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Week 33

James: Thank you all very, very much. We appreciate you welcoming us and thank you for giving us this opportunity to share time with you. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We really count it an honor to be able to share what faith does in a living God, not what dead lifeless dull religion does, which is oftentimes something that keeps people from really having life and the fruitfulness that God wants.

Our guest today has written a book titled interestingly, *Green Pastures of a Barren Land*. It has a subheading on it that is really very, very interesting in the book cover and that is: *Finding contentment in life's desolate seasons*. Now the author of this book, Candise Farmer, really understood what it was like to feel barren because of losing child after child in miscarriages. From that point, God gave her, I think, tremendous inspiration and insight to share. Would you welcome Candise Farmer to *LIFE Today*?

Candise, we're glad to have you. Glad you're here.

Our oldest daughter lost a child, stillborn. Betty nearly lost the one that passed after she lived 40 years. I have watched so many women hurt when they lose the baby they thought was on the way. Tell us your experience.

Candise: I've experienced that hurt firsthand on multiple occasions. My husband and I were married for about six years and we decided that it was time for us to start a family. That's what we desired. I love children, he loves children, and we were at a place in our marriage financially, with our careers, with education where it was just that time to begin to start a family; and just very quickly I was able to get pregnant and then just early on had some struggles. And although I was on bed rest for four to six weeks ended up losing that pregnancy, and it just took the wind out of our sails within our home and within our marriage. It was just a real loss, a grief.

From that time on for the next ten years we just went through multiple miscarriages. I would just try to immerse myself into Christian resources but what I was finding is that many times in what I call "empty cradle books" the authors in the end would get their babies. And it was just occurring to me that I might not ever have that end. And many times I would just project, what is it going to look like if I never do carry a baby

to term? What is it going to be like if I do have to go to my grave as a barren woman? I was just traumatized by that scenario, by that thought.

And then sure enough after my final loss I ended becoming irreversibly barren, just biologically barren; and to the place where I would never biologically mother a child. At that point in time I just went into a horrible pit of despair and depression. It was a bleak -- very dismal time in my life. Just basically I wanted to get in the bed, shut the blinds, put the covers over my head and stay there indefinitely.

I know that there are so many other women -- there are 6.1 million women in America that struggle with infertility and pregnancy loss. So here I was in this big pit and what the Lord so sweetly began to do for me just in the bottom of my pit of depression is he began to restore my life.

It wasn't a quick fix and it wasn't just an instant healing but what he did is he began to show me a principle from his Word and that principle would bring me life and it would bring me healing. And I would ingest that and I would live within that truth, and I would just embody what he had for me. Then time would pass and he would show me another truth from his Word, some type of restorative principle about grief or about child loss and I would begin to live and accept that truth. And then just over a period of several, several months, as you were referencing, God took a very barren, desolate time in my life and he granted me through his grace and through his mercy true contentment in my Lord and savior Jesus Christ. And I'm a miracle.

So I want to avail to others and extend to others the message of hope that I found in his Word. That is my story. My resources are based upon seven biblical principles. They're all straight from God's Word. I know that my words have no healing. My words have no life, but the principles of God's Word are what can give anyone in a barren season life.

James: And that's what you built the book on. That was basically the breakdown -- exactly. And you did the same thing when you put together the DVD teaching and the study guide that goes with it. I would like for you to tell our viewers because we want to hear some of these principles -- we know they'll want to hear them because they will be so meaningful to you wherever you are and whatever you consider to be a desolate time, a painful time, you really do need the fullness of God, the blessing of God, the potential of having green pastures in what appears to be a very barren land, and seeing the beauty of that. You have made this available for church groups to use, for individuals to use with their family. Where would they get it? I know it is in bookstores and so forth, but if they wanted to go online and they might be interested

in saying look, how can you help us, Candise in our area maybe in a specific way? Maybe we could do something with a lot of the ladies in our area and bring them together some way because a lot of them are hurting and you seem to have the love and the gift and you've been through this barren time and you found something that gives you peace. If we wanted you, how would they find you on let's say somewhere on the Internet, where would they find you?

Candise: My web site is www.EnoughGraceMinistries.com and that has my contact information. It tells about the ministry, and it reviews all the resources and gives just a real in-depth look at what the products are for. Just the message is what the Lord led me to is that everybody has a heartache. Everybody has a pain of life.

So when I was writing the Bible study, which is an eight-week Bible study where you look in-depth at the seven biblical principles. You do cross-referencing. I love word studies. I've studied under Kay Arthur for years so I love the original word studies.

So you're looking more in-depth at these seven principles but what I'm finding is that it is meeting the needs of people from all walks of life, whether it be encounters with Alzheimer's, unexpected death, disease, loneliness, wanting to get married, never finding your soul mate, but everybody has a heartache and these principles are destined to restore them.

James: They're God's principles, they're God's truth, it's his Word. There's the web site; if later, you say you didn't get it down, you can go to LifeToday.org which that web site will come up again at the end of the program, you can go on there and find out how to get a hold of Candise. You want to touch on some of those principles that really are basically the content of the material, the book, and the teaching? Touch on some of them.

Candise: All of them of course are life-giving but three of them I just want to share tonight. First of all, God will bring barren seasons into our life for his glory. And we look there at John chapter nine when Jesus encounters the blind man. And the disciples say, "Who sinned? Was it he or was it his parents?" And Jesus comes right out and says, "You know, all of this is to occur so that the works of God will be manifest at this moment." So for us, in our times of pain, it is for us to glorify the Lord and to manifest, that means to show forth and display the glory of the Lord. So that's a key principle.

And another one is that the Lord allows times of pain into our life for our good. And I believe that one of the most beloved scriptures is Romans 8:28 and many people claim

that. We know that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, to those who are called according to his purpose. Many times we stop right there and we think, well, all this is going to work out for good. Our interpretation of good many times does not coincide with the father's interpretation of good. So if you keep reading, the following verse defines good and what good is. It's when you and I are conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. So that trial, that heartache, is so you and I can become more like him.

And another principle that is just pretty much the key for our ministry and just the heart of it, is principle number five and it says that we must embrace the keys to true contentment. So we begin to look at Second Corinthians chapter 12. And we've got Paul here and he has a thorn, whatever that maybe, a migraine headache, a reoccurring temptation, it can be an eye affliction. Bible scholars aren't exactly sure what it is but the Lord allows him to keep that thorn but he gives him something so much better. And Paul says that I am well content. And he says, I rejoice all the more gladly but the reason for that is that he has the sufficient grace of God, my grace is sufficient for you, my power is perfected in weakness.

So because Paul was the recipient of God's sufficient grace and because this power, which in the original language, it's the miracle itself. Because he was having the miracle of Christ himself tent and rest upon him, he had the keys to true contentment. So those just bring me life.

James: How do you, Betty, when you listen to what she just said, which I agree 100%.

When you are going through this pain, and Betty and I can relate very closely to pain. I have watched Betty deal with it in a processing that is different from mine. She's writing quite extensively for the first time and -- I'm a reader. I read a lot.

I don't really think most people -- and this is not intended to be scolding you, I am challenging you -- most people don't read at all to any degree, and if they do, it's most often for entertainment rather than enlightenment or education or edification from the scripture. I would like to see that happen. Being a reader, as I have read what Betty is reading, it is quite supernatural. It is an amazing gift. The way she's expressing herself comes out of a depth that is so much greater than a woman I've known and been married to for 50 years, and know her well, that something is coming out of her that would never have come without going through this experience.

How do you describe it? Because to say the pain is gone, when even this morning I asked how I could wipe the tears from your eyes, I think you glanced once at our little

dachshund to see if she was coming to address the tears. How do you explain this process that you've just heard when you know she is right and you're going through it?

Betty: I agree with everything you've shared. In this process I have experienced everything that you just shared and am still going through it. It is a healing process for us in our hearts -- our hearts have been hurt, our hearts have been crushed. So God is right there. That is the beautiful thing about -- this is the green pasture that comes out of such a place that we all find ourselves in at times.

We're not going to avoid the suffering; he didn't promise that. But he did say, "I will be there with you, and walk through it with you." And I can say that I have never felt like he left me. He has been right there. He is all-sufficient. His love and his grace, it comes every time I need it. It's right there and he's right there. I have felt a supernatural closeness to God through this whole process. It's impossible to explain. You just have to have that relationship with him because it is truly beautiful.

James: And that's what you found because when you've been through barrenness and you obviously were so diligent in wanting and so devoted to have a child and to be moved past that. I just wish all of our viewers would grasp, I pray God will communicate this to you as though he was just sitting there basically even taking your hand.

Wherever you are, however deep that pit of despair is, that ditch of defeat, that pain, that ripping at your heart and into your mind, he so wants to hold you. I've felt like... I really heard the Lord say this to me as I try to get in close to him. It's like he says, "I want to hold you so closely that you feel every heartbeat and you can identify with my heart. And when you do, you'll not only know my heart for others but my heart for you, how much I love you. How much I want to be the fulfillment of your heart's desire, the healer of your hurts." That is precisely, Candise, what you have diligently, and I think effectively not only attempted to communicate but successfully communicated.

And when you take the book, *Green Pastures of a Barren Land*, what God can do and then you take the DVD studies where she talks to you, a lot like Beth Moore or Kay Arthur who have been guests here, Beth is on every week; Kay has been here many times, we're very close. We have appreciation for the giftedness of God and the gifts of God on other people for the glory of God and for the healing of the heart, your heart. So take advantage of what God has given you through someone who identifies with your pain.

Father, I pray for everyone with a broken heart. They just feel so barren. They feel there is no fruit. There is so little joy and peace. God in Heaven, work a miracle of grace in their life; in Jesus' name.

Remember this: telephone number on the screen is always first and foremost a prayer line for you, paid for by love. The majority of the calls every day -- we're asking people to give starving people food, to give people that are dying from disease from contaminated water a fresh cup of water, a well of water. When that great need -- we meet needs in crisis situations but in the midst of the crisis, and Candise, this is amazing, 80% of the calls that come are still, "Would you hold my heart? Would you pray with me?" Yes, we will.

So if you need someone to pray with you; hold your hand in prayer and pray with you, don't hesitate to call.

Would you say thank you to God and to Candise for sharing out of her own experience and own journey?

And to you too, Betty. Thank you, Betty, for sharing. I've watched what you walk through, I'm walking through it with you, we're walking it together and with your prayers.

Now let me ask you to do something please. I want you to look and I want you to focus, I want you to ask God, can I heal that hurt? Would you not want to heal somebody's broken heart if you could? Would you not want to rescue a child that was drowning? If you knew it would work and you knew you could do it, would you do it? I want you to watch.

On the mission field

Tammy: I'll never forget getting that phone call from *LIFE Today* asking if I would be willing and available to take another trip with them to India. And as soon as I landed, I knew that a great adventure was ahead of me.

I traveled every day for hours out in some of the driest land I've ever seen. The ground itself was crying out for water. And yet I looked around at all these people that were also crying out for water themselves and they would take me down to these water holes that they would drink from every single day. And at moments it took my breath away because I just thought, how could anybody survive this?

I think at that moment as I would look to the Heaven and the sun would beam so hot on my face and I would feel so thirsty myself so I would sit alongside the edge and watch little children dip into the water and drink it. And I just wanted to stop them. Just stop! Don't drink that! It's killing you. It's filled with death and disease.

My heart would cry out to God, what can I do to change this situation? It's always my prayer that somehow I captured their heart and I tell a story of not just death through the lack of water but the possibility of life. I stood before drills, I've stood before them as water has sprung up...

[Laughing]

...all around me. What an incredible moment! I have seen with my very eyes how our giving has impacted hundreds and thousands of lives. But it took me and it took you, it took all of us having a vision and a hope in bringing them a future through life-giving water.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Boy, there is sorrow overcome with great joy. When you have seen what disease does to little children because they were drinking water they had to have to even live another day, and then to see it destroy their precious little lives, their families and the grief that can be so easily prevented.

Betty, I love watching that water just come up. You know we've got so many pictures of little children and of many women and their family rejoicing when they suddenly just -- it's better than striking oil! This is real life right here. This is not just the ability to get somewhere, this is the ability to live and it all happens because somebody with love gives those people a chance at life. It is a simple thing for us to get water. We've got tap water at home and restaurants and it is amazing how many people want to be really sure it is clean so they go get bottled water from somewhere. We don't know if they just got it out of a tap somewhere and put a nice label on it and sold it in the stores.

The point is this -- and of course, they didn't do that. I think somebody would probably call their hand. But the point is that we are saying we believe clean water is so important we go to great extremes to be sure and take care of ourselves. Well, could we not go to the effort together of making a gift of a well? We have targeted 500 areas this year in 12 nations where the missionaries have pointed us to the need and we believe you want to meet the need.

Betty, I'm believing every single person watching will either give \$48 or \$144; give ten people Water for Life the rest of their life or 30 people water the rest of their life or do what we've been doing with gratitude to God...

Betty: James, those that have joined with us before in drilling the water wells, they come back with the response, "It is joy unspeakable" because they know that they're doing something that is going to save the life of a child.

So if you want to be a part of that and have the expression of love that Jesus would offer them, the clean pure water, please join with us and let's do this.

James: And I'm believing they're going to.

Betty: I do too!

James: I believe every single person watching is going to do something. Now can you drill a well? Betty and I have had the joy of doing that. We ask God to let us drill a well. Ask him! But I tell you what. We started with what we could do while we worked toward the well, and we've been able to give a well.

There are couples, there are individuals, there are small businesses, there are churches, Bible study groups that give a well, they're \$4800. Could you do that? I believe you will. The \$48 for ten people, that's where most of the support comes from. There are people who give \$1200, three others join them and we've got a well -- or \$2400, at whatever level you can do.

Please dial the number, take your bankcard, use it like a check. If you do write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're sending. Remember, you can go online, LifeToday.org. Special gifts we'll be sending you to say thank you. Thank you for giving the great gift of Water for Life. Thank you so much for doing it!

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 *Majesty*, an inspirational new, fully illustrated book that will help you discover the promises behind the many names of God.

With your gift of \$100 or more, be sure to also request "The Names of God" pen set custom crafted with the various names of God and the gifts of the spirit.

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*."

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

End of clip

On the mission field

Tammy: This source of water is their only choice and they have to continually give this water to their children every single day. I can't imagine that feeling of giving my child water that I know is literally killing them and making them sick every single day.

And the beauty of also taking a trip like this is to know that there is something that we can do together to change the life for this young mom and her children and hundreds of thousands of mothers and children and fathers and families all over the world. We can come into these places and drill a well and bring them water that is life-giving.

So why don't you join with me? Go to the phone or go online and do the best that you can to help us make a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

In the studio

James: From the depth of our heart in behalf of missionaries and family members, parents, children, thank you for helping us provide water.

I do want to mention again, Candise Farmer, what a wonderful gift. Kay Arthur has written the forward to this book. She wouldn't have written the forward if she hadn't known it was of great value. There is not a person watching that hasn't had that feeling of barrenness at some level in some way. You can find the comfort that Candise talks about.

There is her web site again. I'd like for you to join Betty and me in saying thanks to Candise because you really are a blessing. You are a beautiful person. You've got a beautiful story, and God bless you as you just keep blessing others. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much for helping us put arms of love around a hurting world.