

5/19/15
Week 21 Spring Mission Feeding
John and Sam Eldredge #2
Killing Lions

James: Look, we've got quite a few guys out here. Did you know that?

James Robison here, and Betty, welcome you to *LIFE Today*. John Eldredge is here with his son Sam, *Killing Lions*. Not a hunting book, not an outdoors book but it is about killing challenges and overcoming obstacles and addictions, distractions, and unhealthy attractions that young men face, and women, but this is a father and a son and they're talking about it.

John is a New York Times best-selling author and he's been here many times. He's got great books that just really, I think, have opened people's eyes. John has kind of approached it in a very unique way, very open, very honest, very frank -- blunt to put it plain. That's why a lot of these men and young men are here because John has impacted them. And I'm sure they wanted to meet his son and see the book they wrote together.

So we're going to talk about it; we're going to actually talk specifically about what some of the lions are, what some of the challenges are that Sam brought to dad so he could get not only father's advice but maybe the Father who really is the ultimate Father, and see if that wisdom could be downloaded effectively, and then shared because it took a while for Sam to realize hey, dad, maybe we should do what you suggested, write a book. Because when dad, John, first suggested it, "No."

Then suddenly... you know what happens? Those of us who really, I feel like have what we would call a ministry witnessing heart, it's not like a merchandising heart but a caring heart, when you find something that works and it blesses you and your family, you want to share it. It's like something so special that you want to see if it would mean something to someone else like it meant to you, and that is the reason for the book. Welcome John Eldredge and Sam Eldredge to *LIFE Today*. Glad to have you back, guys!

John: James, Betty, always love being here.

James: John, you've been here a lot. This is kind of your television ministry that we pay for.

John: And I'm very grateful!

James: And I know you mean that, and we love you.

Sam, it is great to meet you.

I'm looking down here at some of the chapter titles. I'm just going to rattle them off: College then what? You were in college when you started asking questions. Interestingly, Sam realized he could actually call someone and talk to them. And he got to noticing that his friends, many of them didn't have a father.

I remember something our daughter Rhonda said the first time she got on a school bus, a public school bus because we lived where we would take her and we'd lived close and she actually walked to some of the elementary schools but this was when she was in middle school and she had to ride a bus. She came home and she was horrified.

She said, "I cannot believe how those kids talk about their family, about their parents! Or about the parent they don't have. I cannot believe it." Because she loved her mom and dad; she loved her family.

Well, here you are in college; you're in a Christian college. You're seeing the lions, you're seeing some challenges and you've got someone to call and it dawned on you while you were talking, a lot of your friends, they can't call dad because we're in a fatherless nation. Because we don't know the father, we have men who should be fathers missing or men who are dysfunctional and don't function like a father.

Let me just look at some of those titles. College, then what? Bouncing checks.

I didn't know that kids in college, until my son-in-law who graduated from Baylor and married our daughter, I didn't realize kids took credit cards and ran debts out the ceiling. I thought a credit card was a plastic check. You paid it every month at the end of the month. I didn't know you could run it out. These kids go crazy so they bounce checks, cards.

And changing the scripts we live by. Back to love, sex, and women -- like it came up earlier in another discussion. Love, sex, and women. Interesting.

Are you willing to touch on that a little bit?

John: We would love to!

[Laughter]

James: All right. Let's just take off. Take off on some of this stuff that you started talking about in college and so forth. And go ahead and touch on that one here in a few minutes. Who is going to go first?

Sam: Well, the conversation started with my job. I had been promised this career that I thought I would be stepping into like a lot of young folks are and instead walked away with the thousands of dollars of debt that a lot of young people have and a career working in a coffee shop. My particular one: I was running errands for a wealthy family, picking up dry cleaning and cat food; not exactly what I had been promised.

So I came to my dad and said, "Really? Like is this what it's all about? Is this what I get to expect? What do I do with my dreams?"

If anything the millennials are a passionate generation. We're ones that if you're going to sell anything to it's got to have a cause. It has to be slavery; it has to be sending dollars to where it goes. You know this. We are a passionate group of people.

James: And you want it to work. And you're willing to work to help somebody.

Sam: Right. We just don't know what the direction is. We're not quite those people that can handle it yet. So we talked about in work becoming the kind of man who can handle your dreams when they do come true; that there is a dignity in small jobs. That was one of the first things that we dove into.

John: It was huge. My first job was as a janitor at a church. I'm curious what your first job was?

John: My first... well, I sold coat hangers. We went around and collected coat hangers, which we could sell for a few pennies. And we got coke bottles and glass bottles, which we used to have; we didn't have the cans. I'd try to get money that way. And my first real job was when I was 12 years old, I went to work every day seven days a week in the afternoon because we had a school that burned so I got out at noon, so I could go to work by one o'clock; I worked in a grocery store. At 12 years old, as a sack boy, then I became the stock boy, then they put me over produce, then they put me over the dairy. I was running everything but the meat department in the store at age 12.

[Laughter]

So don't tell me you can't do something. Nobody told me I couldn't, and nobody told me to hate everybody that had something. So that was a contribution. Nobody messed me up.

John: Well, this is the dilemma that the millennials find themselves in; is on the one hand they've seen some of their peers, you create an app and you're a millionaire overnight. So there's this crazy thing of like, I really don't have to work for my dreams to come true but then we did raise them as the generation of the self-esteem movement. And they were rewarded for everything. Then they come out and they go, wait a second. We've got M.B.A.'s working at Starbucks.

So what we're trying to do is bring dignity back to the small jobs; that God is developing the character in us as young men and women, he is developing character in us so that we can handle it when our dreams do come true. Just restoring that, I think, was huge for you that I'm not blowing it that I've got this low rung job right now.

Sam: It was huge because then there is that dignity for those small jobs; there is that dignity and you're building up who you are.

The next thing that came to mind was where all this money was going; and it happened to be for the girl. I wanted to take her out on dates, wanting to keep a roof over my head, all these aspects of money and how do we handle money well, how do we handle money in pursuit of women well.

And it wasn't very long before we realize that we couldn't actually begin answering questions about the woman until we looked at actually ourselves. And the chapter on identity was huge for me -- it was huge for the book process, it was huge for my life. We ended up realizing that we had to put a pause on the woman chapter and dive into just what had been said over my life, the way that I was living was defined by what people had told me I was. I was an outcast. I didn't fit in in the Christian bureaucracy therefore I must not have a lot to contribute or I shouldn't be a writer. All those dreams that I wanted to be pursuing I didn't feel like I was qualified to.

So it was through seeking God as the Father, seeking out fathering in father figures and rejecting that past identity and taking up a new one as a son, as someone who actually is belonging, that I was able to, man, I moved toward the girl so fast. I moved in career. That changed everything; the whole schism just shifted.

James: In other words, was your discernment sharper when you got those things in place and you kind of say, "I know I'm making a good decision here" even relating to the girl?

Sam: Absolutely. I felt like I'd been living in a cloud. That I was going to drift my way through a decade, honestly. And once that clarity came about who I was, then what I can offer, what I should be spending my time in was completely clear.

John: The story has got a little spice to it as well because he ended up marrying this girl and we love her. We now have daughters having raised three sons; now we're getting daughters and we love it! But Susie actually broke up with you.

Sam: She totally did.

[Laughter]

John: She dumped him hard! She dumped him hard. She dumped him like with a letter describing his aimlessness. And where are you headed in life? And who are you? And what do you want to be? And what are your dreams?

James: What a girl!

John: Exactly! Like she won my respect when she did that because she was calling Sam out to address those...

James: Did she have another good father, by the way?

John: Yes.

James: She had to have this father to have that kind of wisdom.

John: Exactly. Yep. That's where it comes back to *Killing Lions*. Like facing your fears, overcoming the challenges so that you know who you are as a young man so that you can move strongly.

Betty: Don't you think that with everyone that there's the tendency to want to jump from the beginning to the end of the story, so to speak, to the success and leave out the middle? I know in my life, had I had my way, I would have missed so much that I needed to learn and hear from God, and blessings -- that he wanted to bless me.

James: Now your eyes lit up over here when I read that chapter: Back to love, sex, and women. Why? I mean all three of those, love, sex, women.

Sam: Well, I began with the question that most young men I know are asking, what on earth is going on? -- Which is the answer I then gave my dad.

John: Exactly. See, but the problem, James, is that what we're telling these young guys is just don't do it; right? Just don't mess up there with the sex thing, but we're not addressing the issues of the heart. When you turn it and say, "How do you want to take care of her heart? What do you want your effect to be on her life?" It takes it out of just sex; right? Like yes or no and it takes it into a larger context of what love looks like, of what honor looks like, respecting her looks like. What do you want your impact to be on her life? Huge! And as Sam began to talk this way with his peers, like they started responding when it is about the heart.

Sam: Definitely, yeah. Coupled with that peace of identity of knowing who you are and not taking this question of, my life isn't going very well but can you tell me that I'm okay to her -- was huge. Once I knew who I needed to be, who I wanted to be, who I really was, I was able to offer her so much more strength and so much more stability that she had been looking for all along.

John: So much of the porn thing actually has nothing to do with sex. It has everything to do with validation. She makes you feel like a man. If only for a minute or two, she makes you feel strong, powerful. She makes you feel manly.

James: Are you talking about in porn?

John: In porn. The man is taking his...

James: I would say that the biggest thing that happens when people are attracted to these things that shouldn't attract them is the apperency of the appeal that the woman likes the man, wants the man. And men, bigger than sex, is the feeling of being desired.

I didn't know this until this happened to me as a young man when suddenly, I was a leading minister, I was a very strong figure, I was obviously very focused and had deep convictions but I was a very sensitive caring person. And that's attractive to women because they never saw it a lot of times in their father or their husband or their date; and that can become dangerous. And it almost destroyed my life when I felt myself having been a rejected child, given away with an ad in the paper, not having a home, not having a father, and suddenly I'm desired. It nearly

destroyed me. It's destroying a lot of preachers, a lot of churches because that's bigger than sex, being desired. But it's also desirable; a husband wants to know his wife wants him.

Women pretty well know we want them. They don't have to wonder. He wants me -- hey hey, he does! He's after me but they want to be treated like a queen. But men, a lot of times don't feel wanted and porn makes them feel like we're desired.

So you're exactly right, it's feeding something in there that's bigger than sex and it's terribly destructive. If we're not aware of what happens when you're strong you can be vulnerable and can be destroyed by it. I think that's a fact people need to know.

John: Right. And to be able to bring that longing to God and let him speak into it gives you a foundation that then you're not as vulnerable to that stuff.

James: Absolutely. And really, when a girl believes that you love her so much that you won't take advantage of her -- one of the things I said to Betty in our early date life was, "Honey, sometimes I'm going to come on strong. I want you to be strong." Did I say that?

Betty: You did.

James: We hadn't been dating six months. And I said, "You be strong because you're the purest, sweetest thing I've ever known. Stay there and sometimes I may not be asking you to stay there."

She stayed there. Sometimes I did ask her but she wouldn't move. You know what she says now when I put a move on her. She says, "I'm still strong."

[Laughter]

Touch on another one of the areas that you feel like are really, really important because this is such an phenomenal book. You guys really cut to the chase.

John: Well, the 20s feels like the decade of decision making. Doesn't it? All your big decisions are coming at you in your 20s. Who you're going to marry, if you're going to marry, your career, are you going to chase your dreams? The friendship circle you're going to live in for a while, where you're going to live, it feels like one decision after another.

So one of the chapters we dive into is decision making: How to learn how to hear from God, how to seek wisdom from wise men and women. And I think that chapter alone is the price of admission. Young guys feel like it's up to them; don't they?

Sam: They totally do. That's the message the world is telling us, go out there and figure it out yourself and like make the best of it. So that there may be some sort of framework that we could actually apply, that there actually might be some answers; it's a book that's more than just questions. They're all our answers to these questions and it's the invitation on a journey. A lot of these things just have to be discussed. They need to give you like the cut and paste answer to your particular situation.

James: What do you hope when people read the book, whether it's a man, young man or a girl? What do you hope happens? What is the bottom line? You say, "I pray to God this is what happens."

Sam: Yeah, I've been praying "fire" over the book because I had several young friends in mind when I was writing it and I just want the passion of knowing, of clarity, of some direction to really fuel their lives. I would love for that to be the end result of this book. A guy that picks it up, gets some clarity, and lives with passion.

James: And you can live a joy-filled life. Your marriage, you all share very openly about the things that have gone on there; beautiful story, the joy of still having that relationship.

Betty and I have a 50 year journey; 52 years together and in love for several years before we married. And I certainly can say my journey has been the most unblemished of all. I could say she's pretty well, to me, a lot of times without spot and blemish and yet she says, "I want to grow." But let me tell you something, love heals the wounds.

But here's the big deal. It's exactly precisely what they're talking about. We kill the lions by having that father relationship. And it's really, really important for you to understand it's not just because Sam had a father he could talk to. But what he's trying to do is ask the questions and get the answers that everyone needs from a father, and that will ultimately in its greatest form come from the Father, which John continually in everything he writes points to. Because he, like me, we had no father so whatever we learned about fathering we've learned and are learning from the father.

We continue -- I've got grandchildren -- I've got 11 grandkids; fixing to have a great grandchild. So we're going to keep doing this, pointing people in the right direction and you've done a great job.

Would you say thanks to God and to John and to Sam for writing the book, *Killing Lions*? You can go online or you can go to the bookstores and get it. I really encourage, when you go to get a book, don't just get one for yourself. Think about somebody God wants to love through you

that could really use what's in the book. And this, this is not going to like say, "Here's a sermon for you." No, this is *Killing Lions*; that will get their curiosity. What are you talking about? -- The challenges that come to all of us. And I just think you might like it. Because I'm about to read it but I thought you might like it and we'll talk about it. In other words, look for a way to help somebody else with the things you're looking for. We'll send you the book.

We're sending you an incredible book. We're sending you a Bible that's in story form. It's fantastic. We want to bless you. We'll send you this book that literally talks about the human body and teaches about the body of Christ. Phenomenal book!

But also, if you'd like to have us send you this book to say thank you, you say, "For what? What are you thanking us for?" If you will help us give hope to those who think there is no hope. But the hope we offer is not just wishful thinking, it is an absolute fix to the challenge. We want to show you some children, some families that all they need is a hand extended, giving them food and love so they have a future. Watch closely and prayerfully and respond as God directs. Please do.

On the mission field

Announcer: This is Minoo. Here in South Sudan her name means heaven. There's little question that her mom believes this meaning about her and it reflects the dreams and vision for her. But in Minoo's seven short years she has witnessed more heartache than most of us will see in a lifetime.

>> They just came in and started killing people. When the fighting began, my 10 year old son disappeared. I now believe he is dead.

>> I remember how my big brother and I played together. When I close my eyes, I still see the bodies lying on the ground, blood in the sand.

>> We could see our homes burning in the distance, set afire by rebels. For days, we went without food. And for days, we hid in the river, cold and falling ill. We have lost everything. Without your help, we will die. We are completely dependent on you for food.

End of clip

In the studio

James: "Without your help we will die. We're completely dependent upon you for now. We can't make it without you."

The fact is none of us really make it the way we should without God.

Betty, those precious people there were discovered with the need by missionaries who were sent there and set in place by God and because the missionaries know that we, here at *LIFE Outreach* and *LIFE Today* because we've been there for 25 years and we've walked at their side, and in the very pits of hell and pain and misery and death, to reach out with arms of love and join them and they said, "Would you please go back and get people to help so we can stay here and not be empty-handed? And we can offer them life and a future and hope." And we've been doing it. And millions of lives have been saved, and millions of people have come to Christ and we've actually seen countries that were totally destroyed resurrected -- incredible stories of change that need to continue.

Sudan is just a tragic place. So many other places in Africa they have terrible famine and drought and other issues and tension. They don't have the freedoms all over the continent that we have in so much of the United States and the world.

But we have the life and love of God to share, and we can give those people life. Here's what I want you to understand. We have the resources if we have the money to get everything to them and keep everything in place, to continue to produce the food, and to continue to deliver it and transport it. You've paid for trucks, hundreds of them. You've paid for aircraft to carry it. You've done that over the years.

Now then some of our friends have said, "I'll tell you what. The situation is so great, we will match \$400,000 that's given now. We will match that." Which means we can feed the 400,000, plus the 25,000 that are in Sudan facing critical shortage right now if everyone will give.

Whatever they give, Betty will be doubled. It is amazing to say, \$30, \$50, or \$100 we can feed three, five, or ten children for the next months. But now with the double, the matching, for \$30 we can feed not three but six, with \$50 not five but ten, and with \$100 not 10 but 20. So we have an opportunity to double the impact of our love expression right now.

Betty: I hope you will help us. This should excite you that what you give is going to be doubled to help provide food and nourishment for these families that have been devastated by war, and now they face the threat of death again through starvation if we don't reach out to them. Please join with us.

James: That really was, you might say, a heart cry and a plea, a prayer. I don't think that mother is just talking to us. I think she is talking to God, but as the body of Christ.

We want to send you the book that teaches about the body of Christ by showing us how this body functions. This is absolutely phenomenal. Philip Yancey and Dr. Paul Brand, I want you to have it.

I want you to understand what Heirs to the Kingdom looks like; what does God want us to do right here right now for his glory? What does he want to do through us? We want to send that to you to say we want to bless you as you bless others and give life. And there are other gifts that we send to say thank you because you're giving the greatest gift, you're giving life.

Would you right now go to LifeToday.org? Make the gift God put on your heart, use your bankcard. Or you can dial the number, use your bankcard like a check and say, "Here's what I want to give today." Please do it.

Father, I pray everyone watching will be an answer to prayer. And I pray you answer their prayers and meet their needs as they reach out and touch these in such desperate need; in Jesus' name.

Please go online, LifeToday.org or dial the number. Remember what you give will be doubled today. It will be matched. Please make that gift. It will have double impact. Thank you for doing it!

Begin video clip

Announcer: Disease, malnutrition, starvation -- all terrible human atrocities being faced every day by people living in remote and impoverished areas of Africa. Those at greatest risk are the children.

This month, 400,000 children are depending on us for survival. And now in South Sudan the suffering has intensified and our feeding efforts are desperately needed by an additional 25,000 children.

As an answer to prayer, a group of *LIFE's* friends have set a \$400,000 matching gift challenge for Mission Feeding. This means your gift today can have a double impact! \$30 to help feed three children will be doubled to impact six children. \$50 to help feed five children will be doubled to help save 10 children. \$100 for ten children will be doubled to help feed 20 children. And \$300 for 30 children will be doubled to help feed and minister to 60 children.

With your gift, we'll send you *Heirs to the Kingdom*, four powerful messages on audio CD or USB flash drive. You'll also receive the award-winning book, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*.

With your double-impact gift of \$100 or more to help feed twenty children please request *The Story*, a running narrative Bible to help you engage with God's word more easily.

And finally, please consider a double-impact gift of \$1,000 and request this beautifully framed canvas print of the "Forest Chapel" by the Painter of Light [™], Thomas Kinkade.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I are going to say thanks in behalf of so many people you've loved. Your gift will be doubled. Please remember that. Please do what you can to help because it is so important. We're sending you the gifts that we've been mentioning.

And also, if you'd like to have, Sam Eldredge and John Eldredge book, *Killing Lions*, to help us understand the Father and clear up some of the questions and challenges we have, we'd be glad to send it to you to say thanks.

Join with us saying thanks to John Eldredge and to Sam Eldredge. Thank you for the book, *Killing Lions*. Thank you for watching *LIFE Today*. Visit stream.org every day, and pass it on! Thanks for watching.

Announcer: Be sure to visit stream.org, a rich and lively source for breaking news, analysis, and entertainment! Stream.org