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Week 11: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Esther Fleece Allen

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: I would love for you to come and join our audience here. We tape normally on Tuesday nights. And it is just a joy to have you here because God really ministers to the group that's here, and through them when they leave as they all tell us. So come, be with us.

We have a wonderful guest. Her name is Esther. That's a pretty good Bible name, Esther Fleece Allen. And it is very interesting, the title of the book, *Your New Name -- Your New Name*: Saying good-bye to the labels that limit.

I honestly believe that labels and putting a label on somebody is one of the enemy's greatest schemes to discredit or pigeon-hole someone, or minimize their effect, or even hurt them if possible. Another thing is a lot of times we put names on ourselves that actually become the name of something that limits our witness. Because if we're covered by anything other than Christ, he says it is a shame, Paul writing to the New Testament believers. You don't need but one covering, Christ, have the mind of Christ. So you can have names and labels but be very careful what they do to you because the enemy will try to put them on you.

I'm interested in finding out what Esther is talking about, *Your New Name*. Would you

welcome Esther and let's find out what she has to share?

Esther: Thank you.

James: Good to see you.

Esther: Good to see you!

James: Now tell me what in the world you are saying in this title. And tell us the story that you want us to hear that led you to understand the importance of having the right new name.

Esther: Well, God saved me at an early age. I was on the program years ago sharing a little bit of how I was orphaned at an early age. I took on all these labels: I was unwanted, I felt very unloved. These labels, even as I became a Christian kind of stayed with me. And as all of us are called to share our testimony, I just thought that those labels were a part of me.

James: Did you put some on yourself?

Esther: Of course, I put those on myself.

James: But you felt like others were surely putting them on you?

Esther: It wasn't for years later that I felt like how do we overcome? What is part of overcoming? And how do we become more than conquerors. It says in scripture that we as Christians should be more than conquerors. And every word in scripture matters.

So the "more than conquerors" was really interesting to me. It's not just that we conquer, it is not just that we overcome. We can become more than conquerors. And what that means in scripture is that what was thrown at us, those labels that were thrown at us, we

can now turn those and use those for the glory of God. What was meant to take us out by the enemy, we can turn that and use it for the glory of God.

I've seen God do it again and again in the Bible where he would rename somebody. He would give them a sacred name, a new identity that those labels no longer needed to define them. And I had to go on the quest for myself to say, what's the difference between a label and a name? And is it too late for God to rename me? Because I want my name to mean something. And I want my name ultimately to point to his name.

James: Esther was "for such a time as this." So for such a time as this, what's this new name in process to look like? What do you want us to hear?

Esther: You know what's fascinating? The word *label* hardly appears in the original language. When you see the word *label* in the Bible it is like somebody calls you something. And you even started the show to say, those things are painful. They can put really limitations not just on ourselves but other people.

Most of us have a story even from our elementary school years where we were labeled something that hurt us. But naming is so significant in scripture. And God through the Old Testament and the New Testament gives a new name. It says in the book of Isaiah that God is always doing a new thing. We know that he makes us a new creation. We're familiar of becoming like ministers of the new covenant. We all know this word *new* but what does it really mean? And are we asking God for a new name?

I think that we're never too old and it's never too late to receive a new name. I think every single one of us has taken on labels or we've labeled ourselves and it is time to leave those in the past, and not let those define us anymore. And to say, God, what new thing are you doing inside of me? And who do you say that I am?

James: I was called "God's angry man" in a lot of ministry. Some headlines said, "God's angry voice crying in the wilderness!" I thought, well, okay. He was a voice crying in the

wilderness. I guess I'm the angry voice. A lot of people really like that. They like people being told off but that also became a label that put a stigma on me to where they couldn't see. Actually, God broke me and moved me to a man of brokenness and compassion to where now I actually feel like people say, "He cries too much! He weeps too much." So they'll label me with that. I have a broken heart. I still have a righteous indignation about how the enemy is defeating the church and it angers me to see the enemy walking over precious people and telling them to lay down and I'm going to walk over you. We're supposed to walk over the enemy. So I still have that indignation, that disturbing anger but it is more under the control of the Holy Spirit and I'm not being nullified by labels I put on myself or others do.

But I also listen to what people say and oftentimes I learn. I saw you know what? I'm unnecessarily angry. And God tempered that. I could love my enemies that were even accusing me, I'll learn from you. Does that make sense?

Esther: Absolutely. I think so many of us can get comfortable in labels that limit. And instead, we're supposed to always be submitting ourselves to Christ, and we're supposed to be being transformed. And our new names are part of our testimony, they're part of us overcoming.

But ultimately, it is to point to Christ's name, to his name. We're to cast demons out in the name of Jesus. We're to baptize in the name of Jesus. We're to pray in the name of Jesus. Why do we see over and over in scripture about the name? God's name matters. We're not to take the Lord's name in vain. So if there is weight and power and authority in the name of Jesus, do you think he cares about us knowing our names? And us knowing who he says we really are?

I think for every single one of us we're going to have to stop and take some inventory of our own lives and what are the labels that we have put on ourselves? What are the labels that other people have put on us? And when are we going to choose to believe who God says...

James: What are some of them that you've on yourself or others put on you?

Esther: When I was abandoned by both of my biological parents, I took on the name "orphan." And I was! I was orphaned. I was abandoned. I was a victim. I faced abuse. And so there is a real element of those things happened to me. But those were not God's names for me. That's not how God named me.

As I studied the Bible, I realized so many of God's people were mistreated, they were abandoned. Joseph was sold with trafficking. Moses was abandoned. Esther was an orphan. Hagar was mistreated. And yet all of them, they didn't stay in that state. They didn't stay in that label. Esther rose to be courageous. Joseph, what an overcomer Joseph was! Hagar gives us the name in scripture, "The God who sees me. The God who knows me!" What intimacy was birthed out of that time, out of that naming time for her. Instead of listening to this label that would keep her chained to her past.

I think that God names us prophetically for the call that he has on our life to reflect his name. God said to Abraham, "I'm going to make you a father of nations." And Abraham, he was infertile. He and Sarai, his wife, were unable to have children. And so he was like, how is that going to happen? How am I going to be the father of nations? But God spoke his new name for what he was going to become. And the plans that God had in the future for him.

So we've got to stop renaming ourselves prematurely and listening to these labels that limit us. And we've got to ask God, please rename me. What is the name you have for me?

Betty: And it is not, I know a lot of people as I did, I put most of the labels on myself, not necessarily people around me, they weren't ugly to me or anything but I put them on myself because I felt intimidated, I felt dumb, I felt plain, and all those things until I came to that relationship with God. And then he began to tell me who I was in him and that he

created me. He knew me before I was birthed. And that I could trust him to know that I am more than a conqueror through him. I can do all things through Christ

Esther: And the beautiful thing I love about you as a couple is that God is still doing new things inside of you. You're not giving just a testimony of God's faithfulness 50 years ago. You have new testimonies of the new work that God is doing inside of you. I think I was missing that. I think I used to think, well, I'm saved so I'm saved! That's it. But instead God always wants to do a new thing inside of us and God always wants to give us a new name.

James: I want to read just this section when God renames you and then you kind of respond. "Your new names," I think this is very significant, "are given not earned. Your new names are better than you can see," better than you realize, especially when we know who is giving us the name, "better than the one you can see for yourself. Your new names are personal." Just expand a little bit on those.

Esther: Yeah. God always names us out of his love for us. And labels want to define us based on our circumstances or what we lack or even some of us, maybe our successes, we want those to name us. But God names us and renames us out of his love for us. So our new names aren't embarrassing, they're not shameful. They bring great joy to us. They put his name on display and they're better than we could see for ourselves.

James: That's really great. You say, and you share, and you do it in a very redemptive way when you talk about having some, let's say some tension between you and your father. And some pain that came there. You talk about renaming him. You want to explain that?

Esther: Sure! One of the greatest surprises as I was writing the book is the healing that God brought to my own heart. And I think the reassurance; God was saying to me my name was chosen, my name was bride, my name was loved. And God was doing a deep work in my heart as I was writing these words.

But the surprise ending for me and where I share in the book is how when we know who we are and when we know whose we are God gives us the ability to rename our offenders. And in the middle of changing my two-month old son's diaper, I started singing the Apostle's Creed. I had no idea where this song came from. I was just singing the Apostle's Creed. And I had a memory back when my biological father, the one who left us, the one who never paid child support, the one who never showed up to be present at any of my birthdays, the one who gave me the name orphan...

James: You still feel it

Esther: I still feel it. I remember that he taught me that song and he taught me that creed. I just was able for the first time to start thanking God. I could thank God that God had given me a godly spouse who is a wonderful husband to our son. I could start thanking God that even though I was abandoned and forgotten and forsaken, I was somehow in the church and I would hear the Word of God and that never returns void. And I thanked God that even though my father left, he at least took me to a Christian church where I could hear the Word of God. So all those labels of my father of that abandonment, the abuser that he was, the unable to pay child support, I was just able to rename him and he was forgiven, he was loved by God, he was certainly lost but it didn't mean that God didn't love him. And I think that's what happens when we know our name in God, he gives us the ability to rename our offenders.

James: What do you want people to carry away when we reach over now to start giving somebody a new name, a new future, a new life they never dreamed they could have because they live in prison? They're trafficked victims and they're held captive like they're in bondage in prison, literally. What do you want people to think today as they, let's say, we transfer to try to pour love out on somebody that's not loved?

Esther: I would say that the circumstances and the death and the destruction around you are not how God names you. We see Naomi in the Bible, she goes through tremendous

grief. She loses her husband, she loses her two sons, and her name means pleasant or sweet. And in the middle of her grief Naomi says, "Don't call me sweet anymore. Call me Mara." And Mara means bitter. She was renaming herself based on her circumstances.

I think what God wants to say is don't rename yourself prematurely. Don't rename yourself in the middle of the storm, in the middle of the loss. If you're being trafficked, that is not the name that I have for you. I have a new name. I will see it to fruition. I see you. I name you and I will bring you out of that. And I just -- I don't think God wants us to rename ourselves prematurely.

James: You have a great anointing to share the Word of God alive. If people wanted you to come and share, do you like to go and share?

Esther: I love to share about Jesus.

James: Do you go to churches though? Do you have a name for your child?

Esther: We haven't announced it yet. [Laughing]

James: We'll be quiet. It is a secret!

Esther: Let me tell you our first son is named Asa and that means healer. And I see where God has used a little child to help heal my heart.

James: We love you! Okay. If people want you to come, where do they find you?

Esther: My website is EstherFleeceAllen.com or *YourNewNameBook.com* is where they can find the book.

James: And they can inquire about would you come to some event or to our church or to some kind of outreach that we're having to help people learn their new name?

Esther: Absolutely!

James: Do y'all appreciate Jesus in this beautiful girl, Esther? Esther, for our time what a great, great book. This is great! Go online and get it. You ought to get it. Run to the bookstore and get it today. I tell you what we all need a new name.

My father left me before I was born, raped my mother and then left. But I went to live... She literally took me from the home she put me in and we went to stay with an aunt, the sister of my father. She was very nice to me. And there was a Christmas when I was five and this big tall man kind of staggered into the house. And they said, "That's your father." And I couldn't be glad because I did have a sense of being abandoned.

He went over and sat down at an upright piano and he started playing. We talk about a name. This man never told me he loved me ever until he left many years later. But he starts playing and he sings. I can't sing. He sang. He became an alcoholic in the choir of the church when somebody talked him into drinking, it was okay. He became a drunk until he died an alcoholic, of alcoholic disease that set in all through his body.

But he sat down, and he started singing, "I came to the garden alone while the dew was still on the roses." And then I heard the phrase, "And he walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me I am his own." And I'm a little five-year old boy that my mother has dragged out by the feet from under the bed that I was hiding under because she told me she was going to take me from the foster home I'd been in for all those years.

You have no idea how important those words became to me through my life. That he walked with me and talks with me and tells me I'm his own. Even in the fellowship time we had before we came out here, you could tell what an intimate relationship I have with the one who walks and talks. So I say, my father was the first person to tell me that there is a Father that will walk with me and talk with me and tell me I'm his own.

For all of you watching, you are special to God. You want to give your life to the Lord? You want someone to pray with you? Call that number. Somebody will answer and say, would you like to know Jesus? Let's pray together.

And then let me show you this. We're rescuing children that are trafficked. And we're giving them more than a new name, we're giving them a new future. Because we reach out to them, we rescue them and we restore them and it is all love. And everything we're doing to do that is supported by you, somebody like you. And now what you do will be matched and doubled because there are some believers that say, this is so important. We'll match what you do. We've got to do this! Watch closely. I think you'll want to do your part sharing God's heart. Watch prayerfully.

On the mission field:

Announcer: They wage war in plain sight. Not with weapons of steel but of heart and mind. Always watching, seeing what was meant to be hidden. Fearlessly, they confront the danger, skillfully unraveling the strategy of the enemy. Reclaiming that which was stolen and leaving the thief empty-handed. These are heroes and their brand of rescue is not pulling girls out of hell but sparing them from it altogether.

We call them "border monitors." But to the thousands of women and children they have saved they're known as "guardian angels." Their mission is simple: Prevention through interception. With well-trained eyes they scan the steady flow of humanity pouring through these borders identifying anything that even hints at a potential trafficking in progress.

With unbelievable courage and wisdom they intervene refusing to let evil have its way. They know what to ask to uncover the truth and won't hesitate to right what is wrong. They literally stand in the gap between freedom and slavery.

Today, our mission partners in Nepal have teams in place at three of the country's largest entry points rescuing an average of 90 women and children every single month. Their

success is astonishing. But our hearts are still troubled by the remaining unmonitored areas being used to traffic victims throughout Asia and beyond. Imagine how many more lives could be saved if we were able to expand our efforts. Our ability to empower more of these heroes here is dependent upon the support of our Rescue Life heroes back home. Heroes like you.

End of video

In the studio:

James: That's you! That is absolutely you. Everyone watching. Betty and I joyfully do our part; our team going there in these areas. When we first went to Thailand, the sex capital of the world. To think that we were going to work with two people who ran Hollywood's biggest generators for their biggest production, sold everything. They had watched us on television. Their hearts were moved. They had been inspired by the mission love. They go and plant their lives there and began renting quarters to get these girls and children that they could find, before they got trafficked or after they were trafficked, taking care of them.

And we with your help joined together to build the House of Destiny -- Destiny House! Where literally thousands and thousands of children have been rescued. And then other ministries branched off of that, even in the area that you supported.

Right now what you're seeing on the border of Nepal with these children being taken into India and exploited and trafficked, we're actually supporting those who are rescuing them. And boy, you talk about discernment and sensitivity, they're able to head them off. Because see, many times these children, and even their parents have been convinced, send your child with this person or these individuals, they're going to take them and take care of them. Oh no they don't! They take them and use them and sell them. And these people have the discernment of the spirit of God and the love of God and courage -- it takes tremendous courage to be out there literally interrupting the flow of millions and billions of dollars overall worldwide. When you interrupt that flow you're in danger. But

they're dressed up in the great glory and protection of Almighty God and our prayers. But it is all made possible because of the support of our viewers.

Every single mission project that we're involved in was birthed in the heart of the missionaries and the workers like you see. The anointing and gifting of God is on them and they've yielded their life to do it fearlessly, faithfully. But they cannot do it, and this is what the missionaries made clear to us, could you possibly go back and keep us here effective; not only keep them there but we have with your help helped them expand to get God's arms around more people.

Would you right now help us reach, rescue, or restore hundreds -- hundreds of girls, children, those being trafficked. We have a wonderful group of friends who so believe in what we're doing that they have put up a quarter of a million dollars, \$250,000 matching gift to match what you give today. It costs \$128, that's the average, to start the rescue process. Now then it will be doubled. If you give \$128, it rescues two. Or you could give \$64 and you've rescued one. \$1280 will rescue ten, now it's 20.

Thank you for that love, God! But would you make that gift God puts on your heart? Would you right now go online and would you dial that number, that prayer line and turn it into a life line? Go get your bankcard. Go online. Call the number. Use that card like a check. If you want to write a check, make it to *LIFE* but do call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. We need to know your support's there. All these wonderful workers, all the people we're reaching out to, totally depends upon your support. We have some beautiful gifts to give you made by those who have been trafficked and you're going to like what they made for you with love. They're learning a trade. They're learning how to do something now to make a real legitimate meaningful living correctly, appropriately, because of God's love. Would you continue this outreach? Please, right now make the gift God put on your heart. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Behind the bright lights there is a darkness where a world of innocence is lost and abuse runs rampant scarring the souls of children with no one and nowhere to turn for help. With bodies broken and hopes crushed, these young victims are trapped in a never-ending nightmare.

Today you can shine the light of God's love in this dark world to reach, rescue, and restore these young ones to the life God designed for them to live. With a generous \$250,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to reach, rescue, or restore one child can be doubled to help *two* children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help save one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 mission rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.

With your gift we'll send you this beautiful "Freedom" bracelet handcrafted by survivors of human trafficking who want to say thank you for helping those still trapped. Wear it as a wonderful reminder to pray for the outreach.

With your gift of \$128 or more you'll receive the "Freedom" tote. This quality canvas tote bag is made by trafficked survivors who are now learning a new trade and includes spiritual life resources such as books, devotionals, CD's, or DVD's.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help rescue 20 children! And you may request our beautiful new bronze sculpture, "A Mother's Strength." Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video**In the studio:**

James: I'm really praying for God to set all these precious ones free. I'm praying for them to set our nation free. I just told this audience here that God has promised he'll heal

our land if we'll ask him in humility and brokenness and with repentant hearts. I'm telling you, the stage is set for this nation to get well, and I think inspire other nations to get well, to get healed by God.

This is a fabulous gift! If you help us rescue some, you say, James, you're sending us some beautiful gifts. Would you send us this book to say thank you and to bless you? You better believe it! Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Esther?

"Better than me." This is my new label, "better than me." Thank all of you! We love you! Thanks for helping us love others.