

Week 28

7/2/12

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

James: And we've got -- we're in Cowboy country here. Listen to me now because if you believe in prayer and you have any compassion, pray for the Cowboys sometime. Would you do that? Just do us a little favor and pray for them.

Here is a fellow that played for the Cowboys for a little while, Heisman Trophy winner, All Pro running back, his name is Eddie George, his wife is Tamara. They've got a book and this is probably the most important game they ever found themselves in right here, and probably the most challenging game. But they say they're *Married for Real: Building a Loving, Powerful Life Together*.

Eddie and Tamara George, would you welcome them to *LIFE Today*?

Eddie: Thank you!

James: I'm glad you've got a little spare time when you're not just having to focus totally on the marriage. And you know, you're going to pray for the Titans some but you were with the Cowboys a little while. Throw a prayer our way every now and then.

Eddie: I will. I will! I needed the prayer when I was here because I stood on the sidelines a lot and didn't play a whole lot.

James: You didn't build resentment now or anything? You didn't speak something on us?

Eddie: No, no. I love this city! But I have to admit I grew up in Philadelphia so wearing the star on the helmet went against everything I grew up against.

[Laughter]

James: Well, Christians are forgiving so we'll be able to forgive. I've got an idea here and you married this girl, and she tells us that she knew nothing about sports.

[Laughter]

Tamara: Edward! Football -- did I know about football?

Eddie: You knew nothing about sports?

Tamara: Well, no before. Before --

[Laughing]

In the beginning, I didn't know anything about... I was not an athlete. I'd never played a sport in my life. I was never a cheerleader so I didn't know much about sports. I started to learn about sports when I starting dating athletes.

[Laughing]

James: That's it!

Tamara: My first boyfriend was a basketball player. My husband later was a football player. I used to go to sleep at games. I didn't understand it. I didn't understand it.

James: Now I know why you weren't a cheerleader.

Tamara: I didn't know when to cheer!

[Laughter]

James: It's real tough when you're sleeping. Did you learn that sleeping bit in church listening to people like me?

Tamara: I hope not.

James: Let me ask you this, because we're going to cover some ground here because really, you put a lot into the book. In your past, you had some hurt so you say you brought some baggage into life.

Tamara: My history into my relationship.

James: Well, tell us about it.

Tamara: My history is that I grew up with a mom who was 21 and had six kids. We were poor. She made a lot of bad decisions because she was too young to make anything strong or anything concrete at that time. And she didn't have a lot of help around her. So watching her as a little girl make these decisions, in my mind, I'm thinking this is how life is supposed to be. So I watched an abusive stepfather come in and beat on my mother, beat on us, take everything out of the house.

It just so happens, I didn't realize I was following down those same footsteps. My first boyfriend was physically abusive. I knew it was wrong because I didn't like it. But I thought that was how it was supposed to be.

James: You think that's basically what men were like?

Tamara: Yeah! You don't know that there is a difference until you find a difference. So I had to literally clean myself up to prepare myself for the one that I was supposed to be with.

James: Now did you know about her past when you all met?

Eddie: Oh, no. All I knew was I saw a beautiful, gorgeous angel in the mall one day in 1994 and I felt as though she was going to be my wife even then, even when she didn't give me the autograph at the mall and dissed me.

Tamara: We can go on back there -- talking about history.

James: Why were you asking her for an autograph?

Eddie: Because I recognized her. I appreciated her music, her talent. She's a singer with S.W.V. in the 90s, they were really hot back then. And I was a young struggling student athlete playing for Ohio State at the Citrus Bowl at the time. And we were in the mall, a friend of mine, buying some gifts for our families with the little money that we had. And I saw her walking with all these bags of gifts. And I said, "Oh, man! There is Taj from S.W.V.! Let's go get her autograph."

Tamara: Yes, he did. Yes, he did!

Eddie: So I ran over there. Got my piece of paper out --

Tamara: And this is where our stories differ.

Eddie: Can I finish?

Tamara: Okay!

Eddie: I said, "Ma'am, can I please!"

Tamara: Ma'am!

Eddie: I said, "Ma'am," because I come from a military background, I'm very respectful. I said, "Ma'am, can I please have your autograph?" She's like "Splpp-ha! No! I'm looking for my family."

Tamara: I did not!

Eddie: Said, "Oh, really? I will never buy an album from you again!"

[Laughter]

Tamara: He's like the number one S.W.V. fan. He has tons of CD's!

Eddie: Anyway, that's how it happened. But I didn't know until we really started to get to know one another around 1997, 1998, we would stay on the phone for hours, long distance relationship. So it really took the physical aspect out of the relationship early on and I really had to focus on the quality of the human being.

Once I really understood her background, where she came from, how she was able to persevere, I said, man, that's some great qualities that I want to have somebody on my team when things are rough. They understand what it is like, especially for athletes.

When you go through that world of playing professional sports, you've seen the heights of great accomplishments, you're seeing money thrown at you, it's not going to last forever. Typically what happens after the game, the divorce rates are out of the roof because they're not able to handle adversity and not having what you used to have. She understands that. There was a time in our relationship when she lived in Los

Angeles, she didn't have a bed to sleep on. So that told me a lot about my wife and who she was as a person.

James: I know in your story that you went from the abusive situation in the home to where you made the bad choices and you got into more abuse, you had to break off some things and wasn't one of those encounters pretty significant in your life and a pretty emotional situation? What happened there?

Tamara: My life emotionally had gotten so bad I was done. I was literally tired of living. It took me to a point where I had to break myself down. There was an incident where I remember crying for three days straight. Literally, I would eat and cry. I would shower and cry. Everything I did I cried.

During that time I could hear -- I could hear myself saying, "Why are you torturing yourself? Why are you putting yourself through this?" And I realized it wasn't me. It was a higher power talking to me.

At that moment, I stopped crying and I placed the call and I severed that relationship for good. I walked away, and I've been a better person for it. I can't complain and I realized I opened myself up for the one that I was supposed to be with. I let it all go.

James: When you all got together, how important did communication become?

Tamara: It had to be there because we were long distance. There is no way you can *not* communicate not being together. So you have to find a way to make it work. And ours was on the phone, e-mail -- what did we have? We had this little camera --

Eddie: Two-way pagers.

Tamara: Yeah, it was like a two-way pager and you could send pictures, you could do all this stuff, but we had to communicate. That's the first thing about our relationship and unfortunately, a lot of people don't have that as a priority because they're together all of the time and the physical and everything else takes over. Because we were long distance we had no choice.

Eddie: But I would say this, what we're learning now going into our eighth year of marriage, with 14 years together, is that the communication during difficult times -- when it is tough to deal with real life issues with your children or finances or being in the public eye dealing with other temptations and hearing things and dealing with

those issues, when you don't want to talk about it, that's when you have to communicate on some level.

Because if you don't address the issue and you just sweep it under the rug, that dust builds, it festers, and it becomes a problem. So you have to attack that issue head on, deal with it with the game plan and understand, listen, we're on the same team, these things are going to come up, these waves are going to come up. How do we flow with this current? How do we get with the rhythm of the wave and get through it? That's the key. It's not about avoiding issues, it is about when the issues come and problems come, having that blueprint to get through it.

Betty: You were evidently committed to the marriage. It wasn't like, "Well, if this doesn't work out we can get a divorce, we can go our separate ways." That commitment has to be there because like you said you're going to have -- you both bring baggage into the relationship.

Eddie: Listen, we've gone through our issues, we've gone to marriage counseling...

James: Did he have any issues?

Tamara: Absolutely!

Eddie: I still do! I have issue across my forehead. I am the issue!

[Laughter]

Just call me "issue."

James: Well, issue is why you wrote the book. Because I really am curious why, obviously, you acknowledge you've had enough baggage, let's say, that could keep you from ever having a meaningful relationship, now you all have worked to a point, and you've seen the strengths in one another, and you've gotten someplace but why did you decide you wanted to write about your journey? What led you to write the book?

Tamara: When we decided to write this book we knew we wanted to write something on relationships because we knew a lot about that. We figured if we would be honest about what we went through and how we resolved those issues, it will easily get through to people. We could write a book and create stories all day long but will it touch someone? Will it make a difference? And to hear the truth, the God-honest

truth and to know that marriage is not a joke, it's something you work at every day, we figured that would be the best way to help people. And if we'd had a book like this around 14 years ago, maybe we would have avoided a lot of the issues that we had to go through, we would probably had a much easier road. But we thank God for that road because it made us who we are today, the couple we are today and now we can pass it on to someone else to help them.

James: And you both overcame real serious challenges in the fact that you had abusive situations. And your dad and mom were not together and your dad had some issues.

You and I had a pretty interesting conversation before we came out here. And one of the things I detected, even though you might have had all the reasons to dismiss the respect level for your dad and love, you really do have that. You have an appreciation, even though he might have been trying to live out some of his dreams and fantasies in you, and pushed you, still you went all the way to the top, you fulfilled the dreams.

How do you explain the respect level and how important is that for you to look back on, both of you, difficult situations and yet handle that appropriately?

Eddie: Well, growing up, I didn't have my father in my life the whole times but the years that I did have him was very impactful for me because he would take me to the high school football games, and go to high school football at night. And he would say, "The magic happens under the lights." We would hear the drums like miles away and he would get so excited. And we would watch Monday Night Football together and how we talked about Earl Campbell and Tony Dorsett and some of the great running backs. It was my goal to have him talk about me in the same way.

My father played high school football, that's it. He didn't play in college or professionally but in my mind, he was the greatest running back that ever played the game. I wanted him to talk about me in the same breath.

So growing up as a teenager to a young adult, I would see him around the city. He had his issues with drugs and I never once disrespected my father because that was my dad and I loved him and I wanted him to get well. I thought by living out his dream and seeing me successful would in his eyes he'd say, "Look, I made it." I was carrying his dream on my back. I wanted to do it to the fullest and I thought I'd done it.

A great story, I'll tell you this, came at a time when I needed him the most and it was a play-off game against the New England Patriots, my last year with the Tennessee

Titans. He came up to the game, just him and I, and I'll never forget before the game there was a first time we ever had prayer together. We were praying by the bedside. And I began praying and I couldn't -- I broke in tears. Then he picked me up and he prayed for me and we just hugged.

That was the moment that led to... told me that I fulfilled that part of my life. That was it. I was done as a Titan. I came down here to Dallas and stood on the sidelines and watched y'all play for a year.

[Laughter]

But it was great.

James: We hadn't been real smart for a while, off and on.

Eddie: But that chapter in my life was closed because I had that one moment with my father. He wasn't in my life a lot but I loved, and I played the game because of him and I wanted him to see me and talk about me with greatness.

James: It's obvious that that moment even praying there is huge to you. I look at a couple that I know want people who have had challenges -- and a lot of people have challenges. And I grew up without a father so I want everybody to have The Father but I'd like them to have a father in place. And good fathers usually become better fathers because of this Father -- God, the Father. How important is faith in your relationship?

Tamara: We can't do it without faith. Nothing we do makes sense without faith. When we were down-and-out, when we had no more air to breathe, faith gave us air. It gave us strength. It gave us a foundation that we stand on every day. We can't do it without faith.

Eddie: Yeah, and faith is the foundation for anything -- for anybody. If you're pursuing a career, a dream, marriage, relationship, a business relationship, you're operating off of faith because there is nothing there that says you're going to make it or you're going to be successful, yet you are operating off of faith and will and trust. And that is the foundation for us because dealing with me, I know she had to have faith.

Tamara: I prayed a lot.

[Laughter]

Eddie: You've got to have God in this relationship for it to work. So faith is huge for us and is nothing you take for granted and say, "Okay, we're putting faith on the shelf today." You wake up in faith, you walk out the door in faith, and we go to sleep in faith and that's how we operate.

James: You feel like you really give, in many ways, a handbook to those who say, "Well, when I look at some of the things I've faced in my life, I might wonder if I'm even prepared at all for a meaningful marriage." And you're going to give them hope and faith and help. You feel like if they will read the book, if they're considering marriage, if they're praying for a marriage, praying for somebody or if they're in a marriage, you feel like you really put something out that they can take right into their lives and begin to apply it in an effective way.

Tamara: It's a great blueprint.

James: You're handing off something that can enable people to really get ahead in life and succeed.

Would you say thanks, along with Betty and me, to Eddie and to Tamara? Thank God for faith and the journey. And wherever you are in your journey, you need to understand that God is bigger than every mountain and every challenge that you face, able to lift you up out of every valley.

Oftentimes, Betty, I think the challenging moments make us strong enough to take some things that were totally unexpected. Even as we try to communicate with one another, it makes us stronger.

Father, I pray for marriages, I pray for families, I pray for people who are seeking a meaningful marriage or a relationship that needs to be healed. And I pray dear God that they will turn to you, commit to you and one another and see that relationship healed. In Jesus' name.

We really want to be available any time to pray with you and for you. The number is there because I want to say somebody loves you, not just God, but somebody's paid for the number. If you're at a desperate point and you say, "Gosh, I don't know if I could afford the call," it's paid for by love. Call and just say, "Would you please pray with me?"

I would like for all of you, if you would, to turn your eyes and just look at a scene that is happening all over the world where there is so many children and their families that do not have what I have here in front of me and that's a clean cup of water that we so often take for granted. We're so interested in pure clean water a lot of people don't even want to drink tap water here in the advanced countries so they buy bottled water trying to get something that's a little more pure. Well, imagine, what if you didn't have any -- any source at all for anything close to clean water? You have disease-ridden water but you have no choice. I wouldn't change that. I think you're going to want to. Would you like to do what Jesus said? Give a cup of water in his name? Watch.

James: Well, Betty, those mounds of dirt represent a dream that's gone, all because no water -- no clean, non-contaminated water source. I'm asking you to do what viewers like you have told us, and Betty and I can certainly concur and agree, they don't ever do anything they find any greater joy out of participating in and that's giving people a fresh clean water well, a water source that literally is a gift that we make that just keeps giving for a lifetime.

We're really targeting 350 areas. You say, "How do you find the areas?" Well, our attention on those areas is literally focused by missionaries who planted their life in the midst of that suffering. And in love, they come to us because we have expressed a desire to help meet needs and they know that the viewers of *LIFE Today* want to make a difference outside the world they live in, and impact positively somebody else's world. They live beyond themselves. In other words, the river within is released to freely flow like Jesus said it's supposed to; and in releasing the river, we find life by giving life. So they come to us and they say, "Would you drill a well in this area? We've got an area of tremendous need and it will just change everything." So we've targeted 350 areas.

Now the average cost and we're praying it will stay at this level with the petroleum increases and the energy costs and gasoline costs, diesel costs, we don't know how long it will stay there but right now we are being assured we can drill the wells for an average of \$4800 each -- a well for \$4800. You perhaps could give a well. Many people say, "That's one of the great joys of my year; I give a well." Some people say, "I made it one of my dreams to give a well; I work toward it." We've got children who go to work and start doing little things to raise money and they do it. We've got classrooms that do it, and churches but mainly, we've got individuals and couples that say, "I can do it."

And there would be some, Betty, who tell us, "Well, I can't do a whole well but I can give part of a well." And they give \$1200 and start praying, "God give us three to join me" and we've got a well. So if you can do that, we're asking you to make that gift.

But keep this in mind, this is how it breaks out: A gift of \$48 gives 10 people water for the rest of their life. Now that's just a gift that keeps on giving; \$144 and you've given 30 people water the rest of their life. There is some level at which everyone can participate and that's a joy.

Will you dial the number right now and take your bankcard, use it like a check? Could you do that? If you can give a well or part of a well or make that gift of \$48, \$100 or more, whatever you can do, if you make a check, make it to LIFE but call us and tell us what you're mailing. You can go online, lifetoday.org and make that gift immediately.

We've got some special gifts that we want to send you to inspire you, a devotional book, a study that will inspire you. We always want to bless you. But you are the greatest blessing because you are changing everything for people when you give them clean water. Please make that life-giving call and that special gift.

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 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. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything! With your gift today, we can establish and drill 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 impact 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 *Arise*, a beautiful new daily devotional featuring words of encouragement from inspiring women who have shared their faith on *LIFE Today*. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the *Arise* audio visual devotional featuring 40 days of inspiration from *LIFE Today's* favorite women guests.

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 Lion and the Lamb."

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

End of clip

On the mission field:

James: These beautiful children come here to get water but we just visited with a mother a few minutes ago that lost her little seven-month-old baby girl because of contaminated water from this well.

Betty: James, these children are older than the little seven month old that died but still with this water here, it doesn't guarantee that they're going to grow up.

James: When they're related to the family of God, they're related to us. It's God's family, the people He loves that Jesus gave His life for and we're going to do our best to give health and life and clean water to and we can do that. We can certainly give a cup of water, even a well of water in Jesus' name.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I do want to remind you that we're sending this beautiful bronze, this collectible "Lion and Lamb" to say thank you so much for your gift, that's if you make a gift of a well or \$1200 toward it.

The wonderful devotional book, which you'll hear not only from Betty and others that you know on the *LIFE Today* program but many of the people that you greatly respect to inspire you. Women who have stories that will inspire, and also the teaching series, the DVD and CD series from these same ones.

I want to just say first, thanks to you but also thanks to our audience here and thanks to Eddie and Tamara George. I think they're just a beautiful couple. I just say we bless you.

Would you join us in saying thanks?

Bless both of you and bless you.

Here is the book; it's in the bookstores. You can get it online, *Married for Real*, for keeps -- commitment. Thank you so much for letting us share this time with you.

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* -- now available in paperback and online and retail bookstores.

Announcer: Tomorrow, FOX News analyst, Father Jonathan Morris.
>> Sometimes we can get caught up in either obligation, get caught up in tradition.