

8/21/13

Week 34

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. It's that special day of the week, Wednesdays with Beth. I know I always look forward to it.

James: And she is teaching on our true selves. Do you ever wonder what that is? Maybe you'd like to tell somebody else what their true self is. Well, how about God showing us the truth about ourselves?

I think Beth Moore is uniquely gifted. She is a fun person. We consider ourselves fortunate to know her, to have been around her, to have had her dogs in our laps, to be friends. She is really sensitive to God and sensitive to what matters. When she talks about something, it's because it does matter and it will matter to you.

How about welcoming Beth Moore?

Begin video clip

Beth: Genesis 32 -- please be seated and let's study together.

All right, here's what I want to do with you guys. We are going to pick up by reading in verse 22. We're going to read about this scene where Jacob wrestles with the angel; one of the most famous scenes in all of the Old Testament.

One reason why it's still thrilling is because no theologian, no scholar, no pastor, no teacher has ever figured out exactly what is going on in those passages. But here's the deal I've got to make with you. I'm going to make a few comments but it is not where our lesson settles. We've got to make it at some point in this series into 33; hold me accountable to that! Because it is hard not to move ahead.

I've got to tell you as we get started, I want our viewers to catch up with us. Maybe they haven't been part of our series so far. And in the series we've made four points together and I want you to help me be able to get them up to speed by repeating back what they are. Number one is this: It's time we became a more honest version of ourselves. Number two: We cannot walk in our full birthright as part fraud. Number three is so important. Did number three get on anybody but me? It says this: We are called to work with people, not work people -- not just to work people. And four is this: We start facing up by going face down... by going face down. In other words,

listen, once we can face this thing with God, we can get up and we can face a mess that is in our lives without fear and you're going to see that all over our narrative today.

We've been talking about not working people. Let me tell you, I would have been a natural born worker. I just would have been. Anybody with a really sanguine personality that really likes a lot of people, they can also just be diplomatic and worky.

I especially, if I could, I would have wanted to work my husband in the worst way. Keith Moore will not be worked. It drives me insane. It is always driven me insane. With Keith Moore, and this is part of what God has worked in me because of him and I cannot thank God enough for the work that he's done because Keith cannot stand pretension. He cannot bear it. Even in our earliest days together, if he ever saw it, he would be like grossed out. He would call it out every single time, which is why it means so much to me that Keith can say to me, "Go out there. You live the real thing. Go out there and do it." Because when he didn't see the real thing, he called it out. To Keith, an ounce of pretension is worth like a ton of manure. That, to Keith, is just unbearable; he cannot stand it. If you're honest with him, he'll love you forever. But if you pretend around him... he gets around people that do a lot of religious talk and are real self-righteous, like he's up and gone. If he's even in a service where it's happening, he will get his tail up and walk out of it. It is so embarrassing.

[Laughter]

So listen, I've kind of known those were the rules and it's been good for me even though it's been frustrating to me. But something happened to me on our 25th wedding anniversary. It was like a spirit of pride came upon me. Now you've never known any couple that would have been less expected to make it.

I say continually, "I'll know we made it to the next anniversary the day that we do." I praise God he's been so faithful to us. But we have just like -- we have had a lot of fireworks in our marriage; just two very messed up people coming in under the same roof. So I've known he hates that but something just came over me, and I mean it was not even something I normally felt but I all at once felt prideful about some things and I thought, he's been so lucky to have me.

[Laughter]

Now where in the world? I know better than that! I know better than that! He's just a little more introverted, he's a little more like -- he would just never -- he would have never traveled, and he's been in lots of places of the world. He's just like -- he's had to

live way outside of the box because of what he married into. And what he married into was a wreck; that's what I need you to know. But for a few minutes on our 25th wedding anniversary, I forgot that, I don't know why. So I asked him -- we took this big trip. We said our vows again. My girls, my grown daughters were my attendants. We had the most fun you could imagine. Held flowers, said our vows. I got to say it like a meant it! I mean I meant it! What I wanted to say to him that day is I would marry you again. I would marry you all over. I don't want to have to.

[Laughter]

But I would. I would! So I said to him on the plane -- I just had to wreck it -- on the way home. Why? Why? Why couldn't I have just made it home? On the way home in the plane I said to him, "What would we have done if we hadn't met each other?" Now what I really wanted to know is what he would have done.

[Laughter]

Because I wanted him to tell me. Because he really -- he tells me a lot of times. But he didn't tell me that day; it was our 25th anniversary. I wanted to remember forever. I've told him a lot of times too. That day, I wanted to hear it. Do you feel lucky that you got me?

And listen, he's -- he could have felt cursed to have me many, many, many times but suddenly it came over me. I said, "What would you have done if we hadn't met?"

You know what he said? This is classic Keith Moore. "Well," he looks up like that, "I guess I would have married my old girlfriend."

[Laughter]

I cried! "You put a stake in my heart!" It was just classic Keith. Because I was going for a compliment; I was trying to work him. He will not be worked! I can tell you that. It's been one of the best things that has ever happened to me. You talk about a man in a mess; he was going, "What did I say? What did I say?" He said, "Wouldn't you have married your old boyfriend?"

"I don't think so!" I was just like devastated -- just devastated!

So we're getting to see this part of ourselves, that worker in us -- that worker in us.

Picking up at 22:

That same night Jacob arose.

This is after he planned this whole masterful plan of I'm going to give a big present to my brother Esau and then he's going to be appeased. I'll throw a towel over his face where he won't -- I'm talking about that metaphorically speaking. I'm going to somehow cover up myself where he doesn't see the real me. I'm going to come before him with gifts so he will not kill me because they're about to meet for the first time in 20 years, since that vengeance was first born in their hearts over the trickery of Jacob the little brother.

It says:

That same night he arose and he took his two wives --

Everybody say "one too many."

-- his two female servants and his 11 children and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and he sent them across the stream and everything else that he had and Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. And when the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

Now I'm just going to pause because we're just going through -- we're just traveling through to make it to a stop in Genesis chapter 33. But you've got to see this because you've got to know what happened. Because when it says that he could not prevail against him, it means that he could not make him quit.

My grandson Jackson is six and a half years old and I suppose every little boy loves to wrestle with his daddy. But Curtis, I mean since he was a little bitty guy, I mean I'm talking 18 months, two years old, he's loved to wrestle with his daddy. He would even come to my house, he calls me -- my grandmother name is Bibby, b-i-b-b-y. And he would come to my house and go, "Bibby, wrestle me."

I said, "You know what? Can Bibby just tickle your back?" You know what I'm saying? I'd rather do that. I'm going to leave the wrestling to the men.

But Curtis might have used this same word if somehow Jackson was in such a mood that he could not get him to quit; that he just kept -- it would have gotten Curtis tickled because he would have gone, "This kid's not going to let up!" Keep wrestling, keep wrestling even though he's been beat. Keep wrestling. Keep wrestling. Keep wrestling. That's the idea of what's going on here because we know that the angel of the Lord here, we know he was all powerful because all he had to do is touch his hip and it popped out of socket.

So the whole frame of mine here is he kept wrestling with him. He would not let go. He would not quit. And it was the very first honest fight Jacob had ever had.

It was so odd because he's just about to face his brother but first of all, you don't get more face to face with a person than when you're wrestling with them. You're not on their back. You're front to front, face to face, with someone you're wrestling with. And this huge thing happens in verse 26 when it says:

Then he said, "Let me go for the day is broken."

But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me!"

Unless you bless me! Do you hear Jacob going, "I want an honest blessing here. I'm just saying, I'm not letting go because you're going to bless me. You have something that I want. I want the blessing on me. I want an honest to good blessing."

And we find out in Hosea, if we don't have Hosea to help us with this passage, we miss a wonderful part of it because the book of Hosea describes this scene and it says that Jacob, and I'm going to paraphrase it a little bit in my own words, is crying his eyes out. That's how we know he is not just winning here. He is wrestling with him, crying his eyes out. With tears he says to him, "I'm not letting go. I'm going to hang on 'til you bless me."

What a powerful scene! Because that's what God has promised to every single one of us. That even in our hardest times that if we would just hang on long enough, just hang on, the blessing will come. Somebody's wrestling with God over something because here's the thing. You can't wrestle with people -- if you're a person of faith, if

you're a child of God, you cannot wrestle greatly with the person without wrestling with your God because we can't separate it out. If I've got a big problem with my husband, if I've got a big problem with a sister or brother in Christ, if I've got a big problem with a sibling, if I've got a big problem with a co-worker, if I'm in a big situation, and if somehow that is not also coming into my relationship with God where I'm wrestling with him over it, somehow I am still in a very childish place where I've got everything in separate compartments. So he's going to wrestle the thing out.

He's wrestling with Esau in his mind. Now he's wrestling with God over what to do with Esau and the problem of the blessing, and he's not going to let go until that blessing comes. And some of us say, "I went through that whole thing and the blessing never came." Baby girl, baby guy, did you let go? Did you let go before the blessing came? Because listen, anything we struggle through, if we'll hang on long enough -- I will not let go. I will not let go. I will not let go. I will not let go until this blessing comes. If we will hang on, that blessing will come.

But what happens is this, we let go. We let go. Here's the beautiful part of it because I don't want anybody to feel condemned. Listen, I've been in a place. I've sat under teaching where I just felt more and more shamed in myself, more and more foolish because I'd think, I did it all wrong. I did it all wrong.

But here's the God of redemption because you can grab back on. Did you let go too soon? You know what? He's still there! Anybody? Like grab on with everything you've got, grab back on to it. Say, "You know what, Lord? I let go over that situation and my blessing never came. You know what? I'm grabbing back on. Consider me, grabbed back on because I'm going to see the blessing come out of this thing if it is the last thing I do. I will not let go unless you bless me." I told you it would be impossible not to teach this portion. I told you that would happen.

[Laughter]

And he says in verse 27:

"What is your name?"

This is the angel of the Lord speaking to Jacob.

And he says, "Jacob."

And you know what he is saying because his name means heal grabber, deceiver, supplanter, trickster and he's having to say his name. Now you know the angel of the Lord picked him out because of his name. He knows who he is dealing with but he wants Jacob to own up to the fraud within him. And when he does -- he will do this with every single one of us -- when we own up to the fraudulent part of us, we start being renamed in the heavenlies.

He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob but Israel for you have striven with God and with men, and you have prevailed."

Then Jacob said to him, "Please tell me your name."

But he says, "Why is it that you ask my name?"

And right there, he blessed him. The whole narrative is about the blessing. And right there, he blessed him, verse 30.

So Jacob called the place Peniel for it means for I have seen God face to face and yet my life has been delivered.

Are you a visual person? Do you love this part in a movie where a perfect scene that has no vocabulary with it just the music in it, it shows now that the sun is rising over the horizon, the sun rose upon Jacob as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. So this is where the big music comes in. This is the orchestra right here. And it shows Jacob walking off with his limp because he has wrestled face to face with the angel of the Lord. It is huge! I want to tell you something, it is not just the big moment, it's the big climatic moment of the 20 years.

What I want to try to convince you of over the next couple of minutes is that what has been working in Jacob from God has been working for 20 years. God's been up to something for 20 solid years with this man named Jacob. This didn't all just happen at the ford of the Jabbok. This didn't all happen from the day he left Laban. There has been something that God has been after over and over again with Jacob because -- stay with me here -- he gave Jacob a 20-year look in the mirror because with Laban, Jacob met his match. He met a man that could play a game. And what happened here that I

want you to see is given him a 20-year look in the mirror, a 20-year daily dose of his own medicine.

I want you to write this down. Number five is this: Sometimes God brings healing through a taste of our own medicine. Sometimes -- oh, it is painful; isn't it? It hurts so good; doesn't it? That one hurts so good. Sometimes God brings healing through a taste of our own medicine.

End of video

In the studio

James: Wow! I have learned and I wouldn't say that it's an easy lesson but I have learned the importance of appreciating pain. Pain in our physical body keeps us from disastrous consequences. Pain in our spiritual growth and progress sometimes is rejected without even by reaction rather than responding to see if perhaps the potter is shaping the clay in a very important way. Now when I pray, Betty and I understand pain and I understand the process of shaping, and I have put my life in God's hand. I'm very sincere about that. I still find myself saying to him in my quiet time, squeeze easy. And then I hear my heart say, stay soft, pliable, don't resist.

Father, I pray everybody that's watching will be that way and I pray that when we meet our match or something is dealt back to us we'll say, hey, God, what do you want to do with that? However it comes, whether filtered through your fingers or from your fingers shape us; in Jesus' name.

Any time you want someone to pray with you, you don't hesitate to ask.

I want to show you someone who has got a deep concern. Sometimes people have concerns and needs and it doesn't seem that anybody would care or if they did care, they couldn't do anything about it. Sometimes you can do what's perfect about it such is the case here. Watch and listen.

On the mission field

>> This land has been ravaged by the sun, squeezing every drop from the surfaces around but that's perfect for baking bricks -- every last bit of moisture drawn out. Preparing them is Rajni's job. In a constant battle with heat, they dig deeper chasing a shrinking water source.

This water, it too is perfect for making bricks. Tragically, it is also Rajni's drinking water and that of her two children, Tulsi and Nondi. As a mother, you do what it takes for your children but even still, there are limits to what you can do. Rajni's water

source is one of those limits. While it's a source that builds bricks, it is tearing down the bodies of her family and she risks losing her children.

Rajni can't change her water source but with your help, *LIFE Outreach* can. It's an opportunity to see fresh life-giving water drawn with love for those most in need.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Boy, when I see an image like that of that obviously older sister holding the hand of a younger sibling, I guess I just see us letting them hold our hands. And then I actually take it a step farther in my mind, I see Jesus holding their hand. I really do, I see that connection. I see a divine connection. I see connectedness.

Betty, I've tried to tell people that I speak to that the world will teach you to succeed, you need connections. But the Bible teaches, Jesus taught that we need connectedness like a healthy body. That little boy was holding on to his sister, that's important. We need to hold on to one another and as we hold on to one another, we actually can put the arms of a mighty and loving God around a hurting world. We can do that! That's what we have been able to do for many years because people like you don't just watch and say, "Oh, I like your guests! I like what you talk about. I like the truths that you and Betty present. I like the opportunities and challenges that you put before us and show us that we can make a difference. I like all of that."

But I'm going to tell you something, the greatest joy you'll ever experience is giving people life and expressing the love of God. When we do that, Betty, those people in those villages and communities and even nations, they are open to hear what it was that brought us there to touch them in the area of their pain. They want to know. They want to know why you cared and I'm telling you, you talk about a fertile field of opportunity.

Do you remember we told you for years when we were saving seven, eight, nine million people's lives in emergency feeding situations that we were having an equal number each year give their lives to Christ in those same areas? Amazing! As many people as had their life saved were becoming believers, their souls saved, their futures saved.

Water has an even more incredible impact than food. Don't ask me to explain it, I can't. It is also something that excites people who seem to say, "Boy! If you don't have that, you don't have health."

This year we've asked God because the missionaries pointed us to the opportunity and the need, we've asked God to let us drill 500 wells. Now we have a few days left. We're asking every one of you to take a part in sharing God's heart. \$48, 10 people water the rest of their life because we drill a well, it lasts basically a lifetime. \$144, could you do that? 30 people water the rest of their life. You'll be holding the hands of 30 people and getting them to clean water. Could you drill a well or part of a well? Whatever you can do, we're asking you to do it today.

Father, I pray everyone watching would look to you and say, "Let me be your hands, let me help"; in Jesus' name.

Would you dial the number? If your heart's broken and you need prayer, call. You'll find someone that cares. Today, I'm asking you to call to say, "I want to help someone because I care, because God cares." Dial the number, take your bankcard, use it like a check. Make the largest gift you can. If you want to write a check, make it to *LIFE*. You can go online, LifeToday.org and as many people as call go online now. I think it is amazing. I just now learned how to turn on a computer. And Betty was proud of me when I could turn it off without unplugging it. She thought that was wonderful!

Listen to me, whatever you need to do, do it because it is going to change people's lives. Yes, it will forever for so many! Would you do it? We have some beautiful gifts to send you to bless you because we love you. We want to thank you for helping us bless others.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is there is a solution! Mission: Water for Life is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today, we can establish and drill 500 new water wells for remote villages in over 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten people. \$72 will impact 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh clean disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift be sure to request *Majesty*, an inspirational new, fully illustrated book that will help you discover the promises behind the many names of God.

With your gift of \$100 or more, be sure to also request "The Names of God" pen set custom crafted with the various names of God and the gifts of the spirit.

Also, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well! And be sure to request the limited edition 50th anniversary bronze sculpture, "*Living Water*."

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: I think most of you know this is our 50th year anniversary of our marriage and also ministry. This is a commemorative bronze celebrating 50 years, "Living Water." We've been sharing the water of life for 50 years. We've been drilling water wells now for about 15 years and it opens the door to give people insight about the water of life when you give them Water for Life and it shows love.

I hope you'll help us drill a well. I hope you'll make a substantial gift because the challenge this year for 500 years is big to us and it is real big to the people that need them. So whatever you can do, we've got some gifts to bless you, as you know. But give some consideration to stepping up and drilling a well or saying I'll give a big part toward it and pray others join you.

Thanks so much for watching *LIFE Today*! Thank you for helping us share life.