

6/29/15
Week 27 WFL
Rick and Elizabeth Santorum

James: Hey! I like that! That sounds like a family reception. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

This is a nonpartisan meeting. Do you understand that? It is a pro-principle, pro-God, pro-family, pro-freedom, and pro-love God and one another. How about love your neighbor? Is that good?

We have an incredible book that I'm holding up with a beautiful little girl; her name is Bella. There's actually a comment here, "How a little girl transformed our family and inspired a nation." In fact, she has because everyone I know that has ever met Bella or ever listened to the family talk about Bella, well, it's hard for them not to tear up. Not because they're so sad -- because they're so amazed at what a little girl did.

Senator Santorum and his daughter Elizabeth are here with us. Of course, he wrote the book with his wife Karen -- and she is absolutely beautiful. I want you to welcome this wonderful father and daughter talking about her little sister and about Bella.

Would you welcome them to *LIFE Today*?

[Applause]

The title of the book is *Bella's Gift*. We're going to talk about it.

I want to say something to you, Senator, and I want to say something to America. I have made it very clear so I want to make sure you hear it. I don't endorse candidates or parties. I endorse principles and character and encourage strength and encourage building on what Jesus called a solid rock foundation of truth that's unshakeable so we can withstand the storms of life.

But I want to say something about this man. Now understand I'm an evangelical protestant Christian. He's a Catholic. Let me tell you something. Rick Santorum knows Jesus and loves Jesus. He loves his family and he loves this nation. I'm going to say something that I could wish to be said of me and I think all of us would like to hear it. This man is a man of character

and strength and conviction, and legitimate concern for what's best for others; and true humility as much as anyone I've ever known.

Now you could only hope and pray that in this great nation that we would have men like this in the highest offices in the land representing us or in our community because of the strength of character in Rick Santorum. Would you just say thank you God for a man who loves you and loves others?

Elizabeth, I love your dad and I admire him. You like that guy?

Elizabeth: I always say I love traveling around with my dad. I don't think I would be doing it though if I didn't wholeheartedly believe that not only do I agree in all the principles he stands for but he is just an amazing dad, he is an amazing person. His character is unshakable.

James: When you all talk about -- and I know that meant the world to him -- when you talk about *Bella's Gift*, what comes to your mind when you think about *Bella's Gift*? I know you see her as a gift. But when you think *Bella's Gift*, what comes to mind, Senator?

Rick: Well, I'm just trying to reel in all these nice things that everybody said about me. I appreciate that very, very much coming from you -- and of course, coming from my sweetheart. *Bella's Gift* is so many-fold.

One of the things I always comment on the book, and this was Elizabeth's idea who helped write the book with us; she was one of the co-authors of the book is that every chapter of the book, there is 18 chapters, and every one of those chapters begins with the word *love* because in the end Bella's gift was teaching us how to love perfectly, the way Christ loves us. In fact, the book starts out with Elizabeth talking about, in the Bible, the four different words for love.

The journey that we took with Bella was a journey to understand the beauty of sacrificial love. Every parent who has -- every parent, children require some level of selflessness, some level of sacrifice. When you get married your life changes; when you have children you have a whole new life. It is about serving and giving.

All children are like that but when you have a special needs child and only parents that have a child that is special needs, that needs 24/7 care, that you just pray every day that she'll be there in the morning when you wake up, that is a different kind of commitment and love that just requires you, eventually, to just be completely self-giving. It is transformational. And it is painful, and it is hard, and it is tiring, and it is embracing the cross and feeling all of these splinters hitting you, but in the end it is transformative.

Betty: It's bound to affect -- that kind of love is bound to affect you when you run into strangers even, and all the people you meet outside the home.

Rick: A lot of people who knew me before -- before Bella and after Bella have mentioned the words it sort of "gentled my condition." I was like James --

[Laughter]

James: I'm so much softer.

Rick: But you know, full of the spirit, and fire, and Bella has -- the fire is still burning but it is not burning other people.

James: It really isn't. It is a warm fire and it comes out. I just pray it will really just spread where all of us love God and really love our neighbor, and our families, and other people's families. You use those references, he talked about the four expressions of love but you referenced agape. What does that mean to you when you're thinking about Bella and agape love?

Elizabeth: When I was writing the introduction I kept coming back to the word that we said is just characteristic of her. People are always asking us, "What can Bella do? What does she offer the world?"

I said, "It's simple. It's love."

So I need to talk about what type of love it is. The Greeks had many different words for love. They had storge philia; and agape is the highest form of love. It's the love he talked about which is self-emptying.

I remember when Bella was born, I talk a little about this in the introduction, my parents asked me to be her godmother. I remember looking at her and she's so vulnerable. She was born -- she is a little preemie; she was born three pounds, 11 ounces? -- Just so precious, so small. I thought this child, this perfect little girl, we had no idea how long she will be with us. Bella was born with an extra 18th chromosome. And the doctors told us that she was incompatible with life.

So I'm looking at her and I said I'm supposed to help this little one on her faith journey to God but I just know that everything I'm going to learn about our Lord is going to come from her. I

have nothing that I can teach her because ultimately, the greatest gift she gives us every day is loving us well.

James: When Betty and I saw the needs of the world, we wanted to put loving arms around them, and we knew the only way to do it would be to do it as the body of Christ. So we have a hope for the world, that they will see the love of God in us. When Bella began to temper you and really strengthen you and you wrote the book, what is your hope that will come from the book? And I pray all of our viewers get the book.

Rick: To understand the dignity of all human life is really -- people ask me, I ran for president four years ago and why someone like me, in the world of politics, I would have been the last person to actually think about running for president because I'd lost my last race. Nobody loses their last race and turns around, "Oh, I think I'll run for president!"

[Laughter]

But I did and this little girl was part of the reason. I saw a world that with a new health care system that was government orchestrated, run, and budgeted would not treat -- over time, not immediately, I knew this would not be an overnight type of deal -- but over time government run health care systems look more at budgeting resources for what people can do and utilize, have optimization of dollars to help people who have lived more useful lives.

When you get involved in the world of the disabled, which we do, and particularly this particular disability, you learn about people all over the world. We heard horror stories of the denial of care because they didn't see these children as being able to do anything. They're not useful. It is not a good expenditure of dollars.

So it's one of the reasons that we really -- I decided, Karen decided, we all decided that we needed to go out and fight this battle; ended up running into a presidential race. And that's how people got to know Bella because it was during the presidential race, after I'd won the state of Iowa, that Bella got sick; I suspended the campaign and took a few days off.

Just a quick little story we talk about in the book. When we went into the hospital, Bella's heart rate was up near 200. She couldn't breathe. We were literally -- she was hanging on to life. They brought her in, stabilized her, gave her support, breathing support; took a picture of her lungs and her lungs were completely full of fluid. They diagnosed her with pneumonia. She had had pneumonia a couple years before and was in the hospital for almost a month and a half and on a ventilator for five weeks. So we were facing the realistic chance of saying our daughter is either going to die or going to be in very serious condition for a period of time. Debating what -

- do we continue the campaign? What do we do? We just didn't know. We had never crossed that Rubicon.

But we sent out a notice to people that we were suspending the campaign and we asked people to pray for her. And as Karen and I sat in that hospital room for 24 hours praying and crying and searching for what God had planned for us, I felt those prayers and I saw them. I saw them have an impact on this little girl. This little girl has chronic lung disease. She has narrow passageways. She can't walk, she can't talk. She has very low muscle tone. She doesn't have very productive coughs. When a little girl like that gets pneumonia, it's not a good scenario.

But we sat there 24 hours and prayed over her, as many around the world did. The next morning they took a chest x-ray and her lungs were perfectly clear.

[Applause]

James: And we all joined you. And that's how I wish we would join together to pray for what I think is a sick nation. One of your friends, a wealthy man -- a lot of people think if they've got wealth they don't love people but a lot of them really do. But he says we can have catastrophic health care at a miniscule price of what we're doing right now and nobody have to worry. We really -- do you agree with something that Jay Richards and I said in *Indivisible*, the book we wrote about the national issues? That there is not anything people created in the image of God can't accomplish -- no challenge we can't meet? Do you agree with that?

Rick: Absolutely!

James: If we would just come and God's help. You asked God's help here, as surely as he raised up your little girl. Do you think and do you believe if America would really pray that God might once again raise America up and set us as he says in the Psalm, on a solid rock foundation?

Rick: He's already done that. This country has been so blessed and he continues to bless this country even though in many respects the country is turning away. But I know even though many in the country are turning away, many are praying even more fervently. I know you've called for a revival of this country; that's what this country needs. I believe it is within us. I have no doubt that if you look at how this country has changed over the past 30-40 years, there's a small group of people that really were committed to making this country change into something that was fundamentally different than our founding vision. And we have such a large group of people who still believe in that founding vision and yet, the problem is they're not as committed. I'll just be honest with you. The fervor that I see on the other side to transform America is not matched with the fervor to keep this good, wholesome, decent country as that

shining city on the hill. It's simply a matter of leadership and people being motivated to go back and be faithful again to good.

James: I think Bella inspires that. I think that's the reason you wanted to share it. And Elizabeth, when you hear Dad talking about this precious girl and how much he loves his family but I think you also know he loves this nation and the family. In your heart, what do you think? It is no fun to have a dad really in a political circle; it's a very uncomfortable place. But when you look at America what goes on in your heart for the nation when you look at it and you just look out? What do you think?

Elizabeth: I think I was raised with special parents in many ways. But I always knew from a young age that this was service, and we all viewed it that way. This was something we did as a family, something we still look at as a family; that every American has a responsibility to leave this nation a better place than when they found it. I believe that strongly. I believe the message that we go out there and all share together, that that's an important one. Whenever he's on the road we feel like we're supporting him, whether it is at home, helping with the family or out on the road on shows with you, we're all participating in the mission. We believe there's so much hope out there. We just need to be active and we need to share that hope and that vision.

Betty: As Christians we need to and as Americans we need to take on that responsibility of reaching out and finding out what our place is and helping.

Rick: People always ask me, "What do I do?" My answer is always the same, "Do something." And it starts with prayer -- absolutely always starts with prayer, but it starts with being a witness. I'm not saying you have to go out and preach to everybody. Saint Francis says, "Preach the gospel and if you have to, speak." So it's just witnessing to the truth. It's not being afraid to stand up and be politically incorrect; to stand up for God's truth in a time when people are hungering for the truth. In a culture that is just full of misinformation and lies and deception, people just standing up and in love, speaking the truth is the most powerful witness you can give.

Betty: I know we don't have much time but please just say a few words about your sweet wife because she is very much in the picture of this story.

Rick: When Elizabeth was talking, Karen is here with me. It's hard because if any of you are in a situation where your husband is traveling a lot, it's a hard life. It's a difficult life but she knows, and as you heard Elizabeth, they know this is the family business. You're out there, as James did for years preaching the gospel, well, I'm not preaching the gospel but I am preaching a little different form of good news.

James: You are preaching the gospel, you're preaching good news.

Rick: But it is important. I understand that I could not be here, I could not do anything if it wasn't for Karen and what she's -- her encouragement, her prayers, the fact that I know that our family is strong and formed and faithful. All of the things that she does in supporting everything I do, much less the stuff she does out on the campaign trail or doing the likes. So I'm just very blessed.

Elizabeth: We all say when they do interviews together that she's the one that needs to talk because she is just the best. She really is! I'm sorry she can't be here.

Betty: But more important is she is the mom of all these kids and nurtures them and this precious little girl.

James: Karen, let me just say we love you! Would you just say Karen, we love you and appreciate you supporting your family? You're just great!

[Applause]

I don't know even because we're taping the program before you decided, but you may have just made a decision about what your next step is so we'll definitely be praying for you.

One of the things you said to me that Pope Francis said to me is -- we had a wonderful time together, several hours -- that we knew people who were Protestant and Catholic but they didn't have a personal relationship with Jesus, and you've talked about how important that is. Because you can be Catholic, you can be Baptist -- this little Baptist girl, baptized, teaches Sunday school, came out of the choir to meet Jesus. I was christened and didn't know the Lord. But we need to know Christ and we need to express that love.

I'm going to tell you something, the love of God is in this little girl. And so many people would say, "Well, this little girl should never have been born." That makes me want to lay down on the floor and weep because she is so absolutely precious.

I'll tell you what we would like to do and you can just go online and get the book or go to the stores but I would like to send it to you. I'll tell you what I'm going to ask you to do right now. I think you're about to be moved very deeply. You're going to be moved to see a situation where you can change it, where you can make it indescribably, amazingly beautiful, and alleviate indescribable heartache in just a moment. Watch!

On the mission field

>> This is my water. This is the only water I have. Everyone in the village uses it. Even the animals use this water. I know it is bad water. It is scary but what else can I do?

I have to give that water to all of my children. One day about three months ago my two-year-old girl started vomiting. [Crying]

She was sick all day and she died that night. I am afraid for my other children now. They always complain about their stomachs.

We are separated forever. [Weeping] I can't stop thinking about her. It is so painful.

Tammy: I understand pain well and I understand loss well. I know what that feels like to just feel like you're dying inside because there is nothing you can do to change what's happened in your life. I think that's why I'm here at this moment.

I feel like this is why God has called me here even at this moment to ask you if it would be you -- if you would be the one to help her. It would make a huge difference in the lives of this precious woman and her children, other families in this village and villages all around the world. We can come in here and drill them a well that will give them Water for Life. It will change everything in a moment's time. Please don't hesitate. Don't wait any longer. We need your help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: We know what it feels like to lose a child. It is indescribable. And I wouldn't have shown you that, and that precious mother holding two other children if I didn't know we could stop the continuation of the heartache. We can give those children a future by giving them clean water.

Betty: We can. Maybe you've had someone in your life very close to you and you feel the pain that that mother feels. She's weeping from deep down in her heart. She is -- she has other children but she loves them all so deeply and she is concerned she is going to lose them.

But you know what? There is an answer. There is a way, there is hope and that's through drilling the water wells. We can save families like this. The only thing they have is the diseased water but we can give them pure clean water. Won't you join with us? You'll be so blessed as you do.

James: Please do it. We must drill a well right there. I would like to think there are many of you who would say, "I'll tell you what, I'll drill that one." It does cost \$4800 per well and you must understand that it is that cost, because of all of the savings and efforts that our mission workers and relief workers put into it, and the fact that you bought all the drilling equipment for all the different rigs -- you paid for it! And so they're ready to go. And we know that there is water there that we can get. Many of these wells are relatively shallow, maybe 200-250 feet maximum. But sometimes we have to go further but it averages out \$4800.

I think there is someone saying, "I want to drill that well right there. I want to give those little children -- I want to give them a future. I want to stop the heartache. I can't heal what happened there." She is over that little mound of dirt where her little girl is. Let's not let it happen again.

And please know that there are 500 areas like that where the missionaries have taken us to those situations; where the missionaries are there filled with love and say we want to show these village people and these people in this community in this area what love looks like.

So we want to drill 500 wells. \$4800, maybe you could give \$2400 and pray someone joins you or \$1200 and pray three join you. Most of the money that comes for the wells, for the 500 comes from people who give \$48 or \$144. \$48, ten people water the rest of their lives. That's an amazing gift, it just keeps giving. \$144, 30 people -- that's how it averages out.

Would you right now go to LifeToday.org and make the gift? Use your bankcard like a check. Or you can dial the number and use your bankcard like a check; you should always use that card that way, like a check. Please do it! If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're sending.

We want to send you some beautiful gifts to bless you, a beautiful devotional guide, beautiful "Names of Jesus" pens that you have said, we want those because you've used them to witness, and a beautiful Thomas Kinkade painting, a canvas that you will appreciate already framed.

Please right now go online or dial the number and just express not only your heart but God's heart for precious people like that and so many others that we can help. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice: drink filthy, polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is there is a solution! *Mission Water for Life* is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything.

With your gift today we can establish and drill 500 water wells for remote villages in over 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for 5 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 you'll receive the "Every Day a New Day" devotional broken out into the four seasons of the year. This daily devotional features scriptures, inspirational thoughts, a Bible reading plan, and a place for you to journal each day.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request "The Names of Jesus" pen set; one inscribed with the names of Jesus found in scripture and the other reflecting the gifts of the spirit.

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 request this beautifully framed canvas print of "The Forest Chapel" by Thomas Kinkade.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I, from the bottom of our heart say thank you for your help.

By the way, if you dial a number and get a busy, be determined. Many people are calling to have prayer; most of the calls are still people saying, "Pray for me." But be determined to get through if you can help or go online.

If you'd like to have Rick and Karen Santorum's book, *Bella's Gift*, beautiful story! In so many ways it's going to lift you up. I think help you not only focus on Jesus but focus on others with a greater sense of gratitude and compassion. So we'll gladly send it to you. You just help us drill water, we want to bless you. We'll send it to you to say thanks.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Senator Santorum?

And to his daughter, Elizabeth, thank y'all!

And to Karen! Karen, you're here. God bless you, sweetheart. We love you! God bless you, senator. God bless all of you.

Thanks for being here. Thanks for watching.

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