

7/7/16
Week 28 Mission Feeding
James and Betty Robison
Sheila Walsh

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. We so appreciate you taking the time to tune in. I hope you're really blessed today. I know you're going to be blessed today. We have Sheila Walsh with us. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: And here is a new book that Sheila Walsh has written, *The Longing in Me*: How everything you crave leads to the heart of God. You're going to hear Sheila tell some of the experiences that weighed heavily and that's not just past tense, weighed, but probably she will say continue to weigh.

Both of us had some situations with fatherless issues, you might say. I'm the product of a forced relationship on a hospice practical nurse caring for the father of an alcoholic who forced his way on a 40-year-old woman. And then showed up in my life as a teenager and tried to kill my mother and said he was going to kill me. I came close to shooting him in self-defense.

Sheila had some heavy weights. I think probably our situation now is not so unique to what we find in not only America's population but the world population. There is a fatherless-ness, a father absence, even if the father may be in the house. There's something amiss. That's part of her story but it's an incredible journey.

Would you welcome Sheila Walsh? Sheila, we're glad to have you as part of *LIFE Outreach* and *LIFE Today*. You're doing a great job blessing our viewers. Thank you. -- And your participation in our mission outreaches.

I want you to just really cover some ground because you are a gifted writer and a gifted communicator. I sense here that you're taking us on what I would say is a life journey and you're talking about longings and you're talking about things that happened that had a definite affect on you. So what do you want us to hear and what do you want people to get from the book about the longing?

Sheila: It's funny. Before I started to write the book I had this experience in an arena during the kind of glory days of Women of Faith. I remember I was sitting there and there was 15,000

women in the arena. I was about to go up and speak. My husband was there, my son was there and I had this profound ache inside. I remember saying, "Lord, what is it? What's wrong with me? What is this?" And I had this -- I've never actually had -- I've never heard the audible voice of God but I had this picture as if the Lord was taking me to a place where the arena was gone and it looked like I was in this castle. It looked like it was Scotland to me. I was invited to come into this room and it was clear to me that it was Christ who was sitting on this chair. I knelt down at his feet and he put one hand on my head and with the other hand he did like that as if to say nobody else gets to come in here.

And I began to understand that there is a place inside every man, woman, and child, those who acknowledge the presence of God, and even those who don't, and we don't know what that thing is but I believe it is a sacred ache. It is a longing for God. He is the only one that can fill that. And we'll have it, I believe partly until we see him face to face. When you don't get that you try and fill it with everything else; the woman who buys one more pair of shoes. It's really not a shoe longing that you've got. The person who goes and eats a pint of Ben and Jerry's ice cream when it stopped tasting good. The person who pops another pill when the pain is gone. You're longing for something more.

What I've come to understand is we were built to long for him and it's almost like this little stamp in our heart that says, "Hey, you're not home yet." And one day when we see Jesus face to face, those longings will all be gone. But until then, we need to understand why do I respond the way I respond in a certain given set of circumstances? Because if you don't understand it, you'll repeat it over and over until you get understanding.

James: And you come up empty until you get it.

Sheila: You do. It's like Edmund Burke, that famous Irish magistrate and great statesman said, "If you don't understand history, you're destined to repeat it."

It's like the girl who grew up with abusive father who then goes on and marries an abusive husband. Because as a child you feel helpless and you almost try and recreate the scenario longing for a different ending; this time you can change the ending.

The last time I ever looked in my father's eyes was turning in time to see him about to bring his cane down on my skull. Honestly, what I remembered more about that night wasn't just the sound of sirens as the police arrived and my mother screaming. It was the look in my father's eyes, a look of absolute hatred. I grew up thinking -- my father took his own life. He committed suicide. So nobody could tell me what my dad saw in me that made him hate me so much. And I grew up with such a profound sense of shame, which is to me guilt tells you you've done

something wrong, shame tells you you *are* something wrong. And if you feel that, what do you do with that?

Some people try and hide behind drugs or alcohol, food; too much or too little. I found the perfect place to hide: Christian ministry. Who is going to say to you, "Put down that Bible or we're going to have an intervention!" It's probably not going to happen.

[Laughter]

But God is the only one who knows if we're serving out of pain or passion for him. I read somebody said, "The guy who knocks at a brothel door is really a knock at the heart of God." I was like, "Yeah right! Try getting that one past your wife!" Honestly, the more I thought about it, I thought, I actually believe that's true. Think how many men who are out there hooked on porn, one relationship after another. The next morning, do any of them feel better? No!

The woman who just buys one more outfit and you're in credit card debt and nothing is touching that place inside because it really is a longing that only God can fill.

James: How do you show someone to begin to make that connection? Because you've been on a journey making it. I don't think the journey for that connection or that closeness, I don't think it ends on this earth, you said, "Until we see him face to face." But that doesn't mean we live empty or we live with a longing that is so painful that we don't see progress. So how do you walk people through this? How do you help them walk it out?

Sheila: It is a shifter, James because I don't -- that ache, no, when Christ comes in, when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, when you learn to dive deep into God's Word and to worship, that fills so much, but there is still a little place left. But it's not the bad news; to me it's the good news -- it's a holy place. It's a sacred ache. Every single one of us can get away from the crowd and find that place where you just kneel down at his feet, feel the Lamb of God put his hand on your head and say, "You know I'm here. I'll always be here."

But I try to encourage women to like -- a woman wrote to me last week and she said, "I'm trying to control my husband but he is not listening."

[Laughter]

"I'm trying to get my kids to act right and they're not acting right." Part of our longings come from good places. Women want -- we want to provide a home where our husbands are happy and our children are happy but then if they start not to behave the way we think they should what's natural could cross into what is manipulative and destructive. And we either over-

spiritualize, "I'm just behaving this way because I don't think Jesus approves of how you're living." Or we punish or we withdraw. That's what I used to be guilty of. It's like well, I'm still here but I'm not here. You vote yourself off of the boat. I'm learning that surrender is one of the most powerfully weighty words in the English language. It is not just waving a flag and saying, "Okay. I quit." It's understanding we can't control what's going on around us. If you can barely control your own habits, how can you expect to do it with your family?

But to be able to lift those people to the feet of Christ and say, "Lord, I love this man. At the moment I don't know what he is doing." Or "I love these children but they're going off in crazy directions. You love them so much more so I surrender." And learn to work -- last week I had an opportunity to go to the Billy Graham library. If you've never been -- have you ever been?

James: I have not.

Sheila: Oh, it's brilliant! Such a sense of God's presence there. I wanted to see where my friend Ruth Bell Graham, where her grave is. I love what she wrote on it. It says: Construction completed. Sorry for the inconvenience.

[Laughter]

She's finally home free.

But whatever I remember she said to me was in the days when Franklin was really rebellious and didn't want to know anything about his dad's faith or his mom's faith and she said she used to just weep and cry and get on her knees. And then she remembered when Paul wrote to the church in Philippi he says, "Be anxious for nothing but in everything with prayer, supplication and thanksgiving." She said, "I suddenly thought. I'm not doing that!" And it shifted. She suddenly started getting down on her knees and thanking him for the day Franklin would come to Christ. Thanking the Lord for the day when Franklin would take his father's place. There's such a shift when you accept, I can't control this. But God, you are good and you have plans. So over to you and in the meantime I'm going to worship.

James: I've just looked in and I'm sure we can cut a picture of this in, but just yesterday I talked to my assistant in the office and I looked up at a picture of Billy Graham carrying a golf club, walking back to a golf cart. I'm sitting in the cart. If you look and you can see it, sitting at the table in the Graham home in North Carolina, and Billy is very much in years, just a few years ago couldn't hold a pen well but he wrote a message to James on that picture because I said, "Would you mind just signing this?" I didn't know it would be quite such a battle. But it was a greeting.

But here's what happened. He walks back and he puts the club in the bag and sits by me. I remember exactly where we're sitting, we're at the 9th hole and we're looking across the lake at a par five. By the way, he wasn't a very good golfer.

[Laughter]

Quite a preacher. He said, "Did you hear about my boy? Did you hear about Franklin?" He sits there on that golf cart and within about three or four minutes he tears up and he begins to tell me about Franklin coming to Christ. He says, "Can we just go in and get a sandwich and we'll play the back nine but let's do this. I want to tell you about it."

And T.W. Wilson was with us. We went in and sat down and Billy told me the story of Franklin coming to Christ. It was exactly what you just said. Billy said with the wisest counsel I've ever got was somebody said, "You can't confirm what he is doing, where he is, you just let him know always the door's open, son -- the door's always open."

And T.W. then told at the table how Franklin had let the people know even at his wedding how broken he was that he had hurt so many. What a great beautiful conversion of the rebel Franklin. We've been friends and I love you and you know that.

So the fact that they were able to do just what you said. You turned this over to God and really leave it. When you were talking about this journey and longing and you and I both having things we look back on in our childhood that's painful. Let me just ask you if this helps fill the longing.

When I'm reaching out and trying to know this Father. By the way, if you could just know the Father, the ultimate Father, whether we didn't have a father, had a missing father, had a father that was dysfunctional or whatever, we got the perfect Father. He knows he's not looking for perfect kids but he just wants to love you with a perfect love.

Here's what I found. If I can somehow move in and just say, "Let me sense your heart. Let me look and see the way you see and feel what you feel." It's amazing that he seems to do that. It's like he's waiting not only for someone to love but he's waiting for someone to love through.

Am I right in believing that the longing in us is fulfilled when whatever is in his heart finds a means of expression through a yielded vessel? Is that part of where you find fulfillment when you're suddenly seeing what he sees and you're trying to address it in harmony with his heart? Does that make sense?

Sheila: It totally makes sense. In fact, I spent two years studying First and Second Samuel and the Psalms because I wanted to take this journey with King David. But at the end of it, the greatest takeaway for me was understanding that no matter how great my longing for God may be, it will never hold a candle to his longing for us. Doesn't hold a candle! When you get that...

I had a picture the other day of I remember this horrible dress my mum bought me when I was just a little girl but it was all she could afford. It was for the school dance when I was 12. All the girls were wearing these straight little dresses and she brought one of those poofy ones. It stuck out. It was awful! It was blue with white little flowers on it. I went to the dance but I didn't go in. I sat behind the school all night because I thought they'll laugh at me if I go in. I went home and told my mum I had an amazing time.

But you know what I dreamt about the other night? I was dreaming and I was running across a field and I knew I was running into the arms of Jesus and I was wearing that blooming blue dress!

[Laughter]

It was just this awesome picture of you know what? I was there then. I'm here now. If you get how much I love you, you'll run into my arms every single moment of your life.

Betty: We can sense that longing, especially if we're going through challenges in life, if we've gone through loss, if we've gone through loneliness. Sometimes I've been around a crowd of people and I have a loneliness in my spirit and my heart. And I know that when I get alone with God that loneliness turns into a longing for him and I become fulfilled. I find myself looking for those moments anticipating those moments because God keeps the door open. He is always ready. Come!

Sheila: It's like the story of the prodigal son, Luke 15. We think it is this story of this bad kid and the good kid. It's not! It's the story of the father. It's like the father has thrown this ridiculous party and whether you think you don't belong there or whether you think you deserve to be there, every single one of us has been given a place at the party because it's the Father's heart.

James: I just find myself sitting here and I want so much because you don't do television -- if you have the heart of God toward people you don't do TV because you're looking for something to do. You're really wanting to be sitting in the family room with you, wherever you are. You may be in a bar. I don't know where you are. You may be in a hotel. It doesn't matter. But I look out, I find myself just really wanting you to understand that if you would let God take you in his arms and pull you up to his heart. And you say, "What would make me feel a peace and a

contentment?" Just try this: Lord, would you, as you hold me, and you say you love me and you love me, and you're the shelter and the shadow. And as I just lean in, what do you want to happen through me?

Now just do this. Ask him because I believe this is his heart: Father, let me look out and see people as opportunities. Let me see them as someone that you want to touch, bless, assist, relieve in some way and let me be an expression of your heart toward them. Does this make sense? That this is what we do?

Sheila: Every single day, if we could pray this prayer, God give me eyes to see today what I would miss and give me ears to hear beyond what somebody is saying to what is going on in their heart.

Driving here to the studio I stopped at Starbucks, because one does.

[Laughter]

And there is a woman sitting outside and the Lord said, "Go talk to her." So I sat down on the sidewalk beside her and I said, "Are you okay?" She said, "No. I'm not okay." She'd just discovered she had terminal cancer. And to be able to put my arm around her and to lift her -- because she is my sister. To pray for her, to put my arm and her and say, "You know what? God heard your prayer. I'm heading somewhere else but he said, 'No, go sit down beside her.' God's listening. He cares about you."

James: You heard -- you really heard a whole download, a whole truckload of transforming truth during this little period. Your whole world can change when you literally become the person that changes someone else's world through the power of the only one who can change the world -- the one who created it and who can correct our course.

Would you just right now say, "Lord, with all my heart I want to start doing that." I would love to send you Sheila's book. It's in the bookstores. You may want to go get a copy for somebody.

But I'll tell you what I want you to do. I'm going to let you look in right now with one of our friends and I mean, you don't want to look away. If there has ever been a moment where you're just sitting saying, "God, let me see if I can start doing what James and Sheila have talked about or Betty has talked about, where I really see what you see and I move the way you want me to."

We'll give you an opportunity to see and you say, "God, I want to see it the way you see it. Then I'm going to do my part expressing your heart." I think you'll want to. Watch.

On the mission field

Announcer: In rural Africa it is extremely rare to find a mother who has not lost at least one child before their fifth birthday. And what makes their loss so unbearable is the majority of their children's deaths could have been prevented.

Tammy: I mean truly, if I think about it, I don't think I would ever see that. When I come to a country like this and walk into a place like this and we've got this precious little baby laying here -- laying here so fragile and so tiny and she is dying because she has no food. It is ridiculous when I think about it. And to also know that there's a solution -- there's a solution!

Announcer: Having little or no food can be devastating for a young child whose immune system has not fully developed. The lack of nutrients can lead to severe malnutrition resulting in critical weight loss, skin diseases, mental impairment, and if not treated in time, death.

James: This little child was born in February.

Betty: Died in May.

Open Captions:

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest under five mortality rate in the world. Almost half of those deaths are due to the effects of malnutrition.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Right there in that cemetery area where we're bowing by those graves, Betty and I got to go and see school after school of singing children. They would sing praises to God. I remember after we'd gotten them on their feet and we were trying to make sure everybody stayed healthy and could work, one of the school principals walked out with a missionary and said, "Well, now that we're okay, are you never coming back to check on us?" It was right where they'd been burying all these kids and now they've been listening to the kids that have had their health restored and its a few years later and they're singing and they're in school.

I said, "No, we just came to rejoice with you but we're not going to forget you."

Betty, what we're doing now because of viewers like yourself who look and see a need and you say, "We're going to stop that death cycle. We're going to stop the weeping over the little children and we're going to give them a future because we're going to give them food."

And \$30, \$50, and \$100 feeds three, five, or ten children for months. And you've been doing it and you've been doing it for years and we've been saving millions of lives.

Now, Betty, we're going to start feeding even more at schools because everywhere we get it stabilized, if we can feed them in school they keep coming to school.

And especially the girls. The girls tend not to come because it's kind of their typical manner that they'll start trying to do some work when they still need to be going to school. And they're so helpful; they've got such a precious heart.

What we're asking you to do now is help us feed several hundred thousand, 400,000 that we've got located in feeding centers but also to help us feed at schools. We can feed an entire school say an average of 140 kids for three months for \$1400; for \$5600 we can feed a school for a year. We just believe there are some of you looking in and seeing through the eyes of God and what he's put in your heart, "I can do that for those kids for the next months. I can feed them for \$1400." Or "I can do it for a year!" Well, do it. I believe you'll want to do because God's enabled you to do it; he put it in your heart to do it, and you're going to do it. You're going to be hands. You're going to be the answer to the need; the answer to the prayer of mothers to see their children with such need. I rejoice with you.

There are some of you who will say, "But you know what? When they get stabilized, I want to keep them in school. I want to sponsor a school for a year, for several months." Whatever you can do, you do it. Go to LifeToday.org, take your bankcard or you can dial the number, use that bankcard or if you want to write a check make it to LIFE but call us and tell us you're mailing it and then put it in the mail.

We have gifts to send you to help you on your spiritual journey. This is a phenomenal gift. You are *Living Your Destiny* -- that's what God wants. That's why we're here. We're here for kingdom life. We've lost our life in your purpose God and we find it; and that really is the only place you'll find it is in his kingdom purpose. So we want to bless you. These women are so gifted that you'll see who the teachers are. We want to pass this on to you to say thank you for giving life. Thank you for giving people a future, opportunity, even encouraging their education.

LifeToday.org or dial the number. Make the gift God puts on your heart. You'll be blessed and you will be a blessing.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In remote and impoverished areas of Africa, families are suffering, facing death

by starvation and those hit the hardest are the children. Life's mission feeding program is there ready to feed and care for these children in crisis areas of Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan.

With all of our previous reserves gone and Southern Africa facing its worst drought and food shortage in years, we urgently need to replenish our food supplies to reach 400,000 children counting on us.

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. Please also consider a special gift of \$1400 to help sponsor a school and help feed 140 children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you the brand new audio series, *Living Your Destiny*. Hear five outstanding Bible teachers and women of faith share how to live the life God destined for you. With your gift of \$100 or more you'll also receive *The Longing in Me* by Sheila Walsh, and *Unashamed* by Christine Caine. And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, be sure to request "Majesty," our 2016 commemorative bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or go online today and make your gift of life to help feed and care for hungry children.

End of clip

On the mission field

Beth: I want you to see these precious little ones with me that just wandered up the hill to see What we were doing. This just reminds me again and again that for every single child we feed that there are so many others that need the help. This is where we see our words go into action. This is where our love goes from words to deeds.

Now that you've seen the need, we ask you to please go to the phone right now, if you would. Just feel the prompting of God to act on what you've seen and act on what you've heard. I'm going to join you in doing exactly that!

End of clip

In the studio

James: I know you're going to be blessed with the *Living Your Destiny* series, and Sheila Walsh is one of those who teaches. This is part of the gift. It is part of the entire teaching series, along with the book by Christine Caine if you'll help us sponsor some of this school feeding. We want to thank you.

I want all of you in the audience to express appreciation and say thanks to Sheila along with me and Betty. Sheila, we love you! Glad you're a part of this family! Thank you for sharing *The Longing in Me*.

If you haven't visited *The Stream* lately visit stream.org. Make it your home page. We're going to try to give you understanding.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In his new book, *The Stream*, James Robison charts a plan for spiritual revolution in America. *The Stream*, available now online and at retail bookstores.