

Dave ROEVER

August 2026

Upcoming Events:

www.daveroever.org/calendar

August 9th:

Calvary Temple
Kerrville, TX

August 16th:

Capitol Hill AG
Oklahoma City, OK

August 23rd:

Open Door Church
Burleson, TX

September 7-11th:

Couples Retreat
ESRCO

September 13th:

Praise Assembly
Pueblo, CO

The Shoreline

Two days ago, I awoke with a start at 2 o'clock in the morning. Like Paul the apostle said of one of his God moments, "I cannot say if I was in the Spirit or out of the Spirit."

I don't know what the Glassy Sea looks like, but I think that's what it would be called.

I was walking along the shoreline, and I noticed somebody sitting on some rocks. As I got closer, I realized... it was Jesus!

He didn't look anything like the pictures they drew of Him a thousand years ago. He didn't have long hair or a long, flowing beard. He looked like a normal, everyday guy. When I got closer, He stood up to greet me and said, "How are you?"

I stuttered, "You... you're Jesus." I threw my arms around Him, and when I did, my hand touched His back.

I don't know if you know what a keloid scar is, but it's a scar that's about four or five times thicker than a normal scar. It rises up. It's thick. Really thick. I had one that ran down my left arm all the way to where my thumb had been blown off in Vietnam. It was a keloid scar.

During my open-heart surgery, about ten surgeries ago, they cut that keloid scar off while I was asleep. The surgeon told me,

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**TRAGEDY TO
TRIUMPH
PODCAST**
WITH DAVE ROEVER

"I finished your heart quicker than I expected. I saw the scar, so I took it off. I hope that's okay."

I said, "Yeah, that's okay. Take my scars anytime you want."

But when I hugged Jesus, I felt those keloid scars on His back. There were a lot of them. He lifted the back of His shirt, and I saw them all.

I was moved to tears...

Now let me tell you what sparked all of this.

The Scars I Carried

Many of you know my story well enough to know I've talked about scar tissue my entire career because I'm covered in them.

If you've never heard this story, here's the short version.

I was blown up by a grenade in Vietnam. About 50% third-degree burns. Blast damage to my face, hands, neck, back, trunk, and part of my legs. And much more emotionally.

When you've been burned as badly as I was, they have to replace your skin. They start with animal skin, called a hemograft. Next they use cadaver skin, called a homograft. By that point, your blood vessels have already begun growing toward the surface, trying to connect to your own skin, which is called an autograft.

Of course, your body rejects them because they're not a DNA match. My body rejected both of those first two graft procedures.

Then they took skin, an autograft, from my own legs, from the calves down where I hadn't been burned, and grafted it onto the burned areas. By then, blood vessels had already grown toward the surface. When my own skin was finally placed on my body, it grew because it was my own DNA. That's what ultimately saved my life. Without those first two temporary grafts, the body often won't accept your own skin nearly as well. So they put cadaver skin on me.

The man who donated that skin had been a sailor. Like him, when I die, my body is going to Brooke Army Medical Center. They've cared for me all these years and 64 surgeries. I want them to study and learn from what's left of me. When they're finished, they'll bury me beside Brenda.

Back to the sailor...

He had a big tattoo of a ship. So, when I received his skin, I received his tattoo. The only one of my life!

After surgery, the doctor held up a mirror so I could see myself. There it was. A big tattoo... right on my face!

The doctors started laughing. "What do you think of that, Dave?"

I said, "Holy cow... I'm ship-faced!"

They laughed even harder and said, "We'll never get one over on you."

I tell that story in churches. It's a little edgy, but people laugh because they know



exactly what I'm playing on. But while they're still laughing, I ask them a question.

"Can you wear another man's scars?"

A tattoo is only skin deep. But scars...? Well, they cut to the bone.

That's the difference between sympathy and empathy. Sympathy is feeling sorry for someone. Empathy is feeling sorry with someone. It's sharing their pain.

The Scars of Jesus

I felt those scars on the back of Jesus. As I looked at them, there were so many. I said, "I'm so sorry!"

He said, "It's okay, Dave. That big one there was for July 26, 1969, in Vietnam. I took that one for you."

He pointed to another.

"That stripe was for the healing you received when you should have died on operation number 50."

Then He showed me another.

"That one was for surgery number 64, when the pain was the worst. Oh, and that one was the day you looked in the mirror and didn't recognize the man looking back."

Then He pointed to another.

"That one... well, that one's going to take a little more explaining."

As we walked together along the shoreline, He continued remembering what each stripe was for. Then I looked at His hands.

I said, "But, Jesus, Your side... Your hands. They're so damaged."

He said, "I was wounded for your transgressions."

Then the bruise beneath His eye. "I was bruised for your iniquities."

He didn't have to explain the transgressions and bruises. I already knew what they were. I remembered those... He had somehow forgotten.

Then He came to the part that touched me the deepest.

"Dave, I want you to have peace. I want you to sleep at night. No more nightmares. No more tears. No regrets. I was chastised. I was falsely accused. I endured all of that so you wouldn't have to carry it. I took it so you could rest... so you could have peace."

That's when something finally settled deep inside me.

Show Me Your Scars

Suddenly, I was back in my memory.



Years ago, I was in the hospital. A young evangelist came to visit. He was a good man, a handsome young fellow. I don't know if he had come specifically to see me or if he was just visiting patients that day.

I had tubes coming out of every orifice of my body... and a few I wasn't born with.

He stood there in a perfectly healthy body, looked at me, and said, "Sir, I know how you feel."

He just shouldn't have said that. He couldn't know how I felt!

"Show me your scars," I said.

Amy Carmichael wrote a poem, *Hast Thou No Scar?* One line has stayed with me through the years: "Hast thou no wound, no scar? Then hast thou not followed far."

Every one of you has been hurt somewhere along the journey. Somebody said something. Somebody did something. Maybe you've been so sick you didn't think you'd survive. Maybe you've stood at the edge of the cliff trying to find the courage to leap. Maybe you've lost someone you loved.

If you stop and think about it, you can count the scars. There were probably moments when you wondered if one more scar would be the one that finally took you out.

When you think no one cares, here's what I want you to know.

He understands. He cares.

The Second Night

Back to that 2:00 a.m. encounter the other night that started all this...I still don't know what to call it.

Was it a dream? A vision?

I honestly don't know. All I know is I was wide awake, and it was as real as watching television.

The next night, at exactly two o'clock in the morning, it happened again. Frame by frame. Scene by scene.

Every image was exactly the same as the night before. I don't know if that's ever happened to you, but it was like watching the exact same movie all over again.

Only this second time... there was an additional scene at the end. I'm not ready to share that yet. I need to understand it better myself. When I do, I'll tell you.

The Next Chapter

This week I'm going to spend time with God like I never have before. I want to know exactly what He's saying to me.

I've actually started trying to write a new book.

I think I'll call it:

Tattoo Is Skin Deep.

Or,

Scars Cut to the Bone.

Or...

Ship-Faced!

Yeah! That's it!

Actually, God is writing the next chapter of my life...I don't want to get ahead of Him. I just want to walk with Him. After all, He wore my skin...my scars. He knows how I feel...Isaiah 53:5 (KJV)

-Dave