

Week 8

2/16/12

Betty: Thank you so very much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm Betty Robison and this is James. And I may have a bigger smile than usual because we have our son with us today.

James: Well, you're going to meet our son, James Randall Robison. He has written a book, and if you missed our program earlier in the week, we talked to him about *God Wants You to Be Happy*. He said that someone had inspired him to think along this line, I think Dennis Prager, who wrote a book on happiness. I believe Dennis is Jewish, I think, I believe he is. And we also had Father Jonathan Morris here, a Catholic, who wrote on *God Wants You to Be Happy*, all at the same time and we were just thrilled, our son had written it. But I was especially thrilled and I really believe the other two I referenced understand what real happiness is. It is not some lighthearted I-don't-give-a-rip attitude where you just don't let anything bother you. There is an inner peace and Randy really hit it here: Discovering deeper joy than you ever imagined, an inner source of joy that comes from above. It really is God-given.

I'll be honest with you, I've had a blessed life. Some people think I think pretty well and communicate pretty effectively. Our son is brilliant. God has given him an awesome mind. He is a great writer, a great thinker, and he has a lot of depth. So I'm --

Betty, how do you feel about having our son here?

Betty: I'm excited! I am!

James: Do you like him?

Betty: I do!

James: He is quite a writer. And this is his book, *God Wants You to Be Happy*.

Welcome Randy Robison to *LIFE Today*.

Randy: Thank you! Glad to be here.

James: We wanted to bring someone else along that was intellectual too so I wouldn't just be --

Randy: A heavyweight -- yeah.

James: Yeah, we brought a heavyweight, we brought Frank Turek in who has written a book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, and he wrote it with Norman Geisler who is quite a thinker. I want you to welcome, if you will, Frank Turek who wrote this great book to *LIFE Today*.

Frank, glad to have you. I really felt like the two books go together because a lot of atheists, if you're really honest, unless they seem to be high on something, either philosophy or substance, they don't seem to be very happy; they don't seem to have any inner joy. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that some of them are angry at the very thought of God, and angry at people who believe in God.

And to be honest with you, a lot of people I meet who say they believe in God make me angry too because they're never happy and it makes me unhappy because of the way they who came to believe God seem to be so far from God. So I think a lot of atheists are definitely angry at God because of what they have seen in some of us.

And I believe I have disappointed people, and I really regret it, and I regret it because I care very deeply. I don't want to hurt anybody; don't want to drive anybody away. But we've done that.

But it is not God's fault. God does want us to be happy; he wants us to have joy.

Frank, when you see atheists, what do you find seems to be the driving force behind those who seem to be so set against the very thought of God?

Frank: Well, I've had the opportunity to debate one of the new atheists, Christopher Hitchens, along with Dawkins, Dennitt, and Harris; these are names that people who follow apologetics and the general media might know because they're kind of atheists with an attitude.

Christopher Hitchens I've debated a couple of times, as I said, and in both debates people can watch for free on our web site, CrossExamined.org. But as I was debating him and as I read his book, his book is called *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*. I remember him at one point saying, "I will not live under this divine tyranny," pointing at God. He thinks God is a divine tyrant and he doesn't want to bow to God nor bow his knee to a creator. So he is basically just mad at God.

In fact, his book goes through all the evil things that religious people have done -- and we've done many of them -- but of course, there is no evil unless there is good, and of course there is no good unless there is a standard of good outside ourselves, i.e. God, so he's kind of borrowing from God in order to argue against him.

James: Where did he get the right to decide that wasn't good? By what standard did he get that?

Frank: Exactly. He borrows from the theistic worldview in order to argue against God. He has to sit in God's lap to slap his face.

[Laughter]

At the end of both of our debates I said, "You can sum Christopher Hitchens' book in one sentence. Here it is: There is no God and I hate him."

[Laughter]

He's mad at God. And in fact, other atheists have admitted this.

Thomas Nagel who teaches at N.Y.U. says that he thinks Dawkins and Hitchens have a cosmic authority problem; they don't want to bow their knee to a creator. And this guy Nagel who teaches at N.Y.U. says, "I have it too." He said, "It is not just that I don't believe in God, it's that I don't want there to be a god. I don't want the universe to be that way." And he says, "One of the most troubling things to me as an atheist is some of the most intelligent people I know are religious believers and that bothers me."

Randy: When I hear him talk about the atheists and I've read several of those books, I've read Dawkins, I've read Hitchens; I see people who are offended at God. And that's one -- I didn't write it because of them but that's one of the things when I searched the scripture I found out is an obstacle to happiness is when we take offense -- when we take offense from other people, when we perceive offense that's really not there. And when we're offended at God, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are not offended at me."

It's interesting because I looked at a lot of the original words; I wanted to know the language behind the language. The word for *blessed* there that Jesus used is makarios in the Greek, makarios. That word is translated two ways in the English, blessed and happy. When we are not offended at God at the idea of God or a God who doesn't behave the way we always want him to or a God we don't understand, when we're not offended by that we find greater happiness. So it makes sense that these guys that say there is no God

because they're offended at the idea of him or him personally because I've read some of the experiences of these guys -- well, these guys grew up in church and now they're -- I see an offense there that has taken place that they are taking with them and it makes them miserable. That's one of the things that an offense does in our lives.

James: Randy, when you use the term there "blessed," I feel so blessed. And you've lived with us your entire life. Your life is blessed. Our life has been blessed. Our family has been blessed. And even when we go through tragedy or trials we're still blessed.

Randy: It is and if you look at the beatitudes where Jesus used that word in the English anyway, blessed are... blessed are those who mourn for they will receive comfort. That word is makarios -- happy are those who mourn. That is something that doesn't readily make sense to us unless we really understand what joy is.

The roll-in where we talk about the Water for Life, the woman who lost her child, she mourned. And the Bible tells us to mourn with those who mourn and to rejoice with those who rejoice. God does promise that even in the face of these difficult circumstances we'll be blessed; we can be happy but we have to look at him as our source of happiness.

Betty: As I look at it and in the scripture it says, "Count it all joy." In your own minds you think, how can that be? But I believe as I've experienced that in my own life through -- we have challenges, we have obstacles that get out in our path and our journey. It is not all roses and ice cream and candy. It's not all going smooth.

Randy: Paul wrote that from prison.

Frank: In fact, the only way that you can acquire some of the virtues is through difficulty. You can't develop compassion unless somebody is suffering. You can't develop perseverance unless there are obstacles in your way. You can't develop courage unless there is danger. I mean these obstacles are there to either enhance our character or reveal our character that may have already gone bad. Dr. Geisler who I wrote the book with has a famous saying. He says, "There are only two things you can become after something goes wrong in your life, you can either become better or bitter."

James: And it's really true, how you respond to problems.

Betty: I found too that through those challenges in our life and I sense that joy, its the joy because I see and I know how big God becomes to me in those situations, in those challenges, in those hurts in life. God just gets bigger and bigger in my relationship with him.

Frank: Well, you can see why atheists, Randy, don't have the joy that a true Christian has because there is only two things you can have, you can either have hope or despair. If we're just molecules in motion, if we're ultimately just going to become worm food, ultimately, they have despair. They know they're just going to become worm food.

We know that there is a real purpose to life and in our country -- and if material things brought us happiness, we'd be the happiest country in the world but we're not. We lead the world in all indicators of unhappiness because we have everything to live with, nothing to live for, and we haven't found our peace in God as Augustine said, "Your hearts are restless until you find your rest in God."

James: You don't find it just by going to some religious setting. You won't find it in a church service if you don't find the Christ of the church, if you don't find the Lord of the church, the God of the church. You know when you find this joy, Randy, I was about to say a moment ago, that Paul had this peace that passes understanding and he said, "joy unspeakable and full of glory." And yet this same person, this great example of Christ in a man and a man in Christ, also said, "I say the truth in Christ I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren." This is compassion.

He said, "I want to know the fellowship of his sufferings." In other words, Paul said, "I want to know what's on the heart of Jesus. I want to know his heart." That's a broken heart oftentimes.

Jesus wept at the graveside of Lazarus; not because he didn't know the miracle resurrection that was about to happen. He didn't feel inadequate in the moment and weep. He wept because they were weeping. God cares about us.

People who know and love God should care about others so we will have a sorrow but not one without hope and not one without peace; there is inner peace. This is what Randy is talking about when he is talking about this inner source of peace. It doesn't mean that you're never going to have a message you don't want to hear, that you're never going to have a tragic moment, that you're never going to have a mountain or a valley, even in the shadow of death. You're going to have challenges but there is an inner peace and joy that passes understanding and you'll be able to do all things through Christ who strengthens you.

That's what you talk about in the faith that we have as Christians not enough faith to scrap God, the one who gives us hope so that we can walk through these trials, the one that literally lifts us up out of the valley and the pit of defeat or despair, and puts us back on a solid rock.

Too many people in religious settings, Frank, don't demonstrate that so it's real easy for people to write God off. They've been hurt, sometimes by people who said they believe in God and they've scrapped God. It's really too bad.

The two of you together, I believe are communicating such an incredible message, it really does take a lot of faith to clinch your fist in the face of an almighty maker and creator and say, "I don't believe in him" because you're mad at something, and then put your own standards up to dismiss the real reliable standard. And Randy, you don't have joy if you don't have it from within. We're surrounded by stuff; stuff will not make us happy, oftentimes keep us from the source of joy.

Randy: Absolutely! And I must say that you say from within, but it is from a without within. Our joy comes from God. But it only happens when we experience his salvation. You mentioned brokenness and that was one of the more interesting things I found when I looked at the scripture. It is in the section on mixed blessings because in the scripture there is two types of brokenness. One of them takes away happiness and the other leads to happiness.

When I looked at that, I realized the kind of brokenness that Job talks about is a feeling of ruination, of being of no good, of no value anymore. That's a very negative kind; that will make us miserable and that's a lie from the pit of hell too. The other kind of brokenness is what David experienced and that's when God crushed him over his own iniquity, over his own sin, and he repented. And out of that came the joy where he was dancing in front of his whole kingdom. So there are a lot of things in our life that we just need to position correctly because the ultimate goal, that fruit of the spirit by-product that God has in mind is joy.

James: What set you on this pursuit that is so obvious right now?

Randy: There were some things that happened overseas where I experienced people that had joy that we don't really have in America. And a lot of it has been -- you mentioned Dennis Prager, who is a wonderful thinker and writer, and he talks about it a lot. I think there is such an awareness gap in our country, and specifically, in the church where we don't consider our own happiness. And sometimes we're even told we shouldn't consider our own happiness.

But Jesus said, "I came that you may have joy, your joy made full... the fruit of the spirit is joy." If we have the Holy Spirit in us, then we should exhibit joy. The Bible says that our joy is written on our face. It is in our countenance. The happiness should come through if it is there. If it is not there, something is wrong.

James: And he is not opposed to our comfort, Holy Spirit is the comforter and we are to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we have been comforted, that's how we pass it on. That's the Christian expression; it is total opposite of an atheist.

Frank: Exactly, and the encouraging thing about what you're saying is that it is all true, we know the scriptures are true. And the time to get evidence to know the scriptures are true is when things are going well because when things are going bad and you start doubting, it's nice to know already that despite the feelings you might be having, despite the bad things that are going on in your life, that you can rely on the rock of scripture. And so that's why I think not only because it is commanded but just for practical purposes you need to know why the scriptures are true, before you go through the valley.

Randy: Let me finish with one important thing. When I looked -- happy -- I had a little problem with our title because we used happy as an adverb and that's kind of how you feel. You can't trust that because feelings are up and down. When I looked at over 600 references to this concept in the Bible I found out that the majority of the time it is not an adverb, it is a noun or it is a verb. Happiness is something we should possess and then express; it is not just a feeling.

James: All of that is in the book, God Wants You Happy. Do you appreciate what Randy says? We do as parents. Obviously, we're proud of our son. We're grateful that God -- our great God and father, we said many times, at least I have that they look beyond the father, this father, and saw the Father, all of our children did. Nothing could please this father more than for them to know the Father and love him with all their heart. And it just thrills me. The book is great. I want to tell you Frank's book and what a communicator. The web site again if they want to see some of those debates?

Frank: CrossExamined.org. We also have other videos up there.

James: And you can get some of this material and it could be that you could have Frank come sometime to your area. It would be wonderful. I'll tell you what we'll do. If you'll do something, we're asking people to help us drill water wells, hundreds of them in many countries and we're sending for any gift that you make, Believe This Not That, which is an incredible study rebuking all the things the enemy in the world say that are not true,

giving you biblical truth. But we're asking you to help us drill these wells. I'll just simply say this to you, you help us give 30 people water for the rest of their life and we'll send you all three of these books today, this program only. But we'll gladly send them to you if you'll just help us answer prayerful needs like the one you're about to hear.

On the mission field:

Translator: My name is Miriam Bonegas. It was sudden; he was five months old. He had never been sick. I was carrying him in my arms and then I felt he had quit breathing. He couldn't breathe and he didn't want anything. Here is where I saw my son die.

>> The doctors said it was the water that took him. For a grieving mother this somehow hurt more. Miriam had given everything as a mom but giving her son Tyson water to drink wasn't optional; unfortunately, neither was her water source. River water, contaminated. Left with no choice, Miriam gave Tyson water that attacked his body like a poison.

Translator: That morning my son woke up feeling bad, vomiting and wouldn't eat. I got scared and started to take him to the health clinic but it would take three hours to walk there.

I have to travel that road a lot because it's the only one out of our community. It's hard because I always remember what happened there. I miss him so much.

>> There is little worse than helplessly holding your dying child in your arms, not from an incurable disease but because of unclean drinking water.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Boy, she's lost what's so precious. And they have so little in the impoverished areas where they just need water, fresh clean water. Betty, we really do have the answer for that mother, for the children around her.

Betty: James, I'm watching and as a mother, you can sense the heartbreak of that mother, it was so deep, so big, to her. But you know the solution is simple, they need fresh clean water. They need water free from the contamination and the disease that they have no option of right now. That's all they have. We want to give them an option, an opportunity to choose from the good and the bad. Won't you help us do that? We would appreciate it so very, very much.

James: I'm convinced that every person that has a heart, any measure of sensitivity would like to meet legitimate needs. I think Americans are somewhat concerned, Betty, any time a child is lost or missing or you've had some kind of natural disaster, the American people rush to that scene; same way all over the world, you rush in to help. The thing people are not excited about doing is maintaining programs that don't seem to affect, don't seem to make any difference and just funding something that doesn't work.

We found that people just like you are excited when I know I can do something. Let me tell you how simple this is. This isn't wishful thinking. We can drill several water wells in those areas, the water is there. It's accessible, very accessible. As a matter of fact, the wells in many of the areas are going to be inexpensive but where it is a deep well and very expensive, it still averages out to \$4800. Now we don't know how long that's going to hold but it's holding now.

And we're going to drill as many wells as you enable us to drill; we've targeted hundreds of them in many different countries, and to be an answer to that need that that mother addressed so effectively. It does work, but you're the ones that make it work. This isn't just something you hope works -- this isn't throwing money at something where it doesn't make the difference -- it works!

We're asking you if you would to dial that number right now. If you had a prayer need, it is always there for you. You know that. That may be why you call today. But I'm asking as many of you as can, I'm asking you, would you call and say, "I want to help give water to people like Net. I want to help drill a well."

If you could give the \$4800, I'm asking you to do it. I've had some people say, "I have been able to do so in the past, I can't this year. I'm praying somebody will take my place." Well, perhaps you're that person. Can you do it? Can you give \$1200 and pray three will join you? Or \$2400 and pray someone else will match that. Whatever you can do, please, dial the number, use your bankcard, or write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're mailing it because we have to know it is coming.

We've got to let mission workers and the well drilling teams know that we're going to have the resources. So please make that call. Would you do it? Or you can go online *LifeToday.org*.

Remember this, I'll always ask you to shoot for the highest level you can give but \$48 -- don't consider this small -- for ten people that's water the rest of their life. \$48 toward the well, \$144, 30 people. So whatever level you can participate at please do so.

We have some wonderful gifts to bless you in your life and your spiritual journey but you're going to be giving life, real life and hope. Thank you for making that call.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy, polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is that there is a solution -- Mission: Water for Life is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. The suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today we will begin drilling 350 new water wells for remote villages in 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people! A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10 people! \$72 will reach 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh clean disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift be sure to request, *Believe This Not That* a brand-new topical Bible promise book that will encourage you in every area of life.

With your gift of \$100 or more you may request our newly released *Water for Life* mug set, a daily reminder of the clean water you make possible to those who thirst.

Also please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And be sure to request the 2012 commemorative bronze sculpture, "The Lamb and the Lion."

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Well, here's a little girl getting a drink. Betty said, "I can't help her... I can't help her do it." The reason Betty says that is she knows, she's seen the river where it's come from. We've seen the animals and the animal waste and it's contaminated. How are you going to tell a thirsty child they can't have water when the mother brought them the water? Mom brought them this water. Mom had no idea she might be bringing this child disease.

Betty: This is the kind of water they're drinking. The only water that they have to fill their thirst but as they're filling their thirst they're putting disease into their little bodies. We don't need that to happen.

We can make a difference in that if you'll just join with us and let's give these children some clean safe water. Will you please go to the phones right now? We need to begin drilling these water wells to help these children. We must not delay. We need your help now. Please go to the phone.

James: Betty and I want to say thank you so much from the bottom of our heart for your help. We are sending the *Believe This Not That* that I mentioned for any gift.

If you will help us with a gift of \$144 or more we'll gladly send you today *God Wants You to Be Happy*, talking about the real inner source of joy, that as Randy says comes from above; it's within because it came from without, it came from him. And *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* -- fabulous book! And being able to understand and explain why we believe what we believe as Christians and how to be able to communicate with people who got their fist somehow gladly or sadly clinched in the face of God. We'll send them to you.

Thank you for helping us share life with others.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Randy and to Frank?

Thank you so much! God bless you.

Again, thank you so much. Thanks for being Friends for Life. May God bless you! May you experience the joy of the Lord.

Announcer: Faith, family, and freedom are under attack. James Robison and Jay Richards encourage a divided America to stand together before it's too late. Indivisible -- coming soon to online and retail bookstores.

James: I think the stage is set for the greatest awakening in history.

Announcer: James Robison and Jay Richards encourage us to become one nation truly under God -- next week!