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Week 18: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

O.S. Hawkins

James: Thank you. You're kind. This is going to be a great week. We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. Our friend O.S. Hawkins is with us.

By the way, I'm James, this is Betty. We are the Robisons inviting you to join us with *LIFE Today* every day because you will get life every day. And I'll tell you what you'll find about *LIFE Today*. You not only experience life you get to express life, and you get to share life, and that's one of the most exciting parts of life itself.

O.S. Hawkins is here. He was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas and also Fort Lauderdale, Florida and other places. And O.S. and I were having a little discussion up here, how long we've known each other. We've actually, this year known each other 50 years. So we've been around a while. The journey has been remarkable to just kind of look in and see what God's doing.

I'm holding a book here called, *The James Code*. Nothing to do with me. This is the book of James. And it's 52 scripture principles for putting your faith into action. He's going to talk about that. This whole series of books that he's written along the various codes is just really one of the most supernatural things.

I'm going to ask him to actually tell you kind of what happened with it because here's a pastor who's now head of Guidestones Financial Resources, which is actually helping pastors and church leaders in ways that most people never would give the time to help or know how to help them. It's one of the most loving things that I've ever seen anyone do and do it effectively, and he's really the perfect one to be leading it, not only pastoring but

he is actual shepherding shepherds in what he's doing right here.

Would you welcome O.S. Hawkins to *LIFE Today*?

O.S.: Thank you, James, Betty. Love you guys!

James: So glad to have you. I want you to –

By the way, if people want to know about this service where you're trying to help ministers and people sometimes that would be overlooked or don't prepare as well as they should, where would they go online just to see what it is you're offering?

O.S.: It is called "Mission Dignity." We're on a mission to bring dignity to some forgotten people, and that's retired pastors and their widows. Most of them pastored at the crossroads all their lives, lived in a church owned home, had to get out of it. Never had enough money to live on much less retire on. So we come alongside of them. Ten years ago we were able to help them with \$50 a month. Now the neediest among them get \$630 a month. One little pastor's widow, 87 years old, wrote me the other day and she said, "I get to eat at night now and it's not just a piece of toast."

So you can go on line to O.S.Hawkins.com and there's a link there to "Mission Dignity." And thank you for mentioning the books. We have a code series of books published by Harpercollins, Thomas Nelson, and I can talk about them because all the royalties and all the proceeds go to this group. It's sold a million and a half copies in the last three or four years. I know that you're making *The James Code*, a part of that code series, available to your partners now so we really appreciate that.

James: Let me ask you something because you know we're going to show our viewers. By the way, it's amazing to me that you're going to get spiritual inspiration. You're going to get a real, let's say an impact from life -- the life and love of God when you hear it from our guest. But you also are going to see an opportunity where you can be the

miracle that someone longs for. And our viewers tell us that's the most exciting thing they enjoy about the whole *LIFE Outreach* and even *LIFE Today* programming is what we're able to do, and God do through us to make a difference in people's lives.

You and your wife Suzie, you started helping us and you followed my ministry since way back to when we were relatively young. You seem to appreciate it. We have a respect for one another. But you and your wife supported what we're doing. What moved you to want to help us help others? O.S. what was it that moved you?

O.S.: I would say Suzie, who sends her love, couldn't be here tonight but I would say it was her more than me. Because we were just watching, oh this is years ago, maybe 20 years ago and we were watching and she said, "You know we've known James and Betty for decades and they're real. And we support a lot of stuff and they're doing something that nobody else is doing."

I think at that time you might be trying to raise money to drill wells for people in Africa. So there was a new coffee company nobody had ever heard of that I bought a little stock in and so I said, "Okay." She said, "Well, send them something." I said, "Well, okay." So I saw that stock. I said, "Well, it's not going to amount to anything. I'll just send that over to them."

[Laughter]

And I wish I would have known what it was going to be before I sent it to you because I sent you a bunch of Starbucks stock back in those days.

James: Amen!

O.S.: But you know, James, we feel like we have a stewardship. God's blessed us and we were faithful to giving to our local church but no place we love to give more than to you folks right here because we know what you're doing.

And one of the things James said in the book was he said, "Be doers of the word and not hearers only." You know a lot of people hearing the program today, and a lot of you are listening to the program today, and it is time to be a doer also, and to come alongside a ministry that's worthy of our support.

And I'm not just saying that because I'm on your program because I'm on your program a lot and I don't have to say it. I say it because we give and I believe in you, I believe in what you're doing but more importantly, I know you, believe in you, and love you.

James: Well, you know you said, and we appreciate O.S. said, "I'd like to give everyone who helps you help others watching the program, I'd love for us to give them the book." And that's what we're going to do. We're actually because of what you ask us to do, sharing it with the people who will help us feed the starving, the hungry, the malnourished and it's a thank you. But it's a tremendous study.

Tell us what you want our viewers to understand and that would encourage people to get the book but also to realize what it is going to do in their lives.

O.S.: Well this whole code series, there are eight books in it now, and it really began a long time ago. It began back in 1965 in my heart when a young man witnessed to me after a basketball game one night. I'd never heard a prayer in my home, never seen the Bible opened in my home. I could count on that hand how many times I'd ever been in church in my life. I was a senior in high school and he took me to his church the next day and I heard the gospel for the first time and embraced it.

Somebody came along, you know how people used to come along in the line and shake hands with people who made professions. Somebody came along, put something in my hand and said, "Son, you're going to need this."

It was a little piece of paper and I put it in my pocket. And I looked at it when I got

home. I thought it was hieroglyphics. It said 1 C-O-R 10, and then there was a colon, and a one and a three. I had no clue what that was.

But the next day I got in my car after school on Monday, drove downtown Fort Worth where I'd seen a Christian bookstore, an old Baptist bookstore in Frank Norris' old church and I went in and bought my first Bible. I was 17.

I got back out and I was sitting in the car and I was looking at it and I didn't know where to start. Looked at the beginning and I saw, it had all the books of the Bible listed there and they were abbreviated. I saw C-O-R. When I pulled that piece of paper out and I saw 1 C-O-R and then I turned to that page where it was and I saw... I recognized that ten was the chapter and 13 was a verse. And I sat in my car before I started it that day, as a 17-year old, memorized my first verse of scripture: "There is no temptation's taken you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you're able but will with the temptation make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it."

I can't tell you, James, how many times in those early Christian years I'd get to temptations corner and be tempted to go one way and that verse would come into my mind. So I started memorizing scripture.

Then about eight or nine years ago my little seven-year old grandchild at the time came and said, "Poppy, listen to this." And they had memorized a whole chapter of Psalms and they were quoting it to me. And it dawned on me how many people no longer memorize scripture.

How many Christians watching right now, have been a Christian for decades, it's been decades since you memorized a verse of scripture. So I picked the 52 verses in the Bible that everybody ought to know and Joshua 1:8 says, "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, meditate on it."

So I wrote a book called the Joshua code, 52 scripture verses every believer should know. One a week -- memorize one a week. There are devotional thoughts for it. And Thomas Nelson took it and it took off. Sold hundreds of thousands of copies. So then we followed it up with the Jesus code which is 52 scripture questions every believer ought to answer. Jesus was always asking questions. Over 100 questions escaped his lips that are recorded in the gospels. So I took 52 scripture questions that every believer ought to be able to answer before they go to heaven and it was called the Jesus code.

And then the third one in this series is the one you're giving to your partners, *The James Code*. And in James there are 52 scripture principles to put in your faith into action. You know James is all about putting shoe leather to your faith. He is all about putting faith into action, being a doer of the word not a hearer only. In fact, he is the originator of -- Nike stole the slogan "Just do it" because it really came from James. That's what he's saying in the Bible. He's saying when you see something here, you see these kids being fed in Sudan or wherever they are, wherever you all are out and the spirit of God quickens your heart. Do something about it. Act on it.

James: By the way, he talks an awful lot about giving and not overlooking people and giving attention to the wrong people and not seeing the people that Jesus referred to as the least of these.

O.S.: He says three things about your wealth in here. He said what is important is how you get it, how you give it, and how you guard it. Some people are just guarding wealth that will never be used for anything to advance the kingdom of God. So George Sweeting was president of Moody Bible Institute; he is 92 years old. Gave me one of the greatest pieces of advice years ago, down in Fort Lauderdale, I ever heard. He said, "Seldom resist a generous impulse."

I would say this: *Never* resist a generous impulse because if you have an impulse to do something for God, to do something good, you see some of these clips that I -- before we came out here I was watching some of the clips of your grandkids in the Sudan. As

people watched that and they see those kids and they have an impulse to do something about it, what do you think that came from? The devil doesn't encourage us to help people. The devil doesn't encourage us to be Christ's hand extended. If you've got an impulse, a generous impulse to do something good for God and to help others, that came from God. And so never resist a generous impulse. I'll tell you. If you'll begin to live your life like that, you'll be amazed at how God will bless.

Betty: I have to say that James does that. He's done it as long as I have known him. He has a very generous heart. If he sees a need and he wants to meet that need, and I think that's the heart of God. No question about it. That's why Jesus told the whole story of the Good Samaritan. A lot of people just pass by on the other side and pat themselves on the back. They wouldn't stoop so low to beat somebody up and leave them like that.

James: The two main most religious ones they just kept going on to their religious service.

O.S.: Pulled their ecclesiastical robes around them. Yeah.

James: It makes me very sad. The Bible is speaking to us very clearly in James about the faith, the true faith produces works and works doesn't produce grace, grace though leads you to do the good works. It seems like James really deals with that in a way that should, in my opinion and I think yours, move people to appropriate action upon what God says and upon his spirit, his love.

O.S.: It is not about faith and works like a lot of people think it is. It's not about faith or works. It's about a faith that works. That's what the book of James is about. A lot of people try to pit James against Paul but they're saying the same thing. Paul says in Ephesians, Paul is full of grace, and he says in Ephesians 2:8, 9, for by grace you are saved, through faith that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Then in verse ten he says, "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus." What? "Unto good works." They're saying the same thing. Paul was writing to the Judaizers. They were a group that were saying, "Yes, you've got to put your faith in Christ but you've got to add something to it. You've got to be circumcised. You've got to be baptized.

So Paul's emphasis is on grace. No, it is just grace. James is writing to the dispersed, the scattered ones. That's a completely different audience. He was writing to people who just said, "Well, you know, we've been saved. We're under grace. We can do anything we want to do. We can go live like we want to." It's the start of an antinomianistic attitude. And James is saying, "No, look. Faith without works is dead. It's futile. It is fatal." So he emphasizes the fact that it is a faith that works. It is evidence, the fruit of our faith is what James...

James: Why did you do 52 passages? Are you hoping because you talked about Christians not memorizing the word, not really getting the word in us so that the word carries us; rather than us just carrying the Bible, it carries us. Did you do that hoping that the 52 weeks out of the year you'd be maybe getting a verse down inside of you?

O.S.: You want a holy answer or the truth?

James: Go ahead.

O.S.: I'll tell you the truth. The first one was 52 scripture verses every believer should know, Joshua, 52 verses in the Bible. That if you'll know those verses, you'll know the Bible. The second one was 52 scripture questions everybody should answer. So it's the Joshua code, the Jesus code. And since this was the third one, there are eight of them now, since this was the third one I said, "Well, I better keep this 52." And so I went through the book of James and it just so happened that it fell out into 52 devotionals and thoughts.

So people can take them one a week for a year or they can take them 52 days a week. And since then we've had *The Daniel code*, which deals with the culture. *The Nehemiah Code*, which is about new beginnings. Everybody is looking for a new beginning. *The Christmas Code*, *The Easter Code*; the new one is *The Passion Code* and it is about God with us, God for us, and God in us. It is about the Holy Spirit.

James: You know one of the greatest killers today, and maybe even leading to suicide sadly is stress. And one of the things we've found, even surveying viewers of Christian television is a lot of people have stress. Listen. I just happened to open to Chapter 2, "Stress is predictable." Chapter 3, "Stress is problematic," no question about that. "Stress is paradoxical."

You know you're really amazing with these words and these outlines. I don't think James used all of that quite like that.

O.S.: Oh I tried to help him a little bit.

James: "Stress is purposeful." Let me tell you something. This gentleman right here that I've known a long time, and he's been a great leader, he loves you and he's doing this to bless you because he knows God's word is a blessing. And I'm telling you what, this is fabulous.

Would you say thanks to O.S. for just being a blessing to all of us? Because he has been to me and he has been to Betty, because he has prayed for me and he's watched us as we have pursued the Lord. It is a thrill to me because I am amazed at even just his outline, even his word power with those little titles of the chapters I was reading. He's got an amazing ability to take you into truth and then get truth into you. So we're really anxious to send you this.

And O.S. we've talked about the joy of giving and helping, which James makes that very clear. I want to show you a very real picture of a serious, serious problem that is more

devastating even than stress and some of the things we've just alluded to. This is starvation. And I want you to just, please, just go on hold a minute and ask God to let you identify with what these precious mothers feel. Please! And think about it and then say, "God, what can I do to be a miracle in that situation?" Because listen to me, you can be and God wants to be that miracle of love expressed through you. Watch.

On the mission field

Open captions:

>> I had two children. But my firstborn suddenly became sick with fever and diarrhea. She died three days ago.

Announcer: South Sudan is in crisis. The extreme heat and arid landscape are oppressive and unforgiving, leaving people of the land defenseless against the famine that afflicts them.

Open captions:

>> She would cry and say, "Mom, I'm hungry."

And I would have to tell her, "My child, I have nothing to give you." There is no food here.

Announcer: The vegetation here is so scarce mothers have no choice but to feed their children wild fruit that often proves to be toxic itself. As a result, countless children have lost their lives to poisonous food than malnutrition. Their mothers are left with both immense grief and crippling fear over the health of their remaining children.

For Nagu, the loss is very fresh. But mourning her daughter is a distraction she can't afford as she fights for the survival of her baby who has also fallen ill.

Open captions:

>> I am alone with no help, and I fear for my baby's life. I can only pray and ask God to

help me. It's my only hope.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Betty, I don't know how many people watching who can identify with what a mother feels. What do you feel as a mother that knows what loss is?

Betty: Well, as I was listening to the heart of that mother, and she said her little four-year old is saying, "Mama, I'm hungry. I need something to eat." I can't even imagine the hurt in that mother's heart from having to tell her little four-year old, "I have nothing to give you. Nothing left. I'm so sorry." And how that mother must have wept in her heart for her little girl. And then three days later her little girl dies. So sad!

It doesn't have to be that way. She's asking for someone to give her hope for her baby that's still with her, but maybe not much longer James if she doesn't get the help. Please join with us and let's get the help that these mothers need for their babies.

James: I want to ask you to identify with what Betty was saying there in behalf of the mother. We don't want anybody to know what it is like to lose a child. But let me just say this to you because we've lost our daughter. And I said, God, what in the world can you do? I need to know. And one of the things I know is that I really feel loss that others experience that we have a remedy for.

One of the things, Betty, that is just one of the most difficult memories with our daughter, Robin, because she died three days after Christmas, Betty was there with her before Christmas just spending time with her, taking care of her and we'd pretty well decided Betty was going to move up to be able to be even closer to her. And Betty would call me nearly every day and she would say, "James, I've been with Robin and I don't think you

could bear to see her right now and what's happening. I just need to be able to fix it. I want to go in there and fix it." It was a very difficult time when we'd hang up and I'd pray.

Okay, we didn't see our daughter healed of that cancer -- and she's in heaven. But here's what I want you to know. We have the absolute irrefutable perfect cure for what's taking those little babies and those children. It's food. We have the missionaries in place in some of the most dangerous places on the planet to go in and say here's life because of the love of God. And you're the ones that express that love enabling those missionaries to do something about it.

So here's what I'm asking you to do. I want you to go online or dial that number and get your bankcard and use it like a check. And I'd like you to give the largest gift you can right now to help: \$30, \$50, or \$100, this is just a fact, we can feed three, five or ten children for the next months. Think about what I just said: \$100, 10 children, totally changes their lives. We've saved millions -- way over 10 million lives have been saved that we know of the children. We, you did it. The love of God through you.

So would you be the miracle? You would have been the miracle we longed for if you said here it is. I know you would have. We can be the miracle for them. So would you please right now just make the best gift you possibly can? We have some gifts to send you to encourage and bless you in your life including *The James Code* that will literally get the word in you carrying you with greater truth and understanding. *The Passion* translation, it will be a really blessing to you; just put literally fire in the truth of God even as you read it.

Would you right now please, if you want to write a check make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail? Please do it. Please be the miracle answer that these mothers' hearts long for. Thank you for doing that right now.

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 from starvation in parts of Angola, Mozambique and South Sudan.

With previous reserves gone and mission feeding helping in areas of great famine, we urgently need your support to replenish food supplies to reach the 400,000 children who are counting on us. Your life saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five or ten children.

With your gift we'll send you *The James Code* by O.S. Hawkins, an outstanding devotional to help you go from knowing about God to living for God, and putting your faith into action. You will also enjoy this beautifully grafted leather bookmark.

With your gift of \$100 or more please request *The Passion* translation Bible. This New Testament edition including Psalms and Proverbs ignites *The Passion* of the Bible to modern readers by merging *The Passion* of God's heart for his children with the life-changing truth of his word.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our commemorative bronze sculpture, "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms."

Please call write or make your gift online today.

End of clip**In the studio**

James: Well, Betty and I just say thank you for being the miracle in someone's life. Thank you so much. You really are a tremendous blessing to us. You encourage us because of the love of God flowing through you. Thank you for not turning away.

The Passion translation is just a wonderful study guide. It is amazing. It will be a blessing to you. *The James Code*, I tell you, O.S. has a remarkable gift and I think it is very important that he saw the importance of what he was doing and the publishers did, and then he was able to place something in your hands. O.S. and his wife wanted us to say thank you for helping these kids and give you this as a gift.

Would you join Betty and me and say thanks to O.S. Hawkins?

O.S.: Thank you, James. Love you, Betty!

James: Bless you in all you do. Thank all of you for watching. Thanks for sharing life.