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Week 24: Medical Cure Partnership

James and Betty Robison

Cheryl Martin

James: We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Cheryl Martin with us. I'm looking at the cover of the book and I want you to just really consider this.

Betty, one of the things that I've said to people over and over is a passage that Paul makes pretty clear is everything that is important but we're not to be comparing ourselves with one another or measuring ourselves by one another. Here's what happens, and become void of understanding, lacking wisdom. Once we begin to measure ourselves by one another, and I think this happens even in the way people dress, the way they try to look or carry themselves or their mannerisms. You can actually see people many times coming from various church groups and you can say there's some Pentecostals, there's some Charismatics. There's Church of Christ over there. Yeah, there's a Baptist -- that's a Baptist. Really, it's no joke.

We have a tendency too often and you can know this is not really truly God-like in the truest fashion. When we become shaped in the image of one another rather than the image of Christ, the more like kind we're going to become and the less Christ-like we're going to be. We begin to look like one another. But the God of creative genius loves diversity. And if he has no two snowflakes the same, no two fingerprints the same, then how much he must love diversity, and we've got to be careful that we don't just become like one another.

I think God has given Cheryl a tremendous insight here. As a matter of fact, I'm going to have her cover the three C's, like the letter "C" but this is really seeing, if you see what she shares. Cheryl, we're just really glad to have you here with us. We welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

Cheryl: Thank you. Thanks so much.

James: You hosted a program on B.E.T. network for a long time and you've got a radio program now, weekly; what's it called?

Cheryl: *Excellent Living* -- excellent living is doing life God's way because it is the best way.

James: It is absolutely the best way. Does it air the same day nationwide?

Cheryl: It typically runs on the weekend either a Saturday or Sunday, half hour program.

James: Do you interview people or do you just teach?

Cheryl: I teach and interview. So I get a chance to do two things that I love.

James: I'm glad you do. I really want you to cover some ground here because you had an experience in your life as a Christian that I think you really thought you might as well throw in the towel, you just kind of finish because you had a tragic event that we understand -- it is in fact tragic. How the church often responds to it is also perhaps even more tragic and leads people into the tragic consequences of something that happened is devastating as an automobile accident and yet people don't seem to know how to handle it. Tell us about it.

Cheryl: Well, I had accepted Christ as a child and more than anything else always wanted to live a life pleasing to God. And the dream of almost every young girl is to be married and so I was determined to wait for God's best for me or what I thought to be God's best. So I got married and was married for only three years, and my husband decided to walk away from the relationship. And no amount of praying and seeking God and believing God and fasting and praying changed that.

That was probably, I've had a number of devastating experiences in my life, that had to be the most devastating. Why? Because I accepted Christ as a child and my attitude at that time was this happens to other people. This doesn't happen to people who know God like I know God. This happens to all these other people. Through this experience, as painful as it was, God was always there with me. That's why I would not trade an intimate relationship with God for anything else in the world because he promises to go with us.

I realized that my situation may have caught me by surprise but it did not catch God by surprise. It was through that experience that God revealed to me one of the blockers that will block our distinction and it is a big view of ourselves, pride -- spiritual pride. I did not realize until I went through that experience, until God told me, "Forget about him" because we love to blame someone. And he said, "There are some things that I want to pull out of you that I can't really use you the way that I want to use you because there is some spiritual pride there."

My father used to say, "Some people are proud and don't know it."

I didn't realize because, James, I had actually in my heart had judged other believers.

James: Who had had a divorce?

Cheryl: Yes! Because when you're brought up in an environment that says God hates divorce, divorce is a sin, I judged people unfairly without knowing all the facts. So as soon as this happened to me, I was consumed with other Christians and Satan would bombard my mind and say, "You had a testimony in Houston," I grew up in Houston, "You went to school in the Chicago area, all these people have known about your walk with the Lord and now look at what has happened."

I was more traumatized about that but I also began to say there is something wrong if I'm more concerned about what believers are going to say about my situation than people who don't know God.

But I came face to face with the fact that I had judged people without knowing all the facts because it never occurred to me that if someone decides they no longer want to be in a relationship there's nothing you can do about it. Just like you may want to marry someone but if they don't want to marry you, you're not getting married.

James: Well, it is a tragedy. I actually do see and I kind of referenced it in the open that when a person has a divorce it is like a catastrophic collision. There are many things that might have caused it. Could have been negligence on both parties part, but it could just be something that makes no sense but nevertheless there is a crisis.

Cheryl: Well, God did a wonderful thing because even before it happened, I began to pray a prayer that I'd never prayed and it was this -- and I didn't understand why I was praying this prayer: Lord, let me build my house upon a rock so when the storms of life come I will still be standing. I would pray that repeatedly. God, all the years that I've known you, I've never prayed this prayer like this.

So I can say that in the midst of that greatest storm I also sensed the presence of the Lord in a way that I never experienced before and I can say that my faith did not fail. That's why it is so important for us to have that anchor in Christ. I would say that all of us can fill in the blank. It may not be divorce, it can be a wayward child, it can be a terminal illness, it can be rejection, a loss of a job but the important thing is to know, whatever we're going through will not block the distinction and the plan that God had for our lives.

James: You used the three C's. I talked about the letter C's in an outline and I know you've got it in the subheading here, trading comparison and competition for freedom and fulfillment. Boy,

it is for freedom that Christ made us free -- that's big to Christ. Should be big to all of us and it should be precious to all of us -- personal freedom, our national freedom -- freedom should be a big issue. It was to God. It was when he led his people out of bondage. He's tried to lead all of us out of bondage. Christ is the one that does it.

But you used these C's. Did you mind going over those because you cover them so effectively in the book?

Cheryl: I consider blockers those three C's of comparison, competition, and coveting. And those three C's can lead to three D's: Depression, discouragement, and discontentment -- and they can be deadly. I see this as a big issue especially in our society today and it's actually fueled even more so with social media. You know why? Because we can look vicariously at someone else's life that looks perfect. We can check out their Facebook posts, their Twitter posts, their Instagram pictures, and people put only the wonderful things that are happening in their lives.

James: And knowing some people, and you know their Facebook, it is all totally deceptive, and it is actually like the great cover-up. And it is sad that you're trying to present something, an image that is simply not so.

I wish those words could be convicting. I wish that for some of you who are trying to cover up the lack of spiritual reality and death and all rightness that you're trying to hide that by making it appear to be something that it is simply not.

Betty: A lot of times, I think too, when you talked about pride awhile ago, I think a lot of times because I did this, because I felt insecure, I felt insignificant, so I wanted to be the good little church girl. I wanted to do everything right that I thought every church member was supposed to do, be there, be present all the time and just try and walk the straight and narrow road.

But inside there were some things I knew that I was hiding that I thought if people saw those characteristics, they wouldn't like me. So therefore I let pride come in. And when pride comes in, you also get an unteachable spirit.

Cheryl: That's right.

Betty: And it can be devastating.

James: You try to live up to the expectations of other people and you're going to be, of all people, yourself be disappointed and ultimately disappoint others. Tell us how you expand on those three C's.

Cheryl: Well, what I talk about is when you look at comparison, and I think a great example of this in the Bible is the story of Cain and Abel. If you don't deal up front with the comparison that God did not accept his gift, not because he had a problem with what he brought, it was not his best. God even said to him, "If you do your best, will I not accept you?"

So we have to be very careful about comparing, competing and coveting because it can come out in our words. I've seen this especially with women. If we are catty or critical or demeaning of another woman even within the body of Christ, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Is the real issue, I'm jealous of you. I compare myself with you and I come up short. One of the things that I say is someone else's greatness can take nothing from your distinction.

When we understand that each one of us have a distinction, and I think a perfect example of this and I have read this passage over and over. John's disciple came to him and I think he wanted to get something started. He said, "You know the one that you baptized? Well, everyone is leaving you and going to him."

And I love John's response. He said, "God appoints every man's work. He must be greater. I must become less. I am the usher, he is the bridegroom."

So the wonderful thing is when we understand what God has called us to do, I can applaud if God has given you a more effective ministry, a larger church; if you are smarter, prettier, younger. When I understand my role, John knew who he was and knew who he wasn't. And when we spend time focusing on God, what have you called me to do? And if I stay in that lane, not trying to take your exit because it won't get me to my destination or aim at the bull's-eye on your board, John was very clear about what God had called him to do. He said, "I'm not even worthy to be called his servant, to unlatch his sandals." He was secure.

And when we acknowledge that there's a little twinge, whenever I've ever had a little twinge of competition, I immediately take it to the Lord. We can tell when another woman comes in the room and all of the sudden we feel a little insecure as you talked about, I take it to God. But I also pray. I pray for those who do what I do and they do it better than I do.

James: I do too. I praise God for them.

Cheryl: And I praise God for them. Because again, what God has called them to do takes nothing from the distinction he's given me.

James: So you're trying to pass this message on and do you find when people receive it they do find freedom and fulfillment?

Cheryl: Oh, yes. I've gotten great response already because I believe there are a lot of women especially dealing with these issues of what is my distinction and they keep rewinding the tape of how they have allowed someone else to define them. They look at a sister or brother who is smarter, who is prettier; how do I deal with that?

One example that comes to me a lot, almost every time I go in the store and I'm in the fruit, in the produce section, I look at the different fruit and what I have found is I don't find that raspberries compare themselves with watermelons. They're not sitting there thinking if only I were bigger I would be better. If I saw a raspberry as big as a watermelon I wouldn't eat it.

[Laughter]

There's something wrong with it. Each fruit is content to be what it is. And what makes fruit good is when it is succulent, when it is ripe. So a banana is yellow. Apples come in different colors. Strawberries -- but they're not comparing themselves. A watermelon is just big, that's all. It doesn't mean it is better.

So why are people competing in the body of Christ bragging about how large their church is. My heart goes out so many times to pastors of smaller congregations. My father who pastored a small church said, "You know what? I can handle just a few members." He never aimed -- he knew what he could handle. So it doesn't make one greater because he has a mega church.

James: Because even the little church might be in God's eyes the real mega church. I think this is just so important. You really cover the bases here, *Distinctly You: Understanding the uniqueness of your design*. God didn't make a mistake! He knew exactly what he was doing. I really recommend that you get the book. You can go online and get it.

Cheryl, I'll tell you what we're going to do. We have Beth Moore's book here that she actually published this with us here at *LIFE Today* and *LIFE Outreach*, *Blessed Mornings and Restful Nights*. We're sending this to any of you who will do something very special. As a matter of fact, I think your heart is going to leap to do it. Crippled children, many of them have clubbed feet, twisted feet and they cannot walk. Many of them spend their life crippled when a very simple correction would change their whole world. So we're actually doing this. This again, you, the viewer seeing through the eyes of God, see a need and say, "Let's meet it." You're going to see we do that.

We're giving this book to those of you who simply become an answer to the prayer we're going to show you that is very important. But if you'd also like to have this book, we'd send it to say thanks because we want to be a blessing to you.

Cheryl, you're going to enjoy looking in. Sheila Walsh is with us. She's been pretty good television host over the years and Billy Graham's soloist and one of the leaders of the Women of Faith movement, and she is with us now full-time. Sheila has just made her first trip to the mission fields with the *LIFE* mission team. We're going to see Sheila and we're going to see what I just referenced, how we can be the miracle someone desperately needs. Watch.

On the mission field

Sheila: This is Dariel. He's a six-year-old boy who didn't get help when he was a baby but it's not too late for him. At the moment, life's a little difficult for Dariel. He can't play baseball with the other boys. He can't play soccer. When I asked him what he gets to do it's kind of reduced to playing little games on somebody's phone. Perhaps that's because nobody laughs at him then and nobody points out what's different about his feet.

We have seen what the future looks like for a boy like Dariel. It will be very hard for him to get a job. Hard for him to get married, to make a life because so many people think there must be something really wrong with you if there is something like this wrong with your feet.

It reminded me of the story -- remember the story of when Jesus is someone's house and he's teaching? Four guys have a friend who needs Jesus' help but he can't get there by himself. Do you remember what they did? They put him on a pallet and they literally went up on the roof and cut a hole in the roof and lowered their friend to the feet of Jesus. That's what we want to do. Not just for Dariel but for thousands of children around the world. We want to pick them up and we want to lay them at the feet of Jesus.

The amazing thing is that not only are we going to bring healing to his legs, we want to bring the hope of Jesus Christ to his heart. We want this boy to know God loves you so much he's not going to leave you like this. Would you help us?

End of clip

In the studio

James: How do you feel when you see that, honey?

Betty: To me, that's really big and it's exciting because we had the opportunity to make such a big difference in these children's lives; to know that they would be able to walk some day normally and to play and to have fun and to grow up strong and be healthy. It would make such a difference for them.

I'm just right there with this. I want to help. I hope your hearts were touched and you want to help too. Help a child to be able to walk.

James: We put braces on our first child, our daughter's feet because they were toed in when she would trip. They were big heavy braces. This is just a tiny little brace and this one is in the extreme corrective position when they have turned from in to the final stage of correcting a child.

When you get a child and they're very young as a little infant, very easy to reshape the bones in the feet and get them going right. We can give two of the braces necessary for the children for \$34, four of them for \$68, and six of them for just over \$102. I'm just really wondering if every one of you watching wouldn't say, "I want to do that."

Let me tell you what we're going to do too. We're going to do 400 surgeries. And we're going to do these along with the braces for the children, whatever size they need, whatever age they are, to correct things.

What we're doing is, this is a new outreach. Betty, we need an outpouring of love. I'm always so comfortable when I can say, if you could provide two children a future to walk normally for \$34? Would that be a good investment? Would you possibly be able to help four or six of them? Just ask the Lord.

We have some gifts to send you to help you grow in your spiritual life. But you're actually going to put someone on their feet and like Sheila Walsh so beautifully said, because we do it with an overflow of the love of God, we point them to the source of that love and the way to that love, the way to the father is through Jesus. "No one comes to the father," he said, "but by me." Jesus said, "If you see me, you've seen the father." When they see his body, believers, Christians behaving in harmony with the heart of the father, they see the father -- his heart, his love.

So when you're giving children an opportunity to walk straight, you're giving them an opportunity to come to know how to really walk straight on the straight and narrow and the foundation that withstands the storms that are sure to come.

I know you want to do that. Here's what I'm asking you to do. Go online, *LIFE Today*, dial that number, whichever way you want to go, take your bankcard and use it like a check and you just use that check, that plastic check to be someone's miracle. Put them on their feet. Correct that deformity. Love never fails. Please make that special gift right now. Thank you so much for doing it!

Begin video clip

Announcer: Children born with birth defects in underdeveloped nations are often overlooked, uncared for, and even abandoned. For tens of thousands every year born with a condition known as clubfoot, their deformity leads to a struggle to just survive. The good news is there is a simple and life-changing solution. This summer with your support, *LIFE Outreach* will provide 10,000 children with corrective braces that will give them a chance to walk like any normal child.

With the cost of \$17 per brace your gift of \$34 will help provide two children with corrective braces, \$68 will provide for four children, and \$102 will help give six children braces and the opportunity to walk. And for children with a much more severe need gifts of \$400, \$800, or even \$1200 will help provide life-changing corrective surgery for one, two, or three children in need.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you Beth Moore's devotional, *Blessed Mornings and Restful Nights*. With your gift of \$102 or more to provide six children with corrective braces you'll also receive the journal edition N.I.V. Bible.

Finally with your gift of \$1200 or more, you may receive "Majesty," our 2016 commemorative bronze sculpture. This summer join with us to give children hope for a future. Let's give them a chance to walk.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I think you're excited. I hope if you get on the phone you'll get a busy -- so many other people want to help. But you be determined you get through. Okay? We're going to be sending you Beth Moore's book. If you'd like to have Cheryl's book, *Distinctly You*, I think it will be a real blessing.

I want to say one other thing to you. These surgeries, they're so important, they're an average of \$400, \$800 two surgeries, \$1200 three. I believe there are some of you that can do that. This is serious. This is more than the braces. This is expensive. But let me tell you, if you did it here, off the charts. These doctors are mission-called doctors. They give their time. But we have to cover the basic costs.

So could you help us provide a surgery or maybe several of them? We have a beautiful bronze, "Majesty" to send you. Just praise God for his majesty and his majestic creative power. You're actually being a part of that creative genius to correct something that needs correction. Thank you for doing it. Cheryl, thank you for sharing with us and just bless you and your radio outreach and all that you do when you go around speaking. A web site if people want to know how to get a hold of you?

Cheryl: CherylMartin.org.

James: That's pretty simple! Thank all of you for watching. I get so excited when we show you something God notices and you care. You are a tremendous blessing! Thank you so much.