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Week 19: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Steven Scott and Amy Smalley

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

James: And we're thrilled to have the daughter-in-law of Gary Smalley who just blesses marriage and family about as much as anybody on the planet. His daughter-in-law is here and she is here with Steve Scott who has just published some tremendous transforming books because they're full of the transforming word of the living God: Jesus' words, Solomon's words. And now he's got a series that is on audio, *Proverbs Power* where he is talking about the real, let's say, how to succeed based upon the wisdom of God.

Well, Amy was really impacted by what he shared even though she had heard a lot from her wonderful father-in-law and wonderful husband who teaches these great concepts too. So she is joining us. I want you to welcome Steve Scott and Amy Smalley to *LIFE Today*; would you?

Amy: Thank you!

James: Glad to have you. Okay, Steve, do you want to just hand the ball to Amy right upfront or do you want her to take the -- how do you want to do this?

Steven: Well, let me just give the background. So we decided to do this mentoring series on Proverbs and it's very specific. It is not just a proverb and then preaching on it. What changed my life was being mentored in skills and techniques to apply the Proverbs to our moment by moment walk with Christ, to our business life, our marriage relationships, parenting. Proverbs applies to everything -- everything! In fact, I tell people there is not a single important question in life that Proverbs hasn't given an answer to. But having the answer isn't enough. We need the practical application. We need the Holy Spirit to empower us but we also need to know specifically what to do.

So I asked Amy when we were putting this series together to do it with me. So she basically, she introduces each session and then I go ahead and I mentor the listener in those and we have a guidebook to help you through the material. Then afterwards Amy and I go ahead and dialogue

and we get into some of the practical things that she has seen those Proverbs apply to her marriage ministry. She and her husband have a marriage ministry that has been for years now, I'm sure they're into the decades.

James: Where would they find it, our viewers, online if they wanted to know what she and her husband are doing? What would be the website?

Amy: SmalleyInstitute.com. We have done marriage intensives and we have researched what is it -- what I love about what Gary, I call him Poppy, what he did was talking about how can you apply principles? That's what he did -- that's basically that he started with Steve. Is he started kind of how do you apply these principles to your marriage, to your life, to your work? And when you do that, and that's really what we do with our couples on one, two, three days straight, we work with a couple and we teach them how to love well.

In this session that we're talking about, the communication, a lot of the skills that we teach our couples, that's what I love dialoguing with Steve about because I'm like, oh my gosh! That is just like this concept -- that is just like taking a time out. Of course, that is right! Of course, Proverbs would talk about that.

James: And again, the website if they want to know what you and your husband are doing?

Amy: SmalleyInstitute.com.

James: All right, there it is. Now then okay, so you all are working together which is wonderful. And for some reason she is excited about the communication -- the communication aspect. Tell me why is that so important and how she is involved in it and her importance in it.

Steven: Well, like we mentioned in the last show was that communication is the number one problem in business, number one problem in marriage, number one problem in parenting.

Betty touched on something really important and that is the frame of reference, the perspective of the person you're talking to. That's where you start. You don't start with how you are feeling and what you want to say. You start by listening and learning what the other person is saying and feeling. To do that, you actually need some techniques, some skill sets.

So what I love about Amy is Gary mentored me in the skill sets to apply all the Proverbs on communication. For me in business, it made me literally, it made our company billions of dollars. Before those techniques, I was in life insurance and six months before I was fired, I sold two policies, one to me and one to my best friend. But after learning these skill sets in communication, I sold over 2 million life insurance and health insurance policies with only two

minutes of communication with the viewer. That's the power of these techniques. I generated over 40 million phone calls to all of our different product lines using the very techniques that Gary taught me to apply the Proverbs.

Now the reason I wanted Amy to talk on this is because she is in the trenches with couples that are really in bad shape, either separated or about to get divorced.

James: And they're not communicating. You know what I thought about when we were thinking about when you have to listen to that other person a little bit and Betty pointed that out yesterday. You go into buy something and the guy that comes up, or the sales partner trying to tell you what they've got to sell you and what you need, that person makes you want to go to the next store. And that's the way so many people operate which is the way the devil operates.

But if they act like what do you want? What do you need? And they act like they care, would you call that a good first step in communication?

Steven: It is critical. In fact, my nephew has the most successful sales program in academia. Amazing what his team has accomplished. He created the curriculum. The very first thing he teaches is authenticity and authenticity is discovering the true need of the person. He teaches people, if your product doesn't meet that need, you admit it right away. And guess what? That person will refer you to ten other people because you didn't sell them.

Marriage, we don't want to sell. It is not about her selling Michael on something she wants to do but rather it is about her clearly communicating her heart and her mind to where Michael can hear it and then together they can figure out how to resolve any situation. But I don't want to steal your thunder.

Amy: No! It makes me think about what do we want in a relationship? Do we want to win or do we want to have a great relationship? Really, if you think about it, Proverbs really has a lot to say about how you get to a place where your relationship wins, where your growth wins. I think Michael and I -- I thought last hard decision of my life, I married Gary Smalley's son. Oh we're going to just skate through life. Not so! We were fighting like cats and dogs. I'm the more vocal, I've got a lot of energy and so Michael would be like, why are we yelling? I'm like, this is what we do. This is me being passionate. And he just did not understand that at all.

So for me, I learned how to communicate in a way that was gentle; it was persuasive but it was not in a way that disrupted him hearing me. Like what you were saying when people lean into conversations when you ask them questions like, what is it that you need? How can I help? Instead of saying, "This is what you need to do. I know I can solve your problems in two seconds." A lot of times that's what husbands sometimes will do, "I've got this! Just don't have

that as a friend -- don't have her as your friend anymore." Well, it doesn't really work that way. As a woman, you're not just going to --

James: Don't think girls are pretty anymore. You've got me. I'm the only pretty one on the planet. So you've got to be struck blind.

Here's the deal: The honesty. We have so much fun. I point out to Betty, I watch the ladies. The ladies watch the ladies more than the men watch the ladies. The ladies watch the way ladies are dressed more than men watch. Ladies notice the hair and the eyes and the lips and the figure. They just notice it. They'll even come in talking about, did you see she had small ankles? It's crazy all the things they talk about.

Here's the deal though. If we get all edgy and touchy to where we can't understand reality and really have a conversation, you could just build animosity and hostility immediately. Did y'all see that in a lot of your marriage counseling sessions?

Amy: What you're just talking about is called the negative belief. The reason why the two of you are just so casual with each other about different things is because you know underlying -- A: There is a deep-seeded commitment, a commitment to each other, a commitment to God. And when you have that, you know how incredibly precious Betty is and you speak about her that way, the way that Betty speaks about you. You know that you love each other. So guess what? I can recognize a pretty flower because it is a pretty flower. It is just something.

But when you have that negative belief and there is unresolved conflict that's happened and there's something in you is like oh why? And we were talking about you are battling facts, you're battling opinions about different things and it gets you into that stuck position. Then you start thinking negatively about each other. And we start thinking, well, this isn't the guy I married! This isn't the woman I married. All she is is a nag. Or he doesn't care. You have all those negative beliefs.

But when you're able to train your brain to say you know what? No! I need to be thinking about positive things about my spouse. I need to be able to resolve things and come to a positive belief about each other; then those little things, they don't matter anymore.

James: You know we're having to work through something right now at my age and her age --

Betty: What is that?

James: She never likes me to tell that her age is like a month behind my age exactly. She says,

"Why do you have to tell them that?" But my age, we have a little tension rising up because I don't hear very well. I have my hearing aids in right now and I hate them.

Betty: He doesn't wear them at home.

James: No. Because see, if I wear them I need a psychiatrist to get me out of what I feel because it is just like somebody is tickling my ears all the time. It is driving me crazy. I just want to itch them; I want to scratch them.

But okay, so I don't hear very well. And she is always so sweet but sometimes I'll not hear it well. She will repeat it and then she'll shout it at me. Then I heard it but I didn't like it -- I didn't like it. I say, "Hang on a minute there! Do you know I feel like you're dissing me"; that means disrespect. Guys don't like to be disrespected. They can take a lot but not that.

Our pastor, Robert Morris and Jimmy Evans both teach -- I bet y'all taught on that, men don't like to be disrespected.

Steven: The number one need of a man is to feel admired and respected. Number one!

James: So I'll say, "Betty..." and it kind of really bothered her.

"Well, you can't hear," she says. See, that doesn't even sound like it but you do say it don't you?

Betty: Yeah, not quite like you said it.

Steven: At least you have an excuse. I've been accused of not listening too.

James: But I can't hear. But anyway, the point is, here's the deal. We actually reached a place where we can talk about it openly, where she is hearing me, that it is important not to disrespect and I can tell her, "Honey, you stepped from getting me over to where I can hear it to where you were just like mad at me. I don't want you to be mad at you. Because I didn't hear, I want to hear."

This is called communication. It is called open, honest communication. As a matter of fact, that's what we titled it in our book on marriage, "Open, honest communication" -- not make-believe, not sugarcoat something, this is how we talk. How do you handle somebody like me who will come back forcefully? How do you endure that -- whatever that is you're married to?

Betty: I remember when we first married and we were trying to communicate.

[Laughter]

We never called them really -- we had little arguments but they could get pretty loud too. But I always felt like because he could speak so well he could always win the argument because he could out word me. So I would just pout, like he said; just shut up and pout. He didn't want me to pout.

James: Well, it doesn't help the communication.

Amy: Because ultimately you want a great relationship.

Steven: But see there, Proverbs again, Proverbs says that harsh words stir up anger but soft words de-escalate. I taught that to my children when they were just little. You would hear the volume go up, they would be fighting, and I'd come in and talk softly. And they would have to stop talking just to hear dad. Then I taught the principle and they know how to de-escalate any argument.

That's just one! There are 30 Proverbs -- 30 on communication. He answers every problem and then we had the techniques so you can go ahead. So what you want to do is you want Betty to always feel honored. She wants you to always feel admired and respected. Well, communication tears that down in 30 seconds -- not even 30 -- a single word can tear that down.

Amy: A tone!

Steven: So once again we get into all of that. Of course, the techniques were supplied by Poppy but all the wisdom behind it is from the book of Proverbs.

Betty: Don't you think this is an ongoing thing in your relationship? It is not something that you do, that you arrive at and then everything comes up roses all the time. You have to work on it every minute of every day.

Amy: I love that you guys have at -- you're at a different stage now. You probably didn't have that argument about volume 20 years ago but it was something else. And whatever it is, it is about -- but you love and you respect and you honor each other. And you want your speech, you want to go, aah!! So when you said it in a tone, you're like, "Oh that probably did. Yeah, I was frustrated in that moment because you're not wearing your hearing aids" or whatever; right? If he would just wear his hearing aids at home then I wouldn't have this problem.

James: Well, she thinks that.

Amy: But you can understand that. But guess what? But then you can also understand, I understand I don't want his ears to itch all day or whatever. I don't want him to feel like he has to -- so you give each other grace and when you have that and you make allowances for one another, when you do that, it just makes each other go, aah! Then it is a comfortable home.

James: Betty and I have so much fun working through our challenges. You know what she said? "You've got this word power. You're just really crafty." She said, "You have learned how to apologize in such a way as to make me feel like it was my fault."

Now that's an art form, isn't it Betty? That's an art form. And the first time she told me that, I thought, man, I didn't realize I was doing that but I think maybe that's exactly what I was doing. I want to apologize in such a way as to make her feel like it is her fault.

See, here's the deal though. What's the uniqueness of even telling you that? That's part of growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord that we can actually look at that, go ahead and acknowledge it, even if it was nonsense, foolish or deliberate and we laugh about it because that's not what an apology is. An apology is not to put blame on the other person. It is not even to just stand here and blame each other. It is to let the one who took the shame and the blame who bore it to get it off of us, let's quit putting it back on ourselves and on each other. Would you call this communication, Steve?

Steven: Absolutely! That's the heart of communication but see, you guys have learned some skill sets just through trial and error that work for you. We want to help people to avoid the trial and error and give them the skill sets that Gary gave me.

James: All right, we're offering this to every person who would like to have it, who will do something. Who will do something that's very, very important and that's touch someone with the love we have, the love of God. Would you all just say thanks to Amy and thanks to Steve Scott for being a blessing to us here on *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

I want to show all of you, listen to me; Sheila Walsh is anointed and gifted by God. "Anointed" is an enabling by God, a divine enabling; she can communicate. But here's what I want you to understand. She's not just communicating a woman's heart, not even a mother's heart, she is communicating God's heart. Now listen to me. She is going to talk about mothers, she is going to talk about love, but please get this. What she is really communicating and I don't want you to miss it, she is communicating more than the heart of a mother, she is not only communicating the heart of a father but the Father and the Lord Jesus.

Now I want you to hear it and then I want you to just respond as the Holy Spirit that's in you as a believer, I think that's even in you as a human being created in the image of God. You respond. Watch closely. Listen carefully.

On the mission field

Open Captions: The highest rates of child mortality are in Sub-Saharan Africa. A leading cause for these deaths is malnutrition. Angola is no exception.

Announcer: Death due to malnutrition is why so many of these small graves are dug daily at this cemetery in a place called Catumbela. It is in villages like these where the death cycle starts off as simple hunger pains. Each day mothers struggle to find enough food for their children, all the while hoping and praying that their children won't be next to succumb to the ravages of starvation.

On a recent trip to Angola, *LIFE's* mission team member, Sheila Walsh witnessed firsthand the devastating toll of malnutrition.

Sheila: This is Maria. She is like me. She is a mom. The only difference is that Maria was born in Angola and her little baby girl, Maria was born in Angola at this time when there is such a crisis going on. You're never going to believe it but this precious little girl who weighs six pounds is one year and seven months old -- a year and seven months and she weighs six pounds.

I don't know if you can -- darling, I don't want to hurt you but can you see her skin? I didn't understand this before I got here but with severe malnutrition the first organ to shut down is the skin. It is as if all the reserves go to try and protect what's left inside. So as you can see, her skin has begun to literally peel off her body.

James and Betty, you have sat here over and over and over through the years faithfully serving and feeding millions but I know you'll see this. This is a fresh crisis. This is a fresh urgency. This will not wait. We talk about life where it is needed most; where it is needed most is right here. But even more than that, where it is needed most is in the villages where these darling children live. They need our help and they need it now.

[Child crying]

End of clip

In the studio

James: Wow! And Sheila, you are just such a precious gift. Sheila, we love you! Thank you for helping us at *LIFE* and *LIFE Outreach*, *LIFE Today* share the love of Jesus. It is beautiful to watch it in you.

Yes, Betty and I have been there; 50 years I've been traveling to the ends of the earth to proclaim the gospel; 25 years we've marched into hell for a heavenly cause; that's what we've done with the mission fields. Now then to have someone like Sheila and others that are able to communicate that is such an incredible blessing because she is affirming what we've told you for years. She also gets to see the power of love working.

Betty, when you listen to Sheila there and you see that little girl, I would like us to kind of put her little face back up just real close and just look at this precious little child and the skin is just literally dying. And then she is so precious and she doesn't know what anybody is talking about but that little girl could have a life and some day have her own little girl and have a marriage and have the joys that we've experienced. I want it for them. I want it. Sheila wants it. And the missionaries want it. I believe you want it. But here's the deal, we can give it to her. Betty, our viewers can give that little girl a future.

Betty: Absolutely! We've just shown you what real hunger looks like. Have you ever been hungry? Maybe you got up early one morning and you skipped breakfast, you didn't have time. But boy, by noontime you think, man, I'm getting kind of hungry. So you stop, go grab you a bite to eat or you go back home and get something out of the refrigerator. Oh I feel better! I got to eat something.

Can you imagine --? That's not hunger. This is hunger. They go days and weeks without food. These precious children never have a chance at life because they don't know what it is like to be able to eat at least one meal a day when we usually eat three meals a day.

I hope your heart's been touched by what you just saw; Sheila out there on the field, she knows what it is like. She's been there just like we have. I want you to let God show you what you can do to help these precious children. They're worth it! You have children; you know everything you can do for them from your heart is worth it. You give everything for them. Well, we need to give what we can give to help these children. Please join with us. Let's give them a long life.

James: We can do it. We've saved the lives of way over 10 million little children like that. Most of them we're able to get to in the feeding centers where we have set up with the missionaries direction right on the site right now to feed over 400,000 malnourished. That's one of the extreme cases you saw there. The feeding keeps them from getting there but your love also provides for that last ditch effort, you might say to save them -- and so often, it works.

If you can give \$100 to feed ten children like that, would you do it right now please? \$50 or \$30 for five or for three? Keep this in mind because we're really blessed in many parts of the world where we can do even more than you might think. \$1,000 feeds 100 kids for the next months. Could you do that?

We have special gifts to send you. For any gift we're sending you the very first lesson on communication with the study guide, and then the other lessons if you'll make a gift of \$100 or more. We'll send you the beautiful canvas if you make a gift of \$1,000 or more. Some of you can do it. You'll be glad to do it. And you'll also get the *Proverbs Power* teaching. Would you do that right now? Thank you for making that call. Thank you for making that gift!

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and drought-stricken areas of Africa children are suffering. The need is great and without food they face severe malnutrition -- even death.

With your support LIFE's Mission Feeding outreach can save lives by feeding and caring for children in the hardest hit areas of Angola, Mozambique, and South Sudan. With previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding helping in areas with severe crop failure we urgently need to replenish our food supplies to reach 400,000 children who are counting on us.

Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. And with your gift of any amount, we'll send you *Proverbs Power: Successful Communication*. This powerful CD series, along with study guide featuring Steven K. Scott unveils the secrets to incredible wisdom found only in the book of Proverbs. This series will give you the tools to transform your relationships in life.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the complete *Proverbs Power* library featuring five power-packed sessions that include: The Power of Vision, Breaking through Mediocrity, and much more.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request the "Bridge of Faith" framed canvas print by Thomas Kinkade.

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today.

End of clip

In the studio

James: *Proverbs Power*, the study guide, all of the other lessons that are here, that will be such a blessing to you and they're on audio. So happy to send them to you.

Steve's going to be with us in another program and you're going to hear from someone else who learned the power of Proverbs even as he shared it.

Would you thank Amy and Steve for being a blessing to us today on *LIFE Today*? Thank you both. And you both communicate very, very well!

Thank you! May God bless everything you do for his glory and he will.

escued from devastating circumstances.