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Week Three: WFL
James and Betty Robison
The Riches of Christ Special

James: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to share this time. I'm thrilled to know that we're going to be able to put in your hand a gift book titled, *The Riches of Christ*: What true prosperity looks like. And prosperity is not a bad word, it is a good word. But you don't define it as though it is all material things because prosperity goes so far beyond the material and so far beyond anything material can touch or that even money can buy. This is *The Riches of Christ*.

Betty, the pictures in here are as beautiful as the cover, as beautiful as, if you haven't seen the Thomas Kinkade, the "Bridge of Faith" that we are offering as one of those great canvas paintings for people who just experience the joy of giving a cup of water. You're going to find that true prosperity is giving and sharing and the joy of doing it.

And here's the thing I think is really important. Not that what we want or need does not matter because it matters very much to God but when we look at the joy of giving as far more important than receiving you really can't stop the flow of the blessings of God coming your way. But you can't determine how they come and what they look like. You just know that when we bless we're going to be blessed because the Father in heaven, as much as we want to bless our children, the Father in heaven not only wants to bless his children, he knows the perfect way to bless us and it's better not to tell him always what we want, it is fine to ask, but don't let that be the driving force. Say, "God, give me what I need and direct my steps." And when you yield to him your vessel that he shapes to a vessel of honor, it becomes a channel through which he flows those blessings to others and all of the sudden when that starts happening you find yourself blessed beyond measure.

Betty, you know how much joy we've always had giving our children gifts, not only when they were small, that's when they are so cute and of course, they're wrapped up in it, but also then our grandchildren and now then our great grandchildren. My goodness! It just goes on and on and it is wonderful. But not one time -- I really think it is important you hear this -- not one time did you and I give our children or our grandchildren gifts thinking that if we do this they're going to give us something. Did that thought ever occur or cross your mind?

Betty: No! It was like I wanted to bless them so much. As I was blessing, we were blessing our children and seeing the smiles on their faces and really thankful hearts, that's when I received my

blessing just to see the glow and the smile and the happiness that comes from them. I think that's the way it should be. We always feel more blessed when we've given out than when we take in.

James: Well, I think that it is really important for us to understand, of course, the law of the harvest. What you sow you reap. You want to sow good seed in good soil and you want to pray for the seed to be multiplied and pray for the fields you sow in and you want to sow wisely, that's true. And all of that is so important.

But I want to share something that I think to many people is a secret, and this is not discounting, it is not casting aside, it is not making small the great teaching of those who are teaching to give and know that God's going to bless and he's going to multiply, that's all wonderful -- that is part of the law of the harvest. But there is something about the heart that when you give with no thought of the return, now think about it, when you give those children or those grandchildren a gift you're not thinking about what they're going to do for you some day. It doesn't cross your mind. When you give with no thought of personal return or just the object of love poured out on someone, that is as liberating as anything you're ever going to experience.

I can tell you this and for some people this is hard for them to grasp but it really is the truth. Betty and I have been married now well over 50 years and from the time we first began to give, whether it was our tithe to the church, whether it was gifts to some ministry, where it was some outreach we believed in, not one time, now this is over 50 years of giving and giving faithfully, and giving joyfully, cheerfully, not one time have Betty and I ever stopped to think, what's in it for us? What is coming back?

One of the things we've said over and over on this program that people seem to get and they experience the reality of it, if you want your prayers answered and you can really break this out in Isaiah 58 pretty clearly but many places in the Bible, if you want your prayers answered, seek to be an answer to someone else's prayer. If you want to experience life fully, express life freely.

Now this is what is taught very thoroughly not only with the insights that I'm sharing and I'll give you the chapter titles in just a moment, but also the insights of the people like Tony Evans. I remember and I share the story. I'm talking to Tony about giving and how blessed it is to give. And Tony says, "You can't outgive God."

Well, that's the truth and Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Paul of course, repeated that and of course it is in the book of Acts, so we know it is the truth. It's reality.

I said to Tony when he said, "You can't out give God." I said, "But that doesn't mean that God

is going to give you a money tree."

And Tony said, "No, it doesn't. It means he is going to give you himself."

That's the riches of Christ. When we begin to do what God wants us to do he gives us the fullness of his presence. Think about this! The greatest man that ever walked on the earth, Jesus, discipling these 12 tells them that for their benefit, for their good, he must go away and send another one just like him to live in them. Now he can only be one place at a time but the Holy Spirit is everywhere all the time in us every moment. The teacher, the one who guides us to all truth, the one who opens our eyes to understand the scripture is now living in us.

Betty, I would call that prosperity. Here are the titles in *The Riches of Christ* or the chapters: What is True Prosperity? What is not True Prosperity? The Keys to Prosperity. What should We Do with our Money?

Because see, everything belongs to God but he's made us overseers of everything he created and entrusted to our watch care which includes our money. So we're stewards, we're overseers; that's why you should be concerned about what's done with your tax dollars, what's done with everything we have, we need to be concerned about it.

Releasing the River. And then: The Obstacles to True Prosperity.

I want to read you the definition of prosperity as I shared it and this is just one of the fold outs when we were printing the book. "True prosperity is having all the resources we need to fulfill God's purpose for our lives and the abiding peace and joy that enable us to be perfectly content in abundance or while facing grave challenges."

Do you remember Paul said when he was writing to the Philippians and this precedes the part where he is talking to them about how they -- and think about this. He said, "You're the only ones that time and again, you Philippian Christians are the only ones that time and again gave to the ministry outreach. In other words, you supported us when others didn't even seem to notice us. And because of this, my God, our God shall supply all of your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Because what has happened? They have become this channel through which God flowed his resources for kingdom purpose. Therefore God will meet all of your needs, not necessarily every desire, some of them are misdirected or misguided but he will meet your needs. Now that is a promise, but it is a promise to a specific people who were sensitive to becoming that release of the river, not just the reservoir storing up *The Riches of Christ*, but releasing them to others. That's where you become that channel of blessing.

But in that same passage preceding Paul said, "I know what it is to abound and I know what it is

to be abased. And in all things," he said, "I'm content. I've got total peace with or without."

That's prosperity. God is going to fill me with the riches of who he is like Tony Evans said, "He gives you himself." Now when we release all that we are to him so that we become the channel through which he releases who he is to others, that's when we begin to experience true prosperity, the blessings that God wants us to have.

I want you to listen to these words from Paul when he is writing to the Corinthians. This is absolutely one of the most powerful passages that you'll ever read. This is Second Corinthians Chapter eight. Now he is talking about some incredible love expression. He is talking about the churches in Macedonia. This is verse one, Chapter eight, Second Corinthians: In the great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty -- they're being challenged right now -- overflowed in the wealth of their liberality even while they're challenged in the wealth of their liberality. What did they do?

I testify that according to their ability and beyond -- even while they were challenged -- they gave of their own accord begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participating in the support of the saints. And this not only as we'd expected but they first gave themselves to the Lord and then to us by the will of God.

Here are these people who are facing challenges and yet they keep giving beyond anything they ever imagine. But why do they do it? How are they able to give so liberally when they were facing challenges themselves? Because they first gave themselves, then they were able to release what God entrusted to their watch care -- miraculously.

Do you know -- now listen to me -- the viewers of our program from the time we began to take the gospel to the overlooked, to the third world, to the least of these, the poorest of the poor, our viewers have told us miraculously, "James, we have experienced the fullness and blessing in our life beyond anything we ever imagined."

I can sit here and tell you miracle story after miracle story but then if we're not careful you would say, "Well, I'm going to do it because that's going to happen to me." Wait a minute. We dare not be foolish and compare ourselves with others and say well if we do that then this happens. We're not playing a game. We're not playing spiritual bingo or lottery. We just decide we're going to give ourselves totally to God and we're going to let his spirit, his love flow through us freely. We're not going to limit it. And we're going to trust him not only to bless what we do but to bless through our lives by yielding ourselves totally to his oversight.

Now something miraculous does happen. When we yield ourselves to him and we can be trusted with the oversight of what he entrusts to our watch care, which is why he left us here. He didn't

leave us here to get us out of here. He left us here to make a kingdom impact right now on this planet. That's why we're here. And one way we make the kingdom impact is we testify to the gospel but we share the gospel.

Listen to what Paul said in Second Corinthians Chapter nine: Let each one of us do as we purposed in our heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.

We're not doing it because we're compelled to give, we're not doing it because we're playing a game.

But God is able to make all grace abound to you that always, having all sufficiency in everything you may have abundance for every good deed.

You know what that means? God says if I find a channel through which I can flow my blessing and my love freely, I'm going to make certain that what is needed, not just here but there, is flowing.

Betty, when you and I years ago saw the need for water and you remember, we started out feeding the hungry. But it was when we saw what was happening to the hungry we realized there was another killer, it wasn't just malnutrition, it wasn't starvation, it was contaminated water sources. We knew when we saw boreholes where they got to water but then it got contaminated and filthy, the water was there. So we said if we can give them a water well and contain it and give them some means of pumping it -- it can't be depending on electricity, you've got to do it where children can do it -- we can give a miracle to these children. And we started doing water wells.

Betty, when we started they were \$3600. And we said we want to give a well. Listen to me. At that point in our lives, that was a challenge. Lo and behold, it was so effective and it so transformed lives and led people to Christ and saved their lives that we started doing it twice a year. Well, the missionaries came and said, "We can do it, we can double up." Well, that meant if we were going to give a well because we said we wanted to give one every time we drilled, that's another \$3600. So we prayed God...

Then a few years later, if you remember, listen to me, it went to \$4800. God have mercy! But what did we pray? We want to give a well. Not just one, but two. Listen to me. That passage I just read we experienced that. You cannot even believe how deep the desire is in our heart. And I talk to people... I can be in a restaurant eating, I can be in a public place, I can be at church or I can hear it on the phone and people say, "James, when we learn to release what God entrusted to our watch care like a river, there's no way to describe the blessings in our life and the ability to continue blessing others, experiencing fully *The Riches of Christ* and finding out it

is truly more blessed to give than to receive.

Father, I pray that every person listening to me right now, if they've not started the journey, if they're on it, I pray dear God, they've shifted into another gear of excitement, joy, about touching people with your love freely as givers of life and love, and their time and their abilities as well as their resources to proclaim the gospel in word and deed to the ends of the earth. I pray that. But God, for those who have never started, may they start right now today; in Jesus' name.

I tell you what. I'm going to give you an opportunity right now to say, "I'm going to start -- I'm going to start experiencing prosperity fullness, not materialism, way beyond that, the joy, the peace, the love, the hope, the godly oversight of my life by God, I'm going to experience that and I'm going to release the river today."

You know what? Jesus said if you give just a cup of water in my name you won't lose your reward. And you know what? You know why that's so important to God? Because when you notice a need you notice the least of these and you touch them with the love of God you've done it to Jesus. I'm telling you, that's prosperity.

I want you to look right now and I want you to see if today, for some of you are going to continue the joy of giving rivers of life, wells of water, a cup of water. For some of you right now today this is going to be the start of releasing what God has entrusted to your watch care and experiencing true prosperity now and for the rest of your life. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: Deep within the continent of Africa, on the western border of Burundi flows the Ruzizi River. For those who live in the village of Musaga it has been their only source of water for generations. Women like Casalita, a grandmother of four and Beatrice, a young mother of two, the river has not been a source of life but instead a river of death.

Open Captions: The water that we get here is unclean and it is doing bad things to our families. I have lost two children because of the water. I am very worried about my other two children. They're always vomiting, have diarrhea and worms come from their mouths.

Announcer: Beatrice is not alone in her heartache. Casalita, living on her own, has no choice but to walk miles each day to collect more of the same river water that took the life of her husband and her granddaughter.

Open Captions: My granddaughter got very sick from the water. Her belly got inflated and her legs too. She was four years old. I took her to the clinic but she kept vomiting and having diarrhea. She died in bad condition.

Announcer: Losing a child or grandchild to unclean water is such a tragedy especially when one realizes there is a way to stop this cycle of death through Mission: Water for LIFE. But it is not only the young who suffer.

Open Captions: Losing my parents to unclean water has caused me to such sorrow. They told me they were proud of me, that I was a good mom.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You are a sweetheart. I wish you could hear that. You realize missionaries go over there and love these precious people. One of the things the missionaries said to me and Betty when we said, "We will stay here and help you."

And they, years ago said that it wasn't that they didn't want us to be around, they loved us but they said, "If you'll go back and ask people to help us, we can stay here and we can be effective because one of the biggest challenges we face when we moved here,"

Betty, most all of them we met had moved there with their little children. They moved right into the very pit of hell and pain. And they said, "If you'll just help us, then we cannot only share the gospel but we can show them the power of love and we will have something to share." At that time, it was food. It was before we even recognized the importance of water.

So when you watch that, and you hear the heart cry of those precious people, Betty, what goes on in your heart as a mom?

Betty: You know as I watched that the main thing I heard was they walked to the river of death. But I want them to walk to the well of life, water that will give them life and give those precious children a chance at life. Please join with us and let's offer the well of life to them.

James: Boy, you said a mouthful. It is because of the water of life in us, Jesus that causes us to want to share Water for LIFE. But the missionaries not only give them a cup of water, you can give them a well of water that provides many cups and then they want to tell them about the water of life that led you and others like you to give them the cup of water and the well of water. We're going to lead them to Christ. And when you show people the love of God, they're anxious to hear about it and to receive the source of that love -- and that love is Jesus.

So here's what I'm going to ask you to do. The missionaries have shown us 400 places. They

know there is water there. It can be revealed by a borehole that was dug by the people but it got contaminated and filthy or they know in the area there is water there. You can tell. You can tell the terrain. They've got 400 places where the need is desperate just like you saw; that is an illustration of it. And we're going to, with your help, drill those 400 wells. We need a miracle support.

The wells cost \$4800. If you can give a well, now listen to me, if you can give a well, your company, your church, your prayer group, you individually, if you can give a well, do it. It is \$4800. Sometimes people say, "Well, I can give part of it. I can give \$1200." Well, three join you and we've got a well. \$2400 and one person joins you and we've got a well.

Please do it. Go online, dial the number, take your bankcard and make the gift. Where could you put \$144 and give 30 people water the rest of their life? Right here by giving them a well. \$48 gives ten people. Would you make the gift God put on your heart right now?

Father, I pray every person watching would be moved by your spirit. I pray, God they would believe for the miracle of love to be expressed through them; in Jesus' name.

Some of you may step up. You may go beyond what you ever thought you could do. But God put it on your heart and you're going to do it. Go online right now. Please, go get your bankcard. Call the number, take your bankcard, make the gift God put on your heart. If you make a check, make it to *LIFE* but tell us -- call us and tell us what you're mailing. We need to know; 400 areas have a desperate need you just saw. We have the answer. Thank you so much for doing it.

We have some very special gifts we're going to send you to bless you as you bless others with the great gift of God's love and life -- Water for LIFE. Thank you!

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: Here in the studio hangs the "Bridge of Faith," Thomas Kinkade, painter of light. We want to send that to you. You drill a water well or \$1200 or more toward it, we want to send that to you along with the riches of Christ which we send to every person who gives just a cup of water.

And also, this is so good! Children, grandchildren, little ones, *Children of the World Storybook Bible*, this is absolutely extraordinary -- for children! And we want to send this to you to just say thanks for blessing others.

I pray that you experience *The Riches of Christ*. I think this little book right here when you go through it, beautiful! All of the paintings, all of the pictures, all of the clear teachings that are in very concise brief form, I think can transform the rest of your life and change many lives. So we want to say thanks. Thank you.

Thank all of you for being here. God bless you! Thanks for watching *LIFE Today*. Thanks for sharing *LIFE Today*. Share it every day.