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Week 46: Fall Mission Feeding

Mission Feeding Special #1

James and Betty Robison

Randy Robison

James: I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you to this program. Let me just say, that if somehow you will focus your attention on what we're about to share -- this is not an exaggeration -- it's going to change someone's life. As a matter of fact, whether you believe it or not, it's going to actually save -- save lives and it's going to affect lives including your own, now and for eternity. I'm not exaggerating.

Do you know when Jesus said that he came that we might have life and have it abundantly, do you know how he said you will find and experience that life?

Think about this. Betty, this is the greatest man who ever lived. This is the one person so perfect that no one could actually accuse him of a legitimate failure, he just didn't. He was God with us. Now here's what he said, "If you want to find the life, the abundant life that I came to give, you lose your life in my purpose and you find it..."

Now if you try to save it, hang on to it, establish it, you'll actually miss it. Even when you think you're not you'll miss it. "But if you'll lose it for my sake you're going to find it in all its fullness." That's what Jesus left heaven and came to give us. And he has given us the opportunity of sharing the reality of that life with others.

You're going to meet our son. You've seen him many times on *LIFE Today*, oftentimes he hosts *LIFE Today* with Sheila Walsh. But you're going to hear from Randy. He has just come back from a mission trip; you might say in many ways, into the very pit of hell for a heavenly cause.

I'm telling you what he's going to share and what you're going to see is going to move you. The incredible thing is though, as you're moved, like I said, when we say it changes everything including a life for some, it is no exaggeration.

Betty, I believe if our viewers will just look with eyes of concern and with interest on what they're about to see, they'll recognize we're about to be the miracle somebody longs for.

Betty: Absolutely, James! And to be blessed too. You'll be blessed by giving and sharing and loving, and the opportunity to change someone's life.

James: I want you to look in on a setting right now that I think is going to -- it's going to really move you. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: Another sunrise in Angola, getting ready for a long week in the bush. As Randy Robison and the mission team travel deeper into remote areas, thoughts come to mind about what lies ahead in the next few days.

[Children singing]

Randy: When we come into an area like this, we come in here and the first thing we heard was singing. Why? Because of this. This is the Mission Feeding program in action and we're putting a smile on their faces.

Announcer: As the mission team travels further they enter villages where there is no joy, no singing because they don't have a feeding program. Crops have failed because of drought and mothers are struggling to just keep their children alive.

Randy: This is Cecilia. She just buried her four-year old son, Pedro. Unfortunately, that's not uncommon around here. Just in the two days we've been here, we've seen five deaths.

Announcer: Things turn from bad to worse as the team made their way to a malnutrition clinic. A day Randy will never forget. He arrived at the sound of mothers wailing over the loss of their children who had just died.

Randy: What do you do? What do you say to a mother who has just lost a child? I can't imagine. All I could do is hold her hand and pray. Pray that God would comfort her.

Announcer: Angola has one of the highest mortality rates in the world for children under the age of five due to the effects of malnutrition. Graves like these echo the heartache of countless families devastated by this silent killer.

Randy: They have dug these graves because they know they are expecting death. But I am expecting life because I know that Mission Feeding saves lives. We can stop all of this death by putting food into a bowl.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Randy, the scenes that mother and I witnessed for so many years, I want to say over a 20-year period, we kept going from a place where we were watching children buried, you'd see very tiny graves and some a little bit larger, and they would be just one after the other. We also went in many areas where there would be a grass, a little thatched hut or a mud hut and there would be a little mound of dirt there where they had actually buried a child right by their little hut in those burial grounds.

So we see what happens when you don't, as you said, don't have any nourishment. Then we go where you opened in that clip that we saw from Angola where the children were singing. Boy, you talk about the difference in night and day, and life and death, it is just as distinct as sunrise and sunset.

Randy: It is. It is almost shocking. In fact, when we rolled into that village where they were singing and we saw the children, it wasn't just the fact that they were singing, and that they were getting food, but they were learning, they were going to school, they were playing, they were kind of pushing each other. I said, "Wow! What a world of difference!" That's that stark contrast.

In another village we were in while we were camping, we were actually camped on their soccer field. I thought, okay. Right next to the village, and I'm like, is it okay? Are we going to wake up in the morning and they're going to be out here playing and kicking a ball around? They don't play there. They don't have the energy.

James: Too weak.

Randy: They're too weak. Many of the children are sick. They're worried about am I going to have anything to eat today? And maybe, they look forward to will I have anything to eat tomorrow? That's as far as they can even think. So you see children laying around. And of course, we were there for a funeral of one of the children that had died in the village. Just in that region alone, the school superintendent was talking about like 70 or something children had died in a very short period of time in his little group of schools.

So it changes everything for these children when they get something to eat because they're not worried about the survival. They can actually start thinking about a future. They can learn. They can play. It changes not just a village, that's how you change a whole country. That's what we're doing here. Over the years, as you know, you and mom and Peter and Ann Pretorius, what's it been over like 30 years now, we've been doing Mission Feeding so we know, we've learned what to do, how to develop an area to bring them out of this abject poverty and we've seen tremendous success. That's enabled us to go into even more areas where they might have a drought or a flood or a famine or disease or something that quickly ravages areas over there.

So it's almost frustrating in a sense for me because I'm seeing how simple the solution is and I'm going, can we just get more trucks out here? Can we get more food out here? Can we just

give them the soup? Fill these bowls so they don't fill these graves. It is so simple to make a world of difference in their lives.

Betty: Randy, one of the things that really touched my heart is when you were there with that mother, you said there is no comfort, there is no words that you can say to that brokenhearted mother. I was thinking, there's one thing we can say. She's lost that one child. "Mom, we don't want you to lose the others. We're going to help you. We're going to bring help. We're going to bring food to these children."

So there is that hope that we can offer them. And we can follow through with that hope.

James: Well, you'll see just immediately what Randy saw when he drove up to the school where feeding was going on. And I think it is very important, Randy for our viewers to understand this is not where we are creating a cycle of dependence; like all these people can't get along without us. To me, that's one of the dangers of just having what we call socialistic programs where we just want to take care of everybody. If anybody is led to believe that you're got to depend on someone to always care for you, they're never going to make a future for themselves. So see, the missionaries are far too wise to be tricked into that pit of continual despair and hopelessness.

What we do, Randy, is we stabilize their health. We'll get their parents stronger too, and then they begin to work. We've actually shown them how to take abandoned farm lands that were developed by the Portuguese years ago and bring them back to life. Once you show them, especially how you can actually move water to a place. We've actually taught people how to irrigate their own small plot to irrigating bigger plots.

Please understand, we're not creating a cycle of dependence. That's not what we're doing. We're going in with really, the love of God that you express because those missionaries may leave the comforts of their home, they may take their children, move into very challenging situations with their little families to just give people hope and love. And the only way they can do that, the only way they can stay there is by the support of someone like you who will say, "I understand the

importance of it. And I know you need the support and I know you need to have something to put in those bowls."

Viewers are the ones who actually birthed these heat-resistant bowls because they got tired of seeing children's little hands burn; when you have to heat the soup to get rid of any contaminants that might be in any local water, to also have it prepared right, and they said, "Let's give those children something that won't burn their hands. Let's give them something!" And you did it. You did it. Then you put something in it. You'll notice, and we've pointed this out many times, there are lines in the bowl so that based upon the number of children or the need nutritionally because really, scientific research goes into getting the actual vitamins necessary for that particular area. And then we can portion it so that we don't run out or so that it meets the exact need.

You -- listen to me -- you the viewer are the ones who became the miracle that every mother was praying for, hoping for, longing for to stop the cycle of death. But you didn't just stop the cycle of death, stop the burial, get them healthy, because the missionaries understand that we've got to train for the future. It was the missionaries and Peter Pretorius who is now in the presence of God, and I believe looking down here and saying, "May God touch every viewer and every person so that you will help." Peter Pretorius realized if we could feed children at school they will be at school because that's the only place they know they're going to get a balanced meal. Because people like you said, "I'm going to stop the cycle of death. I'm not only going to provide the miracle of life and health and a stable diet but I'm actually going to feed them where they can train their little minds."

I don't know if I can get close enough to you right now but if I was in the room with you, if you've been helping us, I'd want to reach out, I'd want to take your hand and I'd want to say in behalf of millions, do you know 13 million children's lives were saved because of love through someone like you? I would want to say thank you. Now let's continue it. The opportunity is great.

Right now we have got, listen to what I'm saying 400,000 children in situations where they need

food. We're asking you to help us provide, to put in the hands of those missionaries, every one of those areas where the feeding is set up, give them the food that Randy referred to a moment ago that has to go in that bowl. We're asking you to reach out and touch someone with the love of God, and know that you're not teaching them a cycle of dependence but get them stable. And these mission workers, and under the guidance of the great leadership of Peter Pretorius and those around him, they now have a future they can look forward to and you are making it all possible.

You talk about a miracle of life. When you give life, when you do it for them, you know what Jesus said? "You've actually done this for me." If you ever wanted to bless God, if you ever wanted to bless Jesus, Jesus says, "You bless the least of these. You bless those that are overlooked. You bless those that are desperate and you're going to bless me." You know what? You're going to be blessed beyond measure.

I want you to watch but even now as you're watching say, "God, I want to help them. Show me how many I can help." For \$30, \$50, or \$100 we can feed three, five or ten children for the next months. For \$1000 -- think about it -- what a miracle, you can feed 100 children. Really pray about it even as you watch.

On the mission field

Open Captions:

>> My children ask, "Where is brother?" I had to tell them, "He died."

Announcer: Victoria's oldest son was buried yesterday. The loss fresh and weighing heavy but still hard to believe. The lack of food in Victoria's village has made malnutrition a constant companion creating a burden too heavy to bear.

Open Captions: It's very difficult to find food. There is no rice, no fish, no vegetables. Our only food is maize if we can find it. We eat maize meals once a day or not at all. I tell the children, "We can sleep without eating. Tomorrow we will find food."

Announcer: Victoria and her husband work hard producing charcoal for wages. But when combined with failing crops, their limited resources can't sustain the health of their children. Weakened and malnourished, their immune systems falter and allow minor illnesses to turn deadly.

Open Captions:

>> Right now, I am too weak and tired to even think. I'm suffering, and my son is too sick. I don't know what I can do.

Announcer: The burden Victoria bears is one expressed by so many mothers in this area of Southern Africa. Their lack of resources has created a collective hopelessness. But we know when we join together in response, we can introduce a new hope and health.

End of clip

In the studio

James: That precious mother, Victoria, had to tell her three children their brother was not going to be around anymore. I saw that long line there at the end and thought, if that line had been there where their family was, that little baby wouldn't have died.

Randy, we all sat and said what was the good-bye to your sister. You sang to her, a song that you wrote for her. It was a very difficult thing for us to say good-bye. Disease seemed to win that particular battle. But if somebody could have helped her, I believe they would have. What we felt as a family as we said good-bye to such a precious daughter for us and sister for you, I think in some way we can feel what these people feel continuously, and yet all of our viewers and here together when we join together we actually have the perfect cure for the challenges they face.

Randy: One thing that kept us together and got us through that time was prayer. When I was in the clinic in Angola, it is sort of a last ditch effort where mothers that can get to the clinic, which

sometimes takes them a long time because it is a long ways from these villages, they will bring a child there. When we arrived, a woman walked in and her child had died right there in front of us.

There was another little girl that was sitting up that morning and she was tracking me with her eyes and Ralph Done, our missions' director and I were there and we were looking at her. But her skin was in real bad shape. They pulled her shirt up and skin just went everywhere and we thought, this is bad. By that afternoon she was over in the more critical side of the clinic; there is two rooms. They had an I.V. and they were trying to revive her. Her eyes were not good, she didn't look good.

I asked the mother, "Can I pray with you?"

She said, "Yes."

I said, "Can I pray for your daughter?"

She said, "Yes."

I said, "Do you pray?"

She said, "Not anymore."

And that crushed me. I thought these people are in so much pain. They've cried out to God so often; they haven't always seen an answer to their prayer. she can't even pray over her dying child at that moment. That little girl died that night. It broke my heart.

There is an answer to their prayers though. And you wonder, you wonder, where is God in this situation? And it is interesting because as we were camping out, every night we looked up at the skies because I've never seen a night sky like this. There is no light pollution out there because is nothing. But the skies, the heavens declare God's glory. It wraps you -- and it wraps

those people every night and yet they're wondering in the daytime where is God? Where is the answer to our prayers? And I'm looking at that going, what is the disconnect that I see all around me and his wonder and majesty, and his ability and his love, and the suffering of these precious, precious people?

There's one thing missing and that's God's people in action. What is God waiting on? He is waiting on us to be his hands and his feet. That is the action part of the body.

James: We are the light. When you see all of that light and it declares his glory, the Lord says, "That light is in us." He says he is the light of the world but in us, we become that light. I'm telling you, just as you saw the glory of God, he is saying, "I want my people to look in on this situation and extend my hands just as I extended the hands of my son on a cross to get my arms around you and redeem you. I want to extend my hands of love right now through every one of those lights that are watching."

Randy, the answer to every one of those mothers' prayers, where she wouldn't have had to say good-bye, where the mother that had to tell the children, "Your little brother won't come back. He is gone." But now can tell them there is a future because of people right here watching us. You are the answer to that prayer. You are the miracle, the kind of miracle I know without a doubt you would have given our daughter. The same miracle I was praying for somebody whose child is fighting for life right now as Betty and I were driving here. We were talking and praying because this is a teenager that is dying and needs a miracle and we're believing God for it. And if we could walk in with it we would.

Well, you can right now. You can walk in with a heart filled with love and because of that love fill a bowl with nourishing food and save a child's life. Like I said give them not a life of dependence but where compassion and love steps up. And in the name of Jesus, and for the glory of God as a light, we give them life. I'm telling you it changes everything. Not only in this life but for all eternity. Because those missionaries will lead those families to a relationship with Christ. I believe with all my heart we can give them a glorious future and I believe your future is enhanced the moment you become eternally involved with others.

Would you right now, please, would you do this? Would you just go and get a bankcard? Or go get your checkbook and make a check to *LIFE*. And remember this, \$30, \$50, or \$100 feeds three, five or ten children for the next months. I will always ask you, if you can give several thousand dollars do it. Several hundred do it! And I believe you will. I never, never need to help anyone think small. But you know something? \$30 for some of you say, "James, that's a huge stretch for me." But it is a miracle for three children. So there is no small gift.

I'm asking you right now, go online, go to that website, take your bankcard and use it like a check or dial that number and just say, "Here's my gift." By the way, if you're going to mail it in, would you call that number and tell us what you're sending? Because we need to tell the missionaries, "Yes, you've got the support." You won't just feed them for one month, you're going to feed them for the next months because everyone watching listened to God and became the light of his love. We want to tell the missionaries that. Would you make that gift right now that God leads you to make? Would you call and tell us what you're putting in the mail?

We have some gifts to send you. This is a miracle book. Peter Pretorius's *Death-Defying Faith*. I'm telling you, this is a story everybody ought to read. We're going to send it to say thanks along with other gifts that will bless you as you give the greatest gift, you're giving the gift of life. 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.

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: This is going to be one of the greatest thank-you's you ever get, when you literally read New Testament life in action today. Miracles like you cannot believe -- and we witnessed them and we know. And we brought them home.

Randy, you know you talked about the stars. I think right here on this television, right now people are becoming that bright light.

Randy: The interesting thing about it, if I can interrupt you real quick. The interesting thing about it is it is not just one big light, it is lots of little lights. When they all come together they paint that canopy that is unbelievable.

James: I mean the whole sky. It is -- hey listen. That's how you look. Gosh, I wish we could

give you a hug. A lot of mothers, a lot of families would like to give you a hug. And Betty and I say thanks on their behalf. We love you. Thanks for loving them.