

1/15/18
Week 3: WFL
James and Betty Robison
Rick Bezet

James: I'll tell you what. It is a joy to be able to share this time with you. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome Rick Bezet. Now he is from Arkansas. Now we're in Texas. Okay? It is okay. We're Christians. We really love each other.

[Laughter]

He's got New Life Church and it is in the Little Rock area but it is just like it is reaching out all over Arkansas, 17 campuses. And Rick is here and I'm glad. I want you to look at this. I want you to really focus: *Real Love in an Angry World*. Have you ever seen so much rage and anger? Well, there is one solution and I think Rick Bezet is going to make it clear. Would you welcome Rick Bezet to *LIFE Today*?

Rick, good to have you.

Rick: So glad to be here.

James: Man, ever since I came up there and preached, I preached for you, and you only had like one or two campuses. Did my one visit there just cause this explosion?

Rick: Yeah! That's when we decided to go for it. Hey! We can do this.

[Laughter]

James: All right, I want to cut to the chase because we live in an angry world. I don't think I exaggerated when I said "age of rage." Did you ever think you would see the manifestations of anger to the degree you're seeing it today?

Rick: So much hate. You can see it in the world. You can see it on social media. Unfortunately, you can see it in the church. The world is getting angrier and angrier and so are believers.

James: When you say "real love" what's the heavy emphasis there? I noticed those letters stand out.

Rick: Yeah, that word *real* is very important because you can have love but if it is not Christ-like love then it is not a real love. The early church, you can tell that God craved for them to be authentic. The Bible says they broke bread in each other's homes with real, with sincere hearts -- glad and sincere hearts.

Unfortunately, when I was in Bible School they would teach pastors that the anointing has to be lonely; like you can't have any friends. That if you're hurting you, you just pray it through and you just have to battle it through. So when I graduated from Bible School I believed it. I got married, went into ministry full time but my first year of marriage was horrible! It was like wars and rumors of wars. You know that scripture that says don't go to bed with anger in your heart? We were staying up for like 10-12 days at a time.

[Laughter]

But it was during that time that I didn't have real love, I wasn't real, my wife and I would argue and walk into a Bible study and we would look like each other like, hey, we can't go in there with this tension. We're going to have to fake this. We were good at it because people would say, "Hey! We wish we had a marriage like you."

I was saying, "No, you don't."

So one day I yelled at Michelle and I said, "Michelle, shut up! I'm sick of you."

And my pastor asked me to speak that weekend, a sermon. And I apologized to my wife, which was very hard for me to do, there's a lot of pride in my family. I apologized to God but when I did, I felt the Holy Spirit say, "If you want a change, when you speak to the church this weekend, I want you to tell them the truth about your marriage."

I said, "Lord, I can't do that! In Bible School they taught us never to do that. God, you need to go to Bible School. They will clear that up in the first semester."

So here I was speaking and I finally gave up and I looked at Michelle and I said, "Babe, I'm sorry." I told everybody what I said to her and I asked her to forgive me. It was in that moment, it was like I heard and sensed that the arms of God go around me like, "This is my boy! Thank you for giving me something to work with."

It was that real love that I experienced in that moment. It was right after that we were counseling

this girl and she was depressed and I told her, "I don't know how depressed you really are. I think you need to come over to my home and hang out with us." And that girl drove home and she grabbed a pistol and she blew her brains out.

James: Mercy!

Rick: And the weight of that, knowing that I was responsible to a degree with that, I died --

James: You didn't know the right thing to say?

Rick: All I know is that it killed me. But not one person in the world knew that I was dead because I have the ability to not be real. I finally gave up and said, "I'm not living this way anymore. I'm going to be real. I'm going to have an early church relationship with God."

And it was since that moment that I sensed that God, this is what he is craving, this is what he is looking for. Even a lot of people pray, "Lord, do something in my life. Do something in my life!" But it is your move. It is your move and it is that real love; when you find it, the confidence that comes with it and the way that you dream dreams again.

Like the prodigal son, he left the father and he was gone so long he forgot about the real love. He even thought, I can't go home my dad is going to be mad at me. Maybe I can just be a hireling somewhere on the property. He forgot about that real love. But what happened when he went home the prodigal son's father chased after him. I'm convinced he thought his father was chasing him down to kick him off the property. But he wasn't. He was chasing him down to grab him to say, "My boy was lost, now you're home. Let's go eat filet mignon. It is party time."

And that's a real love that a lot of believers have not experienced and so they are not connected with it and they have a lot of hate. They would much prefer to yell over versus walking over and building relationships with people that are different than us. Every believer has an issue and a platform. We just want to talk about this issue that drives us crazy but we don't want to build relationships.

Betty: And that's the way a lot of the church is because I grew up kind of that way. I thought as a Christian I was supposed to have it altogether. So how do I pretend that I have it altogether? You don't expose your hurt or your disappointment or anything in your life that you're struggling with because hey, I'm a good Baptist.

James: Because you're afraid you won't find real love if you expose yourself if you open up like you did to your wife in front of the church. You became vulnerable. You became open. To me, you became a vessel then that could be shaped into a vessel of honor. You were yielding

yourself to the truth that set you free, the truth that shapes you into a vessel of honor. And you literally confessed your sins to her and to the church and you were no longer going to pretend. You began then a walk because you were expressing something that brought real love.

Did you feel real love coming, maybe like a shock from your wife but then gratitude? Did you sense that it impacted the church because when you're talking about people getting this real love you write about, how do we in the right way inspire them to get in that flow of love? How do we get them there, Rick?

Rick: I did feel that. In fact, Michelle, when I was arguing with her a few days before, she said, "I'm with you for the rest of our lives but I need to know who you really are. Are you real when you yell at me in the living room or are you being real when you preach behind the pulpit? What about when we were engaged? Is that who you really are?"

And when I apologized to her in front of the whole church I said, "Michelle, this is who I am." I did feel the love right there in that moment. I did!

James: When you wrote this book and you were talking about it and I think this is an interesting second subheading you might say, "How to stick to your convictions" which means that we don't just scrap, settle belief, we don't take the word of God that may challenge some people or disturb some people and cast it aside looking for some false sense of comfort. We can have convictions without alienating people. I talk to everyone I speak to who is a teacher or a preacher or people who say we love others, be redemptive even in your moments of correction.

When you're having to do serious correction be redemptive in it because that's what the father of the prodigal wanted, he wanted to redeem the relationship. He wanted to pour the blessings of the family and the father out on the son. That's what our father wants to do. So how do we inspire people to hold their convictions but have an attitude adjustment? You know Jesus started with attitudes, the attitudes we ought to have, so how do you suggest people get over into this real love flow?

Rick: Well, you can't go anywhere if you don't know where your values are and your convictions are. So you have to hold firm to that. But a lot of people, they have forgotten the first conviction and that is the love of Christ. We have to be convicted to be like Christ. But most of us carry more condemnation than we do conviction.

Your listening audience, if you were to poll them and ask them write down the definition of the word *condemnation* or *being condemned* and then write down the word *conviction* and the definition for conviction, most of them would not know the difference in the two. They do not know.

Condemnation shows up when you blew it. Like yesterday, if you lost your temper at 3:00 because of anger and when you lost it, condemnation will show up and say, "See how you are! You're not right with God. How dare you go to church! You think you're a believer?" It's from the enemy and it just leaves you there to die and to get meaner and to rot.

James: He is the accuser.

Rick: He is the accuser.

James: Against all the brethren.

Rick: Conviction comes from the Holy Spirit and it shows up on the same scene and he is the spirit of truth, he is the spirit of comfort, he is the spirit that guides. His number one goal is for you to grow again and to get closer to the Father. So he'll show up and say, "See how you lost your temper? We're going to work on this and one day, if you will jump towards the Father, one day this is going to be strong in you. You're not always going to be weak in this area."

James: "This is not best for you." In other words, it's not condemning, "This is not best. This is damaging to you and others. You can see it." This is the Holy Spirit talking to us. "This can be corrected. This needs to be corrected. It can be corrected. I can heal. I am the Holy Spirit that will put love in you and patience and give you self-control." This is the Holy Spirit talking, the one of the same kind, Jesus in us and he doesn't try to put shame on you.

The accuser puts shame on you, "I can't believe you did that! Shame on you!" One of the worst things you can say. It's bad even when you say it to a dog. "Shame on you! Shame on you, you sorry bad dog." Don't talk to a dog like that. But we talk to each other like that all the time. We talk to ourselves like that because that's the way the devil talks to us. That is condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ." So don't accept it.

You know one of the things people talk about, Rick, a lot is don't be judgmental. They can take that too far. Don't make righteous judgments. We can make a judgment about that's not best, that wasn't wise, that can be damaging, that was not a good decision, that was not a good practice. That is not judgmentalism that is having good judgment -- not passing judgment. We don't pass judgment on people's heart but we make righteous judgment.

So we have a tendency to say, "We don't condemn." That means don't judge. Well, that means don't even determine that that's not best or that's not right then to say that you shouldn't be angry and contribute to this angry world, get real love, that's not judgmental that's making a good judgment. That's passing on good judgment; getting people to do the right thing.

Rick: You said earlier, Paul said, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." But unfortunately, and this may sound like heresy at first but you'll agree with me after, unfortunately, most Christians have a ton of condemnation. So is Paul wrong? No, Paul was right. It is illegally attached to us and it is making us angrier and angrier and angrier.

I grew up in a church that was very condemning, very judgmental.

James: I see this chapter that says, "The Big Ugly Bible." That's a funny thing for a pastor to say.

Rick: That's my Sunday school teacher's Bible. She would swing it at us. She would point -- when I was eight years old, her finger was 30 feet long and I know this because that was the dimensions of the Sunday school class and I was always up against the back wall. She would point. She had a finger and would point and she would say, "Hell is hot! And you're going to hell!" At eight years of age. She would say --

I wanted to ask her, "Does the devil wear Prada because I know..."

She talked about hell like she was born and raised in hell.

[Laughter]

So one day she said, "Don't you want to go to heaven?"

I said, "Not if you're going to be there."

[Laughter]

But the condemnation -- look, it is funny now but when you're eight years old or 80 years old and you think God doesn't want you around, it's a very difficult place to grow and it makes you angry and even angrier.

But when you realize that the Lord does want you around. Like my Sunday school teacher was wrong, bless her heart. The Lord wanted me in. I always thought he wanted me out. I thought he didn't want to have anything -- even when I was in junior high my parents went through a divorce and I thought it was my fault. I never knew that he wanted to express his love to me.

It is the true love of God and the kindness of God that leads people to real repentance. I wrote the book with that in mind because too many Christians have too much tension and hate and

frustration. If they could just meet the Lord that...

Well, you talked about your story, the way you were raised but now you both have so much love. Like you love everybody. When I hang out with you, you just want to talk about the people you're praying for and you care about. That's why God is using you. Why can't we all be more like that and more like Jesus?

James: This is your closing chapter, and the power of love: Love Never Fails -- though it feels like it might. You don't put the effect of love on a timetable. It doesn't run on our schedule. Sum that up.

Rick: Well, when you have real love, you notice needs. But when you don't have it, you have a need to be noticed. I find even as a pastor when I preach the best advice I could ever give a pastor is before you preach find someone who looks like they're hurting. And the whole time you're speaking, think about them. If you want to upgrade it even more than that, remember the hurting life you used to have before the Lord healed you and minister from that angle.

James: Rick, I believe that people are longing for the love of a father they can trust and that is the Father who so loved us he gave his son, not only to die for us and redeem us but to live in us. He sent one just like him. It is the one just like him, the Holy Spirit who leads us to this real love because the fruit of his spiritual begins with love. And if we have all the other things, faith, hope, and love but the greatest of these is love, if we do a lot of great things but we don't have love, we're just a big noisy racket.

So what you're talking about here, I don't know that there's a greater need in the church and in the nation right now than real love. Rick, I want to thank you for writing the book. You can get it in the bookstores, you can go online. You can get it, I'm sure you can get it in ebooks too. A lot of us can do that. But just get it. Just know above all with all you're getting, get the real love Rick Bezet is talking about. Would you join Betty and me saying thanks to Rick for sharing with us? Rick, thanks for writing the book. Thanks for not only talking about real love but expressing it even in the story you told about your wife.

You know one of the things our viewers tell us all the time is that perhaps they don't experience a greater joy than being able to pour God's love out on people that felt like they were never noticed. They're truly the least of these, that's what they feel like. They're the forgotten and overlooked. And our viewers, through the wonderful yielded lives of missionaries that they enable have enabled them to put God's love and his arms around people all over the world.

You know what our people enjoy as much as anything? It's giving a fresh cup of water in Jesus' name. It is actually giving them wells of water. You're about to see someone you're going to fall

in love with. You're going to be so excited about knowing that everything you see in this precious girl, every need, every hurt you can heal it miraculously. I want you to just look at her. I want you to listen to her story. Then I want you to show what love does.

On the mission field

Jeanne: For years I've had the privilege of traveling with *LIFE Outreach* to the mission fields of the world. As a mom, I've rejoiced with mothers who now have clean water for their children. And I've grieved with mothers when we didn't get there in time to save their child from dying.

Recently, I met a young woman named Shantel. She is just a child herself, only 14, but Shantel is caring for her siblings as if she were their mother. As I visited with her, I learned why.

Open Captions: We lost our mother because of unclean water. She died with a swollen stomach. Since my mom's death, we've had such tragedy in our family. Our life is not good. Even my siblings are getting diarrhea from drinking unclean water.

Jeanne: I can tell how much she loves these precious ones in their laps right here. She wants the best for them. But when you know that the water they drink is the thing that killed her mother, only a month ago, it has death in it. They've already found that out. So we have a very desperate situation here. Let's take that load off of her. Let's don't send her to that dirty water anymore. Let's get water here for these precious children.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want you to look again at that girl's face, that 14-year old and just focus in on her beautiful countenance, her expression. You can see a precious little girl, Betty, that is now taking care of her siblings. She has become their mother because their mother died of contaminated water. We can be the miracle her heart longs for.

There are so many other children in that village and other parents dying too but we can with our viewers help be a miracle for 400 different areas like that in 15 countries. I know when you as a mom and a grandmother and now a great grandmother, you look at that and you think, dear God, how can anyone who can give a drink of water or cup of water or help us get a well not participate? I can't imagine anyone who can help not helping when the need is so obvious.

Betty: I can't either, James. I look at this little child taking care of children because they lost

their mother just a short time ago. There she is taking on this responsibility and this burden because they don't have any clean water. And now she is watching her little sisters, brothers get ill, become sick and probably going to watch them die if we don't get the water to them.

Well, I hope you will join with us; you have probably many times before. Please don't stop. We need your help to get the wells drilled so that these precious people can have water. It is a simple solution but we need your help to do it.

James: Well, I'll tell you this. I believe you're going to help. Let me just make it as clear as I can to you. The wells cost, as far as I'm concerned this is still a miracle statement, they cost \$4800. That's when we had increasing costs in fuel. The petro took the cost of \$3600 to \$4800 several years ago. It's a miracle we've been able to keep it there but we have.

You can drill a well in her village for \$4800. I think of there is somebody right now who says, "I want to put one right there." You just call and say I want to do it. Remember this, there are 400 places like that. She just represents that one -- very real, very specific but very typical.

So if you can drill a well, do it. Many times people say, "I can't do it." Start praying you can and ask God for the miracle because Betty and I asked for that miracle years ago and he gave us the miracle. And I'm telling you, it is a joy to be able to do it. If you can do it, do it. If you can give \$1200 or \$2400, then you pray another person joins you or three other people join you and we've got another one.

Here's how most of the support comes -- don't miss this! \$48 will give ten people water the rest of their life; that's how you break it out. \$144 will give 30 people Water for LIFE. Okay. Could you give 30 people, could you give ten people water the rest of their life? Don't think that's small. What does it mean to ten people? What did it mean to her mother, to that family? Whatever you can do, do it. Go to the website you see, take your bankcard -- please do it. Get up and go get it. Use it like a check. That's the way you always should use bankcards. Or you can dial the number, take that bankcard and make the gift God put on your heart. If you can drill a well, do it or part of a well or give the \$48, \$72, \$144, whatever.

We have some very special gifts to send you that will enrich your life. Well, you're not giving just any gift, you're giving the great gift, you're giving them life, you're giving them a future. If you make a check, make it out to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving. But call us and tell us you're sending it in. Please do it now. Would you do it? Led by God's spirit, just do what he puts on your heart.

I want to thank you in behalf of all those your love is going to highly impact, even save their lives, and share the future in Christ that the missionaries will point them to. Thank you for doing

it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day children living in extreme poverty are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink dirty polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from 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. You can help end the suffering because clean water changes everything.

With your gift today, you can help drill 400 water wells in remote villages in over 15 nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people, a gift of \$48 will help provide for ten, \$72 will provide for 15 people and \$144 will help provide fresh, life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift we'll send you *The Riches of Christ*, what true prosperity looks like filled with wisdom, prayers and scripture. James Robison adds insight from what God has shown him about finding contentment in the Father's provision for your life.

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the *Children of the World Storybook Bible*. This easy to read Bible features colorful art by children from nearly 50 countries around the world.

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 the "Bridge of Faith" framed canvas print by Thomas Kinkade.

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I'm really excited about what your love is going to do. Listen to me. I can't tell you how excited I am about putting this book in your hand. This is a gift book. It is beautiful. It is easy to go through. But it is what true prosperity looks like -- so far from materialism. It doesn't limit material blessing in any way, it just opens up floodgate. I'm anxious to send you this. *Children of the World Storybook Bible* and the "Bridge of Faith" by Thomas Kinkade, an

incredible painter, a painting that is just a fabulous, fabulous painting and we're going to send that to you to say thanks.

If you would like Rick Bezet's book it's in the bookstores. But you say, "James, would you send it to me? Maybe I'll share love with these kids and I'll share some of that water you talked about, would you send me Rick Bezet's book?" We sure will just to say thank you. And we just thank you for your gift.

Join Betty and me again saying thanks to Rick. God bless you. Bless your church! Bless Arkansas! You pour God's blessings out down there. Thank you so much for watching. Thanks for sharing Water for LIFE. Thank you so much.