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Week four: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Aly and Josh Taylor

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. We have some wonderful guests that I know you're going to be blessed by. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: Yeah! And we've got Aly and Josh Taylor. They don't have a book, they've got a story. I promise you, their story is so amazing that somebody is going to want them to have a book. The journey they've had is an Amazing Grace journey. I want them to tell it to us.

How about you give Aly and Josh a good welcome to *LIFE Today*? Would you do that? You both have really nice smiles. Can we get a two-shot of them?

Josh: We tried to clean up a little for you.

James: We got both of you. I'm looking over here on the monitor to be sure they got you in there. They want to see you. I don't know which one of you is going to take off running with the ball first but you've had some real challenges. You were fighting for your life and we know what the battle with cancer is like. We know that you're sitting here... when did it appear you'd won the victory so to speak and cancer-free? How many years ago?

Aly: Almost seven years ago.

James: Well, it was touch and go, wasn't it?

Aly: Yeah, absolutely. I always say that my journey, I always wanted that moment -- you hear those stories of people that go in with a cancer diagnosis and they have a scan and everything is clear or maybe somebody says it was a big mistake. I just wanted that moment so badly on our journey.

But it was a journey of faith because we never saw that coming. I think that's something we always say. Through my journey, I got a new definition of faith. I think faith, I always thought my faith is in Jesus. I have faith for this to turn out good. But in this circumstance, we didn't see the end being good, we just had to have faith that it would be.

I always say, "If we could have seen us sitting here now today with the blessings we're experiencing now I would have gone through it a million times over. But when you're in the middle of that dark space, you don't see that and that's why it is faith.

James: How are you feeling, Josh? She's got it in her body. You're watching it in somebody you love with all your heart.

Josh: I turned 27 the week we went to M.D. Anderson to start treatment, and honestly, I look back, I was a kid. I had no clue what was coming; that probably guarded me from a lot. But in truth, you just feel helpless. You just feel for the first time as a man I ran into something that money, time, or talent couldn't fix. At that point, everything I dealt with in life, money, time, or talent...

James: Were you a builder at that time? Is that what you were doing?

Josh: Entrepreneur, I was in real estate since I was 19. We had done lawn care, landscaping all through high school. I had lived in a world where time, my energy, and passion could cure a lot of problems.

James: You didn't have a challenge you couldn't meet. All right, now you had one. So

what happened? Because we need to know. Let's clear some of the ups and downs because I know that's a lot of what you'll talk about. But we're going to get into some things that in my opinion are just incredibly miraculous, even more miraculous than the healing you've experienced. It is just amazing what God's done through what I would call the miracle of love and being available. Tell us something about the journey and how you came out of that particular battle.

Aly: We were married five years. We were wanting to start a family so we were trying to get pregnant. Through that process is how I found out I had breast cancer. So we thought the next big phone call we would be making to our family was that I was pregnant. And instead, it was I have breast cancer; and not only breast cancer, I was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer and it had spread, and it was very aggressive.

One of the first questions our doctor asked us was, "Are you guys wanting to have a family?"

We said, "Yes. That's actually how we found my breast cancer."

She said, "The type of cancer you have we need to start treatment immediately." And that it would have a very strong effect on our fertility. So we prayed. We begged God to protect my body. We'll never forget that moment in the hospital room where we asked them to leave and we prayed Psalm 128 over me. And that scripture says, "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house. Your children will be like olive shoots around your table." And we just prayed and believed in that moment that God was not only going to heal me but protect my womb when we had no evidence that that would be the case.

So I went Through 16 rounds of chemotherapy, double mastectomy, surgery, 30 rounds of radiation and several reconstructive surgeries.

Josh: When we look back, that was the first time in about three or four huge moments

where we did not have a picture of what God was going to do or wasn't going to do. But in that moment in that hospital room, we just had to believe that God was going to protect Aly. First she had to live for a family to even be an issue. So that day all we were believing for is that God would reach down and heal her of cancer.

James: How long was that battle? How did it end? What was the conclusion of that particular battle?

Josh: That started in October of '11, and so that's when she started chemo, 16 rounds of chemo. Fast forward to April when she had a double mastectomy. Then April 30th of 2012 is when we found out Aly was cancer-free.

Aly: Which was, to stop there, so it was less than a 20% chance that I would be cancer-free. So that was the first miracle that happened for us; a huge moment in our journey where we both had to believe. Our doctors were talking backup plans and what we would do if cancer was still there. We had this moment where we said, "We're not doing backup plans. We're believing. We're believing. If it gets to that we will face that at that moment but right now we just have to believe."

Josh: We were just looking at the doctors and saying, at some point we stopped caring about their percentages and their numbers and we said, "Like we're going to do your treatment. We really don't care about your numbers though because frankly, that's not what is going to control her healing."

So for us, that's what we really referenced, is that was a healing because it took a long time. So you're at April 2012. We go through that summer and Aly had four more surgeries, reconstructions, some issues that come for women in that. So that in essence was two years of going to M.D. Anderson every week back and forth.

James: And where was home?

Josh: Wesmere, Louisiana.

James: So you had a pretty good little journey. So now you come out of the cancer. It is still obvious you still want to have a child. So now let's go on that journey.

By the way, when you get through hearing this story, you're going to wish they would come share somewhere you know because this story is amazing. We're just getting into it. I want you to see an address.

Where would they go if they said, "What if we wanted you to come to our church?" By the way, don't even get their address, don't even invite them if you're not going to get people to come listen to them. And then when they come, send them away with a wonderful love gift because he can't do this and keep building all the houses, as dedicated as he is to that, if he is also going to come to you. Send them home. Don't just say, "Well, he's a builder. He doesn't need us." Stop thinking that way. Say we're going to bless them.

Josh: Amen!

James: How would they find you? Where would they go?

Josh: Aly'sFight.com.

James: Because the fight is still on. Right? And you're going to hear that. Now let's take back up.

By the way, I love the way y'all love each other because you love him and his love is in you. I can see it. Let's hear more about what's going on.

Aly: We thought we would get pregnant immediately. We believed in that Psalm 128 and we thought, okay, I'm done with my cancer battle. We're about to have a baby. We

went and saw fertility specialists and our worst fears were confirmed. They said, "Aly, not only are your chances of becoming pregnant slim, but it's impossible." They referred us to an egg donor; we got matched with an egg donor. We decided not to go that route.

We quickly felt led to adoption. We got so excited about adoption. We thought, okay, God, maybe you had me go through cancer to lead us to this route. So we had our first baby on March 12th of 2015, our beautiful Genevieve. We were in the room with her when she was born. I was the first one to hold her, feed her, and it was as if for the first time cancer kind of made sense. But our world kind of took a turn the next day.

Josh: So it was all good. It's better than -- that's what we do tell people is adoption is incredible. It is biblical, it is better than -- you can't wrap your head around -- there is no difference between biological and adopted. Like it's just... it's something we could not have known until...

James: We know that because we've experienced it.

Josh: It is mind-blowing. So it was going good. So Genevieve was born on a Thursday and on Friday afternoon we got a call that the birth family was rethinking their decision and we would not be getting Genevieve. But we were told a decision would come Monday. So we just chose a lot of -- kind of how we talked about earlier, we chose to stick around and fight. And fighting in this is not anything adversarial, it's praying, it's believing. It's saying, "God, I want your will even if that makes me feel like I got run over by a truck. I'll sign up for it."

That doesn't mean it is fun. I think in the end we're walking out of the hospital and I remember saying to Aly, "This for us is our Abraham and Isaac moment." It's the thing about God said go and you don't have a picture of what's coming. You don't know that there is going to be a ram stuck in the bush. You have no idea. Abraham had no clue but he had to obey. I think for us that's just what we committed to in that moment and every moment going forward. So we walked that out those three days loving on that little girl

regardless of what was coming Monday.

And Monday comes and the birth family comes and confirms to Aly in the hospital room that they're going to keep the baby. So they come out, they come down the hall where I'm sitting. At that point, the only reason we signed up is for the well-being of the baby. It is not for us to be parents. So at that point when we're no longer going to have any say in her eternity or be able to pour into her, our only goal is to love on these people we're looking at. So we just say, "Can we pray with you?" So we took about 60 seconds and just prayed, Lord, help them feel of worth, help them feel valued, help them know you're for them." And that's all we prayed.

We hugged and they got about ten feet away and the birth mom looks at us and says, "God has only spoken to me one other time in my life and he just did. You and Aly are the parents of this little girl."

So we had seen a healing, a two-year healing. This was a miracle! This was God reaching down and saying, "No, I'm about to show out." So it was a neat moment, needless to say.

James: I love this moment. Don't you love that moment? There's no question. Praise God! Let's keep this journey going. Here we go. We have a God of the impossible. That's a beautiful story right there. What happened?

Aly: Nine months later I wasn't feeling well. I had an old pregnancy test that I'd had from years before. Felt silly for even taking it. Came back to it saying "positive" and I wasn't even excited when I saw it said "positive" because I thought, something must be wrong. I texted my doctor. She didn't say congratulations. She said, "Can you come in?" Everybody thought something must be wrong. This is something wrong with the test. And it was confirmed that I was pregnant with a healthy baby girl who we named Vera. Her name means *faith* so we always say she is our faith baby.

And so yeah, that's when Genevieve was nine months old. But then a month later, we received a phone call from the birth mother from our first daughter. She called to congratulate me and also say, "You won't believe this but I'm actually pregnant again." She still wasn't in a spot to be able to take care of the baby. She said, "Would y'all even consider adopting again?"

Honestly, we just wanted to jump and say, "Yes!" But we thought we need to pray about this. We don't know when the due dates are. So we said "yes" and then later we found out they were due just two weeks apart. She was pregnant with a little girl as well. So we were going to have three little girls just a couple weeks apart.

Josh: So obviously, in that moment, just like in a lot, the previous five years for us is we found out where this baby would be born. Because of our experience with Genevieve we understood how much weight it carried that the birth family see we'll pick up and cut all ties to be where you are for this little baby, for you, to love on you. So we started making plans to be in Kentucky starting in July.

Aly: That's where the birth family was.

Josh: So I borrowed a big R.V. from one of my buddies that really is not an R.V. it is a house. It happens to have tires and a motor on it but it is a house. So we drove it out. I was scared to death I was going to knock somebody out. But we drove it and we actually went to Kentucky and stayed in a K.O.A. in a campsite for a month.

Aly: And I gave birth, I was 36 weeks pregnant when we went up there. I gave birth to Vera and 11 days later Lydia was born. And all throughout this, T.L.C. captured it all and documented it on a TV show called *Rattled*.

Josh: One of the big moments for us, when Aly gave birth to Vera is for me as a husband, October of 2011, when you find out your wife is diagnosed with cancer obviously, and you don't know if she is going to be there. Well then you fast forward, I'm

sitting there watching my wife give birth. They lay that little baby on her and it's that -- it just seals that moment, the full circle of fearing for her life and then God reached down and heals her and she is giving life.

So for me as a husband, the TV cameras got it. I was a blubbering... I couldn't talk. I'm sure I freaked them out by praying. It was one of those moments that was so special to us to see it all. Sometimes in life we get that treat of -- you get to see God really show out and in that moment, I see Aly sitting there healed and whole having just given birth to a healthy little girl. It is like, wow! We do not deserve so much of this.

James: It is all miraculous. Now what do you want to do when you go out and share? What do you want people to hear when you go to share? What's the story? What do you want them to take away when they leave?

Josh: For us it is the idea that so much of our story, including Lydia, is we did not know what was coming. And so much of faith, so much of walking out whether your life is good right now or you're in the middle of something tough right now, you have to walk now when you don't have a picture of what God has for you because what Aly and I would have written down pre-October 2011, and I'm a dreamer, I'm an entrepreneur, I'm going to think of big things. My dreams for us would have come so shy of where we are today, much less of where we will be. So I think that's what I would take away. What we hope to give people is wherever they are, when we're sitting at a church or when Aly is speaking at a women's event is we're trying to give these people hope that are hurting, like God is for you. But if you're not careful, Satan will trick you into believing he is not -- that God wants you hurting. The truth is, God is fighting for us. He is pursuing us.

James: And even out of hurt...

Betty: We shouldn't give up on God because he is just ready to bless us all the days of our lives.

James: Even out of the hurt can come a miracle. You've got to be figure-shaping clay. If you could feel it, there would be some pressure points. Pressure shapes. Paul thanked God for it. And so that shaping is not always necessarily pleasant but it can still be great. So even the pain or the hurt or the heartache can still shape something beautiful. What do you want people to take away when y'all go to be with them?

Aly: Well, Miss Betty kind of touched on it. I think as a woman, I sometimes can put God in a human box or think I don't want to ask too much of him. We didn't get to tell you the whole story but with Lydia, our youngest daughter, we almost were not able to adopt her. A similar thing happened that happened with Genevieve our first daughter. I remember praying and saying, "God, you've healed me of cancer, you've given us our Genevieve, you've given us a miracle there, I should be happy. I should just say, okay God, you've done enough. I don't need to ask one more thing of you."

I remember God saying, "Aly, ask me again. Keep asking me. Ask me to do it."

Because his word says he wants to do abundantly above more than anything we can ask or imagine. But I think oftentimes I think, God you've done too much. I don't want to ask you again. And God, that's what I always encourage people to like, God wants to do it again. He wants to do it over and over and over and you can't ever ask for too much. Oftentimes he is just wanting us to ask and we don't because we think he's done enough or he wouldn't want to, and that's the total opposite of who he is and it is the total opposite of what his character is.

James: If you've been blessed by Aly and Josh, would you just give glory to God?

[Applause]

I'm sure if there's been a reality TV show there is going to be a book and then more. So there again, there is how you can find them. There is their website. Like I said, if you want to organize something for them to come as a couple. Do you ever go just yourself?

Do you leave Josh occasionally?

Josh: They actually prefer that.

[Laughter]

James: Do you ever go without her?

Josh: Never!

James: You say I'm busy building. I'll come with her. There's how you can get a hold of them. What I said, now if you invite them, you get people to hear them but you take care of them because this is a real sacrifice for them to come.

Our viewers love to help the suffering. I want you to look in right now on a man who has a heart that's broken. You're going to see three little boys sitting by him. He is what they've got. And he is sick with what took his wife, their mother. And then there is more. You are the miracle cure. Just like you've heard about God's miracle cure, you're the perfect cure this time. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: Zachary just lost his wife. Unthinkably, his beloved's body was ravaged by cholera, victimized by the very water that should be life-giving.

Open Captions:

>> I had a fourth child. He was still being nursed by his mother when she passed away. He died three weeks later. Our water comes from a hole in the ground. We know it's dirty but we have no other choice.

Announcer: And as if unsatisfied by taking his wife and youngest child, unclean water has now set its sights on Zachary himself.

Open Captions:

>> My legs are swollen and my stomach is bloated. My whole body is in pain and I'm getting worse. My biggest fear is that I may die, and leave my children here.

Announcer: With nowhere to go and no other way to survive, Zachary has no choice but to return to the source of his grief time and again knowing that every sip has the potential to further rip his family apart.

Open Captions:

>> I'm now having the same symptoms as my wife. I will have to send my children to live with their grandfather. As a father, I can no longer provide for them.

Announcer: For families like Zachary's in the remote country of Burundi, this crisis is not one they can face alone. Without immediate intervention and the development of clean water sources, communities will continue to be ravaged by disease and bound by grief. They ask for only one thing -- your help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want you to put that picture of that family back up on the screen where everyone at home can look at that. You're close enough at home that you can see those precious little children. The man has buried his wife and a child that she was nursing because of contaminated unclean water and cholera, that is literally carried by that. Now he has the same symptoms.

Betty, when I looked at those precious little children, I found myself wanting to take

them all in my arms and hold them real close. And I found myself asking, can I find some people who will reach out to fathers and mothers and children and families like that all over third world countries and Burundi and places like that where we drill hundreds of wells, 6,000 -- think about it, 6,000 that you've helped us drill that gives a village in a community like that life. Everything changes.

Water for LIFE and Betty, we tell them about the water of life and it is the most amazing thing. Listen to me. When you show people the love of God, you don't just talk about it, you demonstrate it, when you do that then they want to hear about the source of that love, and we're able to win them to Christ.

So I'm asking you, would you reach out to that family? And know that there are hundreds of villages. We're right now beginning, as we do this time of the year, to drill the first 200 wells. They're \$4800 each. Betty and I have committed and asked God to help us every time the missionaries call and every time we have the emphasis we want to drill a well. God answered that prayer. It's been one of the greatest joys of our life.

We have many people who tell us we make that the goal for the year, to drill a well. That's awesome! Some of you say, "James, you don't know how much I'd like to do that." I believe you. But you know most of the income to help drill wells comes from people who give \$48? We've said that basically gives ten people water the rest of their life. You can multiply that by three and you've got \$144 and you just gave 30 people water for life. I use those numbers to show the impact it makes, to know that everyone has a part, everyone can have a part, there is no gift too small. I don't think if you've been blessed by God, there's any gift you could give too large.

Would you right now go and get your bankcard? If you want to write a check, by the way, make it to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving. But call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. If you get the bankcard, you can go online or you dial that number; that's a prayer line, others will be calling to get prayer. But would you call to be an answer to prayer? And would you say, "Here is my gift. I'm going to drill a well. Here's \$1200,

here's \$2400, praying three people join me or another person joins, we've got a well." At whatever level you can participate, would you do it right now? If you want to mail the gift call us and tell us you're sending it. We need to hear from you.

We have some very special gifts to send you. You'll see them. We always want to place something in your hand that will go into your heart and be a blessing and a source of inspiration to you. Thank you right now for going online or making that life-giving call and that special gift. Thank you so much.

Begin video clip

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

With your help, clean water is on the way. Mission Water for LIFE provides a way for parents to save the lives of their children, to offer them a bright future free from the fear of death. With your gift today, you can help drill and establish the first 200 water wells of the year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children, a gift of \$48 will help provide for 10, \$72 will provide for 15, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift, we'll send you the *Praying Grace* 55-day devotional. This new devotional will help you renew your mind to the realities of God's grace and help you pray powerful grace-based prayers for each day.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "Praying Grace" tumbler. This reusable 16-ounce container is constructed with insulated stainless steel, perfect for hot or cold beverages.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people, or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well and you may request the beautiful, new commemorative bronze sculpture, "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Betty and I want to say thanks because you heard a miracle story. By the way, we can look back and say, "We would have liked that miracle." But we had plenty of them. We helped others to have miracles. What I want to say to you is you heard a miracle story and you heard a need and you've got an opportunity to be a miracle -- a miracle answer to someone's prayer. I want to thank you for that very, very much.

We're anxious to say thanks, sending the tumbler, sending *Praying Grace*. I'm going to tell you, this beautiful bronze of a shepherd, the shepherd is not supposed to be Jesus. Someone said, "Well, he doesn't have beard, doesn't have long hair." This is just a shepherd holding a lamb; that's what shepherds do. In many ways you held a whole family, when you said, "I want to give them water." I want to thank you for that.

But also, I'm so grateful for our guests today and for all of you who support our outreaches. But I want all of us to give a big thank you to Aly and Josh. What a blessing! There again is their website. You can go on our website and get more information about them.

Thank you so much for watching. Thank you for helping others.