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James and Betty Robison
Katie Davis Majors #2

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: Since a lot of folks have seen us, I'm 74 now.

Betty: You are. You are older than me now.

James: Look at all the young people coming to see me now that I'm 74. Its like, "It's amazing! The guy is still moving."

Betty: Married to an older man.

[Laughter]

James: How old would you be Miss Betty?

Betty: Not 74! [Laughing]

James: Yet.

Betty: Close.

James: She always says, "You always have to tell them, in just a little while I'll be 74. Why do you have to tell them? Just talk about yourself."

Look, we're thrilled to have *Kisses from Katie* here. That was the bestselling book that I think just shocked her, I'm sure her family and everybody, that it just took off. But it wasn't hard for me to understand why this teenage girl would go over to Uganda just to do a little mission tour and just basically never come back. And of all things, as a teenager, unmarried, start adopting kids, little kids, hungry kids, homeless kids, hurting kids. And not only taking them into her house, which was not enough house but into her heart. And she wrote the book, *Kisses from Katie*.

When Betty and I were reading and saw how she lost her life totally in Christ in his will, I was moved and realized why people who read it suddenly realized if a miracle like that can cause a girl to say, "I lost my life there," and actually found it actually, lost it in Christ to really find it in fullness. It was really moving; wasn't it?

Betty: It really was. I loved the way she phrased it. She said, "I quit my life." And she let God pick her up and put his life in her. She got great satisfaction, great peace. And to be in a place like that so far away from really everything she was used to, it was just amazing. Only God can do that in someone.

James: And that love poured like a river, not only there in Uganda where she's been now for more than ten years. She's now married, they have 13 children that are adopted and have one of their own. Would you welcome now the author of this new book, *Daring to Hope* and we're going to talk to Katie Davis Majors. Would you welcome Katie?

[Cheers & Applause]

How did you meet the man that married the girl that had all the kids?

Katie: Benji came over to Uganda as a missionary about seven years ago with the goal of discipling men. So he did full time men's ministry meeting with small groups of men, studying the word with them, encouraging them in their role as husband or father. We lived in the same community, we attended the same church and the same Bible study. So we became friends and then better friends.

[Laughter]

James: He was okay with taking on all the kids and everything? Because like the guy goes home and he's married and has 13 kids.

[Laughter]

That's a heck of a start.

Katie: Yes! It is a big commitment! We dated for awhile and thought about it a lot and prayed about it a lot. But he had a relationship with my kids just as a community member, someone who would fix their bikes when they got broken or come kick around a soccer ball with them some afternoons. So they all knew and loved him as well. Yeah, he was committed to not just me but to all of us.

James: So you have a little one?

Katie: We do! We have a little boy now.

James: With all those girls!

Katie: All those girls and one big boy.

James: Are they all taking care of him too? Do you have a lot of help?

Katie: They love him so much. I always joke that from about four to six I don't see him because they get home from school, then until they come in to the dinner table, he is with them.

James: He likes it? He's comfortable?

Katie: He loves them so much. Yeah. He's 17 months now so he's just starting to try to say everybody's names. That's a lot of names.

[Laughter]

That's a lot of names for a little guy. But he has a little sound he makes for each one of his sisters.

James: Isn't that great? Now why this book? You've just wrote a book that surprised you and I'm sure publishers when they see somebody surprised they're happy. So I know that they talked to you about it. But why did you come up with *Daring to Hope*? What inspired you to go this direction and what's your hope for the book?

Katie: Actually, after *Kisses from Katie* I kind of said like, "Whoo! Not going to do that again!"

[Laughter]

And people said, "When are you going to write another book? When are you going to write another book?"

I said, "Well, only if God gives me another book. I don't know that I'll ever write another book." So it's actually been about seven years since that published. It's been a long time. Our family really faced some hardship during that seven years. We have a small, we call it the guest house but in our backyard is a line of cement rooms, just small rooms that we let people live in. So over the course of the last seven years...

James: This is in addition to the 13?

Katie: Yeah.

James: This is other people coming in?

Katie: Yes, this is other people.

James: Okay. Goodness!

Katie: So we have our house and then we have a guest room in our house and sometimes people live in that. But we also have this little row of rooms in our backyard that people come and live in. So it may be somebody who is very ill and needs quick easy access to the hospital; we live near the local hospital. Sometimes a mom who is in-between jobs and has found herself homeless and needs shelter for herself and her children.

I tell the story of Mac in this book who was -- he was actually the village drunk; a guy that I found kind of an annoyance on my way to Bible study. He would be stumbling around. But he was severely burnt and he came to live with us while he recovered.

James: In the guest house?

Katie: In the guest house, yes. So as all these different people came into our life and I experienced their suffering, really close-up and personal, and decided to allow my children to experience their suffering, because that's a question you ask as a parent too. Like do I expose my children to this? Or do I shelter them from this? And for a little while I really wrestled with, okay God, who are you here? When you're watching children die from preventable disease, when you're telling a mother, "Your child is not going to live anymore," in the midst of such hardship, who is a good and loving God?

And so I spent a lot of time with him. I wrote in the book about my bathroom because my bathroom became my little prayer closet because often it was the only place where we didn't have people. The girls had their bedrooms and then we would have somebody in the guest room and sometimes we even had somebody sleeping on the couch. So I think the two youngest girls still slept in my room at that time. So if I wanted to be alone, I couldn't even go to my bedroom, I had to go in the bathroom and shut the door. That became a place where I knew Jesus more intimately than I had ever known him because I found that when I cried out to him, "Who are you in the midst of this pain?" He showed me. He answered me. He comforted me and he showed me sides of himself that I hadn't experienced yet and wouldn't have experienced had we not been so up-close and personal with suffering.

There were prayers that I prayed that didn't get answered the way I wanted. I prayed for people who lived with us to be healed and stand up and walk and go home healthy in Jesus' name and they died. So then you're asking yourself, why? And as I asked God these questions I felt like he showed me that even when he didn't give me what I wanted, he gave me something better and that was himself; it was the gift of himself and his presence with me for me always.

So that's really, after coming through all this and then getting married and when I was pregnant with our baby actually, I felt God's nudge that okay, you've scooted up close to me and you've known these things to be true and you've known my character to be true, and for a season those lessons were just for you but now they're not just for you anymore. It is time to share those things.

First you're kind of thinking, really? [Laughing] But he's too good to keep to yourself; right? It's too good a message not to share that in the midst of all hardship, in the midst of all suffering, God is a good God who longs to comfort his people and who longs for people to know his love for them. I've known that to be true. So it's kind of the premise of this book.

My hope is that it is relatable; that people's sufferings won't be the same as mine, not all of us have like a dying person in our living room or let the village drunk come and live in our backyard. That's probably not for everyone. [Laughing] But all of us experience suffering. It is in your face in Uganda and it is in your face in America, it is in your face when you turn on the news. I think all of us who really truly believe in Christ at some point have had to ask the question, then why is the world like this? Why do you allow this?

I've known him to be faithful and I wanted others to come away encouraged that even if their experience is very different our God is the same God and he is a God who reaches out to us in all our hard places. He just longs for us to know his great love.

James: You were talking about praying for healing. As a Bible believer, I think most people who go to church, we believe God heals. We certainly believe in New Testament miracles. Some people wonder if we're still going to have them. I think most of us would have to acknowledge that if the Bible says Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever -- he is the same -- what he did then he can do now.

Years ago we began to move into what I call a more active faith when we would pray for somebody to get healed. We would actually believed God would want them to be healed. I don't agree that if somebody is sick that God made them sick. If God made them sick then it would be stupid to pay the doctor to get them well because you're paying the doctor to fight God who is making you sick. So we just know sickness is part of this life. We know disease, we know pestilence, we know sin and all these things are here and we see the effect of these things.

Sometimes we don't, as you just said we pray for healing and we don't see the healing. This happened with us with our own daughter. Our daughter Robin saw miracles. She experienced a miracle. She experienced such an unbelievable miracle that surgeons were amazed. Her whole school was amazed. She saw God do so many things that there was no way she could ever doubt. Then in her 30s and a mother of three beautiful children she got cancer and it looked like she had won the battle and then ended up going into a more serious battle then at age 40, right after Christmas a few years ago we said good-bye to our daughter.

I'm bringing this up because I need you to hear this because she said we prayed for healing and healing didn't come. Now I need you to hear this. You can have a healing and we want it and it is wonderful, and we want it for everybody. But when the healing doesn't come, you've got to get this, you still have the healer and it is better to have the healer than the healing. Because you see a parent loses a child, most people say that's possibly the greatest weight you can bear on this earth, we have the healer.

I think that you are showing people in your life, Katie that Jesus is adequate for every situation. That you don't feel like you have lost things to not be here in the states and be over there in a very impoverished country with people who have been impacted and yet there is joy. You're telling us that if we will just let Jesus be who he is in us there is no bad place on earth to live. There is nothing desolate when he is present. It is amazing what he does in the impossible situation.

I honestly believe you can be used to change the whole country of Uganda. Do you believe that? God can use this young lady and the precious little ones that she's taken in and who knows? Maybe Uganda would help change America? Wouldn't that be nice?

[Laughter]

Africa is the resource richest continent in the world but their greatest resource are the people and the people have been plundered and not developed fully, therefore the resources are not developed. If we would learn to work together, there is nothing we can't do to see people set free. That's the thing, the hope that you talk about is the only hope. You talked about the truth a while ago. It is the truth that sets us free. I think that's what you want everybody to get from what you share, from what you've written. You want them to fall in love with Jesus, let Jesus be who he is wherever they are; is that right?

Katie: That is absolutely right.

James: Tell our viewers what you want them to contemplate as we close this program. What do you want them focusing on?

Katie: I just want people to know God's love for them -- His deep love. That he would send his son. How much does he love us? So much! And it's what I share with my kids and it is what I share with these people that live in our guest house. But it is also why I write because I don't like to come here and be away from my family but I want people to know the love of Christ and that it can transform our lives, transform our hearts, transform nations, transform everything.

James: You were telling that story about Mac, did anything ever happen to him? What happened to this old drunk?

Katie: His leg was burnt so badly that you could see his bone. It was a deep, deep wound. A social worker on our staff said, "Well, we've got to help him." I'm going okay, I guess we do. We took him to three different hospitals and three different doctors told me his leg needed to be amputated. I just knew that for a man who was already drunk and homeless the loss of a leg would mean the loss of life completely. The last doctor said to me, "Well, if somebody would bandage it every day it could get well. But we don't have the medicine or the resources to do it here at this hospital. Would you like me to show you how?"

I said, "Yeah!"

James: And he's looking for this somebody?

Katie: He's looking for this somebody. I said, "Sure! I'll do that." Mac stayed in the guest house for about two years. For the first year I bandaged his leg every single day. And as I bandaged his leg he told me about his life and I got to tell him about the gospel. As the year went by, my husband started -- he wasn't my husband then, he was my friend and I had said, "This guy needs a man to pour into him." He started coming over twice a week and studying the Bible with Mac. About a year in Mac came to know Jesus as his savior and his life has been completely transformed.

James: That's in the book and a whole lot more stories like that. She told Betty and me it's just full of glorious stories when you dare to hope. Your ministry title online. I want you to find it, pray about helping her support all their outreaches and maybe there is a way you can go over there and train some people in skills. What's the name of it?

Katie: The name of the ministry is Amazima and all those opportunities are spelled out online.

James: Well, I really hope you'll visit that website and I hope you'll get the book and maybe get one for a friend that might dare to hope also.

Katie, we love feeding children that are hungry. We love putting God's arms of love around

children. Betty and I went for so many years into the very, let's say, where angels fear to tread, into great danger many times to put God's arms around kids. You know what? I brought them all home in my heart. I didn't forget them. I didn't forget their faces. I shared them with you and you've changed their lives. We know that we have led over 12 million of these to Christ that came to be fed. We gave them the gospel and we said over 10 million up toward 15 million lives according to the reports from the African countries, that's what they tell us. So that's what you did.

I want you to look in right now. I want you to see what love does. How you stop the death cycle and give life. Please watch. Ask God to let you see it the way he sees it and address it the way he wants us to address it. I think you'll be glad to do it. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Isak: James and Betty, last time we were in Mozambique together, we were walking through schools where mission feeding was happening. There were children dancing and singing and just life -- life because of mission feeding in those villages, because of the friends of LIFE, because of each and every one of them opening their hearts, partnering with you, partnering with us to make that joy and that life possible for each and every one of those children. I remember it like it was just yesterday. I remember how filled with joy your heart was in seeing those children thriving, full of joy and full of energy. All of that starting with just a bowl of food a day in the mission feeding program; changing their lives, providing them with opportunity.

James, as you know all too well life is hard here in Africa for many of these families with the drought that we've experienced. We've seen areas where they're just unable to produce food. What it's resulted in is a severe critical need; a need that is putting children in malnutrition clinics. I've seen some of the fullest malnutrition clinics I think I've ever seen in this area. We've seen children, many of them who I don't think will make it. A name on a little wooden cross, another life stolen by malnutrition; stolen by the simple lack of food.

James, we have to do something about this! We've got to reach these children now. It's urgent. It's critical. We have to get to them now because if we don't get to them now, they're going to continue to dig more and more of these graves and bury more and more of these children.

Please James! Ask the friends of LIFE, ask them to help you and to help us so that we can save these lives.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, you've heard the heart cry of a missionary; that's Isak Pretorius, Peter Pretorius'

son. Betty, we have been where they were burying them by the thousands, little children. They were tiny graves like some you saw there. The first time Betty and I saw them I thought I was going to die of a broken heart in the midst of all the digging.

But Betty, we actually asked our viewers to help in that particular crisis area that was even more severe than what Isak was referencing there. When he pointed out that the malnutrition clinics, that's where the children go and the children are dying -- and you pay for those too. That's part of what all the mission outreach feeding does. That's the last effort to save them. But if we get into the areas where the 400,000 are now we can head them off and they don't get there, we begin to restore things.

But where they were dying by the thousands, Betty, we went back two to three years later and the kids were in school singing about Jesus. They all had food at school feeding because we learned if we moved the feeding to the schools it brought the attendance up. You viewers are just amazing at doing what works! Because it is love that works. These kids were so happy.

When we got ready to leave, the pastor was a real little guy. I noticed when I looked back he was looking up at Peter and he was crying. So when Peter Pretorius came over to the truck, I said, "Peter, why was he crying? The kids were happy."

He said, "Because he knew you saw how happy they were and he remembered where they were and where you took them and he thought now that you see them, you'll never come back, and maybe won't be able to help anymore."

Of course, we all wept tears of compassion again for the fact that he thought love might leave but it didn't. We just kept feeding and we do. Anywhere we get the kids coming to get their little minds fed because we've got their bodies strong and you enable us to do it, we do it.

So here's what I'm asking you to do right now. I want you to go online or call that number and I want you to take your bankcard and use it like a check -- or if you write a check, make the check to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're sending.

Now please listen to me. For \$30, \$50, or \$100 we can feed three, five or ten children for the next several months. Now this is not like you'd have at your home. This is nutrition. This is nourishment that totally stabilizes their situation, whatever the need is. And it's balanced biologically by overseers and the medical profession, and even scientists who help us know this is the need there.

That's why upgrading the food factory right now is really important. We have a \$216,000 need to upgrade and I've been praying God would raise up 216 people that would give \$1,000 each. So if you're one of those, do it. But what we need for those 400,000 is the \$30, the \$50, and the \$100. For

those three children you feed with \$30, that's no small gift so don't think that's too small, \$50 for five or \$100 for ten. There is a level at when you can participate. There maybe some of you who can say, "I can feed several hundred kids. God's blessed me and I'm going to do it because it works!"

Would you please right now go online, call the number, make the gift God puts on your heart? We have some gifts to send you you're going to like, you're going to appreciate because you're going to arise and shine and reveal God's love. Thank you so much for doing it. Thanks for making that call. Thanks for the gift.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and famine-stricken areas of Africa, children are suffering. The need is great. And without food, they face death by starvation. With your support, you will help feed and care for children in crisis areas of Sudan, Angola, and Mozambique.

With Africa facing ongoing food shortages and drought, we urgently need to replenish supplies and come to the aid of 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 an additional gift to help provide critically needed upgrades to our food factory that will increase overall production by a staggering 50%. This is a \$216,000 challenge above our normal feeding budget that could help save even more lives.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you *In the Middle of the Mess*. In her new book, Sheila Walsh brings insight to knowing the peace and presence of Christ in the midst of life's inevitable messes.

With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed and care for ten children, we will send you Sheila's book, plus the "Arise" coffee mug. This heat-activated mug reveals Isaiah 61 each time you fill it with a warm beverage; a wonderful way to begin your day.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our "Determined Eagle" bronze sculpture. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to ask you to rise on the turbulence of the times like an eagle flies higher. We're sending this to those who will make a gift of \$1,000 or more. I ask you to consider a \$1,000 gift to

help us really upgrade that food factory. It will just be amazing. Would you consider that -- being one of 216 people?

We're sending Sheila's book. We want to bless you. This is in the bookstores. Katie is a blessing, *Daring to Hope*. If you say, "James, would you send me her book if we just help these kids some?" Sure! You just ask. We want to be a blessing to you. We'll send it to you.

Join Betty and me in saying thanks to a Jesus-filled girl, Katie.

[Applause]

Thanks, Katie! Love you!