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Week 21: Spring Mission Feeding
Spring Mission Feeding special 2

James: We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison; Betty and I are thrilled to have an opportunity to share with you life every day.

I would really like for you to understand that when we come into your home and we bring these incredible guests, Betty, it is like sometimes we're able to discover this magnificent, beautiful scenery or this incredible, fruitful plant that is maybe growing blossoms and blooms and we see, and you can see the blooms in the desert.

Here in Texas we've got wildflowers in the spring that are magnificent. President Lyndon Johnson's wife, Lady Bird Johnson, I carried her groceries out when I was 12-13 years old to the car when she would buy groceries at the store where I had my first job, starting at 12. She encouraged the planting of wildflowers. When you see them, it is just beautiful.

Sometimes you'll be out in a setting where you see something bloom that you think my goodness! And you want to take a picture of it. Some of the most spectacular books and magazines that you look at, I think of Arizona Highways, you may think there's a lot of desert in Arizona but boy, they've got beautiful pictures!

Colorado -- beautiful pictures! You'll see something growing that you just wish everyone could see.

Well, this is what *LIFE Today* does. We bring into your living room, we bring into your home or wherever you watch some of the most beautiful, fruitful people on the planet, showing you the life and love of God every day; that's why we call it *LIFE Today*. And Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly; not some religious existence but a relationship that is so meaningful, Betty that it's actually beautiful.

When you see people love... You know some of the hottest videos on YouTube are people loving a pet or having fun with a pet. Our incredible photographer Janice Meyer, she's always taking pictures of her dog, Traveler, a golden retriever. She just has so much fun. She can take a picture of him sleeping and you just love it. So you're seeing something that love says, "Look at this!" And people like to see it.

Let me tell you something. The greatest scene is when you can see what love does to pain and suffering and misery to make all things new. And do you know this -- think about this a moment -- the Bible says, "A little child will lead them." Some of the greatest inspiration in our lives has come from children -- not just our grandkids. We've got 11 grandchildren and we wouldn't mention them if they were just your regular every day ordinary grandkids. These are special grandkids! And we just love them, and we just like to talk about them.

But sometimes, you'll see a child do something and that moves more than mountains, it moves hearts, it moves people, it moves men and women and families to do something very special. I want you to look at a little five-year-old boy. I want you to hear his heart. He really did get all dressed up for you. Watch.

Begin video clip

Abbi: So I watch *LIFE Today* quite often, actually right before I go to bed. I have the children with me. Ryan, my five year old was very, very upset that these kids did not have any food and they didn't have any clothes.

Ryan: I was watching TV one day, at night, when I was going to bed and I saw them eating dirt. I felt bad for them.

Pastor Smith: Ryan has this heart for helping people and he said, "I'm going to give all of my money for cranberry harvest to them. Those kids need to eat -- that's not fair that they can't eat."

Ryan: First I had \$25 and then I wanted to send it to Africa.

Pastor Smith: I said, "Well, Ryan, I think this is a really good story. Would you be willing to get up in front of the whole church and share what you're going to do?" He said, "Yeah!"

Abbi: He got up on stage and spoke about what he was doing and how he was going to send all of his money to Africa. And he ended up getting \$833 in donations that day. So that night he sent \$1,000.

Eric: I thought we'll go to church and people in the congregation will give and they will help and he'll raise a couple hundred bucks. And God just grabbed that money and multiplied it. Ryan was able to feed a lot of kids with that money. I'm just thankful that God's working in my son.

Pastor Smith: It's already beginning to have that ripple effect. Others are jumping in. He told

me Sunday, "Yeah, I got more money to give." I don't foresee this being a onetime gift for him. It could be a lifestyle.

Announcer: Thanks to five-year-old Ryan many children are going to receive food but there are still countless other children in desperate need of food throughout remote areas of Africa. Please join Ryan's heart to give and help those who are in need today.

Ryan: I want them to be fed forever. You should help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Ryan, I love you buddy!

I want to say to all of you in Yakima, Washington, years ago I preached a crusade there, and all of you in the greater Seattle area, and all of you on the west coast and all over America, and all over the United Kingdom and Australia, wherever you are, it doesn't matter, I want you to know that I believe you're going to respond to Ryan. I'd love to be able to call Ryan and say, "Today, Ryan, you won't believe how much people called in today because you touched their heart." And we will. Ryan, we'll let you know.

So I say to everybody watching, you know that we've been feeding now for more than 20 years these precious people and saving millions of lives. The last count, we were told by the African government officials who kind of kept up with what was happening, that we'd saved over 11 million children's lives and their family. That's a lot of people. And I'd love to call today and say, "Ryan, here's how much came in today online LifeToday.org or they dialed the number there on the screen and they knew..."

He gave initially \$1,000 and they let us know, he is going to keep sending more. So I have an idea he is working right now.

But you're working too now, Ryan, because we're telling people all over the world what God put on your heart and I think it will be on their heart, and they're going to be going to the phone or going online right now. Here's the program. He gave \$1,000 to start with but he's not finished. But that feeds 100 children. And when you think about the fact that we've got a matching gift right now, that's 200! So that amount doubled right now, little Ryan already has directly touched 200 children with the food they need, and their families -- and then with what you do today.

Think about it, \$30, \$50, or \$100, this is the normal amount. I think I've tried to make it real clear. I've tried to break it down where you understand it; \$30 we can feed three children for the next several months and we ask you to help twice a year. We come sometime in the spring, early summer and in the fall, going into the winter months, and we ask you to help. \$30 will feed three but now it's six because we've got \$400,000 matching gift; that means it doubles. \$50 feeds 5, now it's 10. \$100 feeds 10, now it's 20. So maybe you give \$1,000.

Maybe you say, "I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll just go ahead and match Ryan. I'll give another \$1,000." And then that's going to be doubled and we just jumped again to a couple hundred more people just from your gift. So the thing is, like Ryan saw it, I want to send it to Africa. I want to send it to those kids that don't have what I've got. He had his own \$25; he gave all of it right up front. It was kind of like the widow's mite but this is a little boy's -- this is his all.

Betty: James, one thing I really, I was listening to Ryan, one thing I thought was so important was even as a little five-year-old boy, he knew that it couldn't just stop with this one time gift. He said, "We need to feed them forever." It's continuing; that's why we continually ask you. They don't just eat that one time and then quit eating. They need food to continue to get to them so that they can nourish their little bodies. I would like to ask you one question, would you help Ryan feed the children? I will! I hope you will.

James: And it is forever too. That's a huge word because Jesus gives us life forever that starts now. We don't die to get eternal life. We receive Christ and we receive eternal life. Betty and I are going to heaven. We have a beautiful daughter in heaven. We know right where she is. She is praying for us, I know and she is rejoicing over the good things. But we already have heaven in us and we go to heaven. We want people to go.

And the thing about it is, with what Ryan is supporting and the outreach here with the mission programs in the Sudan and all over Africa, to the 425,000 right now that we've found in crisis situations, we're going to tell them how to have life forever. And when you show people the love of God they're ready to hear about the love of God because they've witnessed it in action. It's not just loving in word but in deed.

So I'm asking you to go online right now or to go to the phone. You know we're going to send you the incredible teaching, *Heirs to the Kingdom*: Embracing the riches of sonship -- children of God! A great Bible study by our close teacher and scholar friend who has been an associate with us for so many years; and did all the follow up in our city-wide crusades to get people in the word. We're going to help you.

And then *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*: This is the human body and what we learn from the marvel of God's creation, how the body of Christ should function. The greatest thing that is seen in the body is the miracle of unity with such diversity. This is what we need to see in the church. That's why Betty and I are praying so hard for this to happen in our day so that we can really see Christ in his people, in his body. This is a tremendous book.

Then we send you *The Bible story*; the Bible written just like a story to read, almost like a novel, to say thank you. See, we don't give you gifts -- I think you know this -- we never send you something to try to get something from you. Many of you will actually say, "I don't need a gift." We know that. You want to give a gift. You want to be a blessing. I know that but you see we want to bless you.

The issue is that every day when we come here we want to help you. Sometimes we help you by giving you the joyful experience that Ryan had -- you get to help somebody else. I really pray you'll make that call. I pray you'll make it right now today.

I'm going to tell Ryan, I'm going to tell him what has happened. I know some of you are already going. I want you to watch and listen even as your heart is moved to action.

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

On the mission field

Peter: We're with people here who really have some desperate, desperate needs. The thing to understand is they've lost everything. Before they actually ran from the conflict they had cattle, their children drank milk from those cattle, they had crops that they planted that they harvested but when they fled from the conflict they left everything behind. Their houses were burned. They took nothing with them, literally having to fend for themselves.

When I spoke with these people just a little while ago and asked them, "Have you lost any children through starvation or malnutrition?" More than 60% of them responded and said, "Yes." They had lost at least one child.

You know that... to me, it's not right. These are innocent kids. These are people who are caught in a situation where they haven't been able to grow crops. It's not that they're lazy. It's not that they don't try and fend for themselves. They haven't been able to grow crops. And they, right now, are sitting in such a precarious position that they fear that their other children are going to starve to death.

We have to help these people. We cannot just walk away from here and turn our back. It doesn't take a lot from each person to help a little boy like this, to actually change his life. Because you know what he needs? He just needs a bowl of food. That's not complicated. It's so simple. He just needs a bowl of food, and you can provide that bowl of food. If you'll do that, we will make sure that it gets to these people. So please, please respond and respond now.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I hear you, Peter and I know what that appeal means. It means that we can take these heat-resistant bowls that viewers like you insisted that we make for the children because you had seen them too many times with these old tin cans that the soup would burn their hands and

then you watched them with the plastic bags that the food would burn through and fall into the dirt, and those children would actually try to get it out of the dirt. So what we're doing, as Peter is asking, is we're going to send them the food but we're also hoping we can send the bowls there, 25,000 children there in the Sudan, if you gave each one of them a bowl, that's \$25,000. There may be somebody who will say, "Well, I'll do that." It is possible. There are people so filled with love that have prospered and been blessed who do that. And the incredible thing is, Betty, if they did it now it would be doubled and we'd have 50,000 bowls.

Betty: James, not only will it help to keep their little hands from being burned, their little fingers, and they hold it safely but it helps the missionaries too because there are lines on the inside that gives them different levels that they can dish out.

Why, you say? Because sometimes more kids than you expected show up. -- Because why? They're hungry. So it gives them something to work with so that they make sure that each child that stands in that line all day long can get something. So thank you!

James: We've seen it when it ran out and the children are literally crawling in the barrels and scraping it trying to get something. We're trying to keep that from happening. So everything works with a purpose and it's all provided by people just like you.

So if we meet the need right now, \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five or ten children. And we're asking you, like if you want to feed like three, five, or ten tack on \$3 for the three children or \$5 or \$10 for that level that you're at. What you do will be doubled. So it will suddenly go from 100 children, if you give \$1,000 or 10 children if you give \$100 to be doubled to 200 or 20; and the amount of bowls, if you tack on the extra money for the number of children you feed, that will also be doubled.

So right now we have an incredible opportunity to be an answer to the prayer and the plea of missionaries like Peter Pretorius, and the pleas of the mothers and the families that so desperately need our help. I'm asking you right now, and we're moving into the latter part of this mission feeding emphasis, we really need to hear from all of you. Be an answer to prayer. Let's be able to give Ryan an amazing report that will give great joy to the missionaries as well as those who have need.

I want you to watch and listen and just see if God is not speaking to you even as some of you are moving to the phone right now or you've gone to get your laptop or however you can go online and make that gift. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: Time... it can be a formidable adversary. If we could turn back time... If we could have brought help sooner we could have saved Julia. We could have rescued Abel. We could have fed Leo before it was too late. We've seen it too many times -- something our mission feeding program could have prevented.

We can't turn back time; however, God has given us right now. And right now you have the chance to fill these bowls here so these children don't end up here. Please take the time!

End of clip

In the studio

James: You never get over some losses, you live through them. As I was watching them just holding the little hand of the children, I'm sorry, but I remember holding our daughter's hand, lifeless -- the toughest moment of my life. Here's the thing. I don't believe there is a single person watching that wouldn't have said, if we could have turned that back for you, James, we would have. I know you mean it -- I know you mean it and I thank you. And for the prayers that have held me and Betty up for the nearly two and a half years since we lost our beautiful little girl, mother of three teens. I know you mean that. That didn't happen, she is alive but here's the thing.

What we saw, it can happen. We can stop the process now. Right now! It is not wishful thinking. It's not I wish I could have done something. We can! And we can save the lives of thousands and thousands of precious -- somebody's child, somebody's family. Betty, I believe our viewers, in response to the heart of God to love and to give life, I believe they're going to do it.

Betty: We know that for this disease, this problem, there is a solution, there is a cure. This is something that we can be a part of solving the problem of the death of these children by starvation. We can do something about it. That should bless our hearts. That should fill us with a zeal and a love and a hope to want to reach out and say, "As many as we can -- as many as we can! Lord, help us do it." I hope you will help us do it.

James: I'm believing that you will. I want to thank you. I'm going to be so excited to put *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, which is a medical view of the magnificence of God's creation in the human body; and as Philip Yancey then shows us what God wants the body of

Christ to look like. I'm telling you, this is absolutely phenomenal. You know what I believe? You're expressing his will right now as his body, doing what a little boy said, "I want to do" and you're doing it for the glory of God. And from the bottom of our hearts, we want to say thank you. Thank you for going online at LifeToday.org, thank you for calling, thank you for giving life.

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End of clip

On the mission field

Tammy: This is our chance to give back -- give back into a program that works, one that you can trust, one that is reliable, one that does what it says it's going to do. That's a ministry I want to partner with. When I look at a child like this, there is nothing I have to sacrifice, there is

nothing she's crying out for, there is nothing that she even needs -- except for food. So I'm challenging myself and I'm challenging you today, if you've never ever had a chance to give, please let this be your moment to make a huge impact. Go to your phones right now. Call the 800-number at the bottom, go online, and I challenge you to give the best gift you possibly can. I promise you, it will make an enormous impact into the lives of hundreds of thousands of children.

James: I want to give Ryan the greatest report that little boy ever heard. Who knows? That little boy may send missionaries around the world. He may be a missionary himself. I want to bless that wonderful pastor and church and mom and dad. And Ryan, some day I might get to shake your hand. I love you buddy! You're giving lots of people a future. Remember, what you do will be doubled. Thank you so much for doing it!