

11/16/17
Week 47: Fall Mission Feeding
James and Betty Robison
Dennis Jernigan

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

James: Dennis Jernigan has been journeying with us for 30 years. Many people call him the "Psalmist of our Day." He writes incredible praise songs and messages, great musician.

He's been doing our conferences back 30 years ago. As a matter of fact, he and his wife were with us when we did the first test of a sit down talk program. Here's a guy preaching in coliseums and stadiums and all of the sudden I'm going to sit down by my wife in a living room and it stunned everybody. But it stunned me too.

But what you need to know, because I'm an evangelist, but when I heard the Lord tell me to be a servant to others, not just a spokesman, but to serve others, we went from having hundreds of thousands of people come to Christ a year to millions coming to Christ a year, and being won to Christ. And the gospel went around the world.

Well, one of the individuals that came in with us and ministered, his life was changed. He says, "I came out of the closet for him so to speak." Dennis was defeated in the homosexual lifestyle. When he went for counseling, even at a Christian school, that person put a move on him. So he was very disheartened. But he met a man, a layman, who one day said to him, "I know who you are and I'm not going to leave you. I'm not going to walk away from you until you're able to walk out of that." That love led him to deliverance and marriage and nine children -- and hundreds of songs that are sung around the world, praise songs.

Well, he's written a book that he thinks is one of the most important things he's ever done in his life. And boy, he's been on one important journey because freedom is there for everybody. Let me just say this to you. If you're not willing to admit "I have a problem" then you'll never deal with the problem. If you deny the diagnosis of a doctor that's telling the absolute truth then you're not likely to find the cure, you're not likely to take the corrective actions. If you change what God says into something other than what God says, then you put something before God and you've dismissed the reality of a challenge or a problem and the help that can come when you admit there's an issue. And he's the answer to the issue.

But what Dennis found out is there is a renewing of our mind process because the battle is in our mind. I just visited with Dennis before we came out here and he already said things to me that energized me for you. So I'm anxious for him to share his heart; and what he wants us to get and see in the book that he's written, *Renewing Your Mind*. Would you welcome Dennis Jernigan to *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

Glad to have you back, buddy!

Dennis: Good to be back. Thank you. Thank you, Betty.

James: I want you to take us where you want us to go in this brief timeframe where you've taken a lot of time to take us on a journey of the renewing of the mind process. Tell us what you want us to hear so our viewers will understand the importance of this process.

Dennis: Sure. A couple of scriptures that really helped inspire the book that is very important to me, well, actually three. John 8:32: You know the truth and the truth will set you free. We never get to the truth if we don't take the first step truth requires. It's like you said, it's our own honest confession.

If we went to the doctor, we know we're going to die. The first thing he is going to ask is, "Show me where it hurts." But what if we said, "What will people think?" And walked away and died. That would be foolishness. Well, that in itself is mind-blowing to me and it set me free in a lot of levels, a lot of ways.

But Proverbs 23:7 says: As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.

Romans 12:2 tells us to be transformed by the what? The renewing of your mind.

People ask me all the time, "Was your healing instant or has it been a process?" And the answer is, "Absolutely yes."

In an instant I was born again, radically, irrevocably, utterly born again; transformed from an old something to something brand-new, a new identity in Christ. One of Dennis Jernigan's personal rules is he does not get to call himself something his Father does not call him. So if I do something boneheaded and I'll say, "You're such a stupid idiot!" My wife is right there and says, "Is that who Father says you are?" Even my kids do the same thing now. It is incredible. I got people involved in the journey with me.

The process looks like this though. Lazarus had been in the grave several days, Jesus came and called him forth. Lazarus came forth fully alive but Lazarus was not free. So when we're born again we're fully alive in Christ but we're not as free as we're going to be because Jesus said something significant to those around Lazarus, "Loose from that boy the grave clothes." If I'd been in the grave for all those days and somebody set me free and gave me life, I wouldn't just want to be content to walk around like a mummy wrapped up in the grave clothes. I'd want those suckers ripped off of me.

So since 1981, November 7th, 1981, was the day of my salvation. I've been walking toward Jesus like Lazarus and asking him to reveal to me the things that used to define me in my old life, things like anger. For instance, when I was a kid I didn't understand myself. I was an artsy fartsy kid and my parents didn't understand me because I was an artsy fartsy kid. So I would have all of these moments of frustration where I would just erupt into angry tantrums. And my mom would say, "Well, that's just the Bristol in you." Meaning I was like my great grandparents who had fiery red hair. In other words, I can't help it, that's just the way I am.

One of the first things the Holy Spirit began to deal with me on was that anger. He said, "Son, who told you you were an angry man?"

"Well, my family, Father."

"But I'm your maker. Who do I say you are? Let's rip that away. See that heart of peace I planted in you? Just be that."

People ask me all the time as well, "Do your choices determine your identity?"

No, I didn't get to choose what I was tempted by. Homosexuality to me is just a temptation. It is not an identity. We don't get to choose what we're tempted by necessarily, we don't get to even choose our circumstances but we always have a choice as to how we respond to any temptation. We always have a choice as to how we are going to respond to any circumstance.

So I just decided a long time ago, I went on this incredible journey from 1981 to 1993 where I just thought, I'm so fed up with what the enemy has brought into my life with the lies because the battleground is like you said, it's our mind. So I decided, let's just take the Lord at his word. Let's really dig into this renewing of our mind.

So I got radical. I decided I would just erase the board, start from scratch. Lord, I don't know who I am, I don't even really know who you are. So would you show me who you are? And he began to reveal to me things like this, son, I'm Jehovah-Rapha, I'm the God who heals you. You

are my son. Your spiritual D.N.A. is my spiritual D.N.A. You're an agent of my healing. Be that. He said, "I'm Jehovah-Raah, I'm your shepherd son. You have the heart of a shepherd." He calls himself Jehovah-Shammah, "I'm the God who is always there. I want you to be present for people." On and on, "I'm Jehovah-Shalom, I'm the God who is peace. I want you to be a man of peace."

In other words, I began putting off the lies of the enemy replacing them with the truth; great illustrations for my own life because I have all these physical wounds that bear truth to a spiritual truth in my life.

Way back, it's been 17 years ago now, they shouldn't have let me have an implement but they let me have a tractor. And I was taking my box blade off one day and I was in a hurry and I left the tractor running. The box blade weighs several hundred pounds; it has these spikes called "rippers." The box blade fell from the tractor early, the ripper ripped through my back leg and I thought, this is the way I'm going to die, Lord? My friends are going to mock the way I die. Don't let the goats jump on the tractor because they're going to surely start the tractor going. I thought all these crazy thoughts.

I managed to get this thing off of me and there was this gaping hole in my leg. I saw my muscle and my tendon and my bones. I managed to get to the house. Melinda rushed me to the E.R. Rush into the E.R. And I say, "I've hurt myself."

And they say, "Well, sir, you're going to have to fill out some paperwork."

So long story made short, Melinda comes in and deals with all the paperwork. Two surgeries later they send me home, sewing that flesh over the wound. I thought everything was great.

A few days later that wound began to fester and develop an odor. I went back to the doctor. The first thing he did was cut away that flesh leaving that gaping wound. I said, "Well, when are we going to do the skin graft?"

Do you know what he said to me, James? He said, "For this type of wound to heal properly, it must heal from the inside out."

That's when I knew God, the Holy Spirit was going to be teaching me some things about the process of healing, the process of renewing my mind.

They had me every day, they said, "We want you to cleanse this wound twice a day. For a wound to heal properly, it's got to be cleansed." There's that honest confession.

"We want you to soak this wound in a bucket of warm water and cup of Tide detergent. I thought, y'all are crazy!

They said, "No! It's got to be cleansed constantly. You've got to constantly cleanse the wound. Then when you're through with the cleansing we want you to take this long strip of gauze, we want you to pack it in the wound until nothing can get in."

I said, "Why?"

They said, "Because that keeps anything foreign from getting in there. Then at the end of the day when you soak it again, I want you to rip that gauze out."

I said, "Why?"

They said, "Because when you rip it out everything that is dead and decayed will have adhered to it and it will come out with it for further cleansing." They said, "By the way, try to make the wound bleed as much as possible."

I said, "What kind of doctor are you?"

[Laughter]

They said, "No." They said the most profound thing. They said, "Well, there's life in the blood."

Where have we heard that?

So as I would make that wound bleed the nutrients would come and close that gap. I said, "Lord, I understand the cleansing, I understand the need for that honest confession, I get that. Lord, I understand the life in the blood but what has been the packing material of the wounds of my life in a spiritual sense?"

He said, "Son, when I first set you free and the enemy would try to trip you up and cause you to fall back into your old ways of thinking, what did you pack in that wounded place?"

"Oh! Got you, Lord." What shall I say then? Shall I continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be. How shall I who have died to sin continue to live in it any longer? Micah 7:8 -- that's Romans 6:1.

Micah 7:8: Do not rejoice over me my enemy; though I fall I will rise. Though I dwell in the

darkness, the Lord is light for me.

In every wounded place I'd packed the word of God and just like the gauze I pulled it out revealing the truth; exposing the lie, revealing the truth and repacking that wound again and again until it began to transform my mind.

I've had so much healing in my mind. I've had people in the gay community tell me I'm brainwashed and I agree with them. I've been brainwashed.

[Laughter]

Thought I'd learned my lesson but God wasn't through. Went through a year of healing with that leg injury, playing basketball with some buddies, somebody hits -- I'm making this incredible Michael Jordanesque-type cut toward the basket. I don't know why you're laughing.

[Laughter]

Then somebody hits me on the opposite leg with a baseball bat. I heard the explosion... well, at least that's what I thought. I fell to the ground writhing in pain.

I said, "Who hit me?"

And my buddies were standing there looking at me like, "Dude, nobody was near you. Nobody hit you."

The M.R.I. that night showed that my Achilles tendon had actually pulled apart like a rope that flares, nothing left in-between. We had to wait ten days for that surgery. After I came up from the anesthesia after those ten days after the surgery the first thing the surgeon said was, "Mr. Jernigan, we did not have enough tendon left to put you back together."

I said, "Oh no!"

He said, "Oh, but we fixed you."

I said, "How did you fix me?"

He said, "Enough scar tissue had formed. We were able to harvest it and bridge the gap between the broken pieces."

All of the sudden I have all these physical reminders of spiritual truths. I'm not defined by my

past. I'm not even defined by the things that tempt me. I'm defined by one and one only and that's my maker. In an instant I was born again but the process has been the most incredibly adventurous journey of my life. I'm still on it, y'all. That's the good news I want to bring to the table. Here's the even better news: If you're breathing, there is hope -- if you're breathing there is hope!

So I don't care what your battle is, be it homosexuality, be it drugs, be it whatever, stop the stinking thinking. Kick the lies to the curb, put on the truth and move on down the road. Be who Father says you are.

[Applause]

Did I answer your question?

James: All I can say is if you don't understand glory and truth you've heard it. Dennis, I just -- I just praise God. I can rightly say I'm proud of you. I'm proud of the journey you're on in Christ. I'm proud of the Christ in you that's manifesting and speaking through -- he says he reveals himself in all creation, heaven and earth declare his glory in everything he's doing. You're seeing him in what he does. You're looking beyond the pain and finding purpose. You see the healing process. You're learning to heal the mind.

You're helping me while you're talking. You're helping me. You're helping heal things in my life from the time I was a child. I didn't have good seeds sown in much of my life. I didn't. There is a lot of things there that are damaging to us and there is a process. And one of the ways that we get on with it is get honest and begin to talk and that's what you're helping with.

What do you hear, Betty?

Betty: Well, first of all, we're all on a journey. We must not miss even an inch of what God wants us to learn on this journey. It is so important, everything he wants to teach us.

Dennis: Here's great news, Betty and you just made me think of this. God wastes nothing. He has not even wasted my greatest failure. Who would have thought a God so good would be able to take my greatest failure, my greatest shame and turn it into something good for my life and give glory to his own son through the process? God wastes nothing.

But we've got to bring it to him in honesty saying, "Here I am, Lord." The good news is God meets us right where we are and he loves enough to not leave us there. I'm never alone on this journey.

James: What you're talking about is really taking us into the process that Jesus was taking his disciples through that continued even after he was gone when he sent the other one like him, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete to live in you. This is who's been talking to you. You kept hearing this, "My son" talking to you. He's talking to you. He may not have always said "my son." He might have said "Dennis." He might have just said the sentence and you knew the Father's voice. But you're having this conversation and it is a renewing process. And I can see it.

Let me ask you, what can people do? If they want you to come and do worship and do some of your incredible songs that are sung around the world and speak to people, would you like to go to churches and share? Go to different groups? Is that something you'd like to do now?

Dennis: Yeah.

James: How would they contact you? What do you want them to do?

Dennis: Well, just contact me at [Dennis Jernigan.com](http://DennisJernigan.com). That's the quickest and easiest way to remember: [Dennis Jernigan.com](http://DennisJernigan.com).

James: And if they want you to come and share with a men's group, a women's group, a church group, a whole church, a whole city, whatever, you'll be available. You will pray about it and if time is available you are going to go.

Dennis: God's word says let the redeemed of the Lord say so. If we who have been redeemed don't say what we've been redeemed from how in the world are those in the same bondage going to know there's hope. I will tell my story with my dying breath. That's what I will do.

James: Well, here's the book in the bookstores. You can get it online; probably get it on your website too. I want to encourage you to get it.

Dennis, I've watched this journey. You and I have journeyed together. You've watched my journey, you've watched Betty and I. Us sitting here, you never dreamed I'd be sitting here. You watched me in the stadiums and coliseums. Yet, don't you believe I'm where God wants me?

Dennis: Exactly where he wants.

James: It's been kind of an amazing journey; hasn't it?

Dennis: It's been a sweet journey.

James: Millions of people's lives have been affected. You're the same way. I think you're at

the greatest time of your life. I'm 74 but I think I'm at the best time of my life. I think God is going to do more with you than you ever imagined. And together, we're going to be adorned in his glory before he comes in glory for us and that's what Dennis is talking about, just getting dressed up in glory. So people behold his glory and they are drawn to him.

Didn't Jesus say, "If you lift me up I'll draw all men to myself"? Don't you want all men drawn to him? See, he is the one that draws them. It is not church, not religious people. It is Christ revealed in us, through us, lifted up; people are drawn to him. They are captivated by him. That's what we pray for. I believe, Dennis, you're going to help us get there. So I encourage you to get the book.

Dennis you know what we do in missions. I know you love it. I know you pray for us and encourage us in it. I know you're excited about it. Right now we're going to ask all of our viewers, and I want to send them your book if they would like to have it just to say thank you. Send them a book by Sheila Walsh too.

Here's what I want you to do. I want you to listen to the heart cry of a missionary. I want you to listen to that heartbeat. I want you to listen to the sounds of children that are desperate for life that are still strong enough to whimper or cry. Don't turn away from the cries. Don't turn away from those crying for help. No mother would. Our Father would not. Jesus would not.

You and I become the hands of Jesus. We become the answer to the heart cry of humanity, to the needs of others. We do it unto the least of these and this pleases Jesus. We do it to those overlooked but he didn't overlook them and he expresses his love through us. And I know he is going to do that through you as you watch and you listen and you obey.

On the mission field

Isak: You can hear the children crying in this malnutrition clinic but I've been here too many times, I've seen this too many times. The ones that scare me are the ones like this little child that don't -- they don't have the energy anymore to cry. In fact, to breathe is almost impossible; a two-year old child that weighs less than 13 pounds that has been here for well over a week. A mother who walked from a village to bring her child out of absolute desperation because this child is -- it's dying. They've had to wrap the little child's hands up because its skin is literally falling off its body because the body starts to shut down. So his little skin, if he just grabs on his skin it just tears.

This is a reality for way too many mothers in these areas. This child is not lying here because of some terminal disease, something that requires a massive investment and years of medical science. No, this child is lying here dying because we didn't do enough. Because we didn't get to their village in time, because we weren't able to take a bowl of food a day, something that costs

so little and yet does so much. It fills the heart of a mother, it saves the life of a child, it wins the battle against malnutrition and death.

I wish I could be hopeful and tell you that I believe that this child will make it but I don't. Because children when they get to this condition, most times don't leave this place. But it is not too late for tens of thousands of others that so desperately need your help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You've been listening to Peter Pretorius' son, Isak, one of our best friends weeping over the children on his continent. He said, "I'm tired of burying our children." He said that to me years ago. There he is looking at a situation where he says, "I don't -- I don't actually believe this child is going to make it."

But I've got good news. Beth Moore prayed over a child like that and heard "they're not going to make it" but that child made it. And not only made it but went back and played soccer with Beth Moore a couple years later. So that's what love does.

Isak is just being very honest. He's saying when they reach this point, that's where they've gone to intravenous feeding, that's where they've gone to all desperate measures. You say, "James, who makes those clinics possible?" You do. That's all part of the mission outreach. We don't have time to discuss every aspect of it but part what you give goes to that point of desperation.

What we're asking you to support in mission feeding is feeding 400,000 children that were like those that you saw at the end, those actually were on the way to recovery because they've been coming to the feeding centers, to the feeding areas where we've set up for all of these hundreds of thousands of kids. And that's where we've been asking you for years to give \$30, \$50, or \$100 to feed three, five, ten children for the next months and it works and it changes everything! It saves their lives.

So this is what we're asking you to do right now. We're asking you if you will just go to our website, you can see it right there on the screen. I want you to go to that website, take your bankcard, and make the gift God puts on your heart.

Or you can dial the number that's always there as a prayer line. You have a need, a broken heart, you want someone to share, you want someone to pray for you or with you that number is there for you. Right now it is a life line. I want you to take your bankcard and I want you to be an answer to the need of children like that child and so many hundreds of thousands that won't get

there if we help them. They're going to have everything changed. Six months turns everything around. We're able to get them back on their feet, we're able to send them back healthy, help their families and get them back on their feet and it is miraculous what happens. We've been doing it for years. It's effective.

Right now we need to hear from every one of you who can possibly help. \$30, \$50, or \$100, whatever it is you can do. We have some gifts we want to send you. We're going to send you Sheila Walsh's book, how you live through the middle of the mess we're in. It's phenomenal.

And if you make a gift of \$100 or more, we're going to send you the most unique cup set you've ever seen. You're going to get a cup that when you put your heated drink in it, it's going to arise and shine. It's an amazing thing to watch. But it is inspiring you to do that every day because God told his people to arise and shine with his glory on them; that's what we're doing.

We also want you to know the missionaries have told us they have got to refurbish our largest food processing plant where we make all of this food mixture that we're able to take out and distribute. It's got to be refurbished, expanded a little bit; it's going to increase their ability to produce even more food rapidly. So we need a \$200,000 support right now, \$216,000 they tell me. I'm praying 216 people will make a gift of \$1,000. We'll send you that beautiful, beautiful eagle, the "Determined Eagle." Would you please, right now go online, call that number, take the bankcard, and just make the gift God puts on your heart. Please don't put this off. Lives really do depend upon it and it really does work. Love does not fail. Thank you for sharing it!

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 really hope you give the \$100 or more and get the "Arise and shine." When this plain, old ordinary cup suddenly looks like that and you realize that that's what we're supposed to do every day, it will be a blessing.

Sheila's book, you're going to be blessed by it. If you want Dennis's book, *Renewing the Mind*, I'm telling you, it is amazing. Even the chapter titles just jump out -- at me! And what a blessing he will be.

Join me and Betty in thanking God for Dennis Jernigan and saying thanks for coming! Dennis, we love you. Thank you for sharing. DennisJernigan.com: That's where you find him. Invite him to come. And if he comes, take care of him. He's got nine kids! How about that?

God bless y'all. Thanks for being here!