

THE SCARRED HANDS

John 20:19-23

I read a story by Leslie Flynn who told of a small boy being raised in a frontier city by his grandmother. One night the house catches on fire. The grandmother, trying to rescue the boy who was asleep in the bedroom upstairs, is overcome by the smoke and dies in the fire. This frontier city doesn't have much of a fire department. A crowd gathers around the house and they hear a small boy crying out for help. The lower floor is a wall of flames and no one seems to know what to do. Suddenly, a man pushes through the crowd and begins climbing an iron drainage pipe which runs to the roof. The pipe is hot from the fire, but he makes it to a second-floor window. The man crawls through the window and locates the boy. With the crowd cheering encouragement, the man climbs back down the hot iron pipe with the boy on his back and his arms around his neck.

A few weeks later, a public meeting was held to determine in whose custody the boy would be placed. Each person wanting the child would be allowed to make a brief statement. The first man said, "I have a farm and would give the boy a good home. He would grow up on the farm and learn a trade."

The second person to speak was the local schoolteacher. She said, "I am a school teacher and I would see to it that he received a good education." Finally, the banker said, "Mrs. Morton and I would be able to give the boy a fine home and a fine education. We would like him to come and live with us." The presiding officer looked around and asked, "Is there anyone else who would like to say anything?" From the back row, a man rose and said, "These other people may be able to offer some things I can't. All I can offer is my love." Then, he slowly removed his hands from his coat pockets. A gasp went up from the crowd because his hands were scarred terribly from climbing up and down the hot pipe. The boy recognized the man as the one who had saved his life and ran into his waiting arms.

The farmer, teacher and the banker simply sat down. Everyone knew what the decision would be. The scarred hands proved that this man had given more than all the others.

Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice for us; he has the scars to prove it. What sacrifice are you willing to make for someone else?

God bless,
Pastor Barbara