

11/18/15
Week 47: Fall Mission Feeding
Wednesdays in the Word: V4S4
Beth Moore: The Mark of God #2

James: Thank you! You look beautiful! I think you always look beautiful.

She always wants to know how I think she looks and she always looks beautiful. She wants to know if I like what she's wearing.

You have great taste.

I'm James Robison. This is how you talk to a wife. This is the only way you do it: Lesson number one. Betty is my wife, over 50 years and it's been a joyful journey.

Beth Moore is teaching today, *Wednesdays in the Word*, that's what we call it now. For years it was *Wednesdays with Beth*. Beth said, let's take it to others. Let's have some of these other women that have such an obvious gift and let's get them in here too. So we do that from time to time.

But Beth is talking about the mark of God. And very significantly she is talking about how we can literally change our scars into a signature, like an autograph portrait, I hope a masterpiece. And the master does that even with broken up people and broken up pieces.

So would you welcome Beth Moore? Here is Beth.

Begin video clip

Beth: Galatians 6, verse 17:

From now on let no one cause me trouble, (back off) because I bear on my body the marks of Christ.

So not only was a mark used at times for protection -- and listen. You know what? I don't want to go any further without telling you this. Somebody might want to jot down Second Timothy 2:19. I'm so thankful the Lord reminded me of this. Second Timothy 2:19 before we leave, protection and coming to the next one, and it is going to overlap both of them. That verse says:

But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his."

Listen. At no time is he confused about those who have received Jesus Christ as savior. I believe we bear a mark. We're told in Revelation 22:4 that we will see his face and his name will be on our foreheads. We are told in the scriptures, I'm thinking in particular in the book of Ephesians that we are sealed, we bear a seal of some kind. I believe that it's visible in the invisible realm. I believe that angels can see it. I don't believe there is a demon in the atmosphere that is confused as to whether or not you are in Christ. You bear a mark.

But right here in Galatians 6, and the 17th verse, is for a different reason, not just for protection, it is for identification. If you're taking something down, take that down because a mark, sometimes in the Word of God, was about protection, other times a mark was about identification -- and that is the case right here.

Now why is he in the context of Galatians chapter six so caught up in the concept of circumcision versus uncircumcision? Because -- everybody stay with me here for a second. Because all the way back in Genesis chapter 17, God gave the mark of identification to Abram and what would be his descendants, he gave them circumcision. Why? -- So that they would bear a mark. What would the mark be for? Not for protection. The mark would be for what is our next word? Identification; this would identify them and identify their line. It would go with their fatherhood, I don't want to get more graphic than that but it would go with their line as an identification that they were set apart as the people of God.

So what he is saying right here is, and he is a man, he is a Hebrew of Hebrews. Listen, he is a man who is circumcised, but he is saying, "I want to tell you something, it means nothing now. I bear another kind of mark that identifies me in a whole different way. I bear the marks of Jesus Christ. I bear the marks."

Okay, here in verse 17, you have heard the Greek word that is being used here, the lexical word in the Greek that is translated marks here. You know what it is? It is the word *stigmata* or *stigma* -- *stigmata* from *stizo*, which means to make a puncture or a mark. It could be like a hot iron or a brand. It is a mark, a brand. I'm quoting here out of the complete word study dictionary of the New Testament: As pricked into or burnt upon the body. Such as the marks, I'm still quoting, with which slaves and sometimes prisoners were branded.

Okay, Paul is almost certainly pulling a couple of different concepts together as identification. Here's what he is saying to them. He is saying that it identifies him as a bond-slave. He says over and over again that he is a bond-slave of Christ, bond-slave of Christ -- bond-slave of Christ. Well, in ancient days, bond-slaves could be marked by their owner as a seal of ownership. Certainly, listen, if in the year of freedom when they could be set free, if they chose

to stay with their master instead they would often bear a mark. Sometimes it would be through the ear; other times an owner might even, something that we would understand as a tattoo in the skin. Other times it might be a branding of some sort. But very often in this ancient culture a slave wore some kind of a physical branding, scar, of his owner, of her owner. Sometimes they were branded.

So think of that for a moment, identifying as a bond-slave. But not only as a bond-slave he is also identifying as a fellow sufferer with Jesus Christ. I bear the marks -- I bear the marks. "I have fellowshiped," in the words of Philippians chapter three, "I have fellowshiped with Christ in his sufferings. I bear the marks."

Now listen. Paul was talking about his physical scars. That much is very, very clear to us. The Galatians would have remembered when they met him in acts 16, verse 6 that he would have just been in a stoning in Lystra where he was left for dead. By the time he is writing the letter to the Galatians he could have already been to Philippi where he and Silas were beaten with rods.

So when we're talking about a man who had physical marks that he was a follower of Christ, listen, he had more than enough to identify him because head to toe, one way or another, he had had all manner of marks left on him because he was completely devoted to the gospel and to the living Lord Jesus Christ.

We're going to be building an acrostic for the next little while on the word mark -- M-A-R-K. Everybody spell it to me.

[Audience Repeats]

We are going to make a couple of different statements about the marks that we bear of Christ. And we're going to talk about the fact, M is this, and we'll go straight from M to A. M is this: My life bears indelible marks.

You've been marked by life. I don't care if you're 18, you've already been marked by life because this earth will mark you. Won't it? Just the human experience will mark you. Here's where our acrostic from mark begins: My life bears indelible marks. I want you to put it in those terms so you know you're not just talking about me, you're talking about yourself, "my." I want you to say that sentence with me. What is the sentence?

All: My life bears indelible marks.

Beth: My life bears indelible marks. Here is the A. We're building the acrostic, M-A-R-K. Here's the A. A is this: A mark leaves a signature.

I've got to tell you something that God stirred up in my heart by way of the Holy Spirit because I was studying this through. I love this kind of thing. I don't know if y'all are really in this with me but I love taking a concept like this and seeing what the history is and seeing which ways you can turn it and what it means to us then as a New Testament believer. I love to do a study like this. So I was all wound up in it.

I was thinking to myself, and I was just thinking of it conceptually, I wasn't thinking of it biblically yet because I couldn't prove it but I thought to myself, you know in a strange sort of way a mark lives a signature. It leaves a signature that something has happened; a signature of something that has occurred.

Do you know in the next few minutes in my studies, God took me back to that word and I went and looked up that definition of the word tav. Remember that last -- remember in Ezekiel nine, in case somebody is just now joining us, in Ezekiel nine, verses three and four, when the people who are in such an idolatrous nation, the people who were still devout to God before judgment came, they were marked and they were marked; that word is T-A-W but pronounced tav. They were marked with what? Y'all tell them. An X. In ancient script it was made as an X and they were marked on their forehead with it.

So I went back and looked at that definition and I want to read this part of it to you: A masculine noun meaning a mark, a signature -- I liked to have died -- a signature. It is the name of the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It indicates a mark of some kind put on a person, and also a person's identifying mark or signature.

Are y'all ready to see where this is used? I think you'll enjoy this. Turn with me to Job 31:35. Now Job is beside himself. Now remember the beauty of the story of Job and what God -- God is very secure with himself. You can tell that from the Psalms that he gave us language to cry out when we feel forsaken. I want y'all to think about that. When David was able to go, in times that others in scriptures, when he recorded times that his own servant said, "Where are you? I feel forsaken."

Do you realize he gave us language? He said, "Pour out your heart to me," Psalm 62, "I'm a refuge for you." That God is secure enough in himself to say, "I can take it. Whatever you're feeling, wherever this thing is going inside your heart, don't let it turn to poison there. Don't let that turn into bitterness. Pour it out before me. Tell me what it is you fear. Tell me if you think I've been unfair to you. Tell me. Get it out of your system where you can get through the

bitterness and the anger and get down to what is really happening here." And that is, "God, you've hurt my feelings in the way in the way you've dealt with this situation." Isn't that what, very often is at the base of it? To bring that before him?

Do you know, Job says all of this, we get to the end of Job and God says about Job, "He did what was right and said what was right" but his friends didn't. So interesting! All about the heart. What's speaking from the heart?

So this Job, beside him, Job is making his final appeal here and look at verse 35 where he says this. I'm going to read 35-37 so you can feel it -- feel it is what I mean. I want you to feel it in your soul.

Oh, that I had one to hear me!
(Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!)
Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary!
Surely I would carry it on my shoulder;
I would bind it on me as a crown;
I would give him an account of all my steps;
Like a prince I would approach him.

You know what he is saying? Listen. If there is an indictment against me, if I have done all of this wrong, I mean somebody write it up and I'll sign it. Do you know which word is our tav? Signature -- "Oh, that I had one to hear me," verse 35, "here is my signature."

How many of you have an N.I.V? It says, "I sign now my defense." That word sign is being translated from the Hebrew tav, and that is a word that means my signature. So he's saying, "Like get it for me. I'll sign it!"

I love what New American commentary says because it says this: "I now sign my defense," it's written on the N.I.V., it says it translates two little Hebrew words that would most literally translate this way, "Look! My X." Job is going, "Listen. Look! I'll write it right here. You know it."

When was the last time you signed something, whether it was something for your taxes, maybe something you were purchasing, some kind of business transaction and they said, "You'll sign right here." And they X it right here. Because of course, in the ancient world when they could not read and could not spell their names, they would sign with an X. Here is my X. Here is my tav. This is how I will sign it. Here is my signature.

So this beautiful part of it is that that scar, those marks can become a signature of a whole different kind. I don't doubt like whose signature has been left on you.

I come from a background of abuse so I know what it is like to be misused, and for so much of my life I bear that scar -- I bear that scar. So in a way when I thought, listen, this is one reason why you want to deal with your stuff, because I actually do not want that man's name written in my skin. You know what I mean. I'm speaking metaphorically here but is anything getting this with me? Somebody's betrayed us, somebody's rejected us, and we just continue to bear that scar, that feeling of that some of the people that have hurt me most, it's like I'm walking around with them with their name branded by an iron on me. Why would I want that? Anybody?

Anybody had a partner betray you in business? Still so angry about it. In a way here you are trying to get him out of your head and it feels like he is branded on you. His signature is just written on you. An ex- perhaps, a bully, somebody who rejected or betrayed you. Here is what this series is all about from this point forward, I am proposing to you that every one of those scars, every one of those signatures of someone who did you wrong and hurt you in a way that has lasted a very long time leaving a mark, every one of those signatures can be turned into the signature of Christ on your life -- every one of them! You do not have one that cannot -- not one that cannot -- not one that cannot. From your worst abuse, from the worst thing you've ever gone through, the worst thing that has ever scarred you, nothing is beyond God taking it and it becoming a mark of Jesus Christ.

This is what I'm talking about. That you get through something, work it through with Jesus to such an extent that it becomes an identifying mark of him instead of the mark of the other human or circumstance. In other words, when you think back on it, it now not just reminds you of that person that hurt you or that situation that hurt you, that car wreck, you look back on it and you think, "Oh, I remember breaking my arm all the way through like that. I remember -- that is when I got to know Christ the way I know him now. I tell you what. This doesn't just remind me of a car accident, this right here reminds me of Jesus. This is when Jesus and I started something together that completely transformed my life. Anybody tracking with me in this? This is what we're talking about in this series.

Here's the deal. Some of us are still so very much wearing the stigma of our past -- a stigma of pain, a stigma of shame, and it needs drastically and dramatically to be turned into this signature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So here's the deal. So we have all been scarred. Let's all say it together. I've been scarred.

[Audience Repeats]

Say I've been scarred by life.

[Audience Repeats]

So here's the thing. Here's the scar, we've got them, we've got them, that's all there is to it. But we can either become marred by them or we can become marked by them. It's going to be one or the other and I want to propose to you, you get to make that decision. If you will trust in Christ, nothing gets to just mar you. No, it does not! It gets to put a mark on you that identifies you with Christ in such a way that it becomes the sign of intimacy, of a true heart knowledge and mind engagement with the living savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Oh, boy! Nothing gets to just mar you, it becomes a mark. It can be a mark of the glory of God, his presence in the pain, the failure, the misdeeds -- all that happens, he is indeed the master craftsman.

I want to thank you for watching Wednesdays in the Word. I know you enjoy these that have been teaching. I also want to say to you, you're a very, very special person in that you have watched because you have obviously a hunger for the word but I believe you've been blessed.

I want to ask you to do something. Now that you've been fed, please don't look away from an opportunity to offer food to someone else. What if the person as you've been hungry for spiritual food and this is one of the great mission projects we do when we present Beth and other great teachers, our guests or when we share from our heart is to give you the spiritual nourishment. But what about physical nourishment? How about seeing Jesus when he was hungry in the least of these and do something about it? Let's focus on that just a moment. I can promise you, not only are you going to be blessed but you're going to bless with life here and for eternity. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: We see it every time we come here -- precious mothers, worry etched deep in their faces, having done all they can to keep their babies alive. It's a parent's nightmare, this desperate powerlessness. But it is a cruel reality in this place.

Each mother has fought through drought, scarcity, and disease. Now she has no choice but merely looking on as her child struggles for each breath, reduced to silent observers because they can do nothing else. Each mother would gladly trade places with her little ones if they

could. Instead, they do the only thing they can. Watch. And hope that someone can somehow offer a miracle.

Now you too have seen, but unlike these mothers you are not powerless. You have the ability to offer a miracle. With your help, mission feeding can provide life-giving nourishment in the villages where the need is great. Please! Don't just watch. They're waiting for you to extend a hand of help right now.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want us to come back to that little child that just turned over and looked. Because I really felt a connection even though I'm looking at the video, our grandson Chris was there, Peter Pretorius, of course, was there and the other mission workers.

But here is that precious little baby with mom looking on and that little baby as all of them you saw, they're looking up at the very person you would think could give them what they need but they can't because they too are starving. Many of the mothers, the milk dries up and they don't have any breast milk. They end up in one of those malnutrition clinics where we set those up as the last hope. We try to get them, the 400,000 we've got located, and right now in various areas to feed them but we need your help to feed those 400,000 that we've located to keep them from getting to that point.

But that little child, as that baby turned and looked to the side, I felt like, Betty, the child was saying, "I look to Mom, and now I'm looking to you."

My answer is, Betty and I are going to send a very strong gift, as much as we can right now, and we're going to help because \$30 or \$50 or \$100 we can feed three children, \$50 we can feed five, \$100 we can feed ten, and keep them from ending up there. So we are the answer to that little child's look and that child's hope and that mother's hope.

Betty: Absolutely! And that mother has nowhere else to look but to pray and say, "Someone help me. This is my baby that I love so much. This is my baby that is looking up at me and saying, 'Momma, I'm hungry.'"

This is a solution that can easily be taken care of if we'll join together and let's get the food to these precious children. It is a simple solution but it's a big situation, a big problem that we need to solve. Please help us!

James: Well, we really are the answer to the prayer, to the need, to the heart cry. I want to ask you if you would go to LifeToday.org and get your bankcard and use it like a check and say, "I'm going to help those children. I'm going to help those families. I'm going to be the answer to the heart cry, the need, and the prayer." Or you can dial the phone number and take your bankcard and use it like a check. We not only need to get the food to feed the 400,000 that we've organized into feeding areas, in desperate situations, and I know you want to do that, but we also have a critical need. We need a miracle right now.

We've got to add eight ten-ton trucks in order to deliver the food to all the different areas. Over the years we have given scores and scores of trucks. But right now we need these trucks -- and that's a miracle. It's over \$300,000.

We need more than 75,000 new bowls, they're telling us, to go into the feeding areas. If you can help with that, please make the gift God put on your heart.

We have some special gifts to send you to say thanks. But you're going to be giving that mother and those children like you saw and so many others, you're going to be giving them a future and a hope. Please right now go online, LifeToday.org or dial that number and please make the gift that God puts on your heart. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Disease, malnutrition, starvation -- all terrible human atrocities being faced every day by people living in remote and impoverished areas of Africa -- and those at greatest risk are the children.

Life's mission feeding program is there able to feed and care for over 400,000 children in crisis areas of Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan. With previous food reserves gone and malnutrition levels in Angola rising due to increased food scarcity, we desperately need to replenish our supplies for our feeding programs immediately. Your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for the next three months.

Also, please consider an additional gift toward our \$316,000 goal to provide eight all-wheel drive trucks and 76,000 new bowls for the children.

As our thank you we'll send you this soft-covered journal Bible featuring the gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs for your devotional time in the word. With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed ten children please request the complete Holy Bible Journal edition perfect for keeping notes and insights as you read and study.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed 100 children, you may request this beautifully framed canvas print of "The Forest Chapel" by Thomas Kinkade.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: This has to be one of the most beautiful Bibles that I have seen. And the holy Bible journal edition has the gospels, the Psalms and Proverbs but enables you to just journal in the word and learn and grow. And it is a big thank you for saving lives, with helping us with those trucks.

I really hope you'll make a special gift for the trucks and for those little bowls and we're going to put something in them because you care. Thank you for doing it! Tell your friends about *LIFE Today* and I hope you do visit *The Stream* every day -- stream.org. Keep up with the news that matters and get wisdom too.

Thanks for watching. Thank all of you for being here.