

Week 45

10/31/12

In the studio:

James: What a joy to come into your home. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to LIFE Today, "Wednesdays with Beth." You know what Beth says about this little book? I've written some pretty big books.

As a matter of fact, with Jay Richards, this is quite the book, this is the book if you haven't read it and you really have hope for a new direction that takes us far beyond any election or politician but principle, read it please read it. But a lot of people say, "I just want something inspirational and simple."

Well, here it is, Betty, *The God of All Creation*. And little Princess is right here on the cover chasing a rabbit. Oh my, how those little short legs wish she could catch it. And you'll see a picture of her in here driving a pickup truck and many others. Beth Moore says, "I'm so glad James wrote this book!" These are life lessons we learned from pets and wildlife. If you can learn from the birds, Jesus said, you can. You can learn from the ants, Solomon said you can. The Bible is filled with lessons that God wants us to learn from all we see. By the way, he said in Romans one he revealed himself in what he created. So many people love pets, they love the wildlife; what can we learn? You are going to love this. We're sending it, Betty, to everyone who helps us do something else so wonderful and that's to give food to the hungry, to the truly desperately hungry.

Now Beth Moore is talking in her teaching today and this is the very first part of it, she is talking about how we are all longing, begging, pleading for something. Even our hurt cries out. You're going to be blessed.

Then a little later you're going to really bless somebody that you're going to enjoy blessing and you're going to want to get *The God of All Creation* and a special devotional book, a Bible devotional book. I want to tell you about it. Here's Beth. Be blessed!

From Beth 14-4

Beth: I'm a really visual learner and I pray, I think it would be helpful to you if you also pictured this scene. In fact, I'm going to ask you not only to picture, I'm going to

ask you to try to smell it, to try to feel it, and to just imagine being right in this scene, Acts 3:1-10.

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour and a man lame from birth was being carried whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple.

Verse three: Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. And Peter directed his gaze at him as did John and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold but what I do have, I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

And he took him by the right hand and he raised him up and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up -- are you getting this picture? -- Leaping up he stood and began to walk and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate at the temple asking for alms. They were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Hmm mm mm. Somebody just say, "Hmm mm mm mm!" Sometimes you've just got to hmm mm mm over the Word of God.

Now in Judaism, there were three stated times for prayer. There was early in the morning in connect with the morning sacrifice and then there was at the 9th hour of the day in connection with the evening sacrifice and then at sunset. So we're told that they're at the hour of prayer, at the 9th hour; this is in the middle of the afternoon. They come together for a time of prayer and a time of gathering there while the evening sacrifice was happening.

Now this is very strategic to us because you and I know, based on the Word of God, that the reason why we get to come before the throne of grace and bring our intercessions and receive mercy and grace in our time of need is because Jesus Christ has been sacrificed for us.

The reason why they prayed at the time of the sacrifice is because their sins in this way and their understanding was symbolic of their sins being atoned for. So at that time they could bring their intercessions to God. So it's very important to understand that

we live in the fulfillment of this. That because it is once and for all, any time we pray, there is no set morning, mid afternoon and evening anymore for prayer, we can pray 24/7, anytime of the day because the sacrifice has been made once and for all. So it's a beautiful, beautiful manifestation of what is completed this side of the cross.

Now here's what I want to do with you. I want to look at this scene, these 10 verses in Acts chapter three, first of all from the beggar's point of view and then we're going to scoot over into the side where Peter and John stand and look at the beggar. So I want us to start with the beggar and I want to say this from the very beginning, I'm a detail person. The more they could tell us about the intricate details of the scene, the better I'd like it. I'd love to know exactly what he had on. I'd like to know where his legs, because they had never been stood upon, were they disfigured and bent up? What did he look like? What did he sound like? I would have wanted to know all those things.

But notice in what we are told, we are missing the biggest, most important detail of all, we are not told his name in this scene. I don't know about you but I need to know the name. We've got Peter and John but what is this guy's name?

And I think one reason why that's such a beautiful thing is because every single one of us can become the beggar in the scene. There is Peter and John but then the beggar is unnamed. So today, as I search these scriptures, and as I prepared for you and prayed over this message, today, that beggar is me. Today I wonder if you would let that beggar be you? Because we've come to see ourselves in him first before we look at Peter and John and we're going to build four points together. And the first one is this: we're all begging for something. We are all begging for something. Would you jot that down? Anybody agree with that?

Can you think, if we paused a minute. This is one I wish we could just take a moment. This is one I wish I could sit in your den, across from your coffee table and we could just lean in and say, "What are you begging for?" Because I know a few of the things I've been begging for.

I want you to think through, maybe it is not outright but it is just this underlying thing that we may not even be consciously aware of in our own actions. Maybe we are begging for attention with our depression. Maybe we're begging for something through our anger. Maybe we're begging for something through our immorality. Does this make sense? Because I look back over some of the most foolish things I've done in the course of my life and I think to myself, I was not even having fun!

I wonder if anybody can relate with me on that. That some of the stupidest things I've ever done, I did not enjoy doing. I told you before that I learned growing up that not everybody in a pit of sin is having a great time. I could not even fathom why I did the things that I did.

I'm not saying that there were not plenty of times when I was full on into it with all of my fleshly desires but I'm just saying there were many, many times that I did not know what I was doing and why I kept making the same destructive decisions over and over again.

But I was begging for something, because we're all begging for something. We've all been what the Word of God would call, "poor in spirit." Some of us have been begging for something by acting out in such a way that we almost seem like we have lost our minds to our loved ones.

Maybe you've got a loved one right now completely wigged out, and I'm telling you, that person is begging for something. If we could just lock into what is it that they're really wanting? What are they crying out for?

I want you to see in verse two where it says, "And the man lame from birth was carried in." It says, "lame," literally in the Greek, lame from his mother's womb. So this had been innate. This had been something he had lived with all of his life.

For some of us the reason why we can't always identify what we're begging for is because we have been begging for it all our lives. What is it? Could you try to define what is it you keep and whatever action and whatever striving and whatever moaning and groaning and urging and yearning, what is it you keep begging for?

Sometimes you can't beg people for what you really need because a lot of times they just can't give it -- they just cannot give it. Have you ever just begged for love from somebody that was just too emotionally handicapped to throw their arms around you and tell you how valuable you are to them? Some people are as lame of limb in what they can bring to you emotionally as this man was in the scene of Acts three.

I think it is so interesting because I want you to notice that he's asking for alms. He is asking, of course, for money. Notice that what he really needs is new legs, but he's asking for alms. Wouldn't you agree that that's how we do? Because honestly, they couldn't give him -- he knew already it would do him no good to sit there and go, "I need some legs!"

I want you to hear this quote from a New American commentary because I keep thinking about it. It says, and I'm quoting now, "Alms, alms! He begged like a stuck phonograph record as he would have uttered hundreds of times a day." So he would be carried every single day. And he was carried to this particular place because it was part of the pillars of Judaism that they would study the Torah, (there were three main pillars,) the Torah, worship, and then giving. And so reflective of what this ministry is about.

It is a comprehensive way of serving God, and we do that through worship, we do it through the study of the Word of God, and the ways of God and we do it through giving. That's what they were all about as well. So he would be brought there because people would be in the mindset to give to him in that place. If he would sit right there at that door.

But he had to ask them for alms because they weren't going to give him a new set of legs. Imagine that he would have said, "Legs! Legs! Legs! Legs!" And no one could come along and give him legs. So it was, "Alms! Alms."

I want you to write down point number two -- somebody tell me what point number one was?

Audience: We are all begging for something.

Beth: We are all begging for something. I dare you today to ask Jesus to identify to you what you're begging for. I'm going to do the same thing because it will be an eye-opener.

Number two is this: sometimes we beg for the lesser thing we need. Sometimes we beg for the lesser thing we need.

Now we understand what this guy is doing because he's got to have money because he can't make his own living. So we get that. I don't want to take this too far in the metaphor but I do want you to see how we do the same thing; how we twist it up in our thinking. That instead of asking for what we really need we ask for something to support our infirmity or our brokenness. Does anybody get that with me? That we'll instead of asking for the thing, we still keep trying to somehow have a maintenance plan for our brokenness and all our infirmity. So we find ourselves begging for the lesser thing we really, really need. Sometimes what we're begging for is not what we need most.

Now what's so interesting right here is that one of the things this man would have been begging for that he would not have perhaps even known until it happened for him and he gets up and he leaps and he praises and he's ecstatic before the people of God is that he has been sitting at this gate all this time because he is not allowed to go in. He is begging for acceptance. At the heart of all of it, he was born with an infirmity that made him unacceptable in the temple plaza. He could only stay at the gate; he could go no further.

If you wanted to look that up it's Leviticus 21:17-20 that says that because of his infirmity, he was denied access. So just imagine that. Imagine the bitterness of I have been born with something -- I've been made this way, outside my own control, and it makes me outside a social outcast. Think what that would be for you. I'm thinking what it would be for me.

But you know this is the truth, that most of us feel too marred and disfigured to really be a part of corporate worship. I'm sure I have told it before to you at times when I've shared my testimony with you that I can remember being six and seven years old and sitting out in the pew at church looking around and wishing I was as good as some of the other girls. I'm just asking you, how much sin could the child have fallen into? I mean really?

But I'd already been a victim of sexual abuse and had been since what had to have been toddlerhood, because by the time I have any memory whatsoever it had already happened and begun happening. So I had this mindset that I was able, even as a six or seven year old, to sit in the congregation, look around and not feel worthy to be there. Now what in the world is up with that?

But in those days, nobody -- nobody talked about it -- nobody! It was the -- it was the forbidden subject to bring up and no telling how prevalent it was, even in that very congregation. We feel marred, we feel disfigured, we feel like we're not acceptable if people really knew what was inside of us, really knew where we had been. It's such a repetitive theme in the book of Acts that someone who formerly would have been forbidden entrance and unacceptable is suddenly invited into the people of God. You see it all through Acts.

The Gentiles are received and they receive the Holy Spirit. We see women that are called into places of service. We see the Ethiopian eunuch -- none of these would have been acceptable under the old order.

But Christ comes along and he changes everything because he knows at the heart of every one of us is poverty of spirit and we are all begging for Jesus. We are all -- make no mistake -- begging for Jesus.

I want you to glance ahead just a moment to the very middle of acts 4, in verse 22 because I want you to see where they're talking about him and they tell us how long he's been in this condition. So I want you to see it with me. It's been from the womb and it says in verse 22: For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than 40 years old -- more than 40 years old! 40 something had had it all his life, and I just -- I want to just bring you to this part of the page and ask you, "Have any of you been dealing with something, the very same thing that you feel marred and disfigured over, for decade after decade?" Where you do not know life aside from it?

Maybe something happened so early on that it has dictated the way you think, so dictated the way you act and the way you do relationship that you don't even know life any other way; that there would be no conception in your mind that you could be different. One of the most beautiful things we could say today in Bible study is that Jesus Christ changes lives -- Jesus Christ changes lives! Someone can be set in their ways 40-plus years and Jesus can come along and completely unearth within that person somebody totally new. Oh, let us never lose hope of that!

Video Piece:

Beth: I come with such gratitude to God for James and Betty Robison. They are such tremendous people of God and I not only love them and have so much respect for what they bring to the body of Christ, I also get a huge kick out of them and love them dearly. So I'm so grateful. Keith and I both love the privilege to serve with them.

I want to tell you something, on Wednesdays we get this opportunity. This is the outreach that we do on Wednesdays but somebody else on the other side of the world doesn't even have clean water to drink. They can't even get their mouths wrapped around weekly Bible study because they are trying to stay alive. There are people that don't have enough food to eat and there are outreaches of life that are meeting those kinds of needs.

So I love being part of a ministry that has a broad range perspective of the gospel of the living Christ. So thank you so much! Not only for participating on Wednesdays but in all the outreaches of LIFE. We are so grateful. May God bless you!

In the studio:

James: Oh, Beth, thank you! Aren't you grateful? And aren't you grateful that when God reaches out so lovingly to us we can reach out to others? I want you to see very distinctly two choices -- very clear picture. One of them is reality as it is, one is the hope that love offers. You're going to be moved and you're about to be a blessing.

Video piece depicting pain and suffering versus joy and healing. (No audio)

James: Boy, I hope you saw the -- I hope you saw clearly the images. Betty, we saw cans, most of them over the years, for 25 years, in areas where we had not yet been to get the heat-resistant bowls that you the viewer literally insisted we make it a part of the program because you didn't want to see them burn their hands. Many times the containers would be far worse than this. This would have actually been a pretty nice container. And when you see the difference in the bowl that says love and the food in it or the child that is starving and barely able to breathe or even gasp for life, and then you see life. And to know this, that once we stabilize and get them on their feet, we then begin to show them how to grow their own crops.

Betty, we've literally seen children starving, families starving where we taught them to farm, to bring back the Portuguese farms in many areas that had been abandoned years ago, bring them back into productivity and the people that were starving begin to feed thousands of other people with what they did. So we break the cycle of death. This is what love does. This is what programs that work do. Our viewers have always enjoyed helping us do it.

Betty: Absolutely, and you are the difference -- you make the difference. Please join with us for \$30, \$50, or \$100 or even more, whatever you can do. Ask God what he would have you to do and please help us.

James: Those numbers are so simple and yet so profound. When you think about a \$30 gift feeding three children for the next months, \$50 will feed five. Many of you have a large family. If you go out to eat in a public place, you're going to pay that for one meal. We're talking about feeding five children for months. \$100 -- and I really do oftentimes, and I don't apologize for this, I will say as directly to you as I can, if there is any way that you can help us care for ten children, make the \$100 gift. It is a gift that just keeps giving day after day.

We will take children that are very near death, we'll take children that are terribly malnourished, we will stabilize their diet. As soon as things are stabilized we then put those feeding programs into schools to jump the attendance 70%, especially among girls and it is amazing what happens. So we're really putting something in process that starts by saving children that are dying, stabilizing those that are malnourished and giving them a very definite future.

Would you dial the number there? Would you join in what we've been doing that has saved millions and millions of lives and given millions of people a future? Would you do it by saying, "Okay, James. I can help ten. Here's my \$100 gift." "I can help five, here's \$50." "Here's \$30 to help three." Take your bankcard, use it like a check. Please dial the number or go to LifeToday.org and say, "You know what? I'm going to give the best gift I can." If you would give extra money and help us give some bowls -- here's what we're asking you to do.

By the way, I'm sending the book that... this has been requested for so long because I've told the stories of what we've learned from our little dachshund, Princess, the spiritual lessons from God through a pet. I'm telling you, people have leaped at this. We're sending it for any gift to say thank you. But we're sending it to those of you who will help us feed ten children and give some bowls. The beautiful Sarah Young *Jesus Calling Bible* with those devotionals is absolutely fabulous. Please help us care for ten children. We've got "The Lion and the Lamb" bronze that we're sending to those of you who can give \$1,000 gift.

Father, I pray every person watching would just do what they can to help us save lives, in Jesus' name. Thank you so much for making the call. Thank you for making the gift God put on your heart. Thank you so much!

Pre-taped video:

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. You can help save a life.

Life's mission feeding teams are in place right now ready to answer the hunger cries of 400,000 suffering children in remote areas of Africa. With previous food reserves gone and parts of Africa facing its worse food shortage in more than two decades, we desperately need to replenish our 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 would like to send you James Robison newest book, *The God of All Creation*. Through his personal observations of animals and wildlife, James shares heartwarming stories and spiritual lessons of God's love and grace.

With your gift of \$125 to help feed ten children, you may request the new *Jesus Calling Devotional Bible* featuring 260 scripture insights from the author of the *Jesus Calling* devotional, Sarah Young.

Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,000 to help save the lives of 100 children, and you may also request "The Lion and the Lamb" bronze sculpture. Call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Thank you so much for your help. I pray you will call until you get through. Get the beautiful *Jesus Calling Devotional Bible*. This is absolutely fabulous. You're going to love it.

The God of All Creation, I don't know if you'll be able to put this down. It's going to put a smile on your face, teach you some very deep truths.

Then I want to remind all of you, Betty has got on her Christian VOTE pin, I've got one here on my collar, every Christian, every American, every concerned person should vote. Vote principle -- don't sell out to party, personalities, principles, kingdom principles, principles that can change the way we are to the way we should be loving our neighbors, making God bigger, government smaller and umpire not a provider. The bigger government gets always the smaller God gets and vice versa. Vote! Pray for those in authority. We need a miracle. You're part of it.

God bless you and thanks for watching LIFE Today. Tell your friends about "Wednesdays with Beth" and tell them about the program every day because I'm convinced you'll be blessed.