

11/05/15
Week 45: Fall Mission Feeding
Laura Story

James: Hey! Thank you all so much! We welcome you and we welcome all of you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison; Betty and I have Laura Story with us. This is a really, really, I think, important question that's the title of this book: *When God Doesn't Fix It*. Listen to the sub: Lessons you never wanted to learn; truths you can't live without. Have we ever asked God why he didn't fix something?

Betty: Yeah.

James: Have we ever wondered why?

Betty: We have, especially when things don't go the way we think they should go, and that we pray they will go.

James: And the way we just know they should go. Would you welcome the author of this book, and the one who I think will give us some answers? Would you welcome Laura Story to *LIFE Today*?

Laura: Thank you, guys!

James: We're glad to have you here! You are a singer and you're going to sing -- you're going to hear her sing. Our audience is going to hear her; so you come to some of our tapings, she is going to do a private little concert for them -- just singing. Laura, tell us what inspired you to write *When God Doesn't Fix It*.

Laura: Well, I feel like the message -- the book really is for anyone that's ever asked that question of why God maybe didn't answer their prayer the way that they wanted or didn't do it in a time frame that they expected. The question really came up in our lives in the past nine years, my husband has been struggling through a brain tumor and a brain injury that resulted from his tumor; and it really has redefined our lives and redefined our faith in a way. We had been Christians for years before this had happened but it was the first time that we truly had to trust God's promises in the midst of a situation that seemed so broken. Honestly, faced with the disappointment of why isn't God healing him when we're asking him so fervently to do so?

James: Now you were going to a new church situation where you were going to be involved with the praise ministry and team, and you found out that he had the brain tumor. And you called them and told them what... maybe you shouldn't come with what's come up. What was the response?

Laura: Well, my husband and I are both from Spartanburg, South Carolina and we were moving to the big city of Atlanta, Georgia. And so when we started noticing Martin having these health symptoms our first response was we need to stay here with our family. So I called my -- who was my boss to be -- to tell him something is going on. We're not sure if it's physical or mental. And his response was, "Whatever the problem is, you come here because you are a part of us now."

James: Wow! That's the way the church should be.

Laura: Perimeter Church has been... I've been there for about ten years now and they've really taken care of us and loved us well.

James: What message did you communicate here? How do you comfort someone? Because Betty and I lost a daughter to cancer that had as much faith as anyone we've ever known and we knew all of the famous people of faith. We were close friends with Oral Roberts; our son graduated from O.R.U. We believe in healing.

You (Betty) just read your journal; the first time we went to Africa three blind people healed, a person crippled all their life healed, a lot of atrophy in the muscle but healed.

We believe in healing. Our daughter was miraculously healed when she was a child. -- Just had so much confidence. But she didn't get well the way we wanted. She is well, perfect, we know that, we knew that, she knew that, but why didn't she get well? Why didn't God fix it?

Laura: Yeah! I wish so much that the book had the answer to that question with your daughter, and I wish it had the reason to why my husband to this day still lives with a substantial vision deficit and a memory deficit that complicates our lives every day. The truth is I don't know why. The truth of the scripture is they don't promise us that we're going to understand those hard things this side of heaven.

But what the Bible does promise us is that our broken things in this life find their greater purpose in his story of redemption. He promises that there's purpose for the pain, he promises that he is doing something greater even when we don't understand it.

James: When you see what's going on with your husband now... and is he able to work some? Is he able to accomplish some things?

Laura: Well, he just started working part time in the past two years and it's been a sweet thing to see the Lord restore some of that. It's learning to live in this place of believing wholeheartedly that God could heal Martin just with a snap of a finger.

But also being content in trusting that if God hasn't brought that complete healing then there must be a reason for it, and trying to see the blessings in the midst of it. And more than anything, trying to be as open as we can with our story; the reason I wrote the book is because I believe that every person has a unique story and that's a story that it is their responsibility to steward so that God's faithfulness can be seen through it.

Betty: Haven't you seen how big God is through this journey that you're on, and continue to be on? Because I know in our situation, God, boy, I hung on to him tight and I still do. But that relationship with him became -- I had a choice to make, will I be drawn to God more or will I draw away? And I chose to draw closer to him, and he was my salvation through all this in this journey. You found that to be true too?

Laura: Absolutely! I think about the passage in First Peter that says, "Be ready to have an answer for the hope within you when people ask."

I don't know about you, but before this happened to us, people weren't just randomly coming up to me saying, "Hey, tell me about the hope that's within you." It's when you are walking through that dark valley that's more painful than you could ever imagine and you are still able to still put one foot in front of the other.

People come up to you and say, "How are you able to continue to have joy?"

And that's when I get the opportunity to say, "Because my joy is found in Jesus. Because my joy is a joy that can't be taken away from me, it is not based on my circumstances."

James: You tell in the book that he didn't even remember because of this injury that you all were married. Did he think you were a nurse? At least he said, "I've got a pretty nurse."

Laura: So Martin and I, we grew up together. We went to high school together. We were high school sweethearts. And the doctor told us initially before Martin's surgery, that it was possible when he woke up that he wouldn't remember who I was. So I got to see him that first time after his surgery, and as soon as our eyes met, he said, "Laura Story!" And I thought, okay, good he

recognizes me. And then he said, "What are you doing here?" And then I realized he knew exactly who I was he just didn't know that we were married. So I had to break this news to him. And fortunately, his response was, "We're married? Yes!"

[Laughter]

Which is the best way that could go down. Trust me! [Laughing]

James: That's a good answer when it wasn't fixed. I think he helped you out on that. If you would say to everybody that's watching, that would get the book, which is in the bookstores and online, if they got it and they go through it, what are they going to come away with? Are they going to come away with saying, "Well, I'm just going to have to act happy. I'm not happy." What are they going to actually find that's going to settle in?

Do you feel like that when people go through this that maybe you'll help them see God in their situation but also look beyond their situation and ask how they might share God in somebody else's situation, in that they have experienced similar things? And whereas Paul said to comfort people with the comfort wherewith you've been comforted? Are you trying to get people there?

Laura: Absolutely. I'd say, with my husband's brain injury, I've met with women whose husbands have returned from war with brain injuries or motorcycle accidents, beyond even just health, physical issues, people are struggling with unemployment or drug addiction. I met with a woman once whose husband had a similar brain injury as my husband and we were sitting together in a interview like this where the host had invited both of us to talk about it.

At the end of the time the host was saying good-bye to this lady and she said, "I'm going to be praying for you and I just know that things are going to get better." When it comes to me and I said, "Well, I'm going to be praying for you but honestly, I'm not going to tell you that I know that things are going to get better. I'm not a doctor. I can't say that medically. But the truth is I believe you can get better."

I believe our circumstances... God doesn't have to fix it in order for us to grow into the people that he desires for us to be.

James: Well, we've seen that with our daughter's children, beautifully; and then we know that our daughter sowed beautiful seeds of life and truth and love -- but we're really seeing it come out. And you have to wonder sometimes, because maybe mom's not there, the impact of her life becomes even weightier and more meaningful in theirs. And I won't be surprised at all if I don't just watch the miracle of that unfold before our eyes because frankly, I think I'm seeing it.

So it doesn't matter what happens, it's not all good, but God works all things together for good, regardless of where you are when the problem comes, if you will turn to him who loves you totally, freely, fully, if you will receive that love and ask him to give you love for him he will and he'll give you understanding and work that which is unexplainable, seemingly unbearable, he can work it for good and that's what he's in the process of doing, which is why you wrote the book, which is in the bookstores. But he also gave you a gift -- a gift to sing.

Would you like to hear Laura sing one of the songs that is a testimony of what you're watching God do? Would you do that for us? What's the title of this song?

Laura: A song called "Blessings."

James: "Blessings" -- and that's what we all need and want. We want to hear you.

[Laura sings]

We pray for blessings

We pray for peace
Comfort for family
Protection while we sleep
We pray for healing
For prosperity
We pray for your mighty hand
To ease our suffering
And all the while
You hear each spoken need
Yet love is way too much
To give us lesser things

'Cause what if you're blessings
Come through rain drops
What if your healing comes through tears
And what if a 1,000 sleepless nights
Is what it takes to know you're near
And what if trials of this life
Are your mercies in disguise

We pray for wisdom

Your voice to hear
And we cry in anger
When we cannot feel you near
We doubt your goodness

And we doubt your love
As if every promise from your word
Is not enough
And all the while, you hear each desperate plea
And long that we'd have faith to believe

That what if your blessings come through rain drops
What if your healing comes through tears
And what if a 1,000 sleepless nights
Are what it takes to know you're near
And what if trials of this life
Are your mercies in disguise

When friends betray us
When darkness seems to win
We know the pain reminds this heart
That this is not --
This is not our home
It's not our home

What if your blessings come through rain drops
What if your healing comes through tears
And what if a 1,000 sleepless nights
Are what it takes to know you're near
And what if my greatest disappointments
or the aching of this life
Is the revealing of a greater thirst
This world can't satisfy
And what if trials of this life
The rain, the storms, the hardest nights
Are your mercies in disguise

James: Well, I know -- thank you! Did you write those words?

Laura: I did, yes.

James: And you wrote a song that Chris Tomlin made quite famous, "Indescribable." You appreciate this great gift God has given Laura? "Indescribable." Are you finding him indescribable even in this journey when things aren't fixed that he is still indescribable?

Laura: I'll tell you, it is believing that we have a big God that allows us to endure the pain. I know there is a phrase that says, "Don't sweat the small stuff... and it is all small stuff." I've always thought that phrase was really silly. I think it really minimizes the pain that we walk through; things like brain tumors and losing a daughter, those aren't small things.

But we have a big God that we can run to and he may not be giving us the fix that we're looking for, he may not even give us the answers that we're looking for but the fact that we have a God that we can run to with our questions and with our tears, that is enough for me in this season.

James: -- With our broken heart. Let me just say to you right where you are and come here and let me talk to you a minute here. I want you to know that we're all sitting here with our own journeys, our own challenges, our own wondering why God didn't fix it the way we just knew it ought to be fixed. We certainly wanted it that way. He really does take broken pieces and create masterpieces. He can take a broken heart and hold it close.

I want to say to you because I don't know where you are but I really want God to hold you right now. And better than that, he wants to hold you. Would you just let him hold you? And let him tell you he knows how much it hurts, he knows how you feel, and we want to bear the load with you. Just tell him you want him to.

Father, be like father, be like the greatest father that you are to every person right now that needs to feel a shoulder, the comfort, the arms, the shelter, the peace, the security -- just let it flow; in Jesus' name.

You know the telephone number there on the screen is always there if you need someone to pray with you. I don't care what need we're meeting. It can be a catastrophic event and we're trying to rescue lives, it can be feeding the hungry or giving people water. But the greatest response every day, I mean 1,000 calls, "Please pray with me; hold my hurt." Don't hesitate to ask.

Laura, thank you.

You want to tell Laura thank you again for being a blessing?

Laura: Thank you guys!

James: Martin, listen to me. We're praying for you. You are a miracle -- the whole thing is a miracle. But there's even more to come now and forever, we're praying for you.

Laura, we love to put God's arms around the hurting. And our viewers, many of you watch because you've got a broken heart. Many of you watch and are wondering why; maybe it was just because you wanted somebody to love you. But is it possible that God wanted to love someone through you? -- That you're watching today so you can be the expression of love and life.

Watch! See if there is not someone right now -- watch closely -- you can love.

On the mission field

Open Captions:

Recently, Jeanne Rogers traveled with *LIFE*'s mission team to Angola in Africa...

...where food shortages are taking a devastating toll...

Jeannie: This little girl's name is Esperanza. Her name means "hope." And she's reaching out to me in spite of the condition of her body that is so malnourished. She keeps touching me, reaching for my hand. Everything in her is crying out, "Help me. Help me! I'm looking for change."

This is unjust for a child to suffer like this. I can't stand it. I can't stand to watch it happening. I have hope for her. Yes, I do! I have hope for you, and I have hope for other children -- and catch them soon, we can get to them sooner and turn the whole situation around for their lives so they don't have to suffer like this. We've got to help these children.

We'll do this together. Yes! We'll do this together.

She's fighting to live. This little one is fighting to live. Yes, you are!

End of clip

In the studio

James: That little baby is reaching up. Jeanne knows it.

What do you see? What happens in your heart, Betty?

Betty: The last thing Jeanne said is, "We'll do this together." That's you and me, and everyone watching -- we can do this together. We can make the difference between life and death for these precious children just by offering them nutrition, by giving them the food they need before they get to the state that this precious little baby was. I hope that little baby makes it! I know Jeanne does.

If you'll join with us, we can meet that need together. Every one of these babies are suffering because they don't have any food to eat -- they're dying because they don't have food to eat. Won't you join with us and let's do it together?

James: Every one of those little babies like that, that got helped, they were not only touched by someone like Jeanne, they were touched by a missionary relief worker that was supported by someone who touched them with love in the form of a gift. I can so well remember Peter Pretorius and the missionaries when Betty and I said, "We'll stay over here with you and help you."

They said, "Please don't! Please go back home and tell what's here so we can stay and not be empty-handed. We can help them."

We came back to you not knowing whether you'd help. But thank you. Because somebody like you said, "Jeanne, I'll save that little baby."

You're seeing the little baby there on the screen again. Look at her. She's representing so many. Would you say, "I'll help!" We do not exaggerate when we tell you that for \$30, \$50, or \$100 we can feed three, five, or ten children for several months. The dollar goes a long way on the mission field and it is so effective. We will first show them the love of God. We will love them not in word only but in deed, in action, compassion, and we will keep those missionaries and relief workers putting the arms of God's love around children like that that you wanted to pick up, just like Jeanne did and that child reaching up; reaching up not just to Jeanne, not just to the missionaries that are there, but reaching up to you to be the answer to the need of that child and for the support of the missionaries to do it.

Would you go to LifeToday.org -- please go, take a bankcard with you, and make the largest gift you can knowing that \$30, \$50, or \$100 we feed three, five, or ten children. I would ask you to give \$1000 to help us care for 100.

Keep this in mind. We've got a very special need. We must replace eight ten ton trucks, and more than 70,000 of the little plastic bowls that you, the viewer asked us to give to the children; now we need to replace them in many areas and go into new areas. That's a tremendous amount.

Would you make the largest gift you can, please? Do it online, or dial that number and take your bankcard right now and use it like a check, please! We have some special gifts to send you to say thank you, but you're giving the greatest gift, you're giving the gift of life, and you're expressing the love of God. Thank you for doing it. Please do it. And pray many will join you.

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 -- and those at greatest risk are the children.

Life's mission feeding program is there able to feed and care for over 400,000 children in crisis areas of Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan. With previous food reserves gone and malnutrition levels in Angola rising due to increased food scarcity, we desperately need to replenish our supplies for our feeding programs immediately. Your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for the next three months.

Also, please consider an additional gift toward our \$316,000 goal to provide eight all-wheel drive trucks and 76,000 new bowls for the children.

As our thank you we'll send you this soft-covered journal Bible featuring the gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs for your devotional time in the word. With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed ten children please request the complete Holy Bible Journal edition perfect for keeping notes and insights as you read and study.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed 100 children, you may request this beautifully framed canvas print of "The Forest Chapel" by Thomas Kinkade.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I want to thank you for saving precious little children. But also, listen. Don't take this lightly, these eight ten ton trucks -- eight of them we need -- please help us!

We have some beautiful gifts for you -- the Word of God, the Holy Bible journal edition. I just know that you know we're saying thank you because we love you and want to bless you just like you're helping us bless others.

If you'd like to have Laura's book, *When God Doesn't Fix It*, there is a comfort and an inspiration. And you say, "Would you please send it to me?" It's in the bookstores, get it online, but if you'd like to have it, you just touch one of these children with the hands of love and you just help and just say, "Would you please send me Laura's book too?" We certainly will do it.

Let's say thanks to Laura again for being a blessing.

Laura, bless you and bless Martin. Thank you so much.

Thank you. Thank all of you from the bottom of our heart. Check out stream, the stream.org -- get insight as well as news that matters. Thanks for watching.