**Our Sins Were Laid On Jesus**

Isaiah 53:6c reads “… the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” There may be some room for disagreement about what that means, but a brother in Christ ought to know better than to call this Bible statement untrue. And when brethren started doing just that, I decided to get involved.

The first quote I saw to this effect was when Maurice Barnett wrote in Gospel Truths (July 2010) “It is said that Jesus took every sin of mankind into Himself on the cross … I deny that any … scripture says such a thing but to the contrary the scriptures deny it.” Then I was sent a quote where Gene Frost had said in a March 2000 sermon “To the Calvinist that means … they were put on Him … Where is the passage that says that God put the sins of the world on Jesus?” I was incredulous. It would be one thing to say Isaiah 53:6c is true, but it is figurative so it means such and such. But it is quite another thing to say Isaiah 53:6c is untrue because it teaches Calvinism. Look at the Barnett and Frost quotes for yourself and see if you agree with me they are flat out denying the verse, whatever the verse means. To say the verse (as stated in the scriptures) teaches Calvinism is a horrific mistake. In effect it is saying Calvinists hold the scriptural ground, and we should try to get around it.

So just what does Isaiah 53:6c mean? Well it certainly does not mean the guilt of our sins were laid upon Jesus. The guilt of sin cannot be transferred; one cannot rewrite history about who did what. To add the word “guilt” to Isaiah 53:6c is to add exactly what the Calvinist wants you to add to the verse. The correct meaning is detailed by the verse just previous “The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him” (NASB). So our sins were laid upon Jesus in the sense he took the punishment for our sins. He was punished so we could have peace with God. He was punished for our sins so we wouldn’t have to be. And the punishment Jesus endured was literal/real, not figurative.

Isaiah 53:6c is talking about Jesus taking the responsibility for our sin. For example, if you pay my debt at the bank, somebody afterwards could say “the debt was laid upon you” (literal transference like Isaiah 53:6c), and then you took care of it. Sometimes a basketball team craftily tries to get a foul charged to the wrong player, to a player with less fouls or with less ability. Suppose that happened and it was correctly said - “the referee hath laid on Tom the foul of Dan.” Wouldn’t that mean Tom took the penalty for Dan?

What many are saying, in effect, is we should not believe what Isaiah 53:6c says because Calvinists believe that. But should we quit believing a sinner must believe in Christ to be saved (John 3:16) just because Baptists believe the same thing? Should we quit teaching there are three persons in the Godhead (John 1:1) because the Catholics believe that? Should we quit believing in the death of Christ (I Cor 15:3) because most denominational churches agree with that? That is never, ever a good (Godly) reason to not believe something.

Consider the other standard translations for our phrase in Isaiah 53:6c:

NKJV - the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

ESV - the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

NIV - the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

ASV - hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

NASB – the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him

RSV - the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

So if there is anything that should be clear, it is that our sins were laid (placed) on Jesus. We shouldn’t flatly deny that plain truth, whatever we think the details of that truth involve.