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Week ten: WFL last week

James and Betty Robison

Whitney Capps

James: Betty, what do you think about this little picture of this book right here -- it's title?

Betty: It could have been me at one time.

James: What is the title of this lady's book?

Betty: *Sick of Me*. I think a lot of women can relate to that.

James: By the way, I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We're just looking at this interesting picture with Whitney Capps and she's got the face blocked out. I actually asked her is that actually you? She said, "No. It could be but it wasn't."

She is one who teaches the Proverbs 31 woman series that is just incredible. She is a very gifted communicator and she is a wife and a mother of four boys. I'm going to let her tell you how old they are.

Would you welcome Whitney Capps to *LIFE Today*?

Whitney: Thank y'all! Thank you so much. I'm so like -- I'm supposed to be chill and cool but this is so rad! I'm so excited to be here with y'all. Thank you so much!

James: Do you mean you like us or what?

Whitney: I mean like a long time. My husband asked me if I was going to be chill and I was

like, no. I won't be chill at all. So I'm so excited to be here with you. Thanks for having me.

James: Tell us about the four boys; how old those four boys are.

Whitney: Chad is at home with them so y'all can pray for him. But Cooper is 13, Dylan is almost 12, Rider is ten, and Tate is seven. So my house is loud and wild -- and more often than not smelly. Yeah! They're boys. This is it. It's just life.

James: I want you to tell us because here you are teaching the Bible. You obviously have a gift. You have been greatly received, highly respected, appreciated, what in the world are you talking about?

Whitney: Well, listen, I've been in the church, really, my whole life. My dad's a pastor so I've watched he and mom lead a church for my whole life. So I'm well-equipped at doing the things that good church girls do. And I was having lunch with a girlfriend of mine, and I don't know, I imagine other women can relate. I sure hope so because we wrote a whole book about it.

But I was talking about doing all these things that we're told lead to spiritual fruit and it just wasn't changing a whole lot. The reality was I didn't look dramatically more like Jesus despite doing all the things that we've been told you mark this box and then you mark this box and you mark this box. So I was having lunch with this girlfriend of mine and she leaned over. She's incredibly gracious but she leaned over and she grabbed my hand and said, "Whit, you've told me a lot about you. Why don't you tell me about Jesus?"

It kind of hurt my feelings. It was the truth. She was so right. I had spent the whole time talking about me. And I was sick of me and I wasn't really making progress. It was sort of this beautiful light bulb moment of, I was talking all about Jesus things but not talking about Jesus. I'd done all the things but I hadn't been with Jesus.

I went home that day -- now I was tempted to kind of justify myself and try and come up with a scripture about -- out of Proverbs 31 or something that I was doing, and I realized in that moment

I just kind of needed to sit with that reality. And if I'm honest, it kind of stung a little bit -- but in a good way.

So I had to kind of ask myself some hard questions. And really what I came to is that I was just sick of me. I was so tired of making my Christian life all about me. And here's the thing, maybe it is just me, but I think it is such a subtle shift that sometimes in the church we don't even realize that we've made it about us because we're still doing Jesus things.

So I talk about in the book that it is kind of gospel adjacent but not gospel centered. And when you live gospel adjacent I don't think we see the fruit that's promised in John 15. And that's where I was. So I was just sick of me. So what we talk about is we kind of open the book is that I was on a journey of self-help rather than sanctification.

James: Define sanctification.

Whitney: Well, what we talk about... it is this big church word that we don't talk about a whole lot but man it is super important. But what we try and unpack a little bit in the book is that it is an internal process that God is working out in us and then we respond with external actions and obedience. So it is a two-parter; it is two sides of a coin.

James: Something is happening inside that affects the expression and how we, in other words, what we do, the actions.

Whitney: But I think -- please go ahead!

Betty: I think I hear what you're saying. You were doing all the right things that would lead to what we thought would be a full Christian example but you were missing the relationship part.

Whitney: So much because I knew what to do but I wasn't waiting to see what God wanted to do in me. I was kind of rushing ahead of him. I had the what's-my-part part down and I was missing... There is a process that God works in all of us and though I think how he does it is

unique because our stories, our backgrounds, our experiences, our spiritual giftings are unique, but I think his process is kind of consistent and I think it is a pattern that we see in scripture. And so I started to study these stories of the heroes of our faith and it looked like God worked in like four major phases. So I, in the book talk about that they're the kind of four phases of God's process of sanctification in us.

James: Can you list them for us? Can you touch on all four of them?

Whitney: I'd love to. So if you want to kind of hang on to these: God calls his people to be separate. Separate is hard. Hard is good.

James: Separated not from people but what? Separated from what? A worldly thought process? Conforming to the world, shaping by the world?

Whitney: Absolutely! It is that idea of holiness that we are set apart but it is not -- and this is what I was missing, what you were getting at. It's not just that I stop doing things but that I replace those things with the things of God in a way that is not focused on do I look better to other people? Are people impressed with me? Do I look like the good church girl? But focused on do I look more like Jesus?

James: So if we're separate and we're separated from the conforming of the world, that could also include being conformed in religious images, which those religious images and the traditions of men and the practices of men taught us the commandments of God became one of the biggest curses on humanity and one of the not only biggest conflicts with Christ but contributed to the crucifixion of Christ. I think today contributes to the hindering of the manifestation of Christ in kingdom power.

So we're separated from the world, we're in it but not of it but we are sent like sheep in the midst of wolves but not with fear because we're in the shelter of the ultimate shepherd. And we are walking out to be lights and ambassadors of Christ, right?

Whitney: So we're separated from the world but if we are not separated to him, then we go out in our own power. Which is completely fruitless.

James: You don't have the watch care of the shepherd. You do not have his over sight and you do not have his guidance.

Whitney: And don't you think that's what we see a lot of in the church? Man going out in their own power. And man, it looks good but it is not fruitful. So you have Christians who are frustrated and they find that their testimony isn't being effective for the reaching of the nations. And we go, what am I missing?

James: They're either shaped by the world or the religious world. Neither process is good. I think probably you are actually reacting a little bit to the fact that probably religious settings and religious activity had probably put some of that on you that you were concerned about.

Whitney: Here's the thing. The danger is, without meaning to and let me just say no church, no Christian leader, no book ever means to do this, but we can almost kind of equip people to the degree that we make it appear as though they can do this without the power of the Holy Spirit. That's what's unfortunate because God calls his people to be separate; separate is hard, hard is good.

But this is why the fourth part is so critical. It is that God is best. God calls his people to be separate, separate is hard, hard is good but God is best. That's what he was teaching Israel while the land was a part of the promise. What he wanted them to get was that his presence with them was the promise. That was it. But we go out trying to change our circumstances, trying to fix our identity, our appearance of what people think of us and God is going, "It is me! I want you to want me." God is best.

James: And in that Promised Land, in his presence he kept trying to keep them aware of the fact that the blessings of my truth, and the Promised Land life of a blessed life, which our Pastor Robert Morris talks about *The Blessed Life*, and the blessed life is to be a blessing not just be

blessed. So the Lord was really cautioning that if you don't live in my presence then you're going to think you did all this and you're going to have that many more idols to worship. And the only one who can keep you from worshipping the things, including the blessings that I bestow upon you, I'm the only presence and the only power that can enable you to be an overcomer in this life.

Whitney: I say in the book, I wonder if you'd agree with this, I think we have become a Jeremiah 29:11 people where we want the promises of God more than we want the God of the promise. We slap -- and I love Jeremiah 29:11. It is one of my favorite verses but it was a promise to a people who are in exile because they had turned the blessing of God and turned away from the God of the blessing.

So it's for us to look at what he was promising, was really what was coming in Jeremiah 31 where he says, "I will be with you." And they missed it. And listen. Chief of sinners. I can get hung up on what God is going to do or change or bring about in me. People ask me all the time, "I read God's word but I'm not getting anything out of it."

I say that's the problem right there is we go to God's word for what we're going to get out of it rather than who do I get out of it? Which is to know the God of the universe! And it's such a subtle shift but man, it is a game changer.

Betty: And that is the key. We come to knowing him as we've never known him before. Even through the hard times, that's when he can really draw himself unto us.

Whitney: And that's what I found because I was missing the process of what God was doing in me, I was chasing happiness rather than holiness. And oftentimes when God wants to make us holy, he puts us through circumstances that are quite frankly really, really hard. But I was kind of running from those, looking for comfort rather than change and so I wasn't being sanctified -- I wasn't being made more holy. And that was a really hard lesson for me to learn.

But the beginning of that was saying, "God, I'm sick of me. I'm sick of doing this the way that

makes sense to me, the way that I've kind of built these spiritual habits and this agenda of my own, and I left you out of it."

So this is not a book that is me on the other side of it. This is me in the trenches going I really want to not just live like Jesus, I want to look like Jesus. I want to be changed. I want to be transformed.

And so the second half of the book is us talking about, I don't know if you hear this a whole lot but especially people my age and younger talk a lot about brokenness and authenticity and transparency, which are such virtues for the church, right? We should be real people, not plastic and fake. And so let me just say it is a virtue, the church should be honest about our frailties and our failures and our flaws.

But there is so much more! Because the gospel is a change agent. We should say to the world, "Come as you" are but then also say to one another, "But you can't stay that way. That's not the gospel."

I think one of the major lies that the devil has fed this generation, and when I say "generation" I don't mean people my age or younger or older, I mean those of us breathing millennial air. But the lie that we've bought is that we have to be so broken and so authentic or people won't listen to our message.

But when you read scripture, especially if you go to the letters of Paul, one of the things that Paul did beautifully was that he would say, "This is the thorn in my flesh" but then in a chapter later he would say, "But let me tell you what my God does. Let me tell you what the gospel does."

And that's really, my hope for the book is that people would read this and forget the lie that we have to be purely broken. Should we be broken? Yes. But the gospel makes us better. And can you imagine what it would look like for the church? For women in the church -- because women are especially bad about this, that we don't want people to think we're full of ourselves or that we have it altogether.

But let me just say as a 40-year old woman, what I want are senior saints to say, "Let me tell you what Jesus does. Let me tell you what Jesus does when your marriage is struggling and you're frustrated and you're realizing how selfish you are. Let me tell you what the gospel does in those type of situations."

And what it would do for the church if we celebrated those gospel wins with each other. To say I'm not perfect but man, I'm better than I was -- I'm better than I was.

James: God knows we've been through some crisis. When you lose a child, we're told that's perhaps the heaviest weight that a human being can bear on this earth. And I can understand that. No matter what age the child is, it's a heavy weight. We felt that. But what we've asked God to do was hold us and we find him moving closer to us in those moments because we acknowledge how much we need his shoulder and his arms and his comfort and the peace that only he can give.

And yet, we have viewers like you who watch us, and don't ever doubt that we knew how much you were loving me and Betty and lifting us up, and you put arms around us of love and prayer. And you've got to understand, God is listening to our prayers. Don't tell him how to answer them, just trust him to answer them.

You know what I think you do so beautifully? You are an awesome communicator. You've been able to communicate as though, let's say, you invited people to spend several days with you while you share truths that are transforming. You put it down to where you have that experience and you can have it in your own time, in your own home and privacy or you can share it with others, and you've done it beautifully. I think God has taken your communication gift, he's put it in here where people get it. I don't think there is anyone watching that doesn't hear.

Let me just say this to you because if you watch our program you know, everybody knows if they watch James and Betty, James and Betty are going to ask you to put God's arms around somebody. I want you to know you are the greatest expressions, in my opinion, I just thanked

you for the way you prayed for us when our hearts were broken, you're the greatest people in my opinion that I've ever encountered. Some of you I've met personally, many of you I have not but you've reached out to put God's loving arms around others.

Now listen to me. The reason she's been sitting here, the reason Betty and I come into your home every day is to reach out and try to get God's arms around you to let you know whatever you sense, see some of you may have reacted: I lost a child. I lost a grandchild. Let me tell you something. I feel bad in my heart. I care. We are here to comfort and lift you up and we believe that together we can lift others up. And as the body of Christ we can make an unbelievable impact for his glory, which is what we do together. But God wants to minister to you.

There are things that Whitney has said that have touched your heart. The book you can get online. It is in the bookstores. Let me just tell you this. We're trying to give a child clean water. We're trying to stop a death cycle for grandparents and parents of their precious little ones. You just help us as Jesus said, "Give a cup of water," you want us to send you this book, along with other inspirational gifts that we offer because we love you, all you need to do is ask for it. We'll send it to you.

Will those of you in the audience just join me and Betty saying thanks so much for Whitney for being such a blessing? You are a beautiful picture and expression of the love of God. We thank you so much.

I want to just say to all of you. Please hear what I said a moment ago. That telephone number that you see come up on the screen is a prayer line. It is there 24 hours a day. The majority of all activity on that phone line is people calling, many calling saying, "I'm lonely." Well, we want to get arms around you, we love you. You've got a broken heart, we want to help bind up that broken heart. We love you. And you need to know that. We're here for you. What we share is for you because we want to be in the setting where you are.

Many of you it's your home somewhere. Maybe you're watching while you're traveling. Maybe you just caught it for the first time. Well, you just met some people who care about you. And we

believe that God will use you to touch other people who need to know someone cares.

I want to show you right now tremendous need and the viewers of our program tell us for them personally or as couples, they have no greater joy than meeting this particular need because it's a lifetime effect and it changes everything for many for all eternity. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Open Captions

>> This is where I found my son dead. He was in this bed, and I knew it was because of unclean water.

Announcer: Vanarundai's family will never be the same. While all of her children constantly battle illness transmitted through their only water source, her youngest, a two-year old was simply too weak to fight any longer. Despite his tender age and tiny size, the void he leaves behind feels immeasurable.

Open Captions:

>> What I miss most about my son is how much he liked to play. He was always near me, calling me, "Mama." He played with his brothers and sisters. He was the joy of our family. I loved him so much.

Announcer: Like so many areas in Burundi, there is no access to clean drinking water for this community. The closest safe source is too far away and very costly so the village must rely solely on the Empanda River, water they must share with livestock and also use for bathing and cleaning. Even medical help is largely ineffective because the only available water remains tainted. The danger is unrelenting and Vanarandai is helpless to stop it.

Open Captions:

>> It is very hard for me to keep giving this unclean water to my children, but I have no choice. I keep asking God to bring us people who can save us. And give us clean water.

Announcer: Vanarandai and so many other mothers like her are praying for a miracle. It's the only hope they have for the future of their children. And you can help make it possible.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Boy, how many times have you, if you watch *LIFE Today* heard me say if you want your prayers answered seek to be an answer to someone's prayer? That request, that prayer for a miracle, what about the possibility of being the miracle, being the source of the miracle? People wanted Jesus to come because he was a miracle – when he walked in miracles in the room. Jesus is in us. He's the miracle worker and he uses us to work miracles.

This doesn't take some kind of supernatural manifestation of some earth-shattering, shaking event. It simply takes the supernatural move of God's power and love through us to reach out and give more than a cup of water, we can give a well of water in that area and we can be the miracle answer to the prayers of many mothers. What goes on in your heart when you listen to a mother like that and you know the importance of that child and the importance of the miracle she prays for?

Betty: Well, this mother has several children but her heart's been broken. She's right. It will never be the same without the one that she lost. She loved him so much but we can be that miracle so that she doesn't have the heartache of losing the rest of her family, the rest of her children that she loves each one of them so so dearly.

Please join with us and let's be that hand reaching out offering that miracle to that mother and to many other mothers that have to go through the heartbreak of losing their children knowing that the water they're giving them is going to kill them eventually. Please join with us and let's offer that hope to them.

James: I watched Betty this week look at me and our family room and we had just looked at a

little video, Facebook of our daughter's little granddaughter walking for the first time and she was so excited. Betty and I looked at each other and Betty said, "I so wish Robin..." Well, Robin is watching. Robin, our little girl is watching from heaven, her little granddaughter. Here's the thing I'm telling you. I know we are going to give many mothers the answer to their prayer so they watch their children grow up and those children get to see their children because we have the perfect miracle. It is far greater than just a cure of diseases. It cures many diseases when you give clean water rather than contaminated water. We can do that simply by joining together and drilling a well in that village. The wells cost \$4800. Many of you will say, "You know what? I can do that." This is the last week in this emphasis for the 200 water wells as we go toward the 400 we always put forth as a goal.

Would you give a well? Could you give part of a well? Could you give \$1200 and say, "God, raise up three others and we've got a well." Or \$2400, "Give me one more, Lord." Pray that! But do your part. But here's the thing. Most of the support comes from people who will give \$144 knowing this, think about this. A gift of \$144, 30 people water the rest of their life. \$48, 10 people water the rest of their life. I think you want to make that kind of investment. I think you want to be part of that kind of miracle. You want to be an answer to prayer. You can be.

Would you go get your bankcard? Use it like a check or get a check and make it to *LIFE*? But go get your card and dial the number on the screen that is a prayer line for all who have a broken heart or who are lonely. Or would you go online and make the gift God put on your heart? Please do it right now! I know you want to do it. Would you do it?

Father, direct everyone by your spirit; in Jesus' name.

Thank you so much for doing it. We have some gifts to send you that will be a source of inspiration to you.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Today, a mother living in extreme poverty will do the unthinkable -- give her children dirty, diseased-filled water that she knows could kill them. With no other choice what's a mother to do?

With your help, clean water is on the way. Mission Water for LIFE provides a way for parents to save the lives of their children, to offer them a bright future free from the fear of death. With your gift today, you can help drill and establish the first 200 water wells of the year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children, a gift of \$48 will help provide for 10, \$72 will provide for 15, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift, we'll send you the *Praying Grace* 55-day devotional. This new devotional will help you renew your mind to the realities of God's grace and help you pray powerful grace-based prayers for each day.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "Praying Grace" tumbler. This reusable 16-ounce container is constructed with insulated stainless steel, perfect for hot or cold beverages.

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 the beautiful, new commemorative bronze sculpture, "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms."

This is the last week. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I have just, even before we came to talk to you today, we just said, "Lord, please use us to be a blessing to the viewer. You're loved and we thank you for expressing love. I hope you sense that you're being loved. You remember you have a prayer need, likely you'll call and talk to a prayer partner that identifies with the very things you need prayer for.

If you'd like to have Whitney's book, wow! I'm sick of everything is not just wrapped in Jesus, that's it and carried by him. If you'd like to have the book, be glad to send it to you.

Whitney, we want to thank you. You've been a real blessing. Would you join us thanking Whitney for being a blessing, for blessing our audience? Bless those four boys and that husband taking care of them! Thanks for sharing your wife with everybody. We love you.

God bless all of you. Thanks for watching.