Week 4
1/18/12

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. This is "Wednesdays with Beth." And Betty is not with us today. I don't know if you heard earlier in the week, but Betty got up this week and had a blood vessel that had burst in her left eye. And she has had this happen before and has never missed a taping; it always seemed to get better before we taped -- but it hasn't. It's actually swollen quite a bit and she felt like it would be unfair. She said it would be unfair to the viewers that they see -- this is going to make them cringe like it does me. I know you understand.

Beth is teaching on spiritual discernment. And if there is something I see quite obvious missing in the lives of many Christians and in many church settings it is the spirit of discernment, being able to discern the spirit, the spirits, and what's going on and even exercise wise judgment. I think Beth is excellent in the way she approaches all biblical truth and all concerns, and this is a major concern and it is a major importance. So welcome Beth and "Spiritual Discernment." Here's Beth.

Begin video clip:
Beth: How can I know if I am thinking in the spirit, if I'm thinking with the activated mind of Christ here or if I'm just rationalizing in a way that is not God at all. How can we determine is this of the flesh or is this of the spirit?

So here's what we're going to do. I'm going to take you through a four-point self checklist -- a four point self checklist. Here is what we're going to see. We're going to see -- we're going to have four questions. I'm going to present to you four different questions and here's going to be the way it will work. Four no's is going to bring you one yes. If you can answer no to all four of these questions in any given situation... so if you're up against this in a week, if you're up against it in six months, if you're up against it in six years where you're trying to determine am I thinking in the spirit here or is this just my flesh? How can I determine is this discernment or is this just my own carnal thinking here? Is this God or is it just me? Then ask yourself, I'm going to ask myself these four questions. And if I can answer all four with a no, I've got myself a yes. In other words, I'm onto something and it is probably God speaking and not just me making it up. Is that fair?

So here we go. Four questions and it is going to be four no's to make a yes. So the number one question is this:

-- am I a critical or suspicious person by nature? Take the time to jot that down.

I hope so much that you're able to sit down with us for a little while on the other side of that screen because I think this may open our eyes, the eyes of our heart, according to Ephesians chapter one, to see how he can operate in us.

The first one is this:

In other words, if you have sizable trust issues, then you can't always trust what your gut is telling you because you're already going to assume that no one can be trusted. Is that fair to say? Because we just want to be obvious here, that if we got such a big trust issue that we never trust anyone and we're suspicious of everyone, if we are suspicious of people all the time, we're going to be right some of the time. Does that make sense? So we're just going to just assume, you know what? I was right about so-and-so. Well, you know what? You said it about all of them!

[Laughter]

Is that fair? So if I got trust issues and I can really speak to this one because boy, have I had some trust issues. Very early on in life had key people that were perpetrators of harm toward me instead of protection. So those boundaries were down very early on. I can't even remember the very first time that I was sexually abused, it began so early. So anybody that has a got a background like mine or so many other kind of betrayals, we begin to develop our belief system based on those experiences and we grow into people who don't trust anyone! So we've got to grow out of that. We can't trust people to be God but we can trust some people to be really good fine people.

If you haven't come upon some people that are really good fine people you are not getting out enough because everybody in your life is not to be distrusted. Is that okay to say? Again, we've got to trust that they won't be God for us but there is some fine people out there. And if we have just a suspicious nature, then we're already going to have to question ourselves.

It doesn't mean -- let me say this carefully -- it doesn't mean we're necessarily wrong, it means we better go to the next question because we better settle that issue. We don't want to be distrusting people. We don't want to be suspicious of everybody we come in contact with. We don't want to get a new worship leader at our church and immediately go, "You

know what? I can already tell this is not going to go well!"

[Laughter]

Does anybody know anybody like that besides me? They assume from the very beginning. Somebody will be in the pulpit. I mean the first moment, "There is something wrong there. I just feel it in my spirit. Something is wrong." It is because they're critical and suspicious by nature -- just by nature.

Here's the obvious here, if we distrust everybody we're always going to be right about somebody. There is going to be somebody that is going to come along that is going give us credence to think, I know I'm right about this. Remember so-and-so. How many so-and-so's were we wrong about? Are we suspicious or critical by nature?

Number two is this:

-- am I jealous or do I feel threatened? If I think I've got something inside of me and what we're going to call in our terminology here, if something inside of me is flagging; something in my spirit is jumping over a situation or an encounter or over a relationship or over a person, okay, I've had to ask myself the question, am I just distrusting them by nature? Am I just critical by nature? I need a "no" to that. I need a "no." I've got to settle that with God. Is that just me? Is that just my own flesh? But then I come to that second question, am I jealous or do I feel threatened by them? Because listen, any person we're jealous of, we will be very quick to find something wrong with if somehow we're threatened by them. If they're somehow threatening our position or our place, somehow dislodging us from something we feel like we own, we are immediately going to go on the defensive and we're going to get a feeling in our stomach but it may not be God. Is that fair to say? Do I feel jealous or threatened?

I want to show you something, you're right here in First Corinthians two. Look down at First Corinthians chapter three and verse three. I love this! I love this wording here. This is still the Apostle Paul talking in our same context with spiritual discernment to the church of Corinth. He says this:

Are you not acting like mere men? Now stay with me here because to me, this shows us the difference in being mere people or spirit-filled, spirit-discerning people. Because the Word of God says we can just walk around like mere people, I can go around in my natural man, operate in my natural impulses, get irritated and annoyed easily, be suspicious of everybody. I can walk around as a mere person or I can walk around

empowered by the Holy Spirit of the living God and get somewhere with some spiritual discernment.

What he is saying here is this, any time you and I -- remember we're trying to figure out with our checklist, is this me or is this God? Is this the flesh or is this the spirit? If jealousy is involved, it is always the flesh. Because it says that when jealousy is involved we're not in the spirit, we're acting as those who are worldly, we're acting like mere women or mere men. So we can already -- again, I want to say clearly, it doesn't mean you're always wrong. It doesn't mean I'm always wrong.

In other words, because I've got a feeling of jealousy, I gave you an example about feeling like Keith might have a situation at work where a woman had strong feelings toward him or those that were inappropriate for a married man. Yes, I also could have felt some jealousy with that had time gone on and had seen more than I saw. But I will tell you this, I might have still been right but I wouldn't have known if I was or not because any time I'm working out of the realm of jealousy or just because I feel threatened then I'm still operating in the flesh. So I can't trust my feeling because it could just be my own human instinct having a reaction to it. Am I jealous or do I feel threatened? Because people we feel threatened by, we always want to be quick to judge. We're wanting to tear them down. We're wanting to pull them off of the pedestal in front of us because we feel like somehow they've threatened our position. So that's suspect every time.

The third question is this:

From this I mean from being right. Do I have anything selfish to gain from being right about what I feel? Now, it might be something literal. It might be something like, yes, I have something to gain. I have that promotion to gain if they don't get it. Yes, I have that position at church if they don't get it. Yes, I would have that opportunity if they don't get it. In other words, that's something very specific that we have selfishly to gain from being right about something about someone we think something is wrong with. So something selfish to gain. But it can even be psychological satisfaction. In other words, it is just like, really, really thrills us to be right about something being wrong with someone. There is something psychological that we're gaining from it, something that gives us a sense of superiority.

If we can honestly say, "No, I have absolutely nothing selfish to gain from this; I don't even want to be right. I don't want to be right about this." Then we're usually getting on to something. We've got some questions to ask ourselves where we might come up with enough no's to make a yes because if we can determine I'm not critical or suspicious by

nature toward this person. No, I don't feel jealous or threatened by them. No, I can't think of anything that I have to gain by being right about them being wrong.

So we continue on from that point asking ourselves a fourth question. I want to stop on this third one though and talk to you about it a second. Every single one of the spiritual gifts that God give us has a fleshly counterfeit to it. I don't care what it is. You name a particular spiritual gift and you can come up with some way that that could be twisted off or perverted or counterfeited in the fleshly realm. Prophesy could be just making up stuff. Teaching could be used as a format to just give a personal opinion and draw attention to self. The gift, what we would call "the gift of faith" in its counterfeit could be gullibility and unstudied. All of them have some kind of counterfeit in the flesh.

There is discernment that is for everyone. God wants every single one of us to have discernment. But the Word of God also speaks of a gifting; that some people just have a gift of discernment. They are important in a body of believers. They're important in a church. I can't tell you, there is no estimating the cost where we don't have somebody operating in that body of believers that has the gift of discernment. The gift of discernment, if that happens to be you, where you're kind of the one, you're one of the ones that gets a feel for stuff, and you're one of the ones that has some influence in your body of believers or in your household where you've got the gift of discernment, one of the ways it twists and counterfeits is in a critical spirit.

In other words, just because its been right enough and I say "it" by just talking about the gifting itself but then there is a superiority that goes with it; that there is something psychological that we get from being right. And those are questions we have to answer constantly. Is it discernment or do I just have a critical spirit? Am I wanting somehow to gain a superior position by being right over this person being wrong?

So we have three questions:

The fourth one is this and this is a big one and we're going to sit on this one for a little while: are my emotions clouding my discernment? Huge! Jot that one down. In other words, am I getting all emotionally entangled in this thing because that's what's going to make my spiritual discernment very suspect; what I'm calling that. What may not be that, may be that I have such strong feelings about it that I cannot tell what God is saying to me because I know what I want because I want this so badly or I do not want it so badly; it might be one or the other when we're looking at it and we're so emotionally charged where it is concerned.

Melissa was telling me something the other day. I was asking her how a friend of hers was and she said, "You know, Mom, she has a real high E.Q." It just killed me because I knew she was talking about. She's like "Not I.Q. but emotional quotient." She is just like very emotionally charged. Everything is big. Every feeling is huge. I'm kind of like that. When I feel it, I feel it! When we do, when we got our emotional entanglement in a situation, it can begin clouding what's true. It can overtake the sense of what God is telling us deep down in the underside of our hearts.

I'm going to give you a couple of examples and I want to take you to some scriptures to see it, but I want to throw this out to you when I'm trying to determine what is God and what is me, especially if I'm trying to determine if I'm supposed to take on this particular area of ministry or this particular area of work.

When I begin to hear about an opportunity, I think everything sounds great. If it is a God thing, then I love it! I love it! There are so many wonderful things we could be doing, so many wonderful things to give your time to. But you know you've got this one life God's given you and a calling in a specific way he wants you to serve him in this season. And what he's taught me to do through the years is wait until that emotional charge begins to wane and see if I still feel like it is what I'm supposed to do. After I sleep on it for a couple of nights or maybe sleep on it for a couple of weeks, get some of the emotion out of it. That sounds like the funnest thing I've ever done in all my life. Wait 'til that goes away and see then if under the emotions is it still right? Does it still feel like it is the will of God? Then that's something to take notice of.
End of clip

In the studio:
James: I know you can hear clearly in the spiritual realm. And a lot of times we have to not only calm our emotions or move beyond whatever it is that's troubling, and in the stillness of the moment we'll be able to hear God more clearly.

Let me tell you about a book that we are offering: *Believe This Not That*. When you have something that you're asking about, "Can I ever do right?" "Can I live with this?" "Can I ever overcome?" "How can this be?" "And how do I handle that" or "This is impossible." You've got all of these different situations and challenges that you face or questions that you have and the enemy in the spiritual realm will throw all kinds of accusations and all kind of answers that are totally incorrect.

What we're providing here, this incredible book, is what God says in light of what you're asking or what you hear being thrown at you. It is a tremendous blessing. I want you to get it. You simply ask for it.

Here is what I want to impress upon your mind. The most exciting thing our viewers ever participate in -- and this is according to the viewers -- they love what happens on *LIFE Today*, they love the messages and testimony and Beth's teaching, they love everything we do, they love our guests, and seeing the glory of God and finding answers to the challenges that they face in life, but participating in something that totally changes everything is exciting. And our viewers tell us individually, as couples, as groups in prayer settings or even churches, the most exciting thing we do is help provide fresh, clean water to people who are desperate for it, to drill a water well, to make a gift and provide something that just keeps giving life -- tremendous need right now. And the answer is simple and we can provide it -- it's fresh, clean water.

I want you to look at the situation that love can enable us to deal with effectively. Watch closely.

On the mission field:
Isak: All over the continent of Africa, children have a daily arduous journey to come and look for water; collect water for their families. From a very young age children will carry a bucket, some container for water down to a water source and collect water for their families.

Unfortunately, with drought ravaging the continent we're finding children more and more coming down to sources like this where there is nothing but dry parched land, nothing but hopelessness, lifelessness, and a total lack of the very thing they need, water -- fresh, clean water.

That's why it is imperative for us to drill water wells that literally bring life each and every day, not just for these children, but for their children -- a well that brings life in the form of water.
End of clip

In the studio:
James: Don't you find yourself just wanting to run out there and grab that little boy and saying, "Let me help you."

Sometimes the people in the various regions of the world, when the rivers go dry, they will dig down trying to find some subsurface moisture. And then invariably, they're bringing up water that is contaminated. They're desperate, they're doing everything they can.

That little boy is carrying a bucket just hoping he can find some. I have an idea maybe his parents said, "Just go look and maybe you can find something somewhere." Well, you're the something somewhere -- you really are. We can drill a freshwater well in his village, in his area. We drill hundreds of water wells and you determine how many in many different countries every year. It's probably the most exciting project that we've ever joined hands and hearts to accomplish.

I'm asking you, if you would, help us drill a water well for that boy. You say, "James, what does it cost?" It costs an average of $4800. There will be some places where we can drill a well that's very shallow and it may cost half that but there will be some where it will cost twice that. But the average, when we drill several hundred is still $4800, which means that if you can help us drill a well, and make a gift like that, you will be providing a well and water that basically lasts a lifetime; a single gift that just keeps on giving.

Many of our friends, and I'm going to tell you, we need the help of people who can kind of step up where some people who say, you know I can only give what I would consider a modest gift but it's the best I can do, some of those people have been stressed and they're saying, "James, we're even having trouble doing anything." We need people who will step up and say, "You know what? I can give $1200 and pray three other people will join and we'll have the $4800." Or "I can give $2400 and pray someone joins me," and you'll have the $4800. Whatever you can do, we're asking you to do it.

But keep this in mind, and this is where the majority of our support comes, $48, ten people water for the rest of their lives. That's basically what the cost is. A $48 gift toward the well gives ten people water the rest of their life. A gift of $144, 30 people water the rest of their life. Would you dial the number? Take your bankcard and use it like a check.

If you want to go online, go to LifeToday.org. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*, call us and tell us you're mailing it or use that bankcard like a check. We want to send you a book that's going to give you answers to many of the challenges you face and the questions you have: *Believe This Not That*. Every time you believe a lie or you believe something that is not so, or you think something can't be done, God's got an answer and you're supposed to believe what he says. We're going to show you that. You're going to love this.

And then we have the beautiful coffee mugs to send to you to just say thank you. We'll send you two mugs. Interestingly, the inside of one is beige and the other one is blue. And it really represents in a way what water can look like before and what it looks like afterwards. An incredible difference!

But you're going to treasure the Water for Life mugs because you're going to be helping give people water for the rest of their lives. We want to send you the mug to say thank you.

Then the beautiful "Lamb and Lion" bronze, it is truly one of the most beautiful art pieces I have ever seen, to say thank you to those of you who will make a gift of $1200 or more toward the well. Also, the mugs and the book, *Believe This Not That*.

Thank you so much for making that call. You call until you get through. You're going to be giving someone life and we're going to tell them about the source of love and life that God has for them in Christ. Thank you for your gift.

Begin video clip
Announcer: At this very moment a child is drawing her last breath struggling to stay alive due to a lack of food. Sadly, this impoverished child is not alone and without our help, many like her throughout Africa face death as well.

Today you can make a difference. You can save a life! *LIFE*'s mission feeding teams are in place right now ready to answer the hunger cries of hundreds of thousands of suffering children in remote areas of Africa.

With previous food reserves gone and parts of Africa facing its worst famine and food shortage in more than two decades, we desperately need to replenish our supplies for the feeding programs immediately! Your lifesaving gift of $30, $50, or $100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift we'll send you Beth Moore's book, *The Life that Overcomes.* This Life Outreach exclusive featuring a collection of messages from Beth's heart will inspire you to live an overcoming life each day!

With your gift of $100 or more to help feed ten children you may also request our new 90-day Bible designed to help you read through the scriptures in just 90 days.

Finally, as a special challenge please prayerfully consider a gift of $1,000 or more to help feed and save the lives of 100 children. And you may also request the beautiful "Heart of the Father" bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today at LifeToday.org.
End of clip

In the studio:
James: I want to encourage you to get "The Lamb and The Lion." This really is the kind of peace and presence that we need today all over the world: the Lion of the tribe of Judah and yet a shepherd's heart, and the lamb, the peace that passes understanding. We desperately need it.

We're sending this beautiful art piece, this beautiful bronze to those of you who will help us drill these wells by making a gift of $1200 or more. If you could give a well, $4800, please do! We're going to need every $48 gift, every $144 gift, and I'm asking you to do what you can to help and I thank you! Beth gives spiritual water. We're going to give physical water and spiritual life to people all over the world because you had a part in it. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share life.

>> Too oftentimes our churches have become stadiums full of fans.

Announcer: Becoming a completely committed follower of Jesus and not just a fan -- tomorrow!