

11/1/11
Week 45

James: I always consider it a joy to come into your home, to be here with our audience and to have our special guests. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have the -- really the campus pastor, I just call him a source of inspiration at Liberty University because he, in my opinion, is a real expression of the life of God. I've actually told him, I see Jesus in him. His name is Johnnie Moore. He's written a book called *Honestly, Really Living What We Say We Believe*.

I want to tell you something, Johnnie experienced hurt, disappointment, he's seen a lot of things happen. He'll tell you about it. He does in the book. But we really need to get serious about living what we say we believe and asking others to join with us so that we can be what we claim to be. He's going to inspire you.

Welcome Johnnie Moore to *LIFE Today*. Johnnie, glad to have you.

Johnnie: Good to be here.

James: I've got to say something about your school, about Liberty because I was with Dr. Falwell way back -- I started preaching for Dr. Falwell when I was 28. How old are you now?

Johnnie: Twenty-eight.

James: Well, that's when I started preaching for Jerry Falwell. I was one of the younger preachers he'd ever had at that time. We really became, let's say, visionaries for the school because it was a real vision.

I remember when he first took me up on the mountain and claimed the mountain. I thought, God, he's lost his mind! And then when he started building and sending bricks to everybody he almost collapsed the postal department because they got so tired of sending the semis to send everybody a brick if they would help build the school. We really did see Jerry have a very profound impact on the direction of a nation and really get people to assume responsibilities.

But let me tell you what I've seen at Liberty. And I say this to Jerry, Jr, I say this to Jonathan, I say this to the whole staff, I say this to Macel, I have watched the school stretch your arms, which I see as the arms of God, around a world where children and young people need as Jerry said to go and become champions, which is exactly what Johnnie is going to talk about. I've seen a school become not just the largest Christian university but become an influence that touches every denomination and all people for the glory of God. So Liberty, to God be the glory.

And Johnnie, I've got to tell you, I see Jesus in you. You and I have become friends. You and I have been in some wonderful meetings with leaders who have a broken heart for the nation and for others who love people. But I see in you, as clear a manifestation of Jesus as anyone I've ever been around. You probably, in your book, tell how it took a work of God or that wouldn't necessarily be the case. But I want you to know I see Jesus in you.

Johnnie: Thank you, James. I think it was a major trial in my young life that forced me to own my faith and not just have a cultural faith like I'd grown up in. Not just going to church and going through the motions and not dealing with the real issues of life and that's why I wrote a book about hypocrisy.

For 2000 years hypocrisy has been Christianity's biggest problem. Secular people say, "You preach one thing and practice something else. Your confession and your action don't match up." I work with a generation of young people that are disillusioned and disenfranchised and disenchanted, disappointed with the church and for sometimes, good reasons.

For me, my parents, their marriage was falling apart. They finally went to the church for counsel, after the bomb had already dropped on the plane, it was heading toward the ground and within six months it didn't help, the bomb hit the ground. Their house was foreclosed upon. Our cars were repossessed. We were kicked out of the Christian school we were in because we couldn't afford it. Dad tried to kill himself in my presence. And then as an insult to injury I found out that the pastor, who had been counseling them had been simultaneously in an affair with another pastor's wife. And it was an earthquake to my own belief system. It launched me on a journey to say am I going to have my parents' faith, my church's faith or am I going to have my faith? Am I really going to live what I say I believe or is it even true?

James: A lot of people go through what you saw and really, that is the secular world's idea. And quite frankly, a lot of church folks and a lot of kids grow up in church and they graduate from church when they go off to school. They not only graduate from high

school, they graduate from church because there is something lacking. Plastic produces plastic. It takes the real to produce the real.

Now what happened to you could have been destruction. Okay, what turned it around? Because I've been around you, you love Jesus. You're not a hypocrite. You're not saying one thing and doing another. If you had a weakness then we would want to get together and pray about it and we would fight because you don't want to be held captive. Something has happened that has set you on fire for God. You've not lost faith. It is like you're full of faith. What happened?

Johnnie: First I'd say we're all hypocrites in transition. It's okay to be hypocrite if you're aware of it and if you care about it, because Jesus created this Christianity, that's for the vagabonds and the not good enough and the people who really know they need the grace of God. For me, it was a journey.

The book is in five sections and it is in five sections because I believe that if you're not living what you say you believe it is probably one of these five reasons. The first one is doubt. You have intellectual emotional things you haven't dealt with, questions about trusting God. The second section is spiritual health. You're not feeding yourself spiritually as you should so you don't believe the way you should. The third section is perseverance. Life is going to be hard. People watching like now, there is somebody, no doubt, watching right now who just got a phone call, just got really, really bad news and in a moment like this they've got a choice they can make. They can run to God or they can run away from God. And the time to prepare to persevere is before the crisis.

Those are the first three sections. The last two are mission and vision. What does the gospel really look like when it is alive on planet earth? And what could happen if a billion Christians started to live what they say they believe?

And for me, most of my struggle was in the doubt phase. I traveled all around the world. I went to the Dalai Lama city in northwest India. I went to the holiest Hindu place on the banks of the Ganges River, the largest mosque in south Asia. I stood on a burial ground of a quarter million genocide victims in Rwanda and it forced me to become Doubting Thomas.

I don't think Doubting Thomas is a bad guy. I think Doubting Thomas was the only apostle to actually touch the wounds of Jesus. He not only had faith, he had such faith at the end of things that he died a martyr in India. And in one of the least reached countries of the world in the southern tip of India there is a church that tracks its heritage all the

way back to Thomas because the doubting apostle really wanted to know for sure whether all of this was true. And Jesus could take it and he cared about him.

James: He actually may have expressed what the others wouldn't express. He went ahead and said it. But he also dealt with it -- had to deal with it.

Johnnie: That's where the church is supposed to be, it should be the refuge for the questions. It should be the place where we really test these things.

James: We should never be afraid of the questions. Jesus never was. We had Ravi Zacharias on here recently. He said Jesus was never afraid of a question but he often answered the question with a question, which is always a wise approach. It many times diffuses and actually throws the person to look in a different direction. So we don't need to be afraid of that. I'm not afraid of any questions anybody needs to ask. You probably aren't now; are you? Are you fearful about the questions people ask? You may not be able to answer them but you're not afraid of them are you?

Johnnie: I think there is value in questions. This book I just wrote, I was talking to a secular reporter the other day and there was a moment where the interview was no longer an interview about this book. This was a person who had grown up in a church, had witnessed some similar things as I had witnessed and all of the sudden we weren't talking about my book, we were talking about her life and that is the glory of the gospel. There was a catalytic moment for me.

I was already a pastor at Liberty. I started as a pastor when I was 19 because Jerry Falwell really believed in young people. And I went to India, my first trip to India. I attended a Bible school graduation and I watched 2,400 Bible school graduates stand up and take a martyr's oath before they received their diploma. I felt like I was standing in the book of Acts and it made me like ask this profoundly simple question, why are so few of us willing to live for what so many people are willing to die for?

I think the answer is simple, they've seen Jesus as Jesus really is. Not just as some church, not just some cultural experience. They're not Christians because mom and daddy and grandpa was Christians. They're Christians because they saw what Jesus said, the kingdom of God is like a merchant and finds this pearl and he is willing to do something insane. He sells everything he has to get that one pearl. What was Jesus saying? When you get the gospel, you'd sell everything you have to get the gospel. Then Jesus comes on the scene and he says, "Oh, by the way, it's free. And you don't have to be good enough. I was good enough for you."

James: The reason that people are not coming to Christ is because the people who say they believe don't live it. You've really got to wonder if they believe. Your faith and your looking to God was tried in the fire of the failure and disappointment in Christians and family who failed. But somehow you looked beyond that, found Jesus.

I used to say this, and I said it when I was preaching. If the most famous preacher in the world -- and I'd call his name -- if he ran off with a woman tomorrow, it would not shake my faith one bit. I didn't put my faith in preachers. I put my faith in Jesus. And I fell in love with Jesus. And the love of Jesus is in my heart. And when I disappoint Jesus, which I have and I'm sure I will, not intentionally, but when I do I want to come back to that. I want to live in that shelter. I want the Lord who is my shepherd to keep leading me in the paths of righteousness.

Do you understand this zeal is not something they just stamp on you in some Bible school? This is something God put in my heart.

Am I making the point that I think this is right and I believe this is the way we live. Do you get what I'm saying?

Johnnie: I get it. I get it. When people see Jesus, everything changes. There are millions of people that come to Christ not because of Christians, but in spite of Christians. If we actually started to see Jesus as he really is things would change.

James: He said if you lift me up I'll draw all men to myself.

Johnnie: Yeah! And you know what's crazy? Is Jesus -- he is a big deal. He made a star that's 250 million miles in diameter and yet he cared -- there is this beautiful verse. John 14:18, I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. And so that -- that's what my relationship with Jesus is. It is like I actually have a relationship with a God that cared about me to come down, to come and get me.

If we actually started living what we say we believe, the book ends with a question: What if a billion Christians started to live what they say they believe? Let's narrow it down to real life. What if your dozen best friends started to actually live what they say they believe? The world would change overnight. It did change. A dozen people changed the world in a generation.

James: We're sitting here because of them, basically. We're believers because of their testimony.

Johnnie: And there's never been a moment where this is more important. We've got the millennial generation right, 80 million young people, they have every reason to fail. They've been in the worse natural disaster in American history, hurricane Katrina. They've seen the worst financial crisis since the great depression, the worst terrorist attack in American history, the worst school shooting.

James: And the greatest God is here for them. You know what I think? I think they're looking for him. I think students are looking for him and I think students want to find him but they're fed up with dead, lifeless, Christless religion.

Betty: Don't you think that a lot of times we get -- can I say something?

[Laughing]

Don't you think a lot of times because I know I fell into this trap of the expectations of man became more important than my honest relationship with God. The pressure -- call it peer pressure but even Christianity in the church, we got distracted by the things that people thought as Christians we should be doing or not doing.

Johnnie: And for me, as a 20-something that grew up in this marketing culture, millennials have \$600 billion of spending power or something, I feel this pull so much to make sure that everybody else is happy with me more than anything else. I drove around for two years with a post-it note right next to the speedometer on my car with that verse, where Paul said, I think it is Galatians chapter two. Where he said, "If I still care about the opinions of men, how can I be a slave of Christ?"

But all of that settles down to one thing, it is like how enchanted are you really with Jesus?

There was a moment a couple years ago where I was in an airport, I was in Amsterdam on my way to some mission field. I went up to a little art display on the second floor of this airport and there were half a dozen paintings and I went through it real quick, because I'm not an artist.

But I noticed when I was about to go back down that there was this lady who -- in the whole time I saw the dozen or so paintings, she was still staring at the first painting.

Now I didn't look at that lady and say, "Are you crazy?" I looked at that woman and I thought, what does she know about that painting that I don't know?

And I think for the believers that are watching us have this conversation today and maybe they can't imagine a passionate relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. They ought to look at us and say, first of all we're just like you. Maybe we're a little further along in the journey. You're much further than I am, you seem a lot more --

James: I've been on it more years. But I'm just as excited about it as you are.

Johnnie: But what do we see? I think it is real simple. We believe Jesus is who he says he is and that he wants to change the world now and there is a lot of world that needs changing.

James: And he uses us, individually, to touch one life at a time. The book is fabulous! It is in the bookstores. Honestly -- this is great. Liberty is a great school. Are you excited about what is going on there?

Johnnie: Liberty isn't intending on changing the world, we are changing the world right now. We are not a Bible school, we are a liberal arts university. We are throwing people in the culture, over 70,000 students. We're just doing it. We're not just talking about it.

James: That's vision! That's vision! We just have a few moments but you had an experience, something related to Somalia. We were there in the first crisis in Somalia when it was so dangerous you got killed if you went in so we had to work on the borders. And now there are other crisis going there. You had something happen, some kind of a story about Somalia that I thought would -- you share it in the book.

Johnnie: I write in the book about a moment where I was riding in my car, not paying attention, listening to a radio interview of a guy who was an expert on lullabies, the little songs that mothers sing to their children to give them peace to go to sleep at night. He was saying all of these lullabies, funny ones, interesting ones from around the world. I was paying half attention and then he got to this small tribe in Somalia, which is probably in the worst shape of any nation in the world right now in terms of poverty and political issues and everything else, terrorism. He said, "There is this little song that Somalian mothers sing to their children to give them peace before they go to sleep." He translated the song and it went like this, "If you go to sleep hunger will go away." And that's the most comforting thing that little -- the most comforting thing that little mom can tell her child to just get her to go to sleep.

You know what? If we started living what we say we believe in Christianity, there are a lot of people like that around the world that would have a lot more hope than they do

today because we carry the message of a resurrected savior who says in Psalm 68, verse 6 that I set the lonely in families.

James: I want to just take off from what he just said. I can't tell you how much that touched me. "The hunger will go away if you go to sleep." The tragedy is a lot of them go to sleep and never wake up. I can't tell you how it affects me. I have not just had to sit and say I care. Because of somebody like you, I've been able to share life. When they wake up I've been able to help give them something. And boy, when I say "I have," God, that's the biggest we that could ever be expressed.

And we're asking you right now, help us feed hundreds of thousands of children who maybe have been told, "If you go to sleep the hunger will go away." Listen, please listen to the heart of God through this missionary. Please!

On the mission field:

Isak: I was recently in a very rural, remote village here in Angola with some of our mission feeding team. They were explaining to me how there's 35 children in this village that are in such desperate condition. They don't have any other food but the food that we give them. That's literally the only meal that they eat every day. Blank.

Isak: They're coming in, they will wake these 35 children the moment that someone from our team arrives there, they're actually begging them to cook as early as they can so that they can get some food because that's all they get. Blank.

Isak: But the question is, how many other children are there who when they arrive in the morning there isn't any food? Who don't have us to rely on? Unfortunately, what happens to them is they become the child that a mother's heart breaks for. They become the child that died as a result of malnutrition.

That's the reality of when we don't get there with mission feeding. That's the reality in, unfortunately, far too many villages across our continent. There's more bowls that need to be filled, there is more children that need to be fed. There are more lives that need to be saved. There are more people that we need to partner with us to make that all possible.

End of video

In the studio:

James: And that really is -- that's it. It's a partnership. It is a family relationship of love that says we're going to make the difference there.

Sometimes I really wonder and dear God, how I pray that you'll listen to me please. Sometimes I wonder, do you just look at Betty and look at me and just see us as a couple of beggars?

Dear God, the Old Testament prophet said, "Plead the cause of the orphan, the widow, the helpless." As long as I live I will unapologetically do that. I would ask you to pray for us. But I'm not going to ask you to do something for us, I'm going to ask you to join us and do something for others.

I'm going to ask you, you talk about absolute poverty and suffering, you talk about a sense of hopelessness. See, we talk about being poor here in the states and I grew up very poor. But it is so far from what is there. You know what I've seen? People like you, people all over the world say, "I want to help them."

You know something? They'll be grateful. They won't feel like, well, you owed me. They're going to say, "You noticed? You cared?" That's what they say. Somehow we've got to look at people all around us and love them and care but we've got to inspire people to reach out and love people that are helpless.

By the way, we get them on their feet. We actually teach them how to live and how to make a living. It is incredible! Because that's what love does.

Betty, the missionaries can't feed them, they can't meet those needs. They can't be there -- they can be there to bury them but they can't make a difference unless we put it in their hands to do it.

Betty: That's right. And as Isak said, the missionary, he said, "What about the children that come expecting, knowing that food has been offered but when they get there it's all gone?"

James, we've seen the lines. They come and they line up -- they'll stand there all day hoping that we don't run out before we get to them. I want to make sure that the little child in the front of the line gets their bowl of food but also the little child at the end of the line gets their portion too. Will you help us do that?

There is no greater joy that God can give us in our own hearts, James, in our lives than to give us the opportunity to help those that are so needy.

James: The fact is that we feel the economic tightening. We feel it all over the world. As we felt that the fact is they had begun to run out in a few places. So we're asking everybody watching today to dial that number.

Take your bankcard or write a check, make it to *LIFE*, you're giving life. If you can give a \$100 gift we'll be able to feed 10 children for the next months. If you'll give a gift of \$30, we can feed three, \$50, we can feed five. A \$1,000 gift will feed 100 children for the next three months. We're asking you to do that.

We have some gifts we want to send you. Beth Moore's book, *The Life that Overcomes*, and then this is such a treasure, *The 90-day Bible, The Bible in 90 Days*; incredibly organized, take you through the word of God, transforming effect.

We want to share life and love and help with you. We're asking you to share life with those precious children, enable those missionaries to meet those desperate needs.

Please go to the phone. Use that bankcard like a check. Or you can go online at LifeToday.org. We're asking you to make the largest gift you can. Please? We really need every person to simply do what you can. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: At this very moment a child is drawing her last breath struggling to stay alive due to a lack of food. Sadly, this impoverished child is not alone and without our help, many like her throughout Africa face death as well.

Today you can make a difference. You can save a life! *LIFE*'s mission feeding teams are in place right now ready to answer the hunger cries of hundreds of thousands of suffering children in remote areas of Africa.

With previous food reserves gone and parts of Africa facing its worst famine and food shortage in more than two decades, we desperately need to replenish our supplies for the feeding programs immediately! Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift we'll send you Beth Moore's book, *The Life that Overcomes*. This Life Outreach exclusive featuring a collection of messages from Beth's heart will inspire you to live an overcoming life each day!

With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed ten children you may also request our new 90-day Bible designed to help you read through the scriptures in just 90 days.

Finally, as a special challenge please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and save the lives of 100 children. And you may also request the beautiful "Heart of the Father" bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today at LifeToday.org.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I've got to be honest with you, my heart's still really touched about a child going to sleep so they won't be hungry anymore. I just say to you please, please, let's stop some of them from going to sleep hungry.

Beth's book, *The Life that Overcomes, The Bible in 90 Days* because we want to put something in your hand that will go in your heart and you'll start helping people.

Johnnie Moore is a blessing. I told you what a blessing he is. I love this guy. He loves the Lord. I know he loves us and what we do. And we love Liberty University. Really check them out and go up there and be a part of changing the world with them. *Honestly, Really Living What We Say We Believe.*

Would you join Betty and me in saying a great thanks to Johnnie Moore from Liberty University? We love you! Thank all of you.

If you haven't called to say, "I want to help," I don't want a child to go to sleep so they don't feel the hunger -- just stop that. God bless y'all! Thanks for helping! Thank all of you!

Announcer: Tomorrow, weathering the storms in your life.

Beth: But it says it is chaos: Can't Have Anyone Over Syndrome. Isn't that the best? When you Can't Have Anyone Over Syndrome?