Week 23
5/28/12

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. From the depth of my heart, I want to thank all of you who are families of our military and on this special day to make it very clear that there is no possible way that we can adequately express the gratitude that we have for you, for the sacrifice that was made to protect and preserve the freedom, the liberty and the blessings that we enjoy. God bless all of you!

Thank God for our military who are fighting right now to protect us and to preserve what is precious. The program you're about to see with me and with Betty, with our guest Jay Richards, the co-author of the book, *Indivisible* that should be required reading for everyone who cares about the future of our country, we've asked Mark Davis, one of the most popular talk show hosts in the country, Janet Porter who is doing as much to fight for the precious preservation of innocent life, we are doing this because we want to do what our military is doing, and that is to protect what really matters. Enjoy the program.

Begin video clip:
James: Now, what I've done by inviting this group to be here with Jay and Betty and me and talk about our concerns is to let you hear what God has put on their heart concerning our nation and what is on the hearts of many people here in this audience, you're prayerful concerns. We want to focus attention on the areas that need attention.

Would you agree that we have a run away debt problem? Would you agree that we've got an out-of-control government that is trying to take more control of our lives to our own detriment and demise?

I want you to watch something that our staff found on You Tube recently and we're going to take off after you watch this. It's just a few minutes. These incredibly concerned gifted individuals said, "Let me just illustrate something so you can see the absolute absurdity and foolishness of government practices." Watch closely.

>> What can I do for you today?

>> I would like to raise my debt limit.

>> Excuse me?

>> My debt limit. I would like to raise it.

>> Because the last time I checked Mr. Smith, you were in serious debt.

>> Yeah, yeah! It's pretty bad. I figure we should raise that limit.

>> Yeah, it says here you're $140,270 dollars in debt.

>> Right! So I figure we should raise that limit to about $170,000? I just bought a 60-inch flat screen.

Have you ever been to Australia? Leaving tomorrow, mate! You should check it out. Great parasailing.

>> Do you have some new income that I don't know about?

>> No, still making about $21 grand a year.

>> Okay. And are you still spending $38,000 a year?

>> If that's what it says.

>> So you're adding $17,000 a year in debt.

>> Oh, is that what it comes out to? Debt limit going up. Ding!

>> Have you made any cuts in your expenses?

>> Oh, of course! Yes! My wife and I cut $380 out of our annual budget. That's $380! Brutal!

>> So you're making -- you're adding -- so -- you're adding $17,000 a year to your $140,000 in death and you cut $380?

>> Wow, when you say it like that it makes it sound like not a lot.

>> Hey! Maybe you should think about generating some new income. Maybe new job, maybe ask for that raise?

>> Oh, asking for that raise. I'm not comfortable. That's an awkward conversation. I've always been able to raise my debt limit.

>> Well, this is a little different.

>> Well, how?

>> We're in the middle of a recession and your credit rating will plummet if you continue to go along this path.

>> I almost had it.

>> You don't see how bad this is; do you?

>> I cut my budget by $380 -- are you kidding?

>> I'm sorry, Mr. Smith. We can't help you.

>> Just a little one?

>> I'm very sorry.

>> My wife is going to lose it!

>> Been there.

>> I mean $380 is bad enough, but this is going to end our marriage. We stopped talking to each other for a month. The baby was totally freaked out.

>> Wait? You have kids?

>> Yeah!

[Sighing]

>> Sign there.

>> All right! Aren't kids a blessing? I mean she's got plenty of time to deal with all of this. Right?

>> Absolutely!

>> Are we all set?

>> You're all set!

>> Let's go, kiddo. We've got to meet Mommy at the car store. I think this is yours.

>> Thank you! Enjoy!

[Phone ringing]
End of video clip

[Applause]

James: Well, it's actually the truth.

Mark, how do you respond to something like that?

Mark: Well, here in this environment it's a joy to be able to say that there is a moral component to all of this. That it is not just bad fiscal policy to drown in debt. It is not scriptural. It is not just bad policy to tax people and punish people for their productivity, it is counter to the God-given right to pursue happiness. So the subjects are inseparable, indivisible one might say and so it is just a great opportunity to visit on all these very earthly issues and look at all of them through a spiritual lens.

James: You know, Jay, they would expect us to correct it in our life and it's laughable when you consider yet it is totally appropriate for the federal government to do it. How do you explain that they get away with that?

Jay: Well, they get away with it for one thing because they're in charge of the money and the banks. There is even a book out right now by two economists that you can't make these kinds of comparisons because unlike normal households, unlike even the states or cities, the government, the federal government can print its own money. So now these economists, the implication is don't worry too much about it. So think about that for about five more seconds. It doesn't solve any problems. It's true they can print more money and pay their own debts but when you print more money, you devalue every other dollar that's out there in the market.

So yeah, the government, in other words can pull this trick a little longer than the rest of us could in normal life but we're going to pay the piper at some point, and unfortunately he is coming around the corner pretty quick.

James: But that gentleman couldn't go home and use his monopoly money to pay all his debts. It wasn't going to work yet the government can. Janet, how did we get in this mess?

Janet: Well, I think it's just basically out of control spending. Bottom line, I think what's more accurate is if we brought in the great grandchildren to sign with their crayons because that's really where we are. You know, $385! That's brutal -- oh, that's brutal cut back. Because everybody screams and shouts about not getting their entitlements. But when we hand over to the government the authority in the business medium, we're talking about morality.

The thing that comes to mind is thou shalt not steal. We're robbing from our children and their children in order to do this and when we think about the government taking over the funding, take a look at how their track record is. Social Security -- it's broke. Take a look at -- the Post Office, Medicaid, Medicare, Amtrak. They're not good at handling money but we're ultimately the ones responsible and that's where it comes down to, putting our faith to action to make sure that we hold these people accountable and not give them blank checks to our great grandchildren's future.

James: When you hear about the mess we're in Betty and I've told of our viewers and some of our friends that my concern right now is becoming so public and so often so freely and even forcefully expressed, you're responsible for it. You prayed me into this situation.

[Laughter]

You really did. You prayed me into it, I honestly believe this, because of a broken heart. How did we get in this mess? Who is responsible ultimately for the mess our legislators are making?

Betty: We are. Whether we've been actively involved or whether we haven't, it's just as bad or worse not to be involved, not to be knowing, informed about what's going on.

And just as Janet used the word *responsibility*, that's where it has to start. When our children were small and they were trying -- they were at that point where they wanted to get up and go but they didn't know how to walk yet, we encouraged them. You can do this! Well, as responsible citizens of this country, and first of all as a Christian, I feel like I have a responsibility. It has to start right here -- right here with me! Everyone has to really say, "What can I do? How have I made a mess? Where can I change that? Where can I clean my mess up?"

James: Well, I think what Jay and I tried to point out in the communication in the book, *Indivisible*, is that the people who should be most concerned often seem to be least concerned and certainly least involved. Those are the people who say they value life, they understand the work ethic and responsibility, they understand, to a point, freedom and the privilege that we have but they don't seem to understand the responsibility to help protect it and preserve it. They don't seem to understand that involvement outside their world, which is one thing viewers of *LIFE Today* seem to get.

One of the things that you've really impressed me with and I really believe, I don't know all of you personally but just watching the way you respond to things we show you, you've shown us I want to make a difference outside my little world. I want to make a positive difference in somebody else's world.

Well, you see the reason that we've let somebody else run amuck and make a mess of things is because we've taken care of business and they've given us the business because we didn't assume the responsibility of determining wise leadership and if it is poor leadership get it out. And we don't seem to have the wisdom to know what wise leadership is and what wise decisions are. And we're perishing for lack of wisdom, lack of knowledge, lack of involvement.

Now, Mark, I really believe that pro-family, pro-faith, pro-freedom people are the only hope to turn it around but I also think they're the big contributor to the problem because they just enjoyed the blessings that they had enough sense to know how to manage while somebody else is literally bringing us to a point of not only deterioration and debt but demise.

Mark: Part of it is human nature; we are all humans so we all have this nature. To kind of have a myopic shortsighted view that doesn't go far outside the sphere of ourselves, maybe the sphere of our households or maybe the sphere of our large or small community. To look at what is best for the country as a whole, what is best for the world as a whole.

Betty made an observation there that requires a certain humility of all of us. I operate every day in a world of talk shows where people will always line up. If I started a show that said, "Okay, today what we're going to do for three hours is everybody just call up and complain about the government." Kind of vague, kind of broad, but I could go out in the parking lot and grab a sandwich and just let that show go by itself.

Janet: Or the Congressional switchboard, I've got them on speed dial if you need them.

Mark: Precisely. But the truth that, Betty, that you and all of us are into is the government is us. Those people who are there, whom we hold in such low regard are there because we continue to reelect them. And in no way I'm calling for you to throw them all out. They're all bums. Not even my cynicism runs that deep.

But we will say -- people will say, there are two great poll numbers. This week, it's plummeting as we tape, the opinion -- the favorable opinion of congress is about 9% but ask people what they think about their congressman, about 60% like the guy or gal. Something is wrong with this picture. We go, "Oh, the guy I voted for, or the guy that our community has elevated, he's not the problem, it's everybody else." Well, most of them are the problem and that means that we're the problem for continuing to support and facilitate and perpetuate failure to attend to the needs that you're talking about.

James: Jay, we spend a great part of the book explaining to people of faith economics that should be basic but don't seem to be. We try to show people that the incredible system that we have in free market capitalism where you do have a trust factor, where you do have a reliable rule of law because, really, the free market becomes chaotic and criminal if you don't have trust and rule of law. You have to have that. But you also don't want excessive regulation.

We try to point out economics and economic responsibility, fiscal responsibility and we point out that you can't separate the moral, the social from the economic or the fiscal. We make that very clear. But my question to you is, when you look at the situation we're in right now, can we correct it?

Jay: I think we can. It can seem dire and the problem is as we talk in the book, we're sort of like tourists on a sunny beach. Everything might seem fine, most of us still despite a recession maybe have jobs and have most of our needs met. We're looking around, we're drinking iced tea. We hear news that there's been an earthquake out at sea but everything looks fine. Suddenly we notice that the beach starts widening as the tide works it's way out. In other words, there is a sign of a tsunami coming but --

Janet: Can you pass the sunscreen, Mark?

[Laughter]

Fine!

Jay: It's so fine. So that's the problem because with these fiscal problems we're not actually bankrupt yet so we're not feeling the sort of necessity of these problems. But we, as Americans, have to develop the marshal spirit and the public spirit to realize we're going to have to make changes now or we're going to have to make them because the system is going to collapse. That's the dilemma we're in.

So it might seem like we're sort of negative prophets here but the truth of the matter is we're, at the moment, able to actually do some simple things. Look at Medicare or Medicaid; there are actually some simple reforms that can be made, just raising the minimum retirement age slowly over a period of years so that nobody that's getting a check ever gets cut off but those of us that are farthest away, we have a little more time to adjust.

These are simple policies but I can assure you that any politician, any member of congress that runs for office, republican or democrat that says he's going to do that, he is not going to get elected in his district because we might know this in the abstract but we don't want to deal with maybe short term pain right now in order to solve this long term problem. That's our difficulty.

James: I think that if we're going to survive the problem -- I don't think you're going to really address it without the depth of character and conviction to make it an absolute. We're going to do it. It's going to require certain changes and sacrifices. I frankly don't believe the American people, the basic -- I still believe we've got a majority who would be willing to appropriately sacrifice at every level.

Mark, here's the problem. I even -- the wealthy, who really catch the blame, it's like they're the worst thing that ever happened. They're worst than any racist. They're really animals. They should all be locked up. I really wonder where the socialist minded government is going to collect the wealth you plan to redistribute. Where are you going to get it when you've destroyed the potential to create it? It's insane.

But I really believe even the wealthy would be ready to sacrifice to meet legitimate needs; they don't like turning any more of their wealth over to the government. They want to meet needs. The Social Security problem, we've made a promise. Whatever it takes, we've got to keep the promise to the people. It's our promise. It isn't just the government's problem, it's our problem, our promise as Americans. I really believe we'll do whatever.

But like Jay just said in Social Security too; you referred to Medicaid, we've got to make some changes in the retirement age, we've got to make some adjustments. And the people on the younger group have got to make some adjustments in how they build the future. This means thinking. It means sitting down and having a sensible conversation. It's going to take that but don't you think it could happen?

Mark: It absolutely could if we... not redefine but broaden the definition of sacrifice, shared sacrifice because as Jay properly said, almost anyone stepping forward and saying, "I have the solutions to get ourselves out of this mess. Here are those solutions: one, two, three, four." Most of them are political suicide.

[Laughter]

We're going to give you less, we're going to have to constrain this, we're going to have to eliminate entire departments in the federal government. You can hear people have conniption fits and heart attacks at these suggestions and they will be met with the strongest opposition.

But there is something that I think our leaders could say and a concept that they could offer that would unite almost everybody: Shared sacrifice. What could be more American? What could be more Christian, dare I say -- than shared sacrifice? But the problem is that almost all sacrifice these days is defined by what we give the government. Usually, if some people come up to you and say, "We need some shared sacrifice," what they generally mean is your taxes are about to go through the roof.

Jay: Hold on to your wallet. Right!

Mark: Here's your shared sacrifice, buddy. Here we come. If taxes were more sensible, I don't need to turn them into a big flat tax pitch, (unless you want me to.)

[Laughter]

And if taxes were more equitable, let's just say broadly, if people had more of their own money and were not penalized for their success, I guarantee you that they would be far freer with their charitable giving. And churches and private charities did a far better job taking care of the truly needy than government has ever done or will ever do. So of course, there is room for optimism.

James: I can't imagine any person who thinks and cares not understanding and appreciating the emphasis that has been made in what Mark was just saying. When you teach someone that is in trouble that they don't have to try to find a way out of trouble like the fatherless child that's looking maybe for someone to connect with who could be a mentor, maybe a neighbor or somebody who would be compassionate, and they would be a compassion connection, which I say is absolutely essential to solve any human problem, and then maybe even find a church. Instead we leave them in the ditch that someone dug of defeat, despair, debt, whatever, and we just say, "We'll send you a check."

Normally, we're going to be sure the money that is sent, that check, was taken from someone else and distributed a certain way according to a few rather than everyone; everyone having an opportunity to say, "Well, if it's worth doing." Is it worth all of us finding a way to do it instead of just hating the people who had succeeded in some way and just because of their excess we destroy the opportunity for anybody to succeed? It's like finding a farmer that is successful and he did something wrong so we just destroy all the fields -- all the potential productivity. That's basically what we're doing. God help us.

Well, I happen to know that our viewers all over the world, wherever you are, I know you care about helping others. I want to show you something right now; I want to show you some images and you're the ones that have the shared concern. You can totally change everything. I know you're going to want to. You're going to be excited about changing it.

On the mission field:
Janice: It's desperate in South Sudan right now. The Republic of South Sudan is trying to rebuild. They're trying to start over because now they're a country on their own but they can't do that if they don't have food.

[Child crying]
End of clip

In the studio:
James: Boy, I know you're going to want to put something in those bowls other than the meager leaves that someone went out and tried to get or the little nuts or whatever they could find to try to survive.

Many of these children in Sudan, which we're asking you to help us add another 20,000 where they were dying two a day just trying to get to the food that we've just set up temporarily with the hope of leaving a permanent feeding center. We can totally change everything for those children.

As I was watching, one of the missionaries feeding was Steve Coetzee from South Africa who came to work for *LIFE* as a mission outreach director. He's been all over the world. He played in five British opens. He was a contractor and a professional golfer. He left everything to give his heart to missions, and there he is feeding. We've seen him so many places expressing the love of God. But what he was giving in that instance was provided by you, someone just like you. You may say, "It wasn't me." Well, it can be you. It should be you.

Here's what I want you to know. We have over 400,000 right now in different areas where we've been feeding them now for some time and we've depleted the resources because we raise the funds twice a year. Now, those resources have been used to keep those centers going, we've got to have your help now.

To add the 20,000 where you just saw some there, basically expressing the need, we're going to have to have some incredible help. Some of you have helped before, maybe even in this emphasis, or you help us regularly, we need some big help right now. Some of you could give $100, we can feed ten children for the next months. Think about that: several months, ten children, $100; $30, three children; $50, five. If you would help us with a $1,000 gift and then we could feed 100 children. I want you to think about it. We've got 20,000 more children. Sometimes I say these numbers and I think, God, can somebody who has really been blessed help us take care of thousands of young people, and their families, children.

Whatever you can do, we're asking you to dial the number. Take your bankcard, use it like a check. You can go online to *LifeToday.org* and make your gift. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us. Tell us what you're putting in the mail. It is imperative that we know so we can tell the missionaries, "Yes, we're going to have the resources. You can keep those feeding centers open. You can open others in the areas that you found; especially the tremendous need for the 20,000 in South Sudan." Would you please make that gift now?

We have some gifts for you. A special gift, the Jesus Storybook Bible, actually good for adults. It's so simple; I think a lot of adults might not know some of the stories in this. The side-by-side Bible, New International Version, Beth Moore teaches from that on

"Wednesdays with Beth." Robert Morris, our pastor at Gateway, the New King James version, many people use that. This is great for your study.

The "Lamb and the Lion" bronze for those of you who will make a $1000 gift. Whatever you can do.

Father, I pray every single person watching will go to the phone or go online and make the gift you put on their heart. In Jesus' name.

Please do it now. Thank you.

Begin video clip:
Announcer: At this very moment, a child is drawing his 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 him face death as well. Today you can make a difference -- and help save a life.

In addition to the 400,000 children already in Life's mission feeding program our teams have found a region in South Sudan with another 20,000 children in need of immediate life-saving assistance. Our mission teams are in place but we desperately need your help to replenish critically needed food supplies immediately! Your life-saving 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 rush you the Jesus Storybook Bible. This beautifully illustrated book will help your children discover for themselves that Jesus is at the center of God's great story of salvation, and at the center of their lives too!

With your gift of $100 or more to help feed ten children, you may request our New International Version and New King James side-by-side Bible with a two-column format for easy comparison.

Finally, 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 Lion and The Lamb bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online right now!
End of clip

In the studio:
James: Thank you so much for your help and for watching. Encourage everyone to watch *LIFE Today* and also to read the book, *Indivisible*. *IndivisibleBook.com*: I'm telling you where you can get it and some of the comments that have been made. Or you can contact us here and say, "I want a copy of the book."

Thank you so much for your help. Let's pray for God to heal our land.

Announcer: Tomorrow on *LIFE Today*, James and Betty are joined by Jay Richards, Mark Davis and Janet Porter to discuss freedom and responsibility.