

Week 5

1/26/12

James: Thank you! Thank all of you and thank you for giving us this opportunity to share with you.

I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

I hope this is a regular part of your day. If you're on satellite, we start early in the morning on ABC Family and then we come on Discovery, then we come on Daystar, and then we come on several different inspirational networks, come on the Trinity Broadcast Network, somewhere around noon, one side or the other, depending on where you are; we are on I.N.S.P. two or three times a day, several of the networks, so you can get us and we're here.

We're trying to get in every home and every heart because we have something to share that we're convinced is absolutely worth sharing. Every challenge that you face, every pain that you feel can be one of the best friends you'll ever have because you can find the answers and the solution that you've always wanted and always looked for. And we've got a guest who is going to dare you to find it.

As a matter of fact, Bill Cornelius, pastor of Bay Area Fellowship, which is in the Corpus Christi area, he wrote a book and I know it contains a message that he got through to his people, some 8,000 that attend every week. It's an amazing story, *I Dare You to Change!* "Discover the difference between dreaming of a better life and living it."

Would you welcome Bill Cornelius to *LIFE Today*?

Bill, good to see you.

Betty: Good to have you!

James: I did a number of crusades all over south Texas and it wasn't the easiest place. I seemed to be well received. I was well received by the Hispanic people, I grew up with them, and I don't know whether I look a little bit Spanish but they just listen to me and I just had wonderful meetings in the stadiums, all through south Texas.

I was really excited however when I heard about what's happening in your church because I had not seen a church, I'd not observed one that was really growing, let's say

really in the southeast of San Antonio and southwest of San Antonio, and I was thrilled and I had a wonderful time talking to you.

So I want you to just tell our viewers, because this is a fabulous, fabulous book, I want you to share this journey and what led you to give this dare, this challenge and how it came to pass and what you want our viewers to hear and people who read the book to get.

Bill: I really think everyone has some area of their life they want to change. I think most of us are sort of living two lives, the life we live on a daily basis and the life we're dreaming of living, that we feel like we just can't cross that chasm. Like when can I finally begin to see this happening in my life?

So I think that I used to believe for years that what was going to bring change in my life was that I needed to be inspired; I just need to be inspired to change. I finally realized that inspiration wasn't doing it, that when real change happened in my life -- I think most people would agree -- it's through desperation. It's actually when you get desperate enough, things get bad enough that now you're ready to really change.

So I think the one thing I would tell your viewers today that may surprise them is if they're in a real desperate situation, if they're really frustrated or very angry or frustrated that they're stuck and they get their emotions all wound up, that's actually the first step to change. You're already in the change process if you're mad or angry or depressed or frustrated because you can't really change unless your emotions get wound up enough to where you finally get to the point and say, "That's it! I can't do this anymore. Something has to give."

James: And you start looking for a way out. You start looking for help.

I think a lot of times people look to the wrong source for help. God says, "Lift up your eyes to the hills from which come your help." -- Not to some hill or someplace.

But how do we get the help? When you find that desperation... and we live in a day, I think, Betty, right now we're hearing from a lot of people who are really distressed about the economic situation of our country and our nation, our national leaders have made some decisions that have really helped us to get into a debt ditch but a lot of people find themselves in that. And then they find they're getting the repercussions of it and they're hurting.

So you're saying this comfort -- are you saying this pain, whatever pain a person is experiencing can actually be a friend?

Bill: It actually can be because what happens is you get frustrated enough to finally say, "I need to change."

Let's be honest, how many of us would even know who Christ was if it wasn't for the fact that our lives fell apart? That's how we came to Christ is our life got so bad that we said, "I need something beyond myself." So most of us, that's how we accepted Christ is through a broken relationship, a heartbreak, something happened to us and so we finally came to the conclusion that I need the Lord in my life. I need something greater than me. So that's how we began that relationship with Christ.

But I found in the same way, even among believers, that sometimes we actually begin to fall into this rut of thinking, "Well, if I just suck it up and be a martyr for Jesus and I'm just going to go one more year like this..."

It's like whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! The Bible talks about victory. It talks about overcoming. It talks about how we were more than conquerors. So why are we not seeing this in our daily life? So I think at some point you have to say, "Wait a minute, we believe this book but does it work?" And the answer is yes, it will work if you work it.

And so I think we have to have the personal responsibility, which is definitely something our country is not teaching by the policies and things we're doing right now, which is that the government is not going to change me or change our situation, I have to change me and with the power of God I can.

Betty: Well, that desperation, I feel like, can be a point of drawing us toward our relationship, a better relationship, a closer relationship with God, that pain that you're talking about. But then that desperation God can take that and let us know that we need to be desperate for him. And that desperate situation can become a place of peace and rest and knowing that we don't want to get out of his presence. I'm desperate to stay and live in his presence.

Bill: Absolutely! I think the pain will work for you rather than against you to draw you to the Lord and to draw you to the conclusion of saying, "Okay, I've got to make some changes and I've got to set an agenda that God has for me." "God, what is your agenda? What is your plan? Because what I'm doing, it's not working."

James: So when you tell somebody you dare them to change, how would they take that dare? How would they apply that if they would hear you say, "What do you mean, Bill? What do you mean, pastor? You dare me to change? What do you want me to do? Okay,

I've got a problem. I feel the pressure. Okay, I feel the pain, you want me to say I feel pain and I'm desperate. Now what do I do with it?"

Bill: It can be as simple as saying, "I'm tired of being out of shape and I need to lose weight." That's great but the vision isn't I want to lose weight, the vision is I'm going to have a vision for health. There is a big difference between I need to lose weight and I have a vision for health. There is a big difference between I need to pay off some debt and I have a vision for financial freedom.

I think God will give you a vision for what you can become, what you can do, what you can have, that God has for you in your life. I think in that vision you'll discover it's always going to be bigger than you can accomplish on your own. Because here's the thing I've learned about God. We keep saying, "Oh, God change me and then once you change me then I can do these great things." No, when you begin to do great things, the doing changes you.

Because see, people use people to get tasks done, God uses tasks to get people done. So he will give you a vision of what you can do and in the doing you'll be changed.

James: That's amazing because we're actually talking about... and as a matter of fact, I have a little Water for Life mug here -- we're talking about drilling water wells to give water to the thirsty and to those who have only contaminated water sources or minimal if any water around them that's safe or even accessible. And in doing that, I can't even describe the joy and the fullness of life that has come out of doing that.

But the neat thing is, our viewers have discovered that. We don't get -- hundreds of people call every day. We will pray with anywhere from 1200 to 2000 people a day. Every day! That's how many we'll pray with. They will say, "Thank you for sharing. Thank you for caring. Thank you for being --." We love to hear that.

But you know what the number one thank you we get? "Thank you for getting us involved in making a difference." In other words, making a difference in someone's life, meeting a need made a difference in my life, and I all of the sudden found the difference being made primarily in me, the joy of making a difference.

Is that on target with what you're talking about? -- Trying to encourage people to see.

Bill: You go on a mission trip to help change a life of a child; who gets changed? You do, just as much as the child does. So in other words, God is inviting us, as you say, into his rest. The Bible says that clearly.

But here's what's amazing. I found that God's rest involves work too. That God has a divine work and the difference is that when you're in rest with Christ what happens is that just like I talk about in the book with Gideon, is basically he begins to lean on the Lord and God allows him to do more than he could have ever done through Christ than he could ever do on his own.

So in fact, at one point in the book we talk about how you may be overqualified right now. So God will get you underqualified. He will allow things to be knocked down in your life to where you think, I could have accomplished that but now I can't. I had the money now I don't. I had the people now I don't. I had the confidence, now I don't.

God is looking, let me get a little more off of you. Let's take some of that confidence away, some of that money, some of those people to where now, if this happens, you know God did it. So in other words, God only uses underqualified people. He won't use overqualified people.

James: I think he's got a whole lot out there available.

[Laughter]

Look here, I am.

Bill: I'm telling you, God is just looking for someone who says, "Lord, I don't know how to do this. I don't have the skills, the abilities, the talent, the money, the people, the connections. I don't have any of that but I do have an available heart."

James: Do you know what I said to God when he told me he wanted me to preach? I said, "God, how will I live?" And I thought, man, preachers starve to death. How am I going to live? "God, what do I do?"

God said, "Where is your faith?" It was like he whispered to me, "Where is your faith?"

You know what I said? This underqualified guy, I said, "It's all in you." You know I meant it. And that's when I went forward and said, "I give my life to God."

I feel like that's what God is calling everyone, no matter where you are, no matter how bad you're hurt, no matter how underqualified you feel, no matter how desperate you are, no matter how deep the ditch that you were either thrown in or fell in or you dug and got

in it at your own terrible misdoings or misgivings, you're in it, and God says, "I'll lift you up."

You tell in the book, it's really, really great because he tells so many stories about how God led people to do what Bill, as a pastor, had challenged them to do and see. You tell a story about a seesaw. Why is that significant?

Bill: A seesaw is basically -- just imagine when you were a little kid and you get on a seesaw. And it is a lot of fun as long as the person across from you is smaller than you. Right? Or at least equal size, then you're having a good time; any time I can balance is a good time. But the moment the big kid gets on the other end you're not having fun anymore. Now they're controlling you.

Well, the pain in your life is represented by that kid and frankly, we all have a little debt, it's a little debt and "Oh, I can control it. I'm fine. I'm good." But when the debt gets a little bigger, eventually the debt gets so big like we're dealing with in our country to where there is going to be a day the debt is so large we can no longer control things, now the numbers take over.

Or maybe for you it's like, "Well, I drink a little bit but it is not that bad." But then you begin to drink a little more and a little more and then you realize that your drinking problem that was small has gotten bigger and eventually, you realize, I can't stop drinking. It's controlling me now. Now the seesaw on the other side, it's running my life.

So one of the ways you know it's time to change is when you stop and realize, I don't have control anymore in this area. I thought I could play with this sin, I could play with this temptation, and now it's grown and it's controlling me. And that's a dead giveaway it's time because if you don't change now -- the one thing I like to challenge people to do, in fact I talk about this in the book also right after that, I talk about if you don't change now, fast forward five years, if you change nothing, how bad is it going to be? Because it's still growing. And every day that you don't make the change, is a day you've lost control that much more.

Betty: Don't you think we're reluctant, a lot of times to change because it might take us out of our comfort zone? Our comfort zone that we've built ourselves, not realizing that if we will step out and allow God to begin those changes in us, oh, my, the things -- the plans he has for us. He's just waiting for us to make the choice, God change me.

Bill: Your ministry is so phenomenal. I just have to say that you are a legend to me, both of you, really -- are spiritual heroes to so many. I just have to tell you that the very nature

of your entire ministry is about breaking beyond the comfort zones. Everything you're about, how many ministries are built around water wells and helping those who cannot help themselves? Most people build a platform around themselves and you've built a platform around a work of Christ.

The great thing about that is that... what I would say to that, especially here in America, is that frankly, one of the greatest false gods that Christians are bowing to is comfort. We do what is comfortable. That's what such a great thing about what you're doing about we're saying, "God, I can live comfortably" -- but in the land of comfort, Christ is not there. The greatness of God is always on the other side of your discomfort. So most of the time the great call of God on our life is going in a direction that requires work.

James: I think if you follow God with your whole heart he will lead you into areas that will be so uncomfortable that you have to have the presence of the comforter in order to do it and be effective.

I have to tell you that I'm actually uncomfortable outside the perfect will of God. I have a comforter and a comfort in the Holy Spirit in doing the will of God. We go to the ends of the earth and we go to places where people have suffered, and we have seen and we've been so many places, Betty, where it was questionable whether or not we would get out alive. You've been where I was held captive or hostage with other missionaries for a period of time and you didn't know if we were coming out or not. We've been surrounded with guns and AK 47s. We've been in situations we've never even been able to report because we were concerned if we did show those situations it would actually put the missionaries in those areas in even greater danger.

But in those settings, in the will of God, we found that supernatural comfort, we found what the Lord invites us into, what I think Bill is daring us to find and this is the change where we move out of what we try to create as what ultimately would be a false sense of comfort into the real comfort of the Lord in the center of his will doing his will and making a difference. Those things you say, "I can't do. Well, I could never do that." No, you can't without him but in him you can.

And if you will really come to him, really come to the end of yourself, and see that all the things that have come at me, all the pressure, the pain, the things I don't understand, this really is an opportunity for me to get into the arms of someone who understands it all who can direct my steps and I pray that for you.

Father, everyone watching, I pray, dear God, they will hear your invitation to literally come out of that discomfort that can actually be the source of driving them to the comfort

and peace that only you can provide, the direction and the purpose and the provision. I pray, dear God, that they will receive that and then they'll begin to release that river of love and life toward others. In Jesus' name.

Would you just join Betty and me in saying thanks to Bill Cornelius?

Bill, thank you! Great book -- *I Dare You to Change!*

He is at Bay Area Fellowship in the Corpus Christi area. They've got a number of campuses and they're spreading all over south Texas with outreaches. You may not only want to be involved with him but say, "You know what? We want one in our area. We want to be connected in a way that is meaningful in our own community."

You know, Bill, you talked about what you've seen us do, and I was sitting here thinking, yes, we saw the need we couldn't possibly meet but we, the people together, we can meet it. I want you to listen to a need we can meet. This is not the story of wishful thinking that has no answer. This is not a cry. This is not the sound of false hope. It's reality. It's pain that we can address effectively with love. Listen.

Begin video clip:

Translator: My daughter died when she got an infection and diarrhea. The doctor said it was because of the contaminated water we were drinking. She was only eight months old.

We don't have any clean water here. We have to go to the river. We know it's dirty and bad for us but what else can we do? We don't have a choice.

I visit the cemetery to talk to my daughter and to take flowers to her grave. She would be eight years old now. I miss her so much. But what I can do? She isn't here anymore. There isn't anything I can do about it.

I worry about my son's future. We still have to use the contaminated water and sometimes he gets sick like my daughter did. I'm afraid of what might happen.

There's an expression in Spanish that says, "Hopes don't fill you up, but they keep you going." I'm hopeful that God will bring us some help and we can have clean water for my family and the community.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You see, we were translating her story from Spanish so you could hear it, and she lost that little baby that would now be eight because of contaminated water.

You could just see, even with the pain, I could see love. I could see a sweetness in that mother's face, an appreciation for her little boy that she prays will not get sick.

Betty, we've been all over that part of Central America and the impoverished nations and we've knelt by the dirty contaminated rivers and we've watched the little families where they would dig down and try to dig a pit and get some clean water thinking -- with animals in the river and filth -- that maybe by digging in the sand beside the river they might get clean water but they didn't. We saw the death cycle.

Betty: We have. And this precious mother, her heart's broken over the loss of her little girl by a simple problem and a simple solution, the dirty water, but we can make the difference and bring the solution with the clean water. This mother can't change what happened to her daughter but she has a son she cares about, and there's just so many more just like them. These mothers are desperate to know how they can help their children. We have the answer. We can offer hope as she spoke about; hope that her children might have an opportunity to grow up healthy.

James: I heard that mother's cry. It was one voice, to me, representing many mothers and many needs. You heard one cry and I really believe the answer to that one cry is one person who will say, "I will meet that need." And another person say, "I will meet another, and another, and another."

When we join together, we become together the full expression of the body of Christ, the family of faith. We really, with no exaggeration, extend the hands of a loving God to a dying world desperate for that love. We express freely the love of God and we express it by giving -- by giving the love and the life; not just in word, but in deed, in action.

I'm asking you to do something right now. Please, listen to me. I'm asking you to move quickly and get a bankcard and use it the way you're supposed to use it, like a check and call the number and give the largest gift you can.

Think about this, \$48 will give ten people water the rest of their life; \$144, 30 people. The wells average \$4800. I know I'm not exaggerating when I say this. Some of you, perhaps you, could give a well. Would you do it? It may be one of the greatest joyful experiences you'll ever have, and that gift will keep giving from now on. It is a gift that just keeps

giving, and it will be the answer to so many mothers' prayers and give life to children. Would you do that?

If you want to write a check, make it to *LIFE*. You can go to *LifeToday.org* and make the gift online. Do that! But would you do it today?

By the way, don't think if I can't give \$4800, maybe you could give \$1200 and pray three join you or \$2400 and pray another person joins you, there is a level at which you can participate. But don't think if \$48, that's not much. Wait a minute, to ten people, to ten mothers for their children, it means so much!

Father, I pray every person watching will make the gift you put on their heart.

Would you dial that number? Would you make that love gift? Please do it.

We have some beautiful gifts to send you that will be a tremendous blessing. We love to bless you as you bless others. Thank you for it!

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy, polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is that there is a solution -- Mission: Water for Life is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. The suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today we will begin drilling 350 new water wells for remote villages in 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people! A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10 people! \$72 will reach 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh clean disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift be sure to request, *Believe This Not That* a brand-new topical Bible promise book that will encourage you in every area of life.

With your gift of \$100 or more you may request our newly released *Water for Life* mug set, a daily reminder of the clean water you make possible to those who thirst.

Also please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And be sure to request the 2012 commemorative bronze sculpture, "The Lamb and the Lion."

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I do want to remind you that we are sending to all of you for your gift, *Believe This Not That*; beautiful biblical answers to the questions and challenges that you ask, the Water for Life coffee mugs.

And the beautiful "Lamb and Lion" bronze, it's absolutely awesome, to those of you who will give toward that well, a gift of \$1200 or more or give a well.

And today, if you'd like to have it, we would be glad to send you Bill Cornelius's book, *I Dare You to Change!* I think you'll find it very relevant and very, very meaningful.

Join Betty and me again in saying thanks to Bill Cornelius.

Bill, thank you so much! We really appreciate you! Bless your church, bless your family, all your staff.

Bless you, south Texas! Corpus Christi! God bless you! Thank all of you for watching. Thanks for helping us share Water for Life.

Announcer: Faith, family, and freedom are under attack. James Robison and Jay Richards encourage a divided America to stand together before it's too late. *Indivisible* – coming soon to online and retail bookstores.

>> And the bottom line is it is an effort to be spiritual without God.

Announcer: Next week, Ravi Zacharias helps us rediscover God's truth.