

2/20/17
Week 9: WFL
James and Betty Robison
Lacey Buchanan

James: It's a blessing to us to share blessings with you. I really believe that if you'll just kind of buckle your seatbelt and just stay right there, I think you're going to have whatever load you have sensed that you're carrying, you're going to see love lift the load. You're going to be inspired.

I'm James Robison. Betty and I are blessed to share blessings with you, to give you an opportunity to be a blessing to someone else who never expected they would even see a blessing. We have a guest today, Lacey Buchanan who has a little boy in her arms that you're going to see up close and personal. She's titled this book, *Through the Eyes of Hope* because she had a child that had most people known the challenges that this little fellow faced, they would have certainly encouraged her to consider not giving birth to such a challenged child. And she was even accused by some, and this is so hard to believe, that when they saw what he faces, which she sees as such incredible blessing from the Lord through a very challenging situation, many have said, "Why in the world would you even bring someone like that into the world?" It is sad to think that anyone ever has that kind of an attitude.

Through the Eyes of Hope; I want you to welcome the mother of what we consider to be an incredible miracle. Welcome Lacey.

[Applause]

I want you to tell us because I am looking at the picture here of a little boy that just has red on his right eye and under his left and can't tell if he has eyes. There's a mama giving him a big kiss. Tell us about this incredible challenge.

Lacey: Well, Christian was born with what is called a Tessier Cleft Lip and Palate. The cleft was so large that it also clefted his eyes. So he is completely blind. He has to have reconstructive surgeries to repair the cleft so that he's able to speak and eat normally.

James: And they did that?

Lacey: Some. It's a series of surgeries so he has more to come.

James: Well, tell us what happened and what you saw when you first saw him. Tell me what went on in your and your husband's mind when you saw a little boy that was obviously extremely challenged.

Lacey: Well, we had no idea until he was born that he was going to be blind. We had no idea there were issues with his eyes at all. So we had prepared ourselves for a cleft, we knew that that was a part of the issues that he was going to have but preparing ourselves for his vision impairment didn't get to happen. So we were in shock, disbelief. We were scared about how we were going to raise a child who was blind. We had no idea what to do, what resources there were.

So we love this child madly and we knew that but we knew that... we didn't know what else to do but just love him.

James: What happened when you brought him home and you started and you went out in public, what was the reaction of people when they actually saw your little baby?

Lacey: The reaction of other people when we were out in public would be stares, whispers behind my back. Some people would come up to us and ask questions. Sometimes a little bit audaciously, "What's wrong with him? Why does he look that way?" Even to the point where we had some social media comments saying, "Why would you let this child live? He should have been aborted. He's going to live this miserable pathetic life."

Betty: You told us that you got to where you'd just cover his little face when you went out in public just to avoid all the comments.

Lacey: Yeah, I just wanted to go to the grocery store and get my groceries and get home. I didn't want to have to face those struggles and I didn't want to have to explain his condition to people. I just wanted to get in and get out. So yeah, I put a blanket over his car seat and I would just try to hurry around and get what I needed and leave.

James: When you began to deal with the challenges, what was going on in your heart? What did you feel like God wanted? Because here you've taken the time and the effort and the focus to write a book, *Through the Eyes of Hope*. What are you wanting to say to everyone who is listening and everyone who will read this book? What do you want them to hear?

Lacey: For anybody who reads the book, we're all going to face the hardest days of our life, whether it looks similar to my circumstance or something totally different. I want people to know that sometimes what we think is the death of a dream is really the birth of a beautiful new adventure when we put it in God's hands.

James: Do you see that happening?

Lacey: Absolutely! Christian is such a gift. Getting to be his mom is a privilege. I don't want anybody else to be his mom. There was a time when I was angry and thought I was being punished because my child wasn't born healthy. I came to realize that there's no other job in the world I would want than to be his mom. He is thriving. He is enjoying life. He is in kindergarten. He's amazing. Every challenge stacked against him he conquers and he conquers it with a smile.

James: Does he know other children react to what they see? Does he understand what they see because he obviously can't see what they're looking at? Have you explained to him the reactions of others and their actions and how he might deal with it? How does that come across with him when you're trying to explain what's going on and how he should respond?

Lacey: He's just now getting to the age where he's starting to understand that he's different. So we take it little by little and piece by piece with him. We don't want overload it all on him at once because he is still young. When he asks questions or when he says things that let us know that he is realizing that he is different, we try to instill in him very positive reassurance about it and very matter of fact, "Yes, you're blind. It is a fact."

We don't want that to hinder him so we don't ever say, "You can't do this because you're blind." Or "You can't do that because you've got a cleft." If he wants to do something and the blindness makes it a challenge, we help him overcome that challenge.

So we want him to grow up knowing that his blindness is -- it may make some things more difficult but not doable. So we try to live out those things that we want him to live out. We try to just give him a model to go from.

Betty: Tell us a little bit about the journey God's brought you on in this because like you said you weren't expecting it to the extent until after he was born, all the challenges you would have with him. But you said, and you told us earlier that God just showed you something about him, about his beauty within that you didn't feel like you had to apologize or hide him from people.

Lacey: So I was at the grocery store one day getting groceries and this guy saw my covered car seat and he just kept insisting that he wanted to see the baby. I was purposefully covering this car seat. So I kept explaining to him that this child had some differences and it was just easier to keep the blanket on. And then he just persisted until he just wore me down. Finally, I said, "Okay, sure." So I pulled the blanket back and when I did, the guy threw his hands over his mouth and gasped and jumped backwards. It broke my heart to see him do that at this baby who I loved and adored. That's really when I decided... Really, when God said to me, "Don't hide this

baby."

James: I want to let our audience here and at home see Christian, this just happened recently and watch this. I love it!

Begin video clip

Christian sings:

Jesus loves me this I know

For the Bible tells me so

Little ones who him belong

They are weak but he is strong

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus love me

The Bible tells me so

Lacey: Yay! Beautiful! Good job! Give yourself a hand.

[Christian Clapping]

End of clip

In the studio

[Applause]

James: You did something on YouTube earlier. How old was he when you did the cards and you did the YouTube post?

Lacey: He was 15 months old or so when I did the YouTube video. He was tiny.

James: Oh man. The time we're talking to you, and I think they're cutting up where you can at least see the images on YouTube. What would they type in to get that?

Lacey: They can search my name, Lacey Buchanan.

James: At the time we're talking, 15 million people have been blessed with Christian right here. Hopefully, you will get a lot of other folks that you know after you watch it to watch. I want you to hear the rest of the story but just know you can find that.

I think when people see the way you've handled this and then to take the time to write the book,

do you think that it is going to inspire them to face every challenge and see it as an opportunity to not only receive hope but in some way give hope to others?

Lacey: I hope it will. I hope people will realize that no matter what we face, God is big enough to handle it.

James: Well, you've been doing something that most people find very difficult to believe. From the time you've had this baby, you decided that you were going to become an advocate and represent people who are challenged and who need help. And you are about to complete or have completed your law degree?

Lacey: It's complete.

James: It is complete?

Lacey: Yes! Finally!

James: So what are the steps now for you as a mom, because that's number one, and wife? What are you going to do with your law degree that might be of interest to people who are watching us?

Lacey: Well, finally completed the law degree so I really want to help other families who have been in situations like mine. I've lived it and so I can sympathize with where they're at. I want to use my degree to really advocate for those families in the legal system and use it to educate about the disabled community and just open doors for people that have a hard time accessing because I understand their struggles. I've lived those struggles. I still live those struggles some days. So I really hope to impact the special needs community in that way.

James: What do you think God is going to do with Christian? Do you see when you watch this little boy developing, he was so cute and he's happy and he's just being a little boy; do you see and sense anything in your spirit that God might do that's just really special for him? Can you see anything beginning to develop in your prayer life that gives you an indication?

Lacey: Not too much just yet. I really do hope that he will pursue an education because education is so important to me, I did law school and all that and so I want him to know that he can go to college and do great things despite his disability and that's not going to stop him.

I would really, I think it would be amazing if he became some sort of speaker or pastor or something because he's had speech difficulties his entire life. So I think it would be really cool to see a child who has struggled his whole life to speak become a mouthpiece.

James: That would be so beautiful -- with all those challenges. One of the joys of our viewers is to do the cleft palate surgery for little children around the world.

Let me say this to all of you. You are amazing. The very fact that you're still watching when you find out, okay, we're talking about some other challenge. I find that you're not only interested in knowing how people deal with challenges and how they overcome but the viewers of *LIFE Today*, those of you who tune in regularly, have found that we give you an opportunity to be the answer to prayer, a prayer for some that would seem like it is impossible to see answered and you become the answer. So I think you're going to not only pass the book on and tell people about it, but I think you're going to be an encourager. I think you'll point people to her testimony even on the web and on YouTube. I think that you are an advocate, like she is talking about being for the poor, for the overlooked, for the forgotten. And from the depth of my heart, I want to thank you for that.

You know what most of you communicate with us if we run into in person when we're out traveling or we're out in public or we're at church, or you email or you may write a note? You have found a tremendous joy becoming the blessing, becoming the answer to prayer for someone else. So when we share stories like this you realize that we're sharing something to lighten your load but also to inspire you to lighten someone else's load.

That is precisely what our incredible guest, Lacey is doing and what I think her son is going to do. I'm going to be surprised if he doesn't do something very special in life because there are a lot of people praying for him right now; a lot of people praying with you and rejoicing with you. I'm very proud of you for what God has given you the grace and the determination to do.

You are really a blessing and Betty and I just want to thank you for sharing and thank you for this beautiful little boy that you so obviously love and that you are becoming not only hope for him but you are giving eyes of hope to an awful lot of people.

Would you thank Lacey for sharing her story and her beautiful little son, Christian? The first time I saw this little guy, I just fell in love with him.

By the way, Christian, I know you're not able to see me but you can hear me, I love you buddy and I really did like to hear you sing "Jesus loves me." I'm telling you, he does. You are such a blessing.

Our wonderful viewers have been giving water to people around the world who don't have it and we've got something going right now that we've never been able to do and I know you're going to like this. We take drilling rigs in and we drill a water well that takes care of maybe 1,000 people

in that area.

But we've got some areas where you can't get rigs in; the terrain is impassable. Their water source is awful. But we've got a little filter system now that we're able to give a family their own device to give clean water to their children. It's incredible!

I want you to just look in. I can't help but smile because when you see the love of parents for their children and those children are sick because of contaminated water and they've lost many of them and you realize that we can drill water wells but we can also offer people another solution. You watch this. You're going to like this.

On the mission field

Announcer: Have you ever waited for things to change in your life? The people of Burundi have waited... and waited. -- Some longer than others. Too many times they've seen their children, their brother, or sister pass away from lack of clean drinking water. And yet, they wait and they pray that God will look upon them with favor and restore the springs of old with fresh clean drinking water. Until that day comes they continue to draw from sources filled with waterborne disease and hope that tomorrow the change they have longed for, for so long, will finally arrive.

Ralph: We're here today in the heart of Africa. Try to imagine being a mother, your children are thirsty and you want to give them something to drink. But the water that you bring them looks something like this and you know in your heart of hearts that by them drinking this water chances are they're not going to live much longer.

Announcer: Look closely at this water. Just imagine for a moment it was your only option to stay alive. Would you drink it? The people of Burundi shouldn't have to make that choice either.

Ralph: It all starts right down here at their source of water. This little waterhole, which is really more like a mud puddle, is the water source for a people trying to drink out of this one hole. And it is just incredible when you look at that water that they're going to drink. It just breaks your heart.

Announcer: Look into their eyes. If you look closely you'll not only see thirsty bodies but souls that thirst as well. Together we can share through word and deed not only clean water for their bodies but living water for their souls.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Those are absolutely -- absolutely beautiful children. Betty, right now we've got the opportunity to not only drill wells -- and let me just say this. There's an area, there's 188 locations that the missionaries have pointed out where the situation is so critical that we have to move very rapidly and it is \$4800 to drill a well.

Lord, I'm praying for a miracle today of several, and hopefully, many people will say, "I'll drill a well. I can do it. I will!" Then Lord, I pray everyone who can will give toward it, whatever they can to get those emergency wells; in Jesus' name.

I believe if God puts it on your heart to help, whether you can do the \$4800 or \$1200 or \$2400 and pray someone matches you with the \$2400 and we've got a well, or three join you with \$1200, we got it -- many people, most who support us, Betty will give \$48 or maybe \$144 to give ten people water basically the rest of their life or 30 people. It breaks out like that.

But we've got something else. We've got these five gallon containers that have a hose line and a filter that takes any water, however contaminated and dirty it is and makes it perfectly clean, non-contaminated, potable, drinkable water. And we can give three families those filter systems.

Now think about this. We've got areas where it's virtually impossible to get a drilling rig and all they've got are those mud holes like the one Ralph Done, our mission overseer was talking about. We can take those to those families, \$100 and you can give three families their own filter system. So there is some level, some way that I believe every one of you watching can help. I've already prayed and I know God answers prayer. If you can give a well, I believe you will joyfully do it. If you can give toward the well you'll do it. But Betty, I think there are many people who can give that \$100 for that amazing, simple non-complicated filter system.

Betty: I'm sitting here and I'm thinking about us getting those little filter systems to those areas where we can't drill the wells. And how excited a mother would be to be able to filter water through that filter so that her children could have safe drinking water. I can't even imagine having to offer them, James, the water, the contaminated water knowing that it's going to poison their little bodies and eventually kill them.

This is such an opportunity. I'm going to go ahead and just thank you upfront because I know your heart. You have giving hearts and I know you're going to do all you can to help with the water wells and with the filters. Thank you so much.

James: I really do agree with you, honey! I think God is going to answer the prayer. If you'll go to LifeToday.org and take your bankcard, use it like a check or if you want to just send it in and mail it in or you can dial the number there and call and say, "I'm going to put a gift on my card," whatever God puts on your heart. If you do decide to write a check, make it to LIFE, that's what you're giving but call us and tell us that you're sending it in so we know that we are seeing the met. Would you do that? I really do thank you for doing it.

We have some beautiful gifts to send you that I promise you are going to be an inspiration to you and an encouragement. I hope many of you will give the water well or the \$1200 and get, I think the most beautiful bronze we've ever created, the "Determined Eagle" because we're going to live by the grace and power of God, determined to soar on the turbulence of the times and the challenges of our day. And we're going to help other people do that by sharing the love of God, not in word only but also in action.

We want to bless you and say thank you as you're giving life to others. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day children living in extreme poverty are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

Our teams have recently identified 188 remote villages in southern Africa where children are suffering from contaminated, disease ridden water. The situation is desperate. They need clean disease-free water immediately.

With your gift today you can help drill fresh water wells in remote villages across seven African nations. Your gift of \$24 will provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will provide for ten. \$72 provides for 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift we'll send you Sheila Walsh's devotional, *5 Minutes with Jesus*, a fresh infusion of joy to help you experience a deeper connection with God.

Please consider an additional gift of \$100 to help provided three families with water filtration kits in emergency areas where our rigs cannot reach. And you may request our "No Greater Name" canvas print.

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 beautiful new hand-painted “Determined Eagle” bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

On the mission field

Ralph: We're here in Burundi, Africa up in the mountains where they cannot get drill rigs to come up here to drill wells. This scenario happens around the world, not just here. We've discovered that these people up here have pathetic water sources. This is water that mothers are bringing home to their children only to get worms, other waterborne diseases, cholera, extreme diarrhea, and then to hear stories of death.

LIFE has been given an opportunity to bring these water filtration systems into the mountains so that when mothers bring water home to their children they're no longer bringing water that is killing their child, they can create water that brings life to their child.

I think you see the joy in their faces. It's going to bring so much joy to these homes that can provide clean water for their families. Again, we thank you so much for all the generous giving. It really is making a difference. God bless you.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty, I thought what you said a while ago, it just came across so beautiful. The excitement level that Betty, just really pointed to for the mothers, "I'm going to be able to give my little child clean water." If it is just a simple little filter system, not just the well and I believe you want to do that.

If you want to see through the eyes of hope and you want to let Lacey and little Christian be a blessing to you and you'd like to have this book, of course, you can get it in the bookstores or online, but you just give a cup of water, you help us reach out and give those people life, give them that fresh water, and you'd like to have this book also, along with the other gifts for you, we'll be glad to send it to you.

I hope you'll be in prayer for this beautiful, beautiful family; and for little Christian to become a bright light to many people.

Would you say thanks to Lacey again for sharing her story?

Lacey: Thank you. My pleasure.

James: God bless you! Love that little guy! Thank you for loving others. Thank you so much.

Announcer: In his new book, *Living Amazed* James Robison shares how divine encounters can change your life. *Living Amazed* -- coming soon to online and retail bookstores.