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Week 17: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Erwin McManus

James: Thank you. I believe you're glad that we have a special guest. James Robison and Betty welcome you. Erwin McManus is with us. He's written a new book, *The Way of the Warrior*; an ancient path to inner peace.

One of the things you're going to see right upfront is something we know right here by talking to people and praying with people every day, hundreds of people, sometimes as many as 2,000, that many yesterday, they call for help. And some people call to help others. The vast majority, 80-85% of every call is for help. Many of them are lonely, many of them are depressed, and they lack peace. They seem to lack hope.

Well, *The Way of the Warrior*, interestingly, is actually finding the way of peace, an abiding inner peace that most people never have and yet the Prince of Peace says it's more than a possibility to be a reality. I want Erwin, I want to give him a good welcome but I want him to tell you what's happened right there in Hollywood, right there in L. A; just kind of like on a street corner on like the Hollywood Boulevard, just right there, what's happened in the last year.

Would you welcome Erwin McManus back to *LIFE Today*?

Erwin, good to see you.

Erwin: Good to be with you.

James: Really good! Tell us what's happened in this impossible place, Hollywood. Tell us what happened right there in the beautiful little gathering that you have.

Erwin: First of all it is so good to be here with you guys. You guys are always such incredible hosts and most gracious and compassionate people. So it's an honor just to be with you.

It is incredible when you look over 30 years. I went to L.A. when I was much younger. And people would always tell me L.A. was sort of like a cemetery for churches. And you just can't do anything meaningful there and Hollywood is not interested in spiritual things, and the message of Jesus will never be received. We're right on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and La Brea. We're walking distance from Grauman's Chinese Theatre and El Capitan and all that. The stars walk of fame starts right across the street for us. But just this past year we had the incredible joy of seeing over 5,000 people come to know Jesus on that corner.

James: Did you hear that? That's Hollywood -- 5,000.

Erwin: And instead of baptizing inside of our building we actually put baptisteries outside on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard so that it would be a Hollywood spectacular. That's where they have the Oscars and everything else. We figured we might as well be outdoors too. So we've seen over a thousand adults baptized outside this past year. It's been so exciting to see that.

What's amazing is we did a little survey two Easters ago and I asked how many people here would say "I'm an atheist but if God were out there I'd be open to finding him?" And we had over a thousand people who said, "I'm an atheist but if God's out there I'm open to finding him."

I think that's one of the unique things about Mosaic is that our community is filled with atheists, with agnostics, with Buddhists, with Muslims, with Hindus. I just met someone

who came from the religion of Jainism, who just came to faith in Jesus. Someone from the religion from John the Baptist. One of the original followers of John the Baptist who had not yet found out that John was actually pointing to Jesus, came to faith on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard. And the people from the religion of Zoroastrianism. You can't even imagine where they come from!

And then thousands and thousands and thousands of young people, the world's brightest most talented most creative people coming to Hollywood to see their dreams come true, to become famous, to become celebrities, to become artists. And yet so oftentimes their lives are shipwrecked and there's where they find hope and a meaning for their life.

James: Okay. You've written some very inspirational books. You said if you gave a book to children, your children, or could want a parent to, this would be the book you'd want to give them, right?

Erwin: Absolutely! Context. My son is 30 years old, my daughter is 27 and as a parent you know that nothing fills your heart with more joy to see your kids living a life of fullness and nothing breaks your heart more when their lives are falling apart and they're struggling. In many ways I feel like as if my heart no longer is inside of chest and my heart is now inside of my children. A lot of my joy and sorrow is deeply connected to their own journey.

I wrote this book because I felt that I wanted to pass on to my kids my internal journey of going from brokenness to wholeness, from fighting the chaos inside of me to finding peace. I wrote it as an ancient Samurai writing to a young Samurai passing on these eight codes that will allow them to have mastery over their internal world so they can live with inner peace.

James: Is there some strength in that teaching that caught your attention, you just referenced it, which would not be what you would be telling people to do to get to Christ but evidently you're talking about something that's so important that you didn't mind

referencing the importance of it.

Erwin: No, it's interesting because my publisher, the House, with Random House, when they first received the manuscript they said, "We were surprised it's so much about Jesus." I said, "I don't know any other way to peace except by following Jesus."

But at the same time, my book was very much inspired by these old ancient Samurai stories of like Crouching -- or Chinese, like *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* or *The Seven Samurai* or the *Last Samurai*. I love these old films because the heroes in these stories are never violent individuals. In fact, they're always the person who has found inner peace. And they live in conflict because they have found inner peace but they live in a world filled with violence and chaos.

So the story is really this underlying determination that peace never happens without a struggle. Peace never happens without a fight. And so the opening line of the book is simply this, the warrior is not ready for battle until they have come to know peace. I think we have a society where people are out of control with rage and anger and violence. And at the same time we're trying to create world peace.

You know what I think is interesting? I worked a lot as an anthropologist and I study species, and humans are my species of preference. I love studying humans. We're a very unique species. We captured fire and light. We're the species that learned how to take human sound and translate it through invisible waves through radio and then images through television. We're a pretty extraordinary species.

James: Take the invisible and make it visible. Move it through the space.

Erwin: We're the species that invented pizza.

[Laughter]

We're an amazing species.

James: Surely, we need forgiveness for that.

[Laughter]

Erwin: And we invented the iPhone and we harness nuclear power and solar power. We put a human being on the moon. We know how to travel to outer space. We're so advanced and yet, we have not figured out how to bring world peace.

James: Yeah! Even personal peace. I think that's the problem with world peace.

Erwin: That is the problem because you see, the world is raging with war because there is a war that rages within us. A part of what motivated me to write this book was we'll never know world peace until we know inner peace.

James: All right. So how do you help people get there? The warrior fights only for peace.

Erwin: So the opening code is the central code, the warrior fights only for peace. I wrote this book specifically with this imagery of a warrior because when you're dealing with issues like depression, anxiety, when a person is having a panic attack or overwhelmed by stress -- I don't know what's going on completely in culture but in Los Angeles and across the world there is a generation that is the most free, has the most opportunity, is the most educated, has the most resources available to them that are paralyzed by fear. They're on medication for depression, they're struggling with panic attacks, and I began to realize that a huge part of the dilemma right now is that we have this great opportunity to live life fully but people are in so much inner turmoil that they can barely function and survive.

So the opening code is saying look, to ignore the war within you is to surrender to it and

to lose the battle. You cannot win a battle you will not admit you're in. I wanted to use warrior language to say, look when you admit you're depressed, when you admit you're struggling with fear, when you admit you're struggling with anxiety, this doesn't make you weak. It does not make you a coward. It actually makes you a warrior because finally you're fighting with the courage to fight the battle in your inner world, and to know that you can come out of it victorious.

This is not a book that leaves you in despair. I'm not here to say, hey, you're depressed, you're anxious, you're stressed out, and it's okay. I'm here saying that is the human experience but you don't have to stay there. There is a way to hope. There is a way to health. There is a way to wholeness. And this process will help you get there.

James: Okay. You put in print what's in your heart and what you wanted to apply and see it applied and see it have effect, right?

Erwin: Absolutely.

James: Have you seen what you've put in print already in action in people where you imparted this insight to them? And you can actually see that this is beginning to happen? That the Prince of Peace suddenly becomes the abiding presence in them that gives them supernatural peace?

Erwin: James, I never write anything as a result of research. I always write everything from the beginning point of experience. I will not write about things that I've not been through. For me, I've been through this journey personally. I'm an immigrant from El Salvador. I never knew my real father and always lived with that shadow that tormented me going, who am I? How can I ever know who I am if I don't know who my father is? My grandparents raised me for the first few years of my life. My mom courageously came back and got us and raised us. But she remarried and it was a tumultuous contact.

By the time I was 12 years old I was in a psychiatric chair. I was in and out of a hospital.

I struggled with psychosomatic issues. I was depressed. I couldn't go to sleep at night, couldn't wake up in the morning. I had night terrors for probably five to seven years of my life. My entire internal world was in chaos. It was in turmoil and I would not have survived.

When I was 20 years old I had a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ. And I can tell you that no cliché fixed me. Not even just memorizing a Bible verse fixed me. But what happened was I ended up in this relationship with the creator of the universe. No one can get into the battle inside of you except for two people: You and God. No one else can help you win that battle. No one else can get inside of your soul. So I was fighting this battle all by myself.

What I keep telling people, look, this battle is too important, and it is too powerful to fight alone. You need the God who brings peace to enter into the universe inside of you so he can win this battle for peace in your life.

James: How do you show people to get into that process?

Erwin: Well, there are eight codes and I'm just going to highlight maybe one or two. I think it's code number five that talks about the warrior owns defeat. That is one of the principle chapters. It's the smallest chapter in the book and maybe the most powerful one.

I have a psychology background and so one of the things I've done a great deal over the last 30-40 years is I've done a lot of psychological assessments on people and try to help people understand, because I think you use all the resources you can to help people understand themselves because self-awareness is a huge part of moving toward health.

One of the things I've discovered is that when a person takes low responsibility for their life they actually become less capable of taking great risks. They also become more powerless to step into great change. So here's the counterintuitive thing. Whenever you blame someone else for your life you've advocated the power to change your life. And so

it would be so easy for me to blame my father or blame my mom or blame my family or my ethnic minority status. Believe me, it wasn't easy growing up Latino in the world I came up in. It would be so easy to blame someone else all my life -- and there were times in my life I did. And every time I blamed something else or someone else I became more powerless.

One of the most difficult things to do is to help a person make a shift in their life where they stop blaming other people for their lives and start taking responsibility for their lives. When you take responsibility for your life you actually reclaim the power to change, to see your life changed. And so one of the things I think is so important as we move forward is to stop looking for a reason why you failed. To stop looking for why what has happened. It may not be your fault but it is your responsibility. And so you can spend your whole life pointing out why you're the way you are or you can actually take responsibility for it and say no, this is who I was but it is not who I'm going to be.

James: Even if your initial response is it is their fault, they caused it. Somewhere you've got to be warrior enough to push that back, that enemy back and accept the responsibility?

Erwin: Because if you keep blaming other people you're actually living in the past. This is where the power of forgiveness comes in, of course. Because when you have unforgiveness in your life, when you are filled with bitterness you are trapped in the past. Because bitterness is our attempt to hold people to their past, to their worst moments. But what it actually does is bitterness keeps us trapped in that moment.

One of the things I began discovering is I was depressed all the time. I felt angry all the time. And a part of it was that there were moments in my life where I was profoundly hurt. There were moments in my life where something really terrible happened. And I could spend my whole life blaming that person except I was still giving them power over my life.

You know what the great surprise is? Forgiveness feels like a cheap way out, doesn't it? Why should I forgive you? I'm letting you off the hook. I'm going to hold you as long as I can, prisoner to what you did to me. But they're not a prisoner. You're the only prisoner.

When you forgive someone they are now powerless to control your life. So I keep telling people, why would you give someone who never should have had any power over your life a continued power over your life?

Betty: Wouldn't it be like a puppet? All the strings of what the enemy puts on us. He's making our lives miserable because we're tied to that, we're trapped in it.

Erwin: That's right. We have this word called regret but regret is actually hope facing backwards. Hope can only exist in the future. But the moment you're living in the past you're surrendering you're future. I keep telling people stop remembering your past and start remembering your future because that's where everything God wants to do is. God cannot change your past but he can free you from your past and create a new future.

Betty: I was trapped by fear. I grew up very, very fearful for many, many years until I came and someone spoke about the hope that we can have if we realize we have the power within us when Jesus came into our lives that we can battle that and stand against it. And like you said it is a process. It took a process but I'm so grateful in that it did because I learned so many of the things that God wanted to show me. It made me stronger.

Erwin: That's so good. You know what's funny? There are so many people that I meet who say, I'm too evolved to have faith. I'm too intellectual; I'm too educated to believe in faith. But they still believe in fear. Because you can deny faith but you can't deny fear. But fear is just faith in the most negative future. I go, well, if you're going to go ahead and operate in fear, which is you believing in the worst possible future, why don't you just go ahead and operate in faith because it is you believing in God's best possible future.

So it's an interesting kind of dynamic that we're oftentimes unwilling to step into the things we think are beneath us as humans now that we're so evolved like faith. But actually, faith is believing the best possible tomorrow. Faith believes that your past doesn't have to be your future, that your past can stay in your past and your future can be complete now.

James: Would you like to say thanks to Erwin for writing and sharing how we can actually live in this peace that God want us to have? And what a gift God has given you! And what a beautiful presence in your life.

Our viewers, to me have really learned something about the joy of service. Think about this. I want you to just keep your seatbelt buckled just a second there. Do you realize that at the close of almost every one of these programs we take you where you can see the most overlooked people and the people in the greatest pain and distress?

Now watch it. The tendency is for most, well, I've got to go away from that. Okay, I've heard what's for me and I hope I get some help. But the real wise person that wants to experience and express the love and life of God says, "I'm going to wait a minute. I want to see if there is a needed miracle, a need that I can meet, and the miracle I can become in that situation."

Well, let me tell you something. You absolutely can. But only if you look at the least of these and then do what the Father says is in his heart. Watch. I think you'll want to do it.

On the mission field

Announcer: It is hard to imagine the reality that thousands of children are dying on the continent of Africa each year simply because their families do not have enough food.

Isak: It's absolutely devastating to just walk through this cemetery here and to see how

they're digging graves. They're preparing graves for young children; more than ten graves that have been dug here. These graves don't have a name yet. They haven't been allocated to a child but they've dug them because they know that children will die in the next week.

Announcer: Our mission teams have seen firsthand mothers emotionally devastated, having lost children because they literally starved to death.

Isak: This child is lying here dying because we didn't do enough, because we didn't get to their village in time, because we weren't able to take a bowl of food a day, something that costs so little. And yet does so much. It heals the heart of a mother. It saves the life of a child. It wins the battle against malnutrition and death. Unfortunately, I think it is too late for this precious child. God, I pray it's not but I think it is. But it is not too late for tens of thousands of others that so desperately need your help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Over the crying that you hear, now listen, I said a moment ago if you'll just watch. Beth Moore prayed over a child like that, Betty and miraculously he was raised up. She went back and kicked a soccer ball with that miracle.

But Isak Pretorius, now remember his father, Peter Pretorius died last year. We spent 30 years there with him, rescuing the perishing. Foreign governments in Africa said we saved 13 million of their little children's lives. We, meaning you. Not me and Betty, we did our part, so did the missionaries, but you carried the load.

Did you hear what Isak said about that little child? Betty said we got here too late. We got too late to his village. Very likely he was asking in another moment, would you help us go to that village and not be empty-handed? Would you help us feed the 400,000 children that we found right now that are in desperate need of food?

Our grandson just came back from South Sudan. He's got a little baby not even nine months old yet. Came back, and talking about three children that had walked for days. Their parents murdered; shot just because they were Christians -- killed! And he wanted to bring those kids home, and got home to his wife with their little baby. She wanted him to bring them home. Said, "Luke, we've got to bring them home! We've got to take those kids."

See, that's the love of God that's just flowing through people who understand what love can do. Would you be an answer to that missionary's heart cry that we get to the village before it is too late? Would you help us feed those 400,000, one child at a time?

Betty, it's amazing but we can still feed three children for several months for a gift of \$30; for \$50 we can feed five, for \$100 we can feed ten. That's not an exaggeration. You can do that.

Erwin, you just talked about your wife and how you're saving some kids, and how little it took to save the lives of these kids. It's miraculous, isn't it?

Erwin: It's incredible.

James: It is amazing what a little love will do in those situations. All right, here's what I want to ask you to do. Go online or dial that number, go get your bankcard. This is a love gift. You're going to use it like a check. Would you help us? Would you help us feed ten children with a \$100 gift that will feed them for the next several months, or \$50 for five?

Listen. I may say \$30 is not much. For three children and for that family, boy that's huge. There are some of you who can give a thousand dollars and help us carry for a hundred. Whatever you can do please do it.

We've got some beautiful gifts to send you. We're going to send you O.S. Hawkins book,

The James Code, which is talking about living it not just reading it. But also, this is a beautiful study Bible. This is *The Passion* translation. What it is, it is like commentary just expounding the Word of God in really language filled with the passionate love of God and the incredible gifted editor translator and writer. Much like the *Living Bible* but in many ways it is rightly named, *The Passion*. We're going to send it to you to say thanks. If you can help us would you do that, care for ten children? And we have the beautiful bronze for those of you who will literally get someone in the shepherd's arms. Would you help us? Could you help us care for a hundred children? I hope you will.

Please right now go online or dial the number and make the gift God put on your heart. 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 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: You know I've just, in my heart, been believing that every one of you who can help will help. And we want to send you the gifts that will really bless you.

But also, let me just say this to you. This is just out and boy, it's getting legs. It's giving people their legs, their spiritual legs as a spiritual warrior and overcomer. If you'd like to have Erwin's book, you say, James, if we help give those children food would you send us this book? Yes I will. How about recommending your friends go online and get it? You might even want to get a copy for a friend and give it as a gift. But you help us give life, take care of these children and their families, you want the book, we'll be glad to send it to you. Just ask for it.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Erwin McManus for being with us? Erwin, you're going to be with us now in another program right here.

Erwin: I'm looking forward to it.

James: We're going to talk about it some more. Don't miss it. Tell your friends to watch. Tell them to watch *LIFE Today* every day.