

7/9/18
Week 28: WFL
James and Betty Robison
Dr. Mark Rutland

James: Glad to see Mark?

Betty: I'm so glad to see him!

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm James Robison. We're smiling because we've got one of our friends that we're talking with. We've been friends now for a long time. Goes back about 40 years. And Mark Rutland says when we were in elementary school we were friends.

Well, he is just an incredible preacher. As a matter of fact, I'll just go ahead and tell you this, but we had the most famous preachers in the world preaching on the conference all the time and Mark was well known but he wasn't like famous. He hadn't become the president of Oral Roberts University yet and all these other things, Southeastern, just a lot stuff he had done.

But here's the deal. He comes in and he just preaches to stars now. He preached a message on our Bible conference that is called "Power, not Power." That's real impressive; isn't it? "Power, not power." He said, "Heaven is not up, it's up. It's not up it's up. Power not power." It was the single greatest sermon I ever heard. If you want to get it, if you'll write, well, we haven't like got it ready for today but if you say, "I want that message" we'll figure out how to get it for you and we'll tell you how much it costs. We'll get it to you. But here's the deal, it is awesome.

Now he's back. He's been our friend for a long time and he's been on *LIFE Today* a lot. He's always a blessing. But now here's the new book. It's called *David the Great: Deconstructing the man after God's own heart*. He said at two universities that he led that this teaching on David was the thing that captivated his students. So I think it led him not only to keep preaching it but to write a book. I want you to welcome one of our best friends, Dr. Mark Rutland back to *LIFE Today*.

Betty: Good to have you back!

Mark: Thank you.

James: So good to see you. I've always admired David -- just everything about him. But you

know today the way Christians respond to somebody who has failed, he probably couldn't speak in most churches the way they talk about people because we've all failed. We don't seem to realize that. We can find all the reasons why somebody is not useable but this man was awesome, a man after God's own heart. Why do you think this is so popular with the students?

Mark: Well, I think part of it was they were used to this sort of reductionist view of David. Either the little felt board Sunday school curly haired lad with a slingshot that killed the giant, they knew that, or they knew David and Bathsheba. So they lost the life between those two events and after. So when they found the complexity, this man is a complex genius, multi-faceted genius in genres that are seemingly mutually exclusive. He is a genius at war. I started in one time to calculate all the people that David either killed personally or were killed by his extended agencies, armies or whatever. When I got into the tens of thousands I dropped it. David is a man of war. When I was working on this book, I was in Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee just doing some research. I was writing on an outdoor picnic table. An Israeli lady came up and said, "Are you an American?"

I said, "Yes."

She said, "What are you writing?"

I said, "I'm writing about King David."

I thought she would be pleased. She stepped back and stared at me with this horrible look on her face and she said, "Why would you write about that bloody man?"

I thought I just love any man who after 3,000 years can still make a woman that angry.

[Laughter]

But he was a bloody man. He was a man's man. This is a man's man. This is a guy you want to take deer hunting. You might not want him to take your wife deer hunting.

[Laughter]

This is a tough guy. And then turn right around and write poetry that is still cherished 3,000 years later. A musical genius. He was a little boy, he was a prodigy. They sent him out in the pasture and he came back to the family playing the guitar like Johnny Be Good. He is writing his own music. He won the Israeli version of "The Voice."

[Laughter]

When the king of Israel is so demonically oppressed that he can't sleep at night he is in Gibeah in the tribe of Benjamin and they send... this little boy is so famous, his music is so famous, they send all the way to Bethlehem and Judah to get him to come to Gibeah and sing for the king.

James: That's great! What a guy!

Mark: A genius in every way. He was a C.E.O.

James: He killed a bear and a lion to protect the sheep.

Mark: Yes! And his brothers thought he was lying. You think about it. Your little brother comes in, a child, "How did everything go in the pasture today."

"Oh a lion came."

"What did you do?"

"Well, I punched him with my little fist and I killed him."

[Laughter]

"Right!" So next day, "What happened?"

"Well, a bear came."

"Oh! A bear came!"

You know what I think happened? I think Eliab his big brother said, "I'm not calling you a liar but the next time you kill some big ugly thing, you cut its head off and lay it at my feet."

I hate to think -- you know it says when he killed Goliath he cut his head off. I think he took that head and rolled it at his brother's feet and said, "There you go! How's that?"

[Laughter]

James: That's huge! I love the way you talk. I love the way you preach. I love the way you write. Hey! Get the book. Go ahead, make a note, get it online, get it for a friend, get it for all the women that David would make mad.

[Laughter]

But listen. He really is remarkable. Keep going. Why was he so remarkable? When you say he was "a man after God's own heart" I don't -- now this is me. I don't think that meant he was like God's heart, I think he was in pursuit of God's heart.

Mark: That's it.

James: That's what I came up with in prayer. I didn't even get that at seminary or Oral Roberts University.

[Laughter]

Mark: That's it, James. That's it exactly. Samuel says, before we meet David, he says to Saul, "God is taking your kingdom away from you and he is going to give it to a man who is after his own heart." But we have not yet seen the terrible itineration of David's life, this roller coaster up and down. However, a thousand years after David dies Saint Paul knows everything and he adds to it, he says, "God testifies of this man, 'he is a man after my heart.'"

So I said what can it mean? There are some minor issues in David's life -- adultery and murder.

James: Pretty big.

Mark: Yeah! But what does it mean? Here's what I've come to. You're an athlete. I believe David is like this powerful running back that comes at you through the line and he is so focused on the goal, so focused on the end zone. You may bring him down temporarily but he is going to fall for three and a half yards. Furthermore, he is going to get up and come at you again. He is going to hit you again and again and again because he is focused on that goal.

David fell. Okay, he fell. But he fell at God's feet. And he got up and went again. What David proves to us is the inestimable riches of God's grace. When we are after God accepts that. God accepts that. You want a really perfect hero in the Bible? It is Joseph, Daniel. David is a complex flawed genius -- deeply flawed but he was fastened on the goal line and for him the goal line was the knowledge of God.

James: I think God was fastened on him too. I think everybody needs to realize that God's love and grace is so fixed on us with such unconditional love that it goes beyond anything we could ever imagine. Which does not excuse a wrong, "thou art the man," he heard it. He knew he was guilty. I don't think there is any question that this man was broken. He talked about how this ate at him physically; he felt it in his body, night and day it was a weight. So the conviction was

there but somehow he moved beyond -- and this is the thing people misunderstand. The condemnation that we feel when we have failed does not come from God. Conviction that we missed the mark, the standard we failed. But the move of God brings conviction that leads to contrition and confession if we respond appropriately. There is no question that David the Great was broken over his sin. It was daily before him. He couldn't shake the reality of it, the ugliness of it. And his repentance was genuine because some of the greatest manifestations of God's grace and glory on this man was after he failed so miserably, God used him mightily.

Mark: We daren't use David's sins to justify or rationalize our own but we must use his repentance to inform our own. The sin with Bathsheba is his most famous sin but it is by no means his most destructive sin. The census was really his destructive sin and it doesn't -- we're so fascinated with sexual immorality and sexual sin that we fasten on Bathsheba. But Uriah died and the baby died but that's two -- it was terrible! But when David took the census which he was forbidden to do, God struck Israel with a plague and 70,000 people died because of David's sin -- 70,000! Until finally David went to God and said, "Look! Kill me. These people haven't done anything." He stands before God and he says, "Kill me! Here I am."

And that's when God says, "Go to this man Araunah and buy his threshing floor." It is kind of a comical scene really. When David goes to the guy he's working on his threshing and the Bible says the angel is standing behind David. So David can't see him but the other guy can. Now this is not the effeminate creatures you hang on your Christmas tree. This is the angel of the Lord.

And David says, "I'd like to buy your threshing floor."

And the guy says, "Take it!"

[Laughter]

And David says, "No. I want to buy it from you." He says, "Don't even cut me a corner. God forbid I would give God anything that hasn't cost me. Charge me full price."

He buys it sacrifices there and God lifts the plague. But that's not the end of the story. That threshing floor becomes the sacrifice altar in the temple of Solomon; that the place of David's repentance becomes the place of God's grace.

James: Wow! Wow!

Mark: One of the great things after all that David did and everything else, have you ever thought about this? On the cross one of the last things Jesus says in English, "My God, my God why has thou forsaken me?" In Hebrew it is "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" "My God, my God,

why has thou forsaken me?" Do you know what it is? It is the first verse of Psalm 22 that David wrote. So from the cross Jesus -- he's not hanging there in unspeakable agony thinking at a cognitive level how can I affirm the leadership of King David? That comes up from within him. He affirms the prophetic capacity of a complex and fallen man from the cross. Which says from the cross, I can use people despite their weaknesses, failings, flaws, faults, and that is affirmed from the cross. When he cries out, "My God, my God why has thou forsaken me?" He is quoting King David.

James: Wow! Unbelievable! Can we sum up if you tried to answer... you've given, I think the whole book basically gives it, but why in the world would David be such a big deal to God?

Mark: Well, part of this is the sovereign choice of God. He is a big deal historically, biblically. He is the founder, really Saul notwithstanding, David is really the father of his nation. He is the founder of the city of Jerusalem. He is -- through his D.N.A. comes Messiah. And if you'll remember in the New Testament people calling out for healing, they cried out to Jesus, "Have mercy on me thou son of David." So he is really the central figure in the D.N.A. line that leads to Messiah.

Beyond all that, it is as though God says, "I want to prove to every person in my kingdom I am not expecting perfection I'm expecting you to receive my redemptive grace."

James: Wow! I'm sitting here, I've asked you the question and I'm listening to you begin to talk. Do you ever think when you're talking or somebody else is talking you hear God kind of talking over both of you?

Mark: Yes.

James: I just really believe that's reality and I just felt like I just saw him, he was the brother that was kind of overlooked, he was the last one to even been called in, and not even called in when it was going to be a king from the family. He did do those things. He did that in obscurity so he could kill Goliath before the world. But he was loving God and trusting God and he was being a good shepherd for those sheep. He was a good shepherd boy. And the Lord is our shepherd. He had that innocent heart and then he had that total trust when he killed the giant.

And then he got distracted by the most beautiful thing God ever made, a woman, at the wrong place at the wrong time. He responded inappropriately as so many do to the beauty of this world and the fascination that the enemy offers. And he failed. And he tried to cover it all the wrong ways, he did everything wrong but he was broken. He was like that running back. Boy, I really went down. I went down hard but I'm not staying down. I'm knocked down but I won't stay down. I'm getting up. Because the real conqueror that lives in us won't stay down. There's a

conqueror in us just like there is a forgiver in us so we forgive. If the forgiver says we've been forgiven we're going to forgive.

I believe this man so loved the Lord that he failed, that he just lived his life in hot pursuit of him. Now does that make sense?

Mark: It's 100% right. David's life is filled with controversy and struggle -- even up to his death. You know David only lived to be 70; David died when he was 70 but he lived 150 years in that 70 years. He had some difficult miles on his odometer. He had to arise, stir himself up on his deathbed, he is dying and fend off a coup d'etat because one of his own family members, his trusted right hand man, Joab is trying to replace Solomon with Adonijah. And David has to rise up on his deathbed and fight off a coup d'etat.

And there again, that was a lesson to me, life is a struggle, life is things. You know we had a great speaker at O.R.U. one time and she said, "When I was young..." I'll never forget this! She said, "When I was young I was taught in church life is good and God is hard." But she said, "Now I've come to realize life is hard, God is good." I'll never forget that.

That's what David says, "Life is struggle, life is giants, life is coup d'etats, and life is family problems." David didn't do family all that great. He did a lot of stuff great, family was not his strong suit. And yet he said -- out of all of it he says, "I will love the Lord my God. I will continue to praise him. His praise shall be in my mouth all the time."

James: Thank God! Thank God for David. Would you say thank God for what you've heard? Thank you Mark Rutland. Mark, you are a great communicator. Where do you learn to say Die-ved?

[Laughter]

Mark: My children mock my accent mercilessly. Now are you going to start? Is this what I'm facing?

James: This is persecution like David too.

[Laughter]

To me, this is a must read. This is so great. Lord, thank you! Thank you for what you've given us through this incredibly gifted preacher and just what he shares and just what we've seen. And thank you for David. Thank you for your grace. Your amazing, endless, boundless love and grace in Jesus' name.

It's going to bless you. Mark, you and I have been to the mission fields together. I mean we've walked there. We've seen the miracle of love; haven't we?

Mark: Yes, we have.

James: In the hardest parts of the world -- where you say this is almost beyond belief what love does. Well, our viewers, and you're so incredible, and would you agree our viewers are remarkable?

Mark: They are the best.

James: They know that every time they watch me I'm going to ask them to love somebody and I'm going to ask them to part with something they might love too much. They don't mind doing it.

Mark: They want to do it. They want to do it. They do it joyfully!

James: They actually do! They do because you know what? Love never fails. It works. Now look. I want you to watch. I want you to listen to reality and then I want you to release what love can do. You're going to want to. There's no question in my mind you're going to want to. Just say, "Lord, I'm going to download your love. I'm going to release a river of life and love." Watch closely because you're going to want to do it.

On the mission field

Announcer: For generations now not much has changed in remote villages like these all across Southeast Asia. Hard-working families do their best to get by with very little resources. And mothers like Touch raise their children the best they know how. They love their children as much as any other mother around the world. All mothers have hopes and dreams for their children and they want them to grow up happy and healthy but unfortunately, statistics show that many children in these villages won't live to see their fifth birthday. Mothers like Touch are plagued by a constant fear that their children could die any day because their only option for drinking water is dirty and diseased.

Open Captions:

>> Everyone who lives in this village has gotten sick from the water. We have never had an option for clean drinking water.

I had three children but my daughter died. She had severe diarrhea after drinking this water. And

just yesterday, I had to take my son to the clinic. I'm scared that he will die also. I loved to hug my daughter every day. But now I can't and my heart is broken. [Child crying] I would be happy if our village could get clean drinking water.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You know while we were watching that Mark Rutland leaned over and said, "You know the real amazing thing, the miracle is any of the children live." That's not an exaggeration. They are drinking poison and it is the greatest crisis, catastrophe, catastrophic situation in the world is unclean water.

But the miracle is, think about this, this is not wishful thinking. This is the reason that people like you say "count me in" because this is where love never fails. We can drill a well, a clean freshwater well there. We can drill a well for that village for an average cost of \$4800. It is a miracle! See even petrol, petroleum costs has stayed relatively level so it hasn't gone up because that's a big part of the increase. So we can average \$4800 per well. 400 areas targeted right now.

You say, "What do you mean by targeted?" There's the crisis need but we know there is subsurface water that you can reach. Sometimes it takes a greater depth that costs more, sometimes it is very shallow, it doesn't cost as much but the average is \$4800 per well. So that means we need a miracle of response right now because we've got 400 areas where basically like that mother we have told the mothers we can deliver water.

But the only way we do it is love through you. And so what we're asking you to do -- and there is no question in my mind that if you can, you're going to do it. Because Jesus said, "You just give a cup of water in my name you won't lose your reward" and that means the blessings of God in your life. Don't try to tell him how to bless. But when you bless others, you're blessed. The blessing of others is blessing enough for me. I've given them life, I've given them a chance.

We're sending these beautiful cups to say thank you; you make a gift to help us. We're sending the book the miracles of Christ which is going to bless you -- just to bless you. But here's what we're asking you to do. If you will simply go online or dial that number, take your bankcard and this is the miracle, Betty, but it is true, \$48 will give ten people water the rest of their life. That's what it will do! Because we're going to give basically, for sure, a thousand people in an area where we put a \$4800 well in. \$144, think about that -- \$144, 30 people water the rest of their life. Could you do that? If you can, I believe you will. Could you give the \$4800?

Betty and I made a commitment to give a well every time the ministry and the missionaries said,

"Here's the place, and we need to do it." And it was \$3600 when we started and it was a stretch back then. We said, "God, let us do it." And we began to do it, and then it's \$4800. And then lo and behold, we start twice a year drilling wells. We signed up. We're like so many people and said it was one of the greatest things we ever did. It was as though the Lord was smiling on that.

And I'm telling you the joy of seeing what we did for mothers and families, there is no way to compare. But God, when we are willing to share out of the overflow, it is amazing how the Lord enables us to just keep sharing.

So would you right now, if you can give \$4800 or \$1200 or \$2400 and pray three people join or someone else joins and we've got a well? Whatever level you can help, please do it.

We have gifts for you. We have got the "Bridge of Faith," the Thomas Kinkade painting; it is beautiful, it is a canvas and we'll send it to you to say thanks, it's framed, it's beautiful if you'll give \$1200 toward a well or give a well.

Would you do it right now please? Go online, dial the number, take that card, and use it like a check. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving. Thank you so much for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Today a mother living in extreme poverty will do the unthinkable: give her children dirty, diseased-filled water that she knows could kill them. With no other choice, what's a mother to do?

With your help, clean water is on the way. Mission: Water for Life provides a new beginning for thousands of children and their families; a bright future with better health.

With your gift today you can help drill 400 water wells in remote villages in 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 life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift we'll send you *The Miracles of Christ; What Living Beyond Impossible Looks Like*. Filled with scriptures, prayers, and stories of Jesus' miraculous power, James Robison adds insight about how to walk in faith and live beyond the impossible.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the Morning and Evening coffee mug set. Each mug

features beautiful artwork and scripture from Psalm 92:2, a wonderful reminder of God's faithfulness each day.

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 beautiful Bridge of Faith framed canvas print by Thomas Kinkade.

Please call, write or make your gift online!

End of clip

In the studio

James: We just rejoice, Mark it's a blessing. You commented a moment ago that people need to know we've drilled 6,000 wells.

Mark: Six thousand! It's wonderful! It's a great accomplishment! Great accomplishment! It is a labor -- it has been for you a labor of love and is continuing to be.

James: Well, we sure thank you. By the way, you help us with one of those wells or you just make a gift, say, "Would you mind sending me that David the Great? I think I need that insight." You help us give water and you want us to send you this book just ask us we'll send it to you. But tell your friends to get it online or in the bookstores. Or run get one for your friend. We're not sending you one for your friend, we're sending one for you. Okay? Thanks for giving water.

Would you say thanks to Mark Rutland for being with us? Thanks Mark! You are such a blessing. I'm going to learn to say Dia-ved. Thanks so much all of you!