



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Luis Palau Tribute: A Biblical Look at the Family - Part 2

Guest(s): Luis Palau

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Dr. Dobson: Hello everyone, I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, which is a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. Today, we're going to hear the second half of an interview with the late Christian evangelist, Dr. Luis Palau, who went to be with the Lord on March 11th of this year, really just three weeks ago or so. I want you to know the context for this program today. It was recorded in 1984, the first time I had ever met Dr. Palau and he came to Focus on the Family, which was only seven years old at the time. And we sat and talked for a while, began to get acquainted that I learned what a great man he is. I could just sense his wonderful spirit for the Lord. And we stood and talked then we walked into the studio and recorded what is now for us a two-part program. You heard the first part last time and we're going to hear the balance today.

Dr. Dobson: Now this was 38 years ago and we've aired that program a few times through the years because I consider it to be a classic. Dr. Luis Palau was of course known around the world. He spoke in Latin America primarily, but in Russia and other places. He was associated with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Billy Graham particularly; they were great friends. The website for Dr. Palau says that he spoke to more than one billion people over the years. That's just amazing. He's authored more than 50 books and his radio broadcasts were heard by millions of people on 3,500 radio stations in 48 countries. God has used this man and now he's with the Lord in Heaven and we have so much to be grateful for. We're going to let you hear the balance of the program that was recorded at that time, today. And stay tuned because at the end of the broadcast, something dramatic happened and I'll explain that at the end of the program. Let's listen now to the interview with Dr. Luis Palau in 1984.

Dr. Dobson: Luis, last time we were speaking primarily on the decline of the institution of the family around the world. And I was, as you recall, giving you specific problems and asking you then to offer some advice to the people who are facing those difficulties. And we were talking at the end of the program about the man in the marriage relationship and what you feel God is saying to men. And today I want to that coin over and get you to talk directly to the women.

Dr. Dobson: And especially again, I want to name a particular problem at a particular woman that we're going to be talking to. I'd like you to talk to the woman who loves her

husband or at least she used to, but she feels that he isn't meeting her emotional needs and she's been agitated by that and frustrated about it. She has screamed and complained about it and cried about it and now she's come to the point where she's had it. She's made up her mind to getting a divorce. She's already met with her attorney and in a matter of six or eight months, the marriage is going to be over. What do you say to that woman?

Luis Palau: Well Jim, we were in a crusade in central California and at a woman's luncheon, which I also enjoy sharing when I'm all alone, no men in the audience, just hundreds of women. I enjoy it because I can open up my heart. And I often say, "I'm like an older brother or your younger brother, just look at me as a friend." And a woman got up and sang a hymn on the line that impressed me was this, only Jesus satisfies the soul. And although I had a message that day, the Holy Spirit as this woman was singing laid on in my heart and I picked up on that. And my message basically was based on that. That phrase may be old fashioned, but it's very contemporary. Today we say, "My husband doesn't fulfill me." What we're really saying is, "My soul is unsatisfied." If a woman can understand, no man will ever fulfill you.

Luis Palau: In fact, I pull a little line and say, "Do you think I can fulfill you?" Can you imagine any ugly man going to fulfill a woman? It's an incredible dream. It's a straw man that we've invented in our day. My wife can't fulfill me and I cannot fulfill her. Men and women weren't created to fulfill each other. Only Jesus satisfies the soul. We were meant to help each other. The Bible does say that, I will make her helper fit for him and vice versa. We are helpers, but fulfillers never. The basic thought is this, a man will never fulfill a woman and a woman will never fulfill a man because that wasn't God's intent. His intent was that we should love each other and help each other but fulfillment only comes when Jesus Christ fills our souls.

Dr. Dobson: Did you know that the notion of marriage based on romantic love or an emotional attraction between one individual and another is only as recent as about 1200 AD. It did not exist prior to that, marriage was by arrangement, marriage was for convenience, marriage was for alliances between countries and such things. And it was not till the time of Shakespeare that it was really popularized. But today that emotional component has become the end all and be all of marriage. And if it's not there, even for a short period of time, it's time to bail out.

Luis Palau: Oh it's awful.

Dr. Dobson: I think the root cause of the high divorce rate we have is in that notion right there, that we are entitled to eternal bliss and some kind of revved up emotional apparatus at all times.

Luis Palau: An incessant high.

Dr. Dobson: And life won't deliver that

Luis Palau: If a woman is going through that awful situation of an unloving, unkind, thoughtless husband, it's a terrible thing. But if she cannot see a change, cannot she turn that situation around and say, "I'm going to give my life for people in the neighborhood. I'm going to try and empathize with women who are suffering. I'm a Christian woman therefore I will turn my agony into a source of good." Because all of us have conflicts in our home, even the best of us, even me. And therefore, can't I turn our weaknesses into a strength by thinking how many people are going through what I'm going through therefore, I shall learn something of this situation with my wife, Pat and use it to the glory of God.

Luis Palau: I have found Jim, that some of my strongest points in helping other people in counseling or preaching have been from the greatest weaknesses in our marriage. Because as I thought about it and learned from it, I have been able to help other people. If I had run away from my wife, which I haven't thought about, but if I had run away from the tough times, I would not be helping people as much as today.

Dr. Dobson: Luis, I want to be sensitive to the feelings of the woman who's listening to us right now, who is on the verge of divorce in that way. Because from my counseling experience, I know what she's feeling. She's thinking, you don't understand. You don't know what it's like to live with this loveless man. You don't know what it's like to not be treated with respect. You don't know what it's like to feel like dirt because this man doesn't show the kind of love that builds self-esteem. And I'm aware of those kinds of frustrations. And I don't want to be glib about that, but I do have to say, as I read the scriptures and that is the source of our understanding, that God has not called us to happiness, God has called us to obedience.

Luis Palau: That's right.

Dr. Dobson: And it may be that he's called us to endure, to persevere in the face off some frustrating circumstances. And it just might be that he's got a plan down the road that he hasn't revealed yet with regard to what he wants to do in the relationship and what he wants of women and men in that kind of situation, I believe, is to stick it out and make the most of it and stay on our knees before Him and let Him work through it.

Luis Palau: You're so right. I really think you're giving Godly counsel here, for sure. Fundamental. The word sacrifice, I was thinking, as you were giving that word of advice there, that Godly advice, the word sacrifice has disappeared. Jesus Christ was spat upon, buffeted, blindfolded, crown of thorns, the nails in his hands and his feet. Therefore, the situation that we have to learn today is that suffering often brings life. Death produces life in God's economy. The other side of the coin on that suffering aspect is this, a woman can learn to make God her husband. Now I'm coming back to the original premise. Isaiah 54 says like this, "Your maker is your husband. The Lord of hosts is his name. The Holy one of

Israel is your redeemer. The God of the whole earth he is called for the Lord has called you like a wife, forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she's cast off, says your God."

Luis Palau: Now, although the Lord is addressing Israel, the teaching is there. I think the New Testament bears it out. That if a woman going through what you described can say, "My husband is not what I wished he had been when I married him. My husband is not the dream of my youth. My husband has not fulfilled his vows. He is not the man that I dreamt I would give my love to." Nevertheless, for the sake of the Lord, because it's revealed in scripture as you said, I will stay here to see what the Lord is going to bring out of this. Then the Lord supplies what the husband does not supply. Now that's not escapism. After all, divorce is escapism too. This kind of escapism is divinely provided so to speak, in a following world.

Dr. Dobson: Luis, I've seen it happen. It does occur. And I've had women who have taken that approach say the Lord was incredibly close to me during the time that I needed Him most.

Luis Palau: And isn't that the scriptural promise? And then out of it comes a richness that the world will mock. We know that. People who are purely materialistic won't accept this kind of word, but a woman or a man who loves Jesus Christ will believe that God has a purpose down the road. Now we've got to come back to that. And the previous verse, Jim, says this, "Fear not for you will not be ashamed. Be not confounded, you will not be put to shame. You will forget the shame of your youth and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more."

Luis Palau: In other words, this period of time where it appears like it's all over, may come to an end. As you said, you've seen it happen. I've seen it happen. And if a person, if a woman would just be patient with the Lord, she will not be ultimately ashamed. God will not allow it nor will she be utterly confounded, completely out of joy. The Lord has a purpose. And I have seen it happen in very close family. And I believe it could happen to the women who are listening to your program. The reference is Isaiah 54, verses 4 through 8, are tremendous promise for women who feel lonely because of a husband that isn't what he was meant to be. Or even for widows and for the victims of divorce, I would put it that way. Isaiah 54 is a choice chapter.

Dr. Dobson: There are some men who are in that situation too, aren't there?

Luis Palau: A Growing number. Now I'm finding more and more, Jim, after a crusade service, a man will come and you can almost see them coming. Do you know that? There is a look of, like when a man goes through shock and his face is pale and his eyes are popping out? You can almost see a man coming whose wife has walked out on him. You know that you can almost sense it? There's a blankness that is different from a man who's become a widower. There's a certain look of despair. And it's a growing number of men who will come and say, and this passage can be turned around I believe for men. That the Lord will fulfill us and

that we shouldn't rush into the next marriage. Do you know, I have seen with my wife Pat, we don't counsel as much as you do, but we have done some.

Luis Palau: And we have seen some Godly young women, women now, whose husbands were faithless and walked out on them. But that for the sake of Jesus Christ and using wisdom after all, Godly counsel, like the kind you given your books and other Godly people, they have said, "I will not get married again. I will stick it out." Young women now, who would like to be married and who have stuck it out for years because of various reasons. And their satisfaction, there is a joy and a glow that returns to their life that is really beautiful. And I really think that we need to emphasize that more and more that the Lord, only Jesus, satisfies the soul. If people would only believe that.

Dr. Dobson: Okay Luis, I'm going to change the responsibility now and give you an opportunity to preach to a new group. I'd like you to make some comments to the teenager, boy or girl who's involved in a social group that is not Christian. They're under pressure to do immoral things. Perhaps they're dating an un-Christian boy or girl and the pressures are enormous. And they know what's right. They've been raised in the faith. They've heard their minister talk about the Ten Commandments and they know what's right, but they're having trouble doing it. What do you have to say to them?

Luis Palau: Well Jim, I love to address teenagers too. And when I think of a young person like you describe, I think first think of the potential for you as a young fellow, as a young girl. If you follow the Lord's way, if you trust Him with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but depend on the Bible's wisdom, you shall be successful. You shall have a measure of satisfaction for the rest of your days. I say to the young person going through temptation with a peer group at school that is really pressuring them into sex or drinking or drugs or just playing around, think of the end of your life. I've always had this concept. What will I be when I'm an old man? What regrets will I have if I don't walk with God? That always haunts me. And I try to get young people to think this way.

Luis Palau: I've tried my four boys to think this way, Jim. Boys, think of the end of your life. And I've always used illustrations with my boys. I don't like to talk negative, but once in a while, when a person, a young person in our neighborhood or even school or perhaps even church has messed up their life as young people, I use it as a model to my boys as a negative model. As in now look boys, the end of their life, they're going to look back on this failure and although God may forgive them and they may get up on their feet again, think of the regret that they shall never be able to erase. Forgiveness yes, but the mistakes cannot be erased. Now, the other thing is this, ongoing out with a non-Christian, I don't think is being preached so much nowadays, Jim. I think it's a mistake of us.

Dr. Dobson: I do too.

Luis Palau: Old boys from years ago to think that the young people, they don't even realize that the Bible prohibits marrying a person that isn't a Christian. You'll be

surprised how many churches have asked youth directors. They have never taught their young people. I preached in a church that I won't even hint what it is, a very good Bible church. And when I spoke to young people and I talked about, do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers, the old translation. And I came on strong. You are not there for supposed to go around dating an unbeliever seriously, because if you do, you may quote, fall in love unquote, and you may end up marrying them and the scripture says, no.

Dr. Dobson: You set in motion certain consequences that you can't stop.

Luis Palau: Yeah, because they think if you're 20% serious, eventually it's supposed to end up in a deeper emotional involvement that eventually should lead to engagement and marriage. Or if you're weak, it may lead to sexual failure. You're not supposed to even consider marrying a non-Christian. The Bible prohibits that. Now Jim, we mustn't take for granted most young people in Christian homes don't know that. It isn't being taught. We are such a nice, that's the weakness of the niceness of America that we don't want to quote hurt anybody's feelings, unquote. And therefore, we don't want to speak the truth. As far as temptation, Jim, there are times when a young fellow and a girl must break even a circle of friends in school.

Dr. Dobson: We do pick up the attitudes and the behaviors of those around us. And to think that an impressionable adolescent is going to be surrounded by non-Christians and not begin to adopt their language and their behavior and their mannerisms and so on. At the very least, it's putting a strain on the most important thing in his life.

Luis Palau: Interesting I said to my wife the other day, Jim, we haven't heard a sermon and I haven't preached one because when I was a boy, it was over done on love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. I tell you, I don't think I've preached one. I'm embarrassed to say it except exposition.

Dr. Dobson: I heard a lot of them when I was a kid.

Luis Palau: Yeah, but not today though. You're not a kid now.

Dr. Dobson: You notice that.

Luis Palau: But you know.

Dr. Dobson: I know.

Luis Palau: It was overdone, wasn't it? My mother for instance, was a sweet lady. She is a sweet lady. I love her. Wonderful example, but she used to go overboard, I think. Now it's better to go overboard in separatism than in liberality. Although the best is balance. We always have a tendency to get more loose, don't we? But we don't tell the kids what it is to love the world today. We love the world

too much. Now we could spend a whole three weeks on what is the world? But essentially the things that the world loves, the pride of life.

Dr. Dobson: Lust of the flesh.

Luis Palau: The lust of the flesh. Over obsession with looks. Over obsession with worldly success, which makes us imitate what is glittering, but really destroys our soul. I think we've got to get back to that. We were saying earlier about not marrying an unbeliever, that isn't heard anymore today. And so kids do it and they marry someone who doesn't even believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, because they're a nice person. And they cross over religious barriers that should never be crossed in marriage. And then the same thing is true of the world. We're allowing ourselves to flirt with the world too much and I don't want to be negative here, but I do believe that it helps our boys and girls if they realize that there is a line to be drawn and that it's actually exciting to stay within the fences that the Lord has built. The most important thing.

Dr. Dobson: Luis, there must be somebody who wants what you just described, but doesn't know how to go about it. How about praying for that person who might just pull a car over to the side of the road right now and bow their heads and pray with you as you reach out in faith for all those unseen people out there.

Luis Palau: Let's do it. And can I say this, Jim? Jesus said, "I stand at your door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him and he with me."

Dr. Dobson: That's a promise.

Luis Palau: That's a promise. That person in the car or in the kitchen or wherever they are, can right now unlatch the door from the inside to their soul and invite Jesus Christ to come in. It's just as if you, Jim Dobson, go to the door of this person, knock on the door, they look out the window and they say, "Oh my soul, there's Dr. Dobson. What are we going to do?" They have to make a decision. If they want you in the house, all they have to do is just open the door and say, "Dr. Dobson, welcome."

Dr. Dobson: It's not complicated.

Luis Palau: No.

Dr. Dobson: You don't have to go out and pay back all the money you've stolen or clean up all lies. You can do it right now?

Luis Palau: Right now.

Dr. Dobson: You don't have to earn it?

Luis Palau: No, sir. And then will come the house cleaner. But until they receive Christ, nothing will happen. If they will bow their heads right now and I will lead them in a prayer phrase by phrase and if a listener wants to open their heart to Christ, they could pray right now and let Jesus Christ come into their heart.

Dr. Dobson: Let's do that.

Luis Palau: Let's pray. Thank you, Heavenly Father, for speaking to my heart right now. Thank you that you want to change my life and I know you have the power to do it. Lord Jesus, I don't understand it all, but I believe you died for me on the cross and right now, Lord Jesus, since you rose from the dead and since you're alive, I open the door of my heart to you. Come into my life, Lord Jesus, change me, cleanse me, make me a true child of God and I shall serve you and obey you for the rest of my days until I see you face to face in Heaven forever. Thank you, Father, you have heard my prayer and Christ lives in my heart. In His name I pray. Amen.

Dr. Dobson: We have been listening to Dr. Luis Palau in an interview that I made with him in 1984. As I said at the top of the program, something dramatic happened that has not occurred in my 44 years on the air because I turned to Dr. Palau, you just heard me ask him to pray a closing prayer for anybody who might be listening, who did not know Jesus and to just pull off the freeway if that's where they were driving and into a parking lot and give his heart to the Lord. And lo and behold, there was a man listening to us who later told us that he was driving on the freeway. He pulled off the freeway and went to a parking lot and as Dr. Palau led him in a prayer of dedication and repentance, he gave his heart to the Lord. That man turned out to be Jim Talent.

Dr. Dobson: Jim Talent is Jewish. He had never had an encounter with Jesus Christ and that day made a lifetime commitment to the Lord. And he went on to be a United States senator from Missouri for a number of years. Became a very good friend. And it all happened as a result of that prayer by Dr. Palau. Dr. Palau obviously had a great heart for the Lord and for his people and that's why he was so loved and appreciated around the world. He's gone now, but to his family, we express our condolences for his passing and just remember him as one of the great evangelists of all times.

Dr. Dobson: I hope you've enjoyed this classic program, this trip down memory lane. I wonder if there's anybody listening to us now who heard that original broadcast. It's been a pleasure having you join us on the air and I do hope that the others will come to know the Lord because of it. Thank you for being with us and we'll see you next time.

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