

1/19/16
Week 4 WFL
Justin and Emily Wren

James: You all are really, really kind and gracious. Thank you! Welcome to *LIFE Today*, I'm James Robison.

Betty and I are thrilled to have -- can you believe it? We have one of these ultimate fighters. This guy is probably one of the most incredible individuals I've ever met. He is a missionary to the pygmies in the Congo. You've got to hear how they love him.

This is a fantastic book: *Fight for the Forgotten*. Now listen to the subheading: "How a mixed martial artist, (a fighter) stopped fighting for himself and started fighting for others."

Now let me tell you something. He not only fights for their life by being in the midst of their misery and pain as an incredible healing balm of love and care and compassion, but I'm telling you he is literally fighting for their life and their soul and giving them the love of God in such a way that they see him as part of their family.

And then God gave him the most beautiful girl. How in the world this fighter could get this girl? If you do not believe in the grace and glory and greatness and power of almighty God, you just look at Justin Wren and his beautiful wife Emily and welcome them to *LIFE Today*. Here they are right here.

Give me a close up of both of them and come zero in on this little girl sitting here by him with this beautiful smile.

You know what I told you, Emily, that everyone I know that met you on my staff, and knows Betty so well says, "This girl is like Betty." I really consider that one of the sweetest compliments.

How in the world did you ever take to this guy? Tell me the story. I want to know how in the world did you go -- by the way, he is kind of cute. He looks pretty good. How did it happen?

Emily: Other than him being adorable I just...

Justin: That's the first time she's called me that.

Emily: I fell in love with his heart. He has, like you said, the most tender -- one of the most tender hearts you've ever met. I saw that right away.

James: You actually joined him on the mission field. Are you going to continue? When he goes back, he says he is going to do the fight, has that money right, try to add to it if people will help him, which we hope you will. But are you going to be going? Is that going to be part of your mission call too?

Emily: I will. I would like to go at least once a year with him. He is planning on going at least twice or two or three times a year, so I'd like to go.

James: Well, part of it but you're not going to be a full-time missionary, necessarily? You'll be a wife that's praying for the full-time missionaries and for him as he helps; correct?

Emily: Absolutely!

James: Are you good with that?

Justin: I am! I am! We were praying about a lot of different stuff. I took a five-year layoff from professional fighting and sports and we thought maybe we were going to spend nine months a year there and three months back here. So we're still praying it through and just wanting to listen to God and what he wants, we want. But I'm completely okay with that because she's been incredible.

Even going there, we stay exactly like they stay. That's one of the things that really connects us to their hearts; we live in the twig and leaf huts. I mean the twigs are the size of my thumb and the leaves are banana leaves. And if it rains, it rains right on us. We sleep on the dirt; it's turned into mud. We've woken up in the mud before. And so that was actually Emily's first ever camping trip, was actually in the Congo.

[Laughter]

James: You didn't tell about all these camping experiences.

Justin: So she came through three full months.

James: Well, really?

Justin: There's tough stuff that happened from the roaches that maybe crawled over her neck...

James: You're inspiring a lot of people to go on the mission field. I think what we're doing is we're inspiring a lot of people to keep people like you on the mission field. We're going to help you.

Justin: But I think what's great is my name, the family name that was given to me was Efeosa Mbuti MangBO.

James: That is their name they gave you?

Justin: Yes. And Efeosa was the name my literal family there gave me and that means: The man who loves us. That's the one that's so near and dear to my heart. And Mbuti MangBO is now, the Mbuti Pygmies are normally pretty small dudes. They're about four foot seven on average for the men and so they just call me Mbuti MangBO means the big pygmy.

[Laughter]

James: How tall are you by the way?

Justin: I'm 6 foot 3, 265. So I'm a lot different. But what's been so great is that we've become family with them and known them. So Emily has done great in the mission field but there have been struggles too. I just think there is a beautiful story where God came through and answered her prayer only three days later. We were struggling, kind of in the forest; we both had gotten sick, had gotten waterborne illness.

James: You drank some of the water they were drinking and got sick.

Justin: Yeah. We still tried to purify it and something went wrong. Emily was struggling and kind of praying; you can go ahead with that.

Emily: He's more of a rugged guy and going out in the jungle is...

James: I've got to say, you don't look just real rugged.

Emily: I don't?

[Laughter]

James: You look really sweet. Tell us what you were going to say.

Emily: So it's kind of easy to picture him in the mud and everything, whereas I'm not really outdoorsy. I appreciate the outdoors...

James: I'm going to look at it!

Emily: Yes! Look at it! But I didn't really know if I like belonged or how I belonged with the people because I fell in love with the people but I just didn't know how I belonged in the environment. Or "God, am I chosen for this? Can I just be anyone with Justin and would I just be going along for the ride if it was just anyone?"

It was really amazing just one of the last nights we were there, the elders got together and...

Justin: And they're three of the sweetest guys ever. The chief in the tribe and then Bajonjee, one of her favorite guys, and Katula, one of my personal friends who has since passed, but they are the three that gave her her name and I had no clue, she had no clue. Your name...

Emily: So the name they gave me was Lusumae Kumataylee. And Lusumae means chosen and Kumataylee means belongs here.

Betty: Oh, wow! How neat!

Justin: For us it was -- for you, it was an answer. In a time of doubt he came in to remove that doubt.

James: What do you have as a vision? Because I want all of you to really listen. First, tell us the web site where they can go and I hope, perhaps even see some images of what's going on.

The book -- this is, if you have any heart for understanding a missionary's heart, and something that only God can do, and I mean the love and tenderness that's in Justin's heart is just remarkable. He is literally fighting for the helpless. When he fights, it is a sport, it is a martial art sport, it is tough. He came back -- you came back and you fought -- you hadn't fought in years and who was the first fight against? Tell us how big this guy was.

Justin: Yeah, he was like a Mac truck. He was the widest guy I've ever fought. The only guy I could never get my grip around. He was that barrel-chested -- just muscles upon muscle. His head actually sat on top of his shoulders, I think, or the muscles there. But it was tough.

It was five years and two months that I'd taken off because I had fought against people and then five years, five months, and 15 days ago was whenever I submitted and surrendered to the ultimate fighter, Jesus Christ. I felt like he shifted me from fighting against people to fighting for people. And then I felt like he was able to show me that I don't have to do just one or the other. That if I allowed him to use my past, which was being a depressed drunk, drug addict as a fighter...

James: Why were you in all that trouble? What was happening? I don't know if people can see what happened to your arm or not; you've got a long sleeve shirt on. But this literally led you to drug addiction that was in your mind justifiable. But you were in a bad place. So let them see here.

Justin: This scar here was from breaking it, dislocating it, and tearing my ulnar collateral ligament and it was against a world champion in wrestling, and Olympic bronze medalist. The doctors for months, because I was waiting to get surgery, had just given me narcotics and so I got hooked and I got hooked quick.

Then that led to becoming an alcoholic and using cocaine and marijuana all the time; it was a six-year addiction, the battle with that, and a ten-year battle with depression because growing up I'd gotten bullied and that's one of the reasons why I wanted to get into fighting, to not get bullied.

So I battled with depression and suicide for ten full years, addiction for six. I would just say in the most literal and not just figuratively, but literally, God came in with his love and his grace and through what Jesus did, God loved the hell out of me. Literally!

James: And loved you out of hell.

Justin: Right! And so now, beginning to go back into fighting, just a couple of weeks ago, I fought and won.

James: -- This big guy!

Justin: Big, big guy! Luckily, I ended up winning the fight. I had done a lot of training to get back to that point. But on national TV, Spike TV, that's where all my fights will be from now on, I was able to share my testimony.

James: Which is great! That's an audience that have not heard and needed to hear. Because the whole world needs to hear -- the whole world needs to know.

Justin: And then also, we get to tell people about what's going on in Congo and kind of the mission and vision there. When I first got there, the pygmies had no land of their own. They were the first people of Congo but a lot of -- kind of we can relate it to what happened to the Native Americans here. They were the first people that had a lot of their land stolen and pushed off of it. Pygmies are dealing with the same thing in Congo.

So one of our goals was -- one of my first trips there was a little boy named Andibo and that's what gripped my heart for clean water. Because Andibo had passed away either seconds before I picked him up or as I picked him up; and the blood came out of his ears and onto my hands. It forever gripped my heart; it wrecked me. I cried and cried. I dug the grave and had blisters on my hands from that. It was just from dirty water, something that we can just go to a faucet or even use the restroom in and they just didn't have access to it at all.

So I knew to be able to give them clean water first before we could give them a farming project or show them how to farm land they need a land of their own. So Emily and I had come back and we had fundraised for 300 acres of land and two water wells.

James: And we've helped you with that.

Justin: Absolutely! Thank you so much for partnering with us because through that, God's multiplied it and we've legally purchased, in the name of the pygmies, my pygmy family, 2,470 acres of land.

James: Praise God! Isn't that beautiful? God bless them. Will your web site tell a little of the story? And how if people want to go to your web site and say we want to help in a certain way, they may ask, "Is there any way people can go and help?" Will you be able to answer those questions? Correct? What's the web site?

Justin: It's FightForTheForgotten.com. Same name as the ministry, same name as the book: FightForTheForgotten.com or.org. They both go to the same place. We've got videos there. A short documentary clip because now it is going to turn into a full documentary.

My first promise to the chief wasn't that we could give them land or give them water or give them food because I didn't want to promise something I couldn't back up but he pulled me to the side and said, "Efeosa," or "Efe, people don't know about our suffering here. We don't have a voice. Can you help us have one?"

James: Isn't that great?

Justin: So I said yes. That's what the book is doing, is giving them a voice. That's what the documentary will be at Sundance Film Festival next year and it's going to be a full feature length film. The short film is on the web site but the feature length will come out and it's actually going to be not just from my point of view it will be them sitting there speaking and showing how water is changing their lives. So we want to do two water wells, but now God's changed it to where we have employ 18 locals in the Congo that there year round --

James: They're missionaries, that's what they are.

Justin: Absolutely! Missionaries in their own country but they get to be the hands and feet of Christ and we get to say, "Hey, just because you're living in poverty doesn't mean there is not a way out of it. Instead of maybe just the one time charity, we can create an opportunity out of poverty."

So we put the tools in their hands and the knowledge in their heads and we send them out. Emily and I were there for the first 12 water wells and sat back and watched them on the 13th because I actually had my hands-on teaching them, training them. But now, as of two days ago, they have actually doubled the number that we were there for and they've done 26 water wells in the Congo.

James: That is what love inspires. My heart cry is for us to really help the poor. I've said this over and over and I repeat it. I say this to the national government, I say it to Congress, I say it to every candidate, to every hopeful representative or leader, listen to this, you do not help people by making them dependent upon somebody else taking care of them. You give them the capacity through compassion and love and oversight, the ability to do those things which are essential and necessary. You don't stifle them, make them depend upon Pharaoh or any other source of power, you'll end up in Babylonian and Egyptian captivity. Don't do that! You've got to understand this now.

There is some wisdom being spoken to this nation today that is loving everybody right now that feels like we're overlooked. It is love and compassion and giving the people the wherewithal and the ability to make their way out. You're doing it. I'm praying that people will help you who are watching right now. We're going to do our best. We've been helping you, continue helping you.

I wonder if you can see what I see in this couple? I see the glory and the beauty and the love and the strength and the compassion of Christ in your countenance. Their countenance testifies of him. Would you agree with that when you look at them?

[Applause]

Justin: Just so you know, if it's okay. Through the support that you guys have given us, there are stories like Mama Miriamo who is one of our favorite women in the Congo. She was -- she had lost five of her seven children due to waterborne disease. She lost her husband. She had lost her eyesight because of river blindness. We were able to come in there and Emily was there -- that was her first water well celebration to experience.

And those celebrations are so -- I've been to the Super Bowl and the World Series and the N.B.A. finals and I'd fought in front of 6.8 million people and nothing compares to the celebrations or the depth of the joy that comes out of their mouths. Mama Miriamo's village, she was getting two liters of dirty water for her and her two children. And Emily was there and they were able to help me walk her down to the well. It was just such a great celebration because it's literally only 20-25 footsteps out her front door of her hut is clean water. Even though she is blind, she can pump it for herself and have it. It's because of support of the viewers and you that this is all possible.

James: Well, let's just say thanks be to God and thank this couple right now, for your love, your willingness.

And there again is the web site. I really hope you will get the book in the bookstores or online, and give it to others who perhaps have a heart to express the heart and love of God. I will say this to you. Right now we are asking viewers to do what he just expressed thanks for viewers doing. We're asking you in 15 nations, identified by loving people just like this, by missionaries who have planted their lives in the pain and the heartache and the lack all over the world and they're expressing the love of God in direct hands-on acts of compassion. One of the things these missionaries ask us for is, can you help us drill a well in various villages in these 15 countries?

So in trusting God, and turning to you the people of God who love God and love your neighbor, we're asking you to help us drill those 500 wells. You help us, you like to have this book, along with other gifts just to bless you, we'll say thank you. But I want you to look with us and I know that Justin, you and Emily are going to appreciate what you see.

You all know our journey in losing a daughter, how difficult that was and is for parents. But you've also heard us say what a great impact she's made with kingdom imprints and influence with her life. She sowed, Robin sowed seeds of life. And the most beautiful place to see the affect of her life witness is in her family: Her husband and her three children. Her oldest son, we watched graduate from Baylor and he went almost immediately to the mission field. I want you to listen to this just college graduate, and the son, our grandson, the son of this beautiful

daughter, I want you to listen to him talking to us about legitimate needs that we can realistically and effectively meet. Please watch prayerfully.

On the mission field

Announcer: Water! Earth's most abundant natural resource; yet out of this abundance only a tiny fraction of it is suitable for drinking. And suitable is a loose definition.

Chris: Okay, so we're at the water source here in Tchiyala; it's a village in Angola, very remote. This is their primary source of water. It really comes from one area. It is very open to the livestock. You can imagine defecation that can take place; just the contaminants. To be sharing drinking water with farm animals, as you can imagine, could be quite dangerous to the population of the village. What you're seeing here is not a problem isolated to Angola or even the continent of Africa alone. This is a problem that mothers face all over the world.

Announcer: While the problem here is serious, the solution is surprisingly simple and it's already been implemented in this Central American village.

Betty: This is a time when I don't mind watching them stand here and pour water over their head because I know it is good water.

James: That's right! This is a place for which we give great praise to God in gratitude. But we need to drill hundreds of wells like this all over the world. And you can see, if you can't look at these children, look at their faces, look how happy they are, and understand the importance of clean water, it becomes the center of life; schools spring up. We want kids to get an education and we want them to come and get healthy, clean drinking water.

[Cheering]

End of clip

In the studio

James: Betty, as we watch that water running out and then we look down at that little pan and saw that crystal clear water, and compared to all the places that you and I have knelt and looked at, and I've watched you kneeling by filthy water and talking to the camera to people back at home saying, "This is their water source. Can we please give them a fresh well?" And we have given thousands because of you.

Betty and I signed on not just to go and to support with our presence but also with our resources. We asked God in a very direct way, would you let us drill a well every time the missionaries show us there's a need -- every year? And I mean God in a beautiful way answered that prayer.

And many of you have joined in that; you've asked the Lord every year, "Let us drill a well." We've had some businesses, some corporations, some churches who said, "We'll drill a well. We want to join in that effort, in that commitment."

And, Betty, I believe that our viewers are going to do that whether they give the \$4800 for a well or they give a part of that or they give what most people give, the \$48 that gives ten people Water for Life. I believe you're going to help.

Betty: There's no doubt in my mind that you will -- and in my heart, because when we're able to show you the results, this is the fun part, to see them jumping up and down in the water, to see them pouring the water over their precious faces.

And best of all, is the smiles that you see on their faces. Because you see, this water is more than just a little puddle for them to jump around in, it means life to them. The difference in the diseased water and the clean water, is to purify their little bodies and keep them from getting all the disease that they have when they drink the dirty water.

So please continue to join with us. We'd love to show you these kinds of results. But to be able to do that, we have to keep reaching out, James, and drilling the water wells.

James: You really are the ones who do it. Betty and I will do our part sharing the heart of God. We're asking you to do that. If you can drill a well, please do so. I believe you will. If you could drill part of one, pray others join you so that we have the well. But many of you will give the gift that many others give, \$144, gives 30 people water for the rest of their life, or \$48, and give ten people water the rest of their life.

We have some gifts to send you, to inspire you, to be a blessing to you, and an encouragement - and also to become a conversation piece. The bronzes that we give become conversation pieces. "Where did that come from?"

And you're able to tell them, "We're sharing water. We're sharing life, we're sharing the love of God." And you tell them what you do; many others will join you just on that testimony.

Would you go to LifeToday.org right now? Many people want to give online and it is like instant, we've got the resource. Or you can dial the number. Either way go to LifeToday.org, dial the number, take your bankcard, use it like a check right now, please!

Father, help them to be anxious to do it and to make the best gift they can; in Jesus' name.

Would you right now take that bankcard and use it like a check? Thank you for giving life! Thank you so much!

Begin video clip

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

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 15 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for 5 people; \$48 will help provide for 10 people; \$72 will impact 15 people. And \$144 will help provide for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift we would like to send you James Robison's book, *God of All Creation*. Through his personal observations of animals and wildlife, James shares heartwarming stories and spiritual lessons of God's love and grace.

With your gift of \$100 or more, be sure to request *Majesty*. This beautifully illustrated book teaches you the blessing and significance of the names of God, including Jehovah Rapha, your healer and Jehovah Jireh, your provider.

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 you may request our beautiful new "Majesty" bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: Honey, I appreciate the way you shared and I really do believe our viewers are going to do exactly what they were encouraged to do. Would you please today give a cup of water in

Jesus' name? -- Water for Life to demonstrate the power of the water of life and so they'll come to know him -- that water?

We have beautiful gifts to send you if you'd like to have Justin Wren's book, *Fight for the Forgotten*. Tremendous story! A living testimony of the living God right now expressing himself through I believe a very yielded vessel -- a very yielded couple. So if you'd like to have it, just help us give water and we'll be so glad to do it.

Remember to go to Justin's web site, check out what they're doing and be involved in any way God leads you to.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Justin and Emily?

You're a blessing!

You're a beautiful couple! God bless you! Thank you so much.

Thanks for watching. Thanks for sharing *LIFE Today*. Check out The Stream -- stream.org every day. Thank y'all! Thank you!