

2/18/14
Week 8: Water for Life
John and Stasi Eldredge

James: Hey! Is this fun? Let me ask y'all something. Is it fun being here in this studio? Do y'all like being here?

[Cheers & Applause]

Now we normally will tape programs on Tuesday nights. We'll do several with several guests; so you'll just have an incredible time together. You're going to like it. As a matter of fact, you'll want to get all of these DVD's and CD's of the *Awaken Now* Conference speakers. When you see Beth Moore and Andy Andrews and Mike Huckabee sitting out there with their mouth open listening to the speakers... and when Beth says, "I have never heard anything like this in my life!" -- You know it is something good! And then when Beth is one of the speakers and Huck -- and all the others! You'll want to get these tapes because God wants us to wake up and he is speaking truth to us.

I'm James Robison; Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. This audience is just a blessing. Our guests, John and Stasi Eldredge. We talked to John about his book. Do you remember years ago he wrote *Wild at Heart*? Now he's taught us about the beauty of holiness; it is not ugly, it is not smugness, it is not tradition, it is not ritual but relationship.

And Stasi kind of identifies with Betty. Betty's book, which so many of you have enjoyed, *FREE TO BE ME*, Stasi wrote about it, *Becoming Myself*. Embracing God's dream of you -- not just for you but of you. You like that!

Betty: I like that! Yeah!

James: Well, John is here with Stasi because he loves Stasi and he loves watching God work in Stasi and she loves God work in him. He works in both of their lives and their family. Would you welcome Stasi Eldredge and her husband John?

[Applause]

Did you struggle with you, and who you are ever?

Stasi: Absolutely! Of course! I am alive so I'm a human being. But particularly women -- one of the core issues that every woman struggles with is identity and who am I? Who am I supposed to be?

And then God comes and says, "You're supposed to be you. On purpose, I made you in all of your quirky uniqueness and qualities on purpose."

And the goal is -- you've talked about this before -- the goal is Jesus. He is the only one that's perfect, we're not going to be perfect. But we are invited to go on this journey with him deeper into his heart. And when we do, we become more our true selves and we like that person.

James: And really, that ain't bad.

Stasi: No! It's not!

Betty: That's difficult for women a lot because they don't like themselves. They don't see themselves as God sees them.

Stasi: I don't know if you have one of these but I have a magnifying mirror that I... yeah! Search and destroy any interlopers. And John, he's like, "Throw it away! Would you please throw it away?"

I'm not ready. I cannot throw it away yet. But I hope to some day when I can actually, truly fully embrace and see myself the way God does. That's the reflection that we're invited to look in, how he sees us.

We're never going to be perfect. That's okay, actually. He's grace for our humanity, so can we. But we do get to grow in becoming and then offering who we are to bring his life in the unique way that he's gifted us to do it.

James: I think women, just by nature or naturally, and it's not healthy, but I think they just compare themselves with other women in the way they look. I don't know any women, no matter how they look that really like the way they look. They just don't. There's something about some other woman has better eyes, better eyelashes, or her nose is better, her teeth are better, her cheeks has got dimples, her hair is better -- it does! And look at her waistline! Oh, look at that! Oh, my God, look at that!

Stasi: Where did you hear all this?

James: I'm telling you. All you've got to do is -- you've just got to be around a woman period and if they're talking and I have two daughters and five granddaughters and I'm telling you, it's just there.

I remember our oldest granddaughter; she was getting ready to go swimming with one of the neighbors. I bet she was not six years old and they put on their little swimsuits, which were quite modest back then, they were actually one piece swimsuit. She says to her little girlfriend, "I'm a little bit chubby." Boy, it was like somebody stuck a knife in my heart. She was just a little girl. And she's so beautiful. And all of them are so beautiful! But see, that's the way they feel.

Stasi: Hey! The first diet I was put on was when I was eight years old, and put on Weight Watchers, and my lunches were celery sticks and Buddig meats. And the message given to women, particularly in the west -- the less you weigh, the more value you have, and it's because of the way we bear the image of God. Women bear the image of God primarily, our essence and our beauty, and it's more than our external beauty but it makes itself known that way. So women have been targeted fiercely throughout time, throughout history, throughout nations, with hatred by the enemy -- not by men, I'm not talking about the hatred of men or hatred of women but by the enemy, fiercely, to destroy that. So we're shamed. So it is a rare woman that can stand in front of the mirror and go, "Honey! Looking good tonight! Yes!" But that's what God is saying.

Betty: And that pressure, sadly, is mostly put on women like that in their appearance and what they look like. Because you get a guy and they get this little tummy on them and they stand up in front of the mirror, "Yeah! Man!"

[Laughter]

"Look at me!"

James: You ain't seen me do that. I don't like it! I'm telling you I don't like it a bit! Don't you remember me telling you, I said, "I got this, Betty, I wouldn't want any women lusting after me."

And she said, "Why don't you go ahead and risk it!"

[Laughter]

Stasi: Ooh, that was a good one! But the thing about women and the assault on our beauty, it transfers, it translates into an assault on who we are as women -- our personalities, our gifting. I just like to say we try to squeeze into emotional, spiritual spanx because who we are, we're terrified that's not enough and certainly the messages through our life have told us that that's not enough. Well, there's healing available and I'm after that.

James: Well, that enemy, by the way, never shuts up. He's always yapping at you. Like a yelping dog.

Stasi: Shut up!

James: That's it! Exactly! That's exactly how you say it.

Stasi: Yeah! In the name of Jesus.

[Laughter]

James: Yes! That's really how forceful you've got to get. I'm not listening to it.

Stasi: But here's the deal. It's hard to fight for ourselves but for us to be able to fight for other people, those we love, and we have to stand up for ourselves in order to bring life to others. So it's a fight worth fighting. It's a life worth living!

John: Let me tell you a great moment in our house. So Stasi used to cringe at any possible message from me that she's unacceptable -- whatever it was -- how the meal went, what movie she likes -- whatever. I remember we were having some argument one night --

James: Not a holy man!

[Laughter]

John: We're having an argument and I forget what I was ranting about but Stasi was reading something and she simply looked over her book and she said, "Sweetheart, I think this is your issue." And she just went back... do you remember what I did?

Stasi: Yeah! He fell on the floor.

John: I fell on the floor.

James: In awe of God!

Stasi: Of happiness! Yes!

John: I was actually so thrilled that Stasi was free to be herself -- free from me, I'm sorry to say, free from the fear of what other people think of you.

Stasi: Which in relationship that allows him the room to have emotions and be mad because before he couldn't because that just meant death to me. No, I'm growing. See, it's a journey. Becoming myself, it's a journey into the woman that God created me to be, and we're all on it because God says he is doing it. He says we are being transformed into the very image of Christ. And I want to pursue that and participate with him, cooperate with him in the process rather than continue in things that are hurting me like shaming ourselves or just leaning solely on discipline to gut it out because it will not do it.

James: It is not any fun.

Stasi: It will kill you.

James: Well, it's bondage. Church folks look like they're in it. So help me, the chain gang marches in to most churches on Sunday and they drag in...

Stasi: Following them home.

James: I'm not scolding, I'm breaking my heart. You don't need to live that way.

Stasi: Right! Because their hearts are hurting. We think we have to put... and we try to put our best face forward.

John: I think one of the biggest turning points in Stasi's life was... we talk a lot about the father wound in our ministry, particularly with men and with women, the impact of a father on a son and on a daughter. But I think when you begin to be honest about,

invite Christ into the mother wound for women and your mother wounding, like sense of value, sense of worth, I think that was a huge turning point for you.

Stasi: It was massive! It was massive. The impact that a mother has on her child, both sons and daughters, is profound.

James: That might not necessarily be positively profound; right?

Stasi: No! It could be fabulously wonderful but it's not going to be perfect because nobody had a perfect mother. Or it could turn your blood to ice because of the effect that she had on you.

But the thing is that the invitation from God is to receive healing there. So much, we kind of hallmark card it: mother... Ah! Pie! I don't know. What other fabulous things do we think of? But it's okay to in love honoring our mothers, it doesn't take any of the honor away to with love and dignity look at the truth of the impact that she played on our lives and then invite Jesus in to come and fill those gaps.

Betty: You're talking about things that weren't necessarily positive that we carry into our own marriage relationship.

Stasi: She has impacted us more than we know.

Betty: Well, this is the way mom did it or this is what mom did. Or this is how she dealt with it.

Stasi: And she comes out. She emerges through us at the most unexpected times. Yeah!

Betty: My mother, bless her heart, I loved her very, very much. Like you said, none of us are perfect. And she did it like her mother did it, so many times. But James, a lot of times would say, "Well, your mother's here!" Like that.

[Laughter]

James: And I would also say -- I would also say, "I didn't marry your mother. I didn't want to marry your mother! And I don't want you to be my mother."

Stasi: Right! On the nose. So for some people the mother wound is the mother of all

wounds. And so to gently, with God, explore the impact and learn that he can actually mother us in the places where we still need it. Because actually, we still need it!

James: That's what the Holy Spirit does. The Holy Spirit is very feminine. He's very, very feminine. Not effeminate but very feminine. By the way, I see in him, and there is nothing sissy about him, but I see in him a whole lot of encourager, Holy Spirit, love of God, encouraging you just like when he said he's proud of you. He's sitting here right now glowing because you're flowing.

Stasi: Ah! He puts his arm on me just to calm me when I get a little nervous.

John: The mother bestows self-worth. The mother bestows whether you'll be cared for and whether you're worth sacrificing for. We were looking at some research where this goes all the way back to the womb. If the mother is anxious, fearful, uncertain, if it is an unwanted pregnancy, the constriction literally...

Stasi: The blood vessels literally constrict and the developing baby does not get enough.

John: And then you wonder where some of the compulsion comes from of I'll never have enough, I'm not safe, I'm not nurtured.

Stasi: I'm not satisfied. And so if you were... the gestation matters. And then all through growing up and if you're a child that was afraid, you didn't have enough, you won't get enough, then it's really difficult to grow into a healthy adult who can really know this God who says he will satisfy us with every good thing. But that's our journey.

James: So God is there to make you, me, all of us what we really long to be inside.

Stasi: The time is right! God needs his women.

Betty: This is not an excuse though to say, okay, go home or get your mom or dad on the phone and say, "Hey, you're the reason I'm like this!" That's not what we're talking about. Because I look back and my mother had some beautiful qualities. I would say, "God let me have those qualities, that heritage." She would tell me about my great grandmother and how her faith was so strong. God give me those things that are good, that were in those people that I was in relationship with.

John: And -- and, I forgive -- I forgive the wounding; right? The journey toward restoration requires the forgiveness. Forgive those who have hurt me including my mom.

James: Let me just say, because there is so much to say, and that's why you write books to try to get more of it where in your own time, your own focal point, your own moment of inspiration or meditation you can read.

The book is in the bookstores. We'd be happy to send it to you. We're asking you to help us give some people some water to save their lives. But no matter where you've been, please, please don't get down on yourself. God is not down on you. Stasi sure doesn't want to get you down on yourself as a mother. That's not the point.

You see, you may have failed as a mother because some things happened in your life. Hey, let's get past that. Don't live there. Don't get bogged down in that. God wants to lift that load. He says, "Take my yoke. Let me get in the yoke with you, it will be light. I've got it. I've got it! It's light."

Father, I pray for every person listening, women who feel so compared, they don't really like a whole lot about themselves but you love everything about them. And the things that hurt or have hurt or where they feel they've missed the mark, you're so anxious to lift them and carry them and direct them. Please God, let them find their way into your arms to lean on you; in Jesus' name.

Listen, you need someone to lean on? You call, we'll pray with you. Then pray God will let you become a strong shoulder for someone else to lean on. Strong arms to hold someone else. That's what Stasi is trying to do; it's what John tries to do.

Would you join us in saying thanks to John and Stasi Eldredge?

[Applause]

I want to ask you to give us an opportunity to send you the *Awaken Now* Conference CD's/DVD's and the book, the transcript messages that you can read, meditate, study. We want to send them to you to say thank you. You say for what? We want to say thank you for giving the greatest gift that we can give and that's life, the life and love of God, not just in word but in deed.

Jesus said, "If you will give only a cup of water in my name you won't lose your reward." What's the reward? The blessing of God in our lives: Christ in us, the hope of glory, glory for God, manifestation of his presence.

Would you give a cup of water? When you see this, just watch, it's very brief, you're going to want to do it.

On the mission field

>> This is Em. At age 67, Em's main pleasure in life is watching her two grandchildren play with village friends. Seeing her grandchildren grow helps soothe the pain of the tragic memory that haunts Em to this day.

[subtitle]

Life must go on. While having no other choice but to gather water from the same pond that took the life of her two-year old granddaughter, the unthinkable happened. Em lost her 13 month old grandchild to a waterborne illness.

[subtitle]

End of clip

In the studio

James: I promise you that those little children that she's referring to and you look into their eyes and you see them getting the dirty water and I'm not exaggerating when I tell you they capture my heart. They not only touch my heart, they capture my heart because they really have captured the heart of God. He really loves them. And you and I are on this earth, the revelation of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. We reveal what life looks like when God's god and when his love's in our heart. That sweet grandmother, she's ordinary, she's poor, she's real poor.

Poor in the United States is not anything like what poor is anywhere else. We give our poor people a cell phone. And that's fine; it's probably not the best use of how you help people. And we teach them to be dependent upon us.

These people, Betty, they don't even have any water for their children. And you know, when you look at them, they're not looking for somebody to bring them a toy, they

were playing just holding hands. I wish the church would hands. I wish the family of God would put the arms of God around a hurting world, one child at a time, one village at a time.

We've been 50 years in marriage and ministry and there's nothing we've ever done that gives us greater joy than giving life to families like that. We want to drill them a well. I want you to see those children that were reaching down in that dirty water. I want you to see them getting water that's clean and they want to splash and play in. And that's their water park, just splash a little water. Whole villages rejoice because they've got something that we take for granted. We take too much for granted in the blessed countries.

Sometimes it seems that our blessings cause us to forget the source of the blessings. But I haven't and I don't think you have. Betty, I don't think our viewers have. I think our viewers would want to give that village a water, and many others, give them a well. And we're going to, by the grace of God with your help, drill 500 wells to be an answer to the prayer and hopes of a grandmother.

Betty: As I watch this grandmother – I'm a grandmother, we have five beautiful granddaughters and I just can't even imagine. I know that grandmother must say, "This shouldn't be. This shouldn't be." And it doesn't have to be if we will reach out, drill these water wells, so they can at least have a chance, an opportunity to not have to take in that old diseased water, but fresh, clean, pure water. Let's reach out together and do that!

James: I want to ask you to go to the phone, or go online, lifetoday.org. Take your bankcard right now.

Please, father, touch hearts to express your heart and your love. In Jesus name.

Please, just dial the number. Go get your card. Say, "I will not be distracted from this."

I can make a gift of \$48 and give ten people water the rest of their life. Or \$144 and give 30 people water. That's how it breaks down, because \$4,800 will give a village water. Could you give that?

Did you know there are people that tell us, as much as anything we've ever done, drilling a well, and some say we make a commitment to drill several. I thank God,

we've had a couple of people in the last couple of years that drill ten wells. You say, "How did they do that?"

God blessed them and they said, "We're blessed to bless." But wait a minute. The \$48 to help those ten people – How big is that? Till the ten people represented by those the grandmother just talked about. Those precious little eyes look so sweet. Let them see the eyes of God.

Dial the number, use your bankcard, go online. Make the gift. If you write a check make it to *LIFE*.

We're going to send you the *Awaken Now* CD's, or the DVD's. You'll see all the information. This conference, we're told, is one of the most powerful visitation of the power of God people ever saw. You're going to hear these truly anointed speakers and you are going to be lifted in the presence of God

We want to say thank you by blessing you with spiritual water and life. So simply ask for these tapes, CD's, and DVD's and the wonderful book with the messages, and know you're giving water.

The beautiful glass art piece, the collectable, we send it to those of you who'll make that special gift. Thank you so much for going to the phone or going online.

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 demonstration 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 twelve different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for 5 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 the *Awaken Now* audio series, a once in a lifetime gathering of 23 anointed speakers proclaiming a powerful message for every believer in God's kingdom.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request *Awaken Now* on both audio and video, along with the companion book containing the speaker's sermons and encouraging messages.

Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4,800 to help sponsor a complete well and be sure to request our new commemorative sculpture glass statue, "The Blessing."

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: I really pray that we can send you this beautiful art piece, this glass sculpture. That's a beautiful little boy! I'm amazed at how these artists can do this -- and of just glass! A little boy reaching out to bless or to receive a blessing -- maybe to get water. I hope you'll help us drill a well.

Make that special gift and we've got the wonderful *Awaken Now* Conference DVD's and CD's.

If you would like to have Stasi's book, *Becoming Myself: Embracing God's dream of you*. That's even bigger than for you! That almost says I've got to do something. No, it's of you! It's beautiful! We'd be happy to send it to you. It's in the bookstores. You can get it online. But we'd be glad to send it to you if you'll just help us give some water.

Join us in saying thanks to John and Stasi again for being with us.

We love y'all! Appreciate you! Thank you for being here. You did really good! Give me five! You did good!

Didn't she do good? Good!

Thank you! God really does love you a bunch!