

Week 4
1/21/13

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

James: And I've got a wonderful friend here, O.S. Hawkins. He was pastor at First Baptist Fort Lauderdale and First Baptist Church in Dallas. That legacy, that heritage, the influence of those two churches, and of course, right here in our own metroplex where we live, First Baptist of Dallas, in my opinion served as a standard bearer for so many decades.

I was blessed to be close to the pastor that was there for so long, Dr. W.A. Criswell, and started preaching there when I was only 23. And loved the church, loved the people -- I still love all of you so much! Dr. Jeffress, we love you. As a matter of fact, he told me, he was about five years old and listened to me preach there when I was there all the time preaching, and he grew up there.

O.S. is a tremendous blessing. His wife Susie is a speaker and an author. I want to just reference her book, *From One Ministry Wife to Another: Honest conversations about ministry connection*. She is a wonderful communicator.

O.S. Hawkins wrote a book called *The Joshua Code*. And I'm going to tell you why I ask O.S. to come in particular, but I want to read the back verse that's here; it's the opening verse in the introduction. Joshua 1:8: This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

I think that's the purest, let's say emphasis possible on prosperity being far more than merely monetary or material gain but you would have a lot of stuff and not have any real prosperity, no riches in your life while surrounded by riches. O.S. understands what that means.

I want you to welcome to O.S. and Susie Hawkins to *LIFE Today*. Would you?

We're glad to have you here.

O.S.: Thank you, James. Glad to be here.

[Applause]

James: What I see here, O.S. are literally 52 different messages, you could just say start every week, where you meditate on it, and tell us what your goal was when you took a lot of the insights that God had given you over the years of pastoring and ministering and literally preaching all over the world, what were your goals?

O.S.: The secret to define what the goal was is in the subtitle: *52 Scripture Verses Every Believer should Know*. So I picked out 52 verses that I think before we get to heaven, everyone who knows Christ ought to know those verses; ought not to just have them in their heart but in their mind, that they ought to incarnate them into their lives. So it's really a devotional book where one week a year, for 52 weeks you can take one of those verses; there's devotional thoughts there, you can meditate on it, memorize it.

Memorization, scripture memory is a lost art in the Christian faith today. This came about when our little seven-year-old grandchild the other day was quoting a whole Psalm from memory. I was listening to that and I thought, how many believers do I know that have been along the Christian faith for 10 or 20 or 30 or 40 years, haven't memorized a verse in years and years and years, and hid it in their hearts? So what I've tried to do is just take 52 verses that all of us ought to know, memorize one a week, and incarnate the truth of it into our lives.

James: Really important what O.S. just said. Let me just take a couple of moments in my life when Betty and I were dating and God called me to preach, he really focused my attention on the word. And on our dates what did we do?

Betty: Memorize scripture. I helped him -- he would memorize passages of it -- chapters.

James: And here's the beauty of it. We're about to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. We're going to be married 50 years and we still like each other. Do you agree with that?

[Applause]

It really started... It started, that journey, that in-depth journey, we liked each other. We were obviously attracted and you see why I was attracted to her. You're still trying

figure her out; what was going on with you, Betty?

[Laughter]

But the point is that we started on the right footing. And O.S. I had a touch of God on my life. You heard me preach from the beginning. Would you agree that it was a special touch?

O.S.: The first time I heard you preach, James we were both in our early 20s and it was in Fort Worth. I wish somehow, some way you could find some of the those tapes of those days because of the anointing. When you were operating in that gift, no one had the gift of the evangelist like James Robison.

James: Well, and I really appreciate you saying that. Here's what happened to me though as I operated in that gift. I began to preach the word, I preached the Bible but I was no longer meditating in the word. I was no longer letting the word find its way into my heart -- the very thing you're trying to encourage here.

Well, I experienced defeat and I experienced a wonderful deliverance which I think the whole world observed to their dismay, a lot of them, because he got delivered from every kind of sectarian boundary too. God just lifted me up to where I loved everybody. I felt like God did, and I was and his love was in me and I couldn't stop it and it's not going to be stopped. What happened? I came back to the word -- and went back in the word. So, what God has put in your heart right here is really, really important.

Susie, you've got a real passion and mission to teach people to communicate. You really have a burden for ministers' wives. I don't know anyone that probably has a heavier load to bear, just simply not being married to the minister but the flock and all that comes at you. Share with us what -- you may want to comment on what you see and what O.S. is sharing but what's on your heart that you want people to hear?

Susie: Well, the book for ministry wives really addresses the very unique culture that ministers' wives live in. While it's like most wives, of course, living with a husband and managing a family and children and all of that, you have a church life as well. There are great blessings that come with that but there are enormous challenges.

The challenges of criticism for example, of seeing your husband or your children hurt frequently by well-meaning or not so well-meaning church members. The fear of failure, of not succeeding in the eyes of men, which we know in God's eyes may be a

success but it may not be what you view as success in the eyes of your peers. All of these are very personal issues to a wife; and the main issue is where does she go to get support and help? It is very difficult, just as a minister does. Where does he go to get emotional strength and marriage help or all of these other issues? It is limited. You can't just go to any counselor in your area. It's just a unique calling on a person's life.

So the book talks about the connections. The connections we have as women and our commitment to Christ, to the calling. There's all these issues that come with that calling. And so I like to talk about the good things of connections but then some of the disconnects, some of the difficult times.

James: Do you go and minister to women in settings? What is the web site if people would say how could we get you to come?

Susie: You could go to Guidestone.org.

James: And they could get the book there, as well as bookstores. O.S., I want to come back to you. What is Guidestones? And that's a title, the web site there, but you actually help several hundred thousand preachers.

O.S.: We have an incredible ministry there, James. It's been around since 1918; and only in the last eight or nine years we've changed the name to Guidestones Financial Resources. And we serve pastors, missionaries, seminary professors, university teachers, hospitals. We have over 200,000 participants. We have the largest Christian base mutual fund, about \$11 billion in the world. And it undergirds ministry people for retirement needs and insurance needs and things like that.

James: So if they want to know about finding out where they can get advice or counsel?

O.S.: They can go to Guidestone.org. We also have a mission called Mission Dignity. We're at a mission at Guidestone to bring dignity to a lot of forgotten people, particularly retired pastors, and in most cases, their widows in their declining years. They probably pastored out at the crossroads somewhere and were never able to provide for their retirement. They lived in a church-owned parsonage and they had to vocationally retire and they had no place to go. They're living near the poverty line. So we raise a lot of money every year to meet the needs. We're on a mission to bring dignity to these people. The average age is 85 of these widows living near the poverty line. 15 years ago we were able to help them with \$50 extra a month and now the neediest among them get \$530 extra a month.

I might just say, one of the reasons we wrote *The Joshua Code* is that all the royalties and the proceeds from it go to support Mission Dignity. That's why I promote the book, not because my name's on it but because we're using that to help support these retired ministers.

Betty: This book would be good for the new Christian that doesn't really know how to get started in the word.

O.S.: It would, Betty. There are three primary target audiences for that. One is a lot of people are using it. They have lost loved ones, lost family members or friends that they don't know where to get started in the Bible. They wouldn't know where to begin to read the Bible, and here you can read a chapter in 10 minutes; 52 verses, that's where they can get started in it. So a lot of people are using it as an evangelistic tool to give to people, to get them started in the Word of God and to get the Word of God convicting them. Others are using it as a devotional for themselves to memorize those verses.

And there are a lot of churches... I just got a letter from a church in New York. They're taking this year, their whole church, every week as a congregation they memorize one verse and he preaches on that verse that day. And the church is -- all the church members have the book and they're using it as a devotional. So many churches are using it, all of them going through it like that.

James: O.S., you and Susie have been a real encouragement to me and Betty. You watched me through all those years in the evangelism. You watched the impact on the nation when the Lord led me to bring the Mr. Reagan here when he was governor and you saw what all happened and you watched history impacted really, by the power of prayer and preaching, and let's say making some wise decisions. But both of you have supported me and encouraged me. You gave us, years ago, I think before anybody knew Starbucks was going to be a pretty big deal, you gave us quite a bit of Starbucks stock as a gift. I want to thank you. But you've been a prayer partner.

Also, when I went through the transition where God stretched my sails, let's say beyond our Baptist world, to really put God's arms around a broken world, and try to bring the church together. While many people were unhappy with me, even criticized me, or confused -- they didn't understand, you were an encourager. And you never saw me that you didn't lift me up. I want you to know it means a lot to me and I've told you that. But why did you continue? And why did you believe in what we're doing? And why did you seem to stand by me when others might not have understood or might have even been critical?

O.S.: I don't know, James. I've just always loved you, for one thing. The other thing is I thought I saw you working out the high intercessory prayer of John 17 in your own life. Not to be bordered by the minutia of certain things that were not the heart of the gospel. In other words, you wanted to be one with the family of God, wherever they are and whoever they were.

And another reason was, I've watched you in these latter years of your ministry and life giving yourself to the unloved and the untouched and the undeserving in some people's eyes and I think that's very close to the heart of God. I just believe in you -- believe who you are and what you're doing. And you encourage me to want to love the whole family of God.

James: Well, I'm blessed to hear you say that. When you were talking about loving the widows and the pastors' wives, I... I've got too tender of a heart. Sometimes I think I'm not able to control it. But when you were just talking about because see, they are overlooked. It just really does get to me that people don't think about the pastor's wife or the widow. What I was hearing you say, and I feel like, if America could hear it, we would be anxious to meet the need. I think if you just show us a legitimate need and a meaningful way to address it, we all want to have a part in it. I think that's the American heart, the true America. It certainly ought to be the heart of the gospel and the church.

Do you see and I'm just asking you, we've been around a while, we've been in ministry a while, do you see a spark of hope that maybe this kind of move of God in the American people and people all over the free world to say, "Come on! Let's be our brother's keeper. Let's notice what's going on. Let's don't turn it over, so to speak to Pharaoh or to the federal government. Let's don't hand it off. Let's find a way to be involved." Do you see that?

O.S.: Absolutely I see that. I see it in many different areas and many different ways. Especially as more and more persecution comes to some of these areas of the world, and here also, but not like it is taking place in certain countries of the world where thousands of believers are being slaughtered. And sometimes the burden of my heart is... Hebrews 13:3 says when you see someone that's being persecuted, you've been persecuted with them... and to have that heart. So yeah, I definitely see there's a welling up, I think, among certain people that don't want to just be peace lovers but want to be peacemakers. Sometimes we've got to take the initiative to do that.

I think a big part of that is what this book is about and that's getting the Word of God in us, not just us getting into the Word of God but getting it into us. It's what transforms lives. It's what -- I was saved when I was 17 at Sagamore Hill Baptist Church over on the east side of the Fort Worth. You knew Fred Schwenk, he was pastor there for 43 years.

James: Our son accepted Christ at that church when I was preaching.

O.S.: When I was 17, I did not know Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were books on the Bible. I could count on one hand how many times I'd been in church in my life. And I heard the gospel that morning and was converted. An old gentleman in the church came by and handed me a piece of paper. He said, "Son, you need to memorize this." I looked on it and it said, 1 C-O-R 10:13. I had no clue what that meant.

[Laughter]

James: That was Greek to you.

O.S.: It is Greek to me! The next day, I was a senior in high school. I got in my car after school... I'd seen in downtown Fort Worth an old bookstore down near the old Frank Norris' church. I drove downtown to the bookstore, I went in, and I bought my first Bible there. And I went back out and sat in my car and I was just looking at it. And I looked in the front of it and there was the index of all the books of the Bible. I saw the abbreviation; I saw C-O-R. And I turned to that page number, it was First Corinthians, and then I turned to chapter 10. I looked down and I found verse 13 and I sat there in my car, 24 hours into the faith and memorized that verse that day. It says: There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted above that you're able but with the temptation make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it. I memorized that verse sitting in my car. God has only recorded how many times over the course of my life I got to temptation's corner and that verse came into my mind.

James: He gave you good advice; didn't he?

O.S.: And I made the right turn. I can repeat that with hundreds of verses in the same way.

James: That's really what you do here. I want to just say we are -- if you will help us do something so simple, something Jesus said if you'll do, you want lose your reward, the blessings of heaven, and that's just give a cup of water. We want to send you this

just to say thanks, along with a devotional book by Beth Moore about starting the mornings and ending the day that's just so beautiful. It's meditation. Would you say thanks to O.S. and Susie Hawkins for sharing with us? O.S., your book really blessed me at a time I needed the blessing, and I needed desperately the encouragement. I want you to watch, not just with your eyes but with your heart, and just see if God says something to you, something about you as it relates to what you see and those you see.

Begin Video Clip:

Water means life to the world. But diseased water... causes waterborne illness that takes the life of a child every 20 seconds. They have no other choice... you can change that. Help drill a water well. Mission: Water for Life.

[Cheering & Laughing]

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I will never reach a point in my life... I would think life had ended when I would look and see a need like I see with those children. The images just flash back from what I saw the little children getting the only water they had access to and it's contaminated, it's death. Seeing that mother that was in the images there from overseas with a little baby strapped on her back, knowing her whole world is wrapped up in that little bundle and knowing it's very likely she had already lost a child several years old, to contaminated water.

I look out here in the audience and we've got a lot of young people here. And every one of the young people in this audience, I watched their eyes and I watched their faces while they were watching, and in every one of these children I could see concern, thinking about that's what they got. It's like drinking poison. It's all they've got.

That's why so many people bring their grandchild or their children when they're little to me and to Betty and they want us to meet them because they say, "My grandchild... or my daughter... or my son, watch y'all on the television and saw the children with the need for water. And this six year old or this eight year old, they've drilled a water well. They drilled a water well, a whole \$4800. They raised it." And then they begin to tell me how they did it, all the different ways that they do it. It's amazing to me.

I don't think there is a kid sitting here or a person in this studio that wasn't saying, "I want to find some way that I could do that." Well, we can. There's a way we can. I don't want to -- when you think about \$4800, that's a tremendous sum of money but a

child does it. We've had children that would work the whole year and drill two water wells. It's amazing to me. It's because the desire to do it is in their heart because of love, the love of God, and then we become the expression of that heart so we can do it. We can meet the need.

But I want you to understand something. When you give a cup of water, Jesus said, you won't lose your reward. Let him determine what that reward is; don't start guessing at it. Another will make you some silly promise: You give us money and all of your bills are going to be paid. You may need to learn a lot about money management. So let's learn that. Let's don't play a spiritual lottery game with God. Don't get me into that stuff!

We're talking about doing something that blesses God and blesses others. You say you give a cup of water; I'm going to bless you. Let me just tell you something, if you can't give \$4800 or work this year to do it, I'm asking you to pray about it. God, this year, let me give a well. Go ahead and make it a prayer. But right now we've got a goal to drill 500 wells; that's the most we've ever drilled in a single emphasis -- 500 of them in 12 countries. \$48 -- stop right there a minute -- ten people water for the rest of their life, that's how it breaks out -- \$144, 30.

There's a level at which you can do something now. You can start with the cup of water for ten people for the rest of their life. Would you do it? Dial the telephone number there. Use your bankcard like a check, that's how you should always use it. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*; call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. If you want to go online, LifeToday.org and make the gift God put on your heart. If there's any way you can give a well, and Betty, we've got people that give \$1200 and three people join them, \$2400 and another person joins, at whatever level you can come in, come on in now and then start praying, God, before the year's out, I'm going to drill a well. Ask God to help you. Betty and I did that. He answered our prayer and we've been able to do it, and as far as we're concerned it's a supernatural thing that God has allowed us to enjoy. We asked him and he let us do it. You ask.

Would you dial the number? Use that bankcard like a check. Please do it. We want to send you Beth Moore's book. It will bless you so much: *Blessed Mornings & Restful Nights*. What a way to start the day and end the day.

The hymns, the origin, how they were written, the instrumental music will bless you.

The 50th anniversary of Robert Summers' bronze -- this beautiful bronze, "Giving the Living Water." -- That's what you're doing. We're sending that to those of you who help us drill a well with a gift of \$1200 or more.

Thank you so much for going to the phone or going online. Thank you for sharing a cup of water or a well in Jesus' name.

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 500 new water wells for remote villages in over 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten 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 Beth Moore's "*Blessed Mornings & Restful Nights*," a beautiful new daily devotional to begin and end your day in God's presence.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request *Morning and Evening: I will Praise You*, a two CD collection of 20 instrumental hymns and the companion book that shares the stories behind each hymn.

Also, 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 limited edition 50th anniversary bronze sculpture, *Living Water* by artist Robert Summers.

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

End of clip

On the mission field:

Jeanne: Stagnant water... contaminated with feces and chemicals. If your child scooped this up in a glass, how fast would you knock it from their hands? That's how fast I need you to respond because this water, the only source in areas like this is killing moms and dads and children. We can stop that. We can drill a well. Will you go

to your phone or go online and let us know how you can help to drill a well in an area just like this where they need... desperately need clean water.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Betty and I say thank you so much for your help. We're not only going to send you the book for any gift, *Blessed Mornings & Restful Nights* but also *The Joshua Code*. And these 52 verses, as O.S. Hawkins said, you would do well to memorize them and meditate on them.

Would you join Betty and me saying thanks to Susie and O.S. Hawkins?

Thank you so much! Appreciate your friendship! Thank you for that Starbucks stock! Boy, you knew a good deal when you saw it!

You may want to go on Guidestone and find out how they might help you manage some of your resources. Thank you all for being with us!