

Week 49

11/28/11

James: It is such a privilege to come into your home or wherever you're watching and share this time. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*, hopefully every day.

And remember you can watch on LifeToday.org. -- you can go online and get it in great high definition quality and just watch the program right there. Or you can record it. But we're on all through the day; if you're on one of the satellites, you get us about six or seven times a day; in most cities more than one or twice a day on national networks like Discovery or the I.N.S.P. or the Daystar or T.B.N. So we're there and we appreciate the opportunity of sharing this time with you.

Heather Williams is our guest. She's a great singer. She's got a tremendous gift, has written a song that's become quite popular, "Hallelujah." And it came from a situation that would not cause one to be inclined to say "hallelujah" or any kind of praise unless there is the one worthy of praise who becomes very personally and directly involved in that situation.

Heather had a pretty tragic life. I was reading a little bit of her bio and her mother gave her away when she was 11 -- mine gave me away when I was three or four days old, and then took me back at five and then I ran away when I was 15. So I bet there are some similarities because we both had impoverished situations.

I'm anxious for you to hear her story and hear her sing. You're going to be blessed.

Would you welcome Heather Williams to *LIFE Today*? Heather, we're glad to have you. We're glad you're here.

Heather: I'm glad to be here.

James: I referenced a traumatic event. Tell us a little bit about what transpired and why that give away occurred, and what happened afterwards?

Heather: I grew up in a broken family. My mom had been married before and this was her second marriage that my brother and I kind of came into.

We were a family that went to church all the time, Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, potlucks, everything we were there. On the outside even though there was no money in our family people would look at our family, my stepfather and my birth mom had four other kids, there is six of us being paraded into church and my mom is a very beautiful woman. People would look and think, this is a perfect family. This is -- so beautiful, this family.

But as we all know perception is not reality and they did not know what was happening behind closed doors, which was abuse, emotional abuse and physical abuse from a very early age. He would tell me I was ugly. I was stupid. My brother and I were never allowed to be a part of family time.

And just to give you a little instance of some stuff that we went through, there was a time one of my stepfather's favorite punishments was to put us on bread and water. And I was a little girl and I didn't really want to eat the bread and I didn't say anything. In my head, I'm saying a bunch of stuff but I never said it out of my mouth. I was sitting at the table and looking at it. And he came over and he popped me in the mouth and he was like, "You need to eat that bread!"

I bled on this piece of bread, and he made me eat it. I remember getting sick on the floor. I remember being down on the floor and I remember cleaning it up and looking up at my mom and she's just eating -- just eating as if nothing is going on. I just remember in that moment feeling so alone and so rejected.

Again, going back to going to church. I remember Sunday School teachers, everybody telling me Jesus loves me and I didn't want to hear it. I did not want to listen to anything they had to say. I believed God was real but don't tell me he loves me because there is no way that a God who loves me would allow all of this to be going on in my life.

So from six years old I remember just being so bitter at God. I so desperately wanted my stepfather to love me -- even though all of this was coming against me from him, I just desperately wanted that care from him, and that love from him and I never got it.

My grandfather actually came down and got me, saved my life, actually. I always encourage those people who are grandparents, do not give up on your grandchildren. You pray for them. You intervene in their life. Don't be afraid to have anybody come after you or yell at you, you do what you have to do.

So my grandpa came and took me up to live with him in Michigan and took me to church. But I still didn't want anything to do with it. I ended up not going to school and getting in

trouble for that and given an ultimatum and told, "You can either stay in school and stay here, have a place to live or you can get your stuff and you can leave." And I got my stuff and I left.

So I had one friend; one friend that I probably could have turned to earlier but he was a goody-two-shoes, if you will. He was a Christian, he and his family. His dad was a police officer. I never even would have thought to go to him for help but I was so desperate at this point. I'd been humbled. You know when you're hungry and you're getting tin cans to get ten cents, to try and have money, it is a very humbling experience.

So I walked to his house, knocked on his door, and his family welcomed me in. And his dad said, "Why don't we try to find some family of yours in town?"

They got out the phone book, which totally dates this story right here. Got out the phone book and looked through for anybody with the last name "Holder," which is my maiden name and they found my birth dad who I had not seen since I was a little girl. He had walked out and walked away.

And so they get me in the car and they drive me over there. And here I am walking in -- walking into this house. Talking about surreal, you're walking in and this person is extending their hand saying, "Hi, I'm your father."

I didn't even know what to say except, "I'm your daughter."

I kind of sat there just pretty much going to do whatever they were going to ask me to do. They said, "Well, there is a lady at my church who said that you can stay with her but you have to go to church."

Betty: God kept bringing you back to church -- didn't he?

Heather: Exactly! I'm like seriously! Inside my head, because at that point I'm just like I just want a place to stay so I'm like, "That sounds nice."

I went to go live with this lady and I went to go to church with them. They had this little downtown Detroit church. The third time I'm there, we do our little song and dance and we sit down. And the pastor starts talking and I start to realize that everything that this man is saying, he is saying it right to me. And I got angry. I got really angry because I looked over at my birth dad and I thought for sure he had told this guy, "Listen, there is a charity case in the house tonight and if you could just like get her saved."

I'm like how dare you tell him about my life? You don't even know me.

But something inside of me is still leaning in and still listening to this man and he starts talking about the love of Jesus. I'd heard this probably 50 to 100 times in my life but he says something that I heard for the first time. The Bible tells us about scales being removed from the eyes and those who have ears to hear to hear. Well, that day I had the ears to hear.

He said, "Jesus loves you just the way you are. You don't need to clean yourself up to come to him. You come to him and you let him be the one that changes you."

It gives me chills now. I wanted that. I wanted that so badly. I wanted Jesus to take me and just clean me up. I wanted him to make me new. Because I'd spent my whole life yelling and screaming and hollering at God and telling him how he ruined my life. How could he let my birth mom not care about me? How could that woman not have stood up for me? How could that man, my stepfather, have treated me that way? How could anybody take people to church and treat people that way? God, how could you?

Well, I found myself walking up an aisle after an invitation and I just stand there. And this man was so nice to me because I was a blubbering mess. And he came over to me and he said, "Can I pray with you."

I nodded my head. He prayed with me to receive Jesus Christ as my savior. Then he said to me, he said, "I want you to talk to God right now and just tell him anything you want to tell him right now here in this moment."

Again, I'm thinking, boy, if you only knew the stuff I was saying to God. I don't know if he wants to hear from me. But I opened up my mouth and I said the two words and I want people to get this gravity of this, "Forgive me."

This stubborn German/Irish thick-headed person who would blame everybody and everybody for the problems that had happened in her life, forgive me because somewhere along that line I'm making decisions on my own and there is consequences to sin and I had been sinning and turning my back on God. And in this moment of me asking for forgiveness it was like a weight was lifted off of my shoulders and I had a radical transformation. But I'm telling you, Jesus Christ changed my life.

James: That's what he does! Isn't it? There is no question you had a head-on Damascus road experience. You were changed. You got married. You had a baby. What happened to that child?

Heather: Well, I've always wanted to be a mom. And it had taken us about five years to be able to conceive.

We had no idea when our son Caedmen was born that he had cardiomyopathy, which is what we now know is an enlarging of the heart muscles and basically, anything less than a heart transplant is terminal. The person is going to pass away.

When he was six months, 18 days old we had to take him to the hospital after a few days of dealing with coughing and not wanting to eat. They had taken an x-ray. They said he had the beginning stages of pneumonia and that he would be home by New Year's; we're just going to check him in and get him so fluids. And we took him to the hospital and got him checked in, in his room and I remember them telling me that his blood had clotted and that they needed to take new samples.

I said, "Okay, I'll go in and I'll hold him. I'll comfort him."

And I'm telling Caedmen, "You're going to be okay." I'm just looking into his beautiful blue eyes.

And I pick him up after they're done and I go to walk down the hall and take him back to his room and half way down the hall he sits up in my arms and he's having a seizure and it just terrified me and I screamed.

They grabbed him from me and shoved him and me into this little room. We're just pleading, begging God, "Please let him be okay. Let him be okay, God."

I'm making bargains with God. "God, please! I'll do anything you want God."

Then what can only be described as the peace that passes all understanding, it came over me and I remember looking at my husband, Tim, and I remember saying, "He is going to be okay. He is going to be okay."

When they came back in and they said, "We've had to start C.P.R." Then I just hit my knees and we just began praying again. Then I start asking God. I said, "God, I don't want to be angry anymore. I don't want to hate my mom anymore. I don't want to hate my stepdad anymore. God, just help me."

And it is the most inappropriate time to have church meeting, if you will. But I'm telling you, God showed up in this room. And as they came and got us and said, "We want you

to come down into the room" and we walk in... and they're pumping and they have him incubated and they're pumping him with this little thing, and I don't know if you've ever been in the room with someone who you know they're not there anymore. It's just air.

Dr. Simpson came and he took my hand and he put it on his leg and he said, "Just talk to him."

I said, "Caedmen, please don't go! Please don't go!"

But I knew -- I knew. I said, "Its okay. Go be with Jesus."

Then you're just sitting there and it's the monotony of hospital life starts taking over and it is "Time of death: 4:34" and it's ripping the tape off of his mouth and they're wrapping up his diaper. And I'm just standing there like did this even just happen? What is going on? You told me he was going to be home. What's going on?

And as they're wrapping him in the blanket and the nurses come over and they go to hand him to me. I didn't want to at first but I'm so glad I did. I remember looking down at him and looking up at the nurses. I said, "I want you to know that whether my son had lived or even now that he is gone, that my faith is going to remain the same."

And that's actually on his head stone. It says, "Our faith is not shaken. It's only stronger."

That doesn't mean that you don't feel the pain and that doesn't mean that the emotion of the loss is not there but it does mean that God will never leave you and never forsake you.

And Romans 8:28, let me tell you something, that verse means so much more to me now: All things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose. I know -- I know that God has taken this and he is continually working it together for good to change lives.

James: You wrote a song.

Heather: I did.

James: What is it?

Heather: Well, I wrote a song called "Hallelujah" and it is basically a prayer out of desperation, needing God to show up. And I've got to tell you, I've been amazed at the response. But I think it is because every single one of us, we all have moments where we

just need God to show up and I want to encourage -- I want to encourage everyone out there, you're not alone; he never leaves you. And there is power when you lift your voice in pain and sing "Hallelujah."

James: Would you sing that for us?

Heather: I would love to.

James: Please do.

Jesus, please come
Please come today
Hear me

Heal me
Be near me I pray
I've fallen so far
Flat on my face
I'm in need of your grace today
I stumble and fall
but in spite of it all
Your love always stays the same
Hallelujah
Hallelujah

Jesus, please come
Please come today
Break me
Mold me
Use me I pray
But don't give me up on me now
I'm so close to you now
I'm in need of your grace today

Wipe the dirt off my face
Hold me in your embrace
Your love always saves the day
Hallelujah

Hallelujah

Music

On my knees here I fall
In spite of it all
Hallelujah
And though it seems hard
I'm still trusting you, Lord
Hallelujah

I've fallen so far
Flat on my face
I'm in need of your grace today
Hallelujah
Whoo
Hallelujah
Ooh yeah
Hallelujah
Ooh yeah
Hallelujah

Jesus, please come
Please come today

James: Thank you, Lord!

Bless you, Heather and to every one of you who, wherever you are and there are many of you in the studio, your heart is moved, it is touched. While she was singing I was just praying that God would heal your broken heart, and hold more than your hand, he would hold your heart, your life. He is such an awesome God! A God that can put a hallelujah in a broken heart -- that's rightly broken and mightily healed. God will heal everyone's broken heart.

You want to say thanks to God and to Heather again?

[Applause]

And here is Heather's beautiful CD, "This Time Around," Hallelujah and other songs she's written. Do you have a web site if people want to know where you are?

Heather: Yes, HeatherWilliamsMusic.com.

James: All right, there is it is on the screen if you want to just go and say how can I find out where she is going to be or maybe communicate with her to get her to come to our area and get her CD. If you need someone to pray with you, the number's there. You see it on the screen. Somebody is glad to pray with you and hold your hand and take your broken heart to God for the healing you need. I want to ask you to do something very, very special. You know you would have liked to have corrected her situation. Let me show you where there is some children, all they need is a hand, something to eat. Watch closely please.

On the mission field:

Isak: This young child's name is Esperanza. Her name means hope, and yet for this child there is very little hope. And for the thousands of children that this child represents, children who don't die as a result of a war or some form of conflict or something that they did wrong but children whose lives are literally stolen away, silently in the middle of the night by a killer called malnutrition. It is a simple thing. It is the lack of adequate nutrition and food for children of this age.

Esperanza, while her name means hope, may not represent hope, it may actually represent the exact opposite unless you open your heart to stand up and say, "I'll do what I can do." Because each and every one of us can do something, that's one life saved -- that's one less child that dies as a result of malnutrition.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I've spent... my life sharing life because I experience life. I experience it more fully because I express it freely. I just like to share. I find something wonderful, I like to share it. I see these little children and I don't run from them. I've spent, with Betty and others, boy, nearly 25 years running after them -- running to them. And I've not gone to them empty-handed. We've not left missionaries empty-handed.

I remember one of the first places that we went and saved a lot of children who were dying and we went back and saw one of the missionary pastors there and we came to give a good report. As we were leaving he looked at us. He looked real sad. I said, "What's wrong?"

He said, "Well, I just wondered if now that they're a little better maybe you're not coming back."

I reached out and put my arms around him and said, "We're coming back."

He said, "They're all doing good but there is a lot more. We'll go get them."

I said, "Okay. We'll feed them."

That's a big we -- because that we includes you.

Some of you I've never seen. God's seen you and he's seen them and he wants to connect you. So that's what I'm asking you to do. This is kind of the divine connection station where the heart of God finds hands and hearts to extend the hands. So that's what we're asking you to do. I'm asking every one of you wherever you are, yeah you -- I'm talking to you -- I'm asking you to just go and get your bankcard and use it like a check. Perhaps it's the greatest reason you've may ever have used it -- to save lives.

And dial the number, it's always there as a prayer line, and take that card and say, "Here I want to save -- I want to save a hundred kids lives" -- the next months we're going to feed them. \$1,000 we can feed 100 kids for the next months. \$100 we can feed ten. \$50 we can feed five. \$30 we can feed three. So where could you put \$30 or \$50 or \$100 or \$1,000 and do more good?

This is not something that might work -- this is what does work -- it is what will work. It is guaranteed to work. Love never fails. When you express it and you just give a little girl named Hope real hope -- more than a name -- hope. Give her help. Give her life. Would you do it? Please?

You can go online LifeToday.org and make the gift. You want to write a check, make it to *LIFE*, address it to *LIFE*, put it in the mail. But call us and tell us what you're mailing because we have to let the missionaries know they can count on you. Please? Don't just pray someone else will do it. You be the one -- the answer to a heart cry, to a prayer, to a missionary's need. Thank you for doing it.

If you get a busy, call until you get through. Make the largest gift you can. It will just keep giving. We're going to send some wonderful gifts to bless you -- not because you ask for them but because we like to bless you as you bless others. Thank you for your help.

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 just want to say thanks to all of you for your help. I think about Heather and think about her weeping and I'm weeping with her because Jesus weeps with us. But he put a hallelujah in your heart. He put a big hallelujah in other people's hearts when you give them a reason to know God loves me.

Here is her beautiful CD. Let's say thanks to Heather Williams again.

Heather, bless you. Bless your husband.

She's got two beautiful children, a year apart! They've made up for lost time. Hallelujah!

Thank all of you!

Announcer: Tomorrow, Bible teacher Priscilla Shirer.

>> And sometimes it does come in the form of a life that is interrupted because our plans, they're not his plans.