

Week 49

12/1/11

James: We're so glad to see you. We're glad to see you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have a Catholic priest, Father Jonathan Morris.

Now let me just tell you something, here's a book that he's written, *God Wants You Happy*. This Catholic priest knows the source of happiness, it's joy, and that joy comes from a relationship with the Lord Jesus. And I'm telling you, this man is a blessing.

I want you to welcome Father Jonathan Morris to *LIFE Today*. Would you give him a welcome?

Father, I'm glad to see you. I told you personally and on more than one occasion -- I'll just say it in front of the whole world -- I watch you on FOX and you'll come on many of the different programs, you're on FOX and Friends a lot in the morning. They will have you on oftentimes during special holidays or let's say Christian seasons, whether it is Christmas or Easter, and then they'll ask you questions at various times of the year when there is some question that comes up of a theological nature, biblical nature or spiritual nature in their opinion and sometimes they really don't know the spiritual from the secular but they think they do.

Father Morris: They try, they try -- they do their best.

James: Whenever you're on and I'm just telling you straight on, as an evangelical, as a protestant, every time you talk, every time I see you, I see Jesus. When you open your mouth, what you say is so consistent with the Word of God, with the heart of God, with the spirit of God and the spirit of Christ that I marvel. And I've often said I wish most protestant preachers had the sensitivity and discernment and gift to communicate that you have.

Don't you agree that you see Jesus in this wonderful man of God?

Betty: That's what I've appreciated every time I've seen you on FOX is because there is a calmness and a peace but a sureness too of where your beliefs come from and it is just evident that God is first.

Father Morris: Can I say something to you all? It takes a lot of courage, quite honestly, for a protestant evangelical Baptist -- I don't know what you call yourself, James,

[Laughter]

to have a Catholic priest on. I know that you do it not because you believe every single theological thing that I believe and we would probably have some disagreements on things but you said it, it is about the person of Jesus Christ.

And if you can have the courage, James, to have a Catholic priest to talk about things that we care about, I can say, let me tell you, I've accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and savior.

You don't hear many Catholics say it because we don't know how to say it; we're not used to saying it. We say, "Well, I was baptized like... I can't remember it."

[Laughter]

But you know what? So much -- we have so much in common. But we have one person in common and that is Jesus Christ. And we have to work together. We have to have courage to work together no matter what anyone says. "Father Jonathan, what are you doing going on that *LIFE Today*? We've got a quote from James Robison in 1975 --."

[Laughter]

"He didn't like those Catholics too much!"

[Laughter]

James: Oh, God, forgive me!

[Laughter]

I've got public confessional.

Father Morris: But I think we all know right now that the world's problems today are so much bigger than our differences and we have to have courage, not because we're perfect but because we have a God who is perfect and who loves us and has a plan for us and that's why we're here today.

James: Absolutely! And I've told this to you, I chewed Billy Graham out for having Catholics in all of his meetings.

[Laughter]

I even chewed him out for having Pentecostals and Charismatics. You talk about Baptist, buddy, I was Baptist blood, bred, bought!

Father Morris: I'm glad I'm sitting over here.

James: It was scary -- I think I used to scare God a little bit.

[Laughter]

I used to tell people, I've put so much fear of hell in them nobody wanted to go there. I'll just scare the hell out of them!

Here's the thing, God -- and really Billy Graham is the one, he asked me, "Do you know these people you're talking about and telling me to stay away from?" And I didn't. And I've said this and if you watch me you've heard me say this many times, we don't know him as well as we should because we refused to know them.

And as a result of us not knowing one another and even being an answer to the prayer of Jesus that we be one, we've not learned as well as we should.

Father, listen, I've developed such wonderful relationships -- I've got to be honest with you -- if Catholics, evangelicals, protestants, if we would just come together on common ground, you talk about a city set on a hill that cannot be hidden, you talk about a city set on a hill that could light up the way the world should walk and reveal the way not to walk as well as to walk, I think it is going to happen.

I want you to tell me, what do you want people to hear when you think about *God Wants You Happy* because I know you know it is beyond frivolity, it is not triteness, it is not trivial, and it is not hip-hip-hooray! There is some depth here and that's what you communicate.

Father Morris: Even if the book is yellow and the smiley face looking...

[Laughter]

The subtitle of this book is "From self-help to God's help." There is a self-help industry out there that has a lot of -- I would say pearls of wisdom but unfortunately, this industry has cut itself off, has divorced itself from the origin of true happiness. So yes, we can help ourselves but we can only get so far. And then the grace of God has to intervene.

On FOX News, on other secular media venues, I look at mostly ethical issues, as you mentioned, James, social issues, political issues that have meaning for our lives as families and as individuals. What I try to do is help people take as we were talking at dinner tonight, baby steps -- baby steps to understanding truth and goodness and beauty.

But there is more to it than taking baby steps, there is something called walking and there is something called running in the presence of God. What I try to do in this book is help people to go through -- specifically through the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love and begin to live in the presence of God through living faith, through living hope, through living love.

God wants that for us and he wants us to be happy because he wants us to flourish on every single level of your existence, suffering included, of course but flourishing with that spiritual joy that you talked about, James.

James: Well, you exemplify it; you really do. I have no reason to just try to be patronizing or just say okay, this is the kindness of the evangelical protestant to the Catholic. I'm telling you that I believe that I'm going to get to see and be a part of Jesus' prayer for us to have a oneness with the father and to see a perfected -- perfectedness and perfection coming from a supernatural unity and the world know we're his disciples because of our love that I think I'm going to see that. And just knowing you, the little exchanges that you and I have had, really in the last weeks has been really quite remarkable. I'm thankful.

You said in our conversations that you've seen some things in what you hear in my expression that encourage you.

Father Morris: On the plane here today I read from cover to cover the manuscript that you sent me of your new book Indivisible, and I'm reading it and I'm blown away. I'm saying, you know what? Here we have and I think you wrote it with a Catholic --

James: With Jay Richards.

Father Morris: And I'm reading, here we are evangelical, well-known pastor, writing

about things that I would write about. Here I am reading a Catholic who helped you writing about evangelical things that I need to learn! And we need to help each other.

You know what? James, I think the center of this book is showing the God-given gift of faith, where's the origin? Well, it's God-given, it is from God but we also have a God-given gift of reason and that gift of reason, when it is well-formed, when it is not polluted by all the junk that's out there and the media and the news, when we purify it, helping each other purify it, that gift of reason goes together with that gift of faith and there are two wings upon which we can fly toward new heights. And if we're doing it together as evangelicals and Catholics, Christians, anyone of good will, I believe that our country can take steps forward and we can gain, not looking back, remember when... back in the 60s or the 40s or 30s -- no! How about the 2020s! We can do it!

I believe there is an evangelical Catholic movement that's going on right now. Not only two groups coming together but Catholics who are evangelistic and evangelicals that are going back to traditions and finding the best of it and not being afraid of it.

James: Absolutely!

Do you like hearing what you're hearing? I say thank God!

I really believe -- I'm excited about what I believe God is doing. I don't see hopelessness. You've been on FOX where Glenn Beck has been and Glenn and I happen to be friends. But one of the things I keep saying to Glenn, "Man, let's have some hope. Come on, where the hope? I mean you talk about doomsday -- you're the doomsdayest guy sometimes I've ever heard!"

He loves me -- he listens and we have great fellowship and I'm saying, "Glenn, get your hopes up a little bit!" I believe the blessed hope is not just the return of the Lord but it is the hope, Christ in us, the hope of the manifestation of his glory, which I see on you.

And I get the feeling that, you know, we were having fellowship with other evangelicals and we were eating together, it looked like you could see hope in this beautiful girl right here and you could see hope in the others.

Don't you think that we have this hope that people are looking for and if they see it, they're going to be drawn to it? I feel like that's what you're saying when you say God Wants You to Be Happy, to have a life that is attractive in which Christ is lifted up, not just some dull religion but a relationship.

Father Morris: And this is not hope that is like hey, the positive thinking/optimism. Hey, wake up! Have some coffee! That's not it! Optimism is a mere emotional state of the soul. Hope is being positive -- positive thinking, positive acting. Why? Because we know that Christ has already had the victory. So whether I feel like... bad --

[Laughter]

Or whether I feel great that emotional state of the soul is less important than the deep theological spiritual conviction that God is on my side, that he is with me and that he is not going to abandon me. We have to be that for one another.

James: That's good preaching!

Father Morris: What do you say down here in the south that that will preach?

James: That will preach!

Betty: I love the title of your book, God Wants You Happy. But I believe God is happy when he sees his children fellowshiping together and getting along together.

Father Morris: Rejoicing in heaven -- right?

James: He does! I believe the angels rejoice. I believe the father rejoices. I know Jesus who's daily making intercession for us, I believe he has turned to his father and said, "Father, my prayers are getting answered. We're getting together."

Don't you like what you're seeing? Don't you know God likes for us to come together?

Let me just ask you to share something that I think is really remarkable because this just shows that religion isn't the answer, relationship with the Jesus you talked about right up front, the priest that was over your fellowship, he failed but your faith didn't fail. Explain that to us.

Father Morris: I wrote about that a little bit in this book. Just as a basic primer, there are two types of priests. There are religious order priests, you might have heard of them as Jesuits or Franciscans, and then there are parish priests or diocesan priests. And I was part of an order that was founded in Mexico and the founder turned out to be, he was a very Charismatic guy and had turned out to be basically a big fraud. It wasn't found out

until 60 years after he was running this and tremendous good people got involved and did wonderful things, and then we found out another whole aspect or many aspects of his life of the humanity, the broken frail humanity.

If we put our faith in any specific person, even your wife or your husband, a specific pastor, a boss, or a hope that I might have to have such and such position, or money -- we're going to be ultimately disappointed. And that's a very good thing to be disappointed when we've placed our hope in a place that does not deserve our hope. Yes, it was hard.

Here I'm writing this book *God Wants You Happy* and I'm going through all this stuff. Yeah, whatever! Right? But isn't that how God works? In the midst of our pain he is helping us and pushing us along.

So yeah, it was painful but hey -- it's good for us sometimes.

James: Yeah, he looked beyond our sin and gave us forgiveness and grace and we can look beyond our pain and the failures of others and see his adequacy and his sufficiency.

I want to encourage you to get Father Jonathan Morris' book, *God Wants You Happy*, in the truest, purest sense of the word.

And then whenever you see him, and I'm praying that God will open doors beyond anything he's ever imagined -- I prayed this for him. As a matter of fact he has come on this program where so many people, highly visible in evangelical circles have been, I've never heard anyone put it any clearer, any plainer, any more precisely, any more directly pointing to Jesus than he did.

I believe I'm watching just what he referred to a moment ago, I'm watching something happen in the family of God that lifts us above all those barriers that have been put up always in defense of the faith. Always... but oftentimes in the defense of the faith we destroy the demonstration of the faith and the high impact potential of the faith. I believe God is going to heal that.

Father, I don't see that as a compromise, I see we've been compromising over our various differences and we've really missed the power of the real difference maker, the Lord Jesus.

Father Morris: And it is not about us or even about us -- it is about us with God. Right? Who is going to help us because hey, what can we do? We're limited human beings with limited scope and even with the Internet and television it's nothing -- that's nothing

compared to the suffering of individuals, the needs of families. And we can't do it on our own but we have to do our part and be the Junior partners with the Holy Spirit to bring about a wonderful work of God.

James: Amen!

Will y'all say amen to that? Here's the book.

You pray for Father Jonathan Morris and I just tell you right now, you've got an invitation; I don't know how often you want to leave up in the New York, up in the happy grounds or wherever, and come down here to hot Texas.

Somebody said, "All Texas needs is a little more air-conditioning and a little bit more water."

Somebody else said, "That's all hell needs!"

But if you want to come -- if you want to come down, you've got an invitation if you'll just let us know you're coming this way, or you would just say, you know what? I'll make it part of my schedule. We'd love to have you come several times a year.

Father Morris: Let's play golf too!

[Laughter]

James: Let's do that! Shake on that! Let's do it.

Say thanks to Father Jonathan Morris.

God Wants You Happy -- in the bookstores. And the joy of the Lord is our strength. You know what I've found and that is I even meditate on that truth, the joy of the Lord is our strength. When you give God joy because you're walking in his will, accomplishing kingdom purpose, the joy of the Lord gives us strength.

I want to tell you something that gives God great joy when we release his life and his love in the most unexpected fashion and when you give with no expectation of return, when you give where they could not give back, that's the greatest release of love possible. I want you to look very closely and see if you don't find an opportunity to express love, to release it; put the arms of God around these.

Begin video clip:

>> I have always known hunger. It was in my village before I was born. There have been times me and my brother will have gone days without eating. One time it was so bad in my village that many children died because there was nothing to eat.

When it does not rain, our crops dry up and turn to dust. Sometimes we can't grow our food because of soldiers fighting.

At night the pain of hunger will not let me sleep. I tried to listen in school but my stomach is empty and my head feels very dizzy.

I sometimes think hunger is just a bad dream... but it never goes away. Hunger doesn't care how young you are. It will follow you until you are in your grave. My little brother died because he didn't have enough food. I hope I can eat tomorrow.

End of clip**In the studio:**

James: That is a little African girl that made her way over here, whose voice you heard. For 25 years, Betty and I have undergirded, with your help and only with your help, Betty and I -- we are among the most faithful, determined givers in all of *LIFE Outreach's* ministries because it is a joy to us. But we've given our time, our lives, and our due diligence to try to rescue those little children because they're precious.

You know that little girl? Her brother died, that's just typical. We've saved millions of children's lives -- we! That's you! That's all of us. By putting our hands together and putting God's hands of love out.

I'm asking you please, this is in the last days now of our mission feeding emphasis. Twice a year we come to you and say, "Would you give so we can feed for the next months?" So basically, we feed for six months. And when we first started a gift of \$30 would feed three children six months, now it only feeds them three.

What Betty and I do that you don't even know, we just keep raising funds, kind of behind the scenes. But the majority of the funds for the whole year comes twice a year. And these requests -- and Betty, there is some crisis going on right now in Somalia that's very dangerous. Hundreds of thousands are dying and the missionaries are saying, "It's pretty tedious, it is pretty expensive to make some adjustments." We like to say, "Go ahead and make them. Our viewers will supply the need."

So that's what we're asking you to do. We're asking you to race to the phone to put arms of love and to give help and food to those children that you just heard referenced because there are hundreds of thousands of them but you need to see them as one child or two or three or five or ten that you'll say we'll take.

So I'm asking you to dial the number. Now listen to the numbers here, when you dial that number, \$100 we can feed ten children for the next months, \$50 we can feed five, \$30 we can feed three.

Do not say, "Well, I don't have much." It's much to those children so do what you can. If it is three kids, maybe a little girl's brother wouldn't die, they wouldn't be waiting, hoping -- but no hope, no help. We are the hope and the help. We offer it and we do it because we tell them God put that love in our heart. And we would love them and help them if we were not even allowed to talk to them because we would show them love.

So would you dial the number? Would you take your bankcard?

Listen, if you could give \$1,000 that would feed 100 kids. We need that. But many of you could give \$100, maybe the best \$100 you ever give and it will take care of ten children for the next months: \$50 or \$30/five or three. We've got some beautiful gifts to send you.

Beth Moore's book/teaching *The Life that Overcomes*, *The 90-Day Bible* will help you get in the word.

The beautiful art piece, the father's love, literally the hands of the father. Would you please be his hands?

Make the largest gift you can. You want to go online, LifeToday.org. You write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're putting in the mail. Please do it! If you should get a busy, be determined -- please be determined and get through and make the difference. 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: Betty and I just say thank you. I do remind you, it is real important because we only have a little time left to raise the funds we need.

And I want again to say thanks to Father Jonathan Morris, remind you *God Wants You Happy*. I just pray that all of us, Evangelicals, Protestants, every Catholic, every professing Christian would be the kind of witness and the kind of light that Father Jonathan Morris is.

Would you say thanks to Father?

Bless you, sir!

Thank all of you for watching! Thank you for your support. So many depend on it. We love you! Thanks for loving others.

Begin video clip:

James: Everyone is rightly concerned about who will lead our nation? Who will fill the various offices?

I've written a commentary that I believe God put on my heart. It is critically important. It is titled, "What, not who." We must understand the "what" to find the right "who" and insist to right what is done.

Go to the web site. Get a copy and pass it on.

End of clip

Announcer: Connect with *LIFE Today* through your favorite social media sites. Just go to lifetoday.org and click connect.