We All Have Scars

Warning: Reader discretion advised.

A few years ago, our keep-on-a-leash-at-all-times-when-outdoors cockapoo, snuck out the front door and unwittingly approached a pit bull being walked by a neighbor. (You probably know where this is headed). It wasn't a fair fight by any stretch. And it did not end well. In my futile attempt to get the pit bull to release our dog, he chomped down hard on one of my fingers. From there, Pattie headed to the animal hospital (to no avail), and I headed to the ER for stitches.

Today all I have to show from this sad ordeal is a scar.

Scars. You can't do life without getting a few. Maybe quite a few.

But how about those scars that you can't point out on your knee or elbow? The invisible ones? The ones that matter to the heart, to the soul? The ones that seem to heal ever so slowly—week after week, month after month, maybe year after year?

Odds are that you've got some of those. And probably more than you thought you had signed up for.

Truth be told, scars are part of the deal. They are part of life.

And they are part of leadership.

When you stop and think about it, scars are reminders—**visual storylines.**

Scars are reminders that you've been in a battle. That life is risky. That life offers few guarantees.

Scars are reminders that we all belong to the fraternal order of the WIP—works in progress. We fail. We make mistakes. We are not yet who we want to be. But by God's grace, we are closer than we used to be.

Scars are also reminders that healing happens. **They serve as witnesses that our present pain can and will ultimately give way to God's restorative work in our lives.** And as we are cooperative with His activity in our lives, our hearts are shaped to be more like His.

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I'm pretty sure that this is what Joseph had in mind in the closing chapters of Genesis when recounting his life to his brothers years after they had heartlessly sold him into slavery, he said "…you meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good." Those are audacious words—words that confidently signal a healed heart. Yes, a scarred heart, but more importantly, a healed one.

And perhaps most of all, in those quiet and reflective moments with family and friends, scars can become our talking points of how faithful God has been to us during the painful chapters of our lives and leadership. **They remind us that God does not exempt us from pain, but rather uses it to accomplish something worthy IN us so that He may accomplish something worthy THROUGH us.**

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Perhaps you need to take a look at one of your scars and claim it as part of God's work of art, or better said, His work of heart in your life and leadership?

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