

12/11/18

Week 50: Fall Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Chris Turner

James: Thank you! Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have our grandson, Chris Turner with us. Let me just say this. I brought out his wife, Brittney and their little girl which is our fourth great grandchild and introduced them. I want you to see them. I introduced them to the whole audience.

Let me just tell you, this is our grandson. This is Chris Turner. And this is Brittney. And this is Ella. And we're going to be talking to Chris on the program tonight but I wanted to let our audience know, and our viewers, this is our 4th great-grandbaby. And you are the sweetest thing that ever was!

Well, Chris, I'm glad we got to introduce the family. That little girl, she is a smiling-est little gal. You're smiling pretty big. Did she get that from you? And Brittney smiles.

Chris: I don't know if she gets it from me. She gets it from her mom.

James: Well, Chris, I count it an honor to talk to you because I have tremendous respect for you and for your brother and your sister, for Cody and for Callie. We love y'all. And your dad Ken is, I've got to say one of the most remarkable men I've ever known. Our daughter was precious. And I remember when he called and said, "I'd like to date your daughter. I'm serious about her. May I ask your permission?" He did. Ken, I've never seen anyone love their wife more beautifully, faithfully in times of tremendous trial toward the end of her life. You were incredible. What a dad you've been to these kids.

Chris, I know how much you love your dad and how much you love your mom. We miss

her. It was tough to say good-bye; wasn't it?

Chris: Yeah. It's never a fun season to lose a loved one. Like you said I have an amazing family, an amazing dad. He did an incredible job demonstrating the way you need to lead and love your wife. So I agree. I want to honor him with that.

James: Well, I don't think we exaggerate when we talk about your mom being the most expressive person. And would you agree, she was a woman full of faith and expressed her feelings very clearly.

Chris: Oh yeah. She was the strongest person I've ever met, that's for sure. She demonstrated faith. I believe that all three of us are where we are in our walk with God because of her. She was tremendous.

James: The beautiful little Ella, I was holding her this afternoon, just the two of us and smiling. I couldn't help but think how your mom would love to have been holding her because she was the greatest party giver. We approach Christmas and you know how she loved to decorate and all the things she liked to do for all the kids in the school. I was thinking just of the joy she would be having. But she's watching us right now.

Do you have a sense that mom is looking in on that little granddaughter that she had hoped that she might get to see her grandkids some day, but do you think she is looking in?

Chris: I think, the Bible says that we're surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses. I think there is times when Jesus is like, hey! Look at that. I think there is a way that anyone that's lost someone that they get to feel like they're a part of it and feel that sense.

James: Tell me what you went through in your journey because you knew how much your mother believed, "I'm going to get healed." You saw her experience healing twice in a battle with cancer and when suddenly it came back the final time she found the healing

in heaven. How did you deal with all that when you heard what she said all the time, when you know what your own church, the Church on the Move in Tulsa, Oklahoma, pastor Willie George and now Whit, his son; such a great pastor.

Willie, love you!

Whit, God bless you. What a tremendous leader you are.

But what did you go through there with the loss of your mom?

Chris: I think a lot of it was just dealing with the idea that God may be different than I thought he was. The way I like to put it is this. I heard this quote, "Sometimes God is nothing more than an idealized version of ourselves in our own eyes." We don't see God as bigger than he really is.

I think for me, one of the things I struggled with is I saw God heal my mom twice. I saw God do some incredible things. My struggle stemmed from the idea of God, you healed everyone in scripture. Like everyone that came to Jesus, I can't find one instance of him sending them away and not healing them. So for me it was dealing with, we have been coming to you as a family, we've been praying all the right prayers, we've been doing all the right things, we've done all of them, why was she not healed? I had a lot of questions.

So I really began to struggle just internally with, what can I really believe God for? What prayers will God answer? Are they just subjective? That's what really began my journey there.

James: Where did you end up?

Chris: Well, it was an interesting journey because I think sometimes whenever you are a blind person you may not know you are blind, and that's kind of how I was. So I got to the point where I was really relying on intellect, to reason that God even exists. Because

really, the rationale goes, all right, so either God is not real or God is a liar. But this perfect God I grew up believing in can't be real anymore. That's where my thought process went.

So I was relying on a little bit of intellect. And the reality is you can't reason your way to salvation. You can't reason your way to a belief in God and rely just solely on intellect. I was listening to a sermon one day and the pastor said, the quote he said was this and it's really wordy but he said, "Intellectual assent to correct doctrine is not salvation." So basically, you arriving there by way of your own mind and intellect, you can't just arrive using your brain at Jesus. God has to work on your heart. You have to give your heart to him.

When he said that, it began to turn some things in me. He said, "If you don't love God and you don't love people stop calling yourself a Christian." For me, I sat there in my car and actually just was moved emotionally. And I realized in that moment, I don't love God. I don't. This God I grew up believing in, I don't love you. I'm kind of just falling in line to serve you, I guess. I'm living the correct life morally. But a true love heart dependent upon God was not there. It was in that moment that I kind of got to the end of myself.

James: What happened?

Chris: From that moment on I began to just look at God differently. And for me, I felt in that moment, I don't know why it was in that moment that God said -- I'd always wanted to go on a mission trip. You always want to go with the team to Africa. It was the weirdest thing. So like you're in this moment where you're struggling emotionally and God's like, "Go to Africa." So that's kind of what I felt deep down.

There's a story in Mark chapter eight where the village brings a blind man to Jesus. Jesus grabs him by the hand and leads him out of the village. That's where he spits on his eyes, touches his eyes and he sees men but they look like trees. Then he touches him again and

he's healed.

But the part of that as I've gone back later and looked at that, sometimes Jesus has to physically lead us out of the place where we currently are in order for us to see clear. That's exactly what had to happen with me. Jesus said, "I'm going to take you somewhere so I can show you just a bigger picture than your own world to just have a bigger idea of who I am." And when I got over in that environment I realized, I could have been born here. I didn't choose where I was born. It kind of released in me in a way a little bit of a self-pity that there was. It released in me I'm incredibly fortunate to have the mom I did for 40 years because I've talked with several moms, I talked with a mom that had lost five kids. To look at God in a different lens of how fortunate I was, in Tulsa, Oklahoma to an amazing family. It gave me a bigger view of God and a bigger view of how blessed I am and how big an impact I get, I got to help make just being over there for the people there.

James: So did that bring the life you were talking about in relationship? It suddenly came alive and suddenly things seemed to make sense to you?

Chris: Yes. I felt there, I remember I went back and looked at my journal just the other day. I wrote, "I feel very alive here." I think what it was, was it was a time to really get real with God. Like if God was good when my mom beat cancer twice, he's still good when she didn't.

And the Bible says in Malachi, "I'm the Lord, I do not change." God does not change. Our circumstances around us change all the time. Everything on a daily basis, anything could happen in a twinkling of an eye. Anything could happen. We don't know what's going to happen in the next five minutes but the reality is God does. God is good. God is good in those situations. For me, it was just realizing, I'm not going to have the answers to everything.

The very first sin in the Garden of Eden was man, Adam and Eve wanting to know what God knows. For us, so many of us struggle with we want to know what God knows but

God hasn't given me that right. That's why he is God and I'm not.

James: But you can know him.

Chris: We can know him.

James: In a very personal relationship. And even when you have questions is he still trustworthy?

Chris: Absolutely! Where else can you take your doubts?

James: How has this affected you in your relationship with Brittney and now your little baby? And now you are a pastor of a satellite church in Broken Arrow, an area just outside Tulsa. You're there now. What's going on inside of you as you look at your family and everything, and you and God and them, and you look at the people you are seeking to help in the Broken Arrow area and the church?

Chris: When Jesus was teaching a crowd, the Bible says he looked upon them and had compassion. I would say what God did in me going on that trip and since then is God has given me an incredible new level of compassion for people. Before this happened --

James: And they don't have to be in Africa.

Chris: No. So I walk down halls and I talk to someone maybe that's been diagnosed with cancer or I talk with someone that's going through a traumatic family experience and my compassion level for those people is a level that it never was before.

You can grow up with this idea that basically, if you have any struggles in your life it is your fault. Like you brought this on you. The disciples thought this way too. Whose sin was it that this man was born blind? And Jesus says "Neither. Neither his parents or him sinned." So we want to apply reason to everything, where we live here.

I think for me it was as much as now I get to walk down and somebody's going through something, my sense of compassion and my true ability to be able to relate to someone and to really care for them and to be able to empathize with what they're going through is so, so important whenever you're pastoring people.

Betty: I think too, and I listen to you in how God has dealt with you in this healing process really, and it's one that goes on day by day. But I think about the awesomeness of God and now how can especially -- you said you went over to Africa and you can relate to those children. Well, that's kind of the way I felt. I could go over there and relate and hear about these moms that are losing children because I lost a daughter. But in the gentleness and the way that God deals with us individually is just so mind-boggling. It is just so awesome because he dealt with you differently as a son, he dealt with me differently as a mother but we all come to the same conclusion is what a great God we have. And we don't always understand the ways of God but he is awesome.

James: I feel like I can see that you want this God that you're getting to know more fully, you want everybody to move into that relationship because that relationship can be so real that it can help us go through any journey, in valley, any challenge in life.

Chris: I think one of the things that through this process, for me I've discovered, the greatest work God wants to do is in you, not to you. God doesn't -- he's not just after felt needs. He is not just after the external circumstances. He wants to do something in you. And I think that for me, God uses the situation.

I'm not saying that every situation is the same. I'm not saying that every person is going to go through it like I did. But for me, my journey God used this as a way, with gentleness, like you mentioned, God uses... like a surgeon, he is like, you're going to lose your sense of understanding here to me. You're going to surrender that to me. You're going to surrender some of your need to know everything to me. Because for me, I often took the approach that God was kind of an errand boy; like running my needs -- doing

what I need him to do as opposed to no, I exist to do what God needs me to do. It is a very different posture when you make God king instead of a butler.

For me, what I want to share with people though is God does not want to leave you in the middle of that process. God doesn't leave us there. God is a God of restoration. There may be pain along the way, there may be pain like Job suffered pain but at the end the book God restores him. There may be pain like Joseph suffered but at the end of his book God restores Joseph and he restores that family relationship. For me, that's the God I see. My mom is not coming back in this life but my hope, what we get to hope for is that God of restoration, that God we have to look forward to and the hope that we have in heaven going forward.

James: Do you appreciate Chris sharing his journey and being able to share with us?

Let me just say I don't know where you are but you would be amazed because it is not an exaggeration. If Betty and I knew you or if I was around you, and could even hear your heart, however hurt it is or disappointed you are or challenged you are, if you kind of just dump it out, I'm going to really care. And I'm going to without exaggeration say I would really like to correct every issue in your life and every challenge and meet every need. And if I can say that, and yet not be able to do all that, however much I care to, how great is it that someone else cares that much and more and is able to deliver whatever is necessary in your life to shape the fullness of life in you through Christ?

Please understand that's really the reason you're watching. No matter what you've gone through, God wants to walk out the rest of your life with you, you living in the shelter and shadow of the reality of his presence.

Father, I pray for every person right now that have been trying to listen to a family that didn't go through something, we're still going through it. This isn't something you get over. It is something we walk with. And you've said you'll never leave us, you'll walk with us. We can live in the shelter and shadow of your abiding presence. And it is not an

exaggeration. So Father, I pray that for everyone watching, whatever is going on in their life that they will reach up to you and touch you and allow you to come into their circumstances in their life totally; in Jesus' name.

Listen. There's a phone number there and it is paid for by love. It is an 800 number. You want someone to pray with you, say, "I want to know God. Like Chris was talking about going through the journey. I want to get to where I just know that God's got his arms around me and I'm holding on to him." And ask someone to agree with you in prayer.

Then Chris, you talked about going to the mission field and seeing those children. Our viewers often wonder, does what you do really help them? Does it change their lives? Does it?

Chris: Yes! Absolutely.

James: Are the missionaries the real deal?

Chris: Absolutely! An incredible group of people.

James: In other words, the love that these viewers share does exactly what it was sent to do and it is miraculous. Miraculous enough it became a part of your own journey with the loss of your mom. And it helped you grow, what you saw there and you wouldn't have seen it without the viewers. They're the ones that make it happen.

This is what I want you to see, please. I want you to look in right now. You'll see Chris there but I want you to say, "God, what do I do about the situation? I want to be part of the change process. I know you're going to work change in me." Watch closely.

On the mission field

James: Wait a minute! I can't get them to stop pressing in on us so I can even get to the soup. These people are hungry! I mean the absolute desperation -- I can't even feed them.

Announcer: Unfortunately, too many children know what happens when the food runs out. They know it will quickly become a desperate situation where they are fighting to survive. Children and their parents end up scavenging for anything to eat to fight off their gnawing hunger pains. Sometimes the children will even eat things that aren't even considered food just to try and feel better.

Bruce: I'm sitting here with this little boy and when I came in I noticed he was sitting here and he's eating dirt. He's trying to fill his little stomach and he's trying to take that hunger away. It won't. I've never seen a child eat dirt.

Announcer: The impact of this type of food crisis is particularly devastating to the youngest victims. Once the effects of severe malnutrition set in desperate parents will try and walk for miles to get help in a clinic.

Chris: This is why we need your continued support for mission feeding because we do know she's been here about a week now and if you can imagine she's gotten better, she's improved. So if you can imagine a condition worse than this. Dear heavenly Father, Lord, I pray over this little girl. I ask that you heal her, in the name of Jesus. I ask that we help all these kids; in Jesus' name.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Chris, we were all in the room with your mom when she was leaving. If somebody had been able to walk into the room and say, "Robin, here," and give her something and she is perfect, wouldn't that have been an awesome thing? And we would have all rejoiced. We know she is perfect now thanks to the Lord. But Chris, there is a perfect cure for those little children. We can get to them before they get them into that last ditch effort in those clinics which you pay for too. You are the ones that provide those clinics.

But what we know works, Betty is we feed them where we find the need and we organize

them. The missionaries are so marvelous. And then we begin to feed them the nourishing porridge that is really scientifically developed by caring individuals to meet the exact need and it is the miracle cure. It works. It doesn't fail. It works!

Betty: We can keep them from having to take their precious babies to the clinic for one last resort, one last little bit of hope. As I think about those mothers and those children look in the eyes of their mothers and they say, "Why can't I have something to eat?" A mother wants to provide every need for her child and it breaks their hearts when they can't. But they need our help. We can make the difference. We can get the food to them and they can grow up healthy and wonderful children, blessings to their mothers. So please help us. Please help us feed as many as needed. We love you for that!

James: Today, we had our little granddaughter, Chris's little girl that's so beautiful, little Ella. We got to feed her. She just smiled. And just thinking, we were giving her what -- we could tell when she got hungry. She made it known. And she was so happy when she got food. It was such a joy to us to have a part in that.

Listen to me. This is the thing I want you to realize. You're reaching out with the arms and hands of Jesus. We are his body. You're actually reaching out and lifting up those little children, and then you give them what they need. It is the perfect cure. It is not like praying for some miracle drug or some pharmaceutical miracle that will solve it. This is a nutritional reality. And we've been doing it now for 30 years. Millions and millions of children's lives saved. Now they are, many of them, leaders in their communities -- many of them are teachers -- many of them are ministers and witnesses for Christ. Millions of them! And it all came because somebody like you watching *LIFE Today* said I'm going to take care of three children or five or ten; \$30, \$50, or \$100 we can care for three, five or ten children the next months.

Now we just have a short time left to raise the funds for the 400,000 children we've reached out to now and we've got in place. We told them we're going to care for them but it all depends upon your love, God's love through you. Would you right now please

get up and get your bankcard or get a check? Make it to *LIFE*. Or take that card and go online or dial the number and just use that bankcard like a check and make the gift God puts on your heart. You can give \$1,000 and feed 100 kids. That would be wonderful! \$100 will feed ten. Whatever you can do. I always ask you to think big. I mean if you could touch 100 children do it. But remember, if it is three and that's what you can do, look what it does for those three and for the mothers.

Thank you so much. We have some gifts we're going to send you to say thank you. One of them is the great story of the Mission Feeding and the founder, Peter Pretorius. It is an incredible book. You won't be able to put it down. Thank you so much right now for going online or dialing the number.

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: I'm really excited to send you the book to say thanks for your gift. This is such an amazing book! Our grandson talked about how it really is life. He's been around Christianity and wonderful Christians and awesome mother and dad and great church and yet, what he went through caused him to have serious questions he had on the mission field, right over here where Peter Pretorius had *Death Defying Faith*. It impacted you right there too.

Well, it did us too. It changed us. It changed the whole ministry. And it was amazing what happened. We went from winning hundreds of thousands of people to Christ to winning millions to Christ, as well as saving millions of lives. We did it together.

Would you say thanks to Chris for coming and sharing with us? Chris, thank you buddy! I love you, man! Proud of you. We're going to talk to Chris on another program now about what he's doing now.