

Week 25

6/11/12

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: And she says, "Do you want me to do it?" I said, "Do you think you can?" The smile just kills me! I'm telling you! You've heard me say it many times and still, if I wasn't married and she wasn't and I'd see that smile I'd ask her out.

[Laughter]

She's got me. We are really excited about our guest today, Jennie Allen. I remember when our daughters, Rhonda and Robin told us about Beth Moore. They said, "Mom and Dad, you've got to hear Beth!" Well, you know what? And they were right and so you've been hearing Beth and you like her on *LIFE Today*.

Well, we heard this beautiful woman Jennie Allen who has just released a book called, *Anything: The Prayer that Unlocked My God and My Soul*. That's just in the bookstores. But what we heard was Jennie teaching... teaching Bible studies and it actually reminded us in many ways of Beth. They're both blonde and they're both pretty but it wasn't that; it wasn't just blonde and pretty and it wasn't just dynamic, all that's true but it was the presence and the Spirit of God; not only an ability to communicate it but to communicate truth in the Spirit. And she has a DVD teaching series called, *Stuck*. We're going to ask her to tell us about it.

I want you to welcome Jennie Allen to *LIFE Today*. Will you do that? Jennie, we're glad to see you.

Jennie: So good to be here. Thank you so much.

James: I want you to tell us about how you got started teaching the Bible and how in the world *Stuck* comes into play and became... actually a part of what you're doing.

Jennie: Well, I met God on a hot night at a summer camp and I saw my sin and I saw my need for God and believed what He had done for me on that cross. So after that point, I was 17 years old, I went home, I was a junior in high school, and I went home and instinctively gathered freshman girls to tell them about this God that I was in love with. So we started meeting in a little room up from the school. I started teaching them Revelations which was very unwise. I do not recommend starting there when you first meet God.

[Laughter]

But I will say it was just instinctive for me to go and talk about Him and I think that's just the way He's wired me, and I know everybody is wired differently to bring Him glory and so I've been teaching women ever since. Never really having aspirations to publish or anything else necessarily and then God's just led me on this journey.

So what we saw happening was some of the things that I was leading recently is we were watching God move to bring people to saving faith. We were watching people that had felt stuck for so long find that there were reasons for that, there were things that weren't believing about God.

And so as we started to see that my husband just said, "Jennie, why don't you go to a writers conference and just see if anything happens." So something happened and I'm here.

But the beautiful thing about *Stuck* was it really was birthed out of a lot personal hurt. I was struggling. Every night I was waking up at 3 a.m. and just worried. I knew that this is not what God wanted for me and yet I did not know how to break that cycle of fear and anxiety. So I really just gathered a living room full of people that I thought had it all together, they thought I had it all together, I was a pastor's wife and we started on this journey of just discussing different things that nobody sees but that we all feel, every one of us.

So I would lay the feeling out of discontentment and every woman there would all the sudden start to relate and express times within the last few hours they had felt discontent or envious. I just started to see that this is human. We all struggle and fight sin and some of us cover it up better than others, some of us know how to perform and know how to look like we have it together and look like we love God most and yet I think there is all of this stuff going on inside of us. What I saw in that room was just this confession and this beautiful movement of the Spirit to come in and to begin to show us the places that we were not believing God, that we were doubting who He was and what He had for us.

The beautiful thing about this study is I'm watching all these people, some of them, they don't even know God. They don't even know that they need God but they start to realize, I struggle with anger, I struggle with fear, I struggle with discontentment, I struggle with all of these issues and they look across the table that is 65 that has known God since they were 12 years old and they're saying the same thing.

I think there is something almost comforting to go, "Okay, there is something about the way we're wired where we were made for something. We were made for God and we are trying to fix ourselves and we're trying to fix that feeling with everything around us whether we're Christians or not. I think even the Christians were doing that.

So I think it is so beautiful to get to some of the questions in this and we lay out cards and it feels like a game until you pick up the card and it says, "When was the last time you got angry?" All of the sudden, everybody is crying and mad because they have to answer this. And so it messes with you but what happens is when you share that, you realize that other people feel the same way and there is something healing about that. And then I believe it is the act of confession. Once you have said that thing and you turn and you say it to God and you repent of the places that you have not believed in Him He starts to move and get bigger.

James: You're bringing, in my opinion, into the church setting and the spiritual setting the circle of sharing and openness that even the world's psychologists and counselling settings have learned is one of the greatest strengths in what they do is they'll put people in a circle and they all know in that particular circle, we're all wrecks or we wouldn't be in this particular circle.

[Laughter]

It wasn't like we had to suddenly admit we've got a problem, we're in the circle because we've got a problem. They could be in prison with their problems but you're going to get in a circle and we're going to try to get you to open up and get honest. And when they begin to open up and get honest, the next thing you know it opens them up for healing and they begin to find healing by sharing and finding comfort in identifying but also in the fact people care.

The unique and powerful thing, in my opinion, with what you're doing and what the church brings and what Christ offers through His family is that you're bringing in not only these cards and so forth and the DVD teaching, (let me just open this up right here.)

By the way, you can get it. There is the website where you can go and find the material; it is in the bookstores. But you are also preparing the study guide and the material where you then not only take them from the problem they're dealing with, but you take them not to someone's recommended possibility as a solution to consider but you're taking them to the Word of God where they're then recognizing, okay, I've got an issue. Now how does God address it?

You actually take them into the Word of God and it seems to me that in the setting and I've watched you because I've watched some of the DVD and watched how you communicate and watched the response, it seems to me that the place is just saturated with the presence of God but you've got people who are applying the Word of God to their wound and they're being healed. The Word of God then is getting them unstuck.

Jennie: I don't know what else to point people to. I don't know any other hope. The beautiful thing is as people actually trust God... See I think we live so guarded that we miss the best parts of God. We don't even know what it feels like to take our discontentment because we're not admitting to ourselves that we're discontent. So to start to admit that and take that to God, He goes, "You are discontent because you've been missing Me." It just places Him back in this place of authority. Friendship and dependence, I think that's the beautiful thing about admitting that every one of us feels in some way this word, and it shows that we need God.

James: Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." I sometimes wonder if getting to know the truth that sets you free may begin by admitting the truth about where you are... stuck! I've got an issue.

Jennie: Every time Jesus walked up to someone there was something that He asked them that made them express a need. He wanted them to need Him. And the people that didn't need Him, He just continued to go, "Okay, then I'm not here for you." I think as the church acting like we have it all together, we're missing God. We're missing needing Him because we don't ever admit that we have struggles. Some of us, I'm a pastor's wife and so... and I'm a mom and I felt a lot of extra pressure to hide the fact that I was up every night for two hours. That is not okay. But I didn't tell anybody that. I didn't know how to even process that for myself that I was that worried, that it was physically taking a toll on me. I think we've got to start to confess the things that are going on inside of us because...

James: Why do you think it was so hard for you to do that? Because it's hard for a lot of people to do it. How do you explain that was hard for me to do?

Jennie: I think the first thing is I had a hard time admitting it to myself. It was not just that I wasn't being transparent with people, I just think I didn't want anything heavy and hard. I want easy.

Betty: Well, and we put expectations on ourself. I think what I hear you saying that you're doing is when you let... when you teach people that they need God in their lives it's not just that one time of Him coming into our hearts and forgiving us of our sins, it's

supposed to be the beginning of a relationship with Him. I think as young Christians so many times, we don't understand that. I didn't for a long time. Yes, I was a Christian but I didn't understand growing as a Christian.

Jennie: I think these spaces... one thing I realized through this is they were spaces that were made for Him. They were made for me to get up in the morning and to feel a little twinge in my Spirit that something is wrong and it is because we're on a planet that a lot is wrong. And a lot is wrong in me and around me. And I have friends walking through divorces and I have people that have suffered with depression and they don't know the cause. So there is brokenness everywhere. So when I feel something's wrong I want to go to my God. I think that we push it away and we pretend we don't feel it and we're just missing the best parts.

James: You get up, I think, with a feeling, if you'd be honest, you get up feeling inadequate. And really, the fact is if we'll admit I feel inadequate, adequacy is here and we can find that adequacy if we'd admit we need it. When you see the affect that the studies are having because you're getting feedback and you see what happens in churches.

By the way, this is for study groups in your churches to get – get it! Get something started. This really is... it's a group that's really not... it's not for groups and for teaching setting that say is stuck in some sectarian format or denominational hierarchy or fortress. This is like kingdom truth for everybody that's seeking truth from the Lord and healing. When you see the way women are responding, how do you explain it? You look and you see and it's positive, why do you think it's taken off and that women are getting excited about it?

Jennie: I think it is so simple. I think we are longing to be known, and we're longing for God. I think what *Stuck* does is it helps admit that we need God and I think there is safety. When I watch... sometimes I've watched from up front the tables meeting and I'll just stand there and you'll watch somebody possibly crying, possibly laughing, and every other person at the table is just nodding because they understand. I think there is something so powerful in that nod because they're saying, "I relate. That is human. We all feel that." Then you go to God and He says, "I have an answer for that and I want to expand your view of me because Jennie, you made Me so small and you put Me over here on a shelf and you thought that you could contain Me over here, you are missing all that I have for you."

I think as He grew for me... that's all this is. There is not a magic formula in there. I'm sorry, it would probably sell more if there were but it is that God... the more that I see Him up here and the more I see myself down here, everything starts to click for me.

And I live for something bigger than myself and I want to be about the thing up here, not the thing down here. It's transforming as God gets bigger and that's all this is, is just expanding our view of God.

Betty: And it's important I think, especially for women, to realize because the ploy of the enemy is to make you think you are the only one – you are alone. If he can keep you from separated from communicating and having relationship with even other people around you to talk about these things, he's accomplished that.

Jennie: I've never heard of a group yet, and I'm sure I will. I'm sure it will happen, but that puts the cards on the table and nobody shares. I think we're longing for it. I think they see the question and they go, "Okay, I'm going to brave." Somebody usually has to go first.

James: So if you designed the study, the particular study for small group settings, or where you take like let's say a whole church wants to do it, then do they still divide into little smaller settings rather than the whole?

Jennie: Yes.

James: Then when you go out now and you speak because you do seminar settings so you might speak to the whole church group... And by the way, there's Jennie's communication, there is her website where you can go and find out how you can get her to come to your church. So you might speak to the whole group but then when they take the material, do you then try to get them to break up into the smaller groups so that they can really open up and begin to put in place and practice what you're asking them to seek out in the Word of God?

Jennie: We found about eight... anywhere from five to ten is a good size group.

James: There is the material. It's in the bookstores. I really recommend it.

I'm going to talk to you in another program, Betty and I this week about this, *Anything: The Prayer that Unlocked My God and My Soul*. This is absolutely fantastic. You really need to hear her story.

We're going to talk about something that you did that was a little unusual for someone that already had three children, I believe, and then you adopted a child from Rwanda, from Africa, from Rwanda where we built the largest orphanage years ago after the genocide. It's very, very powerful.

You know, Jennie, we have been reaching out to these beautiful and precious overlooked, forgotten too often, people on the continent of Africa. Our viewers, and you

really are in my opinion, you are the most special people. I know some of you think, well if you knew me, you'd know all the ways I'm not special. Well, I would still love you the way I would want you to love me when you find out I might not be as special as you might hope I am. But I would believe you'd love me.

What I do know is you've helped us share God's love with the people who feel the most unloved and overlooked on earth. We're asking you right now to help us rescue children. As a matter of fact, our mission team just came back from the Sudan where they saw, and this is after 20 years of being on the mission fields in the hardest hit areas of the world, some of the most heart-touching, gut-wrenching images of suffering where love is the only hope and the field is white unto harvest if you will simply go in love. I want you to listen and I want you to move; please, dear God, don't turn away. Reach out. You don't want to miss this. You are the answer.

On the mission field:

Janice: My name is Janice. I've been a photographer with the *LIFE Outreach* mission team for over 20 years. I've traveled all over the world trying to help children in need.

Even though my heart is broken each trip by the amount of pain and suffering I've witnessed, I wasn't prepared for what I saw on our latest trip to south Sudan. This boy's name is Lazarus. His Christian mother gave him this name and it is very fitting because Lazarus needs a miracle. He wanted to see his picture a minute ago. I was scared to even show it to him because I don't know if he understands what he looks like. And I showed him and the man said he is saying, "Who is that? Who is that?" He can't even recognize himself.

[Weeping]

Janice: There is thousands like this all over Sudan. We need to help them get a brand-new start. We need to help them grow and be children and have fun. All it takes is food... food! It's so simple.

Jesus, give him a miracle.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I was thinking tears last for a day but joy comes in the morning. I thought I want joy to come to the mother and to Lazarus. I want a modern day resurrection. Of Lazarus, I want to see him raised up by love. It is always love... love lifted me, that's the only thing that can lift him. You saw the love of God in Janice. Janice has been with us since she was a teenager. We love her because the love of God is in her. She's a witness everywhere she goes, everywhere she moves.

Betty: James, I think we should be weeping in our hearts when we see scenes like that. Our compassion... we should be compelled to want to reach out and help these precious children that don't understand what's happening to them. They don't understand why they don't feel good. They don't understand why they can't have something to eat. It's because it's not there unless we give it. I hope your heart has been touched just as Janice's heart has been touched, and our hearts, to want to reach out and to help these children.

James: This is our last week of the Spring Mission Feeding in the mission feeding emphasis that we have twice a year. This is our last week and we've got hundreds of thousands of children that are desperate. We've got them in feeding centers and we've assured them we'll be feeding them for the next six months there and it takes months to turn it around, get them stabilized. And we found 20,000 more in Sudan, and most of them are suffering because their families are Christians.

In South Sudan they've been pushed out. They have now become a country terribly persecuted and abused and plundered by ruthless corporations and they can be ruthless – not from America, thank God! Other countries and have pushed them out of their villages. And they've been maimed and attacked and had body parts cut off by cruel religious zealots in the northern part of Sudan. And so they suffer. And they pray. That's why they have Bible names.

Would you in this last week, would you make the most special gift you can? \$100 will enable us to feed ten children for the next several months. \$50 will feed five. \$30 will feed three. So I don't need anyone to sit here and say, "Well, I don't have very much." Well, it's huge that \$30 to three like Lazarus perhaps. Maybe you could help somebody like him. Could you help ten like him? Could you give \$1,000 and help 100?

Betty and I find our hearts leap at the thought that we can feed those children and stabilize them. And they're so grateful; they don't feel like, well, you owe me. They don't resent people who have something. They say, "I'm glad you noticed!" How refreshing is that? I appreciate the fact that somebody made something, had something and gave it.

Would you please dial that number right now please? Be an answer to Janice's prayer, the mother's prayer, Lazarus' need and many others? Help as many as you can. Use your bankcard. Please do it. Do it now. Use your bankcard like a check. You write a check, make it to *LIFE* – that's what you're giving. Go online *LifeToday.org* and say, "Here's my gift today." That would be wonderful to have it right now. Tell the missionaries, "You can get those additional 20,000 where Lazarus is." Would you do it? Thank you for making that gift.

We have got some special gifts for you to help you grow and for the children you love in your family.

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: You know that all of the gifts that we make like the Jesus Storybook Bible is to bless the children you love; maybe in your family or your neighborhood. The Study Bible that will bless you so much. We just want to bless you.

We know none of you give to get something. We give to you because we love you; the same way we give to those who are hungry, because we love them.

Jennie Allen, wonderful, wonderful teacher, *Stuck*. She's really a gift, a treasure. She's got a book called, *Anything*. It's just gone into the bookstores. Great! We're going to talk to her again later this week. But would you say thank you to Jennie Allen for being with us?

Jennie, thank you so much! God bless you on your journey with Him and for Him.

Thank all of you for sharing this time and again, we really do appreciate your prayers and your help.

>> God began to undo my view of Him and bust it up.

Announcer: Tomorrow, Bible teacher, Jennie Allen.