

7/21/16  
**Week 30: Mission Feeding**  
**James and Betty Robison**  
**Jimmy and Karen Evans**

**Betty:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty and this is James.

**James:** Yeah, and we've got Jimmy and Karen Evans with us. This is a really neat book. Listen to the title: *From Pain to Paradise* -- pain to paradise. "God transformed my life and marriage from brokenness to blessing," and it's written by Karen Evans.

The thing about it is, Jimmy just said to us earlier before we came out here. He said what she is sharing, he said when he read it he thought I can't believe she said all that. He said it could be perhaps be as great a healing tool in marriages as anything that he would ever offer; marriages, and the people he loves and cares about. Karen has been willing to talk about what it was really like.

Now Jimmy said, which according to what he told us before we walked out here it was really a big understatement of the real truth. He said he was a jerk. He said that just quite doesn't cover it. Karen went ahead and told you exactly what it was she was living with and what God had to do and what God can do for anybody.

Would you welcome Jimmy and Karen Evans to *LIFE Today*? Glad to see you.

**Karen:** Thank you! Thank you so much!

**James:** I want to know about the paradise because I've known you two where you seem y'all get along pretty good. He said plenty of times he is a jerk but you're just making it pretty clear that didn't cover the territory and you were willing to go ahead and open up. I asked you if it was going to be difficult for you to talk but you talked like, "No, I'll go ahead and talk about it." I think you want to talk about it because it is the truth.

But I think also, you want to talk about it because of the gratitude for what has happened, which according to you, this is a miracle sitting by you -- a miracle that really needed to happen. But I sense in what you're saying and what you're wanting to get across is you want that miracle for everybody even where they think it is not possible. Am I right about that?

**Karen:** Well, I start out in the book saying that a lot of women look at our marriage and are like, "I want a husband like Jimmy." I'm like, "Okay. You want to go through what we went through to get this?"

[Laughter]

Because it wasn't easy.

I was really, really shy. Like Jimmy always says, "She was painfully shy." So our marriage started out -- we thought it was going to be great because we really did love each other but it was that kind of love where you're sucking off of each other in that unhealthy way.

So we started, Jimmy said all along, "You've got to write your story because there is something there, especially when it comes to women who are insecure." They have low self-esteem and a husband like Jimmy can dominate them and just really make them feel insignificant and just empower -- to be empowered as a woman in today's world, that's what we're always told.

But to go through this story of how the Lord began to heal me and all that we went through because it was painful. It was very painful. I used to cry myself to sleep every single night and begged God to change him. I didn't have a real close relationship with the Lord at that point, we were both Christians and I just -- in my heart I knew that God was the answer. So after fighting and fighting and fighting -- and honestly, get the book because I do, I go into a lot of details.

**Jimmy:** Too much.

**Karen:** You want to tell the story about the...

**Jimmy:** Nope!

**Betty:** First of all, I love the way you said it. You said, "I've always told our story but she's never gotten to tell her part of the story."

**Jimmy:** And she tells the details that really, I honestly I had forgotten. I wanted to forget. But they're so important because Karen responded to our pain -- to her pain and to our pain in the most godly way, and that's what saved me, that's what saved our marriage. And so her story is a

story of millions of women. But the difference is -- the ending of our story is different because of how she responded to God.

**James:** She handled the difficult situation appropriately or it would not have ended well.

**Jimmy:** She picked a fight with me and I'm the wrong guy to pick a fight with -- back then because I was unrighteous. I was insecure but I covered it but being macho and acting tough. But I was actually very insecure. When she wanted to fight with me, I was more than happy to oblige. But the difference is the change in our marriage happened when Karen went to God and said, "Change me" -- to change her. She stopped focusing on me because I was a bad guy. I was a jerk. And then God picked a fight with me and I didn't win that fight.

When she was before God, humble and saying to God, "God help me, God heal me, God change me," because there was a period of time there her prayer was "change Jimmy" and nothing happened. But when she began saying to God, "change me," that's when I began to feel a shift in the relationship, which ultimately changed my heart.

**Betty:** Karen, don't you think then that's the case with a lot of women when they go into a marriage? They see some imperfections there and they're like, "Oh, I can change that." And you really can't; it has to start within yourself.

**Karen:** With me, I was so insecure that I was probably more focused on my issues than his. I like to say that this has taken a long time. It wasn't something that was quick. We fought like cats and dogs when we were dating for four years and then the first five years is basically where this story is coming from.

**James:** Nine years of misery is a long time to live in misery.

**Karen:** That's why it is paradise now!

**James:** Here's the thing you need to understand is they didn't divorce. Then there is no fix there. They seem to have every reason to divorce. Karen was positive she did. If Jimmy probably was honest and like -- yeah, if he'd sit down a minute and get honest, I'd understand. But the point is they were there in this misery, which we don't have to live in it that long.

But what Karen is trying to help and I know it is Jimmy's desire is to show you can move out of that misery. And it is not always the way you think. It wasn't like her focusing on him because it would have been easy to. It seemed so obvious he was such a person in such great need. But when you just said, "Okay, show me some things."

What do you want people to hear when they read the book? What do you want them to get out of it?

**Karen:** First of all, I wasn't blameless in the relationship. It wasn't just him; I had my own issues. I had the anger. Like I would show my frustrations by slamming doors and leaving the house and driving around just trying to get his attention somehow and it never worked. I'd come home from being gone forever and he would be sitting there never even worry where I was. I'm like really?

**James:** You insensitive jerk! Jerk!

**Jimmy:** Fill in the blank. I was a jerk.

**James:** Tell it better. I want to know.

**Karen:** Believe me he says it. But what I had to do is I started realizing I'm just miserable period. So I wanted help for myself, and so I just began to read the Word of God. Really, the original title, we thought was going to be something about the Word of God because honestly, literally reading his Word every single day totally changed me from the inside out. I became a totally different person just from reading it.

**James:** Did you see it?

**Jimmy:** Absolutely!

**James:** Did it annoy you a little bit?

**Jimmy:** No. But it interested me. Psalm 107:20 says: God sent his Word to heal them and to deliver them from their destructions. And of course, Hebrews four says: The Word of God is living and active.

When she got in the word every day I saw the Lord delivering her from her destructions and healing her. I mean it's just an active force. I saw that happening. It changed the equilibrium in our home. The fighting, she wasn't fighting with me anymore. But what she was doing that was different than anything she had done before is her confidence was growing.

I was a very type-A person, a very strong personality and so she would fight with me. Well, you're going to lose if you want to fight with me. Then she started coming up and not fighting but very graciously stating how she believed. I wasn't used to that. And it was a confidence in her that was rising up but then God was dealing with my heart.

When we look back, we were different people -- we just were different people. But I look back on the days before God broke through my heart, I was deceived. I thought she was the problem. I thought that I had just accidentally married this stubborn woman that couldn't be trained. I was a male chauvinist pig besides all that.

But when Karen got into the word, I literally saw, it was like a beaten-down rose that just began to blossom. She began to blossom and it interested me. But she began to respond to me differently. It wasn't -- it was a confidence, it was a godly confidence and it bothered me in some ways. But that's when the Lord began to break through my heart.

**James:** Did you want to dominate her, Jimmy? Is that just built in?

**Karen:** No, it was just built in.

**Jimmy:** It was just the strength of my personality. Plus I just thought she was the problem.

**Karen:** Plus your family.

**Jimmy:** It was my default setting.

**James:** Go ahead, Karen.

**Karen:** I was going to say what happened though was the more I started reading, I realized how much I wanted a relationship with God. But it was so hard for me because I thought God didn't really love me because I figured if he is still acting this way and God hasn't changed him, there is something wrong with me. This has to be something wrong with me.

So what developed through me reading the Word of God is all of the sudden it was like the blindness of who Jesus really is or what the Bible really says about relationships and love and just everybody that you meet. I remember thinking, God, I'm not his teacher. I'm not a speaker. I'm not a... all these things that you know you think you're "supposed to be" as a Christian. The Lord said, "Can you just love?" I remember thinking, "Okay." So that was going to be hard though because he wasn't that lovable. [Laughing]

And so he took me through the process of me growing in the Lord in his love and just allowing the Lord to love me just the way I was. I didn't have to change for God to love me because that was so foreign to my thinking. I figured you had to do this and this and this and then you'll be loved. If you mess up, then you're not loved. So as the Lord began to heal that in me and the

rejection and the self-hate that I had, I mean really bad self-hate because I knew what it felt like to hate but I didn't know what it felt like to have God's love.

So as he began to heal me through his Word, and then just praying and trusting God then all of the sudden it was like oh, my gosh. Jesus is so cool. And I say this in the book, because I was scared of Jesus because to me in the New Testament he was like, "You Pharisees!" And I'm thinking, oh, maybe that's me? Because I always felt like I'm just not good enough.

But I fell in love with the Lord through Isaiah. I challenge anybody, just get in the word and stay in it. It's the most profound, alive, most beautiful book that's ever been written, as we all know as Christians but as a person who just was desperate, it's literally changed... and I have to read it every day. And every single day it is like alive and new and fresh. I'm amazed. I'm like, no wonder everybody says he is majestic and amazing and brilliant because he is! To write a book and have it written that long ago and it still has that much power over all of our lives is amazing to me. Plus it keeps us connected to Jesus in a way that it's so unbelievable to me. Every single day I tell the Lord, "I cannot believe I how much I love you. I cannot believe." You know those feelings.

**Betty:** I believe too through what God showed you there when you started working and building on that relationship with him, and allowing him to make changes in your own life, you released him to God for God to work.

**Jimmy:** And when we were first dating we were dysfunctional and co-dependent. And Karen was trying to get that God need from me, and of course, I couldn't meet it. Part of what frustrated me about her was I felt like she was making demands on me that I could never meet - and she was. She was expecting me to be Jesus for her. Well, I didn't know that back then.

But when she turned to Jesus and she began to get literally filled with his love and filled with his joy and then I would relate to her, we would just be around the house together or whatever, she wasn't looking to me for those things. She wasn't needy the way she was before. She was confident. In fact, she was a giver. And she would begin to give to me. Before she didn't give unless she got, and I didn't either; that's the way we were. But then she was a giver. She was confident. And it just interested me.

But again, it changed the equilibrium of our relationship and she began to go to God and focus on herself, the Lord began to focus on me. One time she walked through the room and I was being a rat. I had said something to her and she responded in a very gracious way. Not in anger, because that was her problem before, was just responding in anger which just fueled me. She responded in a very gracious way and the Lord said to me, "You don't deserve her." That was --

those kinds of things, and I thought, no, I really don't. She is better than I am. And it was just the chipping away at my heart.

Then one night we had a huge fight and I told her to get out of house. It was my fault. It was not her fault. I was just at the place of feeling like I'm losing this battle so this is how I'm going to win. That's the night that literally, God showed up. Something fell off my eyes. I don't know how to say it, the deception that was on my life. A moment before that, I thought she's the problem. If she'll ever get fixed, if she'll ever get her problems fixed everything is going to be all right. The moment after that, I realized I'm married to the most precious woman in the world. I have abused her with my mouth. I have mistreated her, all those things. And I went and repented to Karen and she forgave me.

That began the healing process in our marriage. It didn't happen overnight but in a few months we were in a wonderful place. We celebrate our 43rd anniversary next week. So we're so glad we didn't divorce. I married the perfect person. I didn't make a mistake. We are soul mates.

Karen's book is so phenomenal in that it tells our story but it also tells how this remarkable woman stopped focusing on me and making me into the enemy and started focusing on God and letting God change her.

**James:** If people wanted to get it, it's in the bookstores and they can get it online but how about web site to you? Say they wanted to ask you for the book, find out about where you're going to be teaching a marriage seminar or setting, where would they go, Jimmy?

**Jimmy:** MarriageToday.com, and they can get the book there, find out all about our television ministry and our speaking schedule.

**James:** Everything you're going. The television ministry is called?

**Jimmy:** Marriage Today with Jimmy and Karen.

**James:** And it basically airs all over the world. I would just say to you we're offering the Living Your Destiny and we have several very gifted women teaching and offering some of that material when we ask you to be a miracle in someone's life, which I think you will want to be gladly. But if you'd like to have the book, you just help us touch a child with God's love and really make a difference in their life, we'll be glad to add that. You can just say, "Would you send that to me?" We'd be more than happy to do it.

Karen, I know that you've got hopes that what you've shared, the people get to see what you've seen because it is worth it; isn't it?

**Karen:** It is!

**James:** And do you have high hope that that's exactly what's going to happen?

**Karen:** Absolutely! Anybody can make it. I know that a lot of people have gone through a lot of hurt and they just think there is no way I can get over the hurt or the pain. But with forgiveness and letting the Lord soften your heart back, because usually what happens is their hearts harden and then they can't hear the truth. They don't want to hear the truth because it is just too painful. Yes, I think anybody can make it.

**James:** I want to thank you. Do you want to say thanks to Jimmy and to Karen for I think being a great blessing? I'm guessing as respected as anyone in the nation, perhaps in the world who is teaching marriage relationships and doing it effectively. I've listened to Jimmy when he'd have 4,000 people sitting out there and they're just captivated. And they so often come in as couples. It's like we expect to walk out different. I know that's what you're going to get from the book, *Pain to Paradise*.

We help people in pain, literally. A lot of times you see something that's challenging that the process looks pretty difficult. What we deal with so much is as simple as a drink of water, clean water or maybe food. You know we're talking about the crisis with children that we're trying to help who are literally starving and the solution is perfect. We support many causes to try to fight disease and they're looking for a cure. What we're showing you, it's a perfect cure but it always comes because of love. It really does.

I want you to watch the birth of a miracle, the birth of a mission outreach that has saved millions of lives and reached more than 11 million people for Christ just in this single outreach. Watch!

### **On the mission field**

**Announcer:** Successful teams are made up of individuals who partner together to accomplish extraordinary things. The partnership between *LIFE Outreach* and African missionary Peter Pretorius has resulted in millions of lives being saved in the mission feeding program.

The need for this type of program became apparent when Peter Pretorius found himself stranded for 10 days in a war-torn village in Mozambique.

**Peter:** About the fifth day I was here there was an old man came out of there. He came walking across the clearing and I could see that he was very weak. I went to help him. And I assisted him, half carrying him, and came and sat him against that very tree. I went to get him



some water. When I came back, I shook him by the shoulder. I thought he had gone to sleep. And his head toppled forward. He was dead. I just stood and I wept. I said to God. I said, "Lord, I don't want know anymore."

You know God spoke to me and he said, "My heart is like your heart at the moment only more so."

**Announcer:** And thus, mission feeding began. Eventually, food factories were built and fleets of trucks were needed to deliver a nutritious food mix to remote African villages and schools.

Now, over 25 years later there are still hundreds of thousands of children living in food-scarce villages who depend upon the partnership between *LIFE Outreach* and Peter Pretorius for a daily bowl of food at their school.

**Peter:** See one thing that is great about the villages and schools in the villages is it draws kids from a five to ten kilometer radius out of all of these tiny little villages. So yeah, you can see, you don't have a big village but you have 500 kids who will come to the school here and they're coming from the whole area. So it enables us to have a point where we can do nutritional feeding that brings the kids in.

But you can see the need of the kids here, James. There is a protein deficiency in nearly all of these children. They desperately need the food.

**James:** We've got an immediate opportunity to provide really for their future.

**Peter:** And it is chronic. We have to do it now.

**End of clip**

### **In the studio**

**James:** Father, I thank you for what we've just seen. I want to thank you for this 25 year journey. And above all, not only for Peter and Ann and the missionaries but for all our viewers all over the world who have made this outreach possible; in Jesus' name.

I want to thank you for praying us into that place. I think Betty and I have three children that have just magnified the Lord and we have 11 grandchildren who are magnifying the Lord. I have a little great grandson. One of the reasons, I think is you've really prayed for us. And from

the bottom of my heart, thank you. You prayed for us when we lost our daughter and you loved us. Thank you!

Let me tell you what you've done that's more meaningful than I can put in words. You've helped us put loving arms around the suffering like you just saw. You've seen a journey with Peter Pretorius and Ann and Betty and me for more than 25 years to save millions of lives. And that report comes from the national governments and reports from those nations where we saved their children's lives, and went into war and actually won both sides in the war. And watched miracles of healing -- indescribable miracles -- and it is because you made it possible.

So what we're asking you to do right now, I'm praying, Betty, I'm asking God for the greatest support in the 25 years that we've worked with Peter and Ann in missions. And that every single person would say, "I'll tell you what. I'm going to be the answer to that kid's need or that mother's prayer. I'm going to take three children or five children or ten children in my arms, I'm going to care for them."

\$30, \$50, \$100 -- we can feed three, five, or ten children for the next months. That's right! -- \$30, \$50, or \$100. We can sponsor a school and feed an entire school with an average of 140 students for \$1400; \$5600 and you sponsor a school for a year, which includes feeding all the need and feeding those that come. It is an incredible outreach.

There is a level at which you can participate. Be an answer to their prayers! Be the miracle they hope for -- the miracle they need.

Right now go to *LIFE Today* or dial the number. Go get your bankcard. I wish you would want to run to get it and come right back: LifeToday.org, or dial the number and take that bankcard and make the largest gift you can. The one God's puts on your heart. If you can sponsor a school for a year do it -- for a few months, do it. Whatever you can do. If you could feed three, five, or ten children, do it.

Father, I pray everyone watching will be moved by your spirit to do that which is meaningful, which is miraculous for those who have a need; in Jesus' name.

Would you be that answer to prayer? Would you be that miracle? We will send you some gifts. We will send you the wonderful teaching by some of the greatest women in this country teaching you about life. Thank you for making the gift. Thank you for going online. Thanks for making the call.

**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****In the studio**

**James:** Well, we're so excited to send you Living Your Destiny. And you change someone's destiny when you give them a chance at life; and in school to learn. You really do become someone's miracle.

If you'd like to have Karen Evans book, *From Pain to Paradise* I'll be glad to send it to you. There again is the web site, Marriage Today. You can find out where all the television airings are on the different stations. You can find out where they are doing seminars and what's going on. You can get the book there if you like. But if you help us help these children and you'd like to have Karen's book, we'll be glad to send it to you to say thanks.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Jimmy and Karen? Thank you! We love you both! And we are co-laborers. Jimmy and I are both elders at Gateway Church. This is a pretty good church in the metroplex. Come see us sometime.

Thanks for watching! Check out [stream.org](http://stream.org). Thank all of you for being here.

**Announcer:** In his new book, *The Stream*, James Robison charts a clear path to personal revival and spiritual revolution in our culture, values, morals, and in government. Reverend Samuel Rodriguez says: "*The Stream* is a Christ-centered, Bible-based prescription for these troubled times." Dr. Ben Carson says: "This important book points out many ways that we can use our lives to preserve those freedoms that made America great." *The Stream* -- available now online and at retail bookstores.