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Week 27: Water for Life

Brett Baier

James: Thank you! You're great and gracious. Thank you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I are thrilled to have someone from the news that has the kind of heart and attitude, and I believe love and genuine interest in those of us who happen to watch the news. And he actually seems to encourage and atmosphere of reason, and would you believe understanding? And in that setting it is possible for wisdom to be heard and for all of us to be better. He hosts Special Report. He has awesome individuals in the panel who are brilliant, articulate and have firm convictions but they still talk like a family.

He had a family crisis that changed his life and he's holding in his lap, in this incredible book, *Special Heart*, his son. You'll want to hear the story.

Would you welcome Brett Baier to *LIFE Today*?

Brett, good to see you!

Brett: Thank you, James! Good to be here. Thank you, Betty.

James: All right. I love you. I appreciate you. I'm excited about what I sense God has done through a very serious challenge that you and your wife faced. Tell us about it.

Brett: This book came out of a series of e-mails I wrote after we found out that my son had congenital heart defects. He was born perfectly healthy. We were given a clean bill of health. We didn't have any problems in Amy's pregnancy, and the first day was blissful. You're on cloud nine. It was my first son and we'd been given a clean bill of health.

He started turning pale about 20 hours in and they thought it was a bacterial infection. They took him for some tests and it turns out that he had five congenital heart defects, really complicated. Essentially his heart was pumping the wrong way. And he had to have emergency surgery within the first ten days or he would die. And we found that out 20 hours into his life.

So you can imagine going from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows. This journey started there and we then, 12 days later, had the first open heart surgery. And standing over this little baby's body who I didn't think I could love that much at that time but I did, they left his chest open, that's part of the surgery and you look through a clear plastic bandage at a little heart that his surgeon has reworked the way it operates with arteries the size of angel hair pasta and has reworked the whole thing.

And you're staring down in the chest watching this little heart the size of a walnut beat, and you cannot help but praise God that he is alive and that you are moving forward.

So from that and those e-mails, we went through a series of recovery and eventually he came out of it. But part of the surgery, the fix was that a little connector doesn't grow with him. So he had to have other surgeries -- open heart surgeries. So he's had three open heart surgeries, seven angioplasties. He's six and a half years old and I can tell you, James, he is booming off the wall. He is the tallest kid in class. He is just... He's awesome!

I decided I need to put this on paper. So I took those e-mails, that was the Genesis of it and I structured a book about my journey to Washington, meeting my wife, and then going through this. It turned out to be a lot about faith and the power of prayer and how much it means to us. So we thought, we want this to be an inspiration to other people and we're going to donate 100% of the proceeds to congenital heart defect research and treatment.

James: Don't you appreciate that?

Betty: I do remember hearing a little bit about it on FOX. I remember when the announcement came that you had your son and everything. And of course, all the details, I don't think, were brought into it then, but I just remember them mentioning that there were some problems and stuff and my heart really went out to you and your wife, and I began to pray for you.

Brett: Well, I tell you what, it was that kind of interaction. We put it out there because I was -- my wife was in the huddle mode, she wanted to be near Paul and just hunker down. I wanted to make sure everybody knew what was going on so I was the communicator.

In addition to putting it out there I kind of told viewers about it too. FOX told viewers and suddenly, I was inundated with prayers from around the country and around the world, James. It was amazing!

James: And they're watching around the world right now. I want to go ahead and say this to you because Brett has such a love for children. And he'll tell you more and of course, it's really graphically detailed here, but in so many ways it changed his life. And he's going to fill you in on some very specific things about the power of prayer. But get the book. Just get it. Go online and order it today and know that when I do that, I'm not only going to read a great inspirational story and I'm going to find out how Protestants pray for Catholics, how we suddenly realize this family of a perfect father could actually behave more like a proper family. And he's going to tell you about some of the things that he saw.

But let's really be a part of that because I'm telling you, the world is waiting to really see the father clearly revealed through those of us who claim to know him as our father. I want you to get the book. I pray you'll go online and get it today or get to the bookstores and get it because you're going to be helping children.

Brett, you were talking about people praying for you. This one particular thing you referenced was Betty and I, we were led to Christ in the Southern Baptist church down

in the Houston area. You had an interaction with a Southern Baptist pastor. Did you say in Katy?

Brett: Katy, Texas -- Randy White and he just e-mailed me.

James: And that's not the football player Randy White.

Brett: No, no! -- A different Randy White.

James: Randy White, I would say to you, you could make just some kind of Christian. You could really get tackled for God.

Brett: Randy is a pastor down in Katy, Texas. He sent me an e-mail and just said, "I would love to pray with you. I prayed for you already but I'd love to pray with you." And he sent some of the most beautiful prayers that I ended up reading in the hospital with my wife in this little chapel. And honestly, and we are Catholics, practicing Catholics, but that interaction, those prayers really lifted us up in our darkest hour. He sent these prayers that really touched our hearts.

James: Now when you talk about this changing your life, tell us some of the aspects of what happened to Brett and to you and let's say in your family. What happened?

Brett: I think it was eye-opening about the precious commodity life is, number one, and number two, how we're not in control; how you have to give it up, and you have to ask for help.

Just a quick story, so Paul is going into surgery; he is 10-12 days old. We had met a bunch of different families in the hospital in the trenches in the waiting rooms. And one of them, a little girl Maggie was nine months old and she had nine surgeries in her nine months. And the day Paul went in for his surgery, she lost her battle; she died. The family wasn't there when we arrived; and I'd laughed, we'd cried, we had talked about all this stuff.

So Paul goes into his surgery, it's an eight hour surgery. At the end of it we're in the cardiac intensive care unit. The phone rings near the bed. The nurse says, "Please, this is for you." I step away from the bassinet. It is Maggie's mom to call to ask how Paul did in his surgery. So the strength and the power and the grace to be able to do that when your daughter has just died is life-changing because you realize there are people out there that think beyond themselves.

And that's what we started to do is to think beyond ourselves. We got really involved in Children's National Medical Center. We're really involved in congenital heart defect research. One out of a 100 kids is born with a congenital heart defect. There are a hundred people in this room, one of you has a son or daughter with a congenital heart defect; half of those have to be operated in the first year. So if we can help in any way, shape or form, we're going to do it. And Maggie's mom was the grace and beauty and power to be able to do that as really something that's life-changing.

James: I want to just say something to our audience as personally and directly as I can, a couple of things. One, as he described how intricate the surgery was and how delicate it was and how precise everything had to be, I'd just like to say thank you to all the physicians who model in some way the great physician, which was another title for Jesus. So for physicians to wear that same title is an honor and I want to thank you when you take it seriously. I wish all leaders and all people with responsibilities would take their responsibility so serious that it's really about life. I want to thank you physicians and nurses and caregivers, I want to thank all of you.

Then I want to thank all of you who take prayer seriously. I think Brett really made that clear. He's talked about people who are outside his own circle but they got very much in the circle; they got very much into bearing one another's burdens. And I encourage the viewers of *LIFE* to think in those terms because that's the heart of God. And you can do that for others. It really did mean a lot to you, Brett, that that happened and I sense that it inspired you to want to do that for others.

Brett: Of course! And I think it drives me in what I do every day, covering Washington, all the back and forth about little stuff. After you've been through what

we've been through, you realize what's important and hopefully you can say that to people on TV in a way that hey, listen, this fight here is not the big picture and it can kind of give you a sense of something bigger. Going through this, I should point out it is not all heavy and emotional. There's a lot of funny stories in here about my journey to Washington, my early days, meeting my wife and the craziness of courting her. But there is -- I just did the audio book and I sat down and read it and it's my voice.

There are times where it was very emotional to get through but I never really read the book like that and I realized how much faith is in here. It's in those e-mails that I wrote at the time and you read them real-time in chronology; so you're kind of part of what we went through. It's not easy for the news guy to talk about himself or to talk about our situation but I think it's going to be inspirational to a lot of families. And I know if we sell a lot of books we're going to make a difference with congenital heart defect research.

Betty: And there is a test, you were sharing with us, a simple test that when newborns, that they can do to possibly detect any problems.

Brett: It's amazing. It's called a pulse oximeter and it is a little one dollar test that can be done on every baby. It's not invasive; it's just something they tape on the outside of their finger. And they can tell whether a baby has oxygen problems in the blood. Those detections, if they're not made, a baby can go home and unfortunately, die because it is undetected. Or some 40 year old who is playing tennis and has never had a drink or smoked can drop dead because of a congenital heart defect that was never identified.

James: And could have been detected at birth. Can you request that?

Brett: Thirty-five states require it. There's an effort to get all of the states to require it and it's not there yet.

James: Do you have a web site, Brett, where people can go to learn more about what you're sharing and even find out, let's say, if there are states that don't have it where they can encourage that to become a rule? Also where all parents could get more

information; to be sure that they request it for their child. One of our staff members, one of the musicians that traveled with us, and we did all the stadium and coliseum crusades similar to the Billy Graham crusades, he had a son that had these issues and they had the several surgeries and we've watched him grow up and become a great man and so forth, but they could have lost him. So we know how serious it is. You're talking about simplicity. What's the web site?

Brett: The web site is www.SpecialHeartFamily.com.

James: *Special Heart Family*, which is the title of book.

Brett: And you can learn about obviously the book but it will take you to this spot where it talks about exactly what I'm talking about, the effort to get this pulse oximeter, and other efforts that Children's National is actually leading the way in Washington, D.C.

James: I sense that what happened to you is what should happen to all of us. Our pain, our heartache should inspire us to want to touch others and this is where every person is so important. I sat with a great big former Alabama football player today at lunch and I said, "One of the things I want to do is show everybody how important they are."

Put your hand out here, Brett. I reached over and he's a great old big football player and I grabbed his smallest finger and I held it. And I said, "God wants everybody to know what you must let this little finger know, how important it is to you. It may not be your preacher pointing finger but that little finger is important." And he teared up! And I teared up! Because people do not realize how important every one of you are to the eternal purpose of God.

And sometimes when we feel insignificant and unimportant we suddenly can hear God say, "You're such a treasure. You're so important." I'm telling you, God used that little boy with his head on your shoulder to lead you to put your head on God's shoulder and to show other people they can lean on God too and they can become a

shoulder for somebody else to lean on. You experienced a miracle!

Brett: I did! We did! And we still are. We have more surgeries ahead, more angioplasties ahead but his prognosis is fantastic. It is really an amazing, amazing thing. We feel that a lot of that in our situation had to do with what we put out there in prayer, and the people that we encountered because of that. Amazing stories in there that you -- that looking back make a lot more sense; that there is something bigger in the big picture and that's okay to talk about.

James: Don't you thank God that he was willing to learn life lessons and to let that source of pain become a source of healing, not only for his son, but to say look, I want to help you. Get the book. You can get it online. Isn't it amazing? You don't even have to go to the bookstore. But if you've got one, run! Hitchhike! Whatever you have to do -- go get it! And know that when I get the book, I'm going to get blessed. I'm going to be able to say, "Hey, I know a newscaster that knows truth and loves us and wants to help everybody. And we're going to be a part of it."

Watch the program if you haven't, Special Report in the evenings on FOX News. It's worthwhile. It's really the kind of civil discussions the church needs to have; congress sure needs to. How about we pray for that?

Tell Brett again you appreciate him.

Brett, and all of you here, and all of you at home, you know your son experienced a miracle. You talked about one that didn't. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you had the perfect solution for every challenge?

Well, let me tell you something. Look at this! You're going to see reality but you're going to know in the next moment that we have the perfect solution to the challenges you're about to see. You're going to be excited to know I can be the answer. Watch closely.

On the mission field

>> Every day over 4,000 children die from a water related disease.

>> My name is Bun Toeun. I know mostly I don't have clean water. I use water that everybody uses, even the cattle. I had four children, but two of my boys died. I worked hard to get the money for the hospital, but it didn't matter how hard I tried. My two babies died. My dream is for clean water. If I would have had clean water to drink, then my two children wouldn't be dead today.

>> In the 60 seconds it took Bun Toeun to share her story, 3 more children died from contaminated water.

End of clip

In the studio

James: In 60 seconds! We can be the answer to her heart cry, her prayer... and for the other children.

Betty, we've been able to save the lives of millions of children, their families because our viewers have said, "We'll give you a clean water well." And she is now crying out in behalf of all the others who have their babies, their children.

Betty, I'm thankful to say our viewers are always anxious to step up and say, "We'll give her area, her village, a water well."

Betty: James, what really touched my heart about what she said was she said, "My dream is for clean water." As parents we have big dreams for our children; we want them to grow up strong and healthy, to be successful -- most of all, to love God with their whole heart. But her simple request was, "I want some clean water for my children." She had already lost two of them.

I believe that is something we can help that mother with -- that heartbroken mother, over losing two children already, is to help give them clean water through the water wells. It is a simple request -- not hard to do when we so readily have clean water; we don't even think about it when we go and turn the faucet on and get a drink of water. But every time she goes to that river she thinks about it because she knows already what it's done to two of her children.

James: Well, I'm believing that you'll reach out and touch someone with love, the love of God. Here's what we're asking you to do, help us drill 500 more wells. I can already tell you we have reached 250. That means that individuals said, "I'll drill a well." Or people joined and said, "I'll do my part."

I want to break it down for you. Currently, and I don't know how long this is going to remain true, but we're still able to drill a well for an average -- and it's because of all the cooperation, the resources and the drilling equipment that you have paid for -- you, the viewers. \$4800 is our average cost; that's about what it will cost where she is because of the depth, but that's the average. Could you give a well?

Many viewers, many couples, many individuals, many small businesses, many churches say, "We'll drill a well." Even children do! Can you drill a well? Dial the number, take your bankcard or write a check, make it to *LIFE* or go online at LifeToday.org and say, "We'll drill a well."

If you can't do a well, could you give \$1200 or \$2400 and pray three other people join you or someone else joins you? And we'll have another one.

Here's the key, for \$48 that amount will give ten people water the rest of their life; that's basically breaking down the cost, \$144 -- 30.

We have some special gifts to give you. We even have a little children's book to help them learn the joy of giving. It's one of those little touchy/feely books. It's called *Children at the Well*. We have *Women at the Well* that Betty has put together with 32 devotionals from the women that have been on *LIFE Today*, including our two daughters and the one that's in heaven, our Robin, what she shared. We'll send these to you to say thank you for your help, for your gift to give water.

We're asking you right now to make that call. Would you do it or go online? Please reach out and touch someone with love and say, "We will give you water." "If you give just a cup of water," Jesus said, "you won't lose your reward." What an honor to provide clean water! *Water for Life* and we'll tell them about the water of life; we're

going to show them the love. Thank you for joining us. Thanks for making that call or going online.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day children of all ages 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 effective life-saving demonstrations of God's love you could ever be a part of. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything.

With your gift today, you can help establish and drill 500 new water wells for remote villages impacting over 20 nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10 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 new *Children at the Well* interactive book to help your little ones understand the blessing of clean water, as well as the *Women at the Well* daily devotional with 32 refreshing devotionals for your quiet time. With your gift of \$100 or more you may request this beautiful leather journal to help capture your personal times with God.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well and you may request our commemorative sculpture glass statue "The Blessing."

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

End of clip

On the mission field

Tammy: I've loved traveling all around the world with *LIFE Outreach*, being able to tell the stories of so many people. In many of the places I've gone into, many children

that I have heard stories about have died because of the water that they're drinking. And it really breaks your heart when you go into these places and you hear such stories and you think, "What can I do?"

This is my heart's cry to you to say we need you. We need to continue to drill more and more and more wells so it will give Water for Life to thousands more people just like this all over the world. Please won't you help us? Go to the phone, go online and help us bring life through water to these people.

End of clip

In the studio

James: From the bottom of our heart Betty and I say thank you for your help. I hope many of you will let us send you the beautiful glass sculpture if you'll make a gift of \$1200 or more. We just say thanks. The book, *Special Heart*, Brett Baier -- what a journey! A journey of faith, hope, courage and love -- and of seeing people pray.

Brett, we've got a lot to pray for. It would be wonderful if we would begin to focus our prayers, just like taking a river and releasing power that can turn a turbine and light up a city.

Brett: I'll tell you what, you guys are powerful. To watch that, to watch what your viewers do, that's powerful stuff.

James: I agree! We believe these viewers are a demonstration of what God wants us to be and so are you and the people who joined you in prayer. Tell Brett again how much we appreciate him. Go get the book! Go get the book! And there is the online... there is where you can go and learn about how you can help; that's the web site that Brett talked about.

[Cheers & Applause]