

7/21/15
Week 30 WFL
John and Lisa Bevere

James: They're pretty nice folks!

Betty: They are! Definitely!

James: They make me feel welcome. I hope you feel welcome. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

John and Lisa Bevere are back with us. We have them here often. I tell John and Lisa, we sponsor their television ministry. We pay for it and they come and they do a marvelous job. They have here an incredible, I think, gift to share; it's called *The Story of Marriage*. And of course, they're talking about their marriage but they're actually talking about marriage. It's the first institution God established even before the church. It's a beautiful thing he did. Only a great God could think up marriage. The fact that we can be fruitful; not everyone that's married has children, and some adopt children. We had children, we adopted a child.

But the point is that it is just God's plan. We know people can live together and we've got a lot of people of the same sex that live together, and I'm sure we could have people who would like to say I'm going to live with several people of the opposite sex or the same sex and call that marriage. But the fact is that it is a man and a woman. With that incredible gift, and established institution by God there come tremendous challenges.

John and Lisa felt very impressed of the Lord after 30 years of journeying in their marriage that they would share what they were learning. Not like they've arrived, but on their journey. And they really wanted young people, because they have sons that were young and wanted to learn, and their friends didn't seem to get it a lot of times. So they decided to do the six DVD/CD series and they put it in print and they broke it into basically daily opportunities to learn and to study and to journal and record or to talk.

I think it is just fabulous and we're thrilled to have them here with us. Would you welcome John and Lisa Bevere?

[Applause]

We've already had fun! I think today we're going to talk about, and this is what you'd suggest; we might talk about some of the challenges or the friction and so forth. How do you want to approach that? Who wants to take off first? Who has been the biggest friction causer?

John: I would say me.

Lisa: I would say me.

[Laughter]

John: One thing that you mentioned, Jesus said that it's an organic union between a man and a woman. And Jesus, literally in the Message Bible calls marriage God's art. He said, "No one should desecrate his art." If you think about how much we value what all the great artists of history have done, if we took spray paint to Mona Lisa and desecrated it, how would humanity react? How does heaven react when we treat lightly his art?

When we try to redefine it and say it's between a man and a man or a woman and a woman? No. God is the one that defined it. God is the one that initiated it, defined it and it will forever be, marriage is between a man and a woman. So I say that because God institutes this, the enemy wants to really bust it up. So marriages are going to go through very, very difficult times because there is a very real enemy that wants to destroy what is very, very precious to God.

So Lisa and I have had many, many challenges but the great news is God has brought us through every single one and we've come out better people. And so I think one of the things that we always have to figure out in marriage is how do we fight fair? Lisa and I, there was this couple when we first got married, they never fought. Lisa and I fought like crazy our first couple of marriages --

Lisa: Couple of marriages?

[Laughter]

John: First couple years of marriage!

[Laughter]

This is the next book.

Lisa: Couple of marriages?

John: Honey, its great being married to you.

[Laughter]

But we felt like failures before this couple. We just felt like absolute failures. They said, "We've never fought before." We're like, "Oh, my gosh, we fight all the time." Well, two, three years later they split up, they divorced.

James: I doubt that they were being totally honest. We've been married 52 years and we have a fight nearly daily -- really fun fights though.

John: I always say to Lisa, the fights add spice to our marriage. But what I realized was, okay, these guys held it in. We fought but we hurt each other when we fought.

James: You heard not hurt?

John: We hurt each other. We would attack each other.

Lisa: We're not talking about punching. We didn't know how to fight fair.

John: We didn't know how to fight fair. So in other words, instead attacking the problem we would attack each other. So we had to start setting up rules, ground rules. Okay, we can argue but we're not going to attack each other's character. We can deal with each other's behavior and appeal on that but we're not going to say, "You are this..." or "You are..." So things started changing to where our arguments started becoming constructive not destructive. So that's one of the things that...

James: How far into the marriage when that happened?

John: That was like year eight.

Lisa: Talk about the circle.

John: Well, one of the things that caused a lot of fights was I'm like, "I'm head of the home. I'm making the decisions and that's what we're going to do."

James: That's impressive!

John: I know, it is!

[Laughter]

Lisa: This is before I knew you.

John: I'm thinking I'm making these decisions and Lisa is saying, "I don't think we should do that."

Most of my decisions were bad. And it was like gosh, you were right. You were right! So one day I'm out praying and I'm like, "Okay, God, I don't get this. I pray like an hour to an hour and a half every single morning. Lisa prays 10 minutes in the shower."

Lisa: That's not exactly true.

John: And she is right on almost everything. What is going on? I'll never forget this. God said to me, "Draw a circle." He said, "Now put X's in the circle."

So I put X's all over the circle. I literally took a piece of paper and I drew a circle and put X's all over it.

Then he said, "Now draw a line right down the middle." He said, "You're not complete in yourself anymore. You're one flesh. That circle represents both of you. That left half of that circle is you, the right half is Lisa. Do you notice all the X's? 50% of them are in that half of the circle, 50% of them are in that half of the circle."

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "Those X's are the information you need from me to make good decisions." He said, "You're making all your decisions off half of the X's. You need to learn to draw out of your wife's heart what I'm putting in her without making her feel intimidated so you can make a wise decision as leader in the home."

That really started changing because what I think the way men are almost raised is you're not a man unless you're the boss and boss means I'm dominating and I'm making all the decisions and don't try to give me your input because I'm the leader here. That is so stupid. It is repulsive.

James: You're making me sick.

John: And the older we get the more stupid we realize it is.

Lisa: That's because your estrogen level comes up and your testosterone begins to drop so it starts to balance.

[Laughter]

But on the flip side of that, one of the things is, again, we did not do it perfectly but one of the things is I want people to not make the same mistakes. There are two things I regret looking back at my marriage.

Number one: I do wish I would have been able to let John make more mistakes. Again, let him take risks and not be so fearful when he said, "I want to do something." "No, don't do that!" Like be so scared and be so fearful. I really wish I would have just enjoyed the risk taking and whatever and not been so fearful. I wish I would have allowed him freedom. And not said, "See, I told you so." He's like, "I wish I wouldn't have done that."

And then the other thing is, James and Betty, I wish I would have loved him more fearlessly because for the first probably ten years of our marriage I was reserved because I was afraid if I gave all of my heart to him then he might break it. So I kept some of my heart back. I remember John would say, "I don't know how long we have to be married before you give me everything but I'm not going to leave you Lisa." But because of what I was raised with, with my dad, I just was guarded.

I remember the day I sat down and I said, "God, I want to be all in. I want to give all of my heart to my husband. If he leaves me and I give it all my heart then I know that I was all in. But if I only give half and there's a problem, then I never was fully invested." That was a huge turning point for us, and just letting that go and learning to love fearlessly.

John told on himself last time but there was a season where I was real upset with John. Okay, this is embarrassing now. At the time I thought it was dramatic but I realize now it was embarrassing. But I said to him, "We're married but we're not engaged."

So I kept my wedding ring on but I took off my engagement ring; I think for 18 months. I mean just 18 months of a constant statement of we're married but not engaged. I don't even -- I'm so sorry, it is embarrassing. But I remember we were at a stand off on a decision. I was alone in prayer and God said, "Lisa, I need you to tell me, 'You're enough for me.'"

I said, "No! If I tell you that you're enough for me, you're probably not going to do anything with John. I need to know that you're going to change John. I don't want to hear, Lisa."

So he said, "I need you to tell me."

I'm like, "What about John?"

He said, "Just tell me."

So sometimes God just needs us to open up our heart. So I started to say, "God, you're enough for me. You're enough for me. Whether John ever changes or not, you're enough for me." But when I started to say that it changed from "you're enough for me" to "God, you're more than enough for me."

And it opened up my heart to my husband so that when he did come in that night and he was like, "I'm so sorry," my heart was already open. I didn't say, "Well, you know what? You've been a jerk." I said, "I forgive you. I forgive you."

There were instances early on in our marriage where John struggled with pornography at the beginning of our marriage and I have to be honest with you, because of my past, I didn't think I deserved anything better. I thought I deserve this. I can't be angry at him. But it scared me and it bothered me. I remember, we would have a fight about it. I remember one day God said, "I need you to forgive him."

I said, "I'll forgive him when he changes."

And God said, "No, you actually need to forgive him so he can change."

I remember it was such a hard thing for me. It grieved John. He hated it but when I shamed him, it continued to trap him in it.

So these are the things that we opened up and talked about because people, they need to know these things so they can move forward. It was early -- very early in our marriage, way before he was in the ministry.

James: That's powerful! And for you to be able to do what you did, that was the first step toward probably freedom for you, was the way she began to have more of a godlike view toward you in your situation; is that correct?

John: Yes. She has helped me in so many ways and empowered me in so many ways. I think that's what we have to understand about each other is I can hold Lisa back, I can be like a roadblock for her and she can hold me back and be a roadblock for me. Or she can be like something that pushes a car, propels it. And what she did there propelled me, made me want to

be free that much more, made me want to really humble myself before God, and so I think that's -- sometimes the things we fight for in our marriages or fight against in our marriages we end up becoming, literally a roadblock to our spouse in helping them to get to where God really wants them to be just by the way we respond to them. And so we can either be our spouse's greatest ally or we can be our spouse's greatest enemy, depending upon how we respond to their mistakes and to their shortcomings. Because you're not going to marry, none of us is married to perfect spouses.

So that's why I believe the Bible tells us to forgive one another, to forbear with one another which means... forbear means I'm going to put up with it knowing that you are going to get through this, and you have a desire to get through this.

Now one thing is that there are some spouses, they don't want to get out of it. They're in it, they like it, they don't want to get out of it, they don't think they need to get out of it. That wasn't me. But I think in those situations, forbearance is not the word. Forbearance is the word but the right word is bring it to a crisis. I talked about this on the last show, this one time when she said, "Oh, no, you're not coming in this weekend." She brought something in my life to a crisis that needed to be brought to a crisis. I went and prayed and I have never –

I'll be honest with you, it was what? First three years of marriage, I hit her once. And I was like -- I was horrified but yet when she locked me out and said, "You're not coming back in," and when I went and prayed, it's never happened since because I really got free.

So in other words, if I would have been the husband that's like, "Forget it. You're a jerk. You throw plates at me, I can hit you." Well then now, that's a different situation because there are abused people out there and mostly women. So I don't want to give any woman out there that's watching us right now the feeling of oh, gosh, I'm putting up with my husband being physically abusive with me. I need to forbear with this. That's not what -- if he's not changing, he doesn't have that -- he's not crying out saying, "God, I need help" and going and seeking help, then you know what? She needs to lock him out of the house, move him home with mom. Let him get a few spankings from mom again or something. I don't know.

Lisa: Dad.

John: From dad -- yeah! But that's really really important and I think in our marriages, I know this, that we have to learn how to fight for each other and fight for the marriage because the marriage is very valuable to God. So we need to learn how to fight for it not against it.

James: I know both of you pretty well and I love both of you like family. I know both of your personalities; they're about as strong as any two people I've ever seen. It's like the immovable

object meets the irresistible force. I mean it's like a hydrogen bomb marries a nitrogen bomb or an atomic bomb. Here it is. It is just incredible.

And yet, what you've been through is not surprising. The fact that you're able to talk about it because of the miracle of what God wants to offer every one of us. And the two of you are really miracles in the sense that both of you are very gifted, you're very dynamic and you're very strong in your personalities. And what God has done with you, if he can do this with you where you can talk this openly, this honest, this lovingly, for one another and for others and want to do it, then it is a real miracle of God.

Would you all agree we're looking at a miracle of what God wants for us in our marriages?

John: James, let me say this one more thing. The thing that I'm hoping that I've conveyed, and you've had me talk about other things on the program, and Lisa, but what I'm trying to convey on this is that God doesn't say "do it perfectly," he says "do it well." We want to hear him say "well done" and I realize that this is a journey and all of us are still on our journey. You two are still on a journey; as beautiful as you two are and as much of a role model you are to us, it is a journey. People need to think of it like that. That you don't hit roadblocks, you hit speed bumps, and there's going to be speed bumps, get through it, and just keep going towards the destination. Because my number one goal in life is that when I leave this earth she is more in love with me than the day we married. My number two goal is that when she leaves this earth, I'm more in love with her than the day we got married. That's my top two goals.

James: And if you're in love with Jesus that will be the case. If you love Jesus with all your heart, you're going to love each other properly. That really is a fact. The reason our marriage made it is number one we committed to him. We absolutely did. He knew that. We lost our life in his purpose. Then we really meant that so that was commitment one. And it has to be commitment one with everybody, no matter where you are in your marriage. And it is still there and therefore, we're able to walk through it.

By the way, the journey is the goal. You just walk the journey. You just walk the road. If you'd like to have the book...

By the way, there is their web site. You want to see what they're doing to share with pastors and church leaders and people in need all over the world? You can see it, you may want to support them; it would be wonderful if you do.

If you'd like to have the book, we're asking you to help us share water. We have some other things to share with you to give to you to bless you when you help us share water. We'll also send you the book if you'd like it. Would you just say thanks to John and Lisa because they're

been a blessing?

[Applause]

I'm going to show you, John and Lisa, something that we find such joy doing. And both of you have been in the mission field with us so you know how real it is what happens, love works. It never fails. I want you to listen then I want you to ask God while you're listening, what can I do that would please you and really bless that situation? Watch.

On the mission field

Announcer: This is Phoung Mao. Her two boys Vannak and Dang are inseparable. They do everything with their mother. Even when she is laboring, chopping this root to sell in the market. Phoung will basically work around the clock knowing she has to fill 13 large bags just to earn \$2.50.

Thinking about the hardship of her labor does not seem to affect Phoung because it allows her to provide life in the form of food for her children. But when it comes to the only water available to them there's something she constantly thinks about -- death -- the death of her seven year old son Dorn who died from a waterborne illness caused by this very same water.

>> Because I didn't have the money the doctor said I couldn't bring my son's body home.

Announcer: After hearing Phoung's sorrowful story our team surrounded her to offer as much comfort as we could. Phoung had expressed to us that her two boys now are always sick from drinking the water and she could not bear losing another child. We don't want to see that happen ever again to Phoung. And it won't if the resources needed can be secured so that we can drill a water well in her village.

End of clip

In the studio

James: And we can because we know there is water there. And viewers like you, over the last years, have bought numerous drilling rigs costing as much as \$300,000 to \$500,000. You gave them. So they are ready to go to the site but what we need to be able to do is support the movement, the petrol, all of the pipes, the drilling equipment in order to get them in each one of those locations.

We have located five regions, Betty, where we can drill and we need \$4800, the average cost of a well. I believe that here in this audience and all over the world that there are individuals who can drill a well and that everyone watching can at least give toward a well; \$48 is what comes in to pay for most of the drilling. You can break it out and say that gives 10 people water the rest of their life but there are some who can give \$1200, \$2400, or \$4800 and pay for part of a well or an entire well.

I'm believing our viewers are going to be an answer to the heart cry of that precious mother.

Betty: James, she was working very, very hard to provide food for her children. She would do anything. She worked hours on hours just to get food for them for two dollars a day! And yet, she can't do anything about the water that she has to offer them because that's all that they have; knowing that that water will possibly kill her children. That heart of that mother is broken because she sees what is coming if something is not done.

Will you please join with us and let's give life to that little precious family and those many others just like them that do all they can do but they can do nothing more without our help? Please join with us and let's drill these water wells.

James: Father, I want to join my heart and my hands with Betty because she so well expresses the heart of a mother, a grandmother, someone who cares so deeply and understands. Father, I believe there are viewers who understand what that mother feels. So I pray today you will answer with an outpouring of love, undeniable expression of your love through the act of giving and helping; in Jesus' name.

There is a phone number there on the screen. You can go immediately to LifeToday.org. Many, many of our friends now are going there and immediately using your bankcard, you make a gift. Or you can call and make a gift using your bankcard or if you want to, you can write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're sending it in. It is very important that we allow our drilling teams and our mission workers to know we can come to your area -- we can go to that area.

We've got 12 countries, 500 sites to drill a well. Could you drill one of them? You might be able to drill more than one. I believe if you can, you will. If you can give a portion of a well, \$1200, \$2400, pray for three to join you or one to join you and we've got a well. If you can give an entire well \$4800, do it. But those of you who give \$48 or let's take the example of \$144, you've given 10 people or 30 people basically water the rest of their life, a single gift that keeps giving.

So would you right now make that gift? Go online, or call the number. We have some gifts to send you to say thank you but I know you're giving to bless and that in itself is blessing enough. 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 depth of our heart, say thank you. If you dial the number and got a busy, please get through. Give a cup of water in Jesus' name, whatever you can do.

If you'd like to have *The Story of Marriage*, John and Lisa Bevere, two of the people we love and respect so much, appreciate, and I think they will be a great blessing to you, what they share. If you'd like to have it, simply ask for it.

Please join Betty and me saying thanks to John and Lisa for being a blessing to us.

We love you guys very, very much.

Thank all of you! Go to stream.org every day -- stream.org every day. Read something that matters, pass it on. Facebook forward it.

Announcer: Introducing stream.org, a rich and lively source for breaking news, analysis, and entertainment. [Stream.org](http://stream.org) is a new information stream where those concerned about our nation's course can now gather for news, wisdom, and inspiration. Working together we will see the promise declared in Psalm 46:4, "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God." Be sure to visit stream.org, a news site to unite us!