

5/4/18
Week 18: Spring Mission Feeding
Special #1
James and Betty Robison

James: It really is an honor for me, James Robison, and my wife, Betty to be able to spend any amount of time sharing with you. Thank you for this opportunity.

The program title *LIFE Today* is about that. I think it is important you know when people come here to watch the program we want you to experience life today and we believe life is found in Christ. He gives us life and life abundant, not necessarily abundance in life but abundant life with or without the abundance. As a matter of fact, sometimes abundance can replace life because it becomes a distraction, it can even be an idol. But what we want you to experience is life.

Now one of the things we've discovered and we've been married and I don't apologize for talking about the fact we've been around a while but we've been married 55 years. Which is kind of like a miracle today; a miracle you're still alive, you might say. Well, it is a miracle you're still married. Well, all of that. But here's the neatest thing and I don't want you to miss this. We're full of life because we share life. Once you receive something freely and release it freely it just keeps flowing. God really, really flows what he wants to share through vessels that will let it go and that's why we're happy.

Betty: There's a blessing that comes from sharing and from helping others that are so needy, James that have nowhere to go for help. But there's such a blessing that happens within our own hearts when we know we've given out, reached out to someone and shown them the love of Christ through that action, through that help and give them hope for life. It just makes such a difference.

James: It's what we do because we share eternal life through Christ. I've preached 600 citywide crusades. Still every time I preach I invite people to come commit their life to Christ. We lead people to Christ every day right here on the phones and through the television outreach.

But we're also sharing, as Betty said, with those who have a need. If we see a need that we can meet with love, we do it. And there is tremendous joy in doing that. Now Betty and I were sharing the gospel and I was preaching crusades but all of the sudden we found ourselves, I was doing a citywide outreach, it was actually a nationwide, countrywide outreach in South Africa,

right in the height of apartheid. And I'm preaching pretty straight; some people thought I might not get out of there alive because I was talking about loving everybody and tearing down walls that divide but made a visit to see suffering like I've never seen.

Betty, I think I also saw, because I got you to come back and look at it, we saw love like we had perhaps never seen through missionaries and we saw what love can do and it is nothing short of New Testament miracles.

I want you to just watch. This is kind of where it all started now more than 20 years ago. Watch. I think you'll be glad you do.

Begin video clip

[Cheers & Applause]

James: I want to bring you the words of Jesus.

Announcer: The year was 1989 and James was right where God had called him.

James: Jesus is the Son of God.

Announcer: Preaching the gospel so that lives would be changed forever. But God had plans that would transform James' life when he and Betty met another evangelist, a South African named Peter Pretorius. Peter showed them the immense suffering people in Mozambique were going through because of the civil war.

Peter: You see the thinness of his hair and the color of his hair, that's a sure sign that he is suffering from malnutrition.

Announcer: James knew he would never stop ministering the Word of God to the poor in spirit but now he would do everything he could to help those who were physically perishing. Thus, Mission Feeding was birthed between James and Peter. And in time, as faithful supporters began to help, feeding efforts expanded into war-torn Angola.

Peter: It's a refugee area, James and the refugee program for a time became solved. But now with the war starting to rear its ugly head again, the whole program is escalated and you can see the desperate need in the children.

James: It would be a tragedy to start it and then have to stop it.

Announcer: The challenge that lay ahead for the Mission Feeding program was trying to keep up with the need in crisis areas where food shortages were critical. Children under the age of five were dying at an alarming rate due to the ravages of a silent killer known as malnutrition.

James: I have never seen so many children buried in one small place -- more than a thousand bodies here around me right now. [Sighs] I'm praying, dear God, please, please stop this!

I just kneel right here and there is a fruit jar. In there is the little child's picture -- in that jar. Somebody's baby! Dear God, help us to save these children!

Announcer: By the grace of God and with the support of faithful partners of *LIFE Outreach International* food factories were built in Mozambique and Angola and began turning out a vitamin-enriched soup mix. A fleet of trucks now deliver the processed food mix into remote villages. This has allowed the Mission Feeding program to expand into other areas including South Africa, the Sudan and Rwanda.

Currently, over 400,000 children receive a daily bowl of this soup mix through both the school feeding and crisis feeding programs. This bowl of food not only has helped stop the death cycle in hundreds of villages but it provides an incentive for the children to remain in school.

James: They want a future. They want to go to school. They walk a long way. They're trying to learn. I don't know anyone that would look in these faces and not say, "Let me help those children that obviously want a future."

Announcer: The Mission Feeding program that started over a quarter century ago helping families in war torn villages has literally saved millions of lives according to government sources.

The challenge now is to maintain the support which will allow the food factories to continue turning out the soup mix for the school feeding program and for crisis feeding in areas where children suffer and die because of severe food shortages.

End of clip

In the studio

James: You see my hair is quite different from what it was there a while ago.

Betty: Just a little bit.

James: Yeah! Precious memories. Those little kids who were dying, they're grown and have families. The official agencies there in those countries report we've saved 13 million of their children -- 13 million! One life at a time.

When I say we that's shared out -- we. Betty and I give faithfully. The moment we saw it, we said we're going to help. And I felt our ministry needed to help but to be honest, we had to sell things here to help because we didn't know if people would help save children. We knew in church life that people didn't often go to a mission conference or a prayer meeting so we didn't know if they'd help. I started talking to you and you responded. Over a pretty short period of time, we could tell that God touched your heart.

Joel Osteen's dad called us before he died years later and said, "James, I'm a mission minded pastor and you and Betty brought the mission fields of the world into our homes. Thank you for showing the love of God through those missionaries and what it does!"

Well, Betty, it does because people watching didn't just look and you didn't look away either. You didn't change the channels and go somewhere else or leave the room and say, "I don't want to see that." They got involved, Betty and 13 million lives saved; and those people have grown: Teachers, leaders, ministers, law enforcement officers. Whole countries have been changed. We can't give you all the history of it but it is amazing.

Mozambique was the poorest nation in the world and now it's known as one of the most exploding new free market areas. It is amazing! Not where it's going to get spiritually but it's totally changed. It is because of love.

Betty: Absolutely, James. You know you said we were able to bring the missions all over the world to their homes. Well, first of all God brought the missions to our heart. We had no idea what we were going to do when we went over there but God so opened our hearts to his love for these children all over the world that we couldn't come back home and do nothing. We had to share it. It was good news because it was something we could help.

And so thank you for being a part of what God opened up in our hearts and now has opened up in your hearts. Thank you for your faithfulness.

James: From the depth of our heart we say that in behalf of all those children and their families and their parents. It's a miracle of love and it is love that never fails. It doesn't always work on the timetable or in the timeframe like prayer, the way we want it to but it doesn't fail.

Right now we're dealing with some very serious challenges there, severe drought. They don't have ways of dealing with the drought that could set us back in the more advanced countries like

the U.S. or Canada or European countries or Australia. They just don't have that capability. But we can get them through these hard times and I mean they're really serious right now -- indescribably serious. But your love is what makes all the difference.

So even now as you're listening to us you say, "Well, I think you're probably going to ask me to help." Well, you're right. We're going to ask you to be the miracle that people long for. I've said this so many times and I really want this to register with you. If you want your prayers answered, you become an answer to prayer and you watch what happens. You release the love of God and even more begins to flow through you to make a difference.

I want you to look right now and just see how serious the need is that we're called upon to meet and we have to meet it together. We touch one life at a time because it is one life, one couple, maybe one business or church, we say we're going to touch them with love and change everything. Watch.

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: I want to say thanks to God but to Sheila for being there. Sheila, there's no person that can go in there, no actor, famous person and communicate what a mission heart can do and that's Sheila. You can't go there with the love of God in your heart and the compassion God puts and not want to help.

So Betty, I'm just going to tell our viewers as clearly as I can what they can do. I want you to understand this is a miracle that's about to occur. I mean it is a miracle expression of love just released like a river of life. I was amazed when Peter Pretorius told me what it cost to feed those children. And from the moment we started we were able to also when they saw how effective the food factories are that you built, the trucks that deliver the food, you've given way over 500 of them. You've given several airplanes for the missionaries to get into the remote areas with. You gave a LIFE Angel, a freight plane that could have Betty's life from being paralyzed when she herniated two disks. The doctor said had she not been able to lay flat to get out, she probably would have been paralyzed, that's how bad it was. The plane you gave to deliver goods could have saved my wife's ability to even move.

So it is love that's been given. But here's the simplicity of it. \$30, this is what I said, \$30 will feed three children for the next months, \$50 will feed five, \$100 will feed ten and I'm going to lean in and ask you please, if you could help us feed ten children for the next months this totally begins the stabilization process. Well, in six months to a year we've got them basically stabilized to the point they're returning to health and then totally able to function and become creative and productive as they begin to grow. That's when we get them into the schools to start training their minds; and we feed them in the schools to keep them going to school. So we're working a process of not only getting them out of the death cycle while putting them into a new life cycle.

So what we're asking you to do right now is go online or dial the number and take your bankcard. Please go get it! If you want to write a check, get it and make it to *LIFE*. But please, if you can help feed ten children do it, if you can do three or five, don't think that's small -- it's huge to those children and their families. But whatever you can do, please if you

write the check, call us and tell us you're mailing it. Would you? Or go ahead and call and use your bankcard or go online and use that bankcard and make the gift God puts on your heart.

Now we have some gifts to bless you and inspire you in your spiritual journey. It will really build you up. That's what we want to do -- that's life today for you. But today, this moment, you're literally giving life to someone who in most instances will not make it without the expression of God's love that you make. Thank you for doing it.

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

On the mission field

Isak: I'm here with little Bernardo who is two years old, who is fighting for his life; dying in a malnutrition clinic because of the tragedy called starvation, lack of food. I wish I could tell you that I believe Bernardo will actually leave this clinic but I don't know if he will. Because unfortunately, more children that come into these clinics don't leave than what leave alive. See you have the luxury of changing the channel and I really hope that you don't do that right now because I actually need you to do the opposite and to see the reality of what's on your screen.

You say, "But how do we change that? What do I do?"

I'll tell you what you can do. You can give a gift right now that is literally a gift of life -- the best gift you could ever give. The gift of life to Bernardo. You can reach out and you can give that gift to multiple children, to children out in the villages where there isn't enough food. Children that haven't got to malnutrition clinics yet. If we meet them before they're in this condition, we know we can save them. We do it time and time and time again. We can guarantee that we save their lives.

When they get to where Bernardo is right now, when their arms are the thickness of my thumb, I can't guarantee anything except that I'll do my very best. Please, do your very best today. Give whatever gift you can give because that gift is a gift of life.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Isak Pretorius, Peter Pretorius's son, the missionary. I saw one of those little children. The mother had put some little ribbons in her little girl's hair; almost like she's dressing her up to say good-bye. They don't have to.

I don't know how many of you remember but it was right in that very same country, not far from there that one of the most famous pictures that's ever been taken in history was taken. It was a picture of a woman holding one of those little children that looked like that a year or so before; just over a year before, right there in one of those places where we were supplying the food and even the medical supplies in a malnutrition setting. Here was this healthy looking baby that looked like those that we just watched. And it was Lady Di, Princess Diana holding a baby love saved -- people who watch *LIFE Today*.

She said, "We need to feed the hungry children of the world," holding an example of what that does.

Betty, our viewers did that. And right now we have that same kind of crisis. I'm believing

everyone watching will make a gift of \$30, \$50, \$100 or I pray \$1,000 to say, "I want to save 100 kids like that. I want to feed them."

Betty: I pray that you will. I agree with James. We need your help. When they get to the clinic, just as Isak told you, it's their last hope; that's that mom's last hope against hope that somebody is going to save her baby that she loves so very dearly. So please join with us. Let's offer that hope. We can so easily give them some food that they might survive. Please join with us and do that.

James: Father, I believe that people right now are hearing your heart, not just a mother's heart or the concern that Betty has or I have but the love that you have, that Isak was talking about that is so deeply needed even as he asked us please to help. I pray everyone watching will do something right now; in Jesus' name.

Would you just right now either go online or dial that number? Always a prayer line for you but now a life line for precious children. If you could give \$100 and feed ten children do it -- \$50 or \$30 to feed five or three. And then I know there are some of you, some of you can give \$1,000, some of you can actually give several thousand. If you can and God puts it on your heart, please do it because the need is there. And the fact is love doesn't fail, it works. When you feed the children that are hungry, it is amazing what happens.

Would you please get the bankcard, go online or dial the number and make the gift God put on your heart? Thank you so much for doing it.

Begin video clip

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End of clip

On the mission field

James: Betty, you look at this long line and boy, it goes all the way back to the big four-wheel-drive truck. You started praying years ago that God would make the line to feed the children longer than the line to be fed. I think God's answered your prayer.

Betty: He has, James. At the same time, the line gets longer so we need to help our line to reach them, continue to grow and you to reach out more because I know you're blessed as you see these children being fed here. Let's don't let it stop. Let's keep soup in the barrel so they can come and line up and get fed.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to thank you for what you do and we're anxious to send the *Proverbs Power* for the wisdom and insight. You'll be amazed what God's wisdom will do in your life.

I glanced over here at the beautiful "Bridge of Faith" painting by Thomas Kinkade. What a gifted, gifted person! If you can give \$1,000, give 100 children a chance, you'll be blessed to have that "Bridge of Faith" in your home because you've expressed the faith and trust in God and that love won't fail. Thank you so much for doing that. Thanks for watching the program. Thanks for your response.