

Lesson 2

The Power of the Cross

The Journey to the Promised Land

Take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess. (Numbers 33:53)

When the Israelites left Egypt, they were headed to a land especially prepared for them. This Promised Land was a wonderful place, full of blessing and prosperity. But in order to enjoy it with all its benefits, the Israelites had to actually walk it and possess it.

It's the same way for you in this new journey you have begun. You have left Egypt, but you're going to have to walk into your Promised Land. God has so much waiting for you and He wants to give it to you, but you're going to have to possess it, just like the Israelites had to do.

When you made your commitment to Christ, you became the beneficiary of all the rights and privileges that He won for you by His death on the cross. This is the Promised Land of your Christian faith. When you became His child, you became an heir to heaven and all its riches. Romans 8:17 says it like this: "Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ."

If you are an heir to an earthly inheritance, your inheritance is spelled out in a will that goes into effect only upon death of the person who made it. Similarly, when Christ died on the cross, all the riches of heaven were now made available to you as His heir (Hebrews 9:15-17). Because He died, you can have eternal life. Because He suffered, you can have physical healing. Because He was wounded, you can be made whole. By looking at what happened to Jesus on the cross, you can get a better picture of what He brought for you as an heir of heaven.

When Jesus died on the cross, Hebrews 10:20 says that "a new and living way [was] opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body." In other words, the battered, bruised, and torn flesh of Christ was a door into a breakthrough. Every place where His flesh was "broken through" symbolizes a "new and living way" into the Promise Land of freedom and deliverance never before guaranteed. We can group these breakthroughs that Jesus won for you into four main areas: healing for your body, peace for your mind, cleansing for your conscience, and healing for your heart (spirit).

Because Jesus endured this agonizing flogging, the price was paid for your physical healing. From the back of Christ flowed the blood for the healing of your body from every disease, affliction, or condition. Peter expressed this thought in 1 Peter 2:24: "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness: by His wounds you have been healed."

Sickness was paid for on the cross and as an heir with Christ, you have the right to walk through that open door and receive the inheritance of healing.

In the events leading up to the actual crucifixion, the Roman soldiers placed a crown of thorns upon the precious head of Jesus (Matthew 27:29), thrusting it deep into His scalp. This crown of thorns represents the “punishment that brought us peace” (Isaiah 53:5).

Christ wore the crown of thorns to bring breakthrough in the area of your mind. Just like thorns are the fruit of a branch, your mind bears the sinful fruit of worry, anxiety, pride, depression, lust, and greed. But when Christ willingly wore that awful crown, He was taking God’s judgment upon every rebellious, renegade thought that you would ever have. Because He bore this judgment, no evil thought can control you, and you don’t have to be the victim of ungodly, sinful thought patterns anymore.

In 2 Corinthians 10:5, the Bible speaks of “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” In other words, you can “capture” every thought and make it line up with the Word of God, because of what Jesus has already done for you. Every thought has been conquered by the blood that flowed from the head of Christ. As a child of God and a heavenly heir, you can have victory over thoughts of fear, worry, depression, addiction, or any mental struggle.

Each of us has a long list, or record of our failures, weaknesses, and shortcomings. These can be called “transgressions.” However, again in Isaiah 53:5, the Bible says that “He was pierced for our transgressions.” Isaiah perceived a connection between Jesus’ being pierced (the opening of the holes where He was nailed) and our transgressions.

Between Christ’s hands and the cross was the list of your sins, symbolically. When the nails went through His hands, they also pierced the list that was between His hands and the wood of the cross. Colossians 2:14 says, “He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ’s cross.” So each and every sin of your past has been paid for. The record of your transgressions has been canceled! Your sins were like a certificate of debt that has now been marked “paid in full” because of what Christ endured on the cross. You don’t have to feel guilty and condemned for your sins, because the nail-scarred hands of Jesus bore your guilt so you could go free. You can lay your head upon your pillow each night and go to sleep with a clear conscience.

Back in Isaiah 53:5, the Bible says Jesus was “crushed for our iniquities.” Christ’s heart was crushed and broken by the weight of iniquity that He carried for all humanity.

After Jesus finally succumbed, a soldier pierced His side with a spear, and there was a “sudden flow of blood and water” (John 19:34). From a medical standpoint, this indicates that Jesus’ heart had ruptured and that blood filled His heart. After He died, the serum separated from the coagulated blood in His heart. As a result, the opening of His side produced a stream of water and an oozing of coagulated blood.

Christ died of a broken heart, literally. His heart was broken that yours might be healed. Inside the broken heart of Christ is a world of freedom, healing, and reconciliation. It is yours as a joint-heir of Christ, if you’ll receive it.

The death of Christ on the hill of Calvary was the pivotal point of all history. It marked the point from which all humanity could receive forgiveness of sins and total healing of body, mind, and spirit. As awful as it seemed at the time, it was yet the most triumphant act of all time. The Son of god defeated death, destruction, and the devil and opened the gates of heaven for all eternity.

As a child of God, you have a wonderful divine inheritance. Physical healing, emotional health, a clear conscience, and a mended heart are all yours as an heir of heaven. Look to the cross each day of your life and thank God anew for what Jesus suffered for you. Look to the cross and see the great love He has for you. Look to the cross and be healed – body, mind, and spirit. Look to the cross and be set free!

Questions for you:

1. In what four areas did Christ win a breakthrough for you when He died on the cross?
2. In which of these areas do you need to see the power of the cross at work in your life?
3. Spend some time thinking about the benefits of the cross to you and all humanity.