

12/26/16
Week 1: Mission Feeding
James and Betty Robison
Dan Wallrath and Sergeant Stephen Jackel

James: Thank you! I want you to know that we have one of our great veterans, one of our great soldiers; that he gave a whole lot of his life, a piece of his life, a part of his life not just time but for our freedom. And when he walked in here this is what happened.

[Applause]

That's what happened when Sergeant Stephen Jackel came in here. And it was right. I commend you because you know honor, and hero, and you honor the hero. We'll be talking to our soldier in a moment. But we're going to talk to somebody else too and I want you to see this.

Betty, this is appropriately titled *Building Hope*. This is a builder who's building homes for soldiers. His name is Dan Wallrath.

Would you welcome Dan and would you welcome our soldier, Stephen again? Would you do that?

God bless you both.

[Applause]

Betty, when you saw Sergeant walk out here and you see these legs -- did you lose your legs to your knees or above the need part of the prosthesis?

Stephen: Below the knee.

James: Just below the knee. I want you to tell us right off how you lost your legs; I think one you lost and then the other. But tell us what happened.

Stephen: I was an army combat engineer so my job was to look for I.E.D., roadside bombs, alongside the road for oncoming forces. On August 23rd, 2011 we were doing route clearance; saw a wire going into the culvert. Told the driver to back up; I had this weird gut feeling. As soon as we backed up, I yelled "go!" because I'd confirmed that there was in fact a wire. The

I.E.D. was initiated on us. I was looking at the ground as we'd left the ground in our vehicle. It was about a 13-ton vehicle. We went airborne a few feet in front of the blast hole actually.

I lost consciousness. I woke up and in the midst of gaining consciousness I realized that we had armor piercing .50 cal. rounds cooking off the side of the vehicle. I'd also bit through my lip and was choking on my own blood. So I pulled my lip up over my teeth, spit the blood out, checked to make sure that the guys were okay and at that point I'd realized that my gunner was pinned and my dismount had been pinned as well. These guys were pretty much within arm's reach as I was laying sideways in the vehicle because I'd come out of a five point harness after the blast initiated.

So landing in the vehicle sideways I did what a lot of people in combat do when they get blown up. I started checking, making sure everything was attached. At that moment I realized that I had damaged feet. The radio mount was destroyed so I picked up my dismount radio and I called up to the rear of the formation of the vehicles that we had and I told them, "Hey, we need three litters, dismount is pinned, gunner's pinned and I've got two broken feet." And about the time that I had said that a fire had broken out inside the vehicle and immediately I dropped the radio. At this point my back was broke, two broken feet.

I swear to you, it felt like a six-minute conversation with God; I'm pretty sure it was like six seconds. But I was done. I was smoked. I didn't have anything left in me. Surely, I had accepted the fact that I was fixing to die right there in the vehicle with these guys and we were going to burn to death. I told God, "However you need to use me, use me." He did. I felt a wave of heat come over my body and I immediately went to my right leg and started using my leg and slam it down to put the fire out. Moved to the rear of the vehicle. At that time, they had finally cleared to us because usually when an explosive goes off those guys over there like to put more than one explosive around it so when people do come to help they create more casualties.

With that being said they had to take their time getting to us safely. I looked out the window at my platoon sergeant and he was looking down at me and he pointed at the door. I was like nope. Already tried it. The hydraulics were busted. Come to find out when I had lifted myself up and leaned forward because we have a MRAP so it's a mine resistant ambush protected vehicle. So you can lock it within so no one can get in. The only double-edged sword of that is the fact that now we were trapped in the vehicle.

So undoing the hatches, the hatch sprung open and I fell down. They came in and pulled us out. They put us on the litter and we were rescued out of there.

James: Thank you for your love. Would you say thank you to God for his love for us?

[Applause]

And Sergeant Stephen, you represent a lot of soldiers. We love all of you. I don't even think we have the ability to tell you the way you need to hear it, thank you. Thank you! It took how long before you lost -- you lost one leg, it had to be amputated because of circulation and shock damage.

Stephen: Yeah, I'd destroyed my leg putting out the fire more than it had already been damaged.

James: Trying to help everybody else, you did more damage.

Stephen: So two days later they cut my right leg off. And so my wife and my mom didn't know about any of this, nor my family. So me, with the drugs that they had given me in the hospital, I was on Facebook and I'd posted a picture with me missing half my leg now. But that's like the wrong way for your parents to find out like you've had your leg amputated. So yeah, my mom got on to me for that one.

James: And you ultimately lost the other leg. Now I want us to move forward because you got a situation. Now you were married, how many children did you have at this time?

Stephen: I was married to my beautiful wife Adrianna and we had five kids at the time.

James: How many do you have now?

Stephen: Six! So God saved me for a reason.

[Laughter]

James: Now Dan, we've got to get you in this. I love your western look. You're a contractor; you're a custom home builder in Houston. Just everything is going fine. All of the sudden you see needs. You see soldiers coming home that maybe they didn't even really have housing but you saw a lot of them that needed help because they had been injured so they needed to be modifications. So tell us your story.

Dan: I had the opportunity to meet with a family, their son was a marine. He was serving in Iraq. His group had much like Stephen they ran over an I.E.D., roadside bomb. This young man had sustained severe head injuries and never going to be the same, and 21 years old. A friend of mine asked me to go talk to this family about helping them get their home remodeled. I did. I actually went over to tell them, I was going to recommend a remodeler. But after I heard the

story, he showed me a picture of Stephen before he was injured and one after he was injured, just broke my heart. His dad was crying and I was tearing up.

I opened my big mouth and said, "I'm going to help you. I know some good guys and we'll get this thing taken care of."

So we, with the help of our building association down in Houston, we just all banded together and remodeled a home, did about \$100,000 worth of remodeling to the home. To my surprise it didn't really cost anybody anything.

Betty: I think it is awesome what you're doing for the families. You're giving them a place to live, a place with the injuries they can move around and feel the independence again because they're the brave ones. They're the ones that have sacrificed their life and the families too. Sometimes we tend to forget about the families back home that don't know when they might get that call saying their loved one's been killed or injured badly. I just think it is awesome what you're doing.

But I guess as a person that has not had to experience any of the tragedy of having someone lost through serving our country, what are some of the ways, Stephen, that we can pray as citizens for these families? When they come back, I know the devastation a lot of times, everything is not back to normal, never will be normal again.

Stephen: In prayer it would be tremendous in the direction of like the reintegrating that strength. Because a lot of families who may not even have people there for them to support them, it's to either bring about that support system or to give strength to the support system that's already there because like me, it's like I was 32 and my wife was changing my diaper and then she had five kids to take care of too. So it's like she's got a whole man to take care of plus the kids. And it is not that in every scenario, but the people, the caregivers or the family members are the ones that experience like the byproduct of the injuries; so it would be the strength and the knowledge.

James: Who would you ask in a community to find out how to help those people?

Dan, do you know of what he is talking about? And then I want you to tell us how all of our viewers all over could contribute to what God put in your heart. Because what he put in your heart can only be multiplied by love and compassion and action. It is one thing to say we care, it's another thing to do action. But do you know how they can contact to find out, or you Stephen, who do they talk to know where there is a particular need that we might go in and assist the family with that they're going in? And how would they be able to help you and get involved?

Dan: One of the things that I'd like everybody to realize is that because of the hopeless and helpless state that these young men and women are in, 22 of these young people take their life every day -- 22 a day. This is not a statistic that's just been going on just like for the last year or two, this has been going on for over ten years. So it's not getting any better.

One of the things that we can do is myself, God gave me a talent to build homes. So now we're using that talent to help these families to heal, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. What we're asking is for builders and the building community to step up and say hey, we would like to join with you guys and we'll guide them through the process.

James: All right, give us an address, give us a web site.

Dan: Yes, sir. It is OperationFINALLYHOME.org.

James: You can see it on the screen. I hope you'll write it down. Keep it there. Say it again.

Dan: OperationFINALLYHOME.org.

James: And you've written a book that tells the story, *Building Hope*, it is a beautiful picture. This soldier, where is he? Do you happen to know where he is?

Dan: I do. That's Captain Best. He flew several missions over Iraq in helicopter and he flew over burn pits. If anybody is familiar with burn pits over there they burn all kinds of different things that produced a lot of carcinogens. The government did it, the civilians did it, and he flew over several missions over there and he contracted a rare cancer. They couldn't find the origin of it. He was going to die and leave his family and his two small kids if they didn't find the origin. So they were going to be on street. So we found them. We were able to build them a new home and they did find the origin of his cancer and he is doing well today.

We're building homes now in 30 different states. We have 80 something projects going on right now and it is due to the love of our building community, our great Americans that step up, electricians, plumbers, painters. They step up and say, "Hey, we want to help." That's who is building these homes. And that's who we are reaching out to. They're lining up to do it. God bless them.

James: You're saying they're volunteering the help. And no, you're not asking people to pay for the supplies or the homes, you just want builders. But you've got to have a staff working with you to train them. So you have to need some resources. Let's just say we've got viewers or people here who say, "I want to help you, Dan, do what you're doing and I want to

see it expand." Where would they mail a gift? Would it be that same name? And is there an address? Is that on the web site where they can know where to mail it? They write a check to you and they send it. I pray you will.

We have a tremendous responsibility on our shoulders to try to help people suffering all over the world. I find the American people want to do it if they believe it works, to see what you're doing works. When we tell you we're going to drill a water well, it works. When we tell you we're going to make it where the kids can get water if the power goes out, it works! So if you do something, you get people out of sexual trafficking or you give kids shoes and they see what it does.

What can we do to encourage you? This is an encouragement and you already talked about how people should notice but is there something the general public needs to know about the soldiers? We just talked about the terrible depression that comes on them. Is there a single suggestion, beyond prayer that you would say just to our viewers, to do something for our veterans? What would you say, soldier?

Stephen: Do whatever your heart is compelled to do. If you as an individual feel as though you haven't served your nation or your fellow brothers and sisters and its like, how do you serve? It is in your own capacity, really. With me, it is like me volunteering my time, that's how I help other veterans because I still serve. It's just not with the D.O.D. We don't go around asking for thank you's and stuff like that. It's like if someone wants to show how much they appreciate those who have sacrificed for them --

James: To express it to you? Does it mean someone...?

Stephen: I mean it is like if your family member was a service member how would you want them...?

James: Want them to be treated?

Stephen: How would you treat them? That's all. We're all family. We all love each other too.

James: Is job opportunities a challenge sometimes -- getting jobs?

Stephen: Yeah, definitely, that's why I love this man to death. We got a mortgage-free home that allowed me -- yeah, y'all didn't hear that part, did you?

[Applause]

Yeah! The mortgage-free home allowed me and my family to not have that burden of paying a mortgage; plus being disabled in Texas, it being 100%, I don't pay property taxes. So with me, it's like I get to now choose what my passion is. And I get up on stage and sing music and teach music, and then I also coordinate hunts and stuff like that. So I'm Vice President of Operation Rock the Troops and then executive director for Camp Valhalla. So I do the music portion and I do the hunting portion and fishing and it's like how could I not love my life?

James: Do you take veterans too?

Stephen: Absolutely!

James: Let me ask you this one question here. You lost your legs and you see a country that sometimes acts pretty foolish. Do you ever wonder if the sacrifice was worth it?

Stephen: You know, there's been a couple of times where I've sat back and one, thought about taking my own life. And two, well, just because I know the father that my kids have and the husband that my wife has isn't the same because I'd suffered multiple traumatic brain injuries; that's brain damage to be exact. So when you don't function the same and you can't give that part of you but there's hope, there is constant healing, there is constant directions. So with me, it's...

James: Let me tell you something. I want to pray with you. Lord, I just love this soldier and his beautiful family, and Dan. And God, if you can put your arms around all these soldiers, all our veterans, put them up to your heart and let them know how much you love them. God, let us show them how much we love them.

I pray you bless this family in a special way. I pray that you'll help Stephen to know how to really help the other veterans. I pray you'll give Dan even more insight. And I pray you'll show all our viewers how we can put your loving arms around these people who have given so much for us and for our freedom, like you gave your son that we might be free.

Lord, heal our land. We leave a year and go into a new year. Let it be the greatest year in the history of our nation for your glory! -- And for these wonderful veterans; in Jesus' name.

I want to just say to all of you right here where I am. I want to talk to you. I don't need to get up. I really do. This is what I believe. If we as Christians and the American people don't get on our knees before God, the things that are going to happen to us are going to knock us down. And to say all hell is going to break loose if we don't begin to move back to God almost sounds like an understatement. But we're going to love these soldiers and you're going to find ways to

do it. And Dan, we'll find ways, and Stephen, we'll find ways that we can be a blessing because we want to, and the viewers here and all the people in the studio.

But I also want to say this to you. I know you're going to appreciate it. We've got little kids that are so weak they can't hardly cry -- they're too weak to cry. We've got feeding programs where we can save these kids lives. I want you to look. We know what happens to you guys with war - - and what happens to the pain. Let me show you some people in pain that never did anything. And we couldn't put your legs back but we can perfectly solve these problems. I want you to watch it.

On the mission field

Announcer: I am a mother's worst nightmare. I thrive on the pain of children. I do not discriminate and I show no mercy.

Sheila: You look into the eyes of a child who is seriously malnourished and there is just nothing. It is like somebody just turned the light off.

Announcer: You won't see me coming but you will soon hear me in your children's cries.

[Children crying]

My touch brings bloated stomachs, thinning hair that changes color, painful skin disorders and tiny bodies so thin and frail they appear as living skeletons.

Sheila: To see this little helpless one with the skin literally peeling off his arms and his legs was such a horrifying sight.

Announcer: I am slow but sure. My name is malnutrition and my legacy is death.

Sheila: I heard someone on the news one day make a comment about the devastating deaths of children in some countries in Africa. And yet the reporter suggested that perhaps the mothers there were "more accustomed to that because it is very much a part of their life." [Sighing] I've seen with my own eyes what I knew in my gut -- no mother will ever become accustomed to burying a child.

The thing that really has blown me away the most, all of this is reversible.

[Children Laughing]

End of clip

In the studio

James: Oh, boy! Thank you for the smiles. My heart is so heavy when I see these things that only love can address that it just -- oh, boy! I feel sometimes, Betty, that there's no way I can ever make it clear enough.

Betty: Well, there's nothing any more heartbreaking than a mother watching her child die. There is nothing any more rather breaking than a mother listening to their baby cry and they know why their baby is crying, because they're hungry. And they can't fix it; a mom is supposed to be able to fix it. But they know what they need and they can't find it anywhere. All their resources are gone.

Well, we can fix it. We can offer the hope to these mothers and to these babies for life if we can get the food to them. You've always been so gracious and so kind to help us, and so loving and compassionate when we ask you to help us with the children that are helpless. We're asking you again. Please join with us and let's give the food to the children that they might live.

James: Betty, while you were talking and I'm listening to you but I'm praying, God! This is the last week of our feeding emphasis, raising money for months now; we won't talk about it again after this week until another time later in the year. But I'm saying God, I'd like to see such a response here at the last of the year. You can make a year-end gift. Some of you are even wondering, "What do I give? I'm so glad I can get a tax break. We need all of them we can get. I want to do something."

I wish we could call the missionaries and say, "Go find another 100,000 kids." We've saved over 10 million little children's lives. Think about it. We've saved that many we know. That's not our count. That's the governments of Africa and the nations tell us this is how many lives you saved because this is what you're doing -- and there is a gratitude. We even had the warring factions, both sides in two Civil Wars, both sides thanking us for saving their kids! That's what love does. So I'm just saying to you in this last week, now here's the beauty. Some of our friends that know how effective it is, they put up \$400,000 to match a gift and that means what you give can be doubled.

Father, I pray everybody will want to give a large gift. I pray they'll give a great year-end gift. It's amazing. We could call the missionaries. So Father, touch their hearts to do it.

\$1400 we can feed a school for three months -- for a full school for that gift and it will be doubled so now you help two schools. \$30, \$50, \$100, three, five, ten children for the next

months, they're going to be fed. But now it's doubled -- not three, its six, not five, its ten, not 10, 20. It jumps. So I'm asking you, just say, "God, what can I do?" Knowing that whatever you gift is, it's going to be doubled and you're going to be sharing love.

We have some gifts to share with you to bless you in your spiritual life. But right now in this last week, would you make a real special gift? Would you go to the web site you see or dial the number, use your bankcard like a check? If you write a check, make it to LIFE but please call us.

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.

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online!

End of clip

In the studio

James: I can't look at a soldier and not just -- like a hug is not enough, saying to his kids, "Hey! Thanks for giving us a piece of your dad." And you know, Sergeant, you died for people

that would call themselves our enemies because you tried to help the kids in the warring factions have a future. A lot of our guys died for the enemy to try to give them a future.

Dan, I want you to be able to keep building homes. There is the web site again. Find out how you can help him. If you'd like to have the book, I'll tell you what. If you just helped us help a kid, and you want the book, of course, you can go online and get it, *Building Hope* but we'll send it to you. I'm believing if I send it to you that you're going to learn how to help build hope. And I bet there are a lot of stories in here about what love does.

So would you say thanks to Dan and thanks to Stephen again? Thank you so much!

[Applause]

And thanks to all of you for sharing life!