

Living with Balance, part 1 - February 8, 2010

LivingWithJoyRadio.com Program Transcript

Lori Salierno

That's part of our inheritance even while we live on this earth, because joy is the fruit of God's Spirit, and it's the evidence of His presence in our lives. When my husband and I first got married - we've been married almost 24 years - I would purchase whatever anyone tried to sell me. When I got a phone call and someone was selling something, I would buy it. If someone came to our home and knocked on the door, whether it was cookies, toilet brushes, or encyclopedias, I purchased it.

Well, my husband was a youth pastor. We didn't have much as far as financial resources. And he came to me. He said, "Lori, you cannot continue to keep buying everything that people sell you, whether it's on the phone or at the door. You're buying, buying, buying. What is the deal?"

I said, "Kurt, I'm trying to encourage the little salespeople. If I buy their product, then I can give them tips on how they can be more persuasive in their presentation, but they're not gonna listen to my tip if I don't buy their product." He said, "Lori, let them learn persuasive selling somewhere else, but not here. We don't have the money." So he said, "You're on a spending freeze."

Several weeks went by, and there was a knock at our door. [Knocking sound.] I open the door, and there is this little, tiny boy, maybe five years old. I mean, tiny. And I said, "Hi." He said, "Ma'am, in my hands, I have some precious rocks, jewels, and if you will hold them up to the sun, you will see that they glisten and they shine, and they can be used for all kinds of purposes. You can use them for decoration, you can use them for paperweights. And these precious jewels that I'm going to sell to you for 25 cents came from your very own front yard."

And I said, "Well, you know something? I'm on a spending freeze, and I'm not allowed to purchase anything." He said, "Who put you on a spending freeze?" I said, "My husband." He said, "Is he head of the home?" I said, "Well, as a matter of fact, he is." "Is he the major decision-maker?" I said, "Yes." "May I see him, please?"

So I go, "Kurt. Kurt. Someone's at the door." He said, "Lori, who is it?" I said, "It's a salesperson." He said, "Tell him to go away. We don't want any." I said, "He won't go away, Kurt. Come see. Serious. You tell him to go away."

So Kurt comes walking out there, and he looks at this little boy, and he said, "Hi, son, how are you?" And he said, "Sir, are you the head of your home?" Kurt said, "I am." He said, "Are you the one that can make decisions in this house?" "I am."

He said, "Well, sir, I have some good news for you." He said, "In my hand, I have precious jewels. They have various colors and different kinda sparklies when you hold them up to the sun." And he said, "Sir, if you want to you, you can use them for decoration or a paperweight, and they will only cost you 25 cents, and they came from your very own front yard."

And I'm standing behind Kurt, thinking, "No way, buddy." So Kurt just scratches his chin. He said, "They're pretty precious, huh?" He said, "Extremely precious. And I'm selling them to you for only 25 cents." Kurt said, "Well, if they're that precious, perhaps I should purchase them for 50 cents." This little boy goes, "There's a whole bunch more. I can get a whole bunch more where this came from. I can get a whole bunch more."

So Kurt buys these rocks from our front yard for 25 cents - 50 cents. So he closes the door and I said, "Okay, Kurt, just fill me in. When I purchase something, at least we have an encyclopedia. At least we have a toilet brush. But rocks from our very own front yard for 50 cents? Why did you purchase those?" And Kurt said, "Lori, the little boy made the ordinary special."

And that's exactly what joy does to our lives. Joy takes the mundane, routine things of life and it adds that divine element to it, that it takes our lives and it sprinkles the divine presence in our lives that when our lives had the joy of Jesus Christ, it takes everything and makes it so valuable.

In fact, Proverbs 15:15 says, "The cheerful heart has a continual feast." Proverbs 17:22 says, "The joyful heart is good medicine, but the broken spirit dries up the bones." And John 15:11, Jesus is talking to his disciples. He said, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be full." Then Paul says in Philippians 4:4, he says, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

And then in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, it says, "In this world, you will have tribulations, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." We have been given joy, joy, joy. Oswald Chambers says, "Joy is the nature of God in my blood." C.S. Lewis says, "Joy is a serious business of heaven." Chuck Swindoll says, "God is the happiest being in the universe." Lewis Smedes says, "To miss out on joy is to miss out on your reason for existence. And Tony Campolo says, "Cold and dead saints who do not enjoy this life lead people to hell, because people turn away from God when they see no joy in those who claim to walk with Him."

Now, my question is if that is our inheritance while we live, if we are people that can experience joy, outrageous, incredible, unbelievable joy, joy, joy, how come we have so many people in the church saying, "I serve Jesus, but it's not easy." Well, what happened to your face?" "Well, I've been serving him for 45 years, and I want you to know, I love him, but it ain't easy."

Well, I'm gonna tell you something. If we've been serving the Lord Jesus Christ for 45 years, it needs to come out in our face, in our presence, that His joy has been vibrating in our lives.

Why is it so important that we have joy in our lives? Because joy is not a feeling. Joy is not a personality trait. It's the fruit of God's spirit. So why is it so important that we have joy in our lives? Because it's evidence of God's presence. That's why God wants us to have it. It's evidence of His presence in our life.

Do you realize that an unbeliever cannot have joy? They can have happiness, which is temporary, but deep-seated joy that will take you through the dark night of your soul and the dry periods of your life, that joy is only given to the child of God because it is the fruit of His Spirit. And God says, "I want that to be evidence in your life because the world cannot have it, and when they see it, they want it. When they want it, they'll ask you, 'What makes you so different?' And you say, 'The joy of Jesus Christ is in my life.'"

So why don't more women have this joy? Why aren't we truly women of joy? Because I think sometimes we think joy is something that needs to happen to us rather than something that we diligently and deliberately pursue. It is something that the Holy Spirit develops in our life but we are to pursue that joy in the disciplines of His Spirit.

If we lose the joy in any area of our life - if you lose the joy in your marriage, if you lose the joy in your children, if you lose the joy in your church, if you lose the joy in being who God created you to be, if you lose the joy of just being alive, you've lost an element of the divine, because joy is the fruit of His Spirit, and He desires for us to have a deep-seated, outrageous, incredible, unbelievable joy, because it is evidence of his presence in your life.

So if joy is not a feeling and it's not a personality trait, what is it? It is a deep confidence in God, that God is in control of what has happened, God is in control of what is happening, and God is in control of what will happen. It is a deep confidence in God, that God is in control. He's in control of my past, he's in control of my present, he's in control of my future, and every single day that I wake up, my God is in control, and my confidence is in Him. Not in people, not in confidence, not in this life, but in God. That's where my confidence lies.

Joy is a positive perspective, an energetic enthusiasm, a sense of humor. That makes us attractive to the world, because joy is the evidence of God's spirit in our lives. You know, Habakkuk was a prophet in a little, small book in the Old Testament. Did learn something in the class. And Habakkuk is dialoging with God, and he says to God, "Lord, why is the sin in Judah going unpunished? I don't understand. Your people are sinning, and you're not even doing anything about it. Why is the sin in Judah going unpunished?"

And God says, "Habakkuk, the sin in Judah will be punished, but I'm gonna use the Babylonians to do that." Now, there's a second question that comes from Habakkuk. "The Babylonians? How can you use the Babylonians to bring righteousness to a people more righteous than they are? How can you use them to bring punishment to your people? We're even more righteous than the Babylonians. Those guys are barbaric, and they're more heathen than we are."

And God says, "Sin will be punished, and faith will be rewarded." Habakkuk, dear sisters, did not understand the hand of God. He didn't understand His ways. He was not sure what God was doing and how He would do it. But in Chapter 3, Verses 17 and 18, we see a profession of worship and trusting God, that Habakkuk does not understand the hand of God, he doesn't know why He's doing the things the way He's doing it, he's perplexed, but this is what he says. "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vine, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stall, yet, I will rejoice in the Lord. I'll be joyful in God, my savior."

He says, "Though the fig tree does not bud." Some of you are here today, and you say, "Lori, hey, I wanna tell you something. My fig tree in my life's not budding. I can tell you that right now." And some of you said, "Hey, I wanna tell you something. The olive crop has failed in my life, Lori. My husband is having an affair, and he's left our family. My olive crop failed, Lori. And there's no sheep in the pen in my life. There's no cattle in the stall. I don't even know how I'm gonna make it financially."

Let me tell you what Habakkuk says. In those situations where you don't understand the hand of God and you don't understand His ways, he says, "Yet" - that little word, Y-E-T, is a small word, but it is powerful. "Yet, though I don't understand, and though I am perplexed, and there are no grapes, there are no olives, there's no food, and there are no sheep, and there are no cattle. I am in desperate straits, but yet, I will rejoice."

In the cattle? No. In the sheep? No. In the olives? No. "I will rejoice in the Lord, my God. I'll be joyful in God. It's joy in God. He's in control, and I trust in Him, and He is my joy. Not my circumstances, not people, not my own inferior feelings, but my joy is in God, my savior." Do you know what that is? Living in the yet power. Living in the yet power.

Do you know that the Aramaic word for rejoice is the same word for dance? It's that positive perspective. It's that energetic enthusiasm. Sense of humor, but a confidence in God.

I'd like to give you five practices on how to nurture this joy in your life. The first one is this. Nurture an eternal perspective. When you have an eternal perspective, it broadens the dimensions of your circumstances, but nurture an eternal perspective. Put your life and your circumstances in the light of eternity. Because when you begin to do that, your circumstances take on a whole different look, because in the light of eternity, they are so much different than if that is all that we're focusing on.

In Philippians 1:12-14, Paul is writing to the Philippian church. He is in jail. They don't understand why he's in jail. In fact, they're somewhat discouraged, and they have been sending messages to Paul, and they said, "Paul, why are you in jail? You need to be out here, planting churches. We're new babies. You need to be feeding us milk from the Word of God. Why are you in jail? This is not a good thing. This is horrible."

And you know what Paul writes? He says, in Verse 12, "Now, I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace garden to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the Word of God more courageously and fearlessly."

You know what Paul is saying? He said, "No, no, no, no, no, no. This may appear to be a bad thing, but in the light of eternity, look what's happening. It has served to advance the gospel." He says, "As a result, everyone in the Palace Guard" - do you know what the Palace Guard was? It was like the FBI of our day. And they would chain a soldier to Paul, and that soldier would stay with Paul for a certain amount of hours, and then they would switch and put another soldier.

Now, when they put a soldier on Paul, what do you think Paul's going? [Breathes deeply]. "What do you wanna talk about?" Oh, absolutely not. Paul's saying, "I wanna tell you something. The Lord Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection was given because He loves you, and if you will believe in Him and trust in Him, you can have your sins forgiven, have His Spirit, and when you die, you can know Him, and when you live, you can have abundant life."

Guard changed. [Makes sound.] "Jesus Christ, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." He witnessed to every single one of those soldiers that were next to him, and the Palace Guard had hundreds of thousands of soldiers. And he says, "It has advanced the gospel, because they know that I'm not in chains because of a crime. I'm not in chains because of some wrong. I'm in chains because of Jesus Christ," and it has spread throughout the whole FBI of our day.

And then on top of that, he says, "The brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the Word of God more courageously and fearlessly. This is a great thing." He reframes the situation for the believers. And God desires that we take the circumstances of our lives, women, and we reframe it in the light of eternity, because if we just look at what we see today, we will grow discouraged. We will have our joy completely snuffed out, because all we can see is our circumstances.

And the Lord says, "I have a greater perspective. I have a better plan. Trust me. See it in the light of eternity." So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen; for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Nurture your circumstances in the light of eternity.

Secondly, discover something to laugh about each day. Discover something to laugh about each day. Do you know, most often, it will be yourself? We are hilarious. But some of us are just serious, serious, serious. "I don't have time for humor. I believe it to be very shallow, and I'm a deep-seated woman." You know what? Deep-seated - praise God. But, you know what? Lighten up. In this life, God is the one who designed humor. Do you know that God gave us laughter? They say that laughter releases tension and relieves that stress, but it even creates a degree of anesthesia, and it helps us to enjoy life, and it helps us to control pain. Laughter is a gift from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I just wonder why sometimes we have these tight-fisted, grim-faced people that just love Jesus. "We just love Jesus." And the people who don't know Christ go, "You know what? I can find more joy in a bar than I can in this church. I think I'll go there." That is a sin, because we know that we serve the Lord. We're not talking about silly. I'm talking about joy that comes when we find laughter in situations that we find ourselves in.

I joined a gym years ago, and we didn't have much money, so it was kind of like a sweat gym. And I walked in on the first day, and there were all of these guys in the free-weight area, and they're big old guys, and they're in there going, [Makes sound], hitting each other on the blessed assurance, and going, "Be the weight. Be the weight." And it was just like cussing and hitting and spitting, and it was heavy, and it was negative. So I thought, "Whoa. It is way too serious in here." So I went in there my first day, and I wanted to bench press. Bench is when they have a bar, you lay down on this bench, and you press this bar up and down. The bar without any weights is 45 pounds.

So I go in there, and there's probably nine or ten guys in there. "Come on. Come on, blankety-blank." [Makes spitting sound]. So I lay down on this bench, and I go, [Makes deep-breathing sound.] I didn't put any weight on it. I go, "Oooh. Oooh, Lori. Be the weight. Be the weight. Oooh." Sat back up, wiped my brow. Every guy in the place was looking at me. I said, "Hi, man, how are you?"

One big old guy walks over. He said, "Do you wanna know what your problem is?" I said, "What?" He said, "You're having way too much fun in this gym. I want you to know that in this gym, we do not play games. We have competitions. We have deadlines. We don't sit around and play around. We are here to

get our glutes and our abs and our quads in shape. We are serious. We have competitions, and we work hard here, and you are having way too much fun in this gym. You've gotta know that if you come here, it is serious business."

Well, I thought since I had all their attention, I'd say a little few words myself. And I said, "Sir, you wanna know what your problem is?" One of the guys goes, "Ooh, she's a little feisty." I said, "You're all too serious. Give me a break. This is the gym. This is not home with the wife and the kids. This is not work, where you're trying to get a paycheck. This is not a hospital, where you're gasping for air. This is recreation, where you have fun. This is like big-boy recess."

I said, "You guys, lighten up. Have a good time." I said, "You know what? My goal is to bench my weight, and when I bench my weight and put that thing up, I want there to be whooping, hollering, and clapping and cheering and a great, big celebration that I have benched my weight. And while I get to that goal, I would prefer that a woman of my caliber not be around cussing, spitting, and hitting on places that are not appropriate for a woman of my caliber. So, any questions, men?"

They're all like - so I'd come in there about three times a week, and I'd put a five on there. [Makes deep-breathing sound.] I put a ten on there. And these guys would go by, and they'd be going, "You gotta breathe out when you push it up, okay?" [Exhaling sound.] "Breathe it out. But we're having good times. Having good times."

Audience: [Laughter].

One guy comes by a couple months into it, and he said, "Lori, gotta be the weight. Gotta be the weight." I don't know what that means even to this day. "Be the weight." But fun was had by all. Fun was had by all. And so over a period of months, I began to put that weight on. I woke up one morning, and I said, "Kurt, this is the day I'm gonna bench my weight." He said, "Is that a big deal?" I said, "It is."

So I get there, and they're all there. I mean, we'd all come on the same schedule, so we knew each other, pretty much. Waving to them, put a five. [Makes deep-breathing sound.] Put a ten. [Makes deep-breathing sound.] I'm not gonna tell you how much I weigh, but I got my weight on there.

Audience: [Laughter].

Pretty soon, one of the guys goes, "Woo hoo. I do believe the woman's got her weight on the bar." He looks at me, and he goes, "Am I or am I not correct?" I said, "Maybe." So these guys come around. I was like, "You guys, I don't want you here. You're sweaty, you're stinky, and I don't want you around me." They said, "No, we got our marching orders what's to happen if you do this."

So I sat down, and one of them's going, "Okay, now, guys, smiling, having a good time. We ain't cussing or nothing. But, Lori, when you push up, [Exhaling sound], breathe out." And the other guys goes, "Be" -

I go, "I know. Be the weight. I got it. I got it." So I lay down. I'm like - [Makes sound.] I'm thinking, "I am so fat." I put it all the way up in the air and down. Those guys are like, [Makes cheering sounds]. The owner of the gym comes over, and he says, "What is going on?"

One big guy said, "Well, this little woman here, she comes in the gym with us about a year ago. She says we way too serious. This ain't home with the wife and the kids. It ain't work, where we're trying to get a paycheck. This is not even a hospital, where we're gasping for air. She says this is big-boy recess. She doesn't want us cussing or hitting or spitting when she's in the gym. And today, she benched her weight, and she told us she wants whooping, hollering, and partying going on when she benches her weight."

The owner of the gym looks at me and he said, "I have owned this gym for a very long time. I have never seen men act like this." Then he said this. "What makes you so different?" And the Lord said, "Lori, we've been building that bridge for a year. Walk over it." And I looked at those men, and I said, "Men, we're not just physical. It's just not about glutes, abs, and quads." I said, "It's about our souls. We're spiritual."

And I looked at the owner of the gym. I said, "Sir, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the image of the living God, the firstborn over all creation, came upon this earth to define for us who God was, but you know what happened?" I said, "Guys, our sin pierced him to the cross, and he took on our shame, and he took on our pain. But on that cross, he satisfied the righteous need for a God, and three days later, he was resurrected from the grave. He had defeated sin, defeated hell, and defeated death. And now He offers to us grace, forgiveness, and it's like a free gift if we will take it in our lives and admit we need a savior. He'll throw our sin as far as the East is from the West, give us His Spirit, put us in direct connection to God, the Most High. When we die, we have eternal life. When we live, we have abundant life."

I said, "The thing that makes me so different is that Jesus Christ is Lord of my life."

Audience: [Applause, cheering.]

One of the guys goes, "You mean you're one of those church kind?" Another guy goes, "Oh, yeah. My grandma's got religion." I said, "Yeah, I go to church. And maybe you guys think I got religion, but I got something greater than that, and that's Jesus Christ."

Then one guy said to me, "No, you don't. You are not one of those church types. You do not go to church." I said, "Sir, I go Sunday morning, Sunday night, and many Wednesdays, when I'm in town." He said, "No, you don't." I said, "Sir, I go to church." "No, you don't." I said, "Well, how do you know I don't?" "'Cause you smile."

Audience: [Laughter].

"You fun." He said, "When I go to church, they're all like upset about something. I think they got a little sad about the guy that died on the cross, 'cause they never got over it."

Audience: [Laughter].

And I said, "Sir, you never get over what happened on that cross, but I wanna tell you something. Where I go to church and the people that I know that know the Lord Jesus Christ and authentically have a relationship with Him, they're even more wild than I am." You know why? Because we have the Lord of God, of laughter, life, and love in our hearts. Discover something to laugh about. Enjoy it.

Even in the midst of painful situations, God will give you little moments of laughter that are little gifts that he says, "Just burst them open and enjoy my presence in something that may not even be easy. It may be mundane. It may be routine." But the beauty of Jesus is in those moments.

And look forward to something every six or seven days. Nurture an eternal perspective, discover something to laugh about each day, but look forward to something every six or seven days, whether that is going out for tea with a friend. Some of you might go to the library and read. Some of you have babies and you say, "You know what? If my friend could just take the babies just for a little bit and I can just breathe and have time in prayer," but look forward to something every six or seven days, because that refreshes and renews us.

Women, enjoy who God created you to be. Enjoy it. Look forward to something every six or seven days. And then, fourthly, develop a hobby. Do something not for pay, not for any other reason than you just enjoy it, whether it's gardening, whether it's doing some kind of a craft. Develop a hobby.

And then, fifthly, take care of your body. Do you know that our physical being is the only mode that we have? This is the temple of the Living God, that we are to eat wise choices, we are to drink water, get enough rest, get some exercise, and take a multivitamin for all the times that we don't get everything we need. But take care of this body.

My father is in Portland, Oregon/Vancouver, Washington area. He's a pastor - was a pastor for a very large and growing church. When I was a child, my dad taught me everything basically that I know. He taught me how to memorize Scripture, he taught me how to speak without notes.

But my dad was my role model, he was my mentor, he was my coach, he was my father, he was my pastor. He just was one of my best friends. I got married, moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, and two years into that marriage, I got a phone call from my mom from Vancouver, Washington, and she's crying, and she's bawling so hard she can't talk.

And I said, "Mom, what's wrong?" And she's just like, [Crying sounds.] I says, "Mom, is my brother Jerry okay? [Crying sounds.] "Yes." I said, "Is Bob okay?" That's my other brother. "Yes." I said, "Kurt, get on the phone." So Kurt gets on the phone. I said, "Mom, are you okay?" [Crying sounds.] "Yes. Lori, something bad's happened. Something bad."

I said, "Mom, Mom, Mom, Mom. Is Dad okay?" "No." I said, "What happened?" "Lori, he came home from church the other day, and he sat down on the couch, and he started crying and crying and crying and crying." I said, "Mom, put him on the phone. Somebody probably criticized him. I'll motivate him."

She said, "He's not here." I said, "Well, where is he? I mean, I thought you said he was coming home crying and crying and crying. Why isn't he home?" [Crying sounds.] "He's in the hospital." I said, "Hospital, calling? Mom, I don't understand." I said, "You just said he came home from work, he's crying, crying, crying. Just put him on the - and he's not even there. Why is he at the hospital? Who's he visiting?" She said, "Lori, he's not visiting anybody. He's in the hospital, the mental hospital."

Now I'm pacing back and forth in the front room. "The mental hospital, Mom?" "Yeah." "You put my dad in a mental hospital?" "Yeah." I said, "Okay. Let me get this right, Mom. He comes home from work. Plink, plink, couple tears. Wrap him up in a straightjacket, and send him off." I said, "Mom, I cannot believe that you sent my father to a mental hospital," and I hung up the phone.

And I'm like, "Ooh, I cannot believe it." And then Kurt comes out in the front room. He says, "Well, that was sensitive."

Audience: [Laughter].

I said, "Well, you wanna talk about sensitive? Plink, plink. 'Oh, you're crying?' Wrap him up, send him off." I said, "Can you believe that my mother sent my father to a mental hospital, Kurt?" He said, "Lori, it wasn't just plink, plink. Lori, his system shut down. Your mom didn't know what else to do. Your dad is hurting. Your mom is hurting, Lori. He's in a mental hospital because he could not function. It is more than just a few tears. It's not just wrapping him up. It's trying to find healing and hope for him. Lori. He said, "You know what we're gonna do? We are gonna fly you out there, and you're gonna be an agent of comfort." "An agent of comfort?" I said, "Kurt, we don't have the money. If you put me on the plane today, we don't have enough money." He went out and sold the bass boat, got the money, bought the ticket the next day. At the airport, he gave me the ticket. He said, "Now, you get on that plane, you fly out to Portland, Oregon, and when you get out there, if you think I need to come, I'll sell something else and I'll come out there, but when you get there, Lori, with all the guts you've got within you, be an agent of comfort to your folks. They are hurting."

I took that ticket, got on that airplane, sat down in my chair next to the aisle, and some guy was next to the window. And I just had all these different emotions in me. I didn't even know if I was hurt, angry, depressed, mad, what. And all this sweet man said to me next to the window was, "Ma'am, how are you?" And, I mean, the floodgates just went, phhh. [Crying sound.] The flight attendant runs over, and he goes, "Sir, what did you do to the lady?" "Asked her how she was. Don't need to know. Don't even need to know."

She says, "Ma'am, if you could keep it down. Would peanuts help?" "No." We get up in the air, and I'm just kinda like, [Crying sounds.] As we're flying, the man said, "Ma'am, I'd like to talk to you, but don't cry out." "Okay." He said, "Why did you cry so hard and so loud? What happened in your life?" "My husband sold the bass boat."

He said, "Bass boat meant a lot to you?" "No." [Crying sounds.] "My dad is like my mentor, my model, and my father, my best friend, and he came home from work the other day. Plink, plink, plink. And you know what my mom did? Wrap him up and sent him to the mental hospital. And then my husband sold

the bass boat, got the money, bought the ticket, put me on this plane, because I'm going out there to be an agent of comfort."

This man looked at me, and he goes, "Whoa." He said, "Ma'am, you know what I do for a living?" "What?" He said, "I'm a lawyer, a very good lawyer." He said, "Five years ago, I couldn't face another judge, I couldn't go into another courtroom, and I couldn't handle another jury, and my system just shut down. And I was in a hospital, much like what you're describing your father is in right now, because my system shut down."

He said, "But I met a man in the hospital that changed my life. His name is Jesus Christ. Do you know Him?" "Yes." He said, "Then why are you crying?" "I don't know." He said, "Lori, God has given your dad a second chance. If he will change his habits, if he will live his life differently, he will rise up and be even more effective than he was before."

I believe that to be a divine appointment. As that man ministered to me, before I landed in that plane, at least I felt like maybe I could be an agent of comfort. Walked off the plane, there was my mom. I was still a little miffed at her, even though I love her to death, so I didn't say anything to her.

Got in the car. She drove to a hospital in Portland, Oregon. Stopped in front of the front door, and she said, "Your father does not know you're here, and he's in Room 105." I got out of the car, and I walked into this hospital. As I walked down the dark, dingy hall of this hospital, it's smelly and didn't - it was hot, and some guy thought he was Abraham. Another guy thought he was Moses. And I thought, "What in the world?" And then I got to Room 105, and I opened up the door.

My dad was sitting on the bed with his head down. When he looked up, he said, "Hi, Hon." "Hi, Dad." He said, "Lori, you ashamed of me?" I said, "Well, couldn't you have had a heart attack or something?"

Audience: [Laughter].

He said, "Lori, I just couldn't do it anymore. I was praying, I was reading the Word, I was memorizing, I was in accountability, I was baptizing, hospital calling, equipping the staff, and," he said, "just - I just couldn't do it anymore. And I came home, Lori, and I just shut down."

Christian psychologist from my dad's church was there said, "Could I see you in the hall?"

I said, "Do you want my brothers to come, too?" He said, "No, just you." I got out in that dingy, dark hall. He said, "I've been counseling with your father." He said, "Of all three of his kids, the one that's gonna end up like him in a hospital like this is you." He says, "You're trying to win the world to Jesus Christ in three years or less single-handedly. Is that true?" I said, "I've got some energy."

He said, "Well, I wanna tell you something. Don't forget the smell of this hospital. Don't forget what it looks like. Don't forget what you see here, because, Lori, I wanna tell you something. Your dad believes that because of what God is doing in your life, you'll be here ten years earlier than he is. You know what about your father, Lori? Do you realize that he had lost a perspective that dealt with eternity? He couldn't see an eternal perspective. He was always on the task at hand. He could not see an eternity perspective. And I asked him, 'When's the last time you've laughed?' Lori, he could not remember the last time he had ever laughed. He had forgotten days without number of laughter. I asked him, 'What are you looking forward to? What kind of a vacation?' I came to find out - I found out that he had not been on a bona fide vacation for 15 years. I asked him what his hobby was, and you know what he said to me?" I said, "What?" "He said, 'Define hobby.'" He said, "Lori, when you have to define hobby, you don't have one. And then I said to him, 'Tell me about your physical habits.' He wasn't eating wisely, he wasn't sleeping enough, he didn't drink enough water, he had no exercise in his life." He said, "Lori Salierno, you listen to me carefully. If you do not learn from your father what not to do, you'll find yourself in a similar hospital, perhaps ten years earlier than him. Keep an eternal perspective. Don't forget to laugh, look forward to something every six or seven days, develop a hobby, and take care of your body."