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Week 46: Fall Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Sgt. Tim Lee

James: Thank you! Thank you! Well, thank you so much. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm just thrilled to have this opportunity to share with you. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I want to say thank you to every veteran and to every member of your family for the love you manifest in the defense of the freedom that we all enjoy. Every time freedom is defended freedom is strengthened around the world.

One of the things I think we fail to realize is that so often our soldiers and those that are in the armed services, they're not only giving their time and their lives, at great risk, for our freedom but so often for the freedom of the people in whose country they are fighting. They're the first ones -- you talk about the first responders, they're the first ones to reach out to what was perceived as the enemy to try to help them rebuild.

Well, we've got a wonderful veteran here with us. I love the title of his book. You think it is a play on words. It says: *Born on the Fifth of July* but "Recreated in Vietnam." Would you welcome Sgt. Tim Lee to *LIFE Today*?

Tim: Thank you, sir. Thank you. Thank you, Betty.

James: I'm glad to see you.

Tim: It is an honor to be here.

James: We've been a lot of places together. We've crossed paths. We've got a lot of

friends that we both love and honor. Let me just say thank you. How do we as American citizens properly and in an effective way help you men, and my goodness, what a sacrifice you made, how do we help you feel appreciated and respected?

Tim: Well, first of all James and Betty, thank you for the privilege to be here. It is an honor. I tell people all the time, just the simple words, thank you. A lot of my friends came back from Vietnam unappreciated and some of them were mistreated, spit upon, called horrible names, even had bags of urine thrown at them, other atrocities.

But over a period of time, especially from the Gulf War and Iraq and Afghanistan, I think Americans learned a little bit better how to say thank you and be more appreciative of our men and women who wear the uniforms of this country. So I just tell people, say thank you.

We've just got a handful of World War II veterans left in this country, if you're ever going to say thank you to a World War II veteran you need to do it now. Then the same way, the Korean veterans are fading fast. Just those simple words, "Thank you for serving" and "Thank you for being there." That means the world.

James: I want you to tell us because this book is absolutely fabulous. It is an incredible story. It is in the bookstores or you can get it online, but you had a pretty rough journey. You actually kind of decided, and I think you tell our viewers that you weren't the best kid in the family. You did something really smart though when you didn't like people telling you what to do. You decided to join the Marines. I want you to kind of tell us how you got in that place where you weren't happy with people telling you what to do and then how you made that brilliant decision.

Tim: I was raised in a pastor's home. My dad was a Baptist pastor for almost 60 years; my mom is 94 -- and tremendous parents. I was raised in a godly home. Of course, when you are raised in a preacher's home the thing you do the most is you go to church; you go to church a lot. So we went Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. It was at

ten years of age whenever I first realized that I was a sinner; I realized I was lost. Of course, I'd been in church since nine months before I was born. But at the age of ten a real conviction came to my life and I realized I was a sinner and that I needed Christ. My dad was saved, my mom was saved, my sister but I'd never been saved and I gave my heart to Christ. I know I was excited. I told family and friends and relatives what had happened in my life.

But then when I became a teenager something else happened. I began to put things before God, football, basketball, baseball, track and field; set records in the long jump and the hurdles. And my dad would tell me more than one time, "Tim, there is nothing wrong with you playing ball unless you put it before God." I didn't want to listen to that.

Little by little putting these things before God in my life I began to have problems. I rebelled at school, rebelled against God, rebelled against my parents. People ask me all the time, "What did your parents do when you rebelled?" They had never read any of Dr. Spock's books on child psychology and we lived on a farm. There was a willow tree back behind the farm house and that was our psychology.

[Laughter]

But I kept getting further and further and further away from God and my life was messed up; hanging out with the wrong crowd, making wrong decisions. Five of my high school friends killed in car wrecks. God was speaking to me but I wouldn't listen. I kept running, I kept rebelling.

I graduated from high school. I started college in the day, working nights. But in the meantime, my life had come to one disaster after the other. I didn't think it could get any worse. But I ended up getting kicked out of college. I ended up getting fired from my job.

One day walking down the street in my hometown, McLeansboro, Illinois, I saw this sign beside the post office that I had seen numerous times but this time it stood out. It said,

"The Marines are looking for a good few men." And I do tell young people all the time, "I was tired of being told what to do and what not to do and what time to go to bed and what time to get out of bed and how to get my hair cut so I joined the United States Marine Corps."

[Laughter]

It wasn't the most intelligent thing I ever did.

But I ended up in a foreign country called South Vietnam, and 10,000 miles away from home. Before I left for Vietnam I went to church with mom and dad on the Sunday before and I really thought that I made things right with God but then when that plane took off there in the runway in St. Louis I basically told God I couldn't do it. They were Marines, I was afraid they would laugh at me. I was afraid they'd make fun of me.

I was in Vietnam for nine months. I didn't go back to a lot of the things that I had done before but I tell people that if you're not living for God then you're not for God you're against him. There is no in-between for the believer, there is no in-between for the Christian. You're either helping the cause of Christ or you're hurting the cause of Christ.

My best friend in Vietnam was a black Marine and he and I flew together on the same plane. He was a Christian, living for God openly. I would watch him; sit on his rack and read his Bible, pray, witness to other Marines. And I knew this was supposed to be my story, this is supposed to be my life but I wouldn't do it. Thirty days left in Nam my top sergeant offered me a desk job; that meant I didn't have to go back out to the field, to the bush anymore, that was where the primary danger was at. But for some reason I told him I'd rather spend the rest of my time with my own men.

I was told to take them on a mine sweep. And March the eighth, 1971, I got my men together early that morning. I told them that I would walk point. Normally, I would be in the back of the squad with the radar man, the Corpsman, the lieutenant, wasn't trying to

be a hero or anything like that, simply showing my men, I had several new men. Some of them had only been there a few weeks, a couple of them just a few days, how to walk point. Our job was to locate land mines and rounds that had not yet been detonated, to clear the area of those devices.

We walked that morning without any problem. We stopped at noon hour to eat. My best friend, Lee Gore, asked me if I wanted him to walk point. He could have very easily done it. He was as well trained as I. But for some reason I told him I would finish out the day, and then on tomorrow he could walk point, show the new men the ropes. So we picked up where we left off from and 45 minutes later I stepped on a 60-pound mine. Blew me several feet into the air and ripped both of my legs off my body. I should have been killed instantly. It was a big enough mine to destroy a Jeep.

We had entered a major mine field. There were South Korean Marine that was serving with us. At that exact moment I stepped on a mine he stepped on a mine and lost one of his legs. Our bulldozer driver set his blade down on a mine. Now there is noise and chaos and confusion. I'm in extreme pain. I looked up in the midst of all the commotion and my head was laying in the lap of Corporal Lee Gore. All that going on around us, tears streaming down his face and he was out loud openly praying and asking God to help me.

I can remember it right now as though it happened five minutes ago, Qui Nhon province, a little after 1:30 in the afternoon. I looked up and I prayed. I wanted to live. Somebody said you never lived until you almost died. I wanted to live. I begged God to let me live. I told him in a simple prayer, Lord, if you let me get back to mom and dad I'll do with my life what you want.

Well, I'd made a lot of promises to God but I never meant it like I meant it that day. They came with the medevac chopper and carried me to the hospital ship the U.S.S. Sanctuary. The second day I was on that ship two naval doctors gave up hope. They didn't think I would live. Dr. Robert Bailey and I were reunited in Garland, Texas a few years ago and he told the people that night that they didn't expect me to live. A lot of problems, high

infection and troubles, but God had a plan for my life. I stayed on the hospital ship for two weeks and the island of Guam for two weeks. Weighed 187 pounds before I was hit; in the island of Guam I weighed a little less than 80 pounds.

Mom and dad received visits from the Marines, the Red Cross, a lot of telegrams. From a human standpoint, they never expected to see their oldest son alive again but again, God had a plan for my life. They brought me back to the states to the Philadelphia Naval Hospital where I spent the next eight months, 13 major operations. Then God heard the prayer of Lee Gore, God heard my prayer, of course, the prayer of my parents and so many people and spared my life. When the doctors were through and all the surgeries were over, I had three inches remaining on my right leg, 11 inches on my left, but no other part of my body was hurt.

A lot of people would tell us it was an accident but really, with God there is no accidents. God was not asleep on March the eighth, 1971. As a ten-year old boy I said yes to Christ but as a teenager I decided I could live my own life and I could do what I wanted to do and I chose to run. And I ran and ran until March the eighth, 1971 when the running was over.

Went home from the hospital. At my dad's church I went forward publically and made things right. I had brought a lot of shame and disgrace to my dad's ministry, to my own family. Of course, they welcomed me with open arms and forgiveness. And I met Connie in the Sunday school class when I came back. We fell in love with each other and was soon married. God's given us three wonderful children, six awesome grandchildren.

James: I know you want to tell our whole audience how to know Christ. You dedicated this book to someone very precious to you. Ally Michelle, they lost their 16-year old granddaughter in a car wreck. And it's -- no way for anybody to understand that. But Tim, we can't make it through the trials of life without the Prince of Peace. I want you to just look at our audience right there when you see that light on, and I want you to tell them how they can know Jesus.

Tim: The main thing was that... the reason we wrote the book, a lot of people get bitter, they get angry when trials come to their life. It is not a matter of if trials are going to come. They are going to come according to First Peter Chapter 4, but what are we going to do when the trials come? And Ally went to heaven in a horrible A.T.V. accident. Our family decided we didn't want to get bitter, we didn't want to get angry. And I've been in this wheelchair for 47 years. My mom is 94, she would tell you, my wife of 46 years, my children, and anyone that knows me will tell me they've never seen me bitter. I've never been mad, I've never been angry. I'm just glad I'm alive, that God spared my life and let me live.

But the reason is that he gave me hope. And the reason I have that hope is because of Jesus Christ. This is what I want the whole world to know and understand. This is the most important thing. Not so much my story, what happened to me in Vietnam but what happened a little over 2,000 years ago. God sent his only son to this earth. When you think about it, God didn't have 20 sons, God didn't have two sons, God had one begotten son, Jesus Christ, came to this earth, born of a virgin, lived here on this earth for nearly 33 sinless, spotless years he did no wrong. The only person to ever live a perfect life on this earth.

Then one day he walked up Calvary's hill, willingly laid down his life for your sins and for my sins and for the sins of the world. He hung on a cross, suspended between heaven and earth. And on that cross he shed his blood, and on that cross he died. God's only son died. They took him off the cross and they carried him and they put him in a borrowed tomb.

And this, right here among other things is what separates Christianity from every other single religion on the face of the earth. For if you went to the place where they put the body of Jesus you wouldn't find him. He's not there. On the third day he got up from the grave, victorious over sin, over death, over hell. And today God's son is alive. That's the good news.

And here's the great news. He wants to come and live in your life. You say, "Tim, how does that happen? How does God's son come and live in my life?" You come to this place, not a geographical location but this moment, this time in your life to understand and decide of this holy God that you're a sinner. All of us have sinned, I've sinned, James and Betty, we're all sinners and none of us have lived a perfect life. We all have a need of a savior. It is our sin that separates us from God. There is only one way to have a right relationship with God and that is through his son, the one who paid the price for our sins on that cross. And tonight, if you'll be willing to repent of your sins and receive Christ as your personal savior, you can be born into the family of God.

Wouldn't you like to know that when you die that you will spend eternity with God forever? A lot of people say, "Well, I'm not planning on dying any time soon." But I tell folks all the time, "You don't have to go to heaven, you don't have to go to hell but you can't stay here. You're going to spend eternity somewhere."

And right now I want to pray. I've led literally thousands and thousands of people in a prayer that I'm going to pray right now. If you'll pray, it is not the prayer itself that saves you, it is not you repeating religious words after me but in your heart realizing you're a sinner, willing to repent of your sins and turn to Jesus. And if you do that by faith right now, when I pray this prayer and you pray it in your heart, something like this: Dear God, I know I'm a sinner and I know my sins can separate me from you forever but tonight I want to be saved. God please forgive me of all my sin. Wash me as white as snow. Make me your child right now. This very moment I am trusting Jesus Christ and him alone as my Lord and my savior. Take me to heaven when I die for I am now your child.

Friend, if you prayed that prayer right now, you meant it with your heart as best you knew how, your whole heart, that means you put your faith and your trust in what God's son did for you on that cross and what he did for you when he got up from that grave and that makes you his child for all eternity. And that's the greatest decision you'll ever make in your entire life.

James: I believe that many of you that have prayed that prayer, you see the phone number there? Would you dial that number? I would like to send you a book that just references really basically, what he talked about, *Knowing God as Father*. It tells my story about being a fatherless child, coming to know the ultimate Father. But then it has a very simple Bible study to help you know the Father.

You just call right now and say, "I've just prayed that prayer" and we'll be glad to send it to you. Somebody will be happy to pray with you to answer any questions you might have.

Tim, Betty and I have spent our life sharing the gospel. When we went overseas and began to reach out to the overlooked, we began to see millions of lives saved but we also saw millions of people come to Christ because they saw the love of God so clearly.

I want all of you right now to look in on a scene. I want you to listen to what I'm saying. If you've ever needed a miracle or you prayed for a miracle, I want you to know that if you'll watch prayerfully and then I want you to listen to what I share with you, you're going to be a miracle. You're going to be a miracle. Watch closely.

On the mission field
[Child crying]

[People praying]

Randy: Life is difficult. Life is hard. Life is work. Survival is hard. They're just trying to survive day to day and that is why so many children live on the edge of life. They can go from healthy to hungry to malnourished to dead in a matter of days. It doesn't take long.

This is Cecilia, and recently she lost her eight-year old daughter, Natalia. Her daughter was in a very weak state because of hunger. They couldn't get to a clinic. She could only

wait for her to die, she told us.

That's the situation here in villages like this all across Southern Africa. The situation is desperate. These mothers are desperate. She is pregnant with another and she says she doesn't even know if she'll be able to have this baby and live. She has five other children and two of them are sick right now. She is concerned that they will pass away like Natalia did.

Life is very hard for them. Very hard for them! But the solution is very easy for us. We can come in with the Mission Feeding program. We can give them food so that their bodies are strong. We are the answer to her prayer. She has prayed many times to God that something, someone somewhere would answer her prayer and send them help. Will you be that answer to her prayer today?

End of clip

In the studio

James: You can be. I pray for you. Father, for everyone watching, many have trusted you. I really believe that. There are many right now who are watching saying, "I need a miracle." Lord, I pray you'll grant it. I pray you'll hear their prayer; in Jesus' name.

Listen to me closely. You and I need miracles in our life. Betty, one of the greatest joys that we've experienced is we've been able to become a miracle for so many people because of viewers who are watching right now who would say, "I want to be the answer to that mother's prayer. I want to be the miracle they need and they long for."

It is not some miracle that we just have to wish for. It is realistic, it is available. All they need is some nutrition and some food. We've got -- listen to the number -- 400,000 little ones like that right now, and children located and organized by mission overseers with the promise, "We're going to give your family food." How do they make that promise and

give them hope? Because of viewers of *LIFE Today*, and people just like you who say, "I'll give."

A gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 enables those mission workers to feed three, five or ten children and their families for the next months. Would you do that? If there is any way -- any way that you could help us feed ten with a \$100 gift, or five with a \$50 gift, that may be really stretching it for you but it is going to be a miracle for all those you touch with the love of God. Betty, I believe God is going to hear our prayer.

Betty: I do too. I hope you will join with us. You can be the miracle for one or many of these children. Be a part of seeing their little lives restored. They don't have to die so young. This is what we can change through our love and through our giving. So please join with us.

James: We have some beautiful gifts to send you. One of them is the story of the missionary, Peter Pretorius, whose life changed our lives and in so many ways changed our ministry and the ministry of many people. What a story! We're sending this to say thank you for any gift.

We have the beautiful *LIFE Outreach* pens that express faith and hope that are just beautiful, beautiful gifts. And the "Bridge of Faith" is a beautiful Thomas Kinkade painting. You know what? These make great gifts for someone else when you've given life and food and then you get a gift, you say, "You know what? I'm going to bless someone with that." Betty and I have given away the "Bridge of Faith" to friends that actually plan to make it a Christmas gift to some other special friends. So there is a way that you can bless someone else even right here with the gift of hope and help and food when you become a miracle for someone.

Thank you for doing it. If you'll dial the number or go online, take your bankcard and just make the gift God puts on your heart right now. Please, go online or dial that number and make the gift God puts on your heart. Thank you for being the miracle answer to

someone's prayer.

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.

Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach you can save lives by feeding and caring for children currently suffering in parts of Angola, Mozambique, and South Sudan. With previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding helping in areas with severe crop failure, we urgently need your support to replenish food supplies to reach the 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. With your gift of any amount we'll send you *Death-Defying Faith*, the extraordinary life of miracle man, Peter Pretorius. This autobiography, completed just days before his unexpected death, chronicles the thrill-seeking adventures of missionary, Peter Pretorius. You will love reading how God took this ordinary man and performed extraordinary miracles throughout all of Africa.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the beautiful "Faith and Hope" pen set; two beautifully crafted pens featuring the key words of Hebrews 11:1; a key verse for every believer especially when facing adversity, trials and challenges.

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 gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: You may be trying to call and get a busy, because many people are calling to say, "I want to trust Jesus" or "I did trust Jesus and I want to know God as my Father," but you be persistent. You be determined to be someone's miracle and you make that call and make that gift.

If you'd like to have Tim Lee's book, *Born on the Fifth of July*, you say, "James, if we make a gift to help the children, could you possibly send us that special book?" We'll be glad to do it. You can tell your friends about it too. It's in the bookstores.

Would you join me and Betty in saying thanks not only to Tim Lee but to all of our veterans and their families?

[Applause]

Thank God for all of you.

Tim, thank you for being such a blessing to us. You have blessed us. Thank all of you for being with us. Thanks for watching *LIFE Today*. Thanks for sharing *LIFE Today*.