



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Love and Laughter – Part 2

Guest(s): Marjorie Caldwell

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Dr. Dobson: Well, welcome again everyone to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm James Dobson and I want to begin today by reading a portion of Scripture from 2 Corinthians 12: 8-10, where the apostle Paul wrote about his own infirmity, or impediment, he didn't explain which. He wrote, "Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it from me, but He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties, for when I am weak, then I am strong."

The apostle Paul's attitude toward his pain and difficulty in this life should inspire all of us every day. Now in a moment we're going to be hearing from a woman who adopted that same attitude concerning her personal story. Our guest again today is the late counselor and speaker, Marjorie Caldwell. Last time, her quick wit made us laugh and her moving testimony touched our hearts. We'll expect more of that speaking style today as we hear the rest of her story. Here again is the voice of the late Marjorie Caldwell.

Marjorie Caldwell: I went all through high school and I was in love with... I've loved guys ever since I was 13, just drooled over them. And you know, just love them. And I fell so in love with this guy and he was a wonderful Christian. I thought, Oh Lord, you sent me a Christian to be in love with. I'm so excited. I'm going to wake up more in love and more in love. And then we graduated from high school and then he went to one college and I went to Rice University there in Houston, and he went about 90 miles off to Texas A&M. And I went up to visit and he'd come home and we fell more in love all the time. And in the summer between our sophomore and junior year in college, well, we were going to get married.

Lord, I was so excited. Lord, you're so good. I just thought you picked me out somebody that's so super and he loves the Lord. And I was just excited to death. And now you didn't work and put your husband through school in those days. You just moved where they were or you went on with them and if you married him, you went with them. That really was convenient. And then you just didn't put him through school and work. So I was supposed to quit school and go up to

A&M and be his wife. And a few weeks before the marriage, when all the invitations are out, the gifts are coming in and you have your bridesmaids dresses, all the exciting things. And I was so excited, I couldn't stand it. Parties. And then one morning real early, I was called to come to the hospital about six o'clock. That Marvin was very ill. I thought, "Oh no." And mother and I drove quickly up to the hospital.

And I walked in and looked down to the face of the guy I was to marry in just a short time. And he was dying. Dying? I thought "Oh, God, no. You can't do this to me." And I looked at him. While I was there, while I was standing there, he died. And I thought, Oh no. And I wanted to die too. I've never been so devastated. I was so sick and so scared and so mad at God and so upset. And I thought, "I can't stand it, Lord." And I got madder by the day. And as time wore on that summer, I became so hostile and rebellious toward God. And I was just shaking my spiritual fist in God's face and tried to pretend he wasn't there.

Down deep, I knew He was, I was just thinking, "if that's the way you are God, I don't want anything to do with you." And while I was doing this in Houston and suffering and wanting to die, I went to mother's medicine cabinet two or three times. I knew where those pills were and I could take them all. I really wanted to die. And if anybody had said to me, "Marge, this is a very important time in your life because you're going to learn something that'll help you later." I would have thought, "Well, I don't want to learn it, whatever it is. I don't care." But you see, when I look in the faces of people there in Houston, young people, I'm on call at the hospital all the time now for young people who try to take their own lives. And I go to see them.

Jan was a student, sophomore in Texas in Huntsville, Texas. And she had tried to take her own life. And I heard about her. All I knew was her name. And I went up to the hospital and she was lying there awake. And I said, "Jan, I love you, darling. And God loves you so much." She said, "Get out of here. You get out of here. You don't love me. You don't know me and God" ... I thought she was going to spit on me. She said, "God, doesn't love me. He doesn't love me. And there isn't any God anyway." And I said, "Oh Jan, yes, He loves you darling. There is a God. And he loves you so much. He made you." She said, "Oh, big deal, lady. You talk so big. I'll tell you a few things I've done. Let's see how much you love me and how much that God of yours loves me."

And I said, "Jan, you don't need to tell me, honey." She said, "Oh yeah, you talk so big." And she curled my hair for about 15 minutes. And then she said, "Now, do you love me, lady?" And I said, "More than I did when I came in this room." And she said, "I guess God loves me." And I said, "Oh Jan, yes, darling. He loves you." And she started crying and she leaned toward me and she said, "Lady, don't tell me things that aren't true. I even blew this. I can't even take my own life. And don't tell me something that's not true." And I said, "Oh Jan, Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. And no man cometh to the father, but by me.' And he said, Jesus said, 'You'll know the truth and the truth will make you free.'"

And she cried. And I put my arms around that precious girl. She didn't accept Jesus that day, but she did later. So happy, so well adjusted. And she said to me, over and over, "You don't know how it is to want to die." And I said, "Yes, I do. Because Jan, when I lost the boy that I was to marry, I wanted to die. And I went to the cabinet and I'd look in it and think I could take that whole bottle of pills and end it all. But thank God he didn't let me." Romans 8:28, "all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose." Even when we're mad at God, all the time we're mad and upset at Him, He's still working everything for us. Thank you, Lord. And you know what, I met Chuck, and now I was sad, but I wasn't blind.

Oh boy. He had 44 shoulders and a 29 waist. I looked at him and I thought, "Well, you sure are cute, but I could care less about a boyfriend." But everybody at school knew. Mother and daddy made me go back to Rice and I wanted to just die. But they made me go on back and finish my education. And there he was and he heard about me and he decided to be my friend. God sent me a friend. And I'll tell you, we'd go out on the spit of this old statue out there near park in Houston every night, and I'd cry and I'd cry. Nobody else would let me cry. Everybody'd say, "Oh, let's go to the show. Oh Marge, don't cry. Let's go." And I wanted to cry.

And I just wanted to scream and yell. And we'd go out there on that base of that stature and I'd scream, "Why? Tell me, Chuck. Just tell me why did God do it?" And he'd say, "I don't know Marge, but all I know is that God never takes anything away from you that he doesn't give you something better in its place." He didn't know he's going to be better. And so he was my best friend and I would cry and cry and cry. And he'd pat me and say, "It's okay. God has something wonderful." And God used that young man to heal me, to help heal me. And so, we began to date and we fell madly, excruciatingly, yummily in love. Now that is in love. It was wonderful. I was so in love. I couldn't stand it. We were just so... Oh, it was so fun. And I kept saying, "Oh Lord, thank you."

And I found out that God does send you someone else, that He does take care of you. He loves you. He knows where you are. He's going to take care of you. He's not going to say, "You just lie down there and suffer." He's right there with us. And that's so good. Oh, I just get so excited to think He's right here. And He was in that plane today too. And I kept thinking, Lord, do you know, why don't you do something about that one over there that's leaving, Lord? But He didn't pay attention. But anyway... and then we got married. And Chuck was in the oil business. I said he was in the love business. You know what, we had a wonderful time.

We had a son first and then we had a daughter five years later. So much fun. And then Gaye was about two and he was seven. And I began to fall apart. Mother told Chuck when we got ready to get married, she said, "Chuck, she can't cook and sew, but she is the healthiest person you ever saw in your life." You know what Chuck told our whole church the other night, I thought it was really ugly. He stood up and said, "If I want to hide anything from Marge, I put it

in the oven." Now that's ugly. And you know what, the preacher got up right after that and you know what he said? He said, "Even the mice eat out at Margie's house." I could have died. Well, I don't care.

But anyway, I began to fall apart. My nerves began to give way and I began to cry a lot. And depression started in and I thought, "Oh God, what's the matter with me?" And I began to cry and walk the floor and I lost weight. And I just, I was like, I was in a long tunnel and I couldn't see the end. Oh y'all, I don't argue with anybody about what hell's like. If hell is anything like depression, I just want to be sure I don't go there. And it was the most terrible time. And Chuck would say, God love him, he'd say, "Honey, I don't know what's the matter. I've never been like this, but honey, I love you." And I'd say, "You can't love me. I'm so skinny and ugly and I'm sick. And I don't know what to do and I cry all the time. And you know, I'm so scared."

And he said, "Honey, when I said, I'd marry you, I didn't say 'for better or worse, but I'll only take the better.' I married you because I love you, period." And God used that consistent, constant love to help me heal. And then one day I kept getting worse and worse. And one day they took me to a psychiatrist. Now, in those days, you didn't go to a psychiatrist to find out who you were, you went to find out where they were going to put you. I thought, "Oh no." And I went up there and I said, "Dr. Smith, you better put me away, something is very wrong with me." And he said, "No, as long as you think you're safe and think I have to put Chuck away, you're safe. It's when you..." Well, I said that wrong. Here's what he really said.

What he really said was, "As long as you think something's wrong with you, you're safe. It's when you want to put Chuck away, I'll be worrying about you." And so the days got long and I really, really was down and fear and guilt entered my life. I was so guilty. "God, why am I this way? I have a husband who loves me and two kids who have one head a piece and they're normal," whatever that is. Lord, what in the world. And I was just sick and I would just cry out, "Oh God, do something for me."

Well, the days got better and I got a little bit better. And then the good days got more than the bad days. And one day we were living in Oklahoma City. I was out hanging up clothes and I looked up and God never does speak to me. "Marge." If he did, I'd never hear the second thing he said, because I'd either die of fright or I'd be the first one in the rapture. I didn't know which one, but maybe He speaks to you that way. That's all right. But He knows how He can speak to us. And it's just kind of in my mind, it was just like He said, "Marge, you're going to get well." And I thought, "Oh Lord, I'm going to get well and get to be a wife and a mother again." Like, "Oh God, thank you." And the good days got better. And the bad days got a little fewer. And then one day I was well, and I am so grateful to God for that terrible valley. You know why? Because now I'm on the staff of our church in the counseling center. And now I sit there from early morning till five and six in the afternoon and every hour, either a teenager or marital

problems. I do all the teenagers and those with marital problems and they come every hour.

And I can say, "I know how you feel. I know, but it's okay because God can heal you. And He will." Oh, I thank God for that. I thank God that He let me take off the mask I'd worn all my life. When I went through this terrible time of depression, I learned how to take that mask off because you see, I thought if people knew me, they wouldn't like me so I tried to be somebody else I thought they'd like. And I found freedom. And I want you to ... this weekend, that's what I hope, that if you've worn a mask up here, that you'll take it off. And oh, it is so much fun to be free. Free to be yourself. Old, crazy, nutty Marge. I just go, Chuck says, "Go to it, Marge. Go on, be as nutty and crazy." He doesn't call me a dingbat. He just looks at me once in a while like maybe there's something to that. But no, he's so sweet and wonderful to let me be me. And I am so excited that I can be who I am and it's freedom. It's wonderful.

And you know what? Sure enough, we moved back to Houston after I was well, my daddy was drinking all the time, so bad and cursing so badly. And for two years we just went to church on Sunday morning. Wouldn't you think we'd have been very active, but we were just so busy raising kids and doing everything else. And we always went to church and Sunday school on Sunday morning, but that was it. We didn't want to get involved because if you went down there too much, they really made you live down to church. I don't know how I knew, but I thought that was what they did. And you know what? Billy Graham's team came to Houston and we had some mutual friends who knew the team and we made ice cream and cake. And every night we took the ice cream and cake over to where the team was. And we sat down and listened to them talk.

And back in those days, in my denomination, maybe not in yours, they were, "I don't drink and I don't dance and I don't smoke, and I don't do this and I don't do that," and that made me real good, you know, if I didn't do about bunch of things. I was sick of that. One girl said to me, "Ms. Caldwell, I don't drink. I don't dance. I don't smoke. I don't use makeup-" and I thought, "you can stand a little." And she went on to tell me, I thought "My soul, I don't care what you don't do. Tell me what you do, and then I'll know who you are." And so, you know what, sure enough, those guys didn't sit around and talk about what they didn't do. They talked about what Jesus was doing. And I got so excited I thought I couldn't stand it. And I thought, "Can you use a nut, Lord? Can you use an idiot," because I thought I marched to a different drummer or something. I saw something funny when nobody else did. And I thought, what in the world's wrong?

You know what? One morning, May the eighth, 1952, I knelt down in my kitchen. Chuck was on a business trip in Oklahoma City, and I'd had it. And the Billy Graham team, I had a fight on my hands. It was Satan saying, "Don't get involved. Don't you give your life to Christ because if you do, you're going to be in a mess. He's going to always ... you're just going ... Chuck's not going to like that. And you're going to be at the church all the time. Don't give your life to

Christ. Don't get involved." Because you see, we were in the oil business and we were in the sales end of the oil business and entertaining and all that. And he said, "You can't do that. You know, you better watch it." And there was another voice was saying, "There's more, Marge. There's more to being a Christian than just Sunday morning. You're going to love it." And I had a civil war. Some of you know what I'm talking about, some of you in high school, God's saying, "I want you," and another boy's saying, "Oh man, don't be different. You don't want to be like that. Oh man, don't listen to..."

And there's another voice saying, "Oh man, I can use you. I want you. I need you in high school." You know what it is? And you know what happened? Well, I just knelt down in my room, May the 8th, 1952. And I said, "Jesus, I give you my life. My kids, my husband, my everything. And please make Chuck understand. He loves to run and play." And I didn't know how he'd act when I told him. And you know what, I got up and I thought I'd given my life to Christ, surely some exciting what happened. Nothing did. So I just cleaned up the house. I didn't know what else to do. And you know what? When Chuck got home, you know what he said, "Marge, I have a surprise for you. And we went home and he said, "Honey, this morning I was in my hotel room and I just knelt down by my bed. And I said, "God, I'll give you my wife and my kids and my business, my social life, my career. I give you my life, Lord."

Don't you quit praying. My daddy started watching Chuck. He watched him very carefully. And miracle of all miracles, he came to me one day and he said, "What's wrong with Chuck?" And I said, "Nothing, daddy, why?" He said, "Something's different about him." I said, "Ask Chuck, daddy." He went in and asked him. And Chuck said, "Oh, Mr. Boyd, nothing's wrong. It's right for the first time in my life. And it's so wonderful." And the day of miracles, one day, daddy came to me and he said, "If what Chuck has is Jesus, can you help me have Him too?" And I had the joy of leading my dad to the Lord. He never took another drink. He lived five years, had both legs amputated during those five years. Never a curse word. Never, in all the sedation that he had, never curse word. And he said to me one day, "Marge, will I have legs in heaven?" And I said, "Oh, sure, daddy. You'll have a glorified body that's just perfect."

He's up there now. I guess he's playing 42 because that's what he wanted to do. I don't know. I don't know what they do in heaven, but I know it's going to be so great. I was telling Chris when he was eight years old, Chris was eight. That's a grandson. And Chuck was 11, and I told Chris all about heaven. And he said, "Oh, Grandmamma, that's great." And he grabbed my hand and said, "Let's go now." I said, "Well, I'm not ready yet." One day Chris said to me, "Grandmamma, did God make me?" And I said, "Yes, darling, he did. You know he made you." And he said, "Did he make you?" And I said, "Yes, darling." He said, "Well then, why do he put those wrinkles in your face?"

Later we were out in the kitchen and I heard Chuck, the 11 year old at that time, he said, "Chris, don't talk to grandma about her wrinkles. You're going to hurt

her feelings." And Chris said, "Well Chuckie, how old is grandma?" And Chuckie said, "She's got to be 100." I came around there real fast.

Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul. Oh, thank you God for making me whole. Thank you, God, for giving to me such a great salvation, so rich and so free. Not cheap, but free. Thank you, dear Jesus, for tonight. Thank you for laughter, for joy. Thank you even for broken hearts and broken dreams because we know you take those broken dreams and broken hearts and you put them together again and you help us to live and to love and to laugh again. I thank you for that, Jesus.

And there's some girl in this room, some woman whose heart isn't right, whose heart maybe is broken, Lord. There might be one here who knows exactly what I'm talking about, about depression, who knows exactly what I'm talking about, about not wanting to live anymore. Oh, God put your precious arms around them and give them such a sense of strength and love and joy and help them to know that you are the God of life and you'll make it all right. You'll bring it all back together again, in Jesus' name. Amen

Roger Marsh:

Amen and amen. This is Roger Marsh again. And what a stirring prayer to end this classic Family Talk message. The late Marjorie Caldwell was our speaker both yesterday and today here on the program. And I hope her story touched your heart. Let us know what you thought of these two programs by connecting with us on our Facebook page, you can find our profile by searching for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Once you're there, comment on either yesterday or today's broadcast posts, then join in on the conversation with thousands of other listeners about this stirring presentation. We love hearing from you. And we also love hearing how our programs are impacting your lives. So go now to facebook.com and search for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. You'll be glad you did. Well thanks so much for listening every day this week to our programs and also for your faithful financial support of our ministry. Be sure to tune in again, Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, have a safe and blessed weekend, everyone.

Announcer:

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Dr. Clinton:

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