

12/13/16
Week 51: Mission feeding
Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh
Leon Fontaine

Randy: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Randy Robison. So glad you're with us. Sheila Walsh is with me and I have a question for you. Do you experience miracles? Should you experience miracles? Is it really something we should expect? That's something we're going to talk about and we have a wonderful guest to do it. Sheila, I believe you know our guest.

Sheila: Well, I had the privilege when I was up in Canada of being on this amazing pastor's show. I was so impressed with everything he had to share that the minute I came back I said to your mom and dad, "We've got to get this guy on the show!"

So I would ask our audience would you please make very welcome Leon Fontaine?

Leon: Thank you.

Sheila: So great to have you here!

Randy: Appreciate you being here.

Leon: Thank you.

Randy: You have a book that sort of I think sums up your philosophy called *The Spirit Contemporary Life*. What in the heck is the spirit contemporary life? I'm not sure what that means.

Leon: I was raised in a wonderful pastor's home. Most psychologists and psychiatrists, you get to blame your mum for everything so I can't do that because both of them were both amazing pastors and leaders, more on the Pentecostal experience. I know we have a lot of the denominations today. So I was raised in a great home.

But then when I came, Sally and I to pastor our own church people would often ask us, "Are you guys seeker sensitive?" Because I love what Bill Hybels has done to the kingdom of God. It has made every denomination think about how do we attract seekers? So I love him for that.

But then they ask me, "So are you seeker sensitive?"

And I say, "Well, yes."

"So then you're not spirit-filled."

Then I go, "Oh, no. I am too."

They go, "You can't be both!"

I go, "I am!"

And so I found it hard because a lot of the expression in many churches in the Pentecostal to charismatic camp would be to the place where I consider it a little bit much and it turns off my family, my friends, etc. But I wanted to see miracles in a way that I didn't have to compromise but I also didn't have to add a Hollywood production. That was my journey of the church at Springs Church was that we didn't have any great churches in Canada, but by that I mean large, just evangelizing and winning people 22 years ago when we started.

So Sally and I, 22 years ago, we really have thought this through when we were working with my dad who was a wonderful pastor, and my mom, but we began to think about how we can be spiritually alive but contemporary and cool and culturally relevant? That was the journey and the church just exploded.

Sheila: But it's interesting when you go back a little bit I remember you talking about the dissonance between you were brought up with pastors in a more Pentecostal tradition. Then you have a job as a paramedic and it's like they become two separate worlds and that world doesn't touch this world. What began to happen in you during that time?

Leon: Well, we would begin to have these services that we still do today where we would play beautiful music and the choir would worship and we would all just take a moment to pray for people who are hurting, maybe lost loved ones, maybe sick in body. So in this time of creating a beautiful worship service we would pray for miracles and we would see God do miracles.

So when I first became a paramedic my dad's church was so small he couldn't afford to hire me as his youth pastor; so I became a paramedic. But I remember one time one of my first really bad calls at three in the morning; we drove the ambulance up to a car accident scene. A mom was hanging upside down in her seat belt. And when the lights lit up the scene there was water and there was water and there was blood in the water. One child had already died. Another was

hanging in the seat belt with the mom; to give you an understanding of how much this just traumatized me.

As I stepped out and I began to walk down into the ditch, I was that day, it was my day to cut a hole in that car, get in there, and maximize survivors and get in airways, etc. You know how you can go through something in your mind for -- an entire lifetime can flash through your mind in seconds and this is what came to my mind. Father, I'm a little preacher's boy and I've learned to pray with people in a church, with ushers and greeters controlling the atmosphere, and beautiful, "He touched me" playing. And we'd still do that, we love that but here I am and the only sound I've got is the groans of that mom and sirens in the distance coming here, someone screaming at me over there, a fireman over there and they're blocking off the highway over there. There is no sense of anointing. There is no sense of --. I said, "God this is where I need to see miracles! Help me to learn."

That began a journey as seven years as a paramedic and then pastoring at the same time with my dad, of learning to pray with people in a way that didn't require me to make prophetic statements that might not come true or to in a way force it on people. I learned the difference between the power of God and force, which too many people try to use, and I began to see miracles like I had never seen before but only read about. But they weren't done with me screaming, shouting, throwing bodies against the wall, Smith Wigglesworth, some of these amazing old time stories because in today's world I'd be arrested for something like that or lose my job.

So I learned to slip into rooms as people were dying and just quietly share Jesus and hold their hand when they went into eternity. I went in and prayed with moms with cancer. And if I couldn't get them healed, and I don't have all the answers, I'd get her saved and know Jesus. I began to teach our church how to minister Jesus to people in a way that they would love and accept. Jesus grew in favor with God but Jesus grew in favor with man. The message is gorgeous. The message of Jesus is incredible. It is the messengers that need work.

[Laughter]

Randy: You mentioned, okay you have an E.M.T. background, a first responder and yet you mentioned wanting to see miracles, seeing miracles and seeing people die. Where does that all balance out? Should we have expectations? Should we measure in some way whether we're operating in the miraculous or not?

Leon: That's a great question. That shut me down for years. When I was involved in this I was never always successful. I saw two trains of thoughts in the body of Christ. One was that it

wasn't God's will for that miracle to take place. And there are so many differences that I'm not going to argue this one, I'll just share my thoughts.

So if someone child's died, "God needed them in heaven" or "he has a higher reason for this" which was really hard to sell to the mom.

Then it was the other side was, "Well, you didn't have enough faith. You didn't do something right" -- which was devastating as well to the mom.

So I began to just tell people when we would pray with them that we live in a fallen world and even though things are God's will... For example, it is God's will that nobody perish, that none go into eternity without Christ. His will is not happening. People are still going to hell even though it is his will that they go to heaven.

So I would just say, "It's God's will to heal, to do miracles, to bring healing to your life. And I don't understand all the reasons why they don't in this fallen world in this fallen body in a mind that I'm working to renew and a heart that I'm working to establish in grace, and all the things that we're doing in a sense of..."

So I just say, "Heaven is beau..." In fact, when I go into rooms as a pastor where someone is dying of a disease like fourth stage cancer, we've trained our pastors to always do this. You'll always firstly talk about dying and it shocks them. Because I'll step into the room and just say, "Hey, before we pray with you and believe God for miracles and I think it is going to be exciting to see this journey and believe with you for God to heal and touch you, let's talk about death." You just see people just like -- where are you going? Then I'll remove the horror of death.

No one enjoys losing someone because you don't get to hug them again, you don't get to talk to them, but no one really dies. They just move into a place called heaven. And when they pass away in that room their eyes open to visions of heaven, their ears open to the sounds of heaven. It's got to be gorgeous and amazing. So they're just waiting for us and we will spend eternity with them.

So I'll talk about dying and I'll talk about if there is things you want to say to your kids and your spouse in this process, whereas many people who want miracles would shy away from ever talking about something as terminal as leaving the planet. And kids who have lost a mom or a dad feel ripped off because, "I wanted to speak to them. I wanted to talk with them."

Or they will tell me, "Leon, I just wanted to say something to my kid."

So we literally at the very beginning just say get your affairs in order. Talk to your kids in a way that we all know we're going to die. It's one for one. It's not always comfortable. It's never comfortable.

So we would always tell people, yeah, there's a battle, there is a fight that's going on and we're going to be with you on this. And even if I lose somebody, I usually win the whole family because of that approach.

Sheila: I want to ask for somebody watching, Leon who thinks, this *Spirit Contemporary Life*, I've maybe been a believer for 30 years, what would this look like for me? How do I even begin to open up my life to live this way?

Leon: Well, for every mile of truth there is two miles of ditch. So the Christians are famous for getting in the ditch on the side of being so cool and so incognito and so secret service that we blend. And then they've got people on the other side that are so weird, so wild, so condescending, so arrogant, so "I'm right" they won't even listen to someone else's...

So there's no respect, there's no honor. To me Spirit Contemporary finds this middle place that says I want to be filled with the spirit and the presence of God. Paul said in First Corinthians 9 when he was with Jews, he knew how to speak and communicate Jewishly. When he was with Greeks, when he was with those without the law or with the law he would know how to communicate. So what we found was that wherever you are, say you're a board member, a C.F.O. of a large company and you're looking at the strategies for next year. So they roll them out and you're in the meeting, it's a huge meeting. Your whole career is tied to this. There is millions of dollars on the line for the future. And as you're sitting there you sense in your spirit, just down in there, this is not going to work. And that would be Holy Spirit nudging you, guiding you because you can do something about it.

So let's say I'm the C.F.O. so then as they turn to me, "Leon, you're the C.F.O. of this company. What do you think about the strategy and what the team has rolled out here?"

I can't go, "Well, the Lord just spoke to me as I was sitting here." Because in Canada they'll lock you up.

[Laughter]

If you hear voices or if you hear from God that is a career-limiting move.

[Laughter]

So how do you represent because I do want to bring my expertise and what God adds. I teach our people this. Look at them and say, "My hat's off to the strategy team but I just get a gut feeling that we're missing something and I don't think that's going to work."

Now people right away think compromise! You should be quoting Jesus, speaking in Elizabethan English, "Thus saith the Lord!" But what I found was, if you can honor people, respect people, speak their language, under their issues they'll never forget my gut if it fails. And as I help that company succeed and grow it will be the actions of me being a blessing in their world that opens them up to me more than some spiritual thing that I'm able to say.

Randy: Yeah, but even doing that though is risky. But one thing you say in your book is that it's always worth the risk to reach out.

Leon: Yes. So one of the things that we were talking about in the green room was an example that happened a lot was I would just be signing -- like I signed a truck bill one time for a truck driver, a tough looking guy! And while I'm signing it I get this nudge from the Holy Spirit that he's going to commit suicide. Suicide just rose up on the inside of me.

So now I've got a choice. I mean in one of the denominations that I used to hang out with it was like, "Thus saith the Lord unto thee. Thou shalt not take thine own life." But he's going to look at me like I'm a freak. So what do I say? Do I say, "You know the Lord just spoke to me." Well, it might fly between Christians but this guy, he was a biker. He was tattooed. He was a mean, angry man.

So I looked him in the face and confidently but just cautiously handed him his bill back and said, "Man, don't do it."

"What the beep beep beep are you talking about?"

I said, "Don't take your life."

Then he just looked stunned. He looked around and said, "How did you know that?"

I said, "Is it true?"

"Man, I was going to off myself right after this call."

So I just said to him, "Well, if you were going to do that, you've got time for lunch."

"Well, yeah."

So I just took him out for lunch; bought him a big meal.

Sheila: May as well die on a full stomach. Yes!

Leon: And he gave his life to Jesus. I believe Holy Spirit is like, it's kind of like the television signal, the radio signal he is always sending to us individually. "My sheep hear my voice and I call them by name."

So individually, specifically, even how to raise your kid, how to make money, what to do in this health crisis, a warning, "Don't go in there." I believe Holy Spirit is continually trying to help us be -- don't get upset about this but super people. We shouldn't be normal people.

Sheila: I love that!

Leon: We should be super people -- supernatural! All of our movies on Wolverine and Super Girl and Superman, they show this instinctive desire, there is something greater in me to do.

So when I began to teach this to our teens and our 20-somethings they began to rise up and ask Holy Spirit to guide them in business, in raising your kids.

My mom, I laugh because I have four brothers and we were a piece of work, all five of us. And if one of my brothers would bring pornography or drugs into the house we would be at the table eating and all of the sudden my mom would go like this. She would look around the table like this and she would get up. And we had a basement, a full basement with bedrooms and she would walk down the stairs. "One of you boys has brought something into our home."

And we all would kind of go like this. And she would walk to where... we had a suspended ceiling. She would walk right to the tile, get a chair, put her hand up in there, grab the bag of drugs and flush it down the toilet. She did not look. She was not -- she knew by the Spirit of God. So we grew up in that.

I recognize it now that I'm a dad and a grandpa and we're running multiple organizations, we need millions of dollars, when we were working on land deals. And I just found out from the hospital to the financial world to raising kids that when I would find some quiet time Holy Spirit would guide me, and even in the midst of craziness.

Like I remember one time I had an accident scene where I was in charge of it and we had about four to five patients. We had multiple units. We had fire trucks. We had police cars. I'm a young man and I'm praying every day, "God guide me." They were just getting the patients

scooped and immobilized and everything and I saw one patient laying on his belly, a great team was looking after him. They had put a collar on him and they were about to roll him off of his stomach on to the back board and then into the ambulance.

As I'm looking around and my job is to make sure that it is safe. All of the sudden I looked at him and something just jumped inside of me and I went, "Stop!" They looked at me and I was supervisor, they had to stop. I quickly ran over there, put a pair of gloves on. There is something wrong here that you've missed. Now they were good, they don't miss much.

What had happened was he had a cut from here to here with his stomach and everything was all wide open. And he was laying there and in the cold he hadn't bled yet because they would scan for blood. And if they would have rolled him everything would have been -- it would have been horrible. So I quickly put my hands under there and I found it and we rolled him as a unit with my hands being his stomach wall. They looked at me and they all realized, it was one of those I've never seen that ever happen like that. But that was simply a nudging. It was a sense of warning from Holy Spirit.

So I've had probably 13 death threats, I've had three or four attempts on my life, and multiple times God has guided me with what to do, where to go.

Randy: It makes me wonder if we truly let the spirit lead our lives and not some agenda, weird way but in a very practical way, how much could we change the world, and our worlds especially? I think we could.

Sheila: The thing that's exciting to me about this is that this is something that every single one of us can begin to live that way, to listen to that outrageous fiery love of God and move in that. One of the ways you help us do that -- and you're literally changing the world -- is because we find a need, we take hands with you, you join together and miracles happen. We're becoming the super body of Christ. Watch this.

On the mission field

Announcer: Angola has been called the deadliest country for kids. Child mortality rates are among the highest in the world according to United Nations with malnutrition as the underlying cause in most of those deaths. The mothers our mission teams visited may know nothing about statistics but they do know the pain of seeing their children suffer and die because of a lack of food.

Sheila: You're a good mom. It's not your fault. It's not your fault.

I don't know if you can see this little one is struggling to take every single breath that she takes. Psalm 56 talks about the fact that God collects every tear in his bottle. I want this mom to know that God has collected all of her tears.

Peter: I'm afraid when it gets to that stage its prayer that helps more than anything else. Because that little kid is in real trouble.

[Praying] Restore her little body. Take them by the ravages of malnutrition, Jesus.

What we try and do, Sheila is we try and make sure that they don't get here. And that's why mission feeding is so important because it is mission feeding that prevents this from happening. When you see things like this, it absolutely breaks your heart. And the only thing that spurs us on to do this is to make sure that they don't get here.

Without the partnership with LIFE Outreach International I think many, many hundreds of thousands, even millions of children would have lost their lives.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: I don't think a child should ever be in that situation, Sheila.

Sheila: I will never forget that malnutrition clinic or that sweet mom. Sometimes people say to me, "Well, that's just the way -- that's nature taking its course. Some people are just not..."

I'm like excuse me, no! We are the body of Christ on this earth. We are the ones who bring hope where there is no hope. We bring help where there is no help. We bring food when that's the need.

Some people say, "Did you tell that mother that Jesus loved her?"

Well, first of all my natural instinct was to hold her and say to her, "This is not your fault. You have a Father in heaven who loves you and is watching over you."

But what Peter Pretorius said there is so true. We want to get to those kids before they ever end up in the malnutrition clinic. No mother should have to watch her child struggle to take one more breath. And to be able to go with Peter that day, literally, I couldn't talk in the van but we drove for five hours and we went to one of the villages where mission feeding is already in place and it was literally like going from hell to heaven. It literally was like seeing darkness and

hopelessness to seeing a place where children were running around, where they had a meal. And it is all possible and it is so easy.

Do you know that literally \$30 will feed three children for three months? That's ridiculous! \$50 will feed five children for three months -- \$100, ten children. We have some amazing friends, you're probably watching, and they said to us, "Listen. We're going to give you a matching gift, \$400,000 on the table."

So for everything you give it will be doubled. And we can even with a school, we can feed a whole school full of children for three months for \$1400 and that will be doubled -- so two schools. I watched. The kids don't go to school if they don't get food. But we can say to them, "Hey, come on to school. We'll give you a good meal." And then they get an education and they can grow up to be men and women of destiny.

Randy: Sheila, you've wondered whether you should tell that mother that God loved her. You did. You showed her that God loves her. And that's what we're asking you to do. You can't travel over there or send them an e-mail or anything but you can show those people that God loves them when you partner with us, give them life, give them food, give them a chance -- give their children a chance. Sheila, that baby didn't make it.

Sheila: No. It was interesting. Peter prayed for that little one and we watched. They wrapped her up in foil because that was all they had but they couldn't get her body temperature up. Yeah, that little one didn't make it.

Randy: But there are others.

Sheila: But there are so many others. That clinic was full of children. I think this is the most amazing God gift. When you think so many of us spend half our life thinking what are we going to eat at our next meal? -- And overeating. We can make a difference. We can get our lives back in balance and we can reach our hand in Jesus' name and change the world.

Randy: Go to the phone, go online, reach out with love and let's give those children a chance. Let's show them the love of Christ in word and deed. Go to the phones and go online right now.

Sheila: Thank you!

Begin video clip

Announcer: In remote and impoverished villages of Africa children are suffering, desperately in need of life saving food, facing death by starvation.

LIFE's mission feeding program is there, ready now to feed and care for children in crisis areas of Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan. With all of our previous reserves gone, and Angola facing a record food shortage due to crop failure, we need to immediately replenish our funding and supplies for our feeding programs.

As an answered prayer, a group of *LIFE's* friends have set a \$400,000 matching gift challenge for mission feeding! This means your gift today could have a double impact! \$30 for three children will be doubled to help feed six children! \$50 to help five children will be doubled to save ten children! And \$100 for ten children will be doubled to help feed 20 children! And don't forget, your \$1400 gift to sponsor a school will now be doubled to feed children in two schools!

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you *Without Rival* by author Lisa Bevere. With your double impact gift of \$100 or more please request *The Complete Illustrated Children's Bible*. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1000, which will now be doubled to help feed 200 children and you may request our beautiful Majesty bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of clip**On the mission field**

James: Here are two children at school. This little guy has got the United States flag on. I want our country to be always be known as a country that gives life to children like these; not only saving their life from starvation but from malnutrition that keeps them from learning as they should.

Everyone in the United States watching me right now, you have a chance to make a gift. And all of our Canadian, Australian friends, United Kingdom, European friends, let's all help. Would you right now go to the phone or go online and respond and make the best gift you could possibly make? Please do it! Don't turn away. Do what you can to help.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: *The Spirit Contemporary Life* isn't always a safe one but it is always a blessed one. We appreciate what you're sharing. Sheila wants to say a prayer for you.

Sheila: I just want to ask our viewers and those that are in the studio audience, God is using Leon and his wife and family so mightily. Would you just join me and pray for God's protection over him?

Father, I thank you for this godly man, for the places that you are taking him, for the ways you are using him. Lord, I ask for a hedge of protection around him, around his wife, around his children, around his church, around his steps that you would order them wherever he goes; you go before him and behind him. And Lord, we thank you. And we pray, Lord that we will begin to see that *Spirit Contemporary Life* alive in every single one of us; in Jesus' name.

Randy: Amen! Amen! I want you to get Leon's book. It is going to bless you. It's going to revolutionize your life. You can get it when you make a gift towards mission feeding today. The phone number is still there. I want you to call, go online and give and request Leon's book and you can leading a *Spirit Contemporary Life*. Would you thank Leon for being with us today on *LIFE Today*?

Leon: Thank you, guys! My joy!

Randy: We appreciate you as well. Be sure to join us every day right here on *LIFE Today*.

Sheila: See you next time. Thanks for being with us!