



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Nothing Wasted: How God Heals Our Broken Past- Part 1

Guest(s): Kasey Van Norman

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Are you in a season of hurt, pain, or confusion right now? Are you in need of some encouragement today? Well, if so, you have come to the right place. You're listening to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh.

Our guest today is Kasey Van Norman. Kasey is a bestselling author, counselor, cancer survivor, and Bible teacher. She holds two master of arts degrees from Stephen F. Austin State University, one in community counseling, another in biblical studies. Kasey lives in Texas with her husband, Justin, and their two children. Kasey is also a plenary speaker for the Extraordinary Women's conferences and the American Association of Christian Counselors.

The presentation you're about to hear is from a recent eWomen's event in Pensacola, Florida. Kasey is speaking to hundreds of women who are there at the event, and you can definitely feel the energy in the room. Let's listen now as Kasey Van Norman shares an encouraging word of truth from scripture.

Kasey Van Norman: I want to encourage us in the Word of the Lord. Listen, ladies, hold on tight, we're going to cover some ground today. We're going to cover some ground today. I want you to get your Bible out. I want to get your note-taking pen out. You go ahead and do that. Grab your phone.

You can go ahead and turn to 1 Kings. Don't be scared. 1 Kings chapter 17. Oh, we're going Old Testament today. I'm feeling it. I'm feeling the Old Testament. I want us to be women that know and love the Word of God more than anything in our life, that we want it as our daily bread, that we pant for it as the deer pants for water. So can I encourage you? I just want to speak out. To begin this teaching, I want to speak out truth to you from the very beginning. You can jot these scriptures down. We are not in 1 Kings yet, but you can jot this down.

Exodus 14:13, "And Moses said to the people, 'Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will work for you today.'" 1 Chronicles 20:15,

"The Lord says to you, 'Do not be afraid, do not be dismayed at this great horde or this great group of people, for the battle is not yours, but God's.'" Verse 17, "You will not need to fight this battle. So stand firm, hold your position and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf." Isaiah 46:8, "Remember this and stand firm. Recall it to mind, you sinners. Remember the former things of old. For I am God, and there is no other. I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning from ancient times, things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand and I will accomplish my purpose.'" Galatians 5:1, "For freedom, Christ has set you free. Stand firm then, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." And then finally, 2 Timothy 2:19, "But God's firm foundation stands, bearing the seal that the Lord knows those who are His."

I want to pull all of this together for us. This is really so beautiful. It gives us so much insight into who we are as women, as sisters, as daughters, as children of God. Because the words, stand firm, it's actually one phrase in both the Hebrew and the Greek. It's very similar. It's almost the same in the Old Testament and the New Testament. It's beautiful. Stand firm in the Greek is "histemi". And it means this, take a note, to be established, taken root, something that is recognized and accepted.

I just want us to put some layers right underneath what it is for us to stand firm in the faith or stand firm in our life, or really believe this. So even deeper, it means that we are established. We are grounded. We are rooted. There is something in our life that we have recognized as true, and we have accepted that truth. And now it has become this core belief that is motivating the things that we do and the things that we say. It's really changing us from the inside out. It's really changing us. It's really healing us.

So, let me give you just a couple of recognitions from, if you read back through just the five verses, I just pulled five verses for you out of the whole Bible of this "stand firm." But here's what's interesting about all of them. They all have one theme. They all make something make sense, and it's this, that standing firm in God actually has nothing to do with our own ability to do so. Standing firm in God is completely contingent on God's ability to be faithful to us. And if you read back through just those verses, did you not see that? "See the salvation, which He will work for you." "The battle is not yours, it's God's." "There is no other God. All of my purpose, I will accomplish." "For freedom, Christ set us free." We didn't do the work. Christ did it.

And His firm foundation stands because He knows those who are His. I just want you to see that God goes first. That's really all that is. God goes first, because we can miss this, right, and it can mess us up. If we miss this integral part of the way that God works, who He is, His nature, how He communes with us, then everything we do will become this religious non-relational experience of God, and He won't ever become our reality, and we will not be walking on firm foundation. So, our ability to be faithful doesn't come from our ability to be faithful. But God's, God's desire to pursue us and be faithful to us first. I love that.

And here's the rub for us, sisters. Here's where we're going to doubt it, is because we trust God only to the degree that we believe He is worthy of our trust. We will only trust God to the degree that we believe He is worthy of it. So the question for all of us in this room today is, is He worthy? And how does my life prove that He is? I got to wake up every morning, asking myself that over and over. How do my relationships prove that He is worthy of my trust? My job, my career, my motivations, the way that I speak, my tone of voice, what I consume, what I do in a day, how does it prove to me and to everyone else that I believe He is worthy, that I believe He is faithful, even when I am not?

Mm. Because then if you just go back through these passages, you know why I need him to be? I need him to be because I fear I'm at a Red Sea moment. It seems completely impossible, and I fear, and I need to stand firm knowing that He's got this. I can easily be dismayed at the great horde or the great battle of people, of onlookers. I can easily want to capsize into the fear of judgment or comparison. The odds feel stacked against me, and I want to see the salvation of the Lord.

Isaiah 46:8. I want to know that there is no other God. I want to believe in a force that's seen the beginning from the end. I don't need my one-way subjective truth. I need eternal truth. I need a God who purposes me and designs me and calls me my name. And I certainly want freedom. Galatians 5:1. I want a freedom so real and so true, because we talk about that in the church, right? We want to be free, but what does that mean? Because I'm going to be tempted to, again, turn to the yoke.

You know what a yoke is? It's burden, it's slavery, it's heavy, it's exhausting, and that's what slavery does to us. And it's an internal thing. I want to be free. I want to be truly, truly free, and I want to stand firm knowing the Lord sees me and He knows me, that He has fully accepted me even when no one else does.

All right. So, all of these things prove to us that He is worthy of our trust, and yet we can still doubt. I'm going to tell you that there's going to come a time in your life, if you haven't already lived it, you will, and it is a crossroads of faith. I wouldn't be up here if I didn't believe that true healing was possible, and I don't mean physical healing. I mean, internal mind, body, soul healing that frees you to live your life in the fullness of life.

You know, it is available to you. There really is healing for you. You really can be free of that thought life of depression, of mental illness, of unforgiveness, of bitterness, of resentment, of trauma. There is healing for us available. Do you think I'd be up here if I hadn't lived this and experienced for myself so much?

But you see, we've got to believe it. It is not just about us believing in God. We can spend our whole Christian life saying we believe in God and that'd be true, but freedom, true healing, true transformation is when we believe Him. We believe who He is. We believe what He says about us. And there is nothing that happens outside us or inside us that can compromise that in any way.

Wow. All right. So, I want to show you exactly what this looks like, and this is where we're going to use one of my favorite stories in the Bible. And will you pray for me right now, just in your spirit? Will you pray for me? This is a lot of words, and I want you to hear the Word of God. I want the Spirit to just rest on my tongue and you just to be blown away by what He wants to do for you. I mean, I'm shaking because I know all of you in here have pain and you have hurt and you have questions and you have doubts.

You've experienced loss and hardship and struggle and suffering, and I want God to speak to your heart. And I want Him to do such a work today that when you leave this place, there is no more doubt in your mind. That a tall order? Yeah. Can He do it? Oh, yeah. I don't want you to ever doubt again that He is worthy of all of your trust all the time, no matter what is going on in our world, around you, in your home, even in your body, that He is worthy of your trust always, all the time, because He is faithful and true. And He is coming after you just because He darn well wants to. He doesn't need us, He wants us. Oh, it's good. And He is using everything in His arsenal to prove himself to you. He is using all of His resources and faithfulness to prove himself finally and fully that you never doubt it again.

And let me tell you how He does it. Three ways. He prepares our heart through pain. I'm going to tell you this story today. It's a real story that really happened, and you're going to see a man be prepared in his heart to trust God, but it's going to come through a very painful experience. Secondly, He will position your heart in truth. I'm going to talk about exactly what it looks like for God to actually position our heart, God to do the work, not us. And finally and thirdly, He purposes our heart, He's going to purpose our heart for His glory, for His glory.

So, let's look at what this looks like. 1 Kings. We're going to start in chapter 17 and verse one. And let me set you up just a little bit about where we are in history, where we are in the biblical narrative. It's been about a hundred years since King David ruled the United Israel. And now Israel is split into north and south, the Northern and the Southern Kingdom. They're split. It's a very, very dark time for the Israelite nation. And we know the theme, right? If you've read the old Testament at all, you know this theme that God's used over and over with the Israelites. They're called. He says, "I'm faithful. Trust me." They're kind of on a high for a little bit obeying, and then ... it just all falls apart because they doubt. They doubt that He's really who He says He is. They doubt that He's really enough.

And then God uses these really painful experiences to once again, bring them back to himself, to prove to them again, I am who I say that I am. I will totally fulfill you and totally satisfy you. I have promised you good land. I have promised you fruit. You've got to trust me. And yet, oh, we just see the fallout. We see the fallout of sin. We see the fallout of idolatry. This is where we've ... kind of are here in 1 Kings. And so another source of redemption and rescue that God uses is the prophets. He raises up all of these men. These prophets just

speaking out through the Holy Spirit on His behalf, and to point the people once again back to their chosenness, back to Him.

And so, this is where we catch Elijah, probably one of the most popular, courageous, stand-firm kind of prophets, but he's in a bad way because King Ahab is the king of the north, and this is a bad dude, the worst, the worst. And he's brought in every foreign God, and he loves him some foreign women. And perhaps one of the most popular women in the Bible is his wife. Do you remember her name? Jezebel.

Now, listen, ladies, we know we don't ever want to be called Jezebel. It's one thing to be called Delilah, but it's another thing to be called Jezebel. And this is King Ahab's wife, and she's pretty much either killed off or run off all of the prophets.

All right, so let's pick up here. This is where we're introduced to Elijah. Are you ready? 1 Kings 17. "Now Elijah the Tishbite of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab," so Elijah is talking to King Ahab, "'As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.' And the word of the Lord came to him," this is God speaking to Elijah now, "'Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the Brook Kerith, which is east of the Jordan. You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.' So he went and did according to the Word of the Lord. He went and lived by the Brook of Kerith that is east of the Jordan, and the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook."

Verse seven, "And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain." Elijah's saying to Ahab, "There's going to be a famine in the land. There's going to be a famine in the land." And then he kind of disappears because God takes him to the Brook Kerith. Well, Kerith means cut down and cut off. That's what that word means. So, Elijah is forced into this season of isolated pain of preparation because he is cut off from people, but he is also cut down, which means he was depressed. I mean, just plainly, he was struggling in his spirit and his soul. He had depression and anxiety. He had worry. This was a very painful season for Elijah.

For three years, he would be hiding out, just being prepared, just waiting on the Lord to tell him the next thing to do. And I want you to notice what's happening while he's at the Brook Kerith, while he is in a season of isolation and pain, what is God providing for him? Bread and meat and water. Is He giving him his daily needs? Yeah. And will He do the same for you in your season of isolation, of depression, of anxiety, of pain? Will He give you what you need every single day? But now also notice something. Did God give Elijah all of it, like stores and savings of meat and bread to put back for later? No, just day to day, day to day, day to day. Trust me today. I don't need you to plan out next week or next month or next year. I just need you to trust me today.

Sisters, can we start praying for that? Give me faithfulness today, Lord, to be faithful to you, to believe that your mercy is new. He is a lamp unto our feet. He is not a spotlight. He is only going to show us the next step, the next thing, the next step. Why? Because He wants us to trust Him. He wants us to trust Him. Our whole livelihood, freedom, and meaning, it is contingent on trusting God, so of course, He's going to set this thing up this way. Of course.

I'm going to tell you that I do believe that God will take you through a season of private humbling before He will ever use you publicly. And I don't mean publicly right like this, like in front, on a stage. That's not what I mean. It can look like that. It can also look like leading a Bible study in your church. It can look like in leadership at your workplace, it can be leading your home to not be sinful heathens. You know what I'm saying?

And I think that you and I, sister, have to go through this isolated pain, this humbling, to experience, really, what God wants for us, for Him to become real, so He's preparing us. He's preparing us for something. That's what he's doing to Elijah. He wants so much more. He wants to do so much more in us so that He can do so much more through us.

A. W. Tozer says, "It is doubtful that God can use a man greatly until He hurts him deeply." And I know that rubs some of us wrong. It makes us uncomfortable to think of a God who would allow hurt and pain in the world. But y'all, this is just something we've got to read the Bible about. Why are we going to give God credit for all the good stuff, our good, our motor version of good, our American version of good? We're going to give God the credit for all that good, all the victory, all the blessing, all the favor, but He doesn't get any credit for the suffering, for the pain, for the hurt for the chaos? You don't see Him in any of that?

That's not the God of the Bible that I read. He is a God who has suffered and He is in all things. He is working out everything for his eternal plans and He sees how this matters, the things that are impossible for us to wrap our mind around. He sees how this matters, and this is what He's showing Elijah in this cave. Have you ever been there? Have you been in a season of preparation of isolated pain where God is getting you ready? He is just giving you what you need for the next day, the day, the day?

Let me tell you what he's doing there. He's developing dependence and obedience, dependence that you really believe that He is enough to feed you for this day. And He wants you to look and address anything that might be getting in the way of that.

Roger Marsh:

James 1:2-4 says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, when you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Friends, it is no secret that suffering is never easy. That's why they're called hard times that we go through, right? But in Romans 8:28, we're told that "God works all things together for good." He makes sure that nothing we go through is ever wasted. Make sure you join us again tomorrow on Family Talk to hear the encouraging conclusion of Kasey Van Norman's presentation.

In the meantime, to learn more about Kasey and her ministry, visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. Dr. Tim Clinton actually interviewed Kasey about her testimony last year, and you can find that conversation on our website as well. Again, the web address, drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. Feel free to give us a call as well. We're here 24/7 to answer any questions you might have about Family Talk or the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Our number is 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825.

Thanks so much for listening to Family Talk today. Join us again tomorrow to hear the conclusion of Kasey Van Norman's passionate, encouraging presentation. I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, have a blessed day.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton here for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. You know, the news comes in all kinds of shapes, sizes, and formats these days, but how do you cut through the noise and get to the heart of the matters that affect your family? Come to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and sign up for Dr. Dobson's monthly newsletter. You'll find clarity on tough issues, encouragement for your everyday life, and trusted principles to help you build strong, healthy, connected families. Go to drjamesdobson.org. Sign up today. That's drjamesdobson.org.