

2/14/17

Week 7: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Jimmy Evans and Alan Kelsey 2

**James:** Okay. I'm telling you, I'm glad you're here. I'm James Robison. Betty and I, we've been married now 54 years. I know you're looking and saying, "I can't believe she gave you an extension of another year. She's an amazing person."

We really -- the sad thing is, it isn't that people don't just live long enough to be married 50 years, people don't usually make five years. It gets to where someone who makes 10, they're getting all kind of praise that they had this miraculous marriage. This is sad to me. Now I wouldn't have wanted to live with her in 58 years of misery. And you might think, well, she's put up with 58 years of misery. I understand. She's, praise the Lord, I would never want to go with a jury in any kind of trial with us because I'm done, I understand.

But here's the deal. We have been so blessed but we're still ready to learn, but there is just not many marriages where the people really seem to be happy. And one of the best marriage counselors who had his own challenges in his marriage but miraculously experienced the delivering power of God in his marriage, Jimmy Evans, his wife Karen, and they began to teach marriage seminars, which are just huge. I've been Jimmy's friend for a long time. He's been coming on here for more than 15 years with his wife to help marriages.

And Jimmy, you're here. Just welcome Jimmy. Jimmy Evans is back with us. Marriage and family is a television program all over the world and he's one of the elders at Gateway, we're there together. It's a wonderful church and we're grateful to be a part of it.

Jimmy began to talk to me about a man and about a test that Alan Kelsey, who's now part of Gateway's staff to help marriages and now the two of you have joined up. You're actually telling everyone you want to read the book. You actually only joined with Alan to try to point people to hear what he is saying and to learn about this test; am I right about that?

**Jimmy:** Absolutely. James, the number one business book in the world is called *StrengthsFinder*. It is talking about discovering really who you are and your strengths, the *Clifton StrengthsFinder* talks about 34 strengths; but all of us don't have all 34. We might have some degree but we have five top strengths that really define who we are.

In the business world they have looked at these for many years. Fifteen million people have taken the Clifton StrengthsFinders and most of that is in the business world and it's transformed businesses. Because once you understand your own strengths and the other people that you work with, it changes everything. It changes the way you relate. It changes the way you appreciate people rather than putting them down. It changes the way you put people in certain positions and not in other positions.

So Alan was trained by the Gallup organization in the strengths years ago. He is a strengths expert. So we took the test at Marriage Today, all of our employees took the test; and I took the test and I was amazed at how accurate it was. We were all amazed. Then we started thinking about what would happen if couples took the test and began to understand each other's strengths and began to appreciate each other rather than reject each other?

Because most people and you said it right, James, so many people are miserable in marriage and most people think there is something wrong with their spouse. They get married and they begin to get frustrated because we married someone different by God's design. If you understand those differences, they're dynamic and wonderful. If you don't understand those differences they are dangerous. Most people don't understand those differences.

The reason that I love the StrengthsFinders and working with Alan is because after 40 years of marriage, we had a good marriage, we took the test; Karen and I both took the Clifton StrengthsFinder and Alan sat down with us. It changed the dialogue we have. It changed the way that we understand each other. Because I've loved Karen. She's always been beautiful, I've always loved her but I did not have a language for who she was until we took the StrengthsFinders test.

**James:** And that's after teaching on marriage. You said somebody says they think there is something wrong with the spouse. The problem there is it isn't just one thinking that, they both think it. So each thinks someone is wrong with the other person. He's been talking about Alan. This is Alan Kelsey over here. Would you just welcome Alan Kelsey to *LIFE Today*?

[Applause]

Alan, we've got a couple other people here. Tell me why this other couple is here.

**Alan:** Well, James, this is April and Abram Potter. They are with us today because they have taken this strengths test for the first time. If I have it right you guys know your own results but you don't know each other's results yet. So it's reveal time right here right now. This is go

time, baby! I would be nervous if I was them, sitting where they are sitting!

[Laughter]

**James:** Why did you do this and bring them here? And they were courageous enough to come. Let me just tell this to you. Did you find taking the test significant in some way; just the fact that you were taking it and even seeing these things that are there and then being curious and wondering what your strengths might be? Did you find that as you were taking it? What effect did it have just to take it?

**Abram:** I think the effect of just taking it is just that next step into better knowing that you're making that first step to better yourself, better your marriage and to just accept the fact that you're there to look at strengths and ways that you've never looked at it, at your spouse.

**James:** You felt the same way when you did it, April?

**April:** Yeah. I just think knowledge is power. You know if you know things then you can understand and I can relate to what you said that you felt like there were things in our marriage that we just didn't understand. It's not that I didn't like it, it's just I didn't understand it. It was foreign to me.

**James:** It was he you don't understand; right?

**April:** Yeah.

[Laughter]

**James:** The rest of us understand him and we've only known him a little while.

[Laughter]

**April:** And to better understand myself as well so that I know why I do what I do.

**James:** So are you anxious to hear from Alan what he wants you to know and what he discovered?

**Alan:** James, this is an important issue you're raising here and it's the issue of when I have misunderstanding I don't know what to do with this other person's behavior. And because the behavior makes me feel bad or at the very least question, it's very normal for me to put it in a box that says this is combative behavior, this person is difficult, I don't understand them. I put it in

a negative box.

What Jimmy and I wrote the book to do is to reframe that language. We want to put that misunderstanding in a different conversation that says wait a second. There may be something at play here that was actually purposefully invested by God in this person and it sets them up for some kind of a contribution that is irreplaceable in the world. So when you see rarity, which is what uniqueness is, if there is only one of this person in the world then you're looking at rarity, you're looking at one of a kind. You're staring at the Mona Lisa. Well, you don't stare at the Mona Lisa like you do at a McDonald's sign. You know what I mean? You look at that differently. We're trying to reintroduce that kind of posture in the marriage simply by changing the language and the way each other interact with each other.

**James:** And you see it work?

**Alan:** I've seen it work.

**James:** Transforming relationships?

**Alan:** Yes, sir.

**James:** No question about it.

**Betty:** Well, it sounds like it could bring a greater love toward one another, a greater appreciation and a greater respect for who they are.

**Alan:** Unfortunately, the English language doesn't do a good job of translating the word *love* into English so we get all the nuances that the Greeks really enjoy. I think even in natural marriage and Jimmy, you would do a better job of explaining this than I will, but in natural marriage we're just going to go through phases of different types of love that move from, maybe even the front is just I love her but that woman is smoking hot. So there is other things I'm interesting in with her too. You move out of some of that into a different stage of life.

But this kind of love involves a language that introduces a new kind of satisfaction and love in the marriage that is unobtainable without the language. So it is a freedom conversation. Absolutely.

**James:** I want you to get on. Let me see how these people handle it. If one of them walks out, is that a bad sign? Bad sign?

**Alan:** Yes. That's on me!

**James:** But Jimmy goes out with them.

[Laughter]

**Alan:** Man, I'm sorry! I drug you into that one. It's a two-for-one deal. I see what he just did right there.

**James:** Let's see what the test tells us.

**Alan:** So women first. Are you okay with that? It is the chivalrous thing to do. I'm getting you points here.

So your first strength is: Achiever. So April, what I know about achiever is I am one and so is Jimmy. We love to get stuff done. So we typically will make lists; depending on how strong your achiever is, you might make lists of your lists. In fact, if it is number one for you, it could be bad enough that if you get something done that wasn't on a list, you'll go back and write it in on the list so that you can check it off because the joy of the day...

**April:** Is in accomplishing.

**Alan:** Is that all -- come on, now! There is how value in that moment; right? So what that makes us is it makes us finishers. We are fantastic finishers because when can you check the box?

**April:** When you finish.

**Alan:** When you're finished. When you've landed the plane. When it's all over. When it is done. So we're great finishers. That's how you're built. That's how God made you. That's the lens through which you see the world. So when you approach something you are a goal oriented person. You are an outcomes oriented person. You are a finishing mind kind of a person. So that's your first strength.

**James:** Now listen, Alan.

**Alan:** Come on now.

**James:** No, this is not Oprah. We only have a certain timeframe and you've got all these steps and we're getting the count down over here.

**Alan:** Cliff note version.

**James:** You've got to compress.

**Alan:** I got you. Number two: Activator. So you love to start stuff. The beginnings of things are so fun for you. You get to the midway point, maybe you're not that interested anymore. Thank God you have achiever because you can also land the plane. So you can run on both sides of the fence. It's really impressive. So achiever is on that side, the finishing side, activator is on the trigger pulling side, on the front-end.

Number three: Restorative. It means you can walk into an environment like this and without meaning to you'll find the one light bulb that may not be working. If you walk into a Walmart, you'll find the one thing that is sticking out that wasn't... It's not like you're trying to find it, it is like God has a neon sign that says, "Rrck rrck rrck."

**James:** That picture is crooked. What's that one?

**Alan:** That's called restorative. At the heart of it, here's what's meant. You know the former design and the glory of it and inside your heart is a desire to get it back to how beautiful it could originally be. And you're not willing to put up with mediocrity in the meantime. So it drives you to correct things.

Number four is: Responsibility, which means you take personal ownership of just about everything that you say yes to. So it could be challenging -- it could be challenging for you to say no because if you ever have committed to something, even if you delegated it to somebody else, you're going to watch it until it lands to make sure that it is right all the way. So sometimes letting go or delegating can be tough.

**April:** I'm tired.

[Laughter]

**Alan:** And then the last one is: Communication. So what I have a question for you then, April is people with communication get a lot of joy out of being able to communicate but it could go one of two ways or both; is it an oral type of communication or a written type of communication? Or is it a mixture of both? If so, give me out of 100% what is it? Is it a 50/50? A 60/40? How would you swing it?

**April:** Yeah, I would say verbal.

**Alan:** You would? How much?

**April:** Maybe 70/30?

**Alan:** 70/30 is your preference on verbal.

**James:** If you were going to tell him how much you love him you'd tell him rather than just write him a note? You might get a note every now and then. I just need to say this but mostly I'm talking. I'm trying to help you out here.

**Alan:** Thank you, James. You're doing a great job. So the two main reasons, James, for knowing your strengths are this. Number one, this is the place where your strongest contribution to life is going to come from. Two, it is flat-out about your joy because God has wired it in our brains so that when we use the strengths we've been given we get this endorphin rush that makes us feel fantastic.

And if it is not enough that God would give us literally slices of who he is so that we could display his majesty on the earth today, he also rewards us when we use the giftings he's given us and it's an unbelievable blessing. If you could drag that kind of natural endorphin high into a marriage where both of the entities are experiencing that kind of natural joy every day, it just bonds the couple together in a way that is almost irreplaceable.

**James:** It is at least a semi high. It's life on a higher plane.

**Alan:** It is perfectly legal and highly repeatable.

**James:** That's great! Let's see if he has any strengths because I'm thinking she is wondering. She wants to know.

**Alan:** Okay. So Abram leads off with: Deliberative. What that means, Abram is if you hear of a situation or an opportunity you need a little time to think it through because your natural awareness is wait a second, there's some potholes here and if we can think through what they are, we're going to be able to travel safe and my objective is to get us there safe first time right time. So you need a bit of time to process that. So that comes naturally to you. You will at times put your hand out to describe, "Just a second, I'll get with you. Give me a minute."

**James:** Could get in the way of an achiever.

**Alan:** Hypothetically that could be an attack.

**James:** That could cause a little tension here. I'm in this counseling thing.

**Alan:** I wonder, do you have a spot for him? Could he come and work for you?

[Laughter]

**Jimmy:** Absolutely!

**Alan:** So number two is: Competition. There are two sides to this. The first one is, okay, pal, it's you and me and it's go time right now. We're going to find out who wins; and that is very much a part of competition. So if he's doing anything with you, playing cards, you guys are playing a game at home, do not ever pull your punches. You have got to give 100% because the minute he suspects that you're going easy on him, it is so annoying to a person of competition. Really! He'll push away from the table and like, "Forget it! This is stupid." Because it's really important that he knows you're giving everything. Because if he loses then he just -- then this is information for him. He just discovered where he sits and that information is really important because it's from there that he knows how to progress. So you just gave him unbelievably valuable information, even if he lost. Which he probably won't do but he's very inclined to know the information.

**April:** But I'm goal oriented so...

**Alan:** So it's on!

[Laughter]

The other side of competition is that it is about measurement. If you're pulling on to an on-ramp your competition is constantly measuring your speed against someone else's because it informs your strategy. See if you know you're running behind everybody else then you can pick up your speed; your strategy just changed as a result. If you're going faster than everybody else you know you've got to back off in order to be able merge. It's how you develop your strategy because you're constantly measuring.

What would be a good conversation between the two of you is to find out what you're measuring. If you're measuring your relationship and you're not talking about it, it is likely you're going to keep score. And as Jimmy knows, that's never a good spot to be in. You can have that one for free.

[Laughter]

So next, after competition is: Maximizer . Maximizers are natural polishers. You want things to be right. You want them to be done right. In fact, if it is not going to be done right you don't want to even mess with it. You have this intolerance for mediocrity. So probably, in your home, if there are any home projects that get started, they got to get done right, they got to get done all the way. You're fussy about the way in which they happen. You're pretty particular about some things, I'm sure. That's all good because it means that she can lean against that wall, sit on that coffee table with confidence because it is going to be what? It's going to be right. It's going to work right. Natural polisher.

Number four is: Significance. Here's what that means. You have a high interest in ideas that are important and no interest in talking about the kids' lunch menu at the school because that's going to bore you to tears.

[Laughter]

So there's not a snowball's chance that they will ever get you on the committee at school to deal with those issues because it's nowhere near important enough. You need to do life-changing kinds of things. Jimmy has this strength and that's why he is attacked the single most important entity in the world and it's marriage.

All right, and the last one is: Activator, which you guys share. This is the one strength you both have where you're both interested in starting things, getting a project started.

So now I have a question for you as we get to the end of both of your initial sets of conversations. Are there at the home some projects that are started but have been in limbo for some time?

**Abram:** Oh yeah!

**April:** A lot!

**Alan:** Are they mechanical projects like fixing something or repairing something or are they relational projects?

**Abram:** Both.

**Alan:** That's not unusual by the way. So I'm saying it because I want to give you guys some permission to know this is how we're built and so if there's some level of that swimming around in the house it's going to be okay. It's not the end of the world.

**James:** Do you feel like you've been helped as a couple seeing this? Do you see these things in her?

**Abram:** I do.

**James:** Do you see them in him?

**April:** Huh-uh.

**James:** Now you see how maybe you can understand each other better, work better? Do you appreciate what we've done here in trying to share?

And back to the strengths based. Here is the situation. You can get the book on line and you can take the test. It will lead you to how to do that. What we'd like to do because we want to help every marriage, I mean we don't think Betty and I should be the odd ducks that happen to have a happy marriage while you have challenges, you lost a daughter, you're able to walk through it with the grace of God and the prayers of a lot of friends and your own family, we want you to have the joy of the Lord. We want you to be able to face the challenges that are sure to come. We want your relationship to be built, just like we want ours to build even though we've been married 54 years. So we want to help you. We'd be glad to send you the book.

Here's what we do all the time. You know this, Jimmy. We help people. We touch them with love. We don't just talk about the love of God, we demonstrate it. If we talk about the water of life, Jesus, and they need water for life, we give it to them. If they're hungry, we feed them. We don't just say we care, we show them.

I want you to watch. I want you to hear a mother's heart and then I want you to know without any exaggeration you're the absolute 100% answer to her heart cry and her need and you can meet it today right now. Watch closely and prayerfully.

## **On the mission field**

### **Open captions:**

>> I remember my daughter as a very loving person. When I was coming home she would run to meet me. My daughter was six years old... Her name was Jehovahnice. Because we have to drink this bad water every day, my daughter got really sick... and that is what killed her. I am afraid my other children are going to die too. Because we have to drink the same water. I still feel very sad about losing my daughter. I cry.

**End of clip**

## **In the studio**

**James:** Well, it's sad to say but Betty and I know what that feels like to lose a child that every one of you would have given us the miracle not to lose our daughter. This mother's story is too typical too often.

Now here's what I'm just really pleading with you to focus on. We can stop this. We've been drilling water wells for villages now for I guess close to 20 years and you have faithfully helped us. We have right now found 188 areas where there is such a crisis they've got to have a well. It's almost like the whole village is going to die.

And the water is there, we just need the rig there and drill; \$4800 has to be covered by somebody full of love. If you can pay for a well, I believe you will. If you could pay for two I believe you will. If you give \$1200 or \$2400 and pray three people join you or one other person joins you, we've got another well.

Betty, we'll never make it with the goals that we have, the opportunity, the need if the people don't respond. But many people say, "I can't do the 25% of a well, I can't give \$1200." There are not many people watching who could not give somebody a filter system that would give them the water that they need. We have that ability right now. If you would give \$100, we give three families a filter system that you can take the filthiest water in any river or any borehole in the ground that is contaminated and give water that's just like what we buy in the store and bottled water. Would you do that? And some of you right now, you're seeing the images of that simple five-gallon container, going through a hose, that filthy water in and coming out beautiful clean water that our mission director or you or anyone here could drink it and know this is perfectly non-contaminated, not disease-ridden water. Would you like to do that?

Father, I believe today there are literally hundreds and hundreds of people who will say, "Thank you Lord, I can reach out to three families -- families! Not just one in the family, three families and give them clean water for \$100."

And then Lord, those who can drill the wells, whatever part or all of it, please touch their heart and let their heart be filled with joy as a cheerful giver to know we're giving life; in Jesus's name.

Remember. You're giving water for life because of the water of life; and our missionaries are going to tell them about the water of life. We want to send you a beautiful canvas to say thank you; Sheila Walsh's book, *A Fresh Infusion of Joy*. You help with a well, the beautiful

"Determined Eagle." I'm praying there wouldn't be a single viewer of *LIFE Today* during the whole year that would not become a determined eagle and even contribute and say send me that bronze because I'm going to soar but I'm going to raise people from death to life because of the free release of love. Would you do that?

You can go online or you dial the number there, take your bankcard, use it like a check, the way you should always use them and make the gift God puts on your heart -- and do it joyfully. Would you do that please?

By the way, call and tell us if you're writing a check made to *LIFE*, call us and tell us you're sending it in. Would you do that? Thank you so much. And going online is so simple for so many to do. Thank you for doing it.

### **Begin video clip**

**Announcer:** Every day children living in extreme poverty 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.

Our teams have recently identified 188 remote villages in southern Africa where children are suffering from contaminated, disease ridden water. The situation is desperate. They need clean disease-free water immediately.

With your gift today you can help drill fresh water wells in remote villages across seven African nations. Your gift of \$24 will provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will provide for ten. \$72 provides for 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift we'll send you Sheila Walsh's devotional, *5 Minutes with Jesus*, a fresh infusion of joy to help you experience a deeper connection with God.

Please consider an additional gift of \$100 to help provide three families with water filtration kits in emergency areas where our rigs cannot reach. And you may request our "No Greater Name" canvas print.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our beautiful new hand-painted "Determined Eagle" bronze sculpture.

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

**End of clip**

**In the studio**

**James:** I think that every one of you who reached out in love should be able to know that I just accomplished something that was in the perfect will of God. I manifested the love of God; I became the hands of Jesus. Thank you for doing that.

And then know this. Our guests have the heart of God for you and your family and they want to help you. Strengths Based Marriage, you just give a cup of water, you can get it online but we'll just send it to you, along with Sheila's book, with the other things we've mentioned. If you want this, we'll send it to you.

Would you join me and Betty saying thanks to all of our guests and the wonderful job? Thank you all! You are a brave couple who came on and you are a beautiful and Abram, you're helpful.

Thank you! Thank you for loving others with the love of God. Thank you!

**Announcer:** In his new book, *Living Amazed* James Robison shares how divine encounters can change your life. *Living Amazed* -- coming soon to online and retail bookstores.