

4/14/16 Week 16
Spring Mission Feeding last week
Sheila Walsh
Living in Love #1

Sheila: Hello! Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh. And before you panic and go flicking for the channel looking for James and Betty, they are here with me because this is a very, very special day. This day, even though we're going to be taping shows all week, there is the actual day of their 53rd wedding anniversary. Pretty amazing!

So we're so excited that you're here! And I am thrilled beyond belief that I get the opportunity, the privilege of interviewing you. Let me just ask first of all, that's quite a cake you've got there!

Betty: I think that's bigger than the one we actually had at our wedding.

James: It's a whole lot bigger. I think we may have a picture of it. See it here, right over our shoulder. Obviously, we're eating some of it. I think I have the bigger piece obviously. Then you can see some of the other pictures. You'll see Betty and I standing there by the cake.

Sheila: James and Betty, what memories come flooding back when you look at these photos?

Betty: Oh, wow! One thing there is probably one or two other pictures -- that's the whole album. That's all we could afford.

James: The cake was provided by her mother who worked at a bakery and the flowers were provided by one of the children of the foster parents who had given me a home because they owned a florist. So that's how we got that.

That's the original little top knot that's on there -- the little top decorative piece. Betty said it looked like it may be needed to be bleached out to match the cake. I said, well, it's just off white.

Sheila: 53 years old, it's pretty good!

James: But anyway, the picture, you see Betty and me standing there together, that beautiful bride and I'm quite trim there. You can see I was 6' 3" then, probably weighed about 185.

Betty: You're still 6' 3".

James: We won't discuss the rest.

[Laughter]

But then there we are with Reverend Hale, that I called "pop" and "dad" and "the Bible."

I want to just pause a moment, if it's okay, and I want to thank God for the 53 years. Father, I thank you for 53 years with this beautiful, beautiful treasure. Lord, the greatest strength apart from your spirit in my life and the incredible blessing she's been as she's lifted me up. Thank you for her.

Father, I pray for every person right now that is perhaps struggling or hurt in some way related to their relationship or maybe they've lost a partner. God, I'm asking you to use the program today and all week to really be able to lift people up into your arms where they feel closer to you than they've ever been, whatever the need. Lord, if you would just do the miracle to bring about the relationship that you long for, for everyone and that we have at least been able to experience and express gratitude for, Lord. I would be so grateful to you if you would do that for our viewers; in Jesus' name.

Thank you, Sheila. It's sure to have you here with us. I don't know how many of you know that Sheila is full-time with *LIFE Today* now and full-time with The Stream and *LIFE Outreach*. Would you just like to say praise God and thank you, Sheila? We're so glad!

Sheila: I have a real job. Whoo! It's interesting; I let some of our Facebook family know that I was going to have this opportunity. And I asked them what things they would like to ask you. One of the questions one of the viewers said, "I watch James and Betty all the time and they seem so genuinely love each other. Would you ask them, is that the way things really are? Or do you just manage to get together for the show and then afterwards you drive home in separate vehicles?"

[Laughter]

James: Neither one of us are very good actors. We can't pretend. As a matter of fact, we don't hold our feelings when we have a heated discussion, which we have them frequently still. And the beautiful thing about it is that they actually become something to laugh about because we have such love.

I just get to watching her, that smile, she just disarms me. She just wipes me out.

Betty: I need to use that more when I want to get my way.

James: It works! It definitely works!

[Laughter]

But we're absolutely crazy about each other. It's not a front. We have fun together.

Betty: At 19, that's pretty young when we got married. We loved each other as much as we knew how to love. But because of God and him in the center of our relationship, that love has grown and it just gets better as the years go by. It really does.

Sheila: Someone wrote and said, "When I got married I thought my husband would be this and I thought he would be that and I thought he'd heal this and it's not happened." What kind of expectations did you have Betty entering into marriage?

Betty: I think that's probably the way with a lot of women when they first get married: Their knight in shining armor. And he is my shining knight. I thought when I came into the marriage he's going to be all my joy, all my peace. He's just going to be there at my beck and call. And he's going to make me feel safe and secure. He did all these things but you never can live up to it because it's too much pressure to put on one person.

But I had to find that relationship with God first. I knew him but my relationship had not grown as it should. When I got in the right place, God first, and then my husband, I could love him better and it helped him because it took the pressure off of him so that he didn't have to be all things to me.

Sheila: One of the things that I think is that marriage is the ideal place for us to learn who we really are at our core. Because you can't, as you say, you're not good at pretending. I know that about you both. You are two of the most genuine, real, loving, compassionate people I have ever known. But in a marriage, who you are is going to come to the surface.

So what do you say to maybe a husband and wife who are watching in right now and thinking, you know what? I wish I could say that was true. But disappointment for me is greater than any pluses in the marriage. What do you say to people who think, I'm not sure we're going to make it.

James: I think we really understood the wedding vows that we were in a commitment, first to

God, then to one another and that it was for better or worse, rich or poor. We definitely started poor.

[Laughter]

And we never pursued things, we pursued God together.

I think that I was, because I was a fatherless child, she had a home but her dad didn't lead, he had a drinking problem. Mine was a missing father who had raped my mother. So I lived in a very dysfunctional situation.

I did not know anything about how to let's say behave as a husband should initially. I just loved her. I was called to preach and God gifted me in such a way that it was indescribable the way he blessed it. I really love God and I really love people, and just to be honest with you, Sheila, from the get go, I think I began to neglect my focus and responsibility. I don't even think I saw it clearly. And I was very much committed to athletics and sports. And I would go out and hang with the guys. The day we got married, which is hard to believe, I played in the state championship basketball game earlier that day.

Sheila: And you're still here, Betty! What a woman! What a woman!

James: Exactly! And the thing about it is, I don't think I was sensitive like I needed to be. I had so much to learn. I'm 72 years old now and I'm still on the learning journey. I will say that I was a person anxious to learn. I do think that I was one that could be taught when you would reach out to me in love or point something out. We got to where we could share, if I hurt her and she didn't understand or she shared her feelings, I didn't just walk off. She also learned right up front that if she didn't seem to be getting through...

Betty: I could pout!

James: You disappeared to pout.

Sheila: Spiritual gift of pouting.

Betty: I definitely had that down. That was one thing that we got straight first off in our marriage was he said, "We will not have pouters around this house."

[Laughter]

Sheila: That's great because you're actually grabbing hold of something in the beginning stages and not allowing it to become a pattern.

James: I knew that we couldn't settle anything if she just disappeared.

Betty: Well, I wasn't a confronter.

James: Seething, and that settling in was going to do irreparable damage. If she didn't come back, when I'd say, "Come back in here" she didn't mind me like I'm sure you always have when your husband says something to you.

[Laughter]

But I would go to her and I would say, "Look at me, and we're going to talk." That pattern has never changed. As a matter of fact, we had a little disagreement this week. She disappears around the corner headed to the bedroom. I said, "Stop! Stop!" So she stops. I said, "Turn around this way. Look! Look here! Let's come in. Let's sit down and talk." And you did; right?

Betty: I did!

James: And we got happy in just a few minutes.

Sheila: I totally get that, Betty. I totally get the walking off and I just don't want to deal with this right now.

James: It's not good!

Sheila: It's not good.

Betty: Also, when we'd had disagreements, I felt like he was the master of words. I'd say, "Okay, I quit. I can't outtalk you. I can't win this battle." And he had a little way of sometimes when he was pretty clever, even if it was his fault he made me think it was my fault.

James: Yeah, she said, "You have learned how to apologize in such a way as to make me know it was my fault." She said, "You're the master of it." I had to go ahead and grin.

But here's the deal. We are laughing about this because we just don't let that seething stay. It is worse than a disease. I would say one of the great things that happened to us is that we recognize we had to communicate openly and honestly from the get go.

Betty: Well, my older sister, one thing she did that helped me in preparation before the wedding and everything, she said, "I'm going to give you some advice." She said, "Please, in that scripture where it says don't let the sun go down on your wrath," she said, "That is so true. If you let it happen, there is something that happens to the spirit. If you do, it hardens the heart and it makes it harder to break through and to come to a good conclusion."

You can come to a good conclusion in that we will agree to disagree but don't go to bed angry with one another.

James: We never have gone to bed, go to sleep angry. We've gone three weeks without sleep.

[Laughter]

Betty: No!

Sheila: That is not true! I know that's not true. But there is something about what you say, even though as you say we are laughing, it's a huge issue because my husband has said to me at times, "Sheila, you're very clever with your words but sometimes it would be more important to me that you be kind than you be right." I think that can be a real issue in a marriage.

Betty: I think that when we both realized very early that we need to listen to each one's heart, not just the words that are being spoken, and that way it would make us pause before we spoke because really speak from your heart. I tried to hear his heart and he tried so hard to hear my heart too. It really made a difference. It changed the whole makeup of the disagreement.

James: There is a determination and those of you who are looking in. I don't know where you are but I have said this many times on *LIFE Today* or if I'm speaking in a public setting that when I talk about the blessings of God on our life or our family, and I say it with the greatest gratitude one could ever have in their heart, I always think about sadly, the majority of people sitting out in front of me can't say that. They don't have a joyful relationship or their children are not necessarily walking in such a way that they can simply give praise because they've got a heavy heart of concern.

One of the things that I would like to say to you is that wherever you are in your journey, if you would just make up your mind, I'm going to seek God with all my heart, I'm going to pray, I'm going to trust the other person that I'm concerned about into the hands of God, one of the things I feel like that you learned was that you could not correct the issues in my life. You had to turn

me over to someone much greater, much more able to shape me than you were. I think a lot of women make that mistake.

Betty: A lot of women go into a marriage and they might see some of the things they wish were different. "Oh, well, I can change that." You can't! It has to be God that does those changes.

But the thing that helps is if you don't try, as a wife, mother that husband, because that won't work either, you've got to leave it in the hands of God and say God, let me be the example that would make him want to change. The change has to start here first.

Sheila: I hope you're taking notes, people because this is good stuff. You talk, James about the fact that you were able to say to Betty, "Stop! And turn around." One of the things, I know in my own life is when we come into marriage we come in with a lot of baggage, more than just the luggage we have at the honeymoon. We have all our hidden baggage. And if you've had a bad relationship with your father or no relationship that could be hard to hear.

Because I think sometimes husbands and wives, we respond in a way that we're not responding to each other, we're responding out of years of stuff. How were you able, Betty to hear James' heart and not just his Words?

Betty: It was a journey too. It doesn't just happen. It takes time. God had to get my attention first. He said, "If you want him to hear you, you've got to hear me first." That makes a difference. He had to get my attention first because we've had those times when we just shout at one another, words just flying and even say some words we didn't mean, really, and have to come back and apologize for that. So it takes -- there's a process there.

James: I'm so strong and forceful as you can easily tell. To make a point, I've been often wrong but never in doubt.

[Laughter]

But the thing is that I would make my point so strongly and because she is like a rose, you could bruise her, she is delicate, and I would see that I am hurting her and I would pull back. But what happened to her is she would begin to come back as forceful as me and be like a tiger. And she would be coming at me so strong I'd start clapping for her. I'd start cheering, "Come on, Betty! Go girl!"

Betty: And you know what that does to a disagreement!

Sheila: It's so hard to keep arguing when you're clapping. I know!

James: We really could cheer for one another in the way we're trying to make our case. I am her greatest cheerleader.

Betty: You are.

James: No question about it. Even when she's setting me straight. I just wish -- listen to me -- I wish you could have this joy together in the relationship and you can but it is a spiritual thing. It is something God does.

Sheila: You have this fantastic book, *Living in Love* and one of the things you talk about, I think it's in chapter four, is the difference about entering a marriage and thinking, this is a covenant or this is a contract -- that's huge distinction.

James: Let's talk about that in the next program. Can we do that?

Sheila: Let's talk about that in the next program because apparently we don't have enough time in this program.

James: Do you know why I'm saying that? Someone just gave me this notice.

Here's the thing. Our viewers know with no exaggeration, we want to be a blessing to you. Sheila, we are thrilled when you would come with the Women of Faith or others, you would come and share something God had put on your heart because it ministered to people. We have tried to share the very best in the body of Christ with everyone God wants to put his arms around and reach out to.

And so our viewers have learned, you have learned this, they want to touch someone with the love of God. This happens to be the last week of our mission feeding emphasis where we need to raise a tremendous amount of money to care for 400,000 children. So that's the reason I said, "Can we talk about that tomorrow?"

And you've watched what we're doing. Your son came in here when he was very young with a whole bag of money. He had been raising money to help us feed children and take care of them. So you've been watching what we're doing for a long time.

Sheila: I don't think there is anything that blesses me more about your ministry than the way you have eternally impacted the lives of millions and millions of children -- and you've never stopped. You keep going. People are on the road at the moment doing this.

James: Well, we could only do it because of our viewers. I want you to look in on what I believe will be one of the most moving moments you've ever witnessed.

What I'd like you to do because we've actually been praying that we might be able to touch you in your relationship, however damaged it may be, however stressed or strained the situation may be in your family that somehow during the course of this week and in this program, you might be encouraged and you might be blessed.

At the same time, I think many of you would like to reach out and become the needed miracle that you really can be in a very serious situation. Watch this very closely.

On the mission field

Janice: Just a few minutes ago we rolled into this village, a very small village. I asked how many lived in this village and an estimate of over 500 people. Then we asked any women that had lost a child to come over. And here they are. This group of women have lost over 150 children. It is not a club you want to be in.

It's just not right! They died because they didn't have enough food.

Nowhere in our world today should women expect to lose a child to malnutrition for lack of food. I just ran past each one of these ladies and asked them individually to show me how many babies they've lost. To lose one child would devastate you for life. But these women together have lost 150. Many five -- many over five!

I went one by one and looked each woman in their eye and held the fingers of the number of children they lost and I said, "Please heal them, Lord! And please don't let another child die in this village."

She's lost eight children. Can you see it in her eyes?

We as a body of believers are for justice and part of justice is making things like this stop, making the death cycle in a village like this stop. And if we have in our ability to change something we should do it. We must do it. Be a part of making this cycle end.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Janice, I know you're watching the program. That was Janice that was holding that lady's fingers representing babies. The way Janice held her hand was tender and caring that I somehow identify with the pain.

And we want to stop the cycle. Betty, we've been able to stop the cycle in so many areas, miraculously. The thing you need to understand is it's been more than 25 years that we have been reaching out. Many of the children whose lives we've saved are now leaders in a community, they are teachers, some of them are professors. Many of them are in some form of law enforcement for their own nation and country. We have seen nations totally transformed by the power of love.

One of the examples is Mozambique. A miracle took place there -- and I'm talking a big miracle! You are the reason that that took place. The African government, every one of them, have reported to us that "You've saved millions of our children's lives." So who did that? God did that through people who wanted to reach out in love.

And Betty, I'm believing that every single viewer this last week of mission feeding, this particular emphasis, that every viewer will help and I believe make the gift so we can share life and food with these children.

Betty: James, our friends have been so faithful. You really have. You've really come up and filled the need with your love, your support and we thank you so very much. This is important! These children don't have to die because of lack of food. We can help these mothers.

Can you imagine losing eight children? We've lost one and it's so heartbreaking but I can't even imagine the burden that that mother carries -- and could be others dying if we can't reach out and help them with the food.

So please join us. Let's make the difference in the lives of these mothers to see their children smile. You know what it's like to have a child to smile back at you.

James: Well, I believe the miracle is going to occur. This is the last week now of our emphasis. We've got 400,000 children that are now organized in areas where we can feed them. The missionaries and relief workers are there. We're the ones that give them the food to distribute.

Would you right now please go to LifeToday.org or dial the number there? People are calling today asking throughout the program to pray for their marriage, to pray for someone in their family, and rightly so, and that call is paid for by love.

Well, would you also call right now to say I want to make a gift or go online? A gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100, we can feed three, five, or ten children for the next several months. But a group of our friends have said they will match what you give to care for 50,000 children, which means that what you give will be doubled. \$30, \$50, \$100 will feed 6, 10, or 20 now; so it actually doubles in its effect.

We want to send you to say "thank you," Sheila Walsh was kind enough to comment on how she thought the book would bless you. We will send the book, *Living in Love* to help you live in the power of God's love and in your relationship; and find encouraging words for you and perhaps someone you want to share it with. We'll send that just to say thank you for any gift.

We also have the beautiful bronze for those of you who will reach out with a gift of \$1,000 to now not just care for 100 children but now for 200. So whatever God puts on your heart, please make that gift in love: LifeToday.org or dial the number there on the screen and let us know what you're sending if you write a check made to *LIFE*.

Thank you 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!

This is the last week. 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

Sheila: I was saying to my husband this afternoon, "I wish I could think of something to give to James and Betty as a gift on their anniversary."

Barry said, "Why don't we feed some more children?"

And I just thought about the same, I bet you wish you could give them something. Do you know what would bless them more than anything? If you were going to give \$30, give \$33, give \$40. It will be a way of saying to James and Betty, through all these years, "You've ministered to us, and on this day of your anniversary, we want to give back to feeding children."

James: Yeah! That's a great thought because 53 years and I just said, "You give \$50, it will feed five children." Well, make it \$53, it will be doubled; and you know what? That would actually now then be doubled to \$100 and six bowls when you take those extras. So that's not a bad thought.

By the way, we're going to send the book to say thank you. Our staff has asked that Betty and I come up here and cut this cake so we're going to do that. All of you keep your seats! But we are going to be able to -- I don't want you to rush the cake here.

Betty: Be careful. You don't like me to handle knives.

James: It's not a good sight when she has a knife. It is pretty dangerous. Now this is the kind

of slice that I would like with all this icing.

[Laughter]

Now there, look at this! This is somebody that knows how to cut cake.

[Laughter]

That would be my piece.

Thank all of you for watching *LIFE Today*! We help hope you'll be with us all week. God bless you! Thank all of you for being here. Sheila, thank you!