

Week 39

9/21/11

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. It is "Wednesdays with Beth" and we always look forward to this.

James: I'm James Robison and Betty and I are thrilled to present one of the most gifted communicators.

As Betty said, "Wednesdays with Beth" is a favorite for many of you. I do hope that you are watching the other days, *LIFE Today*. I know many of you love Beth. Let me tell you something that Beth would want you to know is very important. During the program, toward the latter part, which after you've heard Beth you could say, okay, I'll move onto something else. Don't! Because you're going to see where Beth's heart is and that is really sharing the love of God.

You're going to see a real picture of the power of prayer and the opportunity to demonstrate love. Beth is talking about spiritual discernment and I think far too few even among those who profess Christ and claim to know him personally seem to discern very well. We need to discern the times. We need to discern people. She's going to get into some very specific aspects of discernment. Here is Beth Moore.

Begin video clip:

Beth: I just wonder, how many of you have been punked? Anybody? Betrayed? Misled? Taken advantage of? Taken for a fool? Duped? Flat out lied to? Looked back on something you swallowed whole and think, what an idiot! When was the last time you believed something you shouldn't have? Or you accepted something or welcomed something that you terribly regretted that bit you on the back of the neck so hard you still feel shamed by it? What was it? When was the last time you just had that feeling inside you could not shake but you could not quite define it? When was the last time?

A whole lot of life we've already established is black and white but then we get into that gray zone and it is in that gray zone where you and I have the biggest capacity to get sideswiped. In Paul's words to Timothy, we've come into an age of seduction --

"seducing spirits," he said. What that means is we've got a regular warfare. We've got opposition, which is a normal part of the experience in the realm for believers but then we've got oppression; that's when the enemy somehow is in it now. Where we can sense something. We can have warfare but we can know it. But every now and then, there comes a time of seduction when we did not see it coming. It just was not black and white. It was not clear to us.

Now somebody is going to be thinking right about now on the other side of that screen, you know I can see, Beth, where you would need it but I really can't see where spiritual discernment comes into play in my own life. Like you definitely shouldn't believe things that people tell you like that and then go broadcast them only to find that it is a lie. I can see it with your life but I'm not sure I get it with mine and I would beg to differ.

Can you imagine how much it could be the salvation of marriages? My man always comes with me on these tapings. It's just been something again, when we're talking about how did we know? It is not something he does the rest of the time. But we knew that for this place, for these tapings he was supposed to come and provide a physical covering. He always prays for me over the phone for the rest of the events on the calendar, but God told us early on.

You say how did we know? We somehow knew it -- in our spiritual gut, this is what I'm talking about. So he always comes with me. He would be able to attest to the fact that some years ago in the business that he was in for so long, I got a strange feeling about a woman -- a strange feeling. And I said, "Listen, I really feel like --." He knows I'm not just the big jealous type. I said, "I really want you to be aware. I think that you are going to have a very subtle advance come to you." And he knew it did not mean money.

[Laughter]

"I want you to be on the lookout!"

He comes back the next day and says to me, "It happened exactly that way!" He says, "I want you to know, Beth." He said, "I had no idea she even felt that way. No idea!"

Came and told him she was going to be leaving the workplace because of her feelings and he acted like -- he said, "I acted like I had no idea what she was talking about." He said, "I just saw her and said, 'Well, have a good life. We're glad you stopped by!'"

[Laughter]

You know what I'm saying? Like, "Glad you came -- glad you're going!" And he said she walked out the door and he shut it and went, "Oh, that was it! That was it!"

How did I know? I don't know how to explain it!

Listen, we could get all wiggy here and like we can manipulate everybody we know but it wouldn't have been the spirit had it not come out exactly that way. Then it would just been imagination -- it would have been jealousy, it would have been suspicion! But it wasn't, it was God! It was God! And he placed a warning on us.

The salvation of our marriages -- certainly it could be the salvation of our churches! If we began in our churches to operate with spiritual discernment, can you imagine the difference? Protection in all sorts of relational entanglements. It could keep us from taking up employment where even if we went -- I'm not trying to make something mystical out of it, but if we went to an interview and we thought, uh-huh. Something is creepy here. Something just feels creepy here. You know what? Don't go to work there! Don't go to work there!

[Laughter]

The Word of God tells us that in the latter days there will be greater deception.

I want to tell you something, all of us would say, all of us have heard this phrase that this is the information age. We live in the laptop age. I can get all of my information that I need off of my phone. I can check my e-mails. I can get on the Internet. I can find where the nearest Starbucks is. I can do all of these things straight from the apps on my telephone.

We live in the information age. The information age presumes a deception age; the more information the more deception because there is just more potential to do it! In every realm of social networking you've got opportunity, you've got blogs, you've got people taking up entire identities that are not true because they can pose it, they can become someone online that they never dreamed of being otherwise. I'm not saying everybody does it, I'm saying it's happening. And everyone I talk to has a story about somehow being duped on a blog, on a Facebook account, on something that turned out to be so different than it seemed.

I want you to turn with me to Second Timothy chapter three and we'll begin to close up this first half of our two-part series in Second Timothy three.

Anybody think they can use any of these kinds of lessons? I need to know what I cannot with my human thinking begin to know. Second Timothy chapter three.

See here's the thing, we don't want it to get where all the freedom of speech is removed or we lose our freedom too. We can't just have it all policed because that's where we'll lose our ability to speak the truth of the gospel of Christ on salvation. So there's got to be another way to get around it and that way is to be discerning -- to be discerning.

Second Timothy, chapter three. Let me show you something about it. This is the wildest chapter. It begins to tell us about perilous times in the last days -- in the latter days there will be perilous times. But unlike Matthew chapter 24, that tells us about the ecological disasters and the environmental disasters and circumstantial disasters, earthquakes, famines, all sorts of things that will erupt in the last of days, the witness of Christ going into every nation and people group, this particular chapter tells it from a social logical point of view. What will be perilous about the latter days according to Second Timothy chapter three is people. People will be this... this... this. It starts by saying:

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: **2** For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **3** unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, **4** traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Sound familiar to anybody? Sound like the days we live in? Well, drop down now and I want you to look at verses 12 and 13 of the same chapter.

12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. **13** But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

I want you to get your darling little pen out if you have one. You can get out a pen that is not darling if you can find one. I want you to underline that verse if you mark in your Bibles because it tells us exactly what we're talking about here. How to combat what we're up against because it says:

If we have ever in our lives needed discernment of the spirit we need it now because we live in the age of deception. We are living in the age of the poser and we need to know what's true, what's authentic, and what's not. We've got to operate past the things that we can see with our human eyes into what the Holy Spirit is telling us and what we're going to call our spiritual gut. What is he saying to you? Is he warning you or is he saying, "Move in -- without hesitation go with these people." Or is he saying, "You back off and run for your ever loving life!" What is the Holy Spirit telling you?

I want you to read on before we conclude this part. I want you to see what it says next. Many of you know some of the verses coming up but I want you to see them in this context. Verse 14:

14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

Okay, when we're talking about spiritual discernment, it is important for us to understand that we're talking about something we're going to operate in most accurately.

Remember we're in the gray zone right now. Where it is black and white, go with black and white. Sometimes he says flat out, "You don't need to pray about this, flee from sexual immorality!" I mean it goes, "Flee from it!" You don't have to think like, okay, now this is gray. Oh, no it is not gray. It really is not gray. Am I supposed to work -- am I supposed to be an exotic dancer? No! No! That is not gray. I'm praying this through. No! I'm not making fun.

Listen, we all have all sorts of temptations, all sorts of pasts and all sorts of histories but I'm just telling you, some things we can just go, "That is black or white." Do I need a church that teaches the scriptures? I don't have to pray through --.

"Now they never do open their Bible but I'm trying to think, God may have us here for --."

No! God does not have you there for a reason. Move! Move! Unless you're the pastor; if you are, start teaching the scriptures. Some things you don't have to pray about them; they're either go or stay.

"I don't know, I just don't really feel the same way about my husband as I used to. I wonder..." No, you're staying. You know what I'm saying? Some things are like black and white.

But this one, this is in the gray zone here. And what we're going to find out is that we will most accurately discern the Holy Spirit when we have an operating knowledge of God's word. I'm not saying we have to know the basic foundation of every book, all 66 books of the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. I'm saying the more we get to know God through his word the more we're going to be accurate when it comes to matters of spiritual discernment. Why? Because the Holy Spirit will never work contrary to God's word; it was God-breathed. He will always be congruent. Always -- it will always line up.

So we've got to know God's word because sometimes we're going to go, "I'm feeling that because this is what the scripture says and that's not what we were doing." That's the best way to do it.

But here's what I want to say and the first time I ever taught this, I left this out. And I'm so glad -- this has been something God has been working in my heart -- I'm so glad he brought it back to my remembrance this time.

If you have no background in God's word but you still have a feeling in your spirit, if you received Christ some time ago but you've just never grown up in him and the Word of God and you're thinking, then I can forget it where spiritual discernment is concerned. You may still -- because his Holy Spirit is in you, he may still check you on something. You might still get a feeling. So I'm not saying that it never applies to you. I am saying this, go to someone you know who does have a working knowledge of the scriptures and ask them, "This is what I'm feeling. This is what I think that God is telling me through the indwelling spirit. Do you think that I'm right here?" And begin to know God through his word.

But even until then, is he telling you something you need to respond to? Can you find out from someone is it congruent with the Word of God? What is it he is telling us? I need to be smarter than I am. I need to be wise about matters in this age of the poser. If you have a teenager in your home, you need spiritual discernment!

Audience: Amen!

Beth: If you're a teacher... A friend... A relative... A neighbor... There is so much going on that we cannot see. The Holy Spirit can make known to us, can reveal to us, disclose to us what our human eyes would never see. If he can do it, I want it! I want it! That's what this series is about. Let's pray together.

Father, we ask you in the mighty name of Jesus to work this work even as we study it together. That even today, father in something that you're doing, would you just show us, God that we really can hear you. That when you have a mind to speak, Lord, you are perfectly capable of letting us know in matters, father where it's got to be right or it's got to be left. It's got to be this way or it's got to be that way. You really do have specific will in mind for us. Tell us, God show us what we need to see. Give us ears to hear what we need to understand. Open our spiritual eyes and enlighten us. In the mighty and miraculous name of Jesus. Amen.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Very, very important. What I have found often times and this is a way to discern what is going on inside our own heart, when you see somebody or you see something someone does that is distasteful, despicable, gross, you know just something you can't stand, it is really easy to pigeon hole that person right over in the category of despised.

One of the things I found is that when the love of God rises up in me, so that it is his love that is actually controlling me, flowing through me, I'm going to love that person and I'm going to discern in myself the spirit that is working, whether it is the spirit of God and the spirit of love. So not only discern what is going on with others, ask God to give you discernment about what is going on inside of you.

One of the things I've always recognized about the spirit at work in us, if it is the Holy Spirit it will always be redemptive. The enemy's spirit, the realm of darkness and deception and destruction, it is a spirit of destruction, it may use deception, or manipulation to destroy but it will not be a redemptive spirit. God's spirit is redemptive.

Betty, I want us to look back at a scene that something happened that was kind of prayed into place, it was just something God did real, real special. I prayed about a child I saw walking and ended up being able to express the love of God and this is our last week to be able to do something very special in a particular way for these beautiful children. I want you to watch.

On the Mission Field:

James: Here's just an old worn out shoe. But here's two pretty little feet that this wouldn't work for. Maybe it would work for somebody for a while but this little girl needs shoes.

Betty: James, I look around and I see all these beautiful children and I think it is not things we're trying to give them, it is life! And shoes to put on their feet because there are so many diseases that comes from walking around in their bare feet. They pick up so many things that get in their system, in their bloodstream and just slowly destroys their little bodies. So it's a need that we're asking for. It is not just a luxury. They need our help.

James: It is not even comfort. It is a chance. And this is something I'm very excited about. It is something we can do together. We're going to get her some shoes. Get her some nice shoes. These pretty feet -- get all the dirt off of them. Man, those dirty feet. Clean them up. Are they ticklish? They're not ticklish? [Laughing] Are they too tough to be ticklish? Huh? They are; aren't they?

You know I just hope you will do all you can to help us share life and opportunities and better future for children like this. It is so easy to talk about the love of God and about how much God loves people but it is a whole different thing to show them how much God loves them. A little girl like this just out here in the middle of a remote village in Central America, feels very comfortable in the arms of love. Thanks for helping do all you can. In the name of love, for the glory of God.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I just -- I don't even know how that moves you but I know how I prayed for that little girl when she literally disappeared into the distance. I said, "God, I wanted so much to tell her how much you love her." And a few minutes later she walked by in my direction and I just sat down in the road. This is before I had Betty come over and sit by me. I just sat down in the road and a total stranger, never been in her area before, she just walks over and gets in my lap. She crawled into the lap of love -- that's what she did! And when I told her that we wanted to put some feet on -- some shoes on some little feet, just a little bit larger than these tiny little shoes, I knew I could do it for one reason, because you who view *LIFE Today* wherever you are, you would help us put God's arms of love around those children and put shoes on their feet.

I'm asking you to help us. This is our last week that we're asking you to help us really get the resources in time to deliver these gifts, which is for the children, it is a surprise. I mean food is a surprise, fresh water is just overwhelming to them but they never ever dream that somebody would give them something like a pair of shoes. It keeps them

from getting diseases from hookworms and other problems. We want to give them to the children. We want to put in the hands of the missionaries something they can put on their feet. So right now we're giving shoes and smiles.

Betty, this amount of money is so simple: \$36, ten pairs of shoes; \$72, 20 pairs of shoes for 20 children; \$144, 40 children. To do cleft palate surgery or where they have facial deformity, it averages \$500; \$1,000, two smiles! So we call it shoes and smiles for Christmas.

Betty: What an opportunity! This is an area of need that we can really make a difference. These children can use these shoes. Why? To protect their feet. They have enough challenges in their life with other areas and needs but this can help protect their little feet from disease that they get from the cuts and the bruises and the scratches and all the things that are out there that they might step on, James, to hurt their feet. And then if you can give them a smile, oh, my goodness! You heard the laughter of that little girl. What a joy to fill a need of a child. Won't you join with us and let's make the difference in their lives?

James: Would you do it? This is the last week that we're asking for your help. We need the resources now so we can have the shoes and smiles as a gift by Christmas.

Would you simply dial the number? Take your bankcard; use it like a check, please. Would you do it now? It's so -- I know some of you are praying, God, meet the need. But can you help meet the need? Can you be the answer to someone's prayer? Can you be the answer to that need? If you want to write a check, make it to *LIFE*. If you want to go online, LifeToday.org, you do it.

We have some gifts that we want to send you, the beautiful devotional book, the "Heart of the Father" bronze; we want to bless you as you bless others. Thank you so much for making that call. If you get a busy now, you be persistent and call until you get through.

Begin clip:

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it children needlessly suffer, not only from a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we take for granted such as a healthy smile or a simple pair of shoes. For most of these children they've never owned a new pair of shoes and while that may seem minor in the light of all

their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections that could lead to crippling consequences, disease, and even death.

LIFE Outreach International has developed a durable all-terrain shoe especially made for the harshest conditions in children of all ages. By responding today you can help life immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 200,000 children around the world just in time for the holidays!

Your gift of \$36 will help provide 10 pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will provide 20 pairs. And a gift of \$144 will help provide 40 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

In appreciation of your gift be sure to request the bestselling inspirational devotional by Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide two children with corrective cleft palate surgeries and you may request the heart of father bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

In the studio:

James: We ask you to do whatever you can and this is our last week so we need to hear from you. If there is any way, could you give a couple of children smiles for Christmas? \$500 for a surgery, could you give two? We're sending you the beautiful bronze.

You may just say, James, I'm going to give a large gift to help you with the shoes and smiles. We're going to send the beautiful "Heart of the Father" bronze and then I promise you, *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young, I can't even imagine this getting into the hands of every Christian and praying person on the planet, it is just that good. Precious child of missionaries, and a beautiful missionary herself, Sarah Young -- beautiful daily devotions. I'm anxious to send it to you.

Whatever gift you could make, do the best you can to give the shoes and smiles for Christmas. Thank you and thank all of you for joining us. I appreciate you watching. Thank you for being with us. Thank you so much. Encourage your friends to watch the program.

Announcer: Tomorrow on *LIFE Today*, Pastor Jack Hayford and author Margaret Feinberg challenge the body of Christ to work together and unleash God's power on earth.