

7/12/17

Week 29: WFL

Wednesdays in the Word

Sheila Walsh: *The Storm Inside: From Shame to Love*

Sheila: I'm Sheila Walsh. Welcome to *Wednesdays in the Word*. Some time ago I wrote a book called *The Storm Inside*. It was based on something I learned as a little girl growing up in Scotland.

My grandmother told me that after there would be a real big storm at sea, she said it is worth walking along the shoreline because sometimes, things that have been buried in the sand for a long time, when there is a storm, what's buried is tossed up on to the shoreline. So I would walk along with her and we'd discover all sorts of things. Once I even found a diamond engagement ring.

Sometimes the sea would give up its treasure when there was a storm. I've discovered the same is true in life. When we go through storms, unpredictable seasons in life, things that have been buried for a long, long time, deep inside can get tossed up on to the shorelines of our hearts. Let me show you a little bit of what I mean.

Begin video clip

Sheila: Several years ago, an F5 tornado moved through this area just outside of Austin, Texas. In a matter of moments, an entire community was gone. Those who record the intensity of these kind of events said that this was one of the most devastating they had ever seen.

Life can be like that. You can be having a completely normal day, beautiful blue sky and suddenly a storm moves in with no warning. No one asks your permission and your life is devastated.

I want to tell you a little of a story of a friend of mine. Her name is Davina and I tell this with her permission. She wasn't very keen on her name. It was her dad's mother's name and apparently, she was quite a piece of work. But Davina never spoke up for herself after the age of five. At five, her dad tried to kill her and Davina fought back. Well, she survived and he didn't. It was a decision she regretted for the rest of her life. She felt that she owed it to the rest of her family to keep things in order, in control.

She grew up. She gave her life to Christ and one of the things that impacted her most was the fact that she now had a second chance with a father, a heavenly Father and she determined whatever she did to make her first father hate her, she would never ever make that mistake again.

Years went on. To other people it looked like she had her life together but inside she looked exactly like this devastated broken home, and one day it all fell apart. She sat in front of a doctor who asked her questions that she had no idea how to answer. He held a chart up with emotions: Guilt, shame, loneliness, fear, and asked her, "Davina, which ones of these are you feeling right now?"

She said, "I'm not feeling anything right now."

But he kept going. He kept pressing her. Apparently, no one had warned him about her. And then when she had had enough she picked up her chair and she threw it across the room. And she said to him, "There you go, will that do?"

He gave her the kind of smile she had never seen. And he said, "Yes. Now we can get to work."

The following morning she stood in front of a group of other patients and said, "Hi, my name is Sheila Davina Walsh and I don't know why I'm here."

That was the beginning for me of a new life out of the worst storm of my life. One of the things that we're going to do together over the next few weeks is we're going to look at the lives of several significant women in scripture who faced devastating storms, things they never saw coming. But what made the difference for them was God.

I do not know what you are facing right now, what kind of storm is on your horizon but the one thing I want to say, just as we get started is this: Whatever storm you are facing right now, God is bigger than your storm.

I believe that with all my heart. You may know that I live with my husband, our son, and three dogs in Texas. But yes, you figured out by now that I didn't start there. As I mentioned earlier I was born on the West Coast of Scotland and Scotland is a land of castles. We have more than 3,000 of them, the oldest dating back to the 11th and 12th centuries. When you stand inside one of these magnificent buildings, you can almost feel the history, hear the voices and sense the Celtic music seeping out of the ancient stones all around you. Disney castles did not come from Scottish molds. We build our castles for war and to defend our people against our enemies, not for fairy tales or for little girls in Cinderella pajamas.

Although some castles were built over the site of previous churches, in general, medieval Scotts

built their castles with military purposes in mind. And because of that, you'll find them in some of the most stunningly, breathtaking locations imaginable. There is one perched on the very edge of a cliff with the ocean pounding the rocks far below.

Another is on an island at the meeting point of three deep lochs, which is Scottish for lakes. There are two or three on craggy snow-covered mountainsides.

Wise architects and experienced builders carefully and strategically chose their locations. The fact that so many castles still stand today bears witness to the skill of the master craftsmen who built them.

Not all of our castles are in glorious repair today, of course. Far from it. Some ruins are a little more than a craggy skeleton of their former glory. And it was in one of these that I, as a young girl installed myself as queen and claimed my own personal throne. It was called Loch Doon Castle and it lies just a few miles from where most of my family still lives. And in the summertime we often went there for picnics with friends. We would spread out our blankets on the grass and unpack our picnic baskets at the edge of the loch, outside the ruined walls of this ancient fortress enjoying the glorious scenery and the sun reflecting off the water.

Well, once everyone else got settled in I disappeared. Those, I guess were more trusting days when you could actually allow your children to wander. The castle held a secret that no one else seemed to have discovered apart from me. As a fairly agile child, I could step inside the large stone fireplace of the one remaining tower; and then resting my back on one wall and my feet on the other I could slowly climb to the top of the chimney and then crawl out onto the highest remaining point on the castle walls.

I sat there at the top of my domain, the voices of my family faint in the distance and on a really clear day I could see for miles across the water. I became a different person up there. Gone was the girl whose father had died in a shameful way that no one wanted to talk about. I was no longer the girl with hand-me-down clothes and one pair of good shoes. Up there, I was a Scottish warrior princess who would gladly lay down her life for her people. Up there, anything was possible. I would slay dragons and when something fearsome threatened to storm the castle I would fell it with one mighty blow. Then inevitably, I would hear my sister's voice shouting from down at the bottom of the chimney, "Sheila, it's time to go home. If mom sees you up there, you'll be in big trouble!" So I climbed back down and unwillingly reentered a world with far less glory, a world where shame and all its wretchedness seemed to rule the land.

When many little girls dream of being a princess, if not a warrior one, then many girls dream of the golden girl who rules the land with kindness. For some, maybe they're waiting for that perfect prince to come and sweep them away. Or they imagine the beautiful gowns and jewels

they'll wear. But dreams in this life as you well know are interrupted.

There are so many ways that shame disrupts our dreams turning everything that was bright and beautiful into things that are dirty and things that are broken. For example, when someone sexually violates a young girl, dreaming stops. When the handsome prince uses you and moves on to the next conquest, then that beautiful dress you were wearing turns back into rags in a heartbeat. When tender words turn into rage the mirror cracks from side to side and the way we see ourselves, that's changed forever. When someone that you love tells you you're not worth anything at all, wow!

It as Edward Welch describes: "Shame is life-dominating and stubborn. Once entrenched in your heart and mind, it's a squatter that refuses to leave."

I think that is a powerful word picture, a squatter that refuses to leave. Shame is far more subtle and penetrating than guilt. It's much more personal. Guilt tells us we've done something wrong. But shame, shames tells us we are something wrong. Think of it this way. If you were accused of a crime that you didn't commit and dragged through the shaming process of being arrested, strip searched, fingerprinted, incarcerated and humiliated in a multitude of ways, then you get your day in court and you finally hear the words you've longed to hear, "Not guilty." Well, the guilt's been removed. Your clothes and possessions are returned to you and you walk into the daylight as a free woman, a free man -- but the shame lingers. Guilt may or may not be a fact but shame -- shame feels like an essence. It is not what you did. It is far bigger than that. It's who you feel you are at your very core.

So where do we take that shame? Who can address that life-draining weight at the center of who we are? There is only one -- Jesus Christ. The one who became shame for us so that we could know the Father's love. This is the only way. This is what scripture says.

There's a beautiful story in John's gospel of a woman deeply familiar with shame but her unexpected encounter with Christ changed everything. In John Chapter 4, beginning at verse four we read this: Now he had to go through Samaria so he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey sat down by the well. It was about noon.

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

There is really nothing about these few verses that would strike you and I as strange. Jesus had left Judea for Galilee and by the time he arrives in Samaria it's noon. It's hot. He's tired and thirsty so he sits down at the edge of the well. Do you know you can still draw water from this

ancient well today? But it is very deep and Jesus had nothing to lower into the well and get a drink. So when a woman came who was able to do that, he asked her for something to drink.

Now if that happened to you or I today we would think nothing of it. But in Christ's time, at that place, with that woman? It's unheard of. Why? Well, for one thing the Jews and Samaritans despised each other; that hatred has a very long history. If you want to read more for yourself you can go to Second Kings Chapter 17, verses 24 through 41, will give you the kind of Genesis of that.

But the issues were basically two fold. First the Samaritans had intermarried with foreigners, clearly forbidden by God's law. And secondly, the Samaritans incorporated false gods into their worship of Jehovah. What made them even more despised to the Jews was that because the Samaritans had a historical connection to the people of Israel, their faith was a combination of law and ritual and the law of Moses and various superstitions from other religions.

So most Jews in Jesus time despised the Samaritans even more than the Gentiles because rather than knowing nothing of the faith, what they had done was far worse. They had corrupted it. So the bottom line for any devout Jew was that in blood and in faith, Samaritans were regarded as mongrel Jews. Wow! What a term!

As John begins to tell the story he writes that Jesus "had to" pass through Samaria. This is very significant. That's not the road any Jew would have chosen to take. The common way would be to head northwest to Jericho, cross over the river Jordan and never set foot on Samaritan soil at all. Geographically, as well as historically speaking the Jews avoided Samaritans. But "they had to" here translates as necessity, as divine guidance being led by the Holy Spirit.

This was a mission from God to change the life of one lonely, shame-filled Samaritan woman. So Jesus asked her, "Give me a drink." She must have been shocked. It was a social taboo for any man to speak to such a woman in such a public place, never mind a Samaritan woman. The setting tells us even more. It was noon. This woman had come to the well alone which gives us a glimpse into her life. Women of the village would generally come to the well together in the morning while the day was still cool. This woman avoided the other women and came alone in the heat of the day. Even among her own people this woman was an outcast.

Her story was, you might remember from John's gospel that she had been married five times. She is now living with a guy that's not even her husband. At one point in the conversation Jesus tells her something. He asks her, "Would you go and get your husband?"

What's she supposed to do? She's supposed to say, "Well, actually I've been married five times and the guy I'm living with now wouldn't even marry me, he would just give me a roof over my

head." So she says -- she tells him part of her story. She said, "I don't have a husband."

And Jesus said, "I know that. You've been married five times and the man you're now living with, he is not even your husband." Now why would Jesus do that? Was he trying to shame her? No.

See here's the deal. Unless we get it that God knows the worst there is to know about us, we'll never receive the good news that he loves all of us. Jesus was trying to say to her, "Listen. I know it all. I know your story. I know your brokenness." Then he goes on to say to her, "The time is coming, in fact, it is right here right now. And those who will worship will worship in spirit and in truth."

And you know, in the Greek that word *truth*, you know what it means? It means with nothing hidden. That's true worship, friends. We worship in spirit but we also worship in truth. We tell the truth to Jesus about who we really are. That's how Christ invades our shame. Because he, scripture tells us, he who knew no shame became shame so that you and I could be free.

It was a life-changing experience for that woman. The one who had been ashamed and came up by herself at noon dropped her bucket, ran back to the village to tell everybody, "Come and see the guy who told me everything I've ever done." She became the first missionary to her village.

The disciples came back with sandwiches, she came back with people. It's quite amazing. It's amazing what the love of God will spur you to do. Maybe you want to be a part of that. Would you take a look at this?

On the mission field

Open captions:

I looked and saw how much people were suffering on this earth.

I saw the tears of those who are suffering.

They don't have anyone to comfort them.

Ecclesiastes 4:1 NIRV

Announcer: Tears, we have all shed them but for millions of people around the world they're a daily reminder of hardship, pain, and loss. Sometimes the tears won't flow simply because of emotional exhaustion; other times they won't stop because the pain is overwhelming. It is

especially true for those who have lost a child or a loved simply because they had no access to clean drinking water.

In Madagascar, this man Fernando lost his wife, two children, and a brother all to waterborne disease and now he must watch his surviving niece drink from the same source of contaminated water.

Jeanne: I just pray Lord that you would comfort him right now. And Lord, and just having to tell this story again, it is just so sad. But I ask you to bless him for sharing it with us so that we can help so many people.

Announcer: Yes, there is a way to stop tears of heartache like these before they ever fall.

[Upbeat music]

Announcer: Through mission water for *LIFE* we can restore hope to those in need around the world. And by our giving, we can comfort the brokenhearted and replace their tears with joy.

[Cheers and laughter]

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Even as I was watching that piece, I found myself thinking about some of you out there, and the minute you saw those tears it connected with something really deeply in you because you've cried more than your share of tears. And you're thinking, you know what? I'd love to help some other people but I wish somebody knew the depth of the sorrow that I had in my own life.

Can I remind you of something? Psalm 56, verse eight says this, and David was talking about the Lord. He said: You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle.

God misses nothing. No tear that you have ever wept has fallen unnoticed to the floor. God captures every one. He alone knows the weight. So I want you to know even before I invite you to help others who are weeping, perhaps for different reasons, I want you to know, God sees your pain and he cares for you.

But even as I watched that, no father should have to go to bed at night sobbing himself to sleep because the pillow beside him where his wife once lay and their little pallets where his children lay are empty simply because the only water available to them was contaminated. It doesn't have to be that way. That's the glorious thing that you and I can change this for the people right now who are on their knees in tears asking God for help.

Here's how we can do it. \$48 will give ten people clean water. \$48 these days, it goes like that. You can hardly fill up your car with gas for that. \$144 will give clean water for 30 people. And some of you might be able to put a well in. \$4800 will put a well in that will last for 70 years and provide 1,000 people with clean fresh water.

The contrast between that sweet man and those children with tears literally running down their faces and the look of absolute, unadulterated joy when finally water springs up and there is life, that's why we call it water for life because it literally is life and death. And you and I can do something about it right now.

Would you go to your phone? Would you call? Would you just make the best gift possible? We don't ask you to do what you can't do. But when you do what you can do and I do what I can do and we join hands all around this nation and the different countries where this program airs, we can be the answer to people who are desperate for help. We get the opportunity to give them life but then like that Samaritan woman at the well, they meet the one who is life. He said, "If you drink from water you'll get thirsty again. If you drink from me you'll never be thirsty again." Let's do something now in Jesus' name.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day children living in extreme poverty are forced to make a dreadful choice: Drink polluted water filled with deadly disease or perhaps die of 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 proven and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today you can help drill 400 water wells in remote villages in 15 nations. A gift of \$48 will provide disease-free water for ten people, \$72 will provide for 15 people, and \$144 will help provide clean water straight from the ground for 30 people.

Please also consider an additional gift of \$100 to help provide three families with water filtration kits in emergency areas where our drilling rigs are unable to reach. As our thank you, we'll send you the books, *Words of Jesus* and *Words of Healing*. One contains only the words of Jesus and the other scriptures for healing in your body, mind, and soul. With your \$100 gift you can receive both hardbound and softbound editions of these scripture promise books.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people. Or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well and you may request our beautiful hand sculpted "Determined Eagle" bronze. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

On the mission field

Ralph: We're here in Burundi, Africa up in the mountains where they cannot get drill rigs to come up here to drill wells. This scenario happens around the world, not just here. We've discovered that these people up here have pathetic water sources. This is water that mothers are bringing home to their children only to get worms, other waterborne diseases, cholera, extreme diarrhea, and then to hear stories of death.

LIFE has been given an opportunity to bring these water filtration systems into the mountains so that when mothers bring water home to their children they're no longer bringing water that is killing their child, they can create water that brings life to their child.

I think you see the joy in their faces. It's going to bring so much joy to these homes that can provide clean water for their families. Again, we thank you so much for all the generous giving. It really is making a difference. God bless you.

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Thank you so much! What a privilege it is that we get to do this! And if you'd like to send a gift in today, we'll be happy to send you *The Storm Inside* DVD Bible study series.

But more than any of that, what a privilege you and I have. It is so easy to just go to the faucet in our kitchen and pour ourselves a glass of water. The fact that you and I can reach people on this earth that we might never meet face to face until we are in heaven, and have them say, "You know what? Because you cared in Jesus name my family was able to live a life and get to know Christ."

So thanks for being with us. I'm Sheila Walsh. I'll see you next time on *Wednesdays in the Word*.
God bless!

Announcer: Ambassadors for life are people like you who see need in the world and want to do something about it. Contact us to start a fundraiser today and change someone's future.