

3/24/14
Week 13
Keith and Sheila Craft #1

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm Betty and this is James. We've got some of our long time, special friends with us.

James: We've got a couple that have impacted me since they've been together. And Keith actually went with me to city-wide crusade in Mexico City. He was with a team that he had, feats of strength, and they could do them, Strike Force; and it was just great. He's now pastor of Elevate Life Church. I just love the video spot that comes on every week here in the Dallas/Fort Worth area -- we've got 6 million people in this whole metroplex -- and there he is right after Joel Osteen goes off of his program, and he's standing there by Keith and he's inviting everybody to go to this wonderful church, Elevate Life in Frisco.

Well, Keith Craft is the pastor -- and he is a great leader of men and women and families -- and his wife, Sheila, are with us. Would you welcome Keith Craft and his wife, Sheila to *LIFE Today*?

Good to see you, buddy!

Keith: It's an honor to be with you.

James: I almost got the policeman out here to bring his handcuffs and put them on you. But you broke them -- was it about a week ago, you broke them again at your church?

Keith: A couple of weeks ago.

James: You still have scars on your wrist.

Keith: I do have some scars but I have to be honest, this is from my dog.

Sheila: He has swollen fingers from the handcuffs.

Keith: Me and my dog got into it a little bit.

James: Well, you amazed -- everybody pushed him to do all this stuff!

Sheila: Yes! We were so proud of him being our pastor, and he's 54, that he could still do that! Yes!

James: You still look good! I came out to preach for him some time ago, last year I guess, I thought, this guy looks like he just left the gym. I'm thinking, I want to go back and get in my car. But you've written a book, you've done a lot to teach leaders, and even corporate leaders and speak to businesses; if somebody wanted to communicate with you and say what if we wanted Keith to come and address some kind of a men's leadership, whether it is corporate or in a church setting, do you have a web site they can go to?

Keith: They can contact us at KeithCraft.org and we'd be glad to do that. We've spoken, really, in some of the largest corporations in America; most recently Amdocs, \$3.5 billion company. They're based out of Israel. They brought 250 of their leaders to Atlanta and I joined them there and we taught them servant leadership -- that's what we did. Not just leadership, but really servant leadership; that everything starts by serving.

James: It really does. The book that he's written that's out right now is called *Your Divine Fingerprint: The Force that Makes You Unstoppable*. There's no pompousness in that -- that's not arrogance. In order to be unstoppable, like move mountains, part the sea, that's a supernatural power. So if the gates of hell do not prevail it's because there is a strength beyond ourselves. It is not mighty men with muscles, even though some may have that, there is a strength that goes far beyond the physical. When you talk about your divine fingerprint, your dad had some effect on you in that regard.

Keith: He did. He was actually one the original C.S.I. guys before they were called Crime Scene Investigators. He was a policeman, a detective with the Dallas Police Department. My dad was the first guy up in the Texas Book Depository after the J.F.K. assassination. He found Lee Harvey Oswald's rifle, he found his chicken box; he was the first man on the scene.

So growing up in a home like that, I grew up with this awareness. In fact, I had an older brother, when we got in trouble, my dad would say, "Who did it?"

We never said, "Not me." Ever! We never said, "I didn't do it."

Because the powder would come out. "No, that's your fingerprint."

[Laughter]

I can remember, James, being about 10 years old and he took me to the -- this is the first real strong remembrance I have. He took me to the Dallas Police Department; he was actually fingerprinting me. I remember looking up at him and I said, "Dad, why do you fingerprint people?"

He said, "Well, to identify them at the scene of a crime."

I remember asking him this question, "Is that why we have a fingerprint? So we can be identified for something wrong that we've done?"

And my dad really didn't have an answer to me. He said, "That's just what I do, son." So we were in what I would call the bowels of the Dallas Police Department and there was a thousand files; it looked like it went on, at 10 years old, for miles and miles of file cabinets.

I said, "What are all of these file cabinets?" And this is before the big computers and everything.

He said, "Well, this is where we keep records of people's fingerprints that have committed crimes. We take their fingerprint to match them against somebody that's perpetrated a crime."

Well, when I was 14 I was sitting in a church. The pastor said, "Look at your hand." He said, "Did you know that you have a fingerprint that nobody else has?"

Of course, I knew that but that was the first time when I can remember, at 14 years of age, where God actually spoke to me and said, "To leave an imprint that nobody else can leave." And that really --

James: Say that over. I think it's important for us to hear that. I said something to this audience before we came on the air that if we have kingdom weight, gravity, God influence, we will leave an imprint. I wasn't even thinking about what you're coming out to talk about. But we're supposed to make an imprint on planet earth that God wants made -- really, that we make uniquely.

Keith: Absolutely! Well, again, forensic science for the last 100 years, really until the last 10 years but I'll say 100 years before the last 10 years, the only thing they've known to do with a fingerprint is to identify somebody at the scene of a crime.

That day in that church, literally the Lord spoke to me and I can remember, Sheila and I met when we were 15 and we'll get to that in a minute but when we met at 15, this was my speak -- the very thing that I'm speaking to you right now -- that God's given us this fingerprint that nobody else has, and that nobody has ever had in history, that nobody in the future will ever have so that we can leave an imprint in the world that nobody else can leave.

I can pick up this cup right here and not think one thing about it. I can think, I'm taking a drink and I can drink but when I set that cup down my fingerprint is on that cup. We don't consciously think about the power that's literally at the end of our fingertips that's this divine fingerprint that God has given us that's a natural/supernatural representation of what I call the glory of God that's in us.

Here's what's so cool. By 1984, genome research, everybody began to hear about D.N.A. -- we'd never really heard about it before. It changed the criminologist's world because they were able to identify somebody now not just by fingerprint but by their D.N.A. by a strand of their hair, etc. What we discovered through genome science was this, that 99% of our D.N.A. is all the same. There is only a one percent difference between everybody that ever has been born and everybody that ever will be born; that 1% that you have that nobody else has.

One day I was reading the Word of God and the longest prayer that is recorded in scripture that Jesus prayed is in John 17. And in the 22nd verse he says, "God, you've given me your glory. Now I give it to them."

Now I was raised in church but I'd heard that I'd been given the glory of God. I'd heard that I needed a savior. I'd heard that I was a sinner. I heard that I needed the fruit of the spirit. I'd heard a lot of things in church but I'd never heard that Jesus, one of the main reasons he was put on this earth was to give us the glory that had been given to him by God, and that that's a deposit in each one of us.

And in the book I talk, James, about that I believe that one percent that you have that nobody else has and that nobody's ever had is a deposit of God's glory that the world has never seen that is evidenced by your fingerprint that the world has never seen. So I

correlate that in the book and how I believe that each one of us, because we are sons and daughters of the most high God.

Go all the way back to Genesis one. He said, "Let us make man in our own image." And the first act of God was he blessed us. And he blessed us... we literally have to unbless ourself. He blessed us to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and to have dominion. If we don't realize how powerful that our fingerprint is and how powerful that this one percent in each one of us is, then the world will never know what Jesus' prayer was. And that is, "God make them one so that the world will know that you sent me into the world."

Well, you know what? If I don't know my fingerprint and the power of my imprint in your life how can we ever come together as one? That you have a deposit of God's glory that I need, that I have a deposit of God's glory that you need, and if any two of you can agree as touching anything on earth, my Father in heaven will make it happen on earth. That's the power of your divine fingerprint.

James: And that agreement starts with an agreement with God and one another. Because even when Jesus started in that prayer in John 17 he said, "I pray they'll be one with you as I am."

And Jesus said, "I never moved where I didn't see the Father move." That's why he did everything in the fullness of time. He couldn't manipulate the father. He waited to see where the father looked, where he was moving.

We need to learn to do that. We focus on him, we want him to move us, we want to move with him. So our oneness starts with him. Lord, we want to know your will. And then as we come together in this -- this is supernatural -- let me tell you. The supernatural power of people in the family of God becoming a healthy connected body submitted to the head. I'm telling you, the world is waiting to see that manifestation of Jesus; that's where we're built up into the fullness of the stature of Christ, which is what Paul talked about when he was writing to the Ephesians.

You started -- by the way, this book is phenomenal. As a matter of fact, I'll tell you what. I'd love to send it to you just so you can track with it. But you really had a miracle start.

Now we're actually going to talk to this beautiful couple even in another program because we want to talk about marriage and family and leadership and about the

fingerprint that is unique with us. But you nearly died when you were just a little baby.

Keith: Well, I actually did die; I was pronounced dead. I was dead for over an hour. It's documented. It was on the front page of the Dallas Morning News. We tell the story in the book. It was on Thanksgiving Day 1961 where my picture and the picture of my family were right on the front page of the Dallas Morning News. It says "A Thanksgiving Blessing."

Basically, the byline underneath that picture says that "Mr. And Mrs. James M. Craft will give thanks this year because their son Keith Craft suffocated to death in a plastic bag but was brought back to life." So it gives credit to where to where credit is due and that is ultimately to God. So after the ambulance was dispatched to come to our house that had a flat on the way, a fireman picked up the call and E.R. Coffman who was the fireman that was on duty came to our house, 4416 West Clarendon in Dallas and he said, "How long has he been like this?"

And my grandmother said, "Well, for over an hour."

He said, "Ma'am, there's just not anything we can do but we'll try."

They tried oxygen. They tried mouth to mouth resuscitation. Nothing worked. They pulled the sheet over me, pronounced me dead on the scene. And it was at that point that my born again spirit-filled Mamaw looked up and she said, "God, you're the giver of life. You sent your son Jesus and that same power that raised Jesus from the dead can raise this boy from the dead."

And she had no longer gotten those words out of her mouth than literally, the sheet blew off of me, my eyes popped open and the fireman, literally --

James: Thank you, God!

Keith: Yeah, absolutely! The fireman jumped back. My Mamaw began to rejoice in the Lord. They took me to the doctor. My doctor was a pediatrician named Dr. Crane. And when they found out that I had not breathed for over an hour he said, "Well, we know for sure he will have brain damage then."

Of course, that's always -- that's my excuse. If you don't --

James: She just sadly confirmed it.

Keith: Absolutely! She majored -- in college, she majored in elementary education and learning disabilities. And we said this is what makes this work.

[Laughter]

But no, that's really true. But it is a miracle. And again, I live with -- I think through that story of growing up that way, knowing that God had literally raised me from the dead, I did feel special. I know that may sound hard to people -- it may be hard to hear for some people that don't feel special.

But here's what I can tell you. You don't have to go through a death experience to feel special because Jesus went through a death experience so you could be special. But it is important that everybody know that they have this fingerprint that it's up to them to know how special that they are and that God sees them as special. The book is about how to discover, how to develop, and how to deploy that fingerprint into the world.

James: One of the things that I... and I really... there is a lot of times I like to kind of be sure you're listening. It is like if I get your hand here. But you need to understand how special you really are no matter what you feel about yourself. This precious girl that I'm married to, you can't believe how "not special" she felt. She was so shy that people thought she wasn't smart. You know what I've gotten to do?

Betty: I thought I wasn't smart. [Laughing]

James: I've gotten to spend years pointing out and praising how brilliant she is because she is, and how special she's been to me, to people who know her, to our children and our grandchildren. And I think there are so many of you that just, you need to hear that from God. You want to hear it from somebody. I'm trying to be that somebody like I try to be for Betty. You just need to know you're really special.

I want you to tell this and we'll have to do it briefly because we're going to pick up on it on the next program. But when you all started dating at 15, we started at 15, and God led me with wisdom way beyond a 15 year old. But you told her when you told her that you cared about her, that you thought you knew what it would take.

Keith: You tell them!

Sheila: When we first started dating he sat down with me and he said, "Okay, I want

you to know that before I ask you to go steady with me there are two things that you need to know."

So he took a piece of paper and he drew a triangle. And he put God at the top, he put my name on one side and his name on the other side and he drew two arrows. He said, "If you'll be your best for God and I'll be my best for God I believe we can meet at the top if we'll always put God first, and that we'll have a good relationship."

And he said, "The second thing," he said, "I want us to always communicate." He said, "Are you in agreement with that?"

I thought, well, I like to talk.

[Laughter]

Communication, that's sounds great to me. Because at 15, I don't know if I really understood what he was saying. Of course, I was a believer and I wanted to be my best for God but to really have that understanding.

So he was really, in our relationship, he was establishing core values even though he didn't understand that at that age but that was what he was doing, saying, "We both want to be our best for God and I always want us to communicate because it says in the word, 'Don't let the sun go down on your anger and give foothold to the devil.' So I don't want us to practice divorce because a lot of couples, they break up and they make up and they continue this in their relationship. And really what they're doing is they're practicing divorce. So when we get mad at each other, we're not going to walk away mad; we're going to make sure we talk through it if we have to be on the phone all night long." And that's what we did. We fought all the time, James, Betty! We fought all the time. But you know what?

Keith: But she's like her and I'm like you -- so we fought all the time.

James: We took that verse very seriously about not letting the sun go down on your wrath, don't go to sleep angry. So we never have, we just went three weeks without sleeping once.

[Laughter]

But the point is, something happens in the chemistry of your body, it really begins to shut things down and that root of bitterness begins to fester. Paul called it like a canker

-- like a cancer. "Many are defiled," Paul said writing to the Romans, "many are defiled." So let's get over that.

Look, I'd like to send you the book. Do you appreciate this couple? They're going to be with us and talk more about marriage and uniqueness and how we get along. And let me just tell you again, the Elevate Life Church in Frisco is great. And he's doing a great work, she's doing a great work in leadership, and a lot of young people are in the church. I think it is just wonderful and I highly recommend it to you. You don't have to wait for Joel Osteen to say that to you on the commercial in the metroplex. I'm saying it worldwide: They are sent from God, they have unique fingerprints to show you how unique you are. I do want to send you this book to say thank you.

But here's what I want you to do and I know Keith and Sheila, you're going to love this. We're rescuing precious girls and children from being sexually preyed upon and trafficked -- prisoners! I want you to watch this. Here's the deal. I'm not showing you something that has no hope. I'm showing you perfect hope and help. I'm showing you a miracle that you are to be a part of. I really believe that. Watch closely.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Tonight, there will be children in various parts of the world who will not be tucked into a warm bed by a caring loved one; nor will they experience the safety and security of a permanent place they can call "home." Instead, many will find themselves in streets filled with violence or down alleyways teeming with sex predators searching for their prey.

Once in their clutches, the unimaginable nightmare begins for innocent young children as human traffickers force them into a life of prostitution. For most victims, the inhumane treatment that they receive at the hands of these depraved people produces both physical and emotional scars that will haunt them for the rest of their lives. Others may die in captivity or simply disappear never to be seen again by their loved ones.

It is a known fact that every minute two children will be forced into the sex slave trade. The haunting question is who will become their next victim?

End of clip

In the studio

James: Boy, when I saw that door close on such a young -- young little girl, I don't

know, sometimes I feel like if there's any way I can ever speak effectively enough or even adequately communicate the situation to encourage a response but I don't know how you could not want to reach out and say, "I want to stop that."

They arrested 50 of the predators at the Super Bowl that had brought in girls to traffic and many of them young; and they set a lot of them free in New York City.

Betty, we're working all over the world. In Cambodia right now we want to build a safe house where 24 hours a day, 7 days a week we can bring these girls in.

Here's the thing. Many of the areas we work, we have to use only hidden cameras and we can't even show the girls that we rescue from the face anymore because they will recognize them and they will come and get them and take them back and oftentimes kill them. So we found out we can't let them be identified.

Now there are some places we can. Where you saw them there, we're still safe to let you see the girls we're actually trying to rescue. We can actually show you some that have been rescued because it hasn't gotten to the extent it is like in Thailand where we have the largest rescue center, I guess anywhere, probably on the planet.

It was started by Hollywood producers and workers who watched our program and got a burden and saw missionary efforts and sold everything and went over there and they've never come back home. And they built this house of destiny. Well, we built it - you did. And it's just amazing.

But we can't show those children from the face anymore. You can see them singing from behind in the beautiful home but we can't let you see them because they'll capture them on the streets now because we're training them, we're teaching them to be workers. So it's very dangerous.

But here's the thing, Betty. We can rescue one of these girls, and sometimes boys they take, for \$128. We've got some friends like you who said, "I'll tell you what, we believe in it so much we'll match it." Which means if you give \$128 to rescue one we've got two because somebody just matched it.

Some people say, "I couldn't give \$128." Can you give \$64? And now it's doubled and we've rescued another one.

Then, Betty, we need to spend \$345,000 to build that safe house that would cost a couple million or more here but over there we can do it for that. Betty, I don't know how anyone who could do something wouldn't want to rescue these girls.

Betty: We can't say it any simpler than what James just expressed. We need your help to give these precious children a place, a safe haven. I can't even imagine! We have five beautiful granddaughters, I can't even imagine someone basically caging them up and every day of the week, every night, many every hour, taking them molesting them, abusing them, beating them up and treating them like animals, and then threatening them if they don't do what they're told to do.

We can make the difference. We can get these children out and reach out and offer them hope. They don't see any hope in life.

James: Well, they're going to see it because hope looks like Jesus. It looks like the love of God and it is expressed through people who extend his hands. The missionaries are ready. Let's enable them to be effective.

Would you dial the number, take your bankcard, please, or go online and go to LifeToday.org and say, "Here's my gift." Make the largest gift you can; it will be doubled. If you can possibly help us build that safe house, give a gift of \$1,000 or several thousand, let's do this. Please, whatever you can do, go to the phone, go online; if you do want to mail a check, make it to *LIFE*, but call us please and tell us you're mailing it because we need to know.

We've got some beautiful gifts for you to say thank you and to help you grow in your spiritual life. You're giving to set people free and we're giving to help you live as an overcomer to be a blessing to others.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Human trafficking -- it's impossible to believe but at this very moment innocent children, many very young, are being sold and forced into sexual slavery and exploited in every way imaginable. And someone must save them!

With your help today we can reach, rescue, and restore their hope for a better future. And now a miracle opportunity of a matching grant means your gift of \$128 to help rescue a child will be matched to help rescue two children.

Your \$64 gift will be matched to help rescue one child from the horrors of human trafficking. This year, with your help, we also hope to build a safe house in Cambodia where young rescued girls can find safety, loving care, and direction for a new life. The cost of this safe house is \$345,000.

With your gift, please request *My Daily Gift*, a beautiful new devotional describing the great love of God, who treasures you more than you can imagine.

With your gift of \$128, which today will help rescue two children, you'll receive the side-by-side Bible, which includes the easy-to-read New International Version and the Amplified text with its additional words and insights.

Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,000 to help establish the safe house in Cambodia and you may request our 2014 commemorative glass sculpture, "The Blessing."

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: I hope you'll give us an opportunity to send you "The Blessing" glass sculpture. It's so beautiful! Wherever you display it, it will radiate the light.

We're sending My Daily Gift; it's 100 promises for your every need, these are from the Word of God; the side-by-side Bible to help you grow.

And then today, if you'd like to have it, what Keith has to share is, I believe, a divine gifting and enabling to help you understand your uniqueness on this planet for the glory of God. We'll send it to you if you'd like to have it. And you help us reach out to those girls and those in need, and we'll also send you this if you'd like to have it.

Join us saying thanks to Sheila and Keith Craft, Elevate Life Church. KeithCraft.org if you want to communicate with him. Say, "Hey, can you come speak to our leaders?" If he can, I'm sure he'll work on it. He'll be back with us another program this week and we'll talk about how unique you are.