

Week 50

12/12/11

James: It is a joy to come into your home. Thank you for this opportunity; it's a privilege! The time we spend together now can really be totally transforming. We're going to talk about hearing God from someone who has not only heard God but helps people hear God.

I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome Ken Ulmer who is the pastor of one of the greatest churches in the Los Angeles area. Let me just tell you a little bit about the history of the church. It is called the Faithful Central Bible Church but when I look down here I realize that he's also the president of the King's College and Seminary, which is a wonderful school; Jack Hayford is, I guess you might say, would be the founder of it. We just praise God for it. I've been out there preaching and having -- saying an encouraging word to them.

But here's what I notice here. This is the previous home of the Los Angeles Lakers. This is the forum where they played. I want us to welcome Dr. Ken Ulmer to *LIFE Today*. Would you welcome Ken to *LIFE Today*? It's good to see you.

Dr. Ulmer: Thank you so much! Thank you!

James: I've just got to ask you now, you're in the house of the Lakers, which is now God's house, who won the championship last year, Mr. Los Angeles pastor?

Dr. Ulmer: I don't know if the spirit of the Lord has just left this place or just the anointing has just lifted...

[Laughter]

All right, the Mavericks are champs! You got it? You got it? Can we skip past it?

James: We have to believe in miracles; don't we?

Dr. Ulmer: Evidently!

[Laughter]

But you know it's interesting -- as interesting as that -- our journey into that building was one of the motivations for writing this book, Knowing God's Voice. Because when God spoke -- and I know on the back end, I sensed it at the beginning, I know on the back end - - that when God spoke that word and said that that building, and we did a video of it and the Lord literally said, "That building belongs to the kingdom."

The challenges that we face sometimes when we know in our spirit that we've heard from God, and yet you're often walking with people and leading people who haven't heard the same word you've heard and you are challenged then to trust that it was God and then to trust that since it was God, whatever it takes to bring to pass what he said, you have to trust him to do it. And therein lies the challenge for all of us of knowing and hearing God's voice.

James: And you don't always know. It is like Abraham went out not knowing where, he just knew who. He was looking for that city whose builder and maker so he had to walk every step by faith. It wasn't like he just heard the word and all of the sudden it happened. He had to literally enter in, he had to pursue. Is that true in your journey?

Dr. Ulmer: I'm learning to back off of the "I know God said" and the reason is more theological than it is practical. I hedge on the "I know" because there's a sense in which if I know I've just removed faith. Faith is what bridges that gap between "I heard, I sensed, I believe" and the manifestation that this really was God. There is always that area as you said with Abraham where God said this but still I must walk by faith.

God said, "Abraham you have to leave here." Abraham, like many of us, asked for a preflight itinerary. God doesn't give those. So God said, "You leave now. You must make the decision that I'm speaking and you will leave here. Now where you go from there, you have to trust me step-by-step."

Paul comes along and says, "We walk by faith and not by sight." I think that a part of the challenge of knowing God's voice is that we must realize that it begins with a relationship.

I have five granddaughters and each of my granddaughters have come to know Papaw's voice because of the relationship and that intimacy and that being in relationship with them, and they learn your voice, they learn the inflections of your voice. And so I can call them now on the phone -- sometimes on the other side of the world but out of the context of that relationship they know God's voice, they know my voice, they know the style, they know my inflections and that kind of thing. So first of all knowing God's voice and hearing God's voice is the reality that comes out of a relationship.

The more -- my wife and I've been married going on 35 years -- you guys are coming up on 50 -- the big 5-0! And so there are things that if someone said to you Betty, "James said." You would say, "No, not James. Not James. I know him well enough. No, he may have said that but he didn't say that." And that grows out of that relationship.

And the same thing with knowing God's voice because we've seen the experiences we've had with God, we've seen the manifestations of God's power and presence and we've come to know his voice first of all just out of our relationship.

James: Absolutely! Let me show you the book that he's referring to, Knowing God's Voice. Were you about to ask him something about it?

Betty: No, I was just going to reemphasize the fact that it is about relationship and about getting to know that person just as we got to know each one -- each other through our relationship. Just like I've heard so many times, "How do you know you're in love?" You just know that you know that you know because you know that person and you've come to love everything about that person.

Dr. Ulmer: It almost seems like such a simplistic response. Like you, young people in our church ask all of the time, "Well, Pastor, how do you know?" And you want to think of something deep and profound. And it is like, "Well, the way you know is... you just know. You just kind of know."

[Laughter]

But again it is out of that relationship.

Betty: It is! It is!

James: You and I talked before we came out here about this particular chapter in the book, "The voice and the storm."

Dr. Ulmer: Storms are equal opportunity employers. Everyone in this room, everyone who is listening and watching now, you're in one of three places. You've either just left a storm or if the truth were told we're in a storm right now. But if you have not left a storm or not in a storm as my mother would say, "Just keep living" because it means you're on your way to a storm because storms are consistent with the reality of all of our lives.

And so the Psalmist says, "In this storm God speaks." And it's such a dramatic picture. First of all, it says God speaks to the storm that you're in and it paints a picture of you

being down here, us being down here. Above us is the storm, the storm clouds, and then above the storm is God. And you get the picture of God trying to speak to us through that storm, this multilayered communication, if you will, and God is trying to get a word to you.

Someone is watching today and they look around and look up and all they see is storm clouds and wind is raging and storms are brewing, and yet God is trying to get a word to you. He's speaking to you through that storm because he speaks to the storm that you're in.

And then the next passage/section suggests that when he speaks to the storm you're in he then speaks to you in the storm. He gets a word through to you. The disciples out on the Sea of Galilee and Peter sees Jesus coming and he says, "Lord, if that's you," which really means "since that's you," Peter said, "Bid me to come to thee -- let me come to you."

Peter is saying, "I want to do what you're doing."

And Jesus speaks to him in the midst of that storm and Jesus says, "Come. Come to me." In the storms and the realities of life that would toss us to and fro, even today, tonight, God is speaking to someone and he says, "The storm is raging, the winds are tossing, the billows are rolling but come to me." He gets a word to you. He speaks to you in that storm.

And then James comes along and James says, "Be not double-minded." That word "double-minded" is the idea of a person tossed to and fro as in a storm. So he not only speaks to the storm that you're in; God not only speaks to you in the storm but he speaks to the storm that is in you, those things underneath the skin, fear, depression.

Someone just wrote me -- one of my members just wrote me, I just got a text about an hour ago. It said, "Pastor, I don't know how I can take this. I've never been this depressed in my life. There is a storm raging inside." You've been betrayed. You've been let down. Your finances have been changed, the job is cutting back. The economics are going down. There is a storm not just around you but a storm in you. And the voice of God speaks. And even in the midst of that storm in you he says, "Peace! Be still."

God speaks peace to someone. God brought someone to this program today. I'm amazed at the miracle of communication and God brought someone to this program today, not by accident. God doesn't move by accidents he moves by providence. And he has providentially brought you to this program today to speak peace to the storm that you're in, to speak peace to you in that storm and to speak peace to the storm that's in you.

James: God, I pray that! I pray that for you. It doesn't matter how great it is, he is greater. And he wants to speak that peace to you, not only to the storm, but to you... in the storm, and in the trouble that's inside of us. It is so well stated.

Father, I pray that for the person that senses so much I need you! God, lift that load in Jesus' name.

You need someone to pray with you? The phone number's there, it is a prayer line, paid for by love and God wants to talk to you. Knowing God's Voice, great book! There is a web site on how you can find where Pastor Elmer is and the incredible church there in Los Angeles. Faithful...?

Dr. Ulmer: Central Bible church.

James: Faithful Central Bible Church -- 14,000 people in that arena now -- a great church! Our pastor, Robert has preached there. Ken Ulmer has preached at our church at Gateway several times. He is awesome because he has heard the voice of God and shares the Word of God. Ken, tell me something that the reader will get and that you want the viewers to get about how they can learn to hear God's voice and really recognize it.

You talked about the relationship and knowing the word, we need to be students of the word, the Word of God, to know the voice of God. But can you give some people a little bit of an understanding of either how they train their ear or how they can recognize the voice of God?

Dr. Ulmer: See, I think that's the second point -- the first point I made is it is out of a relationship. But you hit it right on the head, God's Word is always -- God's voice is always related to God's word. God's voice is always consistent with God's Word.

I tell a true story at the beginning of that book. One morning about 5 o'clock in the morning a woman calls me -- 5:00 in the morning! And I said, "Who is this?" And she gave her name. She said, "Pastor, the Lord told me to tell you..." -- that's my first click because it is 5:00 in the morning -- she says, "The Lord told me." She said, "The Lord told me to tell you you're going to be my husband."

[Laughter]

I said, "Who is this?" She said, "The Lord told me that you're going to be my husband." My first response was, "I wish he would have told you about 11:00 or 12:00, a little later in

the day."

[Laughter]

I said, "But what did he tell you about this woman that I'm lying next to that I've been married to for 23 years..." at that time.

She had a great response. She said, "He didn't say anything about that to me, that's between you and her. I'm just telling you what he told me. All he told me was you're going to be my husband."

[Laughter]

How do you know it is the voice of God? First of all God's voice will never contradict God's Word -- it will never contradict God's Word. It is always consistent with God's Word.

I think the next thing is that God's voice will always challenge us to go beyond where we are into his own glory. His voice calls us, bids us.

Jesus said to Peter, "Come to me -- come to me!" It draws us closer to him.

Now the flip side of that is, it will almost always challenge us to sacrifice: sometimes sacrificing our own feelings, sometimes sacrificing our own ego, sometimes sacrificing our own desires.

Jesus -- I debate with some friends of mine who are priests and taught that the greatest battle that Jesus ever had was on Calvary. I got that but I think maybe the greater battle was in the Garden of Gethsemane where he heard the voice of God leading him to Calvary and he is wrestling and he says, "Not my will but thy will be done."

He did like I often do sometimes. He tried to cut a deal with God. He said, "Is there a plan B? Is there a multiple choice on this thing? Is there any other way?"

[Laughter]

But nevertheless not my will." When God speaks he will always subordinate our will to his will.

Then I think the last thing is, it will always require faith, as you said earlier -- it will require faith. It will be consistent with his Word. It will challenge us to move further into his glory. And it will always require faith. And then God speaks through others -- he speaks through his Word, speaks through others. Anointed men and women of God who hear from God.

Again, just the things God is doing on this program, the things that you guys are doing, feeding people around the world. There are three words that talk about God's Word in scripture, when God speaks, there is logos/low-gos, logos/low-gos, potato/tomato. You know?

[Laughter]

That's the written Word of God and it will always be consistent with his Word.

Then there is the Rhema word of God, which to me is when God takes that part of that written word and applies it to you. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son -- that's the logos of God. That logos becomes a rhema when I realize that God so loved me. He makes it personal to me. He applies that word to me.

Then there is that word oracle, which is really the word logion which is a diminutive, like a small word. I call it "a little word." It is when God speaks a word to you where you are practically, in that real situation. He speaks a word to you that again brings honor to him.

Someone is watching this program and they'll see the things that God is doing through this program, around the world to feed, and you may say, "I heard a voice" or "something told me" and God speaks to you and says, "You can feed one of those children. You can touch a life in Africa." It is God speaking that oracle, that little word to you that brings glory to him... that blesses others but that will cause you to rise up in faith. It is God saying, "You can do this!" It's God saying, "You know that's not right."

The many times we've been convicted in our spirit that may not necessarily be a paraphrase of a scripture but is the principle of God that says, "You know that's not right." We're planning and rearranging our lives to walk outside of God's will and God says, "That's not right. That's not my will." That's the oracle of God.

So he speaks to others and many times it is through others that he speaks that little word, "Go to the phone and make a phone call." "Use your resources to bless others." It is God speaking and you recognize God's Word, it calls for faith, it brings God glory.

James: You have heard a whole... almost full load but yet it is only part of what is in this incredible book, Knowing God's Voice. Haven't you heard enough to know this man understands what it is, God's spirit, God's voice.

Ken, thank you! God bless your church! God bless you and he is! And he is blessing the hearers of the word when they listen to what you're sharing and you can hear him there in that incredible church in the Los Angeles area, what used to be the forum where the Lakers played, now the glory of God is recreating a symphony in harmony with his heart through people that learn to hear his voice and walk according to his will.

We will actually gladly send you the book to help you know how to hear the voice of God if in fact you will respond to the voice of God to touch those that need help. I want to show you a need that you can meet. I promise you, you will hear God say, "They need help." Many of you are going to hear God say very directly, "You can help."

Let me tell you something, it should be an excitement when you can do the will of God and be a blessing to someone else. That in itself is blessing enough but the Lord said he will bless you, enabling you to share with others out of an overflow of the blessings of God in your life. I want you to listen to the voice of God even through a broken heart. Listen.

Begin video clip:

Tammy: Africa, what an incredible place! What beautiful people! Their fight for survival - oh, how they fight for life.

But every six seconds a child here is losing that fight. It is not right. Such injustice... every six seconds malnutrition takes another child here. It seems hopeless. Is it hopeless? Every six seconds.

God, what are you saying here? What is your heart for this situation? Every six seconds -- you're bigger than this. I know your arms are long enough. Every six seconds, rescue them. We have to rescue them.

What is my part? Another child. We have to stop it. It is not hopeless. It can't be hopeless! But another one. This isn't an incurable disease, it is food! It is so simple. It is food!

God, if there is anywhere in the world that your heart runs to, I know this is it. These innocent children. Oh, how you love them!

We can do this. I know it is your will. We can do this. Please help us turn back the clock.
End of clip

In the studio:

James: Every one of those children you saw just disappear represent -- I'm sorry to say -- thousands! Because people like you reached out and touched someone with love by dialing a number and taking a bankcard or writing a check, using the card like it's a check, went online LifeToday.org and gave a gift.

We've saved millions of lives. We asked the missionaries to stop reporting when they reached about 8 million that had been reported already saved by your love. I wondered sometimes if that would cause us to just sit back and just rest on what has happened. So I said we just won't talk about it.

The point I'm making is it works -- love never fails! The greatest gift we can give is life and we're not only giving them a chance at life but we tell them about the source of life and love that gives them the food so they're not unnoticed. But they realize God sees them and he sees them not only through the eyes of the missionaries and touches them with the hands of the missionaries, he touches them with your hands because of what you see and what you do.

This is the last week now of our mission feeding emphasis. We need a miracle support, I can tell you right now. We need to hear from every one of you. Even some of you may have said, "James, earlier when you asked, you know the first weeks when you asked, well, I helped." But I can tell you right now, we're going to have to have a tremendous overflow of support. Not only is the need great there, there is some people who feel very realistically, very genuinely an economic pressure.

Whatever you can do, it may be -- You say, "usually I could give \$100 but I can only give \$30." Well do it. That's three more that will be snatched literally from destruction and death -- from despair and hopelessness. Would you dial the number please? If you could help us with five, that's \$50; that's what it takes. A \$100 gift will keep giving food, life, and opportunity to ten children for the next months. If there is any way you can do that, and I know many people say, "James, you always ask for the largest gift." That's right, I do because I see them and I say, "Let's embrace as many as we can."

But don't fail to call or go online or write a check. If you say, "James, I can't take care of ten, we'll, take care of three." But if you can touch and care for ten, do it. Remember this, this is the last week that you can get the incredible art piece, "The Heart of the Father."

We're asking for a gift of \$1,000 or more to help us care for 100 children. Some of you can do that. You've been blessed and enabled to do it. I believe you want to do it.

Would you please make that call? Make that special gift. We have gifts for you to bless you as you bless others. Remember, this is the last week.

Father, I pray everyone who can help will help. Move to the phone now or online and make the gift you put on their heart. In Jesus' name. I know God's going to bless you as you bless others and give them a chance at life. 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.

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online today at LifeToday.org.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Betty and I just say thanks and remind you it is the last week. We'll not only send you *The 90-Day Bible* and Beth's book, *The Life that Overcomes* but if you'll help today, whatever gift God puts on your heart, we'd love to tend you Ken Ulmer's book, *Knowing God's Voice*. You can hear by the way he shared that he communicates clearly how we can hear clearly.

Betty and I say thanks. Join us saying thanks to Dr. Ulmer.

Ken, thank you! Bless your church. You have been a blessing to me every time I've been around you and every time I've heard you preach and you have been today.

Thank all of you for being a blessing! Thanks for joining us in blessing those who are in such desperate need of help. Thank you!

Announcer: Tomorrow, a successful family living the American dream sells everything to follow their God-sized passion to serve others. Their daring journey from passion to action!