

7/9/13

Week 28

Music:

O take me to the cross

Announcer: Next, author, speaker and musician, Jennifer Rothschild shares how trials in life can reveal missing pieces of our faith.

>> And I remember trying everything to make myself better and to feel better and to say all the right things and slap a happy Christian bumper sticker on my pain so I could keep moving.

Announcer: Next on LIFE Today!

Music

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

James: Jennifer Rothschild is back with us. And if you didn't hear her the other day you can always go to LifeToday.org, you can back up and you can listen to any of the programs. If you missed Jennifer the other day, go back and see it. Find out why these 28 chocolate spots here only have five chocolates left. The title of her book is Missing Pieces. I don't know why she used chocolate but this is kind of making me want to go eat some chocolate. That's got to be a truffle right there. You've got chocolate in chocolate. But she wrote Missing Pieces: Real hope when life doesn't make sense. Now think about this, Jennifer is blind. She is beautiful, but she is blind. Now if somebody tells her she's beautiful she sits there, "Well, I believe you. Okay, thank you. I believe you. But I don't know, I can't see." She said as she's gotten older at this particular time in her life, she even went through depression, and it wasn't because she looked and saw changes she didn't like because she can't see. There was something going on inside her that really kind of brought her to the end of herself. And she began to write... and I want you to listen to these topics that she covers in detail. And you need to get this series. It's fabulous! On DVD, LifeWay has produced it, Missing Pieces -- fabulous, fabulous teaching for your church groups, for your community, for you and your family. God, do you care? Hear her question, God, do you care? Are you fair? Are you there? Are you aware? Do you hear prayer? Do you err? Her son told us tonight he heard her going around the room saying it like rhymes: Care, fair, there. And I told her, "That's inspiration!" And it really is. She said, "Well, it's just straight out of the scripture. The first one just bang, bang, bang!" So let's just welcome Jennifer

Rothschild back to LIFE Today. Jennifer, glad you're back!

Jennifer: I'm glad to be here. Thank you!

James: Now where did you say the first ones came and the scripture passage that you said, "Bang, bang, bang!"

Jennifer: Well, I was reading through the book of Habakkuk, which is only three chapters but within the first chapter, here's that great prophet asking those questions. God, how long am I going to have to look at evil and you not intervene? God, where are you when I'm praying? Or God, how is it that you're letting these unjust Babylonians attack our people? Is that fair? So he real quickly asks questions that we do. God, do you care? God, do you hear my prayer? God, is this fair? And I think when we have hard things come into our lives our response can often be questions because it doesn't always make sense. We sometimes think once we sign up for Christianity, everything should be good. And everything is good, we just have to learn how to define good according to God. Because he is the one who works all these things for our good and for his glory. That's what he's done from the beginning of time, that's what he's done in my life since I became blind and even in the last few years when I fell into this deep depression and honestly didn't think I could function. I remember when I finally went to the doctor because everybody who loved me begged me to. I was disoriented all the time. I couldn't think clearly. I was weeping all the time. And even physically -- physically, my body hurt; I was just in pain. I remember going to the doctor and I emptied my purse on to her table and I had every supplement known to man. I had taken every herb, every vitamin. She looked at those and said, "I do not know what to do with these!" [Laughter] I had such a cocktail concocted. Because why? I was trying to fix myself. I was trying to fill in the missing pieces with an answer. Now thankfully this doctor did help me and we do need to be good stewards of our body, and I was and God brought me to a great place of physical healing through medical intervention. But what happened was my physical body became so dismantled is it exposed some real broken places in my faith. I remember trying everything to make myself better and to feel better and to say all the right things and slap a happy Christian bumper sticker on my pain so I could keep moving. I tried and it wasn't working. I remember one day even just crying out to the Lord, "Don't you care? I know you... maybe you only care about big things like hurricanes but do you care about us little people who just want to make it through the day?" And I think sometimes we ask God, "Do you care" because sometimes we feel like we're drowning. I remember reading in Mark chapter four, and of course, when I say read, I can't physically see to read the Bible, I listen to it on audio. So I remember pressing repeat over and over on my Bible on CD and just meditating on Mark chapter four. It is the story of Jesus on the Sea of Galilee with the disciples and this horrible storm erupts. And the disciples' first response in the storm, like mine, like yours is look for Jesus.

Well, where is he? He is asleep. He is asleep in the ship. I don't know about you but I don't want God to sleep through my storm. I want him to be up panicking with me or consoling me or helping me bail out water; do something! You know? So the disciples went to Jesus and the Bible says they woke him and they said, "Do you not care that we're about to die?" And I think we've all felt that way. But I think it is real interesting that when the disciples asked Jesus the question, they didn't ask him, "Do you care?" They literally, according to the original language asked, "Do you not care?" Which sounds a lot more like an accusation than it does a question. And I guess when I wrote Missing Pieces, I did so inviting us, as believers, to ask God questions. But we genuinely ask him questions as inquiries from a child who trusts her dad, not from a courtroom, someone waiting to prosecute, and hold our fist up and say, "Do you not care?" And I know for me as I ask God, "Do you care?" I had this recognition that he may not have answered that question with words that I could understand but he answered that question for me just like he did for the disciples through his presence. He was in the boat. He is a God of compassion. He doesn't stand on the shore and wave to us and say, "Hope you make it!" He's in the boat with us. And sometimes that very storm that we think is going to take us under, those deep waters that he's allowing us to go through, they're not to drown us! Often, I believe, God allows us to go through those deep waters so he can cleanse us -- so he can make us better.

James: He can take us nearer to himself.

Jennifer: He uses those waters to carry us to a better place.

James: And can take you to something you wrote about and put in a song.

Jennifer: He takes us to the cross, James. I got an e-mail from a young man named Greg who had cancer and his e-mail basically said, "I have cancer and I have faith and I don't know how to have both." And then I opened my next e-mail and my computer read it to me and it was from a woman when had been pregnant and she -- at my conference just a few weeks earlier, and she e-mailed me to say, "I had my baby. My baby was born... but my baby was stillborn." And after Greg's e-mail and her e-mail and I just began to weep. I went up to my piano and I began to ask God those questions, "God, do you not care? Or God, you heal some people, why didn't you heal Greg? Why do you not answer our prayer?" And it was as if while I was playing the piano this image of a cross appeared in my mind's eye. As I was asking those questions, why cancer? Why stillborn babies? Why blindness? I looked at the cross and I asked, why grace? Why forgiveness? Why peace? We really don't deserve any of those things but God in his mercy has given us those things. And I believe that when we go to the cross with our questions and with our tears, we go to that one place where the true mystery of faith exists -- why does God love us? Why does he carry us? Why did he cry our tears? Why did he bear our pain? Because he does care.

James: I want us to listen to you sing that song. This is on a DVD, CD. Let's just listen to her.

[Road noise]

[Footsteps]

Music

He said the cancer is back
and he's afraid
He wonders why
So do I
And his greatest battle
is against his fear
It's so unclear
He wonders why
The God who heals
won't reveal himself
in ways we understand

She said her baby never
had a chance to breathe
So she grieves
So do I
And she struggles with
the bitterness and loss
But she looks to the cross
And she cries
And in the mystery
we trust and we adjust
And we wonder why

O take me to the cross
And cry each of my tears
Hide me in your tomb
Crucify my fears
I'll praise you in my pain
O the mystery remains
That you are a god who cries
You are a savior who died

We can trust you with why

So I travel down this bumpy road called faith
And with blind eyes
I still try

To embrace all that I can't understand
Like your kind plan
Your merciful plan
And I'm not angered
I'm anchored yet I feel weightless
And I am hateless

Since you took me to your cross
And cried each of my tears
Hid me in your tomb
Crucified my fears
I'll praise you with my pain
Though the mystery remains
That you are a god who cries
You are a savior who died
We can trust you with why

I'll ask you why
Why this grace?
Tell me why, why such peace
Tell me why, why such love

I'll praise you with my pain
Though the mystery remains
You are a god who cries

You are a savior who died
We can trust you with why

James: We can trust him with our whys. We have to. And Jennifer does. And you can. I so long for everyone to know how big he is, how great God is, how loving he is, how real he is and you really do come to him with a child-like faith and you can -- he can handle anything you throw his way in the way of questions. You can trust him

through whys, and you can trust him with your life and your future. Jennifer, I thank you for who Jesus is in you and you know we love you. We thank you for that beautiful song. Could you just say thank you, Lord Jesus? [Applause] Thank you for walking as a blind person who sees clearly and even in your own pain, you ask and answer honestly, and share your own journey. Betty and I have tried to do that. What Betty and I found great comfort in and we've told how Robin's children blessed us so much when they were little kids and we would drive up to her house to see her up in Oklahoma. And her little children would come running out to meet Mimi and Papaw with little bags, little plastic bags of money. And they would say, "Mimi and Papaw, look at all the money we raised to help children." -- And that's all Robin ever did. We look at Robin and we just see life -- the life of God in our daughter. And so why? God, let people see life in me, let people see life in you and all the viewers of LIFE Today. One of the ways we do it is like Tammy Trent who lost her husband to water -- he drowned. Now watch her on the mission field watching precious ladies trying to get water for their children, their families and the water makes them sick. We together, Betty, can give them a fresh water well and many other people. I think you're going to want to do it. Listen to this and watch it closely.

Copy from 7-5

James: Absolutely, Tammy! You are a precious, precious friend. Tammy lost her husband more than ten years ago drowning, a very, gifted talented swimmer -- no explanation for it. And yet Tammy has gone to the ends of the earth, Betty to help us share water with the thirsty; there in India is where she was at that time. With your help, we're going to drill water wells in 12 nations -- right now, beginning now and our target number is 500 water wells. That's the largest number we've ever challenged our people to do. The missionaries, Betty, have found the location just like that where the need is so serious. And keep in this mind, we're going to give them Water for Life because of the water of life, and we're going to tell them about the water of life that prompts that love for them and their hearts will be opened. Betty, you saw those mothers going for that water. You know there is not a thing a mother wouldn't do to give life and health to her children. It amazes me what women can carry but when you love your family, women will go to any extent.

Betty: They will do anything for them -- especially your children -- even knowing that the water you're bringing back to your children could possibly kill them, if not make them very, very ill. But what can you do? You can't live without water. And the rough terrain that she has to travel to even come back with that water is remarkable. But she is doing all she can do. She can't drill the wells. That's what we can do it make the difference. Please join with us and let's drill as many wells as we can to give them

that fresh, clean water that they -- they deserve it so much. These precious children need a chance in life. Give them that hope that they're looking for.

James: And my personal feeling is, Betty, every one of you watching will simply be asking right now, "What can I do toward the wells?" 500 of them -- they cost an average of \$4800 apiece. Now we can put a well, it's modest but we can put an encased, safe, effective, clean, pure water well right in the midst of that suffering. And it will have a mechanical pump because they don't even have reliable electricity in many of the areas where even children can pump the water and they can get what they need, fresh clean water -- it is accessible. It will change everything for them. Here's what we're asking you to do. Give toward the wells. If you can give a well, they're \$4800. If you can give toward it, \$1200 or \$2400 and ask God to raise up three others who will do the same or one other to match your \$2400 and we'll have a well. Most of you, and most of our support, and we thank God for every person that drills a well, some drill several. We have children who work real hard to raise funds, and they drill a well. It's amazing. But most of our support comes from people who will give \$48, ten people water the rest of their lives; \$144, 30 people water the rest of their lives. So there is something you can do. Would you do it now, please? Don't just say, "I'm going to pray about it." Become an answer to the prayers of those missionaries and those people for their children and their families and let's give the water. If you'll dial the number and take your bankcard, use it like a check, that's how you should always use them, and make the largest gift you can. Call us, use that card. You can go online LifeToday.org and use the card, make the gift. If you write a check, make it to LIFE but call us and tell us what you're sending. It's very important that we hear from you because it is going to take all of us, all over the world doing what we can do drill those 500 wells in 12 different nations. Thank you so much for your gift. We have special gifts we're going to be sending you to say thank you that will bless your life.

Cause spot

James: Well, you know even as I say good-bye to you and thank you for whatever help you've been able to give, it means so much. Don't think a gift is too small, we're giving a great gift of a cup of water, a well of water in Jesus' name together. I just thank God that he can handle our whys and he'll use us to be an answer to somebody else's prayer and somebody else's need. I find that when we are an answer to somebody else's prayers, our prayers seem to get answered. That's Isaiah 58, read it. We'll send you the book, Majesty. Today, if you'd like to have Jennifer's book, it's a wonderful inspiration, Bible study, Missing Pieces. Just ask for it. You help us give water and we just want to pour blessings on you as we pour blessings out all over the world. And we want to say again, Jennifer Rothschild, you're a beautiful person! We love you.

Come back any time. Thank you so much, Jennifer. We love you. Bless all of you!
Hopefully you were blessed today. Tell your friends to watch LIFE Today. Encourage them to share life today -- his life every day!

Music

Awaken now 3

Beth: Depression says there's more bad news than good. Delusion says there's no bad news at all. [Laughter]

Announcer: Tomorrow!