



SURELY he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

NOTE: The following story is taken from a tract from Old Paths Tract Society of Shoals, Indiana. It provides a profound illustration, to a lesser degree, of what Christ did for us in the ultimate degree: (JLO)

He took my whipping for me

Rev AC Dixon, the great Baptist preacher who was born in the mountains of Virginia, relates the following:

Years ago there was a certain school in this section which no teacher could handle. The boys were so rough and unruly that the teachers all resigned.

A young, grey-eyed teacher applied, and the old director scanned him, then said, "Young fellow, do you know what you are asking? An awful beating! Every teacher that we have had for years has had to take it."

He replied, "I'll risk it."

Finally, he appeared for duty. One big fellow, Tom, whispered, "I won't need any help, I can lick him myself!"

The teacher said, "Good morning, boys! We have come to conduct school, but I confess I do not know how unless you help me. Suppose we have a few rules. You tell me and I will write them on the blackboard."

One fellow yelled, "No stealing!" Another yelled, "On time!" Finally, ten rules appeared.

"Now," said the teacher, "a law is no good unless there is a penalty attached. What shall we do to the one who breaks them?"

"Beat him across the back ten times without his coat on."

"That is pretty severe, boys. Are you ready to stand by it?" Another yell, and the teacher said, "Schools come to order!"

In a day or so, "Big Tom" found his dinner was stolen. Upon inquiry the thief was located – a hungry little fellow, about ten. The next morning the teacher announced, "We have found the thief and he must be punished according to your rule – ten stripes across the back! Jim, come up here!"

The little fellow, trembling, came up slowly with a big coat fastened up to the neck and pleaded, "Teacher, you can lick me as hard as you like, but please don't make me take my coat off."

"Oh, teacher don't make me!" He began to unbutton, and what did the teacher behold! Lo, the lad had no shirt on, but strings for bracers over his bony little body.

"How can I whip this child," thought he. "But I must do something if I keep this school."

Everything was quiet as death.

"How come you to be without a shirt, Jim?"

He replied, "My father died and my mother is very poor. I have only one shirt to my name, and she is washing that one today, and I wore my brother's big coat to keep warm."

The teacher with rod in hand hesitated. Just then, "Big Tom" jumped to his feet and said, "Teacher, if you don't object, I will take Jim's licking for him."

"Very well, there is a certain law that one can become a substitute for another. Are you all agreed?"

Off came Tom's coat and after five hard strokes the rod broke! The teacher bowed his head in his hands and thought, "How can I finish this awful task?"

Then he heard the entire school sobbing, and what did he see? Little Jim had reached up and caught Tom with both arms around his neck. "Tom, I am very sorry I stole your dinner., but I was awful hungry. Tom, I'll love you till I die for taking my licking for me. Yes, I'll love you forever!"

We all have sinned and broken every rule, and we deserve eternal punishment. But the Lord Jesus Christ, in the greatest act of grace in all time and eternity, took the scourging for His elect, and died in our stead, and now offers to clothe us with His pure, white Robe of Righteousness – imputed to us. How can we not fall at His feet and tell Him how much we love Him, and that we will love Him forever! *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Romans 6:23)

The End

Postscript:

I believe Little Jim responded in love to Big Tom because Big Tom first demonstrated his love for Little Jim. *We love him, because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19) What a gesture of love was that? Big Tom's lunch had been stolen, and yet he took the punishment for the one who was guilty. We, too, all stand guilty before God without the

grace and mercy of God. We are like the Prodigal Son who returned to the father with the filth of the pig sty and the odor of offal on his rags he wore. Yet, the father brought the best robe to cover his shame. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* (Isaiah 64:6)

Do we not love our Lord beyond measure for His magnificent grace and love for His own?