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Week 45: Rescue LIFE, last week

James and Betty Robison

Dr. Alison Cook

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** Well, we welcome you to *Life Today*. James and Betty, here. This is amazing, *The Best of You*. Some of you may not think you have a "best." Listen to the subheading: Break free from painful patterns, mend your past, and discover your true self in God. That is what he desires to be in us because he's the source.

But this wonderful doctor, Alison Cook is anointed of God, gifted by God to help us discover it. I just want to welcome you, Alison, to *Life Today*, all over the world. I've just got to ask you, "Breaking free from painful patterns." You look like you're quite comfortable in your own skin. You look like you've got a nice family. But what do you know about painful patterns?

**ALIZON:** I think we all are breaking free from painful patterns, every single one of us. Some more than others, some of us have big T traumas. These big T, maybe suffered abuse or severe neglect. Others of us, the little T traumas, the wounds, just the paper cuts of being a human in this world that has a lot of pain in it and even some toxicity that we bump into. So we're all breaking free from painful patterns. I think that is part of sanctification. It's part of how we're growing to be more like Christ, to become more and more of this beautiful soul that God designed each one of us to have. But the minute we enter into this world, we are bumping up against stuff that's wounding us, that's keeping us from that truest version of ourselves.

**BETTY:** So many times, we look at ourselves differently than how God looks at us. We

don't see who God sees in us and all the gifts and all the wonderful treasures he has put in our bodies and our lives. We're concentrating on all the negative.

**ALIZON:** Exactly! I talk about shame, that voice of shame that I believe is a voice from the enemy of our souls.

**JAMES:** It's because we all have failed in some way. The Bible is written by people who failed.

**ALIZON:** Exactly! Exactly! So because we've all failed, that voice of shame comes in and wants to magnify it. And it can feel true to us. It can feel like well, I am a terrible person, I am a miserable mess, I have made all these mistakes. So we start to believe that voice of shame as opposed to healing.

So part of healing painful patterns and part of my own story, I took on beliefs that it is my job to only ever focus on everybody else, that what I needed in my life, maybe didn't matter. That sounds kind of minor but when you live that way, I talk about how I had this really deep faith in Jesus. I loved God. I wanted to help others but I didn't have a clue how to care for my own heart, soul, and body—and had a lot of shame. I had a lot of shame.

**JAMES:** Did you find the religious community could add to that shame too often?

**ALIZON:** Yes, at times, unfortunately. And I think that's another tool of the devil because we pick up these beliefs. So we go to church and we hear these messages. If I already have a lot of shame, I already don't think highly of myself. I already feel like a failure. And then I hear a message that Jesus said such as, "die to yourself" or you can't trust yourself. You're a miserable mess. You hear those messages. But that's not what we mean. That's not what those messages mean. It doesn't mean to pile shame on yourself. That's not what Jesus means. Jesus means when we deny the old self, we're denying those shaming messages to become more of our true self, the person as you said, that he

actually made us be, that we radiate the image of God, that we were made in the image of God, and we were made to radiate God's image.

So a lot of times I say to people, sometimes in my work as a therapist, dying to yourself, denying aspects of yourself might be learning to deny those shaming toxic messages and bringing in the truth of who you are and who you can become in Christ.

**JAMES:** I think it is very important to remember that one of the titles of the enemy, Satan is accuser of the brethren. He's continually accusing us, and then we can join in accusing ourselves because we say, well, I guess, the enemy is right about that. And Paul even talked about the greatest Christian that ever lived, he talked about these messengers of the devil, these tormentors, that they wouldn't let up even though he asked. They still keep coming at you which means this is reality.

I get the impression that you're trying to help people deal with reality in a positive overcoming way to find *The Best of You*. So explain how you're going to help in the book and in what you teach, and you watch people change. And I know that's what you're hoping for with a little more time to explain, but how do you help people escape these accusations they find themselves trapped by?

**ALIZON:** Because it is a process. We have to work at it. There is a working out. I always say salvation can in some places be interpreted as healing or wholeness. So salvation isn't a once-and-done thing for a future destination. It is a process of working out or becoming whole over the course of our life. So I take you through that whole process in the book. It is sort of like therapy in a book rooted in Christian principles and biblical principles.

But I like to say to people, that Jesus said love God, number one. So we look at God at the top of the triangle. Love others as yourself. So there are three relationships right there: So God, others, and self. Now a lot of us, to your point about church messages, a lot of us have heard about how we want to love God. I say this all the time to folks who

come into my private practice. I love God! I'm seeking after God. I'm trying to love others. I'm trying to be good to others, and I feel so broken.

So this leg of that triangle, all three matter and I tend to work with this self-peace, not to the exclusion of God. You cannot heal apart from the one who made you and you need to heal in the context of community, of giving and receiving from community, but this healing of the self, of taking inventory of our thoughts and the messages, we're believing of paying attention to wounds, areas of pain from our past, that we've not been able to break free from.

Well, there are interventions we can do. Just like a medical doctor can go in and help someone with a wound that is not healing on its own. We can go in and help someone heal from past abuses, from past traumas. So I'm looking at this healing of self in partnership with God's Spirit, in partnership with others. We never can take that self—you know our world wants to take the self out and put it on the top. That's not what we're doing here. But it is an important part of this triangle of relationships. It is an important part that we have a responsibility to attend to.

**JAMES:** Are there some trigger thoughts that help people begin to take those positive steps that you try to sow not only in your teaching and your seminars or wherever you happen to be speaking but in the book? Is there something that is a starter, let's say?

**ALIZON:** Yeah. The first pain point that oftentimes people come to me with is they're overwhelmed and exhausted and they want to set boundaries. They want to figure out how to say no to other people. Oftentimes, people feel like, I don't know what to do. I'm pouring out, pouring out, pouring out and I'm just feeling broken inside.

So the first step, I will say, and it is counterintuitive to a lot of Christians is you have to start listening to the cues your own body is sending you. God designed your nervous system. God designed you to feel emotions so when you're feeling overwhelmed or resentful, you need to pay attention to that. And say I wonder what that—get curious is

what I'll say to people. You don't want to act on it, necessarily, but you do want to get curious. I wonder what that's about. And you want—curiosity takes you away from that voice of shame. So we go, I'm feeling so resentful, my family or my kids or whatever. And I hate feeling that way. I'm a terrible person!

So that enemy has just gotten that foothold. As opposed to going, I'm so resentful. I don't know what it is about. I don't like feeling that way. God, what's going on? What do I need to pay attention to? Because oftentimes, those emotions are cues that maybe we're overextending our limits. Maybe we need to set some healthier boundaries.

So step one is actually starting to reframe how you relate to those emotional cues like the light on your car. Like when you're driving along and the light comes on and it's saying something needs attention. We don't just try to make that go away. We go, oh! I wonder what the engine needs. So that's kind of where I'll start with people. Let's just start paying attention without shame, without judgment, just what's real, and then let's see where it takes us.

**JAMES:** Don't you find that people allow themselves to become bogged down trying to deal with the problems of others out of a genuine concern? One of the things the Lord showed me was because I traveled all the time, I was very effective. You know when Billy Graham tells you you're the most effective at reaching a city, and he was pretty effective in reaching the cities, and everybody is pushing me to go, and I went and I went, but I learned as I went there is something about the Sabbath rest, there is something about taking a break.

And one of the things I felt the Lord spoke very clearly to me is if you let your schedule run your life, your schedule will ruin your life. And sometimes, our schedule, because we think we're doing the will of God, but sometimes we need to stop and we need to not be under the control of other people's burdens that we sincerely care about. We need to find a time to rest. Does that sound to you like a part of this process of healing?

**ALIZON:** A hundred percent. And sometimes, I would even take it a step further when we can't say no to all the needs around us. We're not only hurting ourselves, sometimes we're enabling other people. It's not necessarily good for other people either. And so taking that step back, taking what I call a U-turn to go wait a minute, if I'm angry, if I'm resentful, am I loving out of guilt? Is it guilt-driven love? I see that one a lot. Is that really helping the other person or is there an invitation here that maybe God has something for me that I need to receive?

**JAMES:** You know, it is something you share with others but also in the book that you actually suffered a stroke.

**ALIZON:** I did.

**JAMES:** Okay, what in the world brought that on?

**ALIZON:** It was out of the blue and so it was, definitely for me, that moment of the light going off on the dashboard of the car. We don't know what caused it. It took me months to sort of reconcile that. I would say to my doctors, and I think about this as a therapist too, when we have a name for something, it actually helps us because when we have a name for something we can understand it. But when someone says we don't know why this has happened, it is almost scarier. And my doctors would say it is a good thing you don't have any of these other major risk factors so it was a little bit out of the blue.

**JAMES:** Do you mind me asking, what effect or impact did the stroke had when it hit you?

**ALIZON:** My husband acted so quickly that I received the clot blast medications. I didn't walk away with any physical injuries other than that emotional and mental piece.

**JAMES:** But he could tell something went on that could not be tolerated.

**ALIZON:** Yes, he threw me in the car and raced me to the ER.

**JAMES:** And you don't find, necessarily, a specific reason for it?

**ALIZON:** They don't know.

**JAMES:** Think it piled up. And to me, you had to be quite young.

**ALIZON:** I was very young.

**JAMES:** You wouldn't think that somebody would have that. No explanation for it really.

**ALIZON:** There is some hypothetical sort of a cocktail of things. But at the end of the day, I had to make peace with the fact that there are some things that we don't know. And I had to pivot to—again, here's what I can control. And I'm always telling people this, what do I have control over? I didn't have control over that. There are certain things I can do. You can exercise, you can do all the things to prevent it, but we don't know exactly what caused it. So it was such a vivid illustration of life is fragile. We don't always know. There are things we don't have control over. I could live in fear or I can say what do I have control over? Lord, what can I control today? What can I live in today to take advantage of this one life that God has given me while I still have days? So it brings that home. You start to live differently every single day.

**BETTY:** But at the same time, you want to pause and say, God, is there something you want me to learn from this or to know from this to help me grow and continue to grow? It can give you a different perspective on things a lot of times, the physical can.

**ALIZON:** Oh, your dependence on God.

**JAMES:** Did it end up being a positive part of the process of moving past that to where it

becomes a part of what you're sharing with others? Even what appears to be challenging or something unexplainable, you can advance?

**ALIZON:** Yes! What it showed me are two things. One is we're utterly dependent. God numbers our days, every single one of us. No matter how much we think we can—it's really up to him. That's true. And what's also true is while I still have days, I want to be doing everything I can in my control to be as healthy as I can, that's part of my responsibility, to help as many people as I can, that's part of my responsibility. So it's that both/and. So when I'm working with people, that's a lot of times, folks have, they come to me with injuries, with pain, that is unimaginable from their past. I'm sure you all see it all the time. I can't change that. It's unfair. It happens. But what do you have control over? What can you take responsibility for?

Because if we stare all the time at the thing that's hard or the thing that's unfair or the thing that doesn't make sense, we're not going to get anywhere. We have to release that to God. That's part of that daily, God, while I'm still here, this is what I will do. This part is so hard for me. But this is what I can do. So it kind of teaches—it's taught me how to live that out in my own life.

**JAMES:** So you've written a book to try to take people past the painful patterns and move into a more positive relationship and a way of living an overcoming life. Do you have a website that we can tell our viewers about? What would it be?

**ALIZON:** You can go to [DrAlisonCook.com](http://DrAlisonCook.com). I have a weekly podcast and a weekly blog that I post every week on there about these topics, anxiety, about trauma, boundaries, finding your voice, and all of it in conjunction with faith practices. And that's probably the best place to find it.

**JAMES:** And you see it there on the screen. And if you didn't get it down quick enough you can always ask our prayer center what was that? Do the viewers have an opportunity to invite you to come and do something related to their community or their church? Do



you travel to places by invitation?

**ALIZON:** I do. I do some of that. I do a lot of virtual workshops and seminars. I have online courses where you can learn about boundaries, you can learn about healing painful patterns. So you can find all of that on the website.

**JAMES:** All of that is on the website. So if you—get the book into the hands of our people. By the way, we're going to ask you to change lives. Indescribably. And that's what love does. Love doesn't fail. I want to say to you as viewers, if you're a regular viewer of *Life Today*, you know I'm going to pour some life and love and hope on people who thought there would never be any.

But we will send you the book, along with other gifts that we have to say thank you for sharing the gift of God's love. Bottom line, if someone gets the book and gets into it, what is your prayerful hope that will happen as they read the book?

**ALIZON:** That you will receive the healing that God wants for you to have. That there is no valley too low, no pain too deep that God will not reach in. And every hair on your head, he loves you, he also loves every cell in your body. He will come in and bring that healing that you need. It will require some work on your part. I walk you through how to do your part of that but when we do our part God meets us there and brings us into wholeness.

**JAMES:** Father, thank you for Alison's gift to communicate, and then to write, and share your heart, your healing heart, your loving heart. And we just ask you to bless every person who is experiencing pain, so they can experience the fullness of your healing; in Jesus' name.

We are glad you joined us on *Life Today*. You know this is a fact. We are always reaching out to touch someone with God's love, not just talk about it, not just love in word only, but in deed, in action. And the least of these, Jesus says, Betty, when we

notice the overlooked and you minister to them, you are my sheep and you're ministering to me.

I want to show you how you can reach some of the most damaged, pain-stricken individuals on this planet, those who have been sexually trafficked. So often, as children, they have basically been kidnapped. And yet, we can, with his love flowing through you like a river, we can set them free and become the miracle they so desperately need. Watch closely.

### **On the mission field**

>> The mere thought of innocent children being trapped in slavery, and robbed of their freedom and future was and still is beyond heartbreaking. Today millions of children around the world are still trapped in the horror of child trafficking.

They are voiceless, defenseless, and in desperate need of our help. I'll never forget the moment when I first learned about the devastating reality that changed my world—child trafficking.

### **Open captions**

>> Nearly 5 million women, girls, and boys are victims of sex trafficking.

>> Even after these children are found, the journey does not end there. These children need more than just rescue. They need love, support, and encouragement to heal from the trauma that they've endured. They need a safe haven, a place where they can rebuild their lives. I've seen firsthand the difference that a loving family can make in the lives of these children. Every step of this journey requires our unwavering commitment. It's a shared responsibility to rebuild what was stolen: Their childhood, their dreams, and their sense of self-worth.

Together, you and I can be a voice for the voiceless, a force for change, for justice, for

healing. Together we can dismantle the chains of child trafficking and light a path toward freedom. We know it is a long road but we are making a difference one child at a time. Will you stand with us as we champion the rights and dignity of every child?

### **End of video**

### **In the studio**

**JAMES:** Betty, that accent was New Zealand. She's come to the sex capital of the world. And you saw the beautiful building, I just wanted you to see that, Destiny House. Your love built that. And that's a Hollywood couple that provided power for all of the motion pictures where there was no power. She had a seven-carat ring, I've told you this story before, she sold it and then went and rented facilities. And we found them and they said our ministry had inspired them to even make the move they made. And we moved them from renting houses to building the most beautiful place. It's just a magnificent thing what she's doing. But they're able to do it. They're able to reach, rescue, and restore, Betty. Literally, train these girls after they set them free. Reach them, rescue them, and restore them, give them a future. That's what your love is doing.

And right now, I want to remind you that we've got an incredible gift that will double what you give. \$128 is the average to rescue one but now it will rescue two. You make a gift of \$1280, you don't just rescue ten, you rescue 20. Everything is doubled!

So please, Father, help everyone watching to want to reach someone. We reach so many of them before they're kidnapped. We reach them when they're left somewhere and they're so vulnerable or when they're promised a false hope and taken captive. God, thank you for that. Thank you to the viewers who make it happen, in Jesus' name.

It is the viewer. It is the people that watch *Life Today*, that share *Life Today*. Would you go right now and get your bank card? Would you use it like a check? Would you go online or dial that number there, that prayer line that's paid for by love? And would you make the best gift you can knowing that you're giving freedom? You're given an

opportunity to experience life miraculously. I'm praying everyone watching will help.

**BETTY:** I do too. I know your hearts had to be touched as ours is always because we know the opportunity there. We know the heartbreak of kids needing that hope as little children that life is going to get better for them. Please continue to join with us if you've helped us before. But if it is your first time, count it a great joy to be able to partner with us, and let's make a difference for these children.

**JAMES:** Thank you so much. You know we're going to send you some gifts to bless you because we want to always bless you as we have during this program. But you're going to become somebody's miracle and we thank you for it.

### **Begin video clip**

**ANNOUNCER:** *Innocent children and young people longing to be loved and cared for are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators, forced into the evil industry of human trafficking.*

*Through Mission: Rescue Life you can reach out to warn children who are at risk for sex trafficking, rescue those already enslaved, and restore young lives and give them a future. With a generous \$320,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to help reach, rescue, or restore one child can be doubled to help two children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help save one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 mission rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.*

*With your gift today, we'll send you "Declare." This beautifully designed 31-day devotional reveals 31 names of God from scripture and gives insight into the character, grace, and the depth of God's love for you.*

*With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive The Gospels book set. This special edition collection of the four gospels in the classic King James version includes journaling space*

*opposite each page of scripture so you can reflect as you read. The perfect companion for your daily time with God.*

*Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help save 20 children. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds."*

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

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** You're going to love *Declare*. These is really the powerful names of God. But the way it's laid out, you have not only the devotional, but an opportunity to maybe record your own thoughts here on the gospels. And each gospel, it is the King James, which a lot of people, they—a lot of people think that's the only one you should read. But you have places to write notes beside each page and chapter. It will be a blessing.

And if you would like to have Alison Cook's book, after listening to her, I think you realize it is possible to experience some healing that might be deeper and more meaningful than you imagined. But not more than God imagines for you.

Alison, we appreciate you. Your website is up there if people to want visit. We want to thank you for sharing your story and the experience that you've been through and for still having a bright countenance, it's obvious you're experiencing some blessings. Thank you so much for sharing.

**ALIZON:** Thank you so much for having me.

**JAMES:** Well, we're glad you're here. Thank you for sharing life. Not just watching *Life Today*, but sharing *Life Today*. Remember, this is the last week for Rescue LIFE and we need an outpouring of literally, the love that sets people free. Thank you so much!