

4/1/13

Week 14

James: Thank you! Thank all of you so much. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I are thrilled to share this time with you. To those of you down under in Australia, we love you! Let me tell you why we love you because you have expressed love for Betty, for me, and for what we do. And from the bottom of my heart I just want to say thanks in behalf of all the people you have touched with the love of God all over the world and for the encouragement you continually are to us.

We have one of your church leaders with us, Russell Evans with Planet Shakers. His father was a church leader. He actually impacted the nation quite profoundly in positive ways for the family. But Russell stepped into something that can only be described as this new CD says, *Limitless, Limitless, Limitless* -- Amazing, Amazing, Amazing -- Supernatural, Supernatural, Supernatural -- for many reasons!

But perhaps one of the most amazing things about this great move of God is, Betty, it touches young people and captures their heart for God and they'll go to any end to be a part of these gatherings in the presence of the Lord.

Would you welcome Russell Evans from Australia, Planet Shakers, to *LIFE Today*?

Russell, it is good to see you!

Russell: It's good to see you too. Thank you!

James: Do you like -- do you like the U.S.A.?

Russell: We love the U.S.A.! The U.S. is a big influence on Australia.

James: You don't just feel sorry for us or something?

[Laughter]

Russell: No, we feel it is a mission field now.

James: Well, it is! Exactly!

And here's the thing, may I just ask you as you look from down under and you look toward us, are you troubled a little bit about what you've watched and the trends in our country? Does it cause you to want to drop on your knees and pray for us like a lot of your citizens and the people in your population communicate to me?

Russell: I think it's -- America sets a standard for the world, really, in many of the trends in where the world goes. I think if you're going to impact the world, you've got to impact America.

Our heart has always been that God raises up America to be a shining light to the world that there is a God, there is a God of freedom and life and liberty. And as I've looked over the last few years, it's a trend across the western world that the world is tending to go away from the things of God than going to the things of God. So that is a little disturbing but we're also seeing a light in darkness as well.

James: You have just invited our pastor, Robert Morris at Gateway Church where Betty and I go...

Robert grew up, I call him one of my boys because he grew up traveling with me as a young preacher and worked with me for many years. I'm amazed at how God has blessed our church and the impact.

Have you seen something there that caused you to be drawn to what God is doing all over America like in our church and to invite Robert to come because you could see God doing something?

Russell: What first impressed me about Robert, I got handed a book from a friend of ours, Marcus Lamb. And he handed us a book saying, "You need to read this. It's an

amazing book called *The Blessed Life*." So as I read it, it explained what I believed about the Christian life in a way that I couldn't explain it. So we brought Robert down the first time and the impact that he had in my local church, and then across the nation has been profound.

His heart... what we love about Robert is authentic, which is really important to Australians, his heart for people and his kingdom viewpoint -- and it is not a small viewpoint. We're here, called to have a blessed life to change the world. His impact has been amazing and continuing to be amazing.

James: Do you understand or can you give us any understanding of why Australians seem to like us? Is it Betty? They just think she is cute and nice? Why do you feel like the Australian people have really not only prayed for us, but support us? They're wonderful. They want to help us do the things that we share with them.

Russell: I think first of all, people in Australia appreciate how authentic you are. Australians are all about mate ship and friendship and they see out of your ministry that your heart is to be mates or friends with the world.

And also, because Australians believe in the underdog and fighting for the underdog, and your causes that you're hitting around the world with poverty, with water, with child slavery, all that, resonates in the hearts of Australians and they say, "We want to be a part of a ministry that makes a difference in their world." And so they connect with the warmth and the genuineness but also connect with the mission.

James: Please express our thanks. Tell them you were with us and in person, let them know. I am just amazed at what God's done with this group, with the young people, Betty. It's been phenomenal!

Betty: It's awesome! I wanted to ask you since you are especially called to work with young people, what do you see? Are they hungry? Are they looking for someone to be a mentor to them or someone to lead them in a positive direction? Or have they kind of given up on the older generation?

Russell: No, I think young people actually want to change the world. They actually -- they call this generation Y or the millennium generation. Really, they've looked at life and said, "There is more to life so we can make a difference." But they are looking for role models that will say, "Hey, I can be like that. I can be like that person. I can be a part of that dream or that destiny."

I hear a lot of negative things about young people but actually, I think if you give young people a dream and give them an encounter with God, out of your encounters you change your world. Young people just don't want to have information, they want to have an impartation of God, and out of that impartation they want to make a difference. I think this generation knows how to honor, even though sometimes it doesn't seem like they do, if you teach them on honor, they will really respond to that.

James: Now you have been in our conversations, you have said you were amazed at how rapidly this movement has grown and how determined young people are to get to these gatherings. Tell our viewers some of the things you've seen.

Russell: Well, I'm a pastor's kid. I never wanted to be a preacher -- ever wanted to be a preacher! I was actually told by my English teacher that I couldn't communicate. So God has a sense of humor.

[Laughter]

I remember as a young person though, having a desire to empower people. I don't know where it came from, the Lord just put on my heart, empower a generation. So we started with 300 young people out of an encounter I had with the Lord.

And he said, "Start a conference called Planet Shakers."

And I said, "Planet Shakers, what's that?"

And he said, "You'll see."

So we started with 300 young people in the day and we had 700 at night, and it was all about you will receive power when you encounter God. And that word power means ability, efficiency and might. So God out of your encounter with God you can then go and change your world.

So that's what we started in this conference. It doubled every year and it grew and it grew and it grew and we're filling church buildings and we had to do two weeks and then we went to different cities and then it eventually grew to around 30,000 people. And young people would travel in buses for 40 hours across the desert. They would come and sleep on a church floor, on a little mattress that they would bring. The showers weren't very good; they smelled a lot but it was still good. They ate okay. But they would line up for hours and hours to get into the meeting.

In fact, we're having a debrief on one of the conferences and they said, "We've got a security issue."

I said, "Security issue? What do you mean?"

They said, "Young people are turning up" -- we're talking young people who like sleeping in. They're turning up at 6 a.m. for a 9 a.m. service because they want a good seat. Then after the morning sessions they're staying in the foyer areas from 1:30, 2:30, to get into a 7:00 start, and such was the hunger. And then they would go back for 40 hours.

And you'd never hear them complain about the buses, they never complained about the sleeping, all they would talk about was their encounters with God. And they say, "We want to come back the next year."

James: You know one of the greatest tests I see here of our spiritual depth is when you watch the church people who have been worshipping God and talking about the spirit-filled life and then you watch them try to get off the parking lot and get in each other's way. It is like they're almost either suicidal or murderous before they ever get to the restaurant. And then they're upset, the Baptists are, because they didn't beat the

Methodists to the cafeteria -- and it is hard to beat the Methodists to the cafeteria.

[Laughter]

But the point is that they get all disturbed. And you're saying these kids went back. That was going to be the question I wanted to ask. So they come, they get in the presence of God. Do you sense it is the presence of God, it isn't just a big hip hip hooray?

Russell: No, no. It is an encounter with God. Out of your encounters, it gives you destiny to live.

James: So when they go back, what kind of reports come back from the influence or the impact they make?

Russell: Well, the youth groups, many times have doubled, and from small youth groups to medium sized youth groups to large youth groups. So the impact is they go back to their churches and I strongly believe in that scripture, "Those who are planted in the house of the Lord will flourish." So they go back and they're planted and they serve and they bring their energy.

See, young people bring energy to churches. I tell young people, your job is not to steer the wheel, your job is to be the grunt, you're the engine room of the church, it brings momentum. So they go back and they bring energy to their churches and their churches become alive even more. And if pastors know how to channel that energy and that hunger and passion, it actually makes an incredible difference and that's what we've seen.

James: As teenagers, we fell in love with Jesus together. And on our dates I memorized scriptures and would quote them to her. And I even told her for a period of time I wasn't going to kiss you. It lasted a few weeks. But I remember Betty said -- because I said, "I don't want to be distracted, I don't want to think a bad thought ever. I don't want to be distracted."

When I told her what I wanted to do, she said, "Just once, please?"

I said, "No." But I lasted about three weeks on that.

But the point is that 50 years ago, what is happening to these kids happened to us. And that doesn't mean we didn't fall off the wagon, so to speak, and disappoint God or miss the mark or make foolish decisions, we did but God always picked us up.

Here's the thing and this is what I wish everyone would see. We always knew where the standard was. We always knew what the foundation was. We never tried to move the foundation or the principles of God to accommodate our failures.

That's what I see America doing. That's what I see nations doing -- it's what I see church people doing. They move God to accommodate their lifestyle rather than getting their lifestyle and their walk and their practice back to God. But what we did has worked for 50 years.

What you're telling me these kids are doing reminds me of what happened to us as a teenager. And if these kids will walk it out, then these thousands of kids are going to multiply with their families with the influence on their neighbors and it is going to be a beautiful thing. And the whole nation of Australia and just like the U.S., could experience an awakening.

Our conference this summer, July 18 to 20; Christine Caine is going to be speaking. Boy, is God on her! I mean there she is from Australia. Beth Moore will be speaking. Governor Huckabee will be speaking. Tony Evans will be speaking. Andy Andrews -- great speakers. But we are calling the conference Awaken Now! Because that's a charge, it's a commission, it's a command. Wake up now! This is the hour. And that's what you're telling me you're seeing with these young people in Planet Shakers.

Russell: Definitely. I say to pastors all the time, God didn't create the church for the consumer; he created it for the disciple. And we've turned our churches into consumer churches instead of discipleship churches.

Jesus spoke the language, definitely, but he also backed it up with discipleship. And it's not either/or, it's both. And young people want boundaries. They want to be placed -- because boundaries create security.

I say to people all the time, a church is a place where people should be able to go and land safely. And it's the same in the areas of boundaries. Boundaries are there to protect us in safety so that we can grow. I think when young people are in love with Jesus -- and what's exciting for me -- I've come to this nation many, many years and it used to be "entertain me, entertain me, entertain me." Now there is a cry out, "I want an encounter with God because out of that, I find my substance." The entertainment lasts only for a short time and I believe we should be contemporary and I believe we should be having fun but I do believe that if we don't encounter God, if we don't have a revelation of who he is, not be church attendees, be Christians.

And so I say to people, "Jesus doesn't fit into your calendar, he is your calendar -- A.D. and B.C." And so Jesus is the one who directs your life. Don't fit Jesus into your life, fit into his life.

James: You said that Australian people identify with us because they like what we do when we assist the suffering. Do you think young people care about helping people who are overlooked and forgotten and in desperate need?

Russell: I've seen it firsthand with the organizations we've worked with over the years. Tens of thousands of kids have been sponsored by young people, not by adults, young people. Youth groups getting together and saying, "How can we make a difference?" I've seen young people start water companies that every bottle that sold in a store or shop goes to building wells. Young people want to make a difference. Make poverty history is the big cry of this generation. They actually want to do something; they just need vehicles to be empowered to do it.

James: And Pharaoh will never make poverty past tense. No agency or institution. It takes the agonizing, compassionate, extended hands of caring people to put the arms of God around a desperate dying world. Do you agree with that?

Russell: Totally!

James: Do you like what you're hearing concerning the young people in Australia and now spilling over here? The Planet Shakers have a new CD, *Limitless*. These are young people singing praise music and worshipping God. I've seen some of the clips of what's going on. Would it be all right if our viewers and many of them in Australia but the U.K., South America, Canada and all over the U.S., if they would like to have this, and we say, "Would you please help us rescue some of these girls and children from the sex trafficking," that we send it to them? Could we do that?

Russell: Yeah. Totally!

James: Let me just say to all of you who are watching, I want you to look in and I want you to see some very beautiful children typical of our children, perhaps in your own community or your family, but these children are being taken literally captive. They're disappearing from a normal life, being taken into bondage as sex slaves. Now listen, this is horrific but I promise you, no exaggeration, we can rescue them. And you the viewers literally encouraged us to do this, "James, we want to do it." Watch closely. See if you don't want to put God's arms around one of these precious children, one of these girls.

On the mission field:

Announcer: These are the faces of those who once were. Once were happy. Once were safe... loved... cared for. Now they are vanishing at the hands of predators... abducted... misled. To distant cities they are taken, in foreign lands they are held captive. Their childlike innocence is erased, freedom forgotten; their spirit and will broken under abuse -- under torture.

>> If the girls won't sleep with our clients we beat them with a bat or electrocute them until they obey.

Announcer: Not only do these girls vanish, all that they were disappears too.

Nowhere is there a darker evil than that perpetrated so viciously on the victims of sex trafficking. It may be the greatest evidence of Satan at work on this earth and it isn't going away without a fight. We cannot turn away. We cannot say we did not know. The time to rise up -- the time to respond is now.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Dear God, dear God! Those girls with those little numbers, that's like the menu. "I want girl 21... or 15. I want that one." To attempt to gratify perhaps, appetites that can never be satisfied.

Betty, there are some things you can understand, we know they are not right what they do, the compulsive behavior but how it is that people can prey on children or hurt children or little girls and take them captive, use them for their own gain -- and then those who would come in and pay to use them. It defies imagination. It is the power of demonic darkness and bondage. And only love, God's love can break the bondage and set the girls free and also the people who are trapped who are using them.

Betty: Yeah, James. They kidnap them, any way they can get them, they take them and they take their innocence from them. They take their freedom from them. They take their lives from them. And we can make that difference. We can get these girls out of this captivity that they've been put into, not by choice. They lie to them, any way to get them to come with them. If they don't willingly, they just steal them. And then take them into this bondage and beat them and abuse them and hurt them badly. And they hurt their hearts and their spirits. We can give them hope. And through the centers, James, through the people there, they are there to love them and care for them and get them out of these tragic situations.

James: I think it is real important for our viewers to understand that what we do, we see needs all over the world but what we have been directed by God to do is find those God sent who yielded to go to be his hands of love. And when we see these workers,

these caring people, many of them have sold everything that they owned to go and try to rescue people. This is what missionaries do.

And when we find them, because we not only look for need, we are looking for people who are meeting the need effectively; we believe that's the anointing, the divine enabling of God. And when we find that, then we undergird it and many of the workers right there where you were watching, many of those girls were in Cambodia; those workers that are helping rescue these children by the thousands, they surrendered to the mission field without us ever knowing, watching us on television in New York City -- sold everything and moved to Cambodia.

One example, the *LIFE* Center in Thailand, they worked in Hollywood supplying power plants for all the movie sets. They sold everything, a seven carat diamond ring and left. We found them there just working, renting facilities trying to rescue kids. They've never left. We helped them build the largest center like that in the world to rescue precious children.

Here's what it takes to reach them, to rescue them, to restore them: It takes \$128 per child, per person. What we do, is we get them out or we get the children before the predator gets them by telling the parents what these people are up to. And then we get these children to *LIFE* Centers and we give them an education and a future and they go back and help their impoverished community. This is what we do together.

Would you help us? Right now we need to restore a *LIFE* Center that burned in the Ukraine. It is incredibly effective. We want to enlarge it. That's a \$275,000 need we didn't even know.

We need to raise a million dollars overall to help the missionaries do where they've already targeted the outreach. Your gift of \$128 or \$1280 would rescue ten or \$128 will rescue one or give toward that whatever you can. If you can give \$1,000 toward helping us rebuild that *LIFE* Center and expand it, please do it. At whatever level you can help, please dial the number, take your bankcard and make the best gift you can.

If you want to go online, LifeToday.org, please do. Make the gift -- please do it. Write a check, make it to *LIFE*, but call us and tell us you're mailing it.

We have some beautiful gifts to send you to bless you in your spiritual journey as you literally help us rescue people who without the love of God through us and through those workers, they could never be reached. Thank you for making the call. Thank you for going online. Thank you for extending the arms of God to precious girls and precious children.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Human trafficking... it's hard to believe it's happening but at this very moment innocent boys and girls, many very young are being forced into sexual slavery and exploited in every way imaginable and someone must save them.

Through *Mission: Rescue Life* you can help reach, rescue, and restore thousands of children from the horrors of the sex trade in Thailand, Cambodia, India, Ukraine, and many other nations. Your gift today of only \$128 will help rescue a child and change their life forever. And with gifts of \$64 or \$32 we will combine your gifts with others to help reach, rescue, and restore one more child from the horrors of their kidnappers.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you *Free to Be Me*, Betty Robison's updated account of how she moved from fear and insecurity to true freedom. You'll also receive the companion journal for your quiet time and daily reflections.

With your gift of \$128 or more to help rescue a child, be sure to request your copy of the *Life Application Study Bible*.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help rebuild the *LIFE* Center in Ukraine destroyed by fire or \$1280 to help rescue 10 children, and you may request the limited edition bronze sculpture titled Christian.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of clip

On the mission field:

>> James and Betty, and *LIFE* partners, thank you so much for all that you do for hurting children around the world. This House of Destiny that you're building here in northern Thailand is a monument of God's faithfulness and his grace, and your courage and bravery to not give up and to be a part of the solution.

Please continue to help us! There are hundreds and thousands of children that await rescue, that await for somebody to come and help them and love them and give them hope and a future. Never give up, James and Betty! Never stop, *LIFE* partners supporting *LIFE Outreach* and the work they do around the world for hurting children.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Wow! I just heard something from a pastor.

Oh, my goodness, Russell!

Planet Shakers -- he said, "Planet Shakers, we'll give you \$20,000 to help." Do you thank God for that? I'm telling you!

[Applause]

Thank you, Russell. God bless Planet Shakers!

Listen to me -- we will gladly, of course, we're sending Betty's book for any gift. If you would like to have *Limitless*, this incredible... really it's kind of a visitation, a presence of the Lord on young people. We will gladly send the Planet Shakers new CD to say thank you. And again to all of you, thank you so much.

By the way, if you get a busy, be determined. Call until you get through. Let's love these children and these women.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Planet Shakers?

Thank you, Russell. God bless you.

Father, bless this group. Bless this church, these young people all over the world!

Thank you so much for being Friends for Life!