

6/26/17
Week 27: WFL
James and Betty Robison
David Green

James: Hey! Thank you! Thank all of you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Betty, do you ever shop at Hobby Lobby?

Betty: All the time!

James: Isn't it great?

Betty: It's right close; it is easy too.

James: Our guest, David Green is the founder and the owner of Hobby Lobby. I told him I shop there a lot and I do. I find it fascinating and there is not a feminine bone in my body. I just like it. It is a fabulous place. Mardel's is a wonderful, wonderful place to buy Christian books and all kinds of things that point to Jesus.

David Green has written a book, *Giving It All Away... And Getting It All Back Again*. Living, basically, generously is the greatest way to live, this man believes. And that's not just a book title, something he wrote but it is something he wrote with his life.

Would you welcome the founder and president of Hobby Lobby, David Green to *LIFE Today*?

David: Thank you.

James: David, it is an honor to have you here.

David: It's an honor to be here. Glad to be here.

James: I want to thank you for the wonderful witness that you've been, and thank you for the way you treat your employees and the way you treat the people that shop there.

But you know, you took quite a challenge a few years ago. As a matter of fact, it was a test that I don't know if many people would have even found a way possible to endure and I think you probably have to say you had to have supernatural enabling. But you were not going to compromise your Christian convictions about the value of life. You know my own testimony.

I'm the product of a forced sexual relationship on a 40-year old hospice nurse and the doctor would not abort me. Today that would not have been an issue in most places. But you were not going to provide that opportunity in any circumstance to the people who worked for you; took a stand that could have cost you a million dollars a day.

Now I want to ask you this. This goes all the way to the Supreme Court. A lot of Christians prayed for you. How difficult was that for you and your family to do?

David: At first it was very difficult because all I could think about was \$1.3 million a day. So I have to tell you the truth, there were nights that I didn't sleep. So it seemed like it was either the government or it was us, one of us had to go. So it was very, very difficult at first.

But after we really settled in and knew that we only had one decision, a right or wrong decision and it was so right not to give drugs to someone that we feel like without any question could cause death.

God is a God of life. He is the only that's created life and we just couldn't see ourselves, not just my wife and I, Gen 1, we call ourselves, but Gen 2, my ten grandkids and their mates, they all said, "We can't do this." And it was good to see that the entire family, Gen 1, Gen 2, my grandchildren all said, "We cannot do this."

But I think it was because of the prayers of the saints that really helped us to get through this because at some point, after the beginning we felt peace. We had made the right decision and we had peace in that.

Betty: So you felt like the Christian community really responded well to what was going on?

David: We had people from all over the world in fact that was telling us they were praying for us and we felt those prayers or we would not have been in that kind of peace knowing that we could lose our business if it didn't go the right way at the Supreme Court level.

James: We all rejoice that it did. We're praying there will be many more Supreme Court decisions made that go the right way and don't re-interpret the law or the constitution and then actually establish laws they were never intended or even gifted or have that authority to do. So we pray to that end.

All right, *Giving It All Away*, you and I have had some wonderful conversations. You have made it very clear to me that you want entrepreneurs and businessmen and people who understand the blessing of the free market opportunity that we have been afforded in this free country, you want them to realize that if they will live for kingdom purpose and really give their life to that

purpose, and the gifts that God has given them to that purpose, taking the gospel to the ends of the world not just in word but in deed, in action, that that gives you tremendous joy. So when you write *Giving It All Away*, I have an idea you're talking about far more even than money, you're talking about time, gifting, and things you can offer. Why did you write the book and what's your hope for it?

David: My hope for the book is that we all can really focus on things that are eternal, not just temporal. We can spend our entire life just doing things that are temporal, just won't matter after this life. So we want to encourage people to think in terms of eternal things; and to start with their marriage and have a strong family. We promote strong families in our business by the number of hours that we open. So for us, it's a legacy -- a legacy of a strong family, marriages that stay together; and that's the legacy that I think we all should be looking to hand down to our children and our grandchildren.

There is nothing more important to me, my business is not near as important as my family. If I lost one child because of the business, I'd rather not have the business. The business should be secondary and is because it is more important for us that we meet all of our children in heaven. So that's so much more important and that's what we want to focus on is family.

We try to do the same thing with our workers as well, our managers and our people that we say, "Family is the most important thing -- more important than Hobby Lobby." It is to nurture the family and have a good family, a family of faith.

James: You talk about generosity and *Giving It All Away* and the family in every way has been a very generous family in supporting the translation of the word of God, building the museum. Tell us about that just briefly -- we're going to talk about the book, but I want all of our viewers to know when that museum, biblical antiquity, the incredible thing in D.C., of all places. Miraculous! Tell us when it will open.

David: It will open November the 17th. We're real excited about it. We have more than 45,000 antiquities. So it's going to be a world class museum and we feel like it needs to be exactly where it is, right here at the seat of government. This is what our country, like we as family, as husband and wife, we need to build upon. So we hope that this country will build their faith on this book. At one time we were... "in Christ" our label says on our -- "In God We Trust." We need to get back to that.

James: Well, you've got it right there by the Smithsonian. You've got it in the midst of all the history. And the greatness of our nation is based upon the word of God. There is no question. The word of God is carved in the stone and the rocks cry out of that testimony, even when people won't acknowledge it. And there you are, and to God be the glory. Your generous spirit, in my

opinion, as a family is what has led you to do that.

Now if someone reads the book, what are you praying will happen to them not only in regards to their family, keeping it Christ-centered, and keeping him first, but as far as generosity, how should a person look at their resources and give let's say heavenly, God-led oversight? What do you suggest?

David: You know we have a lot of resources: It is our talent, it is our time, and sometimes it is our finance. I think God requires different things from all of us; some of all of that from all of us but maybe a different for all of us depending on our wealth. But we hope that there is an understanding that there is joy -- there is joy in giving. There is not a greater joy for our family than to give to the various ministries that we are involved in.

James: Well, and you also have produced some great films and great testimonies. We shared here, The End of the Spear; that was a phenomenal story of the great missionary love in what we saw. It was one of the greatest presentations of the gospel I've ever seen. So you're actually looking for many ways to get the gospel out. Do you think your book will be used of God to inspire people to start looking for ways that they can support the proclamation of the gospel and what you've told me so many times, kingdom purpose, while we're here on this earth?

David: Exactly. Because we want them to know the joy there is in doing things that are going to last beyond their lifetime. And to hand their baton down to their family and their children and grandchildren, that it would continue. That's what we have done in our company in terms of even the Stock. The stock is not held -- it is in our name but we've all signed off that we can never touch it, that it belongs to God. And that is so relieving to be a steward; we are not owners not because we say so, because the Bible says so. The Bible says he owns everything. We accept that. And I can't tell you the relief we have by knowing that our children and our grandchildren have an opportunity to have fruit of the tree but they can't have the tree because it belongs to God.

James: That's so great! You know we've been given the great joyful assignment of being a steward and overseer of all God's entrusted to our watch care and we ought to be excited about that. I find it exciting and I want to be a good steward of it.

And everybody in this audience and everyone watching on television, you've been given stewardship of everything. The garden of God is the whole earth. Heaven and earth declares the glory of God and we're to give godly oversight to it.

Now you grew up with a spiritual underpinnings. You had a lot of spiritual influence in your life. But you did not feel like you were one that was going to be preaching or minister and you kind

of felt like -- well, you actually said in the book, you felt like maybe you were inadequate, a black sheep.

David: Well, a black sheep, yes. And why didn't God call me to preach or to be in ministry like he did my five brothers and sisters that were pastors and pastors' wives. And so I really felt like I had to be a black sheep because God kind of set me to the side. But over time I have learned that that is not the case. I believe that all of us, whatever our "whatever" is that we can be anointed. I go to work and I sense and I tell my wife, "I sense God's anointing." So I think we can have that anointing on our life to do our whatever. Because I always say the Bible says, "Whatever your hands find to do, do it to the very best you can as unto the Lord." And so as we do that and not spend so much time on a young person is the whatever is to be but how we do the whatever. Wherever we start, do it the best we can. And it is God that promotes us, not man. And he puts us where he wants us when we are obedient in what we're doing.

James: I bet all those spiritual, those great advanced family members are quite pleased with this little black sheep, this little overlooked person. I define "anointing" as divine enabling or a special touch for a specific task. I think they would agree, there has been a pretty special touch on this overlooked little black sheep in the family; wouldn't you agree?

David: Well, God knew they needed someone to help finance those ministries.

[Laughter]

James: All the rest of the family in ministry needed this brother. Let me just tell you that.

Betty: What I hear you saying too is that God, as God's children he created us, he put us here for a purpose. And it is to be a light and to share that light however way he provides that we can share with other people. And if we can find our purpose in life then we're going to find fulfillment in it.

David: Right. Exactly. Yes.

James: You know you've got family members that are Baptists and family members that are Assembly of God. And then your family reaches out to Oral Roberts University, which is the Pentecostals. And the mainline church, nobody knew if they wanted to have anything to do with Oral. Oral and I became good friends and we became good friends because I said, "Oral, I think the rest of us Christians have kind of made you an island unto yourself." He began to weep. He said, "I've been so lonely." Well, we became really good friends.

How in the world does your family look at Oral Roberts University there in Tulsa and suddenly

feel moved to say, "We want to do something in behalf of this school"? How in the world did that happen?

David: None of my family went to college so we didn't know why God touched us but there was no question that there was a time that God just touched us for that university not knowing anybody over there. But God just touched us that we needed to help out. So we are so glad we did. My oldest son had had about one semester of college so we decided he needed to be the chair.

[Laughter]

We knew he'd do a lot more gooder than the rest of us.

[Laughter]

James: He called me and asked me to help. I told him how grateful I was. Do you just want to say thank you to the Green family for reaching out to Oral Roberts University and saying, let's see this be a Christian school like Oral envisioned it and be for the entire body of Christ, not for a faction or a part of it. I think you've just been marvelous at that.

Thank you for the testimony and example that you have set for Christians to be willing to reach outside their own little circles. Are you comfortable doing that?

David: We're very comfortable. And we're doing that in our Bible museum where we reached to the Jewish community, the Catholic community, Protestants. So we're showcasing this Bible has something, if you love this, you're going to love this museum. So we're trying to reach out to everybody.

James: And did evangelicals, like my crowd, did they help you too?

[Laughter]

David: Yeah, you're all in. And we appreciate what you've done in helping us as well in the museum.

James: I want everybody, I'm telling you, to read this book. If somebody goes home with this book and you watch them walk out and you go home, what's your prayer for them?

David: My prayer is that they'll be touched first for their foundation, and that's in their marriage and their families. And then secondly, which is just as important is what are they doing

with what God has given them in whatever they have in their tithing? You know we're not that good as Christians in tithing. The Bible tells us that he will bless us, open up the gates of heaven. So that's a promise.

James: Pour out a blessing. We started at 19, when we married and we put God first. We never thought about what's in it for us. We just wanted to obey God. Did you all start when you were first married?

David: Yes. Because both of us came from parents that tithed and we saw God blessing our parents because of tithing. And so we wanted to do it because God is going to bless you and we want to give to give more. So the more we give the more God just blesses us.

James: Gives you the ability to continue blessing others. Every time you and I have talked, David, you have inspired me with a legitimate concern for others, with a desire for every person to have God's best for their life and through their life. I sense that you are praying that this book will inspire people to become a vessel or a channel through which he flows his life, his love, his resources as he has done through your family. Do you agree that you're watching that happen because I've met some of your family here that that is happening with your family and it is a beautiful, like you said, legacy and testimony to God's greatness.

David: Yes. We have five or six that are in charge of the trust, that stewardship trust and we're seeing that can go year after year after year from now on because we have people in our family that are coming up into other generations that's going to see that what God has given us in terms of the dollars and cents in Hobby Lobby is going to continue for a long time and we're excited about that, what God can do.

James: And what you have sown, the seeds you've sown, the testimony you've lived is for all eternity.

Would you say thanks to the Green family and David? And the book, *Giving It All Away*, I'm going to tell you, you get it back for all eternity in the sense that what you're doing is you're sowing eternal seeds.

David, one of the great joys that we've had in this ministry and when people watch me see -- by the way, when we've talked to someone or Betty and I have shared, our guests have shared, you say, "Okay! Here he comes! I know what James is going to do." You better believe it. I'm going to ask you to freely release through you what God has entrusted to your watch care to his glory and the benefit of others.

We ask our viewers to touch someone with the love of God and you know what? They love to

do it. Isn't it amazing that when they know that in all these years they still sit there? You know why? Because it is more blessed to give than to receive and they love -- listen! Jesus said, "You give just a cup of water in my name, you won't lose your reward." And he's the one that determines the rewards, not us. You have loved to give water. It is perhaps the most exciting outreach that we have. Well, I want you to watch. I want you to see. And I want you to let God move your heart because I want to tell you something, you're going to be able to do more than just give a cup of water, you're going to be a miracle for somebody -- for a lot of somebodies. Watch!

On the mission field

Ralph: Imagine living in a village where everybody is hot, everybody is thirsty, where people are dying on a regular basis all because of the water. Is this a water source for the village, Urma?

>> Yes, that's the water source of the village.

Ralph: They drink that?

>> Yeah, they do!

Ralph: Wow! What do you see in this cup? What we don't see is what should really alarm us; just all types of germs and diseases are in this one little cup of water. We have heard countless stories already of how many people have lost children from drinking this water.

Announcer: Whenever the *LIFE* mission team visits a rural village around the world, one of the first questions they ask is if any children have died from a waterborne illness. Unfortunately, the answer is almost always yes. In fact, many mothers are still grieving from a recent death where they share losing several of their children from drinking diseased water. Can you imagine how a mother feels when she has no other choice but to give her children dirty water to drink?

Open caption:

>> I'm very afraid my other children will also die because even when I'm sitting here I feel like my heart is not at peace because my kids can die at any time.

Announcer: Now imagine how a mother would feel when she sees a *LIFE Outreach* drilling rig enter her village and how her hope would be restored as she watches the assembly of a new pump that will deliver clean, life-giving water to her children.

[Laughter]

End of clip

In the studio

James: Oh! I love that smile! Don't y'all love to see the smile on somebody's face when they've just got water?

[Applause]

It's just a miracle. I'm so excited that I'm talking to someone that I believe has the love of God in their heart. You see what love does. You saw what horrible contaminated water does. It robs the children of health and many times their very lives. Contaminated water is the greatest scourge in the world! We have the cure.

Here's what we can do. Together we can drill a water well. Betty, they still cost \$4800 and I'm praying they will stay at that level -- that's the average cost. Obviously, some areas are a little deeper, some a little shallower, but it balances out the cost to still be \$4800.

You and I asked God years ago when the cost was only \$3600 to let us always drill a well. God heard that prayer and many of you prayed the same prayer. So some of you can drill a well; we have some individuals, so help me, who give to drill a well every month. They say, "That's just part of our budget, part of our life." Churches that support -- companies and individuals. But most of the source of resource and support comes from people who give not \$1200 or \$2400 and ask for others to join them but they give \$48 and that gives ten people water for the rest of their life. That's how it breaks down; \$144, 30 people. So there's a level everyone can participate in. Betty, I can't imagine anybody watching right now that saw what we just saw and knows you can be the miracle that wouldn't want to be a part of it.

Betty: James, through the years we have heard from so many of our supporters that this is their favorite thing to do is to drill the water wells because they know what fresh water can do for the body for the children. It can save their lives.

So James, I feel like I get as excited in my spirit as I know our supporters do that are watching. I know you're excited about this opportunity. Let's make the difference. As that mother said that shared her heart, she said, "My heart cannot be at ease because I'm so concerned about my other children." Let's put that mother's heart at ease knowing that she can share life through the clean water that we'll provide for them.

James: Well, you're radiant while you're asking for that. I love this beautiful smile, and this beautiful person. You know what she prayed years ago when we would run out of food in the

feeding programs? And she asked you to pray, "Pray the lines of people waiting to feed the people will always be longer than the ones who need to be fed." God heard that prayer.

You and I asked God to let us have a part in this. Many of you are. Would you right now take a part? Could you drill a well? If you can, I believe you will. Could you drill part of a well? Could you give the \$48 or the \$144? We have some gifts we're going to send you to say thank you and to help you grow spiritually; you'll see those in a moment. But you're giving to give the greatest gift, water for life and the missionaries share the water of life. This is a gift that not only lasts and changes this lifetime but for eternity.

Would you right now go online, take your bankcard, use it like a check, or would you dial that number that's always there for prayer and would you say, "I'm going to be an answer to prayer today"? Take that bankcard and make the gift God put on your heart. Please do it. Thank you for going to the phone. Thank you for going online. Thank you for giving life.

Begin video clip

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

The good news is there is a solution. **Mission:** Water for Life is one of the most proven and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. Suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today you can help drill 400 water wells in remote villages in 15 nations. A gift of \$48 will provide disease-free water for ten people, \$72 will provide for 15 people, and \$144 will help provide clean water straight from the ground for 30 people.

Please also consider an additional gift of \$100 to help provide three families with water filtration kits in emergency areas where our drilling rigs are unable to reach. As our thank you, we'll send you the books, *Words of Jesus* and *Words of Healing*. One contains only the words of Jesus and the other scriptures for healing in your body, mind, and soul. With your \$100 gift you can receive both hardbound and softbound editions of these scripture promise books.

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 hand sculpted "Determined Eagle" bronze. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

On the mission field

James: These are beautiful children, beautiful families that have come here to contaminated water sources where people are dying of diseases from contaminated water.

Well, we need every person watching to do your part in helping provide families like this and children like this water sources, non-contaminated water, clean water and every time we do it, we inspire others to join us. If you would help drill one well. Maybe you could drill a well or join one or two other people to drill one.

So would you be that source of inspiration and help by making the best gift you can today?

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to mention one other thing that really is an answer to prayer. There are some areas where the terrain is so difficult that we can't get a drilling rig in and we began to share with you in the last emphasis on sharing water that we could share a filter system that will give a family water, pure water, and we can share that system with three families for \$100. You may want to do that.

We're going to send you the gifts that we mentioned a moment ago to say thank you. There may be some of you who are saying, "James, we plan to get David Green's book. We have so much respect and appreciation for the family and for their Christian witness. Would you mind sending us the book?"

You help us give a cup of water, and we'll send you the book to say thank you if you'd like to have it. So just let us know.

Would all of you join me and Betty saying thanks to David Green and their family, Hobby Lobby? David, love you! Appreciate you very, very much!

Thank all of you. Thank all of you for watching.