

Week 31

7/24/12

Randy: Hi, I'm Randy Robison. This is my wife, Debbie. My parents are off today taking a little break.

We appreciate you watching. We have a wonderful guest today, Kasey Van Norman is the author of the book, *Named by God*, and really someone who's been through some amazing things in her life and has just an amazing testimony. That's why we've asked her -- would you welcome Kasey to *LIFE Today*?

Kasey: Thank you. Thank you so much! Thank you.

Randy: Thank you for being here!

Kasey: It's an honor! It's an honor.

Randy: We need to mention up top because we probably won't talk about it a whole lot in today's program but your hair is not normally this short.

Kasey: It's not? No, it's not.

Randy: The book photo is not.

Kasey: No, it's not. I just finished my fourth round of chemotherapy two months ago. Diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma about six months ago, been through some chemotherapy treatments. And by the grace and mercy of God, I'm in full remission -- full remission.

Randy: Good news!

Kasey: So yes! Yes! Absolutely! Lots of prayer.

Randy: But before getting to this latest struggle, you've had a few others. I noticed your wrist has a tattoo. It looks like a bracelet almost at first glance but it is a tattoo and it says...

Kasey: It says "Redeemed."

Randy: What led you to put the word redeemed on your wrist?

Kasey: Well, I tell you, I did not start off with any desire to tell my story in a public way on a platform. I got the word redeemed because I needed to be reminded of that more than any other word in my life.

Randy: Why?

Kasey: Because I have spent my life as a Christian but as one easily believing in God but not believing God. It was very easy for me to believe in God because I grew up in a Christian environment, a Christian home. In fact, I could say I was practically born into the church nursery. There's some perks to being born to what would be considered the Bible belt of the world, which is a small town in east Texas. We have a church on every corner. It is very popular to be a Christian; it is cool to be a Christian.

But where that can lead to trouble is getting older and really having that gut check, that salvation check and saying, did I ever really get the relationship aspect of that? Because it is very easy to go through the motions of going to church, and we did that. And I did have a genuine salvation experience at the age of nine; I know that because it had nothing to do with me. I had a draw to Jesus. I was just drawn to who he was and his character and the forgiveness. I knew I needed to be forgiven. I knew I needed a savior; there was no doubt about that. So I accepted the Lord at the age of nine.

But very soon after, my family system really started to be undone and to be frayed around the edges. I watched my parents go through a really messy divorce at the age of 13. And being the oldest sibling, I took on that protector role for my younger two siblings. I didn't want them to see all the things that I thought I was seeing way too early in life. It was a difficult scenario in that my parents became two very different people overnight. We didn't really talk about it. We didn't communicate so there was a lot of room left to believe that it was your fault, that this happened because of you and there was no one telling you anything differently.

So from the age of 13 to 15, I really just began to doubt God. I believe in God, I go to church every Sunday, I go through the motions but I'm really struggling, God, what do you say about me. Why is all this happening? If this is who you are and that you want the best for us and you want good things for us and if we just live this way, if we just live the right way and go to church and read our Bibles and hang out with Christian people and look the part, then you're going to bless us, right? -- And to see that begin to be challenged in my life.

I really hung on there for a good two years as a -- your critical years where you're forming your self concept, the ages of 13 to 15. And while all my friends were going out and having their first dates and their first kisses and everything, I was babysitting or taking care of my youngest -- my sister is 10 years younger than me.

Randy: At 15, something triggered a lot of things though.

Kasey: Yeah, I had already developed this very deep-seeded wounding of feeling rejected, feeling unworthy, insecurity because I grew up in a fatherless home. My dad was just nonexistent in our home. When we were around each other it was just fighting and arguing and alcohol. So I really had that desire to want -- by a man, to want to be told that I was of value and worth and love.

All women, we're just born with that desire. But at 15, my very first boyfriend, it was a date rape situation. It was very abusive. To have that as your first encounter with a boy when you've so longed -- you've watched all your friends go on the dates to the movies and hold hands and have kisses and this is the first thing I experienced. It really just stripped me of all that I had been holding onto. I'd been holding onto something, a piece of something, believing God. And then to have that happen...

Randy: So how do you respond to that?

Kasey: Unfortunately, I just rebelled. I just got to a place where I said, you know what, God? You're going to let this happen to me?

Randy: You blamed God for letting that happen.

Kasey: I really did. I didn't know any better. I didn't have anybody in my life speaking truth and encouragement and going through that and saying, "Kasey, let's talk about why this happened." I had the True Love Waits ring on. I was saving myself and then this happened.

Debbie: What was your turning moment? What turned it around for you?

Kasey: Well, my teenage years were really just a blur of rebellion. I say that I had this wound that was open and bleeding and I just continued to tear it apart. I just continued by doing things -- I had addictive behaviors.

As anything that we do, we're searching for that Band-Aid fix. We're searching for anything to ease the pain, for anything to comfort us in that place of hurting. So I lashed out and I had an eating disorder that hospitalized me. I would cut -- cut myself because the cutting allowed you a sense of power in a way when you felt completely powerless. You could feel pain.

I was sexually promiscuous as a teenager; all the while knowing I was a believer because I was disgusted by that place, by that sin. I would be cutting my arm and just begging God to take it away. I would leave every encounter with a guy just in sobs, just broken, knowing the spirit was convicting me of that sin.

Then at the age of 18, I did repent of those sins. This is a cliché to have your come-to-Jesus moment happen at church camp but it happened at church camp on a mountaintop, my mountaintop moment -- in Glorieta, New Mexico. I'll never forget it because my heart was just broken for my sin. God will not allow his children to sin successfully. He will break us at some point if we do not come -- in his patience he allows us to come to repentance.

Randy: Do you think he just was wanting you to stop sinning?

Kasey: I think he was just wanting me to come to him. Absolutely, did he want me to stop sinning but why? Because it was what was best for me. Because it would make me more like his son. Because he had a divine purpose for my life that I had not disqualified myself from. Nothing that I could do or would do would ever disqualify me from this purpose that he had laid out.

Randy: What about all the hurts and things, the insecurities? Did you deal with all that?

Kasey: I wish that I could say that I gave it all over on that mountaintop. While I gave him many things, I surrendered the behaviors, there was one thing I had not surrendered and that was the wound, that was the original affliction and wounding in my heart deep embedded in insecurity.

God in his mercy and grace, he allowed me this season of really refreshing me, of drawing me back to him, reminding me of who he was and who I was in him. He did that through me meeting my husband who was the man I thought I would never receive. He was pure and had saved himself for marriage and was just a godly, godly man; my husband, Justin. He did that by blessing me with two children, two healthy

children, my Emma Grace and my Lake. I wish that I could say that I had given all of that over to him but I kept that wounding for myself. I kept that place thinking that I could deal with it. I could deal with it.

Randy: How did that resurface?

Kasey: Well, it resurfaced in my marriage. I struggled with depression after my daughter was born.

I was the girl that said postpartum depression was a myth and that it was just a crutch that us moms used to wear flannel pajamas and eat bonbons and watch Oprah. But when you're in the midst of it, it is the real deal, and I was definitely on the manic side. I couldn't sleep. I was very anxious all the time about everything -- worried about everything. So I see myself turning into a person that I'm not.

My husband then not knowing how to respond to this, I'm not communicating, he shuts down, we both start to shut down, which many parents do with their first child. That's a big transition; you're kind of just getting by -- every day you're just getting by. In our marriage, it wasn't that we didn't love each other it is just that we didn't like each other very much. When you stop caring and you stop dating and you stop pursuing one another, then what happened in our marriage is inevitable in any marriage, and I turned to another man outside of my marriage to again try to be that Band-Aid fix, feed that wounding, that insecurity, that unworthiness. Three years in and out of this relationship outside of my marriage --

Randy: And your husband had no idea?

Kasey: No idea -- no idea.

The amazing, amazing gracious thing about this entire situation is my husband; in that the moment that this secret was brought to light, he was the picture of Jesus Christ. He was forgiving; he'll tell you that the spirit came upon him because he didn't know what he was saying as he was saying it. That he was just saying, "I forgive you. I love you. I forgive you. I love you."

The hurt and the betrayal, it was the hardest day of my life. Cancer is nothing to coming into something like this but then to see Jesus in that. My husband then even went a step further and he acknowledged the place that he had the role that he had in this happening, that he had stopped caring. And that he had stopped protecting me

and taking care of me. So to see him not only forgive me but to forgive the other man, went to his home and forgave him to his face that same day. Just incredible.

Immediately, I have a weight lifted off. It's like coming up out of a coma.

That's what I want to be clear about as Christians, we tend to look at other people who are struggling with these quote unquote "big sins" like adultery or theft or murder, whatever -- these big sins and we tend to push that to the side in another category. I think we think that they're having fun in those situations, that they're somehow having a good time.

What was really happening is I was decaying on the inside. I was running fever and I was sick and I had dropped so much weight and my body was deteriorating in the sin. It was not meant for that any longer so it just couldn't hold it up. I just cried out to God, please take my life because I can't carry this anymore. That day I prayed that prayer, cried out to him at 8:30 a.m. and at 12:30 p.m. that same day the sin came to light. It was just God's mercy and his bringing me back to him and saying, "Look, I'm not done with you."

Unfortunately, the gossip began then. My husband and I are experiencing this rejuvenation in our marriage. We're experiencing this trust building again where this -- we're knowing each other again for the first time and things are so good for us but everybody else, different story. So these lies begin, these rumors begin and the gossip begins and it's just crushing to me as one that is very social and outgoing and loves people, and then to go to the grocery store and someone who was your friend is apparently no longer your friend, and go to church and be rejected by your church. It is just -- it was more than I thought I could take.

Randy: In fairness, not just the lies and the gossip, which no doubt happened but the truth was out there. How did you get up in the morning knowing that everybody knows the truth much less the other stuff?

Kasey: It was just God's strength that I got up because there was nothing left in me. I had no desire to get up. And three weeks after the light -- the secret came to light, I attempted to take my life because that --.

In the moment, you say that taking your life is the most selfish thing and it is, but for the person considering it, it's the least selfish thing. For the person considering it, to be the truth, to be the person that you never thought you would be, that you always said

you would never do that -- and then for the rumor to be true. It just breaks you for everything that you are and Satan is there. He wants you to believe.

Randy: On the one hand you're saying here's my husband forgiving me and here's this weight lifted off of my life. How does it spiral downhill from there?

Kasey: Because if I'm looking to my husband to again fill that gap in his forgiveness, it's still not going to work, is it? Because he is flesh. So the big change for me, I was so broken, I mean I say I was a dead woman. It was just by the grace of God that I did not die that day, that I lived and he pulled me up. There was nothing else responsible, not my husband's forgiveness, not a friendship, not my church, nothing else responsible. I was dead and he brought me up to life. And he spoke that truth over me.

That's where this book came from. That next three months I call my summer of sanctification because I just secluded myself to my home. I did nothing -- I saw no one -- did not talk on the phone, no internet, no social media, nothing; I cut down all connection with the outside world just so I could experience God again and come back to him.

Randy: To heal finally.

Kasey: To heal. The big redemption is that I learned that just surrender is not enough - just redemption is not enough. But when you put those two things together, you talk about abundant living, you talk about freedom. When you can surrender and look, I was surrendering the behaviors but those were just symptoms of the infection -- that was just a symptom. Everything we do is a symptom of something deeper. I had to surrender that place of bitterness, that place of anger, that place of resentment, of needing to be filled, that insecurity. Once I could surrender that and then go a step further and start to believe, not these other people, not my community, not the church necessarily, but what does God say about me? That's redemption.

Randy: That's the names that you talk about in *Named by God*. I want to thank you for being here and sharing so openly and candidly.

Kasey: Thank you for having me.

Randy: It is important though that people see where you've been and where God has taken you because so many people are in some stage of that right now. If you want to read Kasey's full story, it is available and we are giving this book to you with your gift towards *Mission: Water for Life*. I really know -- it's going to bless you or somebody

perhaps that you know but at the same time, when you support our outreach, you are going to bless someone else. Real quickly, I want to take you half way around the world so that you can see where I went as we reach out and share water with people around the world.

On the mission field:

Randy: I want to look at this water. Good Lord! Ah! It smells horrible. It smells worse than it looks! But this is what they drink because this is all they have to drink. This is not water that you can live from. This is water that will kill you.

I have seen diseases, I have seen children with sores and kids with diarrhea, I've seen graves. I've sat with a mother while she wept over her children that she lost because of this contaminated water. This is death water and it's killing their children. I would never make a child drink this.

But these children have no choice. It is this or nothing and some of them don't know that it will kill them. It's not enough to tell them, "Don't drink the water." We have to say, "Here's water you can drink." Jesus calls himself "living water" because he brings life. We are his hands and his feet. Help us demonstrate the gospel as we bring them Water for Life.

End of clip

In the studio:

Randy: You know there's not much better in this world than to see a child smile? And when you know that they're smiling because you join with us in *Mission: Water For Life* and made that fresh clean drinking water possible, I tell you what, that's a feeling -- there is not much better in this world that's better than that. That's the invitation I want to extend to you right now. Join with us on *Mission: Water for Life*. You can impact a life for their lifetime. It's a gift that keeps on giving.

The average well is \$4800 and that reaches an average of 1,000 people. I know in that village I was in, there were more than 1,000 in that area that would come to that well to get the clean drinking water but on average, that's what it does. So your gift of \$4800 will reach 1,000 people. You will give them clean drinking water. What a huge thing! You will eradicate sickness and you will show them the love of Jesus Christ.

Wherever we go, we're not shy about the fact that we are there representing Jesus Christ. We are his hands, we are his feet; that's what the Bible tells us.

I want you to do that right now. If you can give \$1200, we'll send you "The Lion and the Lamb" bronze that will serve as a reminder of your gift and I hope you'll put it somewhere that you can see it and you'll remember the smile that you saw because you're putting smiles on other children's faces.

Some of you, that's a lot of money, I understand. I want you to know that there's not a gift that's too big but there's not a gift that's too small. \$48 will give water to 10 people. How simple is that? It is simple and yet the impact is profound, and so long -- it just keeps on giving.

That's the thing that just astounds me is how a simple act of drilling a water well has such incredible impact for years and generations. Will you join us right now? Will you go to the phone? Call us and make the best gift you can. Really, it's all about obeying God's great commission to go out and reach others. So don't get hung up on what you can or can't give. Just obey God and join with us in this great mission.

Go online, there's a web site right there. That's how I give. Do what you can. If we will all join together, we will reach our goal, hundreds of wells in so many countries impacting so many lives but we can't do it without you. Join us now -- join us in *Mission: Water for Life* and thank you as you give.

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 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. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything! With your gift today, we can establish and drill 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 impact 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 *Arise*, a beautiful new daily devotional featuring words of encouragement from inspiring women who have shared their faith on *LIFE*

Today. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the *Arise* audio visual devotional featuring 40 days of inspiration from *LIFE Today's* favorite women guests.

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 Lion and the Lamb."

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

End of clip

On the mission field:

James: I'm kneeling down here by what is a common water source for little village areas. This river meanders through this part of Central America. It's the water source. It's contaminated with animal waste. It's contaminated with human waste because they don't have any sewage, they have no running water. So they go to the bathroom out here in the bush and the brush, and then it washes here. And people get all kinds of intestinal diseases.

And clean water, fresh water, that's the answer. This is what they have now making them sick, killing a lot of them very young. But we can give them a freshwater well. You may be able to give one or give toward it or give a cup of water that adds up and becomes a well of water but we need everyone's help. You make a life-giving call today please.

In the studio:

Randy: Thank you so much for helping with *Mission: Water for Life* and do ask for Kasey's book. It's going to bless you. And visit her web site, KaseyVanNorman.com. You can find out about her and you can even ask her to come speak to your women's group or church. I'm sure she would be a great blessing to you.

Thanks again for sharing your story.

Would you thank Kasey for being here on *LIFE Today*?

Thank you so much!

Announcer: Faith, family, and freedom are under attack. As America faces battles within, many wonder where to turn. In their new book, James Robison and Jay Richards call us to stand together before it's too late as one nation truly under God. *Indivisible* -- The New York Times bestseller now available in paperback and online and retail bookstores.

Beth: But God's plan is always to heal. You've not been through the one thing that Jesus Christ cannot heal.

Announcer: Overcoming family calamity -- tomorrow!