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Week 31 WFL
Ricky and Cyd Texada

James: Y'all looking good! Don't you tell me you're glad I can't see you.

[Laughter]

I have many people say that, "James, we watch you every morning but I'm so glad that you can't see us." Now you can watch us all through the day. If you've never checked all the different satellite channels you can get us on, all the different local channels, I suggest you do that. I'm James Robison; Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

Mike Hayes is a good friend who pastors Covenant Church in Dallas. I have preached there at their conferences. We share common concerns and we really do believe that we know the answer, and it is found in the person of Christ. They have a branch of the Covenant Outreach Churches, Covenant Church in Colleyville. Betty and I have lived in Colleyville before anyone heard about it; it was just like a big old pasture. We've actually been in the Colleyville area for over 40 years, and we've watched Colleyville and Southlake develop.

Well, the church where our guest Ricky is pastoring is a branch of the Covenant in Dallas. I'm just thrilled to have them. The story, the journey, no one would want to go through. As a matter of fact, most people would say that's curtains. You're finished. How do you make it? And how do you really go on and have a meaningful, joy-filled life when you've lost the love of your life because someone was drunk and took them out?

Ricky and Cyd Texada are here. I want you to hear the story. Would you welcome them to *LIFE Today* please?

I just want you to tell us what happened because here you are, about to be, I think placed in the new church situation; Mike has seen that you have a real touch of God. Tell us what happened.

Ricky: Well, it was December the 17th, and Pastor Mike walked into Debra's office. She was the membership services director, I was a small group ministry director, and he says, "We've been in a meeting all day today and the first part of the New Year we're going to ordain you as pastors in the ministry."

Well, we were super excited about that. We'd been a part of Covenant Church for almost nine years. Never dreamed in our lives that we would, number one, be pastors on a church as dynamic as Covenant and number two, it was never really our aspirations to become a pastor. But when Pastor Mike said that, our hearts were filled with joy, and we began to just reminisce over all the things that we'd gone through. It was an exciting, exciting evening. We went into a meeting; conducted what would be the last meeting of that year. We were on our way home.

James: By the way, how long had you been married, you and Debra?

Ricky: We'd been married up to that time ten and a half years. We met when we were freshmen in college so we were together 15 years. We both gave our heart to the Lord our first semester in college; dated the full four and a half years and then were married after I graduated from college.

So we were on our way home and Debra begins to recap our lives. She talked about the places we'd been, the people we had helped, lived in our home. And then I asked her about a cup of gumbo. Being from Louisiana, we never take an opportunity to pass up a good cup of gumbo that had been prepared by one of our friends. I looked to her as I was preparing to make a left turn and I said, "Debra, do you want to stop by Pat and Mike's house to get a cup of gumbo? We don't have to stay."

She said, "We can just pick it up and keep going." And her last words to me were, "I just want to go home."

As she made that statement I heard a horrendous crash. Because it was 10:00 at night, I didn't know what happened. I felt like I was floating. And when I came to, not sure if I was knocked out or not because time, I couldn't measure it.

I was leaning to the right in my seat. I looked to my right for Debra who was in the passenger's seat and she wasn't there. I looked over my right shoulder and she was in the back seat. The force of the impact, and I guess the spin of the car, that momentum actually flipped her all the way into the back seat. When I saw her, she was just sitting back there as if that's where she had been riding. Her head was down. She was not conscious but I saw blood pouring out of her mouth.

I knew right then and there, I need a miracle. I couldn't see anything externally so I knew it was all internal. I forced my way out of the car, walked around, put my left hand on her back and I said to her, "Hang in there, baby, you're going to make it. Hang in there, you're going to make it."

Now the reason why I said that was because I was hearing Pastor Mike's words that had just been spoken five hours earlier, "You're going to be ordained as pastors."

I was saying, "God, it can't end right here because you spoke to my pastor today and said this is what our future looks like." I say to people, in that accident scene, whether it was shock or the grace of God -- I'm going to call it the grace of God -- James and Betty, I was never afraid -- never afraid of the outcome. I was confident that this was just a little blip on the map and that God would raise her up.

James: I know what that confidence feels like. But that's not what happened.

Ricky: No. We went to the hospital and she fought for the better part of two hours for her life. I had a fractured shoulder so the doctor said to us, "You have to be separated because you might have internal injuries."

And while we were separated, I was in the room by myself, the doctor came in and he says, "She's got multiple skull fractures. We've done all that we can. All we can do now is wait because we can't manage the swelling on the brain."

And again, I said to the doctor, "Doctor, do what you can to keep her alive but God's going to do what he's got to do." Again, speaking and proclaiming words of faith.

And it wasn't long after that declaration to the doctor that Pastor Mike slowly opens the door and our eyes meet. His eyes tell me everything that I don't want to hear. He says, "Ricky, Debra is gone." It was... I've shared that if I could describe for 1,000 years the pain, there is no way to adequately describe it.

But there was an amazing thing that in the midst of that, through those tears and as Pastor Mike and some of the other pastors began to approach the bed, I just began to just raise my hands up to the Lord and I began to worship. I began to just say, "Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord! O Father, I worship you!"

And people would say, "Why in the world would you do that?"

My assessment is, I had looked around the room and I knew that nobody standing there could help me so I turned to the one that I knew this is where my help is going to come from. This is where my strength is going to come. So I worshipped the Lord and through those tears I worshipped and I made two declarations. The first declaration was, "Devil, you've come to kill, steal, and destroy. And tonight, this is your doing and I'm serving notice now. I'm going to serve God. I'm not turning my back on him. I'm going to live for him with a passion and you're going to pay."

James: And that really is the approach we have to take. We have to let the enemy know whatever you think you've effectively hammered us or hit us with, we will use it against you and you'll regret the day.

Now, you experienced a miracle. So tell me what happened, and now you've married this beautiful woman and I know that she stepped into what could have been a very difficult challenge. Tell us how this relationship was birthed.

Ricky: It is an amazing journey. So from December to August I lived in a dark hole; there were days of depression, days of loneliness, days of fear, afraid about my future because everything that Debra and I had for 15 years, we had planned our lives all the way to when we were old and grandkids running around our feet. So when she died my entire future was erased. So I lived in fear for my future.

Well, on August the 10th I'm sitting on the front row and God shows me a glimpse of my future. And I asked him for two things. The man I saw in the future was a lot different than the man I was in that moment. I said, "I need you to change my mind. I want to see people, places, and things the way you do. I want your perspective." And then I said, "I want you to take off these old garments and I want you to put on new garments. And here is what I'm telling -- I mean this -- I mean it to the point that I won't take another bite of food until you do that."

So I walked out of that service not having declared that with my mouth only in my heart and I vowed that I wouldn't eat. Then on August the 17th, seven days later, I'm standing next to Pastor Mike, we're doing our pre-service prayer. He says, "I've got a word from the Lord for you. The Lord says the past was good, the future is better. When you look on the past, there is now no more pain because you have allowed my joy to become your strength. And the Lord says he's heard your prayer. He's going to change your mind. He's going to let you see people, places and things like he does and he's taking off those old garments."

And then he went on to say some other things. But he finished that prophetic word by saying, "Today is the day of new beginnings."

On that day, across town Keith Craft who was at that time a traveling evangelist, was speaking at Cyd's church and I'll let Cyd take it from there.

Cyd: He was speaking at my church and I was leading worship that day. We had gone to the same university so I knew of Ricky and Debra; I always saw them together. So I'd heard from other college friends that Debra had died in a car accident; as a

matter of fact, I heard Debra and their children. So I knew that there were no children but that's the rumor mill.

So with Keith being at our church that day speaking, I said, "Hey, do you attend Covenant Church?"

He said, "I do."

I said, "Do you know Ricky Texada?"

He said, "I do! You know he's single again."

I said, "Oh, no, no. I'd heard that he lost his wife and children in an accident."

He says, "No children. But he did lose his wife in a car accident." He says, "But you know what? I'm going to have Ricky call you."

I'm thinking, I was just asking about him. I didn't know him well enough to get in touch with him and offer my condolences or anything. But he just was determined, "I'm going to get him to call you."

I thought, oh, my goodness. So it was about two months.

James: That's quite a call.

Ricky: Oh, yeah, it was. So the 10th I get the vision, the 17th I get the prophetic word, "New beginnings." God is already working parallel with Keith and Cyd. The 24th, he's now back at Covenant; he mentions her name. I get mad because I'm 14 days without food. I'm not interested in a woman, not interested in a wife, not interested in a girlfriend, but he says, "Brother, God has used me to connect four other people together in relationship and the same anointing I felt for them, I feel it for you and this girl. You've got to call her."

I said, "I won't."

He says, "You're going to turn me into a liar."

[Laughter]

So I made the call, almost two months later.

Cyd: And during that time frame, even though I was not interested when Keith initially said it, because he told me, "I'm going to have him call you" and he hadn't called me I had thought, one time at least, I thought I wonder why he didn't call?

[Laughter]

So two months later he calls and we talk on the phone for about three hours, and I'm not a phone talker. So I just, God was working there.

Ricky: So that was October the 7th I called her. October the 11th, I invite her to dinner. April the 11th we were married, six months to the day -- six months to the day.

James: Wow! Now how long have you been married now?

Ricky: We've been married now 16 years and have two wonderful sons.

James: I think it's important that we didn't actually say she was actually killed in that accident by a drunk driver, and then that story becomes another I think interesting aspect of what God did.

Tell us what happened there because the way you all are ministering together now is a miracle; do you agree?

Ricky: Yes.

James: You've actually walked through his restoration and the walk out with the

Lord. She's been a big part of it; hasn't she? That's a big call. And it takes grace; doesn't it?

Cyd: It's the grace of God, for sure.

James: What happened with this man?

Ricky: So the gentleman, I didn't know what had happened until the police officer told me in the hospital that it was a drunk driver had gone through the light.

From that moment I began to say, "I forgive him. I forgive this guy. I'm not going to hold it against him. This is the devil's doing."

And I had that as my proclamation for the next month and a half, almost two months, until I walk into my house on a Tuesday night. There is a letter from the District Attorney's office. I knew they had charged him with vehicular homicide. Well, the letter reads this: We are sorry to inform you that this case has been submitted to a grand jury and the grand jury has determined that there is insufficient evidence to indict him of vehicular homicide.

In that moment the rage, the anger, the unforgiveness, the bitterness that I had no idea was in me because my confession and profession was something completely different. I shouted at God and I said, "What more do they need? He has a .18 blood alcohol level and I have a dead wife!" And the rage that overcame me in that moment, I realized then that if I could have gotten next to that guy that I might be in the Texas Department of Corrections. I had no idea it was there.

So I called my good friend Gordon Banks over and he listens to me talk, and we cry together. And then he comes with these words of wisdom. He says, "When man judges a matter, he might get it right because he only has limited perspective. He knows some of the past, he knows some of the present, but he doesn't know the future and he doesn't know how the decision today is going to play out in the future. But when God judges a matter, he gets it right every time." And he says, "So you've got a decision here tonight. You have a choice. You can sit as this guy's judge or you can let

God be his judge." And of course, he says, "And if you remain his judge, you know who's going to lose in this proposition. You will be the loser."

And that night I made a decision I'm going to get off the throne of judgment and I'm going to turn him over to the Lord. And whatever happens from here going forward, that's between the Lord and the judicial process.

James: You did find out that that was not all accurate information.

Ricky: Exactly. I got on the phone the next day, called the D.A.'s office. I got transferred from one person to another and the next thing the person who finally came on said, "Mr. Texada, we're so sorry. We have no idea how you received that letter. This case has not even been assigned to an attorney."

And when they said that, I started laughing and I pointed to the throne and I said, "God, you set me up."

[Laughter]

I didn't know what was in my heart.

James: Now then you did forgive him.

Ricky: I forgave him.

James: And you let him know he was forgiven and he was broken. Now he did get sentenced and then he has an extended parole. Let me just say that this story is a miracle -- it is a continuing miracle. And the story is well told in *My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point*. I know that they could get the book in the bookstores. Do you have an online site that they could say if we wanted to get it for some friends and so forth, where would they go?

Ricky: RickyTexada.com.

James: You see it there on the screen. I will say this to you. If you say you know this story, I think would be a healing factor in my life or someone I know, we will be more than happy to send it to you. You know that we ask you to be someone's healing factor, and you can be and you want to be. But if you'd like to have the book, as you say, we're going to touch someone with love, we would ask you to send us the book.

Would you say thanks to Cyd and to Ricky for sharing their journey? It's a marvelous testimony of God's sufficiency and his grace.

May I show you something right now that is going to move you very deeply? I think sometimes when you watch *LIFE Today* and you listen to a story and then we say I want to show you something. Some of you say, "Oh! You're going to want me to help someone."

Now think about this. What if you were the person that really needed someone to notice? Would you be the noticer? Would you notice as Jesus notices? I really think when you see this precious girl you're going to say, "I want to be the arms of Jesus in that situation," and you can be. Watch.

On the mission field

Announcer: In the Hausa language, her name means joyful but a name isn't always a destiny. Fara has experienced very little joy in her brief life. Her mother and father brought her from the other side of Africa to Madagascar when she was only a child. But when she was 15, contaminated water they are forced to drink killed both of her parents leaving her an orphan.

Open captions: I am 17 years old. My parents brought me here from very far away. I'm here all alone since they died.

Announcer: Alone, afraid, and utterly vulnerable, young Fara immediately found herself the target of sex traffickers. Her life became a joyless nightmare.

Open captions: When my parents died I was only 15 years old and they captured me. They abused me and beat me all the time. They sexually abused me any time they wanted.

Announcer: When she became pregnant those who had abused and enslaved her simply threw her away, thus the cherished young son she now cares for was a double blessing. Not only did his arrival give her a pathway to freedom, it gave her a reason to live, but also, a reason to worry.

Open captions: We have no choice but to drink the same water the goats drink. Many people are sick from it. We have no money to buy clean water.

Announcer: The dream of clean water means everything to young Fara and the infant son who is her only joy in life.

Open captions: I'm afraid for my baby's future because he drinks the same water that killed my parents. I'm crying out for help.

Announcer: Fara is crying out for help. Today that cry reached your ears. The question is will that cry now reach your heart?

End of clip

In the studio

James: Betty, what do you think?

Betty: It's reached my heart. I think of that precious young girl, and now she's caring for her own child. She's having to give her own flesh and blood, her baby, the same water that killed her parents. What choice does she have? You have to have water to even survive a few days. So there she is in the same situation with her own baby and not knowing what to do.

But yet there is hope if we will reach out and make that difference. We can help drill those water wells, James. I know you and I -- we help with them because it is so important that we be a part of giving somebody an opportunity at life.

James: Well, it's been the most focused thing that we've done other than just share opportunities to love people. We have focused on that. It's been our joy to actually in some situations just say to the mission team, Betty and I, we will drill a well there because we've asked God to let us do it. We're a part of that.

But here's the thing you need to understand. When you take 500 areas that the missionaries are pointing at and that's one of the examples, and you take all of those areas, the situation is that way but we can't begin to do that. I don't know that there's anyone watching who could do 500.

By the way, if you are, why don't you make it a matter of prayer? Because I'd love to talk to you about it and show you how we might take it into drilling thousands of wells if people who have great means would just have that heart. What you heard there from the mission worker, referring you to the situation, it's reached your ears but will it reach your heart? And then does it go to action? It is so easy to say we care but we don't share. There has to be a compassion connection for the change to take place. The missionaries are there.

People just like you have helped us purchase the drilling equipment and the drilling rigs, a number of them, and we're asking you then to send us in and enable them to go to these different areas and to have the means and all the equipment, the pipe, the drilling, the fuel, the petrol, everything they need to drill, to case it, to give them the pump that they need that is manual because they don't have electricity in so many of these remote areas.

Would you simply today go online, LifeToday.org? Just go there and just say, "I'm going to give today with my bankcard." So often you do things that make it easy for you to shop or get something you need or something to make a gift with. But today you're giving the gift of life.

Keep this in mind, the wells are \$4800. You can call the number there on the screen and say, "I want to make a gift." Use your bankcard like a check; that's how you should use it. But \$4800 is what they cost. Could you drill one or part of one with \$1200 or \$2400? Pray others match it.

Please keep in mind that if you make a gift of \$48 you are giving 10 people water the rest of their life; \$144, you're giving 30 people water the rest of their life. There is a level at which everyone can reach out and say, "I give a cup of water, a well of water in Jesus' name."

Father, I pray everyone who can help will move right now to action and give in your name life; in Jesus' name. Thank you for going to LifeToday.org or dial that number and say, "I want to make this gift." 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: Betty and I, just from the bottom of our heart, thank you for your response. If you ever dial the number, because a lot of people are calling for someone to pray with them, and you get a busy, be determined to get through to help or go online and make that gift.

If you'd like to have *My Breaking Point* because you believe the experience that the Texada's have gone through would somehow be a healing factor in someone's life, your own or someone else's, feel free to ask for it too.

I want to say thanks very, very much, Ricky.

Thank you, Cyd.

Would you say thanks to Ricky and to Cyd? Praise God for his healing and restoration. Thank you so much for watching *LIFE Today*. I really hope you encourage others to watch.

By the way, go on Stream.org. Right now go to Stream.org. We're going to bless you as you bless others.

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