

8/19/16
Week 34: WFL
James and Betty Robison
Levi Lusko

James: Thanks to all of you. Thank you for giving us an opportunity to share *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to share this time with you.

I met a young man that I'd heard a lot about at the meeting in the Cowboy's stadium, the AT&T Stadium, they call it, as long as AT&T will pay Jerry Jones, they can call it that. But we met in the Greg Lowery crusade there; that was incredible outreach. I think ultimately, they said over 20,000 people accepted Christ. There were 80,000 in the arena, in the stadium. I met Levi Lusko. The minute I met him, I knew I had heard about him a little bit but from the minute I met him, I loved him because I sensed the love of God on him.

But something, Betty that we found out while we were standing there is that the very same week within a matter of days, one side of Christmas, and then the other side of Christmas, two very painful things happened. He lost his little girl on the 20th of December; we lost our little girl on the 28th. It's not even easy to say that for us. I think we've only been able to talk about it because you have shown your love by the way you prayed for us, but also we talk about it because we love you. And because we know that there are so many broken hearts. I don't think we realized fully how many broken hearts until ours was so broken, and we've experienced plenty of pain in our life. I experienced a childhood of pain.

But when we were talking to Levi and because he knew our story, he didn't want to dwell on it at all but he just referred to it and that he loved us, and that he understood. And it was as though he kind of wanted to walk away but knowing that we knew, he knew. Look at this. We didn't know he was writing and finishing a book: *Through the Eyes of a Lion*. Look at the lion's eyes. "Facing impossible pain" -- please listen -- "finding incredible power." And then there's this other little set of eyes. That's his little girl.

Would you welcome this father and this pastor, Levi Lusko?

Levi, glad you're here.

Levi: Thank you for having me.

James: Broken hearts. More than we realize. I wish that you, if you have a broken heart, you would just know that we wish we were sitting so close we could kind of reach out and maybe embrace you. Please don't leave. We're really trying to help you. It really hurts.

I can't imagine for you, your little girl. Tell us what happened but tell us where you went from that with this book and what you want the people God loves to hear.

Levi: Well, first of all, when you just said that about how many broken hearts out there, we don't know. When I open the book up I first talk about how about 30 days after Lenya went to heaven, that was her name, Lenya, we as a family went to Seattle on a trip to kind of heal and process and just get away as you need to.

I think it is important that we're honest about the fact that hurting with hope still hurts, and that we don't pressure people into it's okay because I know where they went so I don't need to feel the pain. I don't need to hurt. We hurt as much as anybody. We don't sorrow as those who have no hope but that doesn't mean we won't be sad.

So we went to Seattle and we were walking around and one morning I left to get coffee early and I was -- when you're grieving, as you know, there's nowhere to go but you want to run. There is no one to hit but you want to fight someone. You want to scream but it won't help.

James: I did. I pounded on a wall and I screamed, "No! No! No!" Sometimes I do even now. I will be walking around just screaming, "No!"

Levi: So I ended up in a coffee shop trying to buy a cup of coffee and I looked around. I was hurting so bad. When you're grieving it feels like there's been fire poured into your veins and your brain feels like it's going to pop, and your eyes just sometimes they don't have any tears and sometimes they don't stop running with tears. But as I was looking around I didn't think anybody could notice how sad I was. But then it occurred to me how many times had I been around someone who was that sad but not noticed it?

So I think that we, all the time are around people that are hurting and many people watching the broadcast are hurting. So what you just did in saying that your pain is real and you guys care, I think it is touching hearts more than you know just to recognize people's pain.

But for us, how it all happened was the same week, of course, both of our daughters went to heaven. I didn't have any idea my life about to turn into a crisis. In fact, my wife and I were both living out our dreams. We had planted this church and we were seeing thousands come to know Jesus and literally everything was going so well.

Then five days before Christmas we're wrapping Christmas presents and my second born daughter Lenya has an asthma attack and all of the sudden is not breathing good. So we give her her medicine and instead of getting better the attack got worse. Pretty soon I have her up on the counter and I'm giving C.P.R. We're calling 911. We're praying desperately to Jesus who made the sun stand still and who rose from the dead to bring her life back into her. Instead of that happening, in my arms with my breath in her lungs she leaves this world and goes home -- home for Christmas.

She went from my arms to the arms of her heavenly Father like that. We never got to say good-bye. We never had time to prepare. And so that was how she left this world on that cold night five days before Christmas.

James: So what do you want people to learn that you've learned and you're learning?

Levi: Well, I call the book, *Through the Eyes of a Lion* because the night Lenya went to heaven we received a call from the hospital that we had the opportunity to donate her corneas, the outermost lens of her eyes. Of course, that was a difficult decision to make but one we felt like both Jesus and Lenya would want us to do to serve somebody else. So we gave her corneas and we found out later that two blind people received sight through her eyes. And they, to this day, they see life through the eyes of our Lenya lion. Like there are two people who see through her eyes.

I believe God did the exact same thing to Jenny, my wife, and me through her going home. On the night she left, I did what no father should ever have to do. I had to reach out and close the eyes of my daughter. But what I didn't expect was that God was going to use her to open mine. He taught me that you can look at anything you see in this world and you can see invisible things if you don't use the lens of human understanding but if you lose the lens of faith.

So in the book what I'm talking about is I'm talking about how you can look at anything and see the invisible like in Second Kings 6. Elisha, Gehazi, they're both standing there in the same house and they're surrounded by an army that's come to kill them. Elisha is not worried at all. Gehazi is terribly afraid.

Elisha says, "It's okay. There is more on our side than on our enemy's side."

Gehazi looks out at the door and sees like a 100,000 soldiers and he thinks, 100,000 but more on our side. Okay. So he counts him and Elisha. One, two... and he thinks, good thing you got into the ministry because math is clearly not your strong suit.

[Laughter]

He starts feeling bad for the bald-headed prophet to his side.

So then Elisha goes, "Oh, you're just looking at it through the naked eye." Then he says, "God help him to see the unseen."

Now Gehazi looks again. What does he see? Same soldiers he saw before; they didn't go anywhere. But now behind them he sees another army. What he realized was that the thing that had him surrounded was itself surrounded by God.

Now what's so important about that is that the angels -- the Bible doesn't say the angels came when his eyes were opened but that he could see them. So they were always there. So for me, I can look at my daughter's grave and I can see I don't get to walk her down the aisle, I don't get to teach her how to read chapter books. I can think all that or I can say, "She's with Jesus and Jesus is in me, therefore I am holding hands with the one holding hands with her so I'm still connected to her. And every day that takes me further and further away from her," that's how I look at it. "Oh, I'm being torn so far from her because she was past me this way." Or I can say, "She's in front of me where I'm going. So every day I wake up doesn't take me further and further from me but takes her closer and closer to me." And if I use the right lens then I realize I'm moving in the right direction and she's more a part of my future than my past.

So I want people with cancer to see, I look at death but I see that he is the resurrection and the life. I look at loneliness but I hear him saying, "I'm with you always."

I can look at loss and bankruptcy but hear God saying, "I'm your shield, your exceeding great reward."

So you can look at anything and see what's there or by faith see what God says is there and if you do that you can find incredible power in what's impossible pain.

James: What you just did is take us through a beautiful picture of reality in the presence of very real pain.

Do you appreciate the way that Levi just shared?

[Applause]

This is a wonderful, wonderful gift that God has given this young pastor. What's the name of the church?

Levi: Fresh Life church.

James: And where is it?

Levi: We're all over Montana and we're about to open in Salt Lake City.

James: And where is the home church?

Levi: Kalispell, Montana.

James: Is that southern, eastern?

Levi: North east.

James: Up on the Canadian border.

Levi: Yep!

James: So Canadians could come down.

Levi: Absolutely! From Calgary.

James: And bring some of their anointing and some of their need down to you.

Levi: Love to have them.

James: It's wonderful! Do you have a web site if people want to visit?

Levi: FreshLifeChurch.com.

James: And the book is in the bookstores. I would highly suggest you get one and get one for somebody with a broken heart.

Levi: James, I would even say though, with this, I tell people the best time to practice for a marathon is before the marathon begins. So while some people may think, I don't want to read that; that's a grief book, my life is going good right now. The truth is, Jesus said that storms, they are what reveals foundations. So the best time to build a foundation is before the storm begins. I think we've got to train for the trial we're not yet in.

James: So it's better to go start loving God, loving his Word before the crisis because a lot of times in the crisis if you don't already love him, you can begin to detest him, and you get filled with bitterness. So what I hear you saying is let's tune up so that we're ready to play in the symphony even in the face of incredible pain and pressure. You're trying to help us tune in, get tuned up. So explain a little more of that because that's what the book's about.

Levi: Well, you think about it this way: Prevention is always better than cure. So everyone we know, everyone we love, all of us are all going to die some day. Every viewer at home, we're going to die. The only question is how, when, and in what order? So for someone to cruise along not prepared for trials is to all but guarantee that you're going to be destroyed by them. The Bible says that when the whirlwind passes by the wicked are no more but the righteous have an everlasting foundation.

I know that for you and for my wife and I, we're all in this terrible club that no one asked to be in. When you think about it, when a child loses their parents they're called an orphan. A husband or wife who has to bury their spouse is called a widow or a widower. But there is not even a name in the English language for being a parent having to bury your child. And perhaps it is appropriate for what word could contain such sadness?

But this club that we didn't ask to be in, it came to us and here we are today and we're all blessing the name of the Lord and we're worshipping God and we're all planted in the house. We're loving God. I would say for you and for my wife and I, we love God more than ever. In fact, the trials have splashed water on our face. We almost hate this world even more. The things of this world have grown strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. As parents, are kids are us. We helped create them and so they're in heaven. Our hearts are more in heaven than ever before.

So here we are. We haven't been destroyed by our trials. We have found like Job to have come forth from the trial refined. Now I believe that that has very little to do with what we did in the trial, but what we did before the trial came. Some people go, "How did you do it?" I think, well, it's probably because for 20 years before Lenya went to heaven, before Robin went to heaven, decades tithing, reading the Bible, sowing into the kingdom, fasting, -- all those things, those are the things.

People like to celebrate the wrong thing. You see the championship game, "Oh, that was a great game!" It was the hundreds of hours of practice you didn't see. I think it is the secret things done in faithfulness to God that no one notices that gives us the strength to go through the trials that are coming for us all one day.

Betty: And because of that, that foundation, that relationship that continues to be built, I found myself running toward God and I continue to run toward him and have that relationship just keep building and building. I love God more today than I did yesterday because I know how much he loves me. He is there. He is faithful. He did not fail me. God did not fail our daughter. She is with him. And she is well. So you're right, the foundation was laid before the tragedy came.

Levi: So we can help people now. These viewers who... Think about it this way. Some of the viewers watching this might be one week away, one phone call away, one text message away from the whole bottom of their life crumbling, the whole idea of what their future is going to look like dissolving into thin air and they have the chance now by faithfulness, trusting in Jesus financially, putting their -- because the Bible says where your treasure goes there your heart goes. I believe if our treasures go to heaven our hearts are already there.

And if we're gathering together with God's people... I think that when we're planted in God's house we have all of God's people holding us up. I had people from my church there at the hospital, people from our church there at our house. We had the body of Christ there so in the difficult days, they are holding our arms up when we're weak. That's why we all need each other. We need fellowship. And we need to put those things into practice before hardship comes. You don't want to be in a trial showing up at a church as a new person hoping someone notices your puffy eyes and asks what the matter is. You want to have those relationships already there.

James: That's beautiful! Would you say thanks? I just praise God.

I love you Levi. I just want to say this. Get the book. You can go online and get it but I'll be honest with you, would you just help us give somebody a cup of water? I've written a book called, *The Stream* to help us really see our way through the darkness and become the light. But this is phenomenal for healing broken hearts. You've been a real blessing to us.

I just want to say something to those of you that are hurting right now. If you'd like somebody to pray with you, you see the phone number there? You may get someone to answer the phone that also knows what it is to have a broken heart and just pray with you, just agree with you, just love you.

Father, I pray everyone with a broken heart right now will first reach up and just touch you, and know how much you want to hold them close, and how you alone can really comfort them, and then actually teach them how to be a comfort to others. Help them to reach out first to you, ask you to enable them to touch others with love and with comfort. And if they need someone to talk to to call; in Jesus' name.

Don't hesitate to call if you want someone to pray with you.

Then I want to say this. You're going to see a broken heart and you're going to understand the same thing that gave us a broken heart, that gave Levi and his family a broken heart. But we have the 100% perfect cure and you can provide it today for many. Yes, you can!

So as others are calling for prayer I want you to watch and I want you to ask God right now, help me be an answer to someone's need, an answer to someone's prayer, an answer to their hurt. Let me be the answer because God uses us. Watch very sensitively and prayerfully.

On the mission field

Open Captions: People wash their clothes in the river where we get our water to drink and it makes us all very sick. The water causes diarrhea, cholera and parasites.

Ralph: Well, we've heard this story so many times of desperate mothers trying to raise a family in water sources like these. This is their drinking water. The stories are a little different sometimes but there is a common thread. It's a brokenhearted mother who is trying to raise her children but yet she is watching them die.

Open Captions: I wasn't there when my 8-year-old daughter got sick at school and came home with diarrhea and vomiting. We had to wait until the next day to get the money to take her to the hospital and then she died as were leaving.

>> God just put in my heart today that we have this opportunity to change that cycle; to give these children an opportunity to one day they can be bringing their children to a water source but not this one. They can bring their children to a fresh drilled well that brings clean water up, gives it to the whole family, the entire village, not just for a day or a couple weeks but for a lifetime.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Those little children getting that water are more excited than children that would go to our entertainment parks like Six Flags or any sporting event because it makes them feel good. When we go with the cameras they'll let the children play in the water a little bit. They don't get to play in it a lot but it is their life. And it is given in love and it is a miracle.

Would you help right now us complete drilling 500 wells this year? We need a miracle of support. They're \$4800 each. We have some friends, sometimes some churches, sometimes some businesses, some small business owners even will say, "We're going to drill a well." Thank you for that.

Most of the support comes from people however, who give \$48. And when we break it down, Betty that gives ten people water the rest of their life. At some level you can participate. When you see what you just watched, don't you believe everyone watching wants to be an answer to that mother's hope and to heal her hurt?

Betty: I believe that! As I watched that mother going to the only water source that they have, every day faithfully she goes down there. Why? She knows the water is not good for them but she knows they can't live even any length of time without water in their bodies; but knowing that every time they take a sip of that water it makes them ill and possibly die.

Won't you join with us? Let's be a source of hope to these mothers that love their children so much. Let's drill the water wells and let's give them fresh clean water.

Like James says, this is so fun for the kids too. They see that water coming out and it's so much better than any toy they might have because they love that good tasting water and they've been told, I'm sure, that this is going to make them better. So join with us!

James: We've got a perfect cure. Betty and I are faithful contributors to St. Jude. I don't mind telling you that. You say, "Why?" Because we see those beautiful little faces, and we see those parents with those precious children.

\And one of the main reasons we give is not only so that the people can bring them who can't afford to take care of the child and they take care of them without cost to them, but they're mainly trying to find a cure for every one of those ailments, and they're searching for it. Betty, we've got the 100% perfect cure. And we can deliver that cure to that village and 500 more. Think about that: the thousands, and ultimately millions and millions of people whose lives are saved because you reached out one day and touched them with love.

Here's what we need. We need you to help. Can you drill a well? -- \$4800. Or give part of a well and pray somebody meets your \$2400 or your \$1200 and three more join you? Would you do this too? We need a supernatural miracle. We've got to have a \$380,000 drilling rig. The missionaries told us that has to happen or they cannot continue where they're going in other areas. We need a miracle. We need some people to give \$10,000 and \$20,000 -- \$25,000. I'm praying somebody will give \$100,000. But everybody can give something not only towards the wells but at least give something toward that drilling rig. Together we can meet those needs.

Would you ask God to lead you? Would you go to LifeToday.org, use your bankcard like a check or you can dial the number and use that card? If you want to write a check, make it to LIFE but call that number and tell us you're putting it in the mail. Please do it.

Father, I pray everyone watching will help; in Jesus' name.

Would you just do what he's leading you to do? We have some gifts to send you to say thank you. The book that I've written to help us see the nation healed and freedom literally saved by a miracle work of God through us. We want to help you.

We've got the beautiful mugs to send you to say thanks. But you're giving not only a cup of water you're giving wells of water. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

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

The good news is there is a solution: Mission: Water for Life is one of the most proven demonstrations of God's love today.

Suffering can end because clean water changes everything.

With your gift today you can help drill 500 water wells in remote villages in over 15 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. And \$144 will help provide fresh water for 30 people for a lifetime!

Additionally, just over \$378,000 is needed to replace an old and failing drilling rig in Africa. Please consider an additional gift of \$100 or more to get a desperately needed new rig in place as soon as possible.

With your gift we'll send you The Stream, a powerful new book by James Robison that charts a clear path for your personal revival and a spiritual revolution.

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the "Promises of God" coffee mugs.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our "Majesty" bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

Betty: One of the things that we've seen on our journey is the tears, yes, the tears still come as you see but God has turned those tears to others. It's not yes, we still weep over our daughter some but more so over those that are hurting and that don't have the same hope and assurance that we do.

Levi: That is beautiful.

James: You heard what Betty just said to Levi and that's the reason why we thank you for drilling water wells because we just love to heal hurt.

I'm sending *The Stream*. Listen, this is five years of blood sweat and tears just to speak to you as a shepherd, to lead you to green pasture, through the valley of the shadow of death. Not to live under Pharaoh's rule but in the blessing of God. Then if you'd like to have it, we're sending it to you. You help us give water.

And if you'd like to have *Through the Eyes of the Lion*, you can get it online or in the bookstores. You help us help others today and we'll send it to you. All you have to do is ask us for it because we want to be a blessing to you.

Levi, we love you and bless your church, bless your family. Thank you for blessing us immensely. Would you thank Levi for being a blessing?

[Applause]

Thank you so much.

Thank all of you. Thanks for drilling wells. Thanks for giving someone a cup of water in Jesus' name in answer to their hurt and their prayers. God bless you! Thanks so much for sharing this time with us.