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Week 19: Spring Mission Feeding
James and Betty Robison
Riva Tims

James: Thank you so much. I want to welcome you. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to spend this time with you. Now listen to me. We're here for you. Betty and I don't go look for something to do. When you've got 11 grandkids, two great grandkids and you just care about people, you're never looking for something to do.

You say, "Why are you here?"

Because God loves you -- that really is why we're here.

You say, "Don't y'all help a lot of people in need?"

Yes, because people like you love to help people. You love to be a blessing. I think you want to be blessed. I can promise you this, the most effective way to be blessed is to ask God to show us, to show you, "How can I bless someone?" Or "God, how can you bless someone through me?"

Let me tell you something. You're going to hear a story, it is a true story. This is not some drama for television. This is real life heartache. This is devastation. But we've got a mighty God that works a masterpiece out of what the enemy intended to be a total mess.

Riva Tims is here for the third time. First time she came with her husband, as a preacher who had experienced deliverance. The next time she came back and what he had been delivered of, basically took his life. And now she's come back to tell you what God does with a broken life, a broken marriage, an impossible situation.

So would welcome Riva Tims back to *LIFE Today*?

Riva, glad to see you.

Riva: Thank you. Thanks for having me.

James: You put this story in a book. Why would you put it in a book? What's your purpose

in the book?

Riva: It helps people. For me, when I was writing the book, it also helped me. It was my study time. It was what I got out of the word. It was what helped me walk through the valley of the shadow of death; knowing how not to fear any evil. But it is in the word that gives you your strength and your power.

When I wrote the first book, *When It All Falls Apart*, that dealt with being better not bitter. Many times you come through but then there are prolonged seasons, like Job, go through prolonged seasons. Sometimes you have the strength in the beginning of the season but then as the season gets longer some people lose their hope, they lose their faith. This book really helps you to be able to walk through a prolonged season of a battle and understand that God knows your ending from your beginning and it gives you practical application.

James: And you titled it, *When It All Comes Together*. And basically, you've started with this catastrophic situation. "How God can redeem your brokenness." And yours was total devastation, not of your own making, not of your own design; really, in many ways, unexpected like coming -- like a bolt of lightning, hitting head-on in your situation that you didn't anticipate, and so all hell broke loose. But now something's coming together. So tell us what you want us to hear.

Riva: Many know the testimony, coming through a marriage -- saved myself for marriage, grew up in a Christian home. My father is a Vietnam vet, ex-Marine, just always in the things of God; married my husband and then ended up as pastors. We went through the ranks of our church. They sent us out. Everything was fine and success happened in our church early. We ended up with almost 8,000 members, national ministry, and infidelity hit our marriage. Unfortunately, we didn't recover. So at that point...

James: Let me ask you this. Do you think a lot of times when a minister is an effective leader as a man, as a father, as a figure to be admired, a father figure, do you think a fatherless world, and especially with women who've many times not seen that strong father figure, or even in their date relationship they've not seen what they call strength, and they see that, do you think there is a magnetic attraction to that that a lot of times can broadside a gifted man or a gifted leader?

Riva: Absolutely! Absolutely! And it is really the enemy because if you can smite the shepherd, the sheep will scatter. So definitely, I believe that there were frailties. And that's why I can tell you, forgiveness is a great thing because I learned to love my ex-husband even after because I saw the frailties, I saw the struggles. I had compassion for him. And so I do believe that he did repent at one point of his life. So that's the place that we have to realize, you never throw anyone away because God never throws anyone away. So yes, definitely.

James: So you saw the restoration, you saw the miracle, you saw great ministry even after the catastrophic fall. Now what happened when you lost him? What was going on?

Riva: Devastation! Four beautiful children, young, and then this man full of life, vigor, just always doing great things and now he's gone. So after that happened there was more battles happen in my life for my children, for the ministry that now he's no longer there. So it was just hit after hit after hit. Where do we go and what do we do?

That's when this book really was birthed in my spirit because I know there are a lot of people that go through seasons of battles.

Can I tell you something, though? God never leaves you. What I found out through this whole situation is that when your life is shattered, when you're broken and it looks like the pieces can't be put together, it's like a puzzle piece. God sees the picture and he gives you a glimpse of it and we have to realize that even in the midst of everything, we can't make sense of the mess. We can't! It is impossible.

So we have to make sense of God. You make sense of God through your worship. You make sense of God through your praise, through your reading of the word. When you make sense of God, then the other pieces come together and that's really what this book is about.

Betty: So what did you do when you lost your husband, then you lost the ministry, what about you and your children? What happened then?

Riva: At that point we went through a grief period. At that time his church left and now what do you do? We couldn't even fight at that time. We were just in a place of grieving. So what we did was I taught my children how to lean upon the arm of the Lord, the spirit of God.

And also, how to continually walk in forgiveness. That word *forgiveness* brings so much life; it brings so much power of God. People can get mad at someone who's gone. They sometimes get mad at someone because they had died. Sometimes people get mad at the circumstances and there's unforgiveness just because you're angry. So you have to learn how to let go of all that anger and truly forgive. When you do that, that's when the peace of God comes and that's what happened for us.

James: And he had failed you again. What you may not realize is that he basically, in a way, might have relapsed back or was trapped and actually died of an overdose. So it is a pretty tragic way to end. So when you're talking about grief and pain, it is indescribable and unbearable. It's the kind of thing you think you will be justified in not forgiving. You're fed up. You've had

enough.

And one of the things I'm going to try to share with you in the coming weeks is the fact that when I look at my own life and the challenges, being fatherless, having a very difficult childhood, kind of an impossible childhood, you might say, and then to realize that God has amazingly worked through my life.

One of the things, Riva, that I found, when I look back over it, you think about my father, he raped my mother when she conceived me. He came back into our lives. He tried to kill her. He threatened to kill me. All the different things going on.

And the things that were so painful to me as a child -- this is the beauty of the grace of God -- it is not even difficult for me to forgive all that. I'm going to tell you something. To be able to forgive the wrong that was perpetrated, that you can even say not even foolishly perpetrated or just circumstances, but deliberately thrust on me -- on purpose!

When my mother desired to be loved herself because of her own difficulty, cut me off from everybody else that had ever loved me, and that I had ever loved so I could focus only on her and she could have that need met. For me to find that out and the hurt that it did to me as a child, and to be able to look at my mother with 100% total forgiveness and understanding of the longing of her heart to be loved and "Can't my own little boy love me exclusively and I be the focal point? I can't give him what others can but I want him."

The fact that God's grace worked -- and I'd been hurt by people who didn't understand me. My own Baptist family didn't understand how I could suddenly go openly ministering to everybody outside of our little Baptist world. And they were not kind; were they? You know what I said? I probably hadn't said right. I probably didn't express it right. I love them. I never stopped. I could not -- I could not bear hurt even though there was hurt, I just had love. See that love wins.

Riva: And that's supernatural.

James: But it is important that we get there because if we live under that resentment and that bitterness we're stuck! We're totally stuck. So don't live there.

Riva: Not only stuck but you spiral down. You go more into a destruction mode and self-sabotage. So forgiveness is so supernatural. And God gives us that principle. When you walk in forgiveness, there is a true love because now you're seeing people through the lenses of Jesus. You're seeing people not as the culprits that hurt you, not as those that tried to destroy you.

And one thing about God and I always say this, he never sees you as the victim. God never sees

you as the victim so he won't ever treat you as a victim. He only sees you as the victor because you belong to him. If you belong to God then you know he knows you're already victorious. So that's our mentality to walk in forgiveness and walk in victory.

That's how you become more than a conqueror because more than a conqueror -- and I talk about that in the book -- is where you destroy the works of the enemy for generations, and the only way you can do that is through the love of Christ. So with me even having this testimony, we overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony. My testimony is forgiveness. My testimony is leaning on God. All of that! And through that people may say, "Well, you're dumb to forgive." But no, this testimony is helping others for generations.

So if we can learn how to operate like Jesus operated -- and even Paul, how Paul stood against idolatry. If we can operate like that with love, then we can see a change. Keep the standard, love but not be tolerant of sin, but still show the love of God and forgive, then we can see generations changed.

Betty: We were visiting earlier and you talked about our lives being a tapestry. Would you explain that a little bit?

Riva: Yes! You know the underside of the tapestry is so chaotic. It is not it. It looks ugly. Part of my testimony is -- part of my life was I never expected to see this happen. I never expected me to be in situations that I was through loss of my marriage, lose of my home, loss of my ministry. Another part of my life is I do have a special needs son. I didn't expect to see that -- although he is the love of my life -- never expected to see that. But God knows our ending from our beginning.

The top side, there is a masterpiece and although we don't understand how it is working out, we don't understand how it's coming to be but the masterpiece is beautiful, it is gorgeous. So God takes the good, the bad, the ugly and he works it together for our good. That is such -- some people say that is a cliché but it is so true.

So some people right now they're going through one of the most difficult times in their life and they're literally thinking God has forgotten them. They have no more hope. They're at the end of their rope. When in actuality the masterpiece is being completed or being made; and if they can have that hope to know, I just hold on to the Lord. And if I faint not I'm going to reap in due season.

James: I want you to look at the camera. There will be one there that you'll see a little red tiny light come on. I want you to talk to people who are watching and a lot of them could be women that may be very lonely. You know Betty and I lost a daughter. I prayed recently with Jack

Hayford when he lost his precious wife, Anna. One of the things I said to him as we were talking I said, "Well, she's lived with the kingdom in her, now she is in the kingdom." And that's the eternal and final kingdom. And he talked about how that meant a lot to him. There was that comfort. He talked about how important comfort is.

When Betty and I lost our daughter, it was so obvious so many were praying for us. But I know there are some of you right now who have faced a loss and you don't know if anybody is praying. It is one of the main reasons that people, perhaps just like you, call that number that's coming up on the screen right now. You notice it is an 800 number. You say, "How is that an 800-number?" It is paid for by love. The love of God in people to give any individual, whatever the need, an opportunity to call a friend, somebody who cares and will pray with you. Because there are many of you who didn't have, like Betty and me, people saying, "We're praying for you."

Betty was hurt recently, she had an accident and she was hurt very badly. And the calls and the texts were coming so fast we had to say, "Hold off. We've got to focus here. Just pray and we'll report later."

But some of you, I'm telling you, I think about this kid that went to prison because he, in an alcoholic deal killed somebody. And the parents of the kid he killed finally, after two years went and he looked through that grate, and he looked at the mother of the son he killed and he said, "I've been here two years. You're the only person that's ever come to visit me. I want to thank you." The end of that story is great because they took that boy home with them and he went to the schools and talked about alcohol.

Minister to people right now.

Riva: You may be in a place where you're alone and no one is calling you and no one is supporting you. I've been there. But I want to encourage you to let you know that your due season is coming. You're D-U-E season is coming. There is an appointed time, there is a Kairos moment that God is planning for you. And there is time when you have to first go to the dew season, the D-E-W; that's a place of saturation in his presence.

The Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God. Dew only comes in the stillness of night. You might be in your night season now and I want to encourage you, be still and know that he is God. And as you rest in him, as he pours into you, as he saturates you with his presence, then you can walk into your D-O season, a do season where you're doing what God has called you to do. Then the appointed time will come.

Don't get stuck or be paralyzed by the pain. Allow God to fill you up. Open up your heart to him. I am a living witness. I have a testimony and God is no respecter of person. He wants to do it for

you because he doesn't want any to perish. He wants all to come into the saving grace of his power, of his anointing. And you have a destiny and I know your destiny is still intact because you still have breath in your lungs. So be encouraged today. God loves you.

Betty: Amen!

James: You want to applaud the truth? That's truth. Let me just talk to you here please. Right where you are, just say, "Lord, meet my need. Heal my heart. Hold me. I just give myself to you. I trust you. Have your way, Jesus."

You want someone to pray with you, the phone number's there. If you've never come into a relationship with God as your personal Father through Christ, ask someone to pray with you. Say, "I want to know God as Father. I want Jesus to be real to me, not just a story."

I'll send you a book that I wrote, it's a Bible study called *Knowing God As Father*. But we'll be glad to help you and pray with you. So please don't hesitate to call.

Then let me say to all of you watching, I want to show you in just a moment, and I know, Riva, how much you'll love this and how much our audience will. We're able to see miracles. I'm not talking about something you hope for might be special. No, I'm talking about indescribable life-giving, life-changing, lifesaving miracles in one of the greatest crisis in the history of the world we're facing right now in third world countries -- the greatest death cycle ever. And we're in the middle of it with love. I want you to watch but I want you to listen very prayerfully because you are the answer to this challenge. Watch very prayerfully.

On the mission field

Announcer: If you've ever missed a meal or two you probably know the feeling of hunger pains and the relief that your next meal brings. But sadly, there are those who live with the pain of hunger every single day of their life. And then there are children who do not survive once they move beyond the pain of hunger. Veronica is reminded of her little brother dying from a lack of food every day that she has to go without food.

>> I remember when my brother died. We were hungry and he was so thin. My mom took him to the clinic that was very far away and he died on the way there.

Announcer: Veronica's story is all too common in villages throughout southern Africa and that's what makes this so urgent that we do something now.

Sheila: Some of these moms have to walk 10-15 kilometers with a seriously malnourished

baby just to try and get some help. And if they can get here in time, then there is some hope. But time is everything here as you can see.

But my prayer is that we can save hundreds of other children before they get to this stage. No child should ever get to this stage. No mom should ever have to watch this. So if we do something now we can stop this from happening.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Dear God, my heart breaks. I believe yours does. And I know the answer is love shared through us. Be the miracle these children need. Let us see it. Be a part of it. Please Lord! Touch the hearts of your people; in Jesus' name.

Listen to me. Please listen! We can save those children. Many of the children right now in South Sudan, which is where the greatest death cycle and the most dangerous place is, and that's where we're spending most of the focus and energy and support and all of the missionaries face the very possibility of being killed. In the areas where you saw us right there talking about these children that were so hungry, and the mother couldn't even -- you saw one of them holding a baby very close to her breast. She was covered but it was very likely from malnutrition she didn't have nourishment.

And in that area, and we shared this years ago, the radical extremists, the same that are bringing terror to the whole world, they would cut those women's breasts off, if they were Christians, so they could not nurse their babies. And then they would drive them from their villages. This is brutality that is almost unparalleled.

But those people that are in this area are in love with Jesus and they are dying and they are burying their children. We can, because of God's love in us, stop the death cycle. We can give those precious little children a future. I can promise you, we help stabilize that as we've done in many areas of the world. Those people will rebuild. They are determined and committed and they love their children.

So here's what I'm asking you to do. We have 400,000 now that we've located that we're in direct contact with. All we need is the wherewithal to feed them for the next months. Think about what I'm saying right now. Just focus on it. \$30 will feed three children, save their lives; \$50 will save five; \$100 will feed ten. I'm going to ask you with no apology if you can feed ten children do it but don't step back. If you say, "Well, I could only do \$30." It doesn't matter what it is -- if it is \$10 we're going to be able to enable these missionaries to stay there and put God's arms around

these suffering people and give them hope. And we're going to point them to the love of God.

You're the ones that make it possible. \$1,000, we can feed 100 children. We have some beautiful gifts, a Bible study series of devotions, seasonally. It is absolutely powerful to take you into the word and get the word in you.

And then Kari Jobe who grew up here with our ministry, was in our daughter's, who's is now in heaven, our precious Robin, was in her wedding, when she was only 9 or 10 years old. Kari Jobe, she has presented something so special and the story about how this came to pass is available to just say thank you because we want to bless you on your spiritual journey. We want to lift you higher.

Would you please right now go to the website *LIFE Today*? Please, very quickly and with real sensitivity to the heart of God, get your bankcard and say, "I'm going to use this like a check and I'm going to give life today." Or you can dial the number. Many are calling right now. You could get a busy because people are calling; somebody cares about them right now and have got arms around them. So you be determined. You say, "I'll get through if I have to keep calling for the next hour. I'm going to get through and I'm going to take care of some of those kids. I'm going to see that they have food. I'm going to be the answer to that mother's prayer."

Would you do that right now? Please? Thank you so much for it! Thank you for responding to the heart of God and the need of those people.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and even now famine-stricken areas of Africa, children are suffering. The need is great and without food they face death by starvation.

LIFE's Mission Feeding program is ready. With your support, we're able to feed and care for children in famine areas of Sudan, as well as Angola and Mozambique. With all of our previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding facing the worst drought and food shortage in years, we urgently need to replenish our food supplies to reach 400,000 children counting on us.

Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for the next three months. Please also consider a special gift of \$1400 to help sponsor a school and help feed 140 children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you My Daily Word Devotional. This boxed set of four seasonal devotionals will help you read, reflect, and renew yourself through God's word with space to journal your thoughts and reflect each day.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you'll also receive Kari Jobe's newest music project, *The Garden*, along with the story behind *The Garden* companion DVD.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, please be sure to request "Determined Eagle," our 2017 commemorative bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or go online today and make your gift of *LIFE* to help feed and care for hungry children.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I mentioned to you a little while ago that if you've given your life to the Lord or you want to know God as Father, I'd be glad to send you this. It is a little picture of the journey I had to come to know God as a fatherless child, to know him as Father; and also, a Bible study to really help get you started.

Here is Riva's book, it is in the bookstores. You can get it online. But if you say, you know what James? Her story, it really hit home and her ministry to me as she was just talking to us, it really went home. Could you possibly send me that book? Yes, we will. You ask for it. We ask you to do this. Help us touch those children in need with love. Help us be their miracle. Would you do that? But feel free to ask for Riva's book. We'll be glad to send it to you, along with the other material that we mentioned.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Riva?

Riva, we appreciate you. Bless you! Bless your wonderful church in Orlando. Just thank you for your testimony.

God bless you! Thank you so much for spending this time with us and touching someone with God's love.