

Week 21

5-21-13

James: You're a great audience! Thank you all. I know you are too. I welcome you to LIFE Today. I'm James Robison.

Betty, as you may know, if you heard me sharing in another program, has asked for just a little down time. From the time we lost our daughter, Robin, after Christmas in a lengthy battle to cancer, she said we've not stopped, really, because we're always reaching out to the entire family of God and to people all over the world. She said, "Could I just have a couple of weeks to just, really, me and Jesus, alone.

And I said, "Honey, certainly." And I asked our son Randy if he would join me.

Randy, I'm glad you're here. I know it's not fun to take Mom's place.

Randy: I could never take her place.

[Laughter]

James: But you have done a great job in our social media outreach and interviewing many of our guests that we have on.

He does a great job. You can watch that on LIFE Today, on our website, lifetoday.org.

We have a guest that Randy actually met and actually knows a little bit about and has read the book. I just got the book but I was excited about the author whose family were immigrants from Cuba. I don't know if they came in under the greatest conditions but they left terrific conditions to pursue the American dream and the American dream became a reality to him and yet he was still empty.

Randy is a little bit better at saying the Spanish pronunciation better than I do, because you took Spanish and I did too, but I didn't learn near as much as you. I didn't get it like you did. Tell us our guest's name who wrote this incredible book, *Not of this World*. Introduce our guest.

Randy: This is Aurelio Barreto. Did I do well?

Aurelio: Aurelio Barreto.

Randy: Aurelio, there you go!

[Laughter]

James: Would you welcome Aurelio to *Life Today*?

[Applause]

James: He's pretty good, though, isn't he?

He's better than me because you heard me and you were gracious and kind and you were so full of the spirit that you just smiled at me. And I want you to know that we're thrilled to have you.

Now this title, *Not of this World*, and the logo is appearing on automobiles, it's appearing on t-shirts. You've got it on your jacket, you've got it on the shirt too. *Not of this World, Jesus, Lord and Savior*. And this is part of what your company does, is produce these products that I would say are a witness product. Is that right? Is that what you're trying to do?

So, *Not of this World*, where did that come from?

Aurelio: *Not of this World* came from my wife and I driving one day. But before that we had been praying for a couple of years, I had been praying for a couple of years after coming to the Lord. I wanted God to use me, whatever gifts and talents he had given me.

One of things that I started to realize is how the people needed to be bolder about Jesus because I learned about Jesus when I was 38 years old. I began to just recognize that people need the Lord like I needed the Lord. It's a great witness when people put t-shirts that say Jesus on them, hundreds and hundreds of people read it.

James: All right, I want to hear your story because I know our viewers, I feel like, will be mightily blessed and inspired. You came here, your family, from Cuba. You know the devastation there.

By the way, I love the Cuban people. I would give anything in the world if I could go put my arms around the Cuban people as a nation, all of them, and see God's arms around that entire nation. We love you and we care about you very, very deeply. I've actually

tried to talk to Fidel Castro for years. He's never let me sit down with him, I would still love to, if you can get that message to him, Fidel, Mr. Castro, president. I would love to talk to you about a wonderful person.

All right, you came here and you pursued, ultimately, the American dream. I want you – you kind of capsule the story, that is really graphically told here in this incredible book. Would you just tell us what happened.

Aurelio: Well, we came in the pursuit of the American dream. I was born in 1959, and in 1967 we got our visas. We came and became Americans and I remember growing up as a little kid, my dad would tell me many, many times, "This is America, the land of opportunity. You will be somebody."

And for me, like anybody, I wanted to belong. I wanted to be accepted and I remember hitting a wall about age 18, when I was realizing there was something missing, but I didn't quite know what was missing.

We lived about four and a half miles from the beach. We knew the difference between the beach people and the blue collar worker in the town where I lived at, Hawthorne. I thought, you know, if I could be like them, if I could make a million dollars, then I'll be somebody, then people will like me. They'll accept me. For me, early on, I began in business at age 21, started an Ego Vending Machine, a vending machine business.

At age 27 I started another company. The igloo shaped dog house. Have you ever seen these igloo shaped dog houses before?

James: That was yours?

Aurelio: That was me.

James: Did you ultimately sell that company?

Aurelio: Yes.

James: And you sold it for a substantial sum?

Aurelio: Substantial.

I was thirty years old. I had crossed the finish line, so to speak. I had millions in the bank and by the time I was 37 I had more of those. I sell the business. I'm 37 years old. My wife

and I are vacationing in New Zealand and I hit rock bottom because there was something missing. Something was missing and I didn't know what it was. But I was recognizing, I was realizing that success, influence, accomplishments, they weren't giving me what I was looking for.

I remember crying out to God, I was saying, "God, if this is all you have I just want to die." My wife and I came back from New Zealand three months later and I'm having lunch with this principal, Randy Thompson, where my kids are going to school, a Christian school. He shared Jesus with me.

James, for me, I was 38 years old and what I'm about to share with you right now is the first time in life where I have heard this. He sat me down and he said, "Aurelio, there's a big difference between you and I."

And I said, "What's that, Randy."

He said, "As good as you are, and you do all these right things, God forbid you die. You're going to go straight to hell." And I mean, this guy just, "What are you talking about, Randy?"

And he said, "Without Jesus, hell is where you go."

And I said, "What about you?"

And he goes, "Oh, I'm going to heaven."

And I asked him, "How does a person get into heaven?" And my wheels started turning and I thought, maybe it's a donation. Maybe it's if I can do this, can I buy it? You know? Honestly, I thought surely I could work my way into it and he laughed at me.

He said, "What makes you think you can buy your salvation?"

He shares the gospel with me. I receive Christ and for me, at age 38, it was really the first time in my life where I recognized that somebody really loved me, and that was Jesus. This would have been my fifteenth year in hell, had not this man gone out of his way to share the gospel with me. It was mind-boggling, at age 38, to know that all this weight and all these responsibilities and all the stuff I'd been carrying was lifted, and this Jesus died for me [sobs]...

James: And you had all that stuff while you had accumulated all the stuff that, the American dream and what people often this is real life proved inadequate and totally meaningless as Solomon who had all the wealth in the world, said it's all is vanity if you miss God and his will. And you experienced that.

So the American dream left you empty which is not to say that opportunity is an abomination, it's not. It's when you substitute anything for the only answer, and that's a relationship with God and as you put it, through Christ. He changed your life.

So, did your focus change? What you were doing as far as your business expertise and your ability to be creative, did all that change? The focus change?

Aurelio: Yeah, it did.

James: It didn't just make you a failure all of the sudden, just collapse everything about you?

Aurelio: I thought he was going to take me to Ethiopia and become a missionary or something, and I was scared to death of that.

[Laughter]

I started to pray and at first I thought I was going to be pastor, I thought I was going to be a missionary. But through a course of two years of praying, and praying and asking the Lord to use me, I started to recognize that I was a business person, and one thing led to another and God led me to open up these stores in malls. We've been preaching the gospel for about twelve years and we've met people where they're at. People are hungry, people are starving for God's word.

As we were talking earlier tonight I really believe that the word Jesus is a code, and the gospel is a code, and people don't know. There's a ton of people that are hurting. I mean I was hurting. I battled depression and suicide my entire life and always trying to achieve and always trying to climb, climb, climb. When I crossed the finish line there was nothing there. I was 38 years old, I was retired and on the outside I was like my house was in order but on the inside I was like dead man's bones.

Randy: Let me ask you, Aurelio, I know from reading your book that you had financial struggles before you met Jesus Christ. You had some marriage troubles before you met Jesus Christ. After that transformation in your life, you still had some financial difficulties, you still had some marriage difficulties. What was the difference before and after?

Aurelio: That's a really good question because trials are always going to be around. You've got trials before, trials after, but I would do any day with Jesus than without. I know the difference. I've spent 38 years trying to do it by myself and on this side of the gospel, my wife and I, we were separated for ten months four years ago. We had had a rocky marriage but being the moral guy I was I would never do anything, we never did anything. But we were separated for ten months and one of the things that the Lord taught me was that Peggy became the icing on my cake. Jesus was my cake and the more I fed on Jesus, the more Jesus fed me and filled me. Then out of that abundance I was able to just look at her and accept her just the way she was. At one point is said, "Lord --"

I started asking God to forgive me because if she changed not one thing, did I love Jesus enough to love her unconditionally. Then I just started --

He's just been too good to me. That's the bottom line. He's too good. Whether it's restoring a marriage, restoring my business, restoring me... I don't deserve to be here talking to you guys but that's the Lord that I know. He's really, really good.

James: He's into your heart, it's just as obvious as the tears in your eyes and the pathos in your voice. I sense with your company --

What do you call the company? We've got *Not of this World*. What's the company called?

Aurelio: That's the company, *Not of this World*.

James: So, you're actually called to live not of this world, a relationship beyond this world. Thy kingdom come, in me, heaven in me now, living out the expression of Christ in my life. And you want, though, with what you're doing and your business, to inspire people like you said a while ago as it was in the book of Acts, to be bold, to boldly witness for Christ, to be fearless in their faith and share Christ. Do you want that to happen?

Aurelio: To be clearer. I don't want to get to heaven and God tell me, "You know, Aurelio, I showed you this, I did this and I did this and what did you do? Were you too busy? Did you forget me?" People are not clear with me, but this man, he was clear. The penalty of sin is hell but salvation and forgiveness comes through faith. All I have to do is believe in the name of Jesus and I shall be saved. Man, it happened to me! It was incredible. I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe that God loved me that much.

James: And he does. Randy, you were really blessed when you met Aurelio and you liked his book. What do you sense in this guy that has caused you to have a deep sense of appreciation and admiration for him?

Randy: A genuineness. This is a guy, like you say, has lived the American dream, he has attained all of the things that we think of as being the American dream but yet he realized it's empty without Christ.

Another thing that I want to point out is that with his clothing line, that's what first drew me to him, to his company because I'm thinking these are cool clothes. I'm wearing them when I'm working with the youth at church and stuff, and people are saying, "Cool shirt!" You kind of got that – when you came to Christ and you started a new business, your creativity, your excellence, your business savvy, it didn't go away. It was applied in a new way and for a new purpose. How do you maintain the business side of things as you go about sharing the gospel through your business?

Aurelio: It's a lot of prayer. I really depend on his grace. I can't do anything without him but he's so faithful he never lets me down. He refuses to let me down. Many times I'm at the eleventh hour and I'm like, "Lord, where are you?" But he always comes through. He's a dependable God. We pray for all the designs, we pray for inspiration, we pray for the Holy Spirit to lead us. It isn't us, I'll tell you that. I'm smart enough to know that it's not about us, it's about him.

James: It's not of this world. Here's the book! It's in the bookstores. Do you have a website, where people can go and find out what all your products are and so forth? Where would they go?

Aurelio: Yeah! The letter "C," the number "2," and the number "8." It stands for Colossians 2:8 dot com.

James: Do y'all appreciate the incredible testimony? I know Randy and I have been blessed to listen and I hope you'll get the book and get this story of true transformation.

Let me just say this to you: you're not just kind of looking in on some interesting life story of somebody's journey. You're actually hearing the testimony of the power of God to change a life, to lift us out of that sense of emptiness, even we achieve what the world calls success and what most people pursue. Yet, when you get it, you think about how many people have things but they don't really seem to have life, they just seem empty. A lot of people sit in churches that look very empty, they don't look happy. They look like what they're getting is killing them instead of giving them life. This is not healthy. It's just

not good. There needs to be a transformation in the heart that literally is the power of God.

If you have not experienced that, if you will simply ask God the father to become your personal father and receive the gift of his son Jesus, who gave his life for you, and was raised to live in you and sent the power of the Holy Spirit to indwell you. If you will ask him to forgive you, he will do it.

Like a child, no one comes to God that doesn't come with a childlike faith. Just ask him, "God, be my God. Be my father. I receive the gift of your son, Jesus, as my savior, as the Lord of my life I want to learn your ways, do your will. I want that! Teach me!" And he will send the Holy Spirit to do that, if you've prayed and asked God.

I would love to send you a book titled *Knowing God as Father*. I wrote it, it has a simple introductory Bible study to show you, in the word of God, who you are, who the father is, so you will know him as father. I will help you get started.

I really appreciate your testimony. I appreciate very much – you know I weep a lot. A broken heart is not something to be disturbed about. I think we ought to be disturbed that we don't have enough compassion for people. Our heart should be broken for the things God's heart is broken over. Paul the apostle, the greatest example of Christ in a man, or a man in Christ, perhaps that ever lived. He said, "I want to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. I want to know what he feels for people."

All right, let me tell you something. I promise you, if you'll just open your eyes right now and I want you to look at the precious little faces that I'm going to share with you and I want you to tell me if you will join us loving them. Tell me if you don't want to love them. Watch.

On the mission field:

Announcer: Have you ever known hunger like this? Have you ever known sickness like this? Have you ever known desperation like this? That's all they have known.

One thing we know is they are fighting for their lives because of severe malnutrition. Now that you know will you help the thousands of children who are fighting to survive?

End of clip

James: I do love you. Your little emaciated body and your beautiful little face and your eyes have captured my heart. I want to be a part of loving you, not in word only, but in deed. Yes, little ones, I wish you could hear me but I would rather you see a

demonstration of the love of God that beats in my heart in your behalf. People who are watching me all over the world, I know, I know somehow you wish that you could save those little children.

One of our staff held one of those precious little ones, prayed, it was the last day that little baby lived. You could say we got there too late, but it wasn't because the missionaries weren't there, it wasn't because we hadn't set up and tried to keep all the supplies going to a hospital, a clinic, a malnutrition clinic because we have.

But you see, the fact is, the children are coming there in a steady flow right now because there are desperate conditions in that region in parts of Angola right now, where we've been helping for more than twenty years, saving lives, millions of them. They've got a serious drought, and this is all they have to live on. They're not lazy, they work, they try to make a living, and they do their best. They don't have anything.

We can give them life. It's not going to take all we have to do it, it just takes what's in our hand. \$30 we can feed 3 of those little children for several months. \$50, we can feed five. \$100, we can feed ten.

And miraculously, right now, and I tell you it is, it's an answer to prayer. Someone, several people have put up a challenge, a matching gift of a half-million dollars, \$500,000. If you'll give today it will double your gift. They say, "We'll double everything that's given." Because here's the desperate situation: it's so serious we need to add another 25,000 children immediately to save their lives, that are just like those children, they are headed for that condition, that place.

Would you help us save their lives? Would you please? Please, today make the largest gift you can. Would you reach out and truly touch someone with the love of God by dialing right now, that life line, in their behalf, and use your bankcard like a check. Please go get it! You use it oftentimes for things you could miss to save lives. But take that card, use it like a check. Write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. Or go online to lifetoday.org but make the largest gift you can.

If you can give \$1000 that will enable us to save the lives of 100 children, but it will be doubled, immediately doubled today to \$2000. \$5,000 to \$10,000. I'm praying God let somebody do that because you've enabled them to do it and you put it in their heart to hold those little children in arms of love. Would you do it? \$30 is not a small gift for those three children, now six. It's not small, it's big, it'll give them life. The greatest gift you can give, the gift of life and we're going to tell them about the love of God,. That prompted those missionaries to be there in compassion expressions.

Please make that life-giving call right now. Please do it! You'll be glad you did! Their lives will be saved. They'll have a chance.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: At this very moment children are drawing what could be their last breath, struggling to stay alive due to severe hunger. You can help stop the cycle of death. You can help save a child's life. In addition to the 400,000 children already in our feeding program throughout Africa, we must immediately provide for an additional 25,000 children in the hardest hit areas of drought.

As an answer to prayer, a group of *LIFE's* friends have set a \$500,000 matching challenge for Mission Feeding. This means your gift today can have a double impact. \$30 to help feed three children can be doubled to impact six children! \$50 to help feed five children can be doubled to help save 10 children! And \$100 for 10 children can be doubled to help feed and introduce Jesus to 20 children!

As a thank you, we would like to send you *A Good Word for a Great Day*, a 365-day devotional providing a word of inspiration and promise for each new day.

With your double impact gift of \$100 to help save the lives of 20 children, you may request *The Family Reading Bible* to help engage your children and grandchildren in God's Word.

Finally, please consider a double impact gift of \$1,000 to help save the lives of 200 children, and you may also request the 50th anniversary commemorative bronze, "Brotherly Love."

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to just say thank you. I really pray if there's any way you could help us care for a hundred and see that doubled, I pray you will. Randy is the father of four beautiful children and having been to the mission field many times. You see those little children. What goes on in your heart?

Randy: You know, if you brought those kids into my home, a baby that looked like those babies, a child that was hungry like those kids, my wife would run to the kitchen to give them food.

Well, we bring those kids into people's homes all the time and all we ask is that you do what you can to bring them some food. It's not hard but it changes everything.

James: It does, and it does work because it's love that never fails when it's expressed; if it's just discussed it can have no effect. When it's demonstrated it's transforming. That's what happened to Aurelio, he was transformed with the power of God. Can't you see the transforming power of God in this businessman's life and aren't you grateful for it?

[Applause]

Not of this World, a great business. There's the website. You can go to lifetoday.org and find out how to get a hold of him and his product. We hope you will do it.

Aurelio, thank you so much! God bless you and your family and all that you're doing. Thank you so much for helping us share love and life.

[Applause]