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Week 15: Spring Mission Feeding
Jennifer Garner and Christy Beam

James: We welcome you. Thank all of you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have you.

I've already told one of our guests who is a very well-known actress that we've had Robert Duvall here a number of times and my goodness, there is just no comparison. This lady is absolutely beautiful!

We have also the individual that she is representing in a movie, *The Miracles from Heaven* and it is about miracles. I really want you to give a warm welcome to Jennifer Garner and also to Christy Beam who is with us. Would you welcome them to *LIFE Today*? We're glad to see both of you.

Christy, you were here just over a year ago when you told the story of your daughter, which was just an unbelievable miracle. Here is a little girl who is fighting a disease, takes a terrible fall, and first of all you didn't know if she was going to get out alive. But she not only came out alive, she came out with a miracle.

The book came out and in perhaps the shortest time ever following a book here is a movie. So how do you feel about what you're watching? Does it look like you're just seeing a continuation of miracles?

Christy: It is! When I watch it, at some moments it is very hard because Jennifer does such an amazing job and Kylie does such an amazing job that I feel like I'm reliving it. It is so very real. And at other times where it is not quite so accurate, you find yourself involved, just enveloped into it. And in that moment I can reflect back to the book, which is the true story and they go well together. They complement each other. So the whole thing is just amazing.

James: Let me ask you about the plural title, "Miracles." I found myself wondering as I began to hear about the movie, this is a series of miracles of which this is just one or is it the miracles that you witnessed yourself in the journey with your daughter?

Christy: It was the miracles that we had experienced during the journey with our daughter. But oftentimes, because it was so hard and the struggle was so very real, my head was down and I was just trying to get through each day. But when I had the opportunity to reflect back, I could

see all these miracles that God was performing around us, these small miracles in waiting for the huge miracle. But I had missed the small ones because I was waiting for the big one.

James: Do you think that happens to a lot of people that realize just what's in process of taking place even miraculously?

Christy: Absolutely!

James: Jennifer, how did you get interested in this? Because you indicated to me just in a brief visit that somehow it captured your attention right off.

Jennifer: Oh, without a doubt. Christy's story and her family's story, sweet Annabel, I was just so taken with their struggle and their pain. I loved the story of hope. I loved the inspiration that people will find at the end of the movie. I love putting something out in the world that I think is really encouraging. And I was encouraged by it and continue to be.

So I stayed up all night the first night that I read the script and felt like, I can't believe that children are going through something so awful. I've never even heard of it -- Pseudo-obstruction motility disorder -- what in the world is that? And it is awful! And here is this true little girl and not to mention them, the miracle. I felt like if Christy can go through it for real and if they want me, I will do my best to honor her experiences.

James: Well, everybody, and she has already indicated, said you did an incredible job of actually moving into that role as though you were actually experiencing it. How do you explain your ability to get into that situation? I know there is the skill of the actress and so forth, or the actor but you seem to have more than just okay, this is a role I'm playing. You seem to actually care about not only the incident but the message that, the impact that that message could make. You look like you really got involved like that.

Jennifer: Well, I don't think that you could play Christy... I'm sure any actress who would have played the role would have found her heart just broken open by what happened to this little girl, and certainly, working with Kylie Rogers who plays my daughter, who plays Annabel. In the movie, she and I had such a deep and true connection and we dove so deep so quickly in how to get each other through these incredibly emotional scenes. And it was gut wrenching. You don't have to think very hard or go very far in your imagination if you think if I were this child's mother and if this child started having these symptoms and if the doctors were not taking me seriously, to really find yourself right in the middle of an emotional whirlwind.

But I was always aware and one of the great gifts of this film to me was perspective. I was always aware that I got to go home to healthy babies and that is not something to be taken for

granted. I think just my gratitude for that alone sometimes pushed me into a scene in a way that I wasn't even expecting.

Betty: Don't you think that the story itself will draw people? Because so many people are going through situations like that and even worse, they're looking for a miracle.

I think what you said about the small miracles -- is that something you hope people come away from, to notice more about things God's doing in their lives that may not be so spectacular to anyone else?

Christy: Absolutely. Because I feel like that's my platform, that's my ministry now, is to encourage people that a lot of times, we do have our head down and we're just trudging along, one foot in front of the other. And we think I've just got to fight, fight, fight. That's right but we're missing so much. We're missing the true arms of Christ reaching around and loving us through others, through acts of others, through events of others. I mean there is so much we can be missing.

And my encouragement is to just look up -- look up and look around you because you're missing so much that would give you the courage and the encouragement you need to go another day.

James: Our audience around the world is people who by and large would say we're Christians, we've trusted Christ. We want the best that God our Father has and offers, we want people to experience it. And our viewers are very compassionate people. They have learned when they see a need if they can meet it they do so. I often say if you want your prayers answered, seek to be an answer to someone else's prayers. This is precisely what our viewers seek to do. So they want the best for others.

Now when you look at the film and you're thinking about all the people, why would you want them to go? Let's just ask you as an actress, who has played many roles in Hollywood and you're well-known. Sometimes the entertainment community seemed to be out of touch with reality. It's like they're only living in a make-believe world.

Well, these are serious people who watch us and they are people serious about wanting to bless others. Actually, you referenced "put the arms of God around people." They really want to do that as the body of Christ, as Christians we ought to want to put God's arms around people.

What do you hope that the viewers listening to us right now will take away, first of all from your invitation to go, but what do you hope they take away from the movie when they go and

see it? And how do you hope it affects people who perhaps haven't even given God a lot of thought?

Jennifer: I hope that people walk away feeling hope in their heart. I hope they walk away feeling the power of community, the power of fellowship, the power of family and of faith. And I hope they walk away sensing...

My mom is such a strong force in my life. She taught my sisters and me always happiness is your responsibility. And when things are the darkest, look smaller and smaller; find smaller and smaller pockets of joy and let them feed you.

That's exactly Christy's message. So any time Christy's message can get out there, they're the words of Pat Garner as well, and that's something great for me.

James: Where is your mom?

Jennifer: Well, she is -- well, she is from Oklahoma, from Locust Grove, Oklahoma and lived here in Texas where I was born. Then my parents live in West Virginia now.

James: Well, mom thank you! You've done beautifully, what you said and what you imparted. It's just like this is what the story is about.

Christy, when you think about our viewers, you want them to want to go to the movie, who should they encourage to go? Who should they try to take with them? And what do you hope they take away when they walk out of the theater? What are you praying has happened in their own lives?

Christy: Well, first of all, I feel like anyone can go see this movie, any age can be reached. No matter what age you are, you have trials, you have struggles. Elementary school kids all the way up to parents, people my parents' age. I just feel like everyone can be reached and touched through this experience the movie, the book.

But I also want people to walk away with a new lens on life. They see life differently; they see life with more joy, with more hope. I want them to not only be encouraged but be that encourager for others -- be that extension of the arms of Christ for others -- Be that miracle for someone else.

James: Now you're kind of delivering the same message we try to deliver right here. You know what our viewers have found? If you'll show them an opportunity to make a difference and then you show them the affect that love has, which in my own estimation of what I know

about the book and the movie, people are going to see what love does; not just the miracle that only God could perform but all the miracles that God performed through other people.

Could we look at one of the trailers? I think the trailer -- are you pretty excited about the message the trailer communicates? I know it's only a couple of minutes. Let's watch that. I want to see that. I want to look at it. I haven't seen it yet.

Begin video clip

[Kids Laughing]

>> Cheers!

>> Today let's do Benjamin Franklin: An investment in knowledge pays the best interest. Okay, listen to your teachers!

>> Love you!

>> Love you!

>> It's a good life! It's a good life.

>> It's a good life!

>> Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!

>> I'm coming.

[Ominous music]

>> Mommy, it hurts!

>> Oh, no, baby.

>> When Anna got sick, I just couldn't understand it. Why was this loving little girl going through this?

>> I think your daughter is lactose intolerant.

>> Acid reflux.

>> Everything looks okay.

>> Everything is fine.

>> Everything is not fine! There is something wrong with our little girl.

>> Mrs. Beam, you need to calm down.

>> I'm not leaving this hospital until I know what's wrong with my daughter!

>> Unfortunately, the tests affirm that she is very ill. There is currently no cure for Anna's condition.

>> Doctor, please, this is our little girl.

>> I'm scared mom.

>> Me too.

>> We're not giving up.

[Music]

>> We need a solution. We need it now.

>> We'll get it.

>> How?

>> By not losing our faith.

>> How long have you been married?

>> Fourteen years.

>> Free her from this. Can you even hear me?

[Child screaming]

[Music]

>> So you're telling me that when this baby girl fell 30 feet she hit her head just right and it didn't kill her and it didn't paralyze her -- it healed her?

>> Yes.

>> But that's impossible!

>> It's a little hard to believe. There's a lot of people out there that are just looking for -- .

>> A lot of people think we're crazy.

>> You either roll with it or you get rolled on.

>> Whoa hoo!

>> He told me I'd be fine.

>> Who told you you'd be fine?

End of clip

In the studio

James: Wow! I'm just experiencing a real strange gamut of emotions. I watch Jennifer reach over to comfort you. You're reliving the trauma. I know there is gratitude and yet you wanted to comfort her.

I've got to say, you look like you really moved into the role. It looked like, Jennifer it was more than acting, it was like suddenly I feel what mom had to feel. Am I right about that?

Jennifer: I don't know. It is hard to talk about your experience as an actor. I know that I was so moved by what Christy had gone through and really by what all moms of sick children go through, that incredible pain and that incredible struggle. I was so moved by it that it just -- I know that it broke my heart open to go to work every day.

James: Let me just say to the viewers because I felt while I was watching that and I know you would understand this, both of you would, that some of you are fighting for that miracle.

Most of you know Betty and I pretty well. You watch us. You know we lost a daughter, our youngest daughter to the battle that she didn't win when she signed every e-mail, "In the battle I win." And to hear her oldest son at her funeral say, "She has in fact won."

I find myself to you beautiful ladies, saying to every person wherever your heart aches, Almighty God and Father, and I believe the family that know him and love him love you and we want you in your battle to feel the comfort. I think it really will be very important and a blessing to see this movie and see the miracles that were already happening before the unbelievable, the hoped for miracle actually occurred.

So what they're trying to do is communicate that there are so many miracles you mustn't overlook. I want all of you to be aware, just as this actress is moved and Christy has got the experience and now the movie and Betty and I have felt a lot of the things you feel and we try to alleviate suffering all over the world because of you we're able to do it, let me just say to you, God cares very much about you where you are. He very much wants to hold you. And he wants all of us to literally become his arms, which was expressed already on this program.

Father, I pray for everyone with a broken heart where they didn't see the hoped-for miracle. You become the miracle of comfort and grace that only you can provide; in Jesus' name.

Jennifer and Christy, I just pray that your story and the story you portrayed will be a healing factor in ways we may not understand for many people. Do you know what I find myself hoping for, and you tell me if you think the movie could in some way help this, wouldn't it be wonderful if the people on this planet and the people here in our nation could actually really love one another and appreciate the distinctive differences, and the diversity in God's unique creation? And that we could really love one another? Do you think that this movie could inspire that kind of love?

Jennifer, as an actress, do you feel like it might move people to think more clearly?

Jennifer: I think that the whole point of art is to bring together -- to challenge but to bring together and to unify people. Sometimes people can use it in different ways but certainly in this case, that is our highest, highest goal. Why not? Why couldn't it? Even if it only engenders a handful of conversations that wouldn't have happened otherwise, even if it only touches some people instead of everyone, well, what more could you hope for?

James: Sure! T.D. Jakes has been our guest many times. I opened the dedication of The Potter's House years ago. He seemed to feel like this was like a parable that Jesus would tell. So the story would reveal spiritual truth. Do you feel like that is exactly what can happen, Christy?

Christy: Absolutely! I feel like there is so much. God's hand has been on this from the very beginning. One thing that I learned through it all is if God loves Annabel more than I do, which is incomprehensible, then how big can his plans be? They are so big that I can't even fathom. And he has been true to that up till now, how much greater are his plans for the people who receive this for their lives, for the lives of their family members? I can't even begin to comprehend what he has in store.

James: Would you like to just say thanks to Christy and Jennifer for sharing their story and the -- story.

I do want to encourage you to go. This is the opening weekend. Of course, the reference to Easter, it is about life, it is about the greatest miracle of all and that is that Jesus is alive. He is indeed risen and he lives to live in us and to express his love and life through us. I just thank both of you for the story.

Our viewers literally, continually find great joy in reaching out with the hands of Jesus to offer to those in need that which they desperately need. We don't just talk about the love of God, we demonstrate it.

I want you to join me and Betty on a journey that started years ago. It's led to the saving of millions and millions of precious lives. I want you to watch. Go on that journey and then know this, you can be a part of a very real miracle right now, an undeniable miracle.

On the mission field

James: There is no grip. The child was not breathing at all. We came in here and began to pray.

They just look like they're in a daze. They're coming here to get food.

God bless you little fella! That's great. The little children like this one here are so much fewer.

>> James, Betty, I can see how your hearts were broken through your many years of traveling throughout Africa. I will say this. It doesn't take long before you see a lot of beautiful work that's been done here through our missionary partners. I want to say we're not finished yet.

These children are dying. They're telling us every six seconds a child dies because of malnutrition.

Announcer: In Angola alone, the grim fact is malnutrition causes nearly half of children's deaths under the age of five. The sight of children struggling to live because they simply lack enough food to eat is the reason *LIFE Outreach* continues to go into the areas of Africa that are crying out for help. And in place of death, a bowl of food a day can literally become a miracle of life.

>> We must do more. Please! Whatever it takes, we have to reach out to little children like Joseph here. I can see it in his eyes almost. You probably can too where he's just hoping somebody will believe in him enough to reach out and rescue his life. The solution is really a simple bowl of food through mission feeding so these children can live.

End of clip

In the studio

James: And that is precisely what love does.

You didn't see it but the moment we went to that piece, Jennifer Garner, our guest, she reached over, across me to Betty, and to me, to offer comfort when she learned that we had lost our baby girl. That was compassion.

It's that same compassion that she offered us that God wants to pour out through his people all over the world. And it is so easy to talk about love, and so seldom is it really demonstrated when we have the opportunity. It's just that we overlook. And I'm grateful that I believe with all my heart you don't overlook.

We have right now because of the missionaries and relief workers who planted their lives, filled with love and compassion, in the midst of pain and suffering to offer hope. They would be empty-handed, ineffective if we didn't give them the wherewithal. The missionaries said to me and Betty when you saw years ago, I still had black hair, we're on the mission field, they said, "Please!"

Because we wanted to stay. We said, "I think we'll just move over here."

They said, "Please don't!" They said, "Go back and tell the people so we can stay here and be able to help."

And we did it. You have been incredible in expressing love.

So what we're asking you to do right now, Betty, we know the missionaries have reported. We've got 400,000 children right now located and organized in feeding centers where we can actually begin to distribute the food as you saw us doing. But we need your help to do it. A gift of \$30, a gift of \$50, a gift of \$100, this seems almost impossible to believe but it's the truth, \$30, \$50, or \$100, the missionaries are able to feed three, five, or ten children for the next several months.

A group of our friends who are so full of God's love said, "We will match whatever you give to feed 50,000 of those children," which means our gifts today can be doubled. And your \$30, \$50, or \$100 will feed now six, or double the five to ten, or the 10 to 20. So we believe that you want to express the love of God freely.

Would you right now good to LifeToday.org or dial that number that's there as a prayer line for anyone with a broken heart or concern? Always there -- and it's paid for by love. Would you dial the number or go online and take your bankcard and simply make the largest gift you can, whatever God puts on your heart? Knowing that for 50,000 of those children it will be doubled -- that's wonderful! Thank you friends! Would you do that right now? I know you want to share the life and the love of God, not just in word but in action, in deed.

Thank you so much for doing it! Thank you for making the gift God put on your heart and the greatest gift is the gift of life; that's what you give when you express the love of God. Thanks for doing it!

Begin video clip

Announcer: In remote and impoverished areas of Angola, Africa, families are suffering, crops have failed. There is no food. And those hit the hardest are the children.

In response to this crisis, Life Outreach has received a 50,000 children challenge that with your help will feed and minister to 100,000 children over the next few months. With previous food reserves gone and Angola facing a severe food shortage due to crop failure, this challenge could not have come at a better time to help replenish supplies for the feeding programs touching the lives of children across Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan.

The 50,000 children challenge means more children can be saved and your gift will have a double-impact helping to feed twice as many children. Your gift of \$30 to help feed three children will now be doubled to help feed six children! Gifts of \$50 to help feed five children will be doubled to help save ten. And gifts of \$100 for 10 children will be doubled to help feed and care for 20 children.

With a gift of \$1,000 or more you can double your impact to help feed 200 children. And also request the "Majesty" bronze sculpture featuring a beautiful buck in regal stance reflecting God's presence and majesty in all the earth!

Please call the number seen here, write LIFE, or go online today to LifeToday.org and make your life-saving, double-impact gift today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I, in behalf of all the children you help and their families, and the prayers that are being answered... I want to mention this to both of you that when that roll-in first started and you saw us kneeling in Angola and praying over a little baby that did die a few years later, perhaps one of the most famous pictures ever taken, that ever will be taken seen around the world was right there in that same hospital, was Princess Di holding a little baby boy that we had saved at that hospital, the viewers. And he was a healthy, beautiful little baby. Right there in that setting of death, there was life. And Princess Di said, "Let's feed the hungry." And that was a message heard around the world.

I'm praying that the message that you portrayed, and the one that you experienced, will be heard around the world so that we will trust God for the miracles we need and the miracle healing of hearts and lives -- and even perhaps our own nation. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

Would you say again thank you Jennifer, thank you Christy? What a blessing! Both of you beautiful ladies are a tremendous blessing. Jennifer, thank you for the role you played. Thank you for your encouragement.

Thank all of you for sharing *LIFE Today*! Encourage your friends -- and you go see that movie, Miracles from Heaven. You're going to be glad you did!