

Youth Takeover
October 30th 2022
Sermon Title: "Scars"

Today is super exciting its youth invasion, hasn't it been good so far and to think in just a little bit we will be outside eating lunch at one of the food trucks, and making smores can it get any better than that? Of course, it can Paula Hooper's Mom made her famous cinnamon rolls. But all kidding aside can we stop for just a minute and give it up for our Pastoral staff whom when I brought this idea to the table they didn't hesitate at all to make this day happen. They believe in our students and they believe that this generation of students are going to "Champion Change". I believe after what we have experienced this morning you can see that we are in good hands it's been so good and I truly believe it will only get better as the day goes by.

This morning I want all of us to look deep inside and allow God to speak to us. Will you do that with me? Will you allow yourself to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life this morning. Will you promise me that you will not walk out of here today without responding to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Some of you might say Pastor Jeff why are you asking these questions.

Can I be raw and can I be real with you this morning? I knew a month ago that I was preaching in this service. I started praying and fasting for the direction of this service weeks ago. To say that I have felt burden for this particular service would be an understatement. The heaviness is real even more so today.

I have spent countless hours studying, praying, listening to worship music while walking 41st street, listening to pod cast all while listening for something from God that would give me direction for today's message.

I truly believe that I have a message for someone here today maybe a lot of someone's so again, as I am being raw and real with you this morning, the heaviness of this message has left me exhausted, tired, weary, run down, and even a little broken hearted, So please understand that this morning I am preaching a message not to just you as a congregation but to myself as well.

So, again before we start let me give you one last plea will you please allow yourself to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life this morning. Will you promise me that you will not walk out of here today without responding to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This morning could be heavy for some.

But The famous theologian Kelly Clarkson said "*Whatever doesn't Kill you makes you Stronger*", She also says "*Whatever doesn't kill you makes you a Fighter*" I honestly think there is some truth to both of statements.

The title of today's sermon is called "*Scars*".

Let me ask you a question: *Why did Jesus keep his scars following his resurrection?*

Why did the one who conquered death, hell, and the grave, choose to carry the marks of that terrible day? – Why would Jesus choose to carry the scars from the nails that pierced his hands and feet and held him on the Cross, as well as the scar on his side where the spear went in.

Why would the King of Kings, the Messiah, our Savior allow himself to still bear the marks of a common criminal, I mean over the centuries Rome crucified tens of thousands of people to intimidate, strike fear of punishment, and keep law & order.

Why wouldn't the Savior of the World remove the marks of the crucifixion

I mean Jesus gave sight to the blind, healed the lame, cast out demons and even raised the dead so removing some scars would have been his easiest miracle ever. I mean He just conquered death hell and the grave.

According to the Gospels His resurrected body had been transformed. Think about it His disciples had the doors and windows barred shut in fear, when suddenly Jesus came and stood among them. Jesus could travel through walls.

But He kept His scars!

His resurrected body traveled fast, I mean one minute he's in Emmaus, the next minute in Jerusalem, and then to Galilee.

But He chose to keep His Scars!

His resurrected body looked different, I mean Mary didn't recognize him in the Garden on Easter Sunday. The 2 Disciples on the Road to Emmaus didn't recognize him either.

But He chose to keep His Scars!

If you were Jesus would you have removed the scars?

We live in a day and age where we are taught to cover up our scars, we are told that scars are ugly and make us less than. We actually try to keep scars from appearing, after surgery and at times go to great measures to have the scars removed because we don't like the way they make us look.

But He kept His scars!

Scars we all have them. I'll prove that in a minute. But scars are a reminder of something, and most of the time a scar reminds us of something unpleasant. Again I think it's safe to say that we all have scars. Now hear me I'm not asking any of you to show me your scars! I don't need nor do I want to see them. I had to preference that, because if I didn't well you know we always have that one guy.

That one guy that says "scars" I have scars let me show you. Some of you right now have the person setting next to you trying to do that very thing to you right now. I kind of feel like the guy on the progressive commercial right now. *"Let's not talk about leaving the game before the game even starts."*

So, just out of curiosity can I see a show of hands from all of you who have scars. Again, I'm not asking to see your scars, I just want to see who has scars. Isn't it interesting that almost everyone in this room has a scar of some sort? There are lots of reason why you have scars.

Some of you have scars from a surgery that you had in the past, some of you have scars from a wreck you were in, some of you have scars form an accident at work or school. Resha, has a scar on her left leg that she got when she was 8 at the grocery store as she slipped and hit the curb.

My son Trey has a scar on his forehead when he was 8 moths I had both boys at the house after a Sunday morning service. Resha and her mom left to go get lunch, but before she left Resha put Trey on the couch he was a sleep I left the room for just a minute to put Ty in his room and all of a sudden I heard Trey screaming I ran into the room but not before he had fallen of the couch and cut his forehead it was awful, I was alone, it's a funny story.

I am sure you have scars and stories to tell and I'd love to hear about them over lunch today, again not see them., so don't come up to me today and say well check this out this is a good one.

Let's just stick with stories.

Scars come from a lot of different things, some of us carry *Physical Scars* some of the ones we just talked about, and some of us carry *Emotional Scars* these scars are harder to see and sometimes aren't ever seen because they are buried so deep down inside of us that we never share them and that becomes a problem we will talk about a little later.

Hear me this morning it's our job as the church and I said our job because it's not just me that's going to do work this morning but it's us. That's right we the family of God are going to embrace each other around the altar as we go to battle for each other this morning.

As we talk about scars let me share something interesting with you. Did you know the one part of the body that scars the least is the tongue? That's crazy but it's true. Did you know it's also one of the fastest healing parts of the body, I don't have one but studies show that if you have a tongue ring and you take it out the hole will close up in less than two days, and in some cases in less than 2 hours after taking it out its more than half way healed.

Think about this for just a minute? Isn't it odd that the one part of the body that scars the least is the same part of the body that causes the most scars in all people!

That's why God speaks to us about the tongue so much in scripture. *My momma used to tell me Jeff, if you don't have anything good to say then don't say anything at all.* That's Hard.

This is why God tells us in His Word that the tongue has incredible power. *We can use our tongue to bring blessings and life or curses and death.* The saying "sticks and stones can break my bones but words will never hurt me" is simply not true. Our tongues can be the most difficult thing to control and leave us with great regret if we use our words to hurt people.

The tongue can cause scars that aren't seen until later in life! We will talk about that later too. Did you know that doctors say that not all scars show up after the healing process takes place. Sometimes its later even years later before the scar shows up? "Interesting" Here are a few things the bible says about the tongue.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.
Proverbs 18:21

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. *James 1:26*

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. *Ephesians 4:29*

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ...
James 3: 7-12

This made me ask the question, God why didn't you make the flesh so that it wouldn't scar when it is torn. Maybe its because he needed scars!

But seriously, the tongue is made up of a certain type of tissue that does not scar when it is torn. In fact, the tongue doesn't have scar tissue. Maybe it's because He knew that if the tongue had scar tissue some of us would have so much scar tissue we wouldn't be able to talk. J/K

It's interesting to me that God has fixed the tongue so that it can virtually repair itself, and when it does—it leaves no scar. However, the only scar that the tongue could possibly leave is when you use your tongue to speak against your brother or your sister—it doesn't leave a physical scar, but it's still leaves a scar. Again, these scars can be worse than the physical scars that you can see. Why you ask? Because these scars have a tendency to never heal.

Please church be careful with your tongue it has power of life and death in it.

Maybe you are here this morning and you are screaming on the inside Pastor Jeff that is me. You say I have been scared by someone that has said something about me in the scar runs deep. You see the deeper the scar the more chances are that you will remember in great detail the story behind the scar!

Every Scar tells a story!

Just like every rose has its thorn every scar tells its story. My job this morning is to help you understand that scars although a painful reminder of your past if handled correctly are beautiful.

Don't get me wrong I am not saying that scars are good and that they don't hurt, and hold past hurts and memories, but what I am saying is *"Your Scars should be a constant reminder that what held you doesn't hold you anymore!"*

You see my scars and your scars tell the world of the goodness of God

Now Thomas (also known as Didymustm), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." John 20:24-27

Jesus had some scars and I am so glad he kept them, because when Jesus rose from the grave Thomas needed proof. He needed to see the scars in Jesus hands and side. These scars became part of the fabric of evidence to prove that the Resurrection was not just a rumor or a figment of his imagination brought on by grief and denial.

Jesus was telling Thomas what held me doesn't hold me anymore!

I believe that Jesus is telling us the same thing the words, the accusations, the misconduct all the brokenness that used to hold on to you by gripping your mind, doesn't have to hold you anymore!

Aren't you glad Jesus kept his scars!

I told you this message was heavy and that's okay because I truly believe that God is healing some people this morning from past scars, and past hurts.

For some you this morning you didn't even know you had the scars. But something said this morning by the prompting of the Holy Spirit has caused you to dig deep and reevaluate things from your past.

This morning if you are here and you have had words used against you in the past in such a way that it has caused great trauma, and you are struggling still today because of it. I am believing that today is your day.

We can't let what held us hold us anymore!

Don't get me wrong I am not asking you to act like what happened didn't happen. You have the scars and the heart to prove it did. I am just asking that this morning we choose to not let what held us hold us anymore. If we aren't careful what happened to you verbally or physically will driven a wedge between you and God and in doing so you hold onto the scars and the bitterness that comes with the scars.

Someone in this room this morning you had words spoken over you by your closest friends, your family members, maybe your parents, your siblings, and as sad as it may sound maybe for some of you it was your pastors, or former church members that used words that cut you deep. And if that's the case can I just say I am sorry. That shouldn't have ever happened!

Hear me today my goal is to use the same thing; the power of words that tore you down and caused scars that haven't never healed, Well today I want to use the same thing power of words to edify you and lift you up. *You see we said it earlier there is power of life and death in the tongue* and this morning you need to hear me you are special!

You were created in His Image!

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalms 139: 13-16

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

I like how it says it in the NLT it says you are His *"Masterpiece"*

Webster defines the word Masterpiece as: a work of art such as a painting, movie, or book that is made with great skill! Which means its rather expensive. It cost a lot, its sometimes priceless.

Leonardo's "Last Supper" is widely regarded as a masterpiece.

Show a Picture of Leonardo's "Last Supper"

Hear me to day this painting that you are looking at has some things that make its value unique. The famous painting of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci is one of the most admired, studied, and reproduced artworks the world has ever known.

It depicts one of the most well-known stories from the New Testament and it has become a ubiquitous subject in art history. But what's the Last Supper painting worth today?

Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper is said to be worth \$450 million.

There is only one problem, and it's a pretty tricky problem. Its about the price tag, you see its hard to put a price tag or worth on the Last Supper, I mean it is one of the most iconic artworks in the world. However, *the painting has never been sold*, and hence there has been no benchmark created to estimate its value. Its merely Priceless

What I am trying to say this morning is that most of us in this room can't afford a masterpiece, why? Because the price tag is too big. So, what do we do we look at it, we admire it, we say things like that's beautiful, if I could afford it that it would look nice over the fire place and then we walk out and reject the painting if you will. Why? Because we can't afford it.

There is someone in this room this morning you took the last words your spouse said to you, or the last words your parents spoke over you right before they walk out of your life or the last words of the people that rejected you at school or in your office, and for whatever reason you grab a hold of those words and embraced this misconception that you were worthless.

People every day reject things they can't afford, I do it all the time. There are lots of things I'd like to have but I reject them because I know I can't afford them a lot like this masterpiece.

What I am about to say this morning is for a lot of someone's. Hear me!

There is power of life and death in the tongue!

Some of you in this room this morning your parents walked out on you when you were a kid, to be honest I thought this statement was for the teenagers in this room this morning but I feel prompted by the Holy Spirit that there are some adults in the room today that your parents left you as a kid and you haven't ever gotten over it and the scar continues to run deep.

There is someone in this room that your spouse walked out on, you left you, he or she decided they didn't love you anymore, and upon their exit they said things about you and to you that left you devastated, and the scar still runs deep.

I am not sure who I am talking to but there is a businessman in the room today and you have scars from a previous business transaction, your last business partner did you wrong, you have since gotten over it and you are doing well, but God keeps dropping in your heart to do something you don't want to do to honor the person that did you wrong, and the scar of the past is still holding onto you. In other words what held you is still holding you!

I get it in all 3 of these scenarios I just spoke of, they walked out on you, they left you high and dry, they caused hurt, heart ache and pain, in a sense you could say they rejected you. But here is what God told me to tell you this morning.

When those you loved rejected you it didn't mean you were worthless, it meant they recognized that they couldn't afford you so they left you. And for some reason you misinterpreted their exit to mean you were worthless, but instead it screamed you are priceless!

You are His Masterpiece

Check-out what Paul writes, *"Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches."* 2 Cor. 11:24-28

The dude had some scars both Mentally, Physically, and Emotionally.

As I read this scripture today I quickly realize that He had just that scars, they were wounds that had healed, He had physical scars that you could see, but He also had emotional scars that he had overcome and healed through a process and this is evident by the words he pinned above! And the words he writes later as he speaks of God's Faithfulness!

Paul's scars not only tells us all about his story and his journey, it more importantly tells us about the *Faithfulness of God*.

I don't believe he tried to hide his scars. *Because his scars made him who he was and tells us that there is a purpose behind our scars!*

You see the Enemy wants you to hide your scars he wants you to cover them up because he knows if he can get you to cover them up you can't use them as a testimony of God's goodness.

He knows *Your Scars tell your story!*

Look at your neighbor and say I have Scars!

Aren't you glad Jesus kept His Scars

Paul's emotional scars and his physical scars didn't just affect his appearance these scars served a purpose. His scars preached a powerful sermon, his scars told a story that no one could deny. His scars represented the fact that all things work for the good to those who love the Lord, isn't it amazing that only God would choose to turn the ugly marks of our trials and tribulations into a badge of honor? Just Like Jesus did!

Many of us hold on to situations, circumstances, thoughts, mindsets, and trauma long after it has become obvious and the sad thing is we are still being damaged long after the words have disappeared into the air because we haven't allowed ourselves to heal.

The scars on Paul's body were branding marks of Christ Faithfulness!

I always wear long sleeves and unless you are close to me you have never seen me without a shirt on. This is true so true that even until this day when we go swimming I wear a shirt regardless of who's around! Some of you would say why?

It's because I have a massive scar from the front of my chest to the backside of my chest. To say that I have been a little self-conscious about this would be an understatement that was until I started preparing this sermon. You see when I was a baby I was pretty sick they thought I had a hole in my heart so they did emergency surgery but it turned out it wasn't a hole in my heart it was a valve that refused to close, the procedure was called patent ductus and after they finished the procedure it left me living a normal life. Except for one thing I was left with a huge scar. As a kid this scar bothered my mom more than it bothered me but as a teenager the words said to by friends and other students kept me from playing certain sports at my school because I didn't want to have to change in front of anyone due to the ridicule I would get from others. You see the scar was on the outside but the scar that I received was deep and unnoticed by others. This scar was only seen by me!

Again, it wasn't until the past few weeks that I see the scar on my back as a scar to remind me every day of just how much God loves me. As crazy as it sounds I didn't always see it like that. Instead the only thing I saw was the pain and the words that I heard from others as I grew up different from the other kids.

Let me ask you this morning, Do you have scars?

Do you have emotional or psychological scars because of a circumstance or situation? It's okay scars are good it means you healed. Scars have a purpose. Paul's scars and your scars scream to others of the faithfulness of your God.

Jesus's scars proved to doubting Thomas who He was!

Your scars will do the same thing, your scars can and will if you let them prove who you are! You see His scars proved to the world His wounds couldn't keep Him there. We have to understand that our scars are our proof that we aren't where we used to be, we have been healed!

Yes, we may have been hurt at one time; people may have walked out on you, people may have rejected you, but those wounds can't keep you in the past! What held you on the cross isn't holding you any longer!

Hear me today the scars that remain are not to remind us of our storms and our battles, but they are to remind you of the victories you have with Him. They are there to remind you, of His love!

God doesn't give us scars to remind us that we have been hurt. God gives us scars to remind us that we have been healed, we've been delivered; and we've been set free!

Every scar tells a story.

"There is a big difference between a wound and a scar," "A scar says, 'I've been healed, and this is my story while a wound says you are the reason my story isn't finished.'"

Your Scars will either detour you or determine you!

We all have battle scars, surgical scars, scars from accidents, and emotional scars but before they become scars they are wounds, do you have any open wounds today that you thought were scars.

Here is how you know.

*Wounds are injuries that haven't healed.
Scars develop from wounds that have healed.*

Wounds and Scars are different.

My goal today was to help you transform your wounds into scars. In other words, we want to help you get through the chapters of your life that have open wounds and turn them into scars so we can make them both Meaningful and positive.

If you are watching today and you know without a doubt you have wounds and not scars today is the day to ask God to help you heal those wounds by giving God permission to go to work through you and in you.

You see I think we have bought into another misconception that in order to forgive someone we have to act like it didn't happen and that it doesn't hurt. No, it happened you have the scars and in some instances the wounds to prove it and yes it hurts.

The wound can be gone but the memory is still there, hear me today the pain doesn't go away when you forgive the offense, it doesn't work that way. *But what held you there doesn't hold you anymore!* That's what we have to get to this morning!

Will you let God heal those wounds!

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

Eight days later Jesus shows up again and this time Thomas is there and this is what it says!

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Just as Jesus showed up in a locked room among a bunch of frightened followers to prove to Thomas and others that He was truly the risen savior and that what held Him was no longer holding Him, Is the same Jesus that has shown up today in a not so much locked room but in the locked rooms of your heart if you will to say to you that what held you doesn't have to hold you anymore!

Here Phil, look at my scars, Here Johnny look at my scars, Here Brian look at my scars, what held me doesn't hold me anymore I have overcome the world!