

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

MUSIC STARTS

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:00:02 Hi, I’m Cissie Graham Lynch. Welcome to *Fearless*, helping you have a fearless faith in a compromising culture.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie:

00:00:22 Welcome back to another episode of *Fearless*. And today, I’m going to introduce kind of a miniseries that has just been on my heart and I’m going to call it “The Lies of I’s.” And these are the lies we tell ourselves that have come from our culture—that culture tells us is a truth—and we’ve heard them over and over. And some of them you’ve might already heard in a Christian circle kind of discussed already; these are nothing new.

But for the content of myself, I’m raising two children—or I’m raising three children—but two of them are at the age where they’re starting to kind of catch on to some of these cultural tells and I have a daughter, 10 years old—love those pre-teen years—and we’re just kind of starting to have these conversations of why this doesn’t work.

And the first “Lie of I” is “I deserve.” Corey and I were in our kitchen the other day and we were probably having a very heated conversation. I’m sure we are not the only ones that have those heated conversations. And I caught myself getting ready to say the words, “I deserve.” I *hate* those words. I don’t allow my children to say them. I’m trying to teach my children why they can’t say them, but here I was and they were getting ready to come out of my mouth and I just allowed them to come out. And for me, when I hear those words, it’s almost a gut punch when you start thinking about the truth.

But in this series, we’re just going to talk about some of these I’s and the first one is “I deserve.” And we’ve all heard that. We’ve all seen those beautiful memes that might be on social media that, “I deserve better.” “I deserve respect.” “I deserve love.” “I deserve a raise.” We see people’s homes and think, “Man, I’ve worked so hard. I deserve that.” Or, “I deserve a vacation like that person’s taken.” And we live in this deserving culture. We live in a culture that is preoccupied with what we consider our rights, what we think we are owed, and what we are due. And we hold tightly to the notion that any way in which we are offended or made uncomfortable or anything that goes contrary to how we *want* to be treated and that needs to be righted.

We think we deserve good service at a restaurant and then vice versa—which is one of my greatest pet peeves in our culture right now is the tipping industry, or this whole tipping thing that Americans have gotten wrong. That we have servers now in a restaurant who think before they even serve *you*, they deserve a tip. I know I’m not the only one. You go up to a Chipotle or a Panera Bread or somewhere like fast food and they have a tip before you’re even served. And now, it doesn’t even start at 15%. It’s starting at like 18 or 20 and goes up to 25%. And then you’re afraid if you

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

don't tip them, because they haven't served you your food, they're going to like spit in it or something. Anyways, I'll get off that soapbox. But we have people that think they deserve a tip.

I have a niece that just had her first job last year, and she worked in this smoothie shop, and she was so upset that people weren't tipping her. And so her mom had to teach her like what the purpose of a tip was, and just this whole generation, my generation included, think we deserve, but you know, we deserve tickets to this show. We deserve a better parking spot. We deserve ... The list could go on and on. And I've always kind of wondered like, Where did this start? How did this start? And I think with my generation as a millennial, we were that first generation that was "everyone gets a trophy." We're that participation trophy, no-kids-wanted-feelings-hurt. I can remember getting my first participation trophy, you know, we didn't even keep score.

And even in today we're still doing that. My son's league of baseball does not keep score yet. He's 7- to 9-year-olds. And it's so funny because kids are keeping score. They know what's going on. But I was that first generation of everyone gets a trophy and it's something of a natural instinct, I think, in us to protest when we aren't being treated fairly—but there's also a generational component to this issue. And according to a study from the University of Hampshire, millennials scored 25% higher in entitlement-related issues than their 40- to 60-year-old counterparts and 50% higher than those over 60. And the article also said that this is problematic because entitled people tend to be far more self-serving in their actions and decisions than others. They have less interest in the common good. And it just becomes all about them. And we are—we live in a self-serving society that we are the center of our universe. It's I, I, I. We've talked about that here on *Fearless*.

So where does this attitude come from? And I want to be really careful because I know there's people maybe in an abusive relationship, there's going to be people with health ailments and things that have happened in them that they believe they truly don't deserve, but of course, that's not what I'm talking about here on *Fearless*. I'm talking about this entitlement of, "I deserve this." Some of that superficial, "I deserve better." And when we begin to see ourselves and what we want as more important than the other people around us and what other people owe us, we end up with a mentality that only serves ourselves and it takes away from the life of serving others and what I believe as Christians we are called to do.

And I think there's an interesting root to the core of deserving, and that's coveting. We live in a world that's full of coveting, and that is a dangerous place to be. Coveting is being jealous of something or comparing ourselves to what others have, you know. And God knew that was so dangerous to our spirit, that was so dangerous to our soul that He puts it in the Ten Commandments, and I think we kind of often forget that that's in the Ten Commandments. We're so used to it on a daily routine. You can scroll through Instagram and through social media and see somebody's amazing vacation they're on. You can see their new house that they built that it looks straight out of a magazine or somebody's amazing clothes that they're wearing. And so, it's just so quickly to compare and we don't even realize it, or we covet what

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

others have in our family, or a job promotion that somebody’s gotten. And we, you know, we forget that somebody else’s blessings doesn’t mean that that’s our curse or something. You know, we can be happy for those without coveting of what somebody else is going through or thinking we deserve that. We should be proud of them and happy and cheering those around us from the sideline. But just to be careful that that’s become a core component in this deserving world.

And we see how with the millennial generation, as I said earlier, that there’s kind of no consequences for failure. We were that first generation that did get those participation trophies, that everyone got the award and we weren’t forced to have a winner and a loser. So now, we see that in my generation and what that has brought, you know, 20, 30 years later and how we think we deserve and what we deserve in our life. But our generation, as I just stated too—I was the first generation to have social media. I can remember getting my first Facebook account. Back then, Facebook was only for college students. You had to have a college email address for it. But right away, that’s the world it started in. You were getting on to look at this girl, to look at this person, to see what they were doing. What were they wearing? Where were they going? And of course that was the root. And it has just snowballed after that into a world that is full of coveting what other people have. And then we think we deserve what other people are experiencing as well.

And I look at it as this kind of GPS for our soul. If I take it back to MapQuest—if anybody remembers what MapQuest was—I was in the car trying to explain to my kids what that was, that we didn’t have these maps in our car that they could click from the backseat. But this GPS for our soul, that we’re on this route, we’re all looking for wholeness and we’re on this quest to find wholeness. And we do it through the ‘Lies of I’s’ and what the world tells us and how we’re going to navigate to get to that wholeness. You know, take care of yourself, serve yourself, do what’s best for *you*, you deserve this, that will bring you happiness and that will bring you wholeness. But true wholeness comes through God.

And of course, when we look at the ministry of Jesus, He did quite the opposite. He inverted the statement of, “I deserve.” Jesus didn’t deserve to go to the cross. He was unjustly accused. He didn’t deserve to take on the sins of the world. That’s what you and I deserve, but He did it, and He did it through the lens of He came to serve. We know through Scripture it says Jesus didn’t come “*to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom.*” And He gave His life as a ransom for you and me, and we deserve what He took upon. And in Scripture it says, “*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interest of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, as He already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross.*” And that was Philippians 2:3–8. But even the thieves on the cross who were on either side of Jesus *knew* that He did not deserve what *they*

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

deserved. And Luke 23, it said, “*And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our crimes; but this man has done nothing wrong.*”

So whenever those words, “I deserve,” come out, it is like a gut punch to me, especially in the last couple of years. Those are words I’ve really have tried to eliminate from my vocabulary, even if I’m in a heated debate with my husband, because I’m trying to teach my kids, what does that truly mean when we think of what *we* really deserve? What is the reality of that? Because I truly deserve the full consequences of my sins. I deserve the full responsibility of my choices. You and I deserve the same measure of anger that we have poured out onto other people before. And I deserve the same kind of cruel words that I’ve spoken to other people before. And I deserve to be judged by the full measure of my failures, but Jesus took on what He didn’t deserve in order to save me and you from what we deserve. And I think part of the root of the problem when we look at the “I deserve” world—especially in the Christian world—is that we have minimized, or we’ve even forgotten, the holiness of God.

Because when we *remember* God’s holiness and we recognize His holiness, we realize quickly that our sins are an offense to Him and that He is offended by the sins and the choices that we have made. When we talk about holiness, I often think about John in Revelation, when he fell on his knees because of the holiness of God and what was before him—that that’s the same kind of posture we have to have is to fall on our knees, knowing that we’ve offended Him, our sins offend a holy God, but Jesus took what we deserve and He took that to the cross.

So when we’re on this journey of wholeness and this MapQuest and the world is telling us how to get there, we have to remember that wholeness comes from His holiness. And our wholeness comes from what Jesus did on the cross and us accepting that and how thankful I am for that, because it *does* take the pressure off of you and me. When we had these declarations, “I deserve it,” it just builds up this covetousness, this anger, this bitterness, this resentment, but when we know that what He did for you and me, *whew*, it kind of takes that pressure off of us, that we can be so thankful that our wholeness comes through His holiness.

And when we take on the mindset instead of “*We* deserve” to “How can we serve?” And of course I’ve talked about that here on *Fearless* before: Serving one another and serving those around us is just something that my family has taught *me*, but that’s how Scripture’s teaching us to live our lives. It is not what we deserve, but it’s how we can serve. So, I’d encourage you, serve those around *you*—because when we aren’t focused on ourselves, we open ourselves up to being able to see others’ needs and how we can serve them.

And as we close, I ask the question is, “How do I teach my kids that life is not fair?” That they are going to be treated unfairly at times. They’re going to be mistreated. And that’s why I had this episode is because this is what I’m trying to currently teach my kids. So how do we do that in this world that we’re living in? And I think the first one is the golden rule. And of course, this is one that has kind of transcended Scripture, and we have to remember that it’s not just a nice saying, but it’s actually

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

straight from Scripture. Matthew 7:12 says, “*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.*” *Whew.* This is something we practice in our family quite often. I shouldn’t say *practice*. It’s something I’m declaring over my children on a daily basis. Reminding them of how they’re to treat one another. And to teach your children and to practice that on a daily routine, that life’s not fair, but how we are to treat others is the way we would like to be treated.

And the second thing, as I just said, is to recognize that not all situations are unfair. To kind of sometimes take a pause and think how God has maybe blessed us in ways that we don’t deserve and to thank Him in those moments. Practice that in front of your children. Let them see that that’s how you live your life—through your prayers, through your nightly prayers together, just thanking Him for maybe a daily blessing or a continual blessing that happens in your life in ways that we don’t deserve and that other people might not have.

The third is to respect one another. Use respect and kindness when you’re interacting with others. That could be a whole other episode on its own, because I feel like we have lost that in this world of respecting others, especially those who might not believe what we believe, but to show your children how to respect and to set that example before them.

And the last is to learn from our mistakes, that we are going to make mistakes in this world. Just had this conversation with my daughter through something at school and I had to say, “Margaret, I’ve made mistakes in my own professional career. And when I’ve made those mistakes, I’ve had to say I was sorry and to go to that person to ask for forgiveness and to learn from them. That those mistakes can sometimes be good things because we learn not to make that same mistake again.” And to teach our children to learn from those and to fix those mistakes and to own up to it, because I think that’s part of this “I deserve” world is that we don’t have consequences to our failures, but when we fail to right it, to fix it, and to ask for forgiveness before that person.

And the last thing that I’ve been teaching my kids here at home is how can we serve one another? Because that’s how we show love. And we are to love one another by serving because I have—two of my children are just constantly it’s all about them. So, to show how can I serve Corey? How can I serve them? And I take care of them because I love them. And that’s what we’re teaching our family. So, I encourage you instead of having the “I deserve” attitude today, have that “How can I serve someone else today?”

And to *remember* our wholeness is not going to come through what the world tells us, but our wholeness is going to come through the holiness of God and through His Son, Jesus, of what He took to the cross. He took what we deserve to the cross. And how *thankful* I am to have that posture before Him today, to be so grateful for what He has done for you and for me on that cross, that we don’t get what we deserve, but through that, we can learn to serve others.

MUSIC TRANSITION

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 119 – The Lies of I’s: I Deserve
Final Transcript**

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:15:59 Thank you for listening to today’s episode of *Fearless*. And if you are looking for ways to serve, I encourage you check with your local church. There’s always opportunities. They’re always looking for more volunteers at your local church. But we also have opportunities at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan’s Purse. I tell everybody, “There’s something for everybody.” It doesn’t matter your physical abilities or your age, there’s a way to serve. So check out our websites. I will put those in our show notes to see how you can serve.

CLOSING MUSIC

#