

10/12/17
Week 42: Transport LIFE
James and Betty Robison
Dr. Mike Evans

James: Thank you! It's nice to be in a room full of friendly people and I hope friendly people are joining us. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

We've got a friend, I actually asked him before we walked out here. I said, "Mike, how long have we kind of known one another?" He went back to '72 which means it's been 45 years now. Our children went to school together, some of them. It's been quite a journey.

Dr. Mike Evans has written a lot of best-selling books. He's considered in many ways by many people an expert on the Middle East. He's Jewish. He's going to tell you his testimony. I think it is one of the most painful, and yet ends as one of the most miraculous stories you'll ever hear.

He has established a couple of unbelievable places to bring back the right memories, Corrie ten Boom Museum. And then the Friends of Zion Museum, which every single person I know, I don't care if it is Governor Huckabee, I don't care if it is my friend Jack Graham at Prestonwood, I don't care who it is that has gone to Israel with all the Holy Land sites and they will often come back and say, "The most powerful and impressive thing I saw while I was in the Holy Land was the Friend of Zion Museum that the friends of Mike Evans, and the friends of Zion, people who love Israel in the right way with all their heart for the glory of God and because of Jesus, they built that. It is fabulous.

Would you welcome Dr. Mike Evans to *LIFE Today*?

Dr. Evans: Thank you, James.

James: I want you to take us on the journey but I've got to ask you a question because you told me we've known each other 45 years. And it was obvious to me and others that you had... and maybe you were hearing me in the crusades and God mightily blessed those, maybe you heard me speak and God blessed the communication but from the time you've been around me, the respect and appreciation that you have for my ministry, somehow for me as a person, has always amazed me and puzzled me. Can I ask you why you seem to have a respect for me?

Dr. Evans: Sure, James. I could never please my father. There was nothing I could do to get

him to affirm me and love me. When I got called to ministry, I was so imperfect. I didn't know anybody as messed up as me. And every preacher I met seemed to be perfect; everything about them seemed to be perfect. I was so frustrated, so miserable, so intimidated. Then one day I met a preacher who was ruthlessly vulnerable and said things that no one else would say. And it just -- it touched my heart, it healed my soul because I couldn't -- James, I couldn't get affirmation from these perfect people. I wasn't one of them. I felt totally defeated around them. When I heard you and when I saw you, it was like there's hope for me.

[Laughter]

There's hope for me.

James: He might have even thought if God can use him he could sure use me.

Tell us what your life was like.

Dr. Evans: James, at the age of four, I heard my father hitting my mother and calling her a whore and saying, "That downstairs is not my son. He is a bastard."

I didn't know what a bastard was. But I knew he was beating my mother up over me. I had no shoes on. I ran away. I only ran about a block to the little park. And there was a bunch of elderly people with breadcrumbs feeding the pigeons. And they saw me and the little nurse said, "Here, little boy, here's some breadcrumbs. Feed the pigeons." I threw the breadcrumbs down crying and said, "I don't want to feed the pigeons."

And I knew from the age of four that this man hated me, he despised me. He believed that my mother had an affair with a Jewish man and I was not his son. He started abusing me. No matter what I did, I couldn't get his affirmation.

I remember one day I found a jackknife in the snow. I was so proud of myself. I brought it home and I said, "Look what I found." I was probably eight years old.

He said, "You're a liar. God hates liars. You stole that jackknife. I will beat you until you tell the truth. God hates liars."

He took me down into that basement and stripped me completely naked and took an extension cord and he started beating me with that extension cord. I went hysterical.

He said, "I'll beat you 'til #\$!@! and then beat you."

And I wet all over myself and he kept beating me and beating me until I would make up a lie. I was so hysterical I couldn't make up a lie. He beat me and he beat me. And then he threw me in a canning cellar. I was covered with welts. I was alone, I was frightened, I was a broken little boy.

I never heard, any time I saw him he's going to hurt me. He never called me "son." He never said, "I love you." He never affirmed me once. And my goal in life was to be 20.

Now my mother, around the age of four, I was watching cartoons one day and they went off and Billy Graham came on. She ran over and she shut the TV off. She said, "Don't you ever watch that again. Christians kill Jews. Christians hate Jews. Jesus died. Don't dig him up. The Pope, Billy Graham, and Adolf Hitler, they're all Christians." My mother said, "I named you after your grandfather, your great grandfather who was a rabbi in Belarus. He was burned to death in his synagogue with 2,000 Jews by Christians." She said, "Don't ever watch it."

Well, my mother was Jewish but my father claimed to be a Christian. He went to church every Sunday. They called him Brother Bob. But every Friday night he walked to the Twilight Cafe and got drunk and he was a mean drunk. He'd come home between one and two in the morning violent. Every Friday night it was the same routine, sitting my mother down in a chair and beating her up and calling her a Jewish whore because of that upstairs, me.

I remember -- our community was anti-Semitic. I didn't know what anti-Semite was but I got beat up for being a kike, which my mother said, "That's Yiddish for Christ killer." And then they would throw tomatoes and eggs at my mother on Fridays when she pushed the grocery cart, I'd push the grocery cart to the A&P. She didn't drive. They would call her a Jew witch and they would throw those. And they would spray our house "Jewess," spray painted it.

Well, I loved my mother but the only thing I knew is this poor woman is being abused because of me and this man hates me. I didn't see a purpose for my life. And I had a dream and a goal to be alive at 20. I remember many times in gym -- they came to my house because they'd seen my back and my legs and I'd lie. I wouldn't tell them my father did that.

In school, on a Tuesday, they'd ask the kids, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Now, James, at that time I was so messed up. I had a speech impediment, I had a stomach ulcer, I couldn't hardly -- I couldn't look a man in the eye. I walked with my head down. I was broken -- completely broken. I said stuttering, "T-T-twenty."

And everybody laughed. But they didn't know my goal was to be alive at 20. I was sure he'd kill me before 20.

I didn't believe in Jesus. I didn't believe in God. I thought it was all fake. I said to myself, "Oh, yeah. The Christians who are smart, they're Presbyterians or Methodist. If they're kind of average they're Baptist. If they're complete idiots, they're Pentecostal."

[Laughter]

I thought it was all fake because he was a fake.

And this man, he made us go to church on Sundays. I remember the preacher preaching on tithing and devotions. So he would come home, Brother Flowers was the pastor. He said, "You're going to have devotions! I will beat the !#\$@! out of you." He set us all down and took an extension cord and said, "Now you read that Bible. You pray!"

We didn't know how to pray, James. We didn't know how to read the Bible. So he would start swinging that extension cord and hitting us with that extension cord. He had Jack Daniels and he had goof balls. They were some kind of psychiatric meds he was taking from World War II and he called them "goof balls" and he would take them with his Jack Daniels. But then every Sunday -- and he had his Thompson Chain Bible by his bed, but every Sunday he was in church and this is "Brother Bob."

Well, Brother Bob was probably the meanest man I ever knew. And the angriest man I ever knew. I've never met anybody like this man. I wanted to protect my mother but I couldn't. I was so frightened of him. I couldn't. One day I got the courage up. On a Friday night he came at one to two in the morning and he's sitting her in the chair and slapping her -- she wore sunglasses a lot because of black eyes. And "You Jewish whore! That's not my son that's a bastard."

I'm sitting there crying which happened a hundred times. As I'm crying I got my courage up. I said, "Stop it!" And when I said, "Stop it" he looked up those stairs and saw me. He run up those stairs and grabbed me by my throat and lifted me way above his head and started strangling me. I remember trying to hold on to those fingers and looking in those eyes and I thought, I'll never make it to 20. It's over tonight. And I passed out.

I woke up in a fetal position covered with my own dried vomit. I remember my prayer, James. It was anger. I was alive and I was mad. I screamed out to God, "*Why Was I Born?*" It made no sense. This woman, she's suffering because of me. This man has despised me every day of my life and abused me. Why was I born? Why couldn't he have ended it?

When I prayed that prayer of rage and anger, all of the sudden I saw a bright light, real bright and I thought it was my father. I thought he'd come back with a spotlight and he's going to finish me off.

So I threw my hands up to protect my face but there was no screaming, there was no anger, there was no rage. I didn't know what it was. So I peeped through my fingers and I saw two nail-scarred hands. But the scars weren't here, they were way up high here. And they were coming at me.

Then I looked at the eyes; every color of the rainbow was in the eyes. And they were smiling eyes. I'd never seen a man's eyes smile into the eyes of Jesus. And I could see it was like magnets. When you looked at the eyes, you couldn't stop looking at them. They just drew you in. And he kept smiling at me with those eyes.

And I first thought, am I crazy? Have I lost my mind? I don't even believe in this. What is happening to me? As he was smiling at me he said three words. First he said, "Son."

James, I didn't realize it until he said it, I'd never heard the word *son*. My mother never called me "son." She loved me, but she couldn't say it.

Then he said, "I love you." I'd never heard the word "I love you." If I said to my mother, "I love you!" She would say, "Me too! Me too!" But she had been abused.

Then he said a third word, "I have a great plan for your life." And he left. I've never seen him again. I've never heard his voice again. But that night I had hope for the first time in my life.

I would have been dead, I'm sure, James. I would have been a drug addict or an alcoholic or God forbid I could have ended up like him. But I had hope. I didn't tell a soul this story for over 20 years. I didn't even tell my own wife when we got married.

But I've never met anybody as messed up as me, James. As broken, in desperate need of affirmation and love, and didn't know how to get it. I know I wasn't going to get it from my father. It just wasn't going to happen. This man hated me -- he despised me.

When God called me, I knew I was called to ministry. When I was called to ministry I couldn't relate. When I came to Bible school, I asked them two questions, "Where do we get our robes? And do they hurt Jews here?" I figured all Christians hurt Jews. That's just part of being a Christian is to cuss out a Jew or to hurt a Jew. So I figured well, you know, I better get used to it because there is going to be a lot more of that.

But that's why I loved you because I had never met a minister or a preacher except all the perfect ones. They seemed so perfect and I was so imperfect. I was so broken and I wanted affirmation.

When I started in the ministry, I wanted to succeed so people would like me. But the more I tried to succeed the more they rejected me. If I tried to tell them what I did, they looked at me like... and they rejected me more. It was breaking me. It was killing me because I couldn't get the affirmation which I never got from my dad. And I desperately needed it and I wanted it. I only had it once. I only had it once from Jesus. I didn't know if he was coming again.

So that's why my heart was so touched towards you because I saw for the first time in my life a minister who was authentic, who was willing to be real and to be honest. And I also heard from you the brokenness you went through; and you were the only guy I ever heard it from that I said to myself, I know how screwed up I am. I know that I'm not healed. I know that I want to be healed. I know you love me, Jesus.

Someone asked me the other day, James. They said, "Mike, you've got so much faith. God uses you in such..."

I said, "Oh no, I don't." I said, "Let me tell you something. The greatest things in my life have happened at the most difficult times, the times I was faithless, the times I was so broken that Christ showed up and loved on me and ministered to me and called me and touched me and used me." I said, "I'm not coming to you telling you how great I am or how much faith I have because it is not the truth." I said, "Something about that draws him."

James: Let me just say, you've got a book that's in the stores now when this airs. Why were you born? It's beautiful. The cover is on where everybody is seeing it at home. And they can get it. Your website.

Listen to me. The museum is incredible. You can look at beautiful, beautiful portrayals and images of what's happened there; it will make you want to go there -- The Corrie ten Boom Museum. You did that to bring healing. You've been a healing factor for Israel, probably as much as anybody. And I want everybody watching to know, God not only has worked but is working miracles in his life and through his life. I want you to pray for Mike. I want you to go online and see what he does. I really want you to consider getting the book; it will be a tremendous blessing to you.

I want to say thank you, Betty and I together because our daughter knew your children well, the one that's in heaven, and our son, Randy who just loves your family. I want you to know I'm proud of you.

Would you all say to Mike Evans, thank God for you, Mike! Thank you for sharing your testimony. We don't have time to tell more, it's in the book. Did you not lead that father to Christ, ultimately?

Dr. Evans: I led him to the Lord. The first thing I did is the Lord said, "Give him a gift that he doesn't deserve. Give him unconditional forgiveness." Now the hard part about it, James, I thought that was condoning him or trusting him. But I realized it wasn't either. I did end up leading him to the Lord; yes!

James: So it's a miracle. Don't you thank God? Would you just say again thank God for what you're doing and have done?

Mike, you know how involved we are in mission work all over the world. Our missionaries have asked for 71 trucks right now and vehicles, some of them motorbikes. I want to look at all of you and say please, please help those missionaries. They are reaching out to people that are the most unnoticed people on the planet. Would you right now watch closely and let's be an answer to their prayer and their request? Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: Listen! Do you hear that? That's the sound of joy when someone has been the answer to your prayers. Maybe they have brought your whole village life by supplying clean drinking water. Or it could be simply to share excitement of receiving and wearing your very first pair of shoes. But all of this joy could slowly come to a stop.

The reason: The lack of reliable transportation for *LIFE's* missionary partners around the world. One such example is in Southeast Asia. Here four wheel vehicles are necessary to travel over rough and challenging terrain to reach children at risk of human trafficking and transporting them to safe homes.

In the Ukraine, deep in the remote areas of the Carpathian mountains, mission partners reaching out to families in desperate need must face the constant challenge of maneuvering vehicles in the ice and snow.

While mission teams in India have to navigate incredible obstacles to share a film on the life of Christ with those who have never heard the name of Jesus. The challenges our mission partners face are threefold. They either have transportation that is worn out and unreliable, they need additional transportation to meet the growing needs of those they are reaching out to or they do not have the proper transportation to meet the challenges of the terrain they must travel.

Tim: Over the years that we've had our car, it's absolutely taken a battering. And it is at a point now where it is very regularly falling apart. It is needing a lot of repair and a lot of help to try and keep it on the road. We're an aftercare facility for girls aged five to sixteen who have been trafficked, raped, prostituted, all or at least one of those things.

Announcer: Tim Hughes' situation is just one example of what our mission partners must face each day. Transportation literally means lives will be saved on the mission fields. As Betty once stated, "I don't just see a truck, I see life."

Betty: You see how critical the transportation is and here's one of the trucks pulling out.

Announcer: Be a part of saving lives in word and deed through Mission: Transport LIFE.
End of clip

In the studio

James: Boy, you said something really strong there because when you said, "I don't see trucks, I do see life," you really knew what you were talking about.

Betty: I really do. I see so much more than just the vehicles which are so important because they carry life to these precious children, those that are hungry, those that are thirsty, those that are being trafficked and they need a place, a safe haven. But they need the transportation to carry these children, to take them to the safe place that they need to be. We need you to join with us. Look at the vehicles as life because that's what they are. Please help us! It is so very, very important.

James: Well, they actually are delivering hope. When we tell you they're worn out and the missionaries showed us and you've seen images of them, and we've tried to communicate it with you even to some of our friends through the mail to show you what condition they're in. I don't know if you know this but it was hard for that missionary to be talking about a truck. It's almost like you're buying something that's a non-essential. But it is a life source. It is their delivery system.

And for us to come to you and tell you that right now suddenly, not expected, all the missionaries tell us and they laid it out, this is a specific need: We need 71 vehicles, the majority of them some kind of a truck, various sizes but over a million dollars.

Would you please right now, would you be an answer to that prayer? It could happen today. We could easily have 1,000 people say, "You know what? We'll give \$1,000." But the real issue is would you be one of them? But you know the fact is there are a lot of people who as honestly as you could ever be say, "I couldn't give \$1,000 no matter how much I wanted to." But you could give something. And when all of us join together, that's what makes the Christian body function to look like Jesus. All the parts coming together, our heart beating with the

Father's heart, with the shepherd's heart, the Lord. And then us reaching out.

What do you have? That's what he asked, when they needed to feed the 5,000. "What do you have?" You've got a kid here that's got fish and loaves. Well, would you let me have what you have? If it's \$40 or \$80 or \$120, some level, whatever it is, and I just threw those numbers out as possibilities, we're going to send the beautiful CD instrumental of the great hymns, the sweetest sound, the sweetest songs and also a booklet that tells history of how they were inspired.

We're also offering you the most beautiful large print Bible I've ever seen and I've never seen one with nicer leather. This is absolutely fabulous. We're saying thank you to those of you who would make, for some, a sacrificial gift of \$120.

But at whatever level you could help, we send the beautiful "Determined Eagle" bronze and it is spectacularly beautiful to say thank you for meeting a critical need that may not touch people's hearts like it should but it really is the life source of reaching out and delivering. And also, as some have said so often, taking these children we're rescuing, even these we've gotten that are trafficked, taking them to a safe haven, taking them where they need to go to grow.

Would you right now go to that website? Would you dial the number? Take your bankcard and use it like a check and you just make the gift God puts on your heart. We have some gifts to bless you but you're going to be blessing missionaries, and all the people they put the arms of God's love around. Thank you for doing it!

On the mission field

Announcer: It's a missionary's nightmare, having lifesaving relief supplies in your hand and no way to get it to those who are suffering. Some of the vehicles so vital to our outreaches are completely worn out and must be replaced. And in some critical areas no transportation is available at all. *Life's* mission partners have immediate and urgent needs to transport lifesaving supplies to children and families in remote locations. An additional 1.1 million dollars is needed to purchase 71 vehicles, large and small. Your gift of \$40, \$80, \$120, or \$1000 will help purchase these vehicles and provide lifesaving food, clean water, medicine, and the good news of Jesus to people in need.

With your gift of any amount, be sure to request *The Sweetest Name* classic hymns CD with a booklet containing the history behind the hymns for all twelve songs.

With your gift of \$120 or more, please request the NIV Super Giant Print Reference Bible, ideal for anyone looking for a Bible that's gentle on the eyes.

Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1000 or more to help transport life. And you may request our beautiful Determined Eagle bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online!

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to mention again that you can see it on the screen, Mike Evans book, *Why was I Born?* Well, we know why.

Let me say thank you for helping us get those trucks.

We know why Mike Evans was born. Would you just say thank God?

Thank you, Mike Evans! Thank you, Mike. Love you and your family.

Thank all of you for being here. Thank you for watching *LIFE Today*. Go to the website Mike Evans has. Look at what he's been able to build for the glory of God: Friends of Zion Museum. Look at it!