

Well, good evening again. Matt and Steve are in Abilene for the day for some kind of function. I have the privilege of speaking to you tonight, which I want to do.

Last summer Tom Watson at age 59 came within an eyelash of winning the British Open, one of golf's four major tournaments. And I, like all the golfing world, particularly old golfers, watched with rapt attention. This wasn't Greg Norman. Greg had her going about two years ago, but he's a fifty-four-hole, really good guy. This is Tom. He's leading the tournament on the last day in difficult conditions on the 18th hole teeing it up. Stewart Cink had just made a birdie a hole or so before that, and Tom is there and he stripes one right down the middle. A perfect drive. He's got about 170 to the hole with kind of a back pin location. So he takes an eight iron and he just rifles it right over the top of the flag and it hits just over the flag and rolls back to the back fringe. So he's there and he's got two putts to win the British Open. A victory for all old guys. So I have the thing recorded and I'm cheering him. Instead of chipping it he putts, and he hits it about eight feet by. He has a putt coming back and he fans it out to the right, misses it, taps it in for a bogey and then he loses to Stewart Cink in a four-hole playoff.

Man, so close. Because I had the thing recorded I decided to watch the post round interview with Tom, and toward the end of the interview Tom Watson said this, "I've always said that when all is said and done, one of the things I hope that will come out of my life is that my peers will say, 'You know, that Tom Watson. He was a hell of a golfer.'" I'm thinking, "Really Tom?" And I've thought about this for the last four or five years. As you get older, you begin to think about value, and you begin to think about significance and those kinds of things. You read a few books and that kind of stuff. I'm watching this and I'm thinking at some point in time the stuff that Tom's got is going to go in a box and is going to go in storage somewhere. All of the media files that are on him are going to go in to storage. Over some period of time the value and the significance of Tom and what he did is going to fade and it's going to end up being vain. It's going to end up having no value. It's going to end up being worthless.

So I want to talk to you today about being marked. I want to talk to you about what marks you, what marks me, how we should be marked, what defines us. And I also want to talk about the sequence of things because I think sequence is important as well. So turn with me to the book of Deuteronomy 5. I want you to be able to see some things from both parts of the Bible, the Old and the New, and then attempt to draw some conclusions and applications. So to set the background here. The book of Deuteronomy means "second law." It's a book in which the events and the law first given in Exodus are reviewed and repeated for a new generation. So verse 6 ends up being kind of critical here in this sequence of things. "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." And then He gives the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods before me." Verse 6 is critical because these words preface the command to obey in that they establish the covenant relationship the Lord has with Israel. In Exodus and in other places where this is mentioned, they begin with a statement noting a pre-existing relationship with the Lord and recognition of His prior action in saving Israel. The Lord uses the deliverance from Egypt to identify Himself throughout Israel's history, often calling them to remember what He's done for them and then to live accordingly. So God in His covenant relationship with us, identifies who He is and what He's done for us and then as the basis for that is our response back to Him in love and obedience. That's the sequence. He says who He is, He says what He's done for us and then He says, "Therefore this is how you respond back to Me."

For those of you on the front rows you maybe can't see this in the back, did anybody notice that I had my shirt kinda buttoned wrong? When I came up did everybody just go, "Did he go to the bathroom or something? He wasn't like that during announcements, was he?" Is it kind of distracting to you? It's really kind of hard to take someone seriously when this is how they look? Did you feel sorry for me? Thanks. I need sympathy. I need all those things. I did this on purpose to show you the sequence of things. Did you ever sit down at a restaurant and try to talk to somebody and they've got like lettuce hanging out of their teeth or something like that? It's really hard. This first commandment is given first because it's the most important. When He says "You shall have no other gods before me," He means "ahead of Me," He means "besides Me" and He means "in addition to Me." And the one that got me was, "in addition to Me," because I've always said, "You're the big G, God, but I've got these other things back here that I attach value and significance to that I kind hang on to. I think it's probably okay to do that." Wrong! He says, "You shall have no other gods in addition to Me." I think that in terms of sequencing, like my shirt. If I don't get this first button buttoned correctly, I can't get the rest of them to line up. Does that make sense to you? I buttoned this first one cattywompus and I'm done. I'll fix it while I'm talking. This is like this first commandment. I've got to tell you that if you don't get this one right, nothing else in your spiritual life is going to line up. Does that make sense to you?

So let's look at Deuteronomy 6:4-9. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." "The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Hear, O Israel." This is called the shema and it comes from the first word, "Hear! The Lord our God, the Lord is one." With their belief in one God, the Israelites could have a sense of security that was totally impossible for their polytheistic neighbors. The gods of the ancient Near East rarely were thought of as acting in harmony. Each god was unpredictable and morally capricious. So the pagan polytheistic worshiper could never be sure that his loyalty to one god would serve to protect him from the wrath of another. And the confession by the Israelites here of monotheism, one god, was and is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of the Trinity. God is one yet three separate Person, yet in perfect harmony with one another. The word "Lord" here is in capital letters. The Lord our God is one. This word Lord here is the one with whom the Israelites had their covenant relationship. That word is Yahweh or YHWH.

I think the best place to see that is in the book of Exodus 3. So would you turn to Exodus chapter 3? I want you to see this word because this is key to our discussion about how and by whom we are to be marked. If you recall Moses is in some sort of a forty year time-out training program of in the wilderness. He's there one day and sees this bush burning, he goes up to kind of check it out and the voice of God comes from the bush. The voice speaking from the bush says, "Look I've heard the cries of My people down in Egypt and I've listened to them and I've heard them. I want you to go and deliver them out of the bondage of slavery out of the land of Egypt." Moses starts providing all kinds of excuses why he can't, but look at verse 13. "Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.'" The pre-existent One, the eternal I AM, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. "And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "I am has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.'" This is My name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations." That's Yahweh. That's the One with whom the Israelites have this covenant relationship.

Do you remember in Matthew 22:37 when someone asks Jesus which is the greatest commandment, and He quotes this shema. He says, "Hear O God. The Lord our God is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with

all your soul and with all your might.” And He said, “And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” So this is basically a summary commandment for us of Deuteronomy 6.

If that Name is to be remembered forever, how do we go from the Old Testament to the New Testament? How do we go from Yahweh if this is the Name? Are you with me? If that's the Name. Look at John 8:51. In John 8, Jesus is having this argument with the religious elite. They are telling Jesus that their father is Abraham. He says, “Abraham is not your father; the devil is your father.” That didn't sit very well with them, obviously. So they get into this discussion and I want you to see what Jesus says to them in John 8, beginning in verse 51. “Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.’ The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, “If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.” Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?’ Jesus answered, ‘If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, “He is our God.” But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.’ So the Jews said to him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’” That's the Name. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. There is no other Name by which we are to be saved, other than the Name of Jesus. He is the author of salvation. Who saved Abraham? Jesus. We're looking at a name that goes through all generations and it's a name that was Yahweh in the Old Testament. And it is the Name of Jesus in the New Testament. Does it make sense to you?

In Corinthians 10:4, Paul is talking about the fact that they had the cloud and all these things going on in the wilderness and they had this spiritual rock that gave this spiritual water. And he said that rock was Christ. Jude 1:5 says that everyone knows that it was Jesus who saved people out of Egypt. The name “Jesus” is not used in the Old Testament that I can find. But these guys were acknowledging the work of the second person of the Trinity.

So we're talking about this Name that is to be remembered forever. And for you and me, it's the Name Jesus. Does that make the symbolism come alive for you at all? Here are these people in Egypt in bondage, in slavery. They've got no way out. God sends them a deliverer who does miracles and following the Passover in which blood was sprinkled, He leads them out from darkness into light and He takes them (if they had believed) into what represents eternal rest into the Promised Land. With us it's the same. So every time that gets referenced like that, that's the gospel. Here we were living broken, we can't get there from here, we're born in sin, we've got no clue and we've got no options. We've got nothing. So God has to send a Deliverer to us. And in the fullness of time God sent His only Son as it says in Galatians. He came and lived a perfect life and He died for us. In doing so, He took our sin and placed it on Himself and the wrath that was due us He took. Instead He transferred His righteousness to us and He's leading us into eternal rest. That's the gospel. That was the gospel in Deuteronomy foreshadowed. That's the gospel that we look back to today. It's the gospel.

Back to Deuteronomy 6. Yahweh, in His covenant relationship with Israel, identifies who He is and what He's done so that the Israelites can respond back to Him in love and faith and in obedience. That's the sequence. “This is who I am. This is what I've done for you, therefore. . .” The Israelites were to find their identity in the Name Yahweh. Some of them took that literally. They would make phylacteries, they were called. It was a leather pouch that they would have, and it would bind like a little box on the top of it. They would put a leather band around their foreheads with this same kind of pouch and use it at prayer time. Inside the leather pouch was this passage of Scripture in Deuteronomy chapter 6. Then they would take these other kinds of things, mezuzahs, that would go on the doorpost with the same thing. I tend to think that I need to look at this symbolically. I'm not going tat myself with Yahweh here and there. I look at that as thinking that if I'm going to be marked with the Name on my forehead symbolically I'm going to say this is who I am. I am His. I'm

going to love Him with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my mind. That's a symbolic reminder to me. On my hand, I'm going to symbolically remind myself that the work of my hands that everything that I do is going to be done to bring honor and glory to His Name. Being marked in this way symbolically is being marked as who I am and what I do. That's how we are to be defined and marked.

What about us? As believers in Christ we know that we didn't love Him first. He loved us first. 1 John 4:19. "We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:10, "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, "For the love of Christ controls us, or constrains us because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." "This is Who I am. This is what I've done for you, therefore. . ." Do you see the sequence? "This is Who Jesus is. This is what He's done, therefore. . ." I'm convinced that this pattern, this sequence is repeated throughout the Old Testament in books of the Bible. Look at Ephesians 1-3. This is a magnificent description of who Jesus is and how we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. And how we were dead in our trespasses and sins but He made us alive. It talks about all those things that we are and all those things that we have in Christ to live the Christian life. They are given to us at the time of the New Birth.

I have a granddaughter who is one year old now, and she was born prematurely at 31 weeks. She weighed 2 pounds 10 ounces. She's a little bit behind but she's just now pulling up on things and walking from place to place holding on to things. I'm thinking I don't need to go back to the hospital and say, "She's about ready to walk. Put the legs on." She has everything she needs to live. When Christ blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, He gave us everything we need in order to live the life He wants us to live and that He commands us to live. Then you get to chapter 4 and it's all filled with "therefore's" and "so that's." Don't just read the first three chapters of Ephesians; look at chapters 4-6 and count them. I did this a couple of months ago. I got up early one morning and said, "I'm going to count the 'so that's' in Ephesians 4-6," and I underlined them and counted them because there's all kinds of "therefore's" and "so that's" in Ephesians. In Ephesians 4:1 Paul says, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling."

Matt has been talking about this grand description in Colossians 1 of who Jesus is, and you get to Colossians 2:6 that says, "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith." Then He goes on to say, "I want you to put to death a bunch of things. I want you to take off the old man and put on the new man." "This is who I am and this is what I've done for you, therefore. . ." That's the sequence. Ephesians 1:22 says that God's puts all things under the Son's feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church.

So as we worship and love and obey the Son, we bring glory to the Father. Keep in mind that I'll repeat things to you. It's not necessarily because I'm old. Philippians 2 is talking about the example of Christ's humility. Philippians 2:8-11 "And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

If the Westminster Catechism says the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, then one of the primary ways we glorify God is to love and obey and follow and worship the Son. So it is in His Name that all these things happen. It is in His Name that we are to be identified, that we are to be marked. Listen to what Jesus has done for us in and through His Name and what we are to do in His Name:

- Our sins are forgiven for His Name's sake. I John 2:12
- We are justified in His Name. I Corinthians 6:11
- We are baptized in His Name. Acts 19:5 Acts 10:48
- We have forgiveness of sins through His Name. Acts 10:43
- There is no other Name by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12
- We have life in His Name. John 20:31
- We believe in His Name. I John 3:23 I John 5:13
- Demons are driven out in His Name. Mark 16:17
- He is in the midst of those that come together in His Name. Matthew 18:20
- We call on His Name. I Corinthians 1:2 Romans 10:13
- We are called by His Name. Acts 15:17
- We confess or name His Name. II Timothy 2:19
- We do all in His Name. Colossians 3:17
- We bow at His Name. Philippians 2:10
- We sing hymns to His Name. Romans 15:9 Psalm 96:2
- We ask in His Name. John 16:23-24
- We praise His Name. Psalm 148
- We give thanks to His Name. Psalm 106:47
- We seek refuge in His Name. Zephaniah 3:12
- We exalt His Name. Psalm 34:3
- We bless His Name. Psalm 103:1

Our identity is to be found in Jesus, in the Name Jesus. We belong to Him and we show our love by obeying Him in what we do. And beholding the glory of the Lord, we are to be transformed into His image by the Spirit from one degree of glory to another.

Satan, the prince of the world, wants to mark men and women with his name as well if they embrace and pursue the counterfeit gods he has offered: success, money, possessions, power, control or the illusion of all those things. This mark is clearly revealed to us in Revelation 13:16. He wants to mark all those that are his. You know where he marks them? He marks them either on their forehead or on their hand. You see the world wants to mark you as well by getting you to pursue some sort of counterfeit god. There's nothing wrong with success, there's nothing wrong with money and there's nothing wrong with pursuing physical beauty. So long as you don't attach some kind of value to it, there's nothing wrong with those things. But when you do, it becomes a god and you've got your shirt buttoned wrong because there are no other gods in addition to Him.

Turn back to Deuteronomy 5:11. I want you to see a couple more things. I want you to see one more commandment. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain." I believe this commandment means a lot more than just warning you that when you hit your thumbnail with a hammer, you don't use God's Name and then say dammit. I don't think that's what that means. I think that we have taken on the Name of Jesus. I think we bear the Name of Jesus. I think we carry the Name of Jesus. I think we walk in the Name of Jesus. My thought to you is that we don't want to take that on in vain. We don't want to take that on in a way that's empty. In a way that's worthless. In a way that has diminished value.

I'll give you one more Scripture in the Old Testament. Micah 4:5, "For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever." It's not just a name we speak or even believe in. We walk in that Name. We take the Name of the Lord on in our behavior, our manner of life and our daily walk. How many

might claim or profess the Name of the Lord but do not walk in the Name of the Lord? Maybe there are those who have taken the Lord's Name in vain.

Now one more passage of Scripture back in the New Testament. We'll talk about one more thing with sequence. John 12:26 "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him." This Scripture just jumped out at me several months ago when I read it because I've always read that kind of backwards. "He who follows Me must serve Me." But it doesn't say that, does it? It says, "He who serves must follow me." Is it possible that I have attempted to serve without following? Are there those among who want to serve but have no intention of following. This out-of-sequence thing I call dyslexia. Perhaps that's taken on the Name of the Lord in vain we claim his Name but have no intention of doing His will. We profess His Name but have no intention of following Him. Some may want Him to be their shepherd without wanting to be His sheep.

If you don't have your identity in Jesus alone you've got your spiritual shirt buttoned wrong. If you are attempting to serve without following you're spiritually dyslexic. We're defined by who we are and what we do, and we're to be marked by His Name in who we are and what we do. What is it that defines or marks you? Or who is it that marks you?

I want to read something to you. Just bow your heads and let me read this. It's a passage out of Revelation 22. "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads."

Let's pray. "O Father I pray that we all might rejoice that our names are written in Your book and that our names are engraved in Your hands. We pray that some day we will see Your face and have Your Name on our foreheads and have You say to us, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter now into the joys of the Lord.' O Lord, may we not run or labor or take on Your Name in vain. May we be marked by You. In the name of Jesus. Amen."