

10/16/13

Week 42

James: What a thrill to share this time with you. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

Beth is sharing and she's talking about the last words of Jesus, it is finished but she's going to make it clear, although it is finished, the work is finished, he is not finished. He is not finished working in us.

You are also hearing during the week, you've heard Sammy Rodriguez, you'll be hearing from time to time in the future days and weeks, some of our speakers from the Awaken Now conference because it is absolutely critical that we the people of God, the people of faith awaken and put on the armor of light and pierce this present darkness. We can do it because Jesus is alive.

Also want to remind you that right now with your help we're reaching out, Betty to rescue girls who have been trapped, sold, enslaved in the sex trafficking market, and it is possible to free them and see them have a new life because we're sharing the life and love that God freely offers in Christ.

You're going to be mightily blessed by what Beth says and you're going to be greatly blessed to reach out and touch someone with the love and the possibilities that Beth talks about because of Jesus.

Here's Beth.

Begin video clip

Beth: John's gospel has already told us the very first miracle where Jesus first declared his glory in his public way was to turn the water into wine. Now remember, the man, the master of ceremonies at the wedding had said, "What in the world? This beautiful -- who brings this kind of wine?" The guests would say -- listen, normally after all the people at the wedding have had all the good wine, then they bring out the cheaper wine because they no longer know the difference. Anybody getting that?

[Laughter]

But this, this --. So he begins... Here's just this beautiful quality, rich man's wine. And

here at the crucifixion he tastes the cup of the common man. His name could not have been more common. In the Hebrew it was Joshua. There wasn't a more common name. Would have been like Mike, John, Bill... the son of God was just ordinary people like us in ordinary need. Cheap wine that the common folk drink and that's what he drank for us.

Verse 29 says something really powerful. It says: So they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. They put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch. How odd is that?

Now picture with me, because in a lot of the paintings that we see of the cross it has him really, really high up but actually, that's not how it would have been. His feet would have been only about three or so feet off the ground. So it is not up as high as you're picturing. All it would have taken -- they would get a branch that had the stems on it in such a way that they could stick a light sponge in it, put it down and just lift it up so he just could have to get it up to his lips -- wet his lips. It wasn't like he was able to guzzle something; it was literally kind of wetting his tongue and wetting his lips. It is very important that you see that it is a hyssop branch.

I want to read something to you in Exodus chapter 12. And listen, this is when I'm always hoping that somebody is new to Bible study so that they can get their appetite whet for the wonders of the Word of God. Now the Old Testament and the New Testament go together and are so beautifully fulfilled in Christ. Exodus 12, I want to read verses 21 and 22 to you.

It says: Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your plans, and kill the Passover lamb." Verse 22, very important! "Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out the door of his house until the morning." Very, very important!

So in that first Passover -- now listen. Did you remember when we read... somebody's just getting tuned in with us so you do not know we're in John chapter 19 but we've already been told in this scene that it is in verse 14 of John 19: Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. All throughout -- if just in case you think we're borrowing too much on this or thinking too creatively, listen -- John has from the very beginning presented Jesus as the Lamb of God. It is the first proclamation made at the sight of him. "Behold the Lamb of God!"

So here it is, this hyssop branch. Now please notice with me exactly where the hyssop branch is dipped into the blood and put in the doorway because it is overhead and then it is down the sides. I just want for a moment, I want you to get a doorway going with me, get the posts of a doorway going with me, get the frame in your mind and then I want you to see the blood right up here and then I want you to see it here and then I want you to see it right here because it is depicted perfectly in a cross.

So they lift it up to the mouth of the son of God and he brings it... he receives it to his lips. Even David saw the symbolism of the hyssop in Psalm 51, I believe it is verse 7 -- yes! Psalm 51, verse 7, David after his sin, such grievous sin against God, he said these words, "Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean, wash me and I will be whiter than snow."

Hyssop has no cleansing power. There's -- why would you cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean? Something about hyssop that makes you clean; David knew it was the sacrifice -- it was that it was dipped in the blood, that it was the only way that the angel of death would not come over and consume him. This is my salvation that you would cleanse me with hyssop; that you would cover me in the blood of the lamb. Now I want you to imagine this with me. Turn with me to Luke chapter nine and I want to show you something. Luke chapter 9.

Anybody glad to be in the scriptures today?

Audience: Amen!

Beth: We are talking in our present series about the power of the cross. We've been talking in this series about how hard it is to finish a long term work we've started. Anybody? That all of us, we all held up our hands, all of us know what it is like to have something right in the middle that we just can't see it all the way through. And we're studying Christ as not only the author of our faith but the finisher of our faith.

Now watch this, Luke 9:28-31. And Lord, please help me not teach the passage and just read it for a change! Okay, 28: Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him, (this is Jesus) Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. Verse 29: And as he was praying -- this is the Mount of Transfiguration if you're a little familiar with this. As he was praying the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing became dazzling white and verse 30 and 31 say this: And behold two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure -- just look at this -- which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Okay, this Mount of Transfiguration. They go up on this mountain with him and they see

him become like just dazzling white. The appearance of his face changes. They look up and like, Moses and Elijah are there talking to Jesus for crying out loud. It does not get better than this!

[Laughter]

But they say very specifically what they're talking about. Matthew's gospel mentions that they're there and that they hear them but it doesn't say what they're talking about -- Luke's gospel does. This is why you compare gospel to gospel and book to book because they'll tell you one clue that the other one doesn't. So he tells us there in Luke... they talk about his departure.

The New Testament was inspired in the Greek language. In Greek that word, you look it up -- you can do your study, go find it for yourself. That word departure is the Greek word exodus -- exodus. Just like you see it in the book of Exodus. It would say this: Who appeared in glory and spoke about Jesus his exodus. Does anybody love that besides me? So just in case you're thinking we're making too big a deal of this, it can't be this intentional. I just submit to you it could not be more intentional. When we see him face to face, we will not say, "You know what? We made too much out of it."

[Laughter]

It's good but listen, really, our imaginations went a little bit wild. We're going to kind of go, "Listen. We should have thought a whole lot bigger." Amen? A whole lot bigger! So here's what happens now. It says in verse 30: When Jesus had received the sour wine -- hold up -- there are other times in the other gospels, like the gospel of Matthew and Mark, both talk about a moment just before the crucifixion -- this is really important, stay with me here -- just before the crucifixion when Jesus is offered wine to drink and he refuses it.

So he's almost there; like he's this close. It is finished now. Why now after he's gone -- it would have to be the last thing he has to suffer. Okay, he's thirsty. He's been through worse than that in the last hours. Why in the world now? Because he is fulfilling -- he is up to something of profound significance. This time he receives the sour wine and he says, "It is finished."

Why does he take it? Someone might reason and these would all be exactly right. He did it to fulfill scripture just like it says. Absolutely! We'd see it in Psalm 22:14 and 15 where it says: My strength is dried up. My tongue sticks to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death -- when he is so thirsty. Psalm 69:21: They gave me poison for food and

for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink. Yes, yes, yes! Fulfillment of scripture -- yes!

But I just want to pitch out to you that something else could be going on here. It says to us that he cries out -- when Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished."

But in all three of the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke -- all three of them say whatever he said right here he said in a loud voice. All of them are explicit that what he said right here he said at a loud volume. Here's the beauty of it. Matthew doesn't say what he said it just says it was loud. John's gospel you set it next to it and John says exactly what came out of his mouth. So we know that he took the wine to his lips, moistened his mouth, and then he said in a loud voice, "It is finished!"

I just wonder, do you think it was so he could wet his mouth and be nice and loud? I think he meant to split the heavens in two. I think he meant for there to be such a peal with the sound of his voice that it would be unforgettable. I think the only reason he may have taken that wine to his lips was to moisten his mouth where he could take a nice deep breath and yell out for anyone to hear that was listening and were there ever a crowd of angels over their head.

The Word of God says in this fabulous, fabulous portion of Colossians, it says that he literally, right there made a spectacle -- made a spectacle of the angels -- made a spectacle of Satan.

Listen -- they were all going like, "We've done it! We've done it!" They're just about to throw their confetti when he cries out, "It is finished!" He does not mean it is done -- He doesn't mean that it is over. He means it is complete; from A to Z that word "it is finished" means accomplished. It is one word and it means in Greek accomplished, the entire work of redemption. This is where I'm going to tell you that in the Greek it is a present tense and that means it is finished. It will always be finished. And it cannot for any reason be unfinished!

[Cheers & Applause]

Never! Never! The glorious plan of God because it says in Genesis from the very beginning, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" and then we get all the way to Revelation and it is chapter 21 where it tells us there is a new heaven and a new earth, and all that gets accomplished when he reaches out his hands on that cross. They pull his hands back all the way from east to west, those outstretched arms. He is the alpha and the omega, and he is the beginning and he is the end. He is the

fulfillment of everything from Genesis to Revelation. And all our sins have been separated from us as far as the east is from the west. And girlfriend and guy friend, everything you need is finished -- it's been done! It's been done! Everything we need to be forgiven, completely cleansed, redeemed, renewed -- used by God to his glory and to produce much fruit. Everything was finished.

That one horrific day, nothing is lacking for you to live the life that you were planned to live before the foundation of the world. Nothing is lacking! Nothing! Not the moment you received what God did for you on that cross, you received that finished work and nothing is lacking, everything is accomplished -- everything that redeems what you've been through, everything that redeems you.

I just kept thinking to myself because I come from such a pit of sin, because it is finished -- I'm not. Because it is finished! Look at one another and say, "Because it is finished you're not." I'm going to say it to you.

[Audience repeats.]

Because it's finished you're not. You have not sinned so much that he can't forgive you. You've not gone so far he cannot reach you. You have not sunk so low that he cannot lift you. You have not stayed so long that he no longer knows you. You have not said so much that he has nothing else to say to you. You have not sold your soul until he cannot redeem you. You have not destroyed so much that he cannot rebuild you. You have not hated so much that he cannot love you. You have not been dead so long that he cannot raise you.

And because it is finished, we are not finished.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Oh, boy! Beth, bless you.

Did you grasp that? Did you fully grasp because it is finished? The work on the cross is finished in the payment process but not the transforming renewing, restoring process because that work is finished, his work in us...

Betty, his work in us is never finished. And you can never fall too far, run too great a distance seemingly away from the presence and will of God to go beyond that love and that grace, that redemptive power to restore. You can't be dead so long that he cannot raise you to new life.

Father, thank you for that reality. May everyone listening and watching hear it from you, from your heart; in Jesus' name. You want someone to pray with you? You dial that number. It's always there not only because someone cares and we care but because he cares so much. There's someone who can help you understand all he offers. Don't hesitate to call.

Then I want to say to you and I really pray you grasp this as personally as I can communicate it, there are right now thousands and thousands of children and women and yes, little boys who have been trapped, traded, sold, as an object of individual selfish sexual gratification, addiction pursuits, bondage and they're being held captive.

It is not something they chose, it is not an occupation, it is not a way of life, they were sold into it or they were captured and dragged into it and by the grace of God we can rescue them. I want you to listen to just this series of statements, the story of girls sold and trafficked.

On the mission field:

>> I know I once was a child.

Some still say that I am.

But what I remember of it has been smothered by the darkness I know now.

Look at me! Not past me!

My life is not mine.

I'm owned yet I'm disowned.

I can hardly breathe.

My mind is shattered into a thousand pieces -- shattered!

There have been times, eight times a day at the hands of strangers -- over 2500 times this year -- at the hands of sick strangers.

Please... someone rescue me!

Put me back together.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Twenty-five hundred times, basically plundered, raped, sold.

Betty, it's hard to understand that these things happen but they do and it is not by choice. It is not something that they chose in any way. They want to be freed from it and they can be because God has placed us with wonderful missionaries who have literally planted their life in the midst of this pain and suffering to, in a very personal way, put the arms of love around these people.

And what they're asking us to do, Betty, and I know there may be some viewers who say, "I wouldn't mind going over there and spending months or years of my life to help them."

And the workers always say, "We don't need tourists, we don't need onlookers, we need the wherewithal to continue doing what God put in our heart to do because it works."

So Betty, we know that if we'll help these mission workers and these committed to rescuing those who have been trapped in the sex trafficking. We can set them free, we can give them a future and teach them how to make a living and literally get them out of this bondage.

Betty: James, my heart was really touched listening to that young lady in a desperate call for help; sensing and feeling that maybe there isn't any help out there. I want her to know there are so many more like her. I want them to know help is on the way if you'll help us help them. Please! They're desperate, they're hurting. They don't know anything else in their life but that and the tragedy of it. I want them to know hope and joy and peace and the love of Jesus that we demonstrate when we reach out to them.

James: Well, Betty it is obvious that our viewers have said in almost a united expression of love that you want to rescue them. I've told you every time we have brought this to your attention that when we first brought it, we were afraid church people would say, "We don't want to hear about that. We don't want to know that!" And we actually stepped out almost where angels fear to tread because God showed us his heart and the heart of those mission and rescue workers.

So we brought it to you and you said, "Thank you for showing us what can be done. What love can do!" And you've made it possible for us to expand the work.

Now think about this and I'll always start right with what I call the bottom line. It takes \$128 to rescue a child, either before they get them or get them out, that's the average cost. So I'll always ask you if you can rescue one do it. But remember you can break that down and give a portion of it. But everyone needs to do something; it's not like you say, "Well, I hope somebody does it." You're the somebody. You really are the answer to the heart cry and the need by just doing what God put in your heart.

We have to raise over \$760,000 for this year's emphasis and we've got to raise over a quarter of a million dollars to finish restoring and rebuilding the *LIFE* Center in the Ukraine that burned. So we know we've got to have a miracle expression of love, over a million dollars.

We have some special gifts for you. Betty's story has transformed religious people who were not free. It is an incredible -- this is the story of her journey in life and in Christ. And then the Life Application Study Bible; we always want to place something in your hands that will bless you.

Remember this, \$1280, we can rescue 10, and we've got the beautiful commemorative bronze that shows you the love of God for children and for people that need help. Please go to the phone or go online and make the gift God put on your heart.

Now remember, this is the last week now in this emphasis and we really need a miracle outpouring of love. Thank you so much for your help! Thanks for calling.

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.

This is the last week so please call, write, or make your gift online!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I hope you'll make the \$1280 gift if you can. Remember, this is actually a child in Romania that was living under ground in the sewer and was rescued. Our daughter Rhonda held this child and we have that picture. This is a wonderful expression.

Betty's book will be a tremendous blessing to you because she understands the joy of finding freedom and we know the joy of giving it to others in Jesus' name. Thank you so much for your help.