

9/25/13

Week 39

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*, I'm James and this is Betty. And we are coming to you from the beautiful state of Colorado.

I think if you've been watching this week you know that we've been blessed to have Colorado residents and will throughout the week, Philip Yancey and also Andrew Wommack and his wife Jamie which you'll meet her as Andrew will let you know, she just doesn't go on television but you're going to meet her. And Beth Moore did the first series that she ever did on *LIFE Today*, we did it right here where we just came and secured a rented home up here in this beautiful state and turned it into a production studio to really give you an opportunity to hear some of the most truly anointed gifted people on the planet. We hope you're blessed by all that you hear.

Beth Moore is teaching today, *It is Finished*. And Betty, I know we're going to quite moved at the end because she does reference what it's like for a mother, Jesus' mother to watch him as he passed. And yet, she talks about how when he said, "It is finished," it clearly means we're not. Here's Beth.

Begin video clip

Beth: And I wonder today, just so we can get on the same page mentally, what is it hanging over your head? What is it, that project, that thing that you started? For somebody listening today or watching -- it is a book. Something -- there's like chapters of it and it just keeps sitting there -- just sitting there. And you just keep saying, "I'm waiting on the Lord." And the Lord is up there going, "I'm waiting on you." Anybody? I'm not saying that's necessarily your situation, I'm saying, you need to check and see. Is it him we're waiting on or is he up there going, "I'm waiting on you. I brought you into this." But you've come to a pause and you've stopped what you'd started. I want to talk that through with you. It could be all sorts of things -- a vow that needs fulfilling, a project that needs finishing, a Bible study series, maybe.

I ran into somebody here recently that said she keeps getting to chapter eight of Breaking Free and she stops right there. I said chapter... I mean it's ten, it's ten chapters of homework but she gets to eight. She goes, "I started over and I get to eight every time."

I said, "But nine! Nine is the most important chapter of all. Start now at nine."

What is it we keep getting stuck on? We can't get past it. It keeps hanging over our head. For some of us it is our income taxes. It's just like -- there is just... how many extensions can we possibly file? And there is this wonderful verse in Second Corinthians 8:11. I'm going to paraphrase it a little bit that says this: Now finish the work. There comes a time when you just flat out got to finish the thing. Anybody know what I'm talking about?

Look at one another and say, "You've got to finish the thing."

[Audience repeats]

Just so you will know that you are in good company so you do not turn that off, I just want to see some hands right here... I want the cameras -- how many of you have something that really could see finishing? I just need to see your little hand.

Yes, Lord! We're in very good company here because there is something about it.

As Hebrews 10:36 says: We need to persevere so that when we've done the will of God we will get what he has promised. You've got to persevere through it. And here is what really landed on me in the last couple of days as I was thinking toward this message, that the enemy's favorite thing to do would be to threaten the person. Now we believe strongly because of what the Bible says that there's a real live enemy. There really are powers of darkness.

Let me tell you, if you'll be true to yourself, I think you probably think that too. I do! Even though we might not want to philosophically and verbally disagree, when we look around the world, shootings and just this unexplainable -- when minds go to a

place where you think, what normal thought process goes there? Who in the world would walk into an elementary school and open fire? Who? Something tells us there is an evil that is beyond what is human flesh and blood. The scriptures tell us that that is an absolute fact. Not once, but we're told that many times in the Word of God from Genesis to revelation. So he is all about threatening the person. But if he's having trouble threatening the person, if you have a pretty good idea of who you are in Christ and your identity in him, then here's what he does: He threatens the process.

Anybody know what I'm talking about? He threatens the process because you may not be going for the threat of the person but okay, all of the sudden you cannot get done what you have been called to do. It's on you. It's in your bones but it is somehow not coming out of those hands, not coming out of that mouth and we're just paused on it and it is time we're going to get off pause and back on it.

I've got to tell you something because I saw it resonate with a couple of people in here when I said it a moment ago and so I want to say it because that tells me there have got to be many more on the other side of that screen. When I mentioned "book" a moment ago, I got some faces in this room and some reactions here. I want you to know something.

My dear, dear friend, Priscilla Shirer is with me today. I don't want to point her out but she might be somewhere -- somewhere over here but I don't want to make her feel uncomfortable. She may or may not be on that side but she is such a dear friend of mine. I think she would echo the same thing. Any long term project, so don't just think book, think long term project, particularly if it is where you were called to bear much fruit. Now remember, that's where the process is going to get threatened. So in a long term project like that, never one single time have I not got into the middle of it and thought you know what? I've lost steam for it. I think Priscilla would say the same thing. Y

ou need to know it is normal when people say, "Well, I lost interest in the middle." I say,

"So? Well, you get it back." If you're going to stop it every time you lose that sense of passion, instead of pressing on and believing God to bring it back to you full force and

to use your circumstances to fire it back up again, you'll never finish anything because it is going to happen every time. Anything long -- a long obedience in the middle of it, you're very often going to lose the passion for it. Press through. Believe him, and you will see him bring revival back and you will not be able to fathom all the ways he'll do it. Anybody?

I just need to know anybody getting a word? Anybody getting a word?

So when we see the process threaten -- I just want to throw this out to you. Matthew chapter four, perfect example because the enemy could not threaten Christ himself, Christ is the eternal son of God but here's what he tried to get him to do -- forgo the cross. Proclaim yourself as king! Tell everybody! So he threatens the process if he can tempt Him to do that.

What I want you to know through this present series is this: There is no cross-less redemption. There is no cross-less -- and I'm using it as the cross of Christ. There is no cross-less salvation. It comes no other way. So what you and I are going to settle on for the next couple of weeks is very simply and the most profound thing we have to say in the Word of God, the power of the cross. The Word of God tells us that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. You and I in these next couple of weeks are going to settle in on the fact that he is the finisher -- the finisher -- the finisher. Somebody say back to me what is he?

Audience: The finisher.

Beth: So he is not just the author, he is the...

Audience: Finisher.

Beth: We're going to see that he is the finisher and we're going to see it right here in John chapter 19. Turn with me there and I'm going to start reading in verse 14. Now listen. I've got to read to you all the way to 27, just hang with it. If you don't have a Bible with you, you're going to see words on the screen. I'm going to read it to you. If

you can grab it do but I've got to give you some context so you know where we're going.

We are now at the time of the crucifixion of Christ in the gospels. I'm picking up right there in verse 14, John 19:

Now, it was the day of preparation of the day of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your king." And they cried, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" And Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priest answered, "We have no king but Caesar." So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, verse 17, and he went out bearing his own cross to the place called "The Place of a Skull," which in Aramaic is called "Golgotha." There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Verse 19: Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The king the Jews' but rather, this man said, 'I am the king of the Jews.'" And Pilate answered, verse 22, "What I have written I have written."

Totally, totally ordained by God.

Verse 23: When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and they divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. Also his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

Don't forget that.

Verse 24: So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things --

Verse 25 and we're beginning to close in on our couple of verses that we're heading toward and fastening on.

Verse 25: But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son." And then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. Verse 28-30: After this, Jesus knowing that all was now –

That is a very key word for you in this series. Somebody tell me what the word is –

-- finished! He said to fulfill the scripture, "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine he said, "It is finished!" And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

I don't know how many times some of us have heard this story, somebody viewing today is hearing it for the very first time. I pray that something cataclysmic is going to happen with your faith and with your heart today but I pray it for all of us. I pray that maybe the most familiar story besides the birth narrative in the entire gospels would come alive for us and afresh in such a way that our eyes spring open to the fresh power -- the power today of the cross of several thousand years ago.

I want to lock in for just a moment. We're heading to 28-30 but I want to lock in for just a moment at this scene where Jesus looks down and sees his mother, the several women that are with her and then he sees John. I just want you to imagine because here he is in his searing pain. Now if you know anything of his story, he has been beaten nearly to death, carried his own cross, now been nailed to it and he is bleeding and suffocating to death before their eyes.

You and I talk about a little colloquialism called "blinding pain." But if you are the El Roi, the God who sees, it does not matter if you shut your eyes, girlfriend, and guy friend, you would be able to see right through your lids. That's what happens when you're all seeing. So he, in his blinding pain, cannot be blinded and he looks down at his mother who is suffering right there at his feet -- I want you to just imagine this scene -- how is it -- I don't know when the last time you happen to have been in physical pain may have been but how can you even think of another person on the planet? It is the most isolating -- would agree? Anybody know what I'm talking about?

I have had a back injury and it is a very isolating feeling because you're surrounded with people that are not in pain, all having conversations, all laughing, all talking, and there you are and all you can think about is, my back hurts so badly I'm about to cry. You just can't think of another thing. It is the most self-centered -- you talk about a recipe for narcissism. Not Jesus! He looks down, he sees his mother, he sees John, his beloved disciple and he does something really, really amazing. Here's Mary below him. This was the baby in her arms.

Have a very, very dear friend who has lost an adult child, extremely recently and I was trying to explain to some of my friends that still have young children. I said, "Let me tell you from a mother of adult children, I love my girls." I can feel the chills coming up my arms right now. I love my girls like I loved them when they were children. When they fall asleep at my house on the couch or in one of the beds and I look at them, I still see them. When I move the hair out of their face, I still see them... those are my babies. When they're sick, I still want them to just come to their mother's house. I know their husbands love them but who in the world's going to take care of you like your mother is? Come to your mother! Your mother is going to cook for you. Your mother is going to baby you.

A lot of times when the girls come over I just rub their shoulders. When was the last time you had a good back rub? It is just like their back tickled. You can't let everybody tickle your back! It is not something you could go up to your friend and go, "Could you tickle my back?" You do this with your mother. And my children are precious to me.

My oldest daughter is exactly the age Jesus would have been. I can't comprehend it! I can't comprehend looking at a violence... not only my dying child, a violence done to my child. No! She had held his little tiny body up. When they would take them to the temple to be dedicated, can you imagine what it was like in the heavenlies?

All these firstborn sons brought to the temple, dedicated to God, but don't you know heaven went dead silent -- I don't know if anybody else is having a reaction but the hair stands straight up on the back of my neck -- dead silent when the son of God is lifted up in his infancy, the word made flesh to dwell among us. What an amazing thing back near Jerusalem -- same baby boy to his mother.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Wow! Beth makes it so clear. Betty, we certainly, you said many times as a mother, you know what that's like. Interestingly, Betty has carried that over, I think most effectively too, and not just the love a mother has for her child but an understanding of the love all mothers have for their children. And that any time we can bless a child we have really blessed a mother.

This is the last week of "Shoes and Smiles." I think you know we want to give some children a smile, children that never smiled or wouldn't want you to see them if they tried: cleft palate surgery, facial disfiguration, what a gift. And then to give shoes, beautiful little shoes. And you know we're doing this way ahead of Christmas because we want to present the shoes at Christmas.

I want to remind you again because I think it is so beautiful, the little Christmas ornament, the little shoe and I promise you, if you put it in a prominent place when people come into your home they're going to say, what is that? And you get to tell them about the joy of giving shoes and smiles.

I want you to listen to Tammy Trent but I'll tell you what you do, and Betty, you're going to love this, you're going to see the most beautiful little girl smile. You're going

to fall in love with her. Just remember, all these little children deserve to be blessed and they'll be blessed with shoes for Christmas. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Tammy: What I love is your smile! I love your smile. Getting a brand new pair of shoes is so exciting. It is exciting for any girl. So I know the feeling that you have right now and I feel so lucky to be the one to put these shoes on your feet.

That's what I love about *LIFE Outreach*. They're involved in so many amazing projects around the world and this is just one of them, putting shoes on the feet of little ones that are in desperate need of a pair of shoes. And I love how it makes you feel right now. I love that! There you go, baby.

Announcer: We admit it, like God our father, we have a soft spot for children. Those smiles... they get us. Sure, they come in many ways, lit up by fresh water, food, freedom but sometimes those simple things like shoes bring as much joy to the face of a child as that which saves their lives. There's a unique sparkle in their eyes. They stand a little taller. And no, it is not because of the heel beneath their feet, it's because in these areas where their possessions are so few, shoes are greatly prized because for most, their feet have never seen them. What their feet have seen is disease, but shoes can change that and these are often their first pair. It's something many of us take for granted but their smiles show us they don't.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You've got to love that! You've got to love that smile and those children. Listen, when we look at them, we not only know we're giving them shoes, we're going to see them shod with the gospel of peace on their feet because those families, many of them you're seeing smile have already been led to Christ by the missionaries.

And we meet basic absolute necessity needs like food and try to get clean water to them, and many of these are where we drilled water wells. The missionaries have said, "Why don't we do something really special for Christmas for these children? Just give them something that they need but it will be a blessing and we'll be able to tell them about the Christ of Christmas."

Would you help us send 200,000 pairs of these shoes? We need to hear from you right now. They are \$3.60 a pair: \$36 we've got ten pair of shoes, \$144, we've got 40. And we're asking you to help us. We need to get it now and this is the last week. Would you do that? Is there any way you can help us give 40 children shoes? If you can, please do. You'll put a smile on their face. And Betty, don't you love to see those beautiful children?

Betty: I do, James. We love drilling the water wells, we love putting food in the bowls for the children to have the nourishment they need but this is something I think the child can really relate to; it is a gift to them personally that they put on their feet. I love it mainly because I know what it is doing for them; it could save their lives. They walk around in all these areas where they get disease, they get cuts on their little precious feet and I just look beyond just the gift of giving them some shoes. We're giving them life possibly because we're helping them avoid some of those diseases that can work up through their body just from a cut on their feet walking barefooted. So thank you so much for being a part of this.

James: Well, Betty, you're right. It's a joy to them but it also is a gift of health. It protects them in so many ways. We are sending you this beautiful little Christmas ornament and I promise you, it will be a conversation piece when people see it, "What is that?" And you'll be surprised how many people -- maybe it won't be shoes, but you will make them aware of the importance of thinking about someone else, and at a time of giving, giving to those who least expected it and it's going to be wonderful.

Also remember we're giving smiles, as well as shoes for Christmas. We're asking you to help us pay for cleft palate surgery and the surgeons and doctors that are working with us have made it as economical feasible as possible. The surgeries are costing an average of \$500; some of them cleft palate, some of them facial deformity. Would you help? If you could give \$1,000 do it.

We're going to send you the beautiful bronze that will be a tremendous blessing to say thanks. We're sending the Christmas ornament for any gift. If you could possibly help us give 10 children shoes with \$36 or 40 children with a gift of \$144, do it.

Please go to the phone right now; take your bankcard, use it like a check. If you write a check, do call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. We need to know. We need to know this week. Or you can go to LifeToday.org and make your gift online. Thank you so much for doing it!

Begin video clip

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it, children needlessly suffer not only from a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we take for granted such as a healthy smile or a simple pair of shoes. For most of these children, they've never owned a new pair of shoes. And while that may seem minor in the light of all their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections that could lead to crippling consequences, disease, and even death.

By responding today you can help *LIFE* immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 200,000 children around the world just in time for the holidays. Your gift of \$36 will help provide ten pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will help provide 20 pairs. And a gift of \$144 will help provide 40 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

In appreciation of your gift, be sure to request our 2013 Christmas shoe ornament. This beautifully crafted antiques ornament is a unique reminder of your gift for Christmas shoes, a treasure to place on your tree each holiday season.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes or two children with corrective cleft palate surgeries. And you may request the limited edition 50th anniversary bronze sculpture, "Christian" by renowned artist Robert Summers.

This is the last week. Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, I just want to say thank you. And do remember, this is the last week now. The little girl you saw smiling, I commented of course that her shoes were just a little bit bigger. We try to give them shoes a little bit bigger. I think that I might try do see if we can adjust hers down a little bit, but you know what? She was so happy and so beautiful!

Betty and I want to say thank you from the depth of our hearts for blessing so many people by literally demonstrating the love the God hands on by giving shoes and smiles. Thank you so much! Do remember this is the last week in this emphasis in your opportunity to help and we thank you for doing it.