

Week 4

1/17/12

James: Thank you! Thank you for being such an encouragement, all of you!

And to you, do come and join us sometime. We tape each week here in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, we would love for you to join us here in our studios.

I'm James Robison and I am thrilled to present *LIFE Today* every day. Betty is normally with me. This chair is empty over here and I regret that. I've shared and want to mention again she had a blood vessel burst in her left eye that caused it to swell nearly shut and it looks bad. It has happened several times but not to this extent. I think this may be the second time in 15 years that Betty has missed taping because of any kind of challenge or illness and I really miss her.

Angela Thomas is with us and I know Betty regrets that she is not here. Angela is so gifted to teach and to communicate. She's written many books that are great. We're going to talk about one that has led to a Bible study that you'll want to know about.

Would you welcome Angela Thomas to *LIFE Today*? I'm glad to see you!

Angela: It's good to see you! Tell Betty I miss her.

James: I know! I do too. I feel like I'm really totally incomplete.

Angela: I don't know how to be with you without Betty.

James: I understand that. I don't know how to be here without her. Even though she is kind of my cheerleader and she doesn't really ask me not to ask her to talk; she really does say that. You know how shy she is but she is very, very effective and we really miss her.

Angela, I want to talk to you about the book that actually led to the Bible study that you want to talk about. You wrote a book called *Do You Know Who I Am? ...And Other Brave Questions* -- brave questions! I think that's interesting because a lot of women don't want to ask the questions about any personal need. Women have a great capacity to bear up the load and burdens that others either lay on them unknowingly, or even deliberately it

seems, and the responsibilities they gladly assume. And sometimes it's like "I don't really want to unload or really tell you what is going on with me" so it has to be brave when they say, "Do you know who I am? Or what's going on?"

Tell us a little bit about this book and then I want us to talk about *Brave, Honest Questions Women Ask* because really that's kind of what I was referencing, it takes a brave woman to ask some of these questions. Talk about these two books.

Angela: I wrote a book several years ago called *Do You Think I'm Beautiful?* It was about a woman coming to know the Father's heart of love for her; that God calls you beautiful.

So three or four years ago some women who know me well came to me and they said, "We think the title of your next book is *Do You Know Who I Am?* I didn't like that title. I thought it seemed self-centered, too... who are you going to ask the question to? Ask my husband? Ask my children? Do you know who I am? No one has the answer that would satisfy the soul. So I kind of put that title beside me and left it; went on to do something else.

James, I know one morning about 4:30, 5:00 God woke me straight up, because I don't normally do that. And I knew that I heard him saying to me, "The question is for me... ask me." I knew I was supposed to ask the Lord, "Do you know who I am?" But I was supposed to be honest. Do you know that I feel insecure? Or do you know that I'm undisciplined? Or do you know I struggle with anxiety? Or do you know that I feel afraid? Or do you know I'm suffering a thorn? Do you know I'm worn out?

I sat beside my bed that morning and just filled up a yellow pad full of my struggles. Some I'd been victorious with, some God had already granted a grace about, some I still saw in myself or saw in the women that I had the privilege of ministering to. And I just wrote furiously: Every struggle, every weakness, every failure, everything that I would ask of the Lord, "Do you see all of this -- do you know who I am really?" And then I knew God said to me, "Now do you know who I am? I am the God who sees you. And I am your strength. And I am the one who makes you brave when you struggle. And I am the God of all comfort. And I am the one who will give you rest." And over and over and over... every struggle and every weakness found its answer in the character of God.

And so I knew that's what this book was supposed to be about; about a woman bringing the truth of her humanity, the way she doesn't really particularly want to be, that you and I, we want to be more before the Lord but the truth of it, to God. And then seeing how every answer is found in the truth of who our Lord is.

James: And he can handle who we are. Now tell us about the Bible study because this is what you'd really like for people to access. By the way, web site, how would they go to your web site? They say, "I want to know where Angela is speaking. I want to know where she is going. I want to know if I can get some of the resource material?" Where would they go?

Angela: Just AngelaThomas.com or they can find me on Facebook or Twitter or all those new ways we communicate.

James: All right, talk to me about --

Angela: From the book came the Bible study. And so we whittled down even more the struggles to spend six, maybe seven weeks in the study called Brave. Women are interacting with the study all across the country talking about their honest struggles. The first session is called, "Do You Know that I'm Worn Out?" And it turns out that almost every woman I meet in some capacity, in some area of her life is worn out. Maybe she is worn out working with this child who is difficult or her marriage has worn her out or she is physically weary because life is so demanding for her.

James: Can working at the church wear you out too?

Angela: They're some of the weariest people I know!

[Laughter]

I love it because the Lord has given us so many provisions for the weary in scripture. It's just that we've gotten so busy we run right past them. For instance, we run past the gift of the Sabbath; that we could practice a rest that God has given to us in scripture. And those of us in the church are the worst about it.

James: And even to get still and quiet long enough that you could hear something other than the sounds around you and get off into solitude where you can hear. Does that make sense?

Angela: Oh, yeah!

James: I don't think people do it. I don't think preachers do it enough. I don't think church people do it enough. I don't think moms and dads do it enough. We need --

Angela: And we have to model for our children. At my house we call it "keeping the Sabbath" or "I'm going to take a Sabbath," because sometimes we work so hard on Sunday in ministry that I really think it is okay to the Lord that we take our Sabbath on Monday. Or that we just practice a keeping of the Sabbath for the purpose of rest and restoration that we would be like Jesus, away with the Lord in stillness and give an opportunity to hear him.

I love it that my teenage children are catching on. I even heard my 18-year-old son say to me a few weeks ago, "Mom, I wanted to get all my homework done on Saturday night because I want to keep the Sabbath tomorrow." He's getting it but he is only going to get it because he sees his mom practicing the keeping of the Sabbath and that it is from wisdom and it is a place of following Christ to give ourselves that time of rest and restoration.

James: I pray that for everyone, that they will find that place of solitude and rest and hear the Lord. Tell me some of the other brave honest questions that women ask that you think would be pertinent to our audience that they perhaps are asking; maybe you can shed some light on it.

Angela: Some of the women that I encounter, and it has been the same for me, are asking of the Lord, "Do you know that I feel invisible?" Yeah, that weary mom that is raising those babies and there is nobody there to say thank you or to give her an encouragement. She is standing in her laundry room alone every day trying to match those socks and fold those baby clothes and nobody sees.

James: I think a lot of women feel that way. I think a lot of people feel that way.

Angela: We do!

James: What's the answer for her? What does she need to know?

Angela: She needs to know that according to Genesis 16 that God is El Roi; he is the God who sees, and he stands with us there. He stands with a single mom as she shoulders the burden and seemingly feeling unseen and alone, and he stands with that woman who feels invisible in her marriage. He sees what you sacrifice and he sees the integrity of your heart. For that woman who sits in the same cubicle day after day, week after week, year

after year... a guide. God wants us to know I'm with you. You are in my presence. You are never unseen to me.

It's been a difficult lesson for me because life can get you swirled around and turned around. And God had to send a woman into my life to teach me about living in the presence of God.

When I became a single mom, I lived about seven years as a single mom, a friend of mine came to me and she said, "Angela, you need help."

I said, "I do!"

She said, "Would it help you if I sent the lady who cleans for me to help you maybe every three or four weeks?"

I said, "Are you kidding?"

So this little woman named Beverly started coming to my house and she had been to my house four or five times. And she came to me and she said, "Angela, you really need help."

I said, "I know!"

She said, "Would it help you if I came to your house every Wednesday morning? And if I just worked four hours as much as I could do, do you think you would pay me \$50?"

I said, "I'll find it -- somehow, some way."

So this little woman, uneducated in the things of this world but very educated in the knowledge of the Lord, this little woman about so big started coming to my house every Wednesday. And you need to know about her, that God had given her naturally red hair but she decided to help the Lord so she died her hair fire engine red, you know that whoo red hair. She was very proud of her fiery red hair but she was even more proud of her fiery spirit, because she was the kind of woman that you could hear her coming before you would see her. She would be singing and praying and quoting and hollering and laughing!

You never knew how she was going to come in the door. She was always going to be loud; you just didn't know what it was going to be about.

So Beverly started coming to my house every Wednesday morning and it turned out that - I'd never heard of this before -- she came every Wednesday for eight years and never missed a Wednesday. And I guess it must have taken an eight year every Wednesday kind of lesson for me to get it. Because this woman would come in and I remember one of the first things that she taught me, she would lay on my children's bed -- and each child, and she would pray for that child before she would strip the sheets.

I'm thinking, how do you know how to do that? I am their mother -- it never occurred to me to lay on their bed and pray for them. She would say things like, "Is this one having a little more difficult time at school because his bed is a little bit more messy than normal?" Where does that kind of discernment come from? She began to teach me things like that.

This one day I was in my little office off to the side and I heard all kinds of commotion at my front door. It sounded like there were people in my house. I went around the corner and I said, "Hey! What are you doing?" It was just her!

[Laughter]

She said, "Angela, I'm standing here at the front door of your house and I'm telling the devil he cannot come in! That a woman of God lives in here and the children of the woman of God live in here and he cannot come in here." She said, "I'm...

[sptt-sptt-sptt]

-- spitting on the devil!"

[Laughter]

Well, then I had to turn my head and smile a little bit because I never heard of spitting on the devil! Before I know it she's got me over there spitting on the devil.

She came in my office one day. I don't know what she asked me. She must have said, "How are you doing?" And I must have responded with a heavy heart because she said to me, "Well, get down on your knees."

I said, "Okay."

I am the Bible scholar. She is the cleaning lady. But she is the boss of me!

[Laughter]

And so she put me down on the floor and then she laid on top of me. She started praying and carrying on and singing and marching and I can't even make this up. She had a feather duster in her hand. She went to marching and telling the Lord what we needed him to do and the devil where to go. And she was just on and on and on; you know? She must have heard from the Lord because she said, "Get up."

I said, "Okay."

But this was the kind of woman God had to send to my house every week because every Wednesday morning she would come in and she would start like this, "Angela, this morning I woke up and sitting at the foot of my bed was the Lord. And I said, 'Good morning, Lord!'

And he said, 'Good morning, Beverly!'

And I said, 'It's good to see you!' And he said, 'I've been sitting here all night watching over you.'"

She said, "Me and the Lord, we talked all through breakfast and he rode here in the car with me. We've been talking about you all the way here."

It took eight years but God sent this woman who didn't have very much education to show me what it looks like when a woman knows that she lives inside the presence of God and that he is here and that he is powerful! That will make you brave when you know who stands in front of you and behind you.

And that sweet little Beverly, she would get a bill in the mail she didn't know was coming. She would say, "Lord, you got a bill today. We don't know how you're going to pay it but I expect you will."

And when one of those children were to carry on or act up, she would say, "Lord, those kids of yours..." because she knew he was here and he was present and she was not alone and she was not invisible.

You know what I began to pray? Lord, make me like her. I want to be an old fiery red headed woman who knows that she lives in the presence of God. Because when you know who you belong to it changes everything.

James: It's really blessing me to hear you. I got my plow cleaned by a carpet cleaner who

cleaned the plow of the big preacher that wanted to know if he knew my reputation. But he did -- he read my mail. God sent a carpet cleaner to help me. Boy, it's just a blessing!

[Sighing]

A nobody showed me who the real somebody was. It's what you saw.

Hasn't this been a beautiful story? Don't you love hearing the story of just the grace of God? What a blessing! This is what Angela has got is this openness... for you to open up and get honest. And she got blessed so much and she's blessed us. God has given us such a sweet heart and such a sweet gift to be able to catch us up in the presence of Lord because we could really see that sweet lady that... there's been a lot of folks that have been sent somewhere.

We had a couple here that had a housekeeper that said, "You thought we were here to clean your house, we're here to win them to Christ." And that's what the lady came all the way from South America to do, led the whole family to Christ.

She said, "You just think I'm here to clean your house. I'm here to tell you about Jesus." They were big shots! And they found Christ. So you know what? You're not invisible, you're not overlooked... you're as valuable and precious to God -- more than you could ever imagine and he wants to use you just like he used that cleaning lady to help the big Bible teacher to come to know the greatness of God in a beautiful way.

Father, I just pray for everyone to see just how much you're looking after them and how much you care for them and how you want to meet their needs and use them to be a blessing. In Jesus' name. I thank you for that, Father!

There again is Angela's web site, the book, and the Bible study, *Do You Know Who I Am*, the book. The Bible study: *Brave Honest Questions that Women Ask*. I would suggest that you consider having a Bible study in your own church or maybe in your community and you go through this incredible teaching. It will be a blessing to you.

Angela, we find such a thrill in our personal lives meeting the needs in other people's lives; really noticing the people that feel like nobody noticed because there isn't anyone God doesn't notice. I want you, if you would, to just look and tell me if you don't see a need -- a legitimate need -- that you could effectively meet? I want you to watch closely. Then I'm going to tell you how you can meet the need and I'm going to encourage you to get a book that we prepared, *Believe This Not That* because the enemy will try to get you to believe a lie. We want to show you what to believe. I want to send this to you but I want

you to look at something and I want you to just see can I do something about what I see?
You can!

James: Dauphine, I wish you could hear me. I know you wouldn't be able to understand me and we had to have a translator so we could understand you and graphically put it on the screen so our viewers would understand you but let me just tell you something, we care and we can help you.

I didn't just see that little child sitting there on that rock and think, just some little kid. No, all the little children are precious in his sight. He didn't overlook them.

But he's looking for hands and hearts and a mind that cares enough to say I'll help. So I'm asking you to help us drill a water well in that area. We're going to drill more in that country, Madagascar, than probably any small land mass because the need is so desperate. But we'll be drilling water wells in 15-20 countries; you determine how many we can drill but we drill hundreds every year depending on how many of you will help with gifts of \$48. \$48 gives ten people water for the rest of their life; that's what it breaks out to. You take a \$4800 well, that's what they cost: \$4800, give at least a thousand people water, sometimes it's more than that. But that would break out to about \$4.80 for the rest of their life in these incredibly, desperately needy areas.

If you could give a well, \$4800 -- many of you tell us, "James, every year we do it." Betty and I give a well every time we have the project. We started years ago and said, "God, we want to do it." I'm telling you, God says when you are generous and you bless others, you yourself will be blessed and you will be refreshed. God blesses us when we bless others. It's a blessing to bless others. I don't give to get, I give to give. And God blesses those who bless so we can keep blessing.

Could you give a well? \$4800? Could you give \$2400 toward it and say, "I pray someone joins me"? Or \$1200 and pray three will? Whatever you can do, do it. But remember, \$48 or \$144 you've got ten people water the rest of their life or 30 people water the rest of their life.

I don't know what you can do but there is a level at which you can help. So I'm asking you right now, would you do it? Would you be an answer to that mother's concern for her children? She's already lost children, disease and contaminated water. We can correct that. We don't even have to do any research on it, she just needs a water well. We don't have to do a study; we know what she needs.

Please dial the number. Take your bankcard, use it like a check. That's how you should always use them. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*. Go online, LifeToday.org and make your gift.

Father, I'm praying every person watching will give something. Will you? I really believe you're praying that God will meet the need but can you help meet the need? Would you dial the number, make that gift of a well or toward the well? There is no level too small.

We have some gifts we want to send you. For any gift, I want to send you the book, *Believe This Not That*. Every question, everything that's ever confronted you and you said, "I don't know what to do. I can't handle it." Here's the answer in the Word of God; all the different questions and challenges, all the different points of conflict. You're going to be blessed. We always want to bless you! We're going to send you the beautiful water mugs, the Water for Life mug, the coffee cups and mugs that you can use that will remind you of the importance of water.

And then the beautiful "Lamb and the Lion" bronze, it's one of the most beautiful art pieces we've ever presented. It's the peace of God that brings the impossible together and we're doing the impossible for many when we give them water.

Thank you for making that call. By the way, if you should ever get a busy, people are either calling to get help or calling to give help. You be persistent and you get through. 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: Can I encourage you to ask for "The Lion and The Lamb" or "The Lamb and Lion" bronze? Absolutely beautiful! I just love that! That's the peace of God. We want to send this to you to say thank you for giving water to an entire village.

I want to mention too, our son, Randy has written a book, *God Wants You to be Happy: Discovering Deeper Joy than You've ever Imagined*. I'm telling you, this is an awesome book. I don't care if he is our son, you'll like this. It's in the bookstores.

I want to remind you again that Angela's incredible teaching, *Brave Honest Questions Women Ask* -- and I know you've enjoyed her! Would you join me in saying thanks to Angela? Angela, you're such a blessing! You come back any time. I want to hear some more about that red-headed lady. Thanks to all of you for watching *LIFE Today*. Thank you so much for helping us provide fresh clean water.

Beth: Am I thinking in the spirit here or is this just my flesh? Is this God or is it just me?

Announcer: Spiritual discernment tomorrow on *LIFE Today*!