

Week 25

6/12/12

James: It is a joy to be with you and to come in your home or wherever you happen to be watching. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

Jenny Allen is with us. She did a program earlier with us, I hope you saw it. As a matter of fact we talked about a great Bible study DVD series called stuck. It's beautifully presented and it encourages people to get in a circle and get honest and get unstuck. Powerful teaching! She's a very gifted teacher and I really believe she's serious about God, wonderful education, Dallas Theological Seminary, what a great -- real, let's say, foundation stone for truth and biblical truth and relevance at Dallas Theological, in my opinion is a treasure.

We've got two great seminaries right here, many other Bible schools here. But, you know, Southwestern and Dallas Theological are very, very true to the word of God and committed to it, which she's a graduate there, Tony Evans, Priscilla Shirer, from Dallas Theological.

Many of our friends, many people who are here on the program many times, as a matter of fact, they are many of their board members are the ones that encourage Indivisible, of all things, for James Robison, protestant to write a book with a Catholic! You say, "My goodness, what happened to Dallas Theological?" Well, we could all have a little awakening in our days and they encourage us because they know that the people of faith have got to find common ground to address our legitimate common concerns appropriately, even though we may have some differences.

Now, as a Dallas Theological graduate, would you agree that you've got to have freedom in order to freely demonstrate your faith and freely discuss your faith even if there are differences?

Jenny: I would! I would agree with that!

James: We've got to preserve it. Don't we?

Jenny: Yes!

James: I'm trying to do that so you can keep declaring and demonstrating and we can keep discussing it. I know you appreciate that. Anything!

Now, you told me, and this implies something right here, you've got a little key, so anything, but then you've those little subheadings. You know, the subheadings are very, very important. A lot of people don't seem to realize that, "Anything." It doesn't mean that we're just going to talk about anything but we're going to talk about "Anything." All right, here it is. The Prayer That Unlocked My God And My Soul. Okay, clue us in. Tell us what's here.

Jenny: Well, about three years ago my husband and I were in ministry and I would say were very -- had the appearance of loving God, had the appearance of a life that was blessed and order and that good things were happening and God was using us and there's no doubt we were saved and had come to a saving faith, but I was reading a blog of a girl in Uganda and she was from Nashville, Tennessee.

I'm sitting on my bathroom floor one night because I've heard about this girl and it's 1am and I just can't go to sleep because I can't quit reading about this girl that is living this surrendered life to God. It's a kind of risky, costly life. She's adopted thirteen kids off of the street, thirteen little girls at twenty-one, twenty-two years old.

So I'm reading this and everything in me is just coming unglued because I'm thinking, "You are messing with me! You are supposed to have community. How are you ever going to get married? What about your parents, what do they think?" And it just was exposing all of these values that had defined my life and it was safe and comfortable and easy. And if faith wasn't safe, and comfortable, and easy, I thought it probably isn't from God. I'm watching this girl and she's just living this very uncomfortable life and yet it is screaming of the glory of God and I was so jealous! I just wanted, not necessarily to be in Africa with thirteen children but I wanted God like that! I wanted to talk about God the way that she was. I wanted to surrender to God in the way that she was.

And so the next morning I woke up and of course I had to load the dishwasher and take care of the kids and I wasn't going to get on a plane to Africa that day! But, God began to undo my view of him and bust it up and he has led us, my husband and I, to pray soon after that, a prayer, and it's so simple, just little words, but we prayed, "God, we will do anything." And we just began to hand him the things we loved, really, more than him, if we were honest. So, it was painful and it still is. I mean, it is costly, and we continue to see God's hand in blessing of obedience. But it's also messy and imperfect, and often costly. So, yeah! It's been a journey.

James: What's going to happen to somebody that reads your book? Are they headed for Africa?

Jenny: The only call in this book -- there's no specific call to adopt or sponsor a child or -- all of those things, I believe, are the heart of God. I believe every one of our stories is different and he has written a unique path for us and the beautiful thing about the Holy Spirit is when we push in, and we say, "God, okay, you have me. You have me. You have every piece of me." And we literally were taking tangible little parts of our life and saying, "God, you have this. You can have it!" And we're handing it to them.

He started to show us. He's thinking, saying, "Yes! I know, I really had it all anyway. Thanks for the gesture!" But he did appreciate the gesture because we have been loving those things so much and he's so adamant that -- you know, Jesus boils down all the commandments to "Love the lord God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind!" That was the most important thing, Jesus said.

So, for me to push away all of this and say, "God, you can have it. Anything you want! Anything that I have, all of my days here, all of my decisions." My husband, the same, his job. I mean, we just said, "You've got us." It was just God sprung to life for us. We had so limited him because we were afraid and we didn't trust him and we thought if we gave him everything that he might take us up on it. And he did!

[Laughter]

I can't promise you that he won't but it is so much better than where I was because we know -- I mean, Solomon says in Ecclesiastes he had everything and it was chasing the wind. So, at the end of the day, those things we're holding on to, it's wind and we feel it. It slips out of our fingers and we can't seem to bottle it and put it inside and make ourselves feel better. You know? We all feel that.

James: It's all vanity, it's all emptiness, it's all basically nothing. It all vanishes. I understand what she's talking about and I know what it's like to be very poor, and I know what it's like to be very successful. And the greatest test in this life, for all of you here in the studio, all of you at home, the greatest test on planet earth is great success. Everybody doesn't face that test, it's the greatest test, it doesn't mean that it's the most necessarily difficult test, but it's the biggest greatest test because it can become all consuming.

I experienced great success as a minister, and by the way, the even greater danger is great success in the spiritual realm in ministry. That's when you really have to be careful and I wasn't. I really didn't do a whole lot right. I operated in the gifts, became totally defeated, because I was in love with the "things of the world." I actually became enamored with the success and who I thought I was and who people seem to say that I was and I became defeated and the stuff really becomes like idols and the Lord really had to break me and strip me. I'm very grateful that he did.

But something happened in the stripping process. I think it's very important for people to hear this. I remember when I knew that stuff had me. I remember saying to God, why don't you just take everything away from me? Just take everything!

And God just like shouted, "So you'll love me more than nothing?" What if I give you everything to see if you'll love me more than everything? That kind of stunned me, but he did. Every dream, everything I ever thought, these things happen.

But here's the beauty of it all. This is very important because this is what I hear you saying, and I really believe that if we don't get this you'll still be fishing around trying to get it because what happened is, when I fell in love with him the things of this world grow strangely dim in the light of your glory and grace. Grace to lay it down, grace to say I will do anything, anything, anytime, anywhere, for anyone when you speak.

And that really happened to me! That's not stuff, I'm not going to tell you that, God's listening, he knows! But I really did mean that and something happened inside of me and I may be wrong about this but I feel like this is the anything that God is trying to bring people to today. This is where he is trying to bring you to.

Here's the mistake people can make, they can think well, it just means sell the house and move in a hut, move into a monastery, sell everything, and all of that kind of stuff, you see and there's where you make the mistake. It may be that! God may tell many of you to sell your house, move out of it! But what he is for sure telling you is, "Don't love your house! Don't love the things of this world! Appreciate them. Enjoy them! I gave you all things richly to enjoy, but if they become an idol, if they consume you, they get your love and devotion and attention inappropriately, they become a yoke of bondage."

Jenny: Absolutely! I think that's what so powerful about uttering those words. I've had so many people say to me, "I don't know what happened after I read this book but I'm scared because I don't know if I can pray these words." So, it exposed that there was something that they were afraid to lose. It kind of exposed it. I don't think it is necessarily that we throw everything in the trash.

James: You're going to be willing to, you're going to be willing to forsake everything. He said if you're not willing to forsake everything you don't even have me. So you do lay it down!

Jenny: And I missed it and I've been a Christian for decades and I had not been living a life of surrender. I think, what had to happen is I had to love God more and trust him more and I had to understand we are just not here for very long! We are only here for a few days and if you really start to get your head around that, if you really start to think about eternity with a God that has died for us and given everything for us and is calling us forever to be with him as his children. If you start to -- It's crazy! I mean we really believe crazy things!

[Laughter]

Jenny: But if you do begin to get your head around that you don't care what he says. You say, "Okay! Whatever it is, no matter how hard, no matter how costly, I want that thing because I want my days here to be exactly what you planned for them. Whatever it is, even if it is hard, I just look at the Bible and Ester and Moses and Jacob. All of these people did not want the thing that God was telling them to do.

I mean, Joseph is like, "Really, really, God, I don't want to go to prison. I don't want this hard life!"

And yet God is like, "No! I have a path for you, and a plan for you and it's your story and you've got to live your story because through your story I will make myself seen and known in this world."

That is what I think this is about. It's about God's glory. It is not about each of us doing our fancy little life! It is about us saying, "God, you have me! Will you just show yourself through me? Will you show yourself through this little life that really isn't very important? Would you just take my little days and do whatever you want with them?" It's very rewarding! It's very costly but it's very rewarding!

James: It's what Jesus said, "If there's another way, take this cup from me. But not my will but thine be done." Jesus knew exactly where he was headed. He knew how painful it would be. He said if there's another way, "However, not my will, but thine be done."

It's what Peter did, it's what Paul did, it's what the apostles did. They died for Christ. Peter made a mess of things. He ended up, in his love, being the key note speaker at Pentecost and being an apostle he had so much power on him that when people got in his shadow and they were healed by the glory and power of God.

But Simon Peter, legend says when he was crucified, he said, "I don't deserve to be crucified like Christ, so invert me." So legend says that they crucified with his feet in the air. He was carried -- Paul said, "I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem not knowing what awaits me there. I'm being carried by the spirit. I'm being constrained, compelled, controlled by love."

And this is what you mean by anything and if you redefine the anything in our finite minds we'll all end up a monastery with a vow of poverty and we really haven't understood what anything means. It means being led by the spirit. It means being carried, controlled, compelled by the spirit.

Betty: It's not about things, it's about him and how much -- if we will just give him our whole hearts and say, "God, fill me with you." It's not about the riches of life, it's about the richness that he wants to fill us with that helps us to live that life that will give us peace and joy and happiness in him.

Jenny: When I watched the movie, "Amazing Grace," and I watched William Wilberforce live this life and my husband and I got in the car and we were just speechless and we drove all the way home and when we got home we hadn't said anything and he just looked at me and he was teary still, and he just said, I want to live a life for the glory of God. That man suffered! He poured out his life and yet we were just so jealous of it! We wanted to live like that!

I think it's hard and we're so comfortable, everything is so easy and I think that's why this is powerful because when you push it in and you're dealing with a God who looks over and stands over the entire universe and he stands over every generation you don't know what he's going to do with you! I mean, he can do anything! He's God! So there's a fear in it. I think it brings you to a place of dependence and I think that's what he was after in Adam and Eve! I think that's what he's been after in every single human on the earth ever since, is that we would look at God and say, "I need you! I'm not going to get out today and do my life independently, I want to do whatever your spirit says, and wherever you lead me!"

James: And you had three children and you did something that just made no sense at all. Would you tell our viewers what he did.

Jenny: Yeah, God doesn't usually make a lot of sense. He -- We had a bed in our son's room and we were finished having kids --

James: Had a room that nobody was in.

Jenny: Actually, somebody was even in the room. A bed, just a bed.

James: Spare bed! Beware if you have a spare bed!

[Laughter]

James: They want to change channels! You've got a spare bed.

Jenny: That was one of the things we offered to God and it was so clear. We knew right away that we were supposed to fill it. We filled it with about the most beautiful, precious child that God has ever made. He is just amazing.

James: Where did you get him from?

Jenny: He came from Rwanda.

James: Where they had the genocide? Where you, viewers of *LIFE Today*, built the largest orphanage, placing 50,000 children or more in homes with the tribal groups that would kill the child. But no more! The healing power of God! But they don't let children out of Africa but they did for a short period and you got -- what's his name?

Jenny: His name is Cooper.

James: How does he say it?

Jenny: Koo puh!

[Laughter]

James: How old is he?

Jenny: He's four years old and we got him about eight months ago.

James: How did the children that were born to your marriage like Cooper?

Jenny: They think he's the greatest thing! That's just it. It is so good to obey God! I mean he writes good stories! I mean this is a good story! I'm just so moved by what he had for us.

But, I would not have chosen this! I wouldn't have chosen it! It was a risk and we had three other kids and we have -- this is a three and a half year old little boy that has been raised in an institution and he just comes in and yes, he is a pill! Let me not -- for anybody. He is a handful and then about a hundred more! And yet, it is just the most joyful to our lives and --

James: So that was really part of the anything, wasn't it?

Jenny: That was one of the anythings. Sitting here's one of the anythings. There's a few!

James: I really would love you to get the book, "Anything." We would be glad to send you the book today to say thank you and do you appreciate Jenny's story? Do you appreciate the journey she's on with the Lord?

[Applause]

James: Do you know, you're a lot younger than Betty and me, and we don't even have grandchildren as young as your children. We've been around a long time but can I just tell you something? I'm just as excited and Betty is just as excited as a couple we're just as excited about saying, "We'll do anything, anytime, anywhere, for anyone and know that we mean it. We don't choose the journey, oftentimes, that God takes us on.

Jenny, I wouldn't have chosen the journey to write the book, Indivisible, of all things with a Catholic. How in the world does a protestant evangelical write a book with a Catholic when we've been taught we're to avoid one another? And yet I'm telling you, God wants to do a great healing and bring all of us into a greater understanding of the Father and his love. God, the father, I really do believe that.

I've said anything for you and for your purpose and I think that's really what you're trying to get people to say to God. It's what you said and we really, really appreciate you. We rejoice with you over Cooper and with a love of God that's being not only shared through you but is inspiring others to release that love.

You have been the greatest all over the world. You have no idea how often we wish we could give you, and many of you meet us when we travel, and you say, "Can I give you a hug?" I've got to be honest with you, I mean I can look at Betty and understand why you would want to give her a hug but I think I know why you'd want to give us a hug, you have seen Jesus in the things we do together, we, you, all of us together. You see Jesus and you want to embrace that. Well, here's a chance. In our last week of mission feeding this time, we want to save some lives. Watch!

James: There are no more regal, beautiful people than these! No more overlooked downtrodden people, perhaps, than the African people. I don't know how many more years God's going to give me but, boy, by the grace of God, I want to help be a part of turning that nation around, the greatest resource on that continent are the people, the children, not just the natural resources but the great resource of the people. And love's going to transform it, it's doing it!

I'm asking you right now, from the bottom of my heart, take a group of those kids. I saw those three standing there, the taller child down. I said would somebody take those three, \$30, feed them for the next months? We've got hundreds of thousands like them like that we found.

You say how did you find so many? Because they're that desperate! In the Sudan the missionaries have just found another 20,000 where they were dying, two a day, just trying to get their little feeding areas that we've set up with the hope of keeping them. They say if you stay there will be so many more coming; 20,000 we know will come if you'll just do it.

I said we'll have to try to get the support to do it, and you're the support. Don't ever wonder are you and Betty helping? We always do and we do it joyfully! Would you put his arms of love around them, please? Dial the number, take your bankcard! I'm asking you to.

This is the last week on this emphasis. Make the largest gift you can possibly make. If you could give a thousand dollars and help us feed a hundred children for the next months you give a gift of a hundred and help us feed ten, please! Write a check, make it to Life! Go online lifetoday.org; make the best gift you can today! Please do it! Whatever you do, we're giving life. Make the check to Life, that's what you're giving.

We've got some gifts for you, to bless you because you're actually giving the greatest gift, you're giving people a chance at life, life itself! Thank you for making the gift.

By the way, if you get a busy when you call and be determined, lives do depend on it. Say, "I'm going to get through!" As much as if I were desperate for help, this is a 9-1-1 call for them. I'm going to get through and I'm going to help them. Thank you for doing it!

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

On the mission field:

Peter: You know, these children should be running around playing and having fun but that is being robbed from them because they are without food, they are without hope, they are struggling and I ask if you could help us to give these children hope by giving

them a bowl of food a day. It's amazing how that bowl of food every day adds hope to a child and changes the situation. We can make the difference! We can give them hope! We can give them a bowl of food. We need your help and we need it now!

In the studio:

James: I do remind you, this is our last week now, of the mission feeding emphasis.

I do want to mention this, if you'd like, you know, we're offering the Bible and the children's book but if you say, "Hey, I would really like to have that book that Jenny has written, that "Anything" deal, you know, because part of anything is you helping these desperately needy people but we'll be glad to send you the book today to say thank you for your gift.

Betty and I want to say thanks to Jenny! Would you join us in just saying thank you!

Jenny, God bless you!

By the way, there is her website, if you say, "I'd like her to come and teach in our church or our study," or you want to get some of her material, it's in the bookstores and she'll give you some information on the website.

Thanks for watching! Thanks so much for your support!

Beth: Have you ever known a woman that you cannot just be friends with?

Announcer: Getting out of the net! Tomorrow on *LIFE Today*!