

3/6/17
Week 11: WFL
James and Betty Robison
Franklin Graham

James: This is beautiful! Franklin Graham walked out here -- you all are going to meet him in a moment -- but you gave him a standing ovation. And thank you because he has lifted Jesus up. His dad was, without question, the most famous preacher that has lived -- and what an incredible person.

And Franklin, we had to do some praying for awhile. But when Franklin came around and where he is today, he is a true statesman and a spokesman, and oftentimes it is very prophetic. I'm very grateful for the mission heart that he has with Samaritan's Purse, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He has held the gospel up. We're just thrilled he's here.

Would you just welcome Franklin Graham to *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

James: You and I have been all over Africa. I've been there for about 25 years; how long have you been working in Africa? How many years would it go back now, probably, you'd think?

Franklin: About 35 years.

James: Well, you took us to Sudan. You showed us what God's power and love does through missionaries. Those people talked about the missionaries that had been dead for 25 or more years as though it was their father still there, that's the impact.

It was very dangerous there, and you go into dangerous areas. Now, what brings you here now? And I want to thank you for Operation Christmas Child, everything you do, everything you've done in all the outreaches around the world. Thank you for Samaritan's Purse. But you are here to talk about something that you think is very, very important. So tell us why you're here.

Franklin: We've put together a documentary on Ebola. In 2014, Ebola came into West Africa, actually, it started in 2013 in the late fall and then came into Liberia in 2014 where we were working. We weren't there to fighting a disease, the world's most dangerous virus; we weren't

there to do that. We were working after the war doing a number of projects throughout the country and then Ebola came.

And I've always had the thought that if there is an issue, do we run from it or do we run to it? I think as Samaritan's Purse we've always just tried to make it our policy, we go to the issue, we run to it, we don't run away. But Ebola came; I'm thinking to myself, this may be a good time to run. Now we know nothing about Ebola. When it came into Liberia, we had to stop what we were doing and we were asked by the international community to set up an Ebola Treatment Unit, an E.T.U. I thought to myself, I know nothing about this. Our people know nothing about Ebola.

Well, Medicine Sans Frontiers, out of Europe, they're the world's leaders in treating and fighting Ebola. They said, "We will train you." Okay. You'll train us. All right. We'll try it. But in my stomach I had a knot -- just a knot. I'm thinking, this is something we should not get involved in. This is dangerous; it will kill you -- kill you quick.

So we started an Ebola Treatment Unit and we had one of our doctors there serving in a missionary hospital, Dr. Brantly from here in the Fort Worth area. So we asked Dr. Brantly if he would be willing to run the Ebola Treatment Unit. He said yes. So here he was...

James: Was he at least a little bit aware of how dangerous it was?

Franklin: Oh yes, sir! I guarantee it.

James: But he went on?

Franklin: But listen. When you go into the Ebola treatment you have a Tyvek suit on and all the seams are taped with duct tape; then you put a gown on top of that. You're double clothed. No exposed skin anywhere. Everything is hidden.

But the problem is inside of this two-gallon Tyvek suit that you're wearing, the temperature is like 140 degrees so you can only do this for about 30 minutes or you're going to pass out. So it takes you about 20 minutes to get dressed. You can do this for 30, maybe 35 minutes then you've got to come out. And then everything has to be hosed off and then you come out of your suit.

Well, this is what we were doing. But Dr. Brantly, on the 23rd of July, 2015, I got a call. I was working at one of our projects up in Alaska and they said, "We think Dr. Brantly has Ebola." What? "Yeah, we think he does. We'll get the test back Saturday." That was a Wednesday. Saturday, got the phone call. It's confirmed. The blood test just came back, he has Ebola.

"You need to call his wife." Well, I don't want to call her. What do I say to her? And she was here; she had come back for a wedding with the kids. I pick up the phone and I say, "Amber, this is Franklin Graham. We're going to do everything we can to get your husband back. And I just want to have a word of prayer with you." I had a word of prayer with her, and hung up.

And then after I hung up, well, I have no clue as to what I'm going to do? How am I going to get him back? -- An infected person with Ebola? You just don't go get on an airplane and come home. You can't do that. No. We had an insurance policy. They will come anywhere in the world to pick you up. Call them.

"Hey, we have a sick person in Liberia."

"Okay, great. What's he got?"

"Ebola."

"We're not going."

"But we've got a policy! We've been paying on this policy for years."

"We don't care. Sue us. We're not going. We're not going."

I tell you, it was one of the most difficult things that I've gone through. Because when he got Ebola, the time is ticking; you've got about ten days and they're dead -- ten days. I'm just telling you, James. When we started calling everybody we knew. Calling the state department, calling the White House, calling everybody we knew. Finally we got to a guy in the state department and he said, "You know there is one government asset."

James: In Liberia?

Franklin: No. In the U.S. A government controlled asset -- an airplane, but they called it "an asset" that can carry an infected person safely.

James: We've got one.

Franklin: One. Who do we call? Who do we call? The guy said, "You're talking to him."

"No, I mean who do we need to talk to get permission to use this airplane?"

He said, "You're talking to him."

And the guy was just a guy in the state department. He was not some high ranking guy -- just a guy.

"Okay, what do we have to do?"

He said, "You'll have to pay for the plane. You'll have to reimburse the government for its expenses because this is a government airplane and you're not government employees."

"We don't care. We'll pay."

So he told us how much. We sent him a check; we did a wire transfer that day. This was on Tuesday of the next week. Now Brantly got infected on Wednesday so we're now in the sixth day, approaching the seventh day. The plane got ready to go. Halfway across the Atlantic, it had a pressurization problem; had to come back. And so we're looking. The clock is ticking. He's dying. He's dying, James! And he is getting sicker by the day, weaker by the day.

The plane was going to come back on Friday. Thursday, Dr. Brantly began to die. He was going to die. They said, "There's nothing we can do."

He told the nurses, he told the other doctors, "I don't have the strength, I don't have the energy, I can't do this anymore. I can't fight it any longer."

A person shows up from the government agency with a box. Said, "This is an experimental serum -- experimental. Y'all might want to use it."

"Well, tell us about it."

"Well, it came to Sierra Leone to go to Dr. Kahn, an African doctor who was the world's leader in Ebola treatment. He had Ebola. But the doctors that he was under refused to give him this ZMapp because they were afraid of it. It comes from mice blood; it is cultivated tobacco leaves. It sounds like something out of an Alfred Hitchcock movie -- a little strange. But that's the way they made these antibodies. It's been used on primates; never been used on a human being.

So they called me and said, "Franklin, should we give it to him?"

I'm not going to make that call. The doctors on the field, if they think that's the last choice, they can give it to them and I'll support them. I'll back them. If they get sued, Samaritan's Purse will pay the lawyers. But they make that call.

He began to die Thursday night, 8:00 Liberia time, 4:00 in the afternoon our time. James, he started taking a nose dive and we had four bags of ZMapp, just one dose. You take a bag, it takes nine hours. Then another nine hours you give another bag and so forth. Nancy Writebol had it; she had Ebola. So we split the dosage; gave half to her, gave half to him.

When we put the ZMapp in his arm, within seconds, he went into convulsions -- just violent shaking. Get on the phone and called the people who made this stuff, "It's killing him."

"No. We saw this happen in the primates. It is the antibodies fighting."

I'm thinking this is ridiculous. But we prayed. We just prayed -- and our whole office prayed. In my office I have a vaulted ceiling in my office, and I'm sitting there and I could see like a dark shadow coming down the wall. I thought, what is this? And I just watched it. And as I watched it, James, it just kept coming lower. It was a dark day, it was raining outside, it was just a foggy day but there's a shadow.

And I thought about 23rd Psalm, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

It didn't say the valley of death, but the shadow. I looked at that and I thought, I wonder if this is the shadow of death and if it's coming for Dr. Brantly. And I just got on the floor and just prayed, Lord, this isn't too hard for you to save him. It's not too difficult. And Father, if you'll just save him, we don't know what else to do.

We had people all over our office praying, in little groups, we had people in Liberia, people here in Texas were praying. They put that ZMapp in his arm at the same time and 30 minutes after they put the ZMapp the convulsions went away. And James, he got up out of bed and went to the bathroom. He hadn't been out of bed in three days. It was that quick. It was like God showed up.

James: I want to compress some stuff, Franklin because I want us to be able to get to where you're headed to. Isn't this phenomenal? To even think, here's the deal, if the plane hadn't gone back, he dies.

Franklin: He would have been on the airplane.

James: He would have been on the airplane when all this happened. So having to go back to get pressurization fixed; and then they came and got him, brought him here. Miraculously, Dr. Brantly got well; one of the first places he came was here. He came back and then again, telling the story, I think may have brought one of his family members. So you saw a miracle.

So here's what I want folks to see. Franklin has put together a documentary and I want you to tell them what in the moment you want this to do. But I want them to see this clip. Can we show them the clip? Because it shows what's going on. But here's the thing I want all of you to hear and you to hear. Now please, you're going to be able to see this in the theaters and it will be a premier and he'll tell you about it, and then it is going to be available other ways.

But here's the deal, God wants to capture our heart to understanding what we must see in light of the issues in this world that only love and compassion, like your doctors, and I know what they do, Franklin, I know the risks, and you too. And we've got to pray because God wants to pour out his miracle power through his body, his family all over this world. The stage is set for a spiritual awakening. This is a whole part of it.

Watch this because it is going to take you right into the setting. These were actually shot on scene. Watch it closely.

Begin video clip:

>> This was an unfolding catastrophe.

>> The numbers of new cases and deaths are still rising.

>> Ebola is the world's most dangerous virus.

>> The disease is out of control in West Africa.

>> Action was needed immediately.

>> Altogether, if I remember, I lose 17.

>> God has called us to care for the dying, to care for those that are suffering.

>> We can't say we're Samaritan's Purse and not help.

>> I was confident that what we were doing was the right thing to do.

>> I don't think I was scared yet. I should have been very scared.

>> As the epidemic escalated we were just desperately trying to stay one step ahead.

>> My phone rang and Ken Isaacs said one of our doctors, Kent Brantly has Ebola.

>> David looked at me and he said, "You too have Ebola."

>> Then Barbara was diagnosed with Ebola. There was a high likelihood that her team members were going to die.

>> I don't know how to describe how afraid we were.

>> But we still went in hour after hour taking care of the Liberians, and taking care of Ken and Nancy.

>> We were there to save life, we were there in your name; why?

>> Despite the fact that things were out of control we knew that God was in control.

[Singing]

O God, you never leave my side

>> My greatest fear is that I would have to raise my kids alone.

>> I felt broken. Who was going to take care of my children?

>> God put you in places and supplies the strength to deal with it.

>> If they're on our team they are our blood. No matter what it took, let's get them out.

>> Time is ticking. Jesus Christ didn't run. We run to the fire, we don't run away from it.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I love you, buddy.

Franklin: James, it is a testimony of God's faithfulness that in the middle of storms -- and we all have storms in life -- God's there. I'm not saying that he is going to react just like he did with Dr. Brantly but God is there. He doesn't leave us alone.

Jesus said, "I'll never leave you nor forsake you." That's a promise for those who put their faith

and trust in Christ.

But Ebola was ravaging that part of the world and I had no clue what to do, our staff had no clue what to do, and God opened up door after door. People that we never knew, people that all of the sudden came up out of nowhere like the guy with the asset, and God saved Dr. Brantly.

But I want young people to see this because this film is full of young people.

James: Repeat the date again; is it March 30th?

Franklin: Yes, sir.

James: In the evening in theaters all over the country.

Franklin: All over the country -- you go to FacingDarknessMovie.com. It shows you where the theaters are, where you can get the tickets. If you get the tickets ahead of time, especially for like church groups, it would be great to see. But it is a testimony of what God can do.

These are young missionaries that are on the field that are risking all for the gospel. A lot of times we think of missionaries of being old people, like you and me.

[Laughter]

There are a lot of young folks out there, I'm telling you, that are facing darkness and danger every day.

James: What do you want and what do you pray, what does your heart long for, the affect of this to have because the stage is set for the church to reveal the living Jesus through his family. What do you want?

Franklin: I want this to help raise up an army of young people who are willing to say, "Lord, here I am, send me!" That's what I want it to be.

James: Father, we just pray, we pray that thousands, tens of thousands of young people will hear exactly what he just voiced as a concern, and we've now said in a prayer, "raise them up" and raise up the support for them; in Jesus' name.

There's the website. Get the information. Fill the theater. And then pray God fills every person there with the love of the Lord Jesus so that not only are people moved to go like he said but we send them.

Franklin, missionaries come to me. You know we've supported Samaritan's Purse. We've been behind you big time. Listen to this. Missionaries call us because they say, "We knew you could tell your viewers and they would care and not leave us empty-handed but would give us the ability to do what God put us here to do."

Right now, Franklin, we're drilling water wells.

Franklin: Yes, sir!

James: We give people water for life and tell them about the water of life. It is remarkable.

I want you to watch this and just know -- let me tell you something. This is the last week of this emphasis on mission feeding. We're going to have to have a miracle. Our missionaries have shown us 188 areas where if we don't get a well drilled in the next few weeks it is like the entire village will die, all the people in those areas, 188 areas, they literally targeted. Watch this closely.

On the mission field

Open captions:

Announcement: We would like to inform that, in order to safe and use properly the little water that we have, we would like to ask you to not come with more than three buckets. Signed: The Chief responsible of this water.

Announcer: It's a list of rules. Rules meant to preserve this: The only source of water for the many families living here.

Open caption:

>> It is so little water. It's not enough for all of us so we have to ration it.

Announcer: As desperate a challenge as this scarcity is, it is only where their struggles begin.
Open captions: The water is very dangerous. There are many parasites which make us very sick.

Announcer: It's absolutely mind boggling that anyone could survive long after drinking this disease and parasite-infested water. The sad truth is, many here don't. Most of them young children, little bodies unable to defend themselves against such a contaminated source.

Open captions:

>> My children died from drinking the water.

>> My child got very sick and passed away.

>> I'm scared my remaining children will also die.

Announcer: With your help we could drill a well right here -- abundant, clean, life-giving water. No more thirst and dehydration. No more sickness.

End of clip

In the studio

James: 188 specific areas. We've drilled, with your help, thousands of wells. The wells still average \$4800. Can you give a well? Those 188 areas they pointed out, its crisis.

So we're asking God, this is our last week, God raise up people who are able to drill a well and they'll take joy in doing it. Raise up people who will give \$1200 and then pray, "God give us three more to join me" -- \$2400 and pray one will.

But here's what I want you to understand: \$48, Betty, has been the main gift that comes in to drill wells. And then a gift of \$144, which drills water wells to take care of ten people for \$48 -- \$144, 30. There is a level at which you can participate.

Betty, we have one other addition that's like a miracle. We've got rugged terrain where the rigs can't get in and there is a filter system now, this is so simple, when they put it on a five-gallon container, which we're giving them that, it will filter and clean any water of any contamination. And we can give three of those for \$100 to three families.

So there is a level at which everyone watching can participate. And you can be the answer to a mother's prayer, her heart cry, to a healthy future for her children. Right now go on the website, take your bankcard, use it like a check. You should always use them that way. Or you can dial the number. Many people are calling in right now to pray. You'd be surprised. There are people calling in right now who say, "I want to be a missionary. I heard what Franklin Graham said, I want to be a missionary."

While they're calling, you can call and be an answer to prayer. Here's the gift and tell us what you're putting in the mail. If you write a check, make it to LIFE but let us know. Call and use your bankcard, go on the website and use it. If you mail a check, tell us what you're sending. We have some gifts for you that I believe will be a tremendous blessing to you. Please now, make

that call, make that gift.

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.

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

End of clip

James: Thank you for your response. Thank you.

Franklin, how important is water?

Franklin: It's life! And without water there is no life. Clean water is so important. The number one killer in the world today is contaminated water. So when you can provide a family or a village or a community with a source of clean water you give life to that village.

James: When they see that kind of love meeting that need, they're ready to hear about what inspired that love.

Franklin: It's a great opportunity to talk about the water of life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

James: You remember the 30th of March, get the word out. Tell all your friends.

Would you like to say thanks to God and thanks to Franklin Graham?

[Applause]

I've loved watching God use you, Franklin.

Franklin: Thank you for being my friend.

James: Thank all of you. Thank you for your prayers, thank you for your help.

Announcer: In his new book, *Living Amazed* James Robison shares how divine encounters can change your life. *Living Amazed* – available now at online and retail bookstores!