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Week 22: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Elisabeth Hasselbeck

James: Thank you! Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome someone who may not have always felt like there was this warmth and this joy that we're all together like a family. We've had a wonderful time actually having a meal together in the presence of the Lord. Elisabeth Hasselbeck is with us.

Look at the title of this book, *Point of View*. View! I've got to ask her, did *The View* have anything to do with *Point of View*? Because for many of us the first time we met this beautiful bright light was on *The View*. I've got to be honest with you, it was like in the midst -- excuse me, ladies -- in the midst of darkness and tension there was this bright light. It seemed like people were trying to put it out and I couldn't even tell where the audience was. We knew where we were. We were cheering and praying. And we said, "Man, we like that lady!"

Would you welcome Elisabeth Hasselbeck to *LIFE Today*?

Elisabeth, we're so glad to see you.

Elisabeth: Thank you for having me.

James: Did *The View*, did that *View*, did that fit in there?

Elisabeth: Well, it is a big part of my living history. So I thought it would maybe catch attention a bit of some. But if you've been in television or broadcasting, you know that

extracting a *Point of View* of someone's story means lining up behind their lens, getting as close to how they see things as possible.

I feel what God's really laid on my heart has a lot to do about trying to understand someone who might not stand for the same things you stand for. So he really put this book on my heart in a way and I thought, man, he kept giving me this title and I thought, well, that's a little play on words I didn't intend. But you know what? God's going to use it as he sees best for his glory. It is an honor to be able to write about him. It's just an honor to be able to write about him.

Betty: Well, I have to say the only reason I would ever keep watching *The View* was to watch you because you were a light in darkness in so many ways there. A lot of times I felt like you were in the war zone. But God really came through and he really honored you through every word that you spoke. And even though you might have felt outnumbered God was watching and so were his children too and it really makes a difference.

Elisabeth: Well, I don't know if I knew it at the time during that ten years. I can't thank you enough for saying that. And when I hear people now say that they'd watch and they would pray, I might not ever meet you in person but if you did, thank you. Because I felt a real duty and a privilege being there. I felt like God put me there unqualified but called. I felt as though he trained me up in *Survivor* on how to stand on a log for nine and a half hours maybe himself, and stick it out in the Australian outback with nine of the deadliest snakes so that *The View* would feel easy.

[Laughter]

James: It was even deadlier in the second.

Elisabeth: I was like, this is nothing! But I do think I wasn't qualified for that position and debating five days a week on some of the toughest issues, I just feel like it allowed

me to ask him for words. And is it Luke 12:12 where God says, "I'll give you the right words at the right time." I feel like even when I didn't know that scripture but I asked him to guide me before I took the stage, he did. I prayed most days that that would glorify him because I can't worry about pleasing the world.

You know when you talk on television, you're 100% chance of making 50% of the people 100% mad is 100%? So it's like, man, it's tough. But I'm really thankful. I'm thankful for even the chance to have those challenging moments.

I loved being able to use my freedom to defend those who protect and defend our freedoms. I loved that opportunity. I admit, that's the one thing I miss. I loved being able to be a voice for those that maybe weren't given a value by the world. But I know that God assigns the value, not the world. And so I loved that about that position. I'm so glad to have done that for ten years. I'm so thankful. I talk a lot about what I learned in that time because I like to be able to look at what did God grow in me during that time? I'm thankful.

James: Did you feel like you were in a spiritual war zone? Did you feel like there was tension there and you were there trying to be a light in the midst of some tension and so forth? Did you sense that? That you were representing perhaps a hope that some people didn't see? Because you really wanted to protect innocent life. You believe that all life has value and potential and should be considered precious. You would stand for that, those things you had convictions.

But didn't you feel a lot of push back pretty well coming at you? Did it ever exhaust you or exasperate you?

Elisabeth: It did many a time, and sometimes on camera. I'm not always proud of how to the point of exasperation I would get because I'm human. But it was just a good reminder that I am -- without God's grace and God's mercy, I will lose my temper. I would be choppy with my words. Words can be a sword or they can save someone's heart

by his power. I think on my own maybe my selections would have been different but with his spirit, that Holy Spirit through me, like please, I pray that God always gives me, like the air of the Holy Spirit, the breath of the Holy Spirit. So his words articulate mine.

James: I felt like you represented him well. Let me just say this so you'll know, when I look at you, Whoopi, and I look at you Joy, say the word *joy* -- I'm the product of a forced sexual relationship on a hospice nurse when she was 40. An alcoholic son of the person that she cared for raped her. She conceived, went to have the baby aborted, the doctor wouldn't do it. I was born. She said the reason she allowed me to be born was not because she was forced to. Of course, today I'd never been born.

Some people would say, "Boy, that would have been great if you've never been born." You'd be surprised how many people would be cheering that. But here's the thing I want you to know, when my mother prayed she said she heard God say, "Have this baby. The baby will bring joy to the world." Now we've saved millions of lives on the mission field with the feeding programs and fresh water and we've led millions of people to Christ.

Joy, listen to me. I just wondered if you've ever experienced what that names implies, real joy and inner peace that the Lord gives? And Whoopi, you've been given so much talent! My goodness! Can you just play so many roles? I sometimes wonder, God gave us all the gifts and talent, what if you decided to be a bridge builder and really said, "Let's come to the table of reason and love?" Hey! I'd love to see that.

You may not believe it but this old pretty strong preacher, he loves you. Joy, I love you. This lady sitting here with us, Elisabeth, she loves you. We've even talked about it, she loves you.

You went back to *The View* with this book.

Elisabeth: I did. I'm a glutton for punishment. I mean!

[Laughter]

James: Don't you feel what I just said to them is in our heart, that little message we just said? So you went back. You thought maybe you wouldn't, but you did. So how was that? How you did it go?

Elisabeth: When I knew God was laying this book on my heart I said, "Okay God. I'm going to write this book but I'm not going back to *The View* to talk about it." And I let everybody around me know it. And I drew the line right around me -- like protection line.

Listen. As soon as you do that God comes over with a big eraser. I had no idea the work that I needed in the corners of my heart about restoration and relationship with the women that I worked with there. Because God had to do it in my heart first. I was looking for the change to come from them but the changing needed to come into my heart first. God healed me in my heart in places so that when I can go, because he tells us in Colossians so that we can be unified in Christ.

It was not a month or two later, I was running and I had this yearning to go back. It wasn't even just a, "Fine, I'll go." It was I want to go. I felt a pull to go back. And I'll tell you this, your prayers are being answered. Because Whoopi and I don't think the same about a lot of things but I will tell you this, we have a great relationship because we love the same and the relationship we have and what God is doing in both of our hearts is what I think God desires. Or he really desires, like I desire as a parent, when my kids are not getting along and they're divided? It breaks my heart! And I know that our heavenly Father doesn't want us divided no more than I want my kids separated because of an issue or angry with each other and turned away from each other.

We just went to the Grand Canyon as a family. And I was looking at that and I'm like, man! We have canyon relationships. We have canyons because we've allowed something for miles and years to push us aside. But God's bigger than that. He's bigger than the canyons. He can build those bridges, but he uses our hearts to pull us back to one another.

So, I really believe, I love what's happening in my relationship with Whoopi. I love what's kept us friends over the years despite disagreeing on things. And I would encourage, like anyone out there, if you've got that canyon, like, go first -- go first and ask God to do the work in your heart because there's someone out there that he desires you to be close with again. Because he didn't want you to have a canyon relationship. He doesn't want it for our life, our world, our politics -- no more than our friendship.

So I've experienced that. He's been so good. By His grace alone are we able to go first? But it is joyful. That's where the joy is. And so I'm just thankful for that. He desires that for us. So then isn't it disobedient if we're not aligning our hearts to behave in a way in accordance with his desire.

But the cool thing about God that I realized is I always thought I had to work a little harder, I had to do a little more. I had to get rid of my bad stuff before I could come before him but that's not who God is. Like the best thing about God is that he doesn't assign us a task without giving us his spirit to help us get there. That's the coolest thing. I'm like, I don't have to do this on my own? That's amazing! Like I don't have to fix myself up before? God loves me? God looks at me exactly where I am, exactly right there and sees me and loves me and doesn't leave me in my mess? That's amazing news.

Like I've delivered hard news every day, that's good news. That's the good news!

James: He doesn't love us less than our mess. He loves us right there. That prodigal's father loved him while he was in the mess ruining the reputation. He's looking for him to come back into the joy of the home, the father's home. I want that for everybody. I sense that's what you want.

You tell a very interesting story in here that I think has a whole lot to do with trust and confidence. You were talking about back when you were on *Survivor*, I think y'all were going to do a parachute jump. Now I've never wanted to do that.

We have a camera person, this lady over here, she takes pictures all over the mission field, and she's jumped. Oh that girls jumped. I was with President Bush on his second and third jump. And then talking I'd say, "Oh my God! I can't believe you're doing it."

Here's the deal. Were you really worried about that? What were you thinking about?

Elisabeth: So there's a whole chapter in this book about before *Survivor* and so you saw everything on *Survivor* but this is before, when you're just trying to survive the process of trying to get on *Survivor*. And Mark Burnett, who is a friend of mine now, was not my friend then. Because he wanted us -- the assignment was -- I was actually in Texas and he said, "You have to find a flight school and you're going to jump out of a plane ten times to get certified."

At the time, so two things, one I was under an alias. So at the time because they were trying to keep *Survivor* quiet, my name was Amanda. Okay?

Here's a word to the wise. When you're trying to jump out of a plane and take a lesson in emergency situations, you might want to use your real name.

[Laughter]

And so I look to the left and I see before I get in, I did all the test rounds, I'm in the fluorescent jumpsuit. And check one, check two, and I look over and I see the gentleman who's packing my shoot. And I kind of lock eyes with him because someone else said, "Just whatever you do, know who packs your shoot."

[Laughter]

So I was like, I don't know you from Adam. I gave him one more look and he looked at me blankly and I thought, well, that's a bad feeling.

[Laughter]

So I get on the plane, we do the test and I'm ready to go and all of the sudden, check one, check two, and I think I jumped. I hit something hard. It was the inside of plane.

Everyone's screaming, "Amanda! Amanda!" They whipped me back into the plane. They said, "Amanda, we've been calling you. You can't jump yet. Some paperwork didn't go through." And I'm thinking, my name's not Amanda.

[Laughter]

So everybody at about 5,000 feet of altitude was so confused.

I learned two things. One, the reason why I was worried about who packs my shoot was because in life we have these free fall situations we're about to take a big jump and so it made me think about like who is filling your heart with God's word because you're about to, whether you realize it or not, at any point in life take a free fall situation into something new, something scary, something unknown, something hard, something sad, something devastating. Maybe it's something exciting but if the people who are packing your shoot are not packing it with the Word of God so when you take that jump, what holds you up is his word, like really pay attention to who packs your shoot. You've got one backpack. So I like to know whose packing my shoot. I try to be a good shoot packer for other people.

And two, you can, up to a point, live or try to maintain someone else's identity. You can try to be like someone else to get the job done but ultimately, I think our desire is to be called specifically by the name that God gave us. He knows your name, he knows you by name, but when the going gets tough it's your name that he's going to call. He calls you, specifically, so you don't have to be like anybody else and you can't be like anybody else. He doesn't ask you to be like anybody else. He loves you exactly as he wired and made you.

So those two lessons came quick. And I'm so thankful that I did not end up having to jump out of that plane because I did not want to jump out of the plane. I don't think it was God's plan for me that day.

[Laughter]

James: Your trust is what carried you through *The View*, it's what carried you through your *Survivor* and you survived. And it is what's carrying you now as you're being a mother and you don't know what the future holds, you know who holds it.

And we're going to all be praying that God directs her wherever he wants her light to shine because it shines beautifully and brightly and consistently with conviction and with courage and with compassion.

We want you to know that we pray everybody that can possibly get their hands on it will read the *Point of View*, will see the things that God has revealed to you that you're wanting to share.

Would you say thanks to God and thanks to Elisabeth for being a witness?

Elisabeth: It's all God!

James: And for being a bright shining light when the darkness is intense.

Father, I just pray for Elisabeth, her family, for these athletes coming up, for her daughter, for her husband. I just pray that your glory will fill their household and every member of that family to overflowing with your life, love, and joy and peace, courage, contentment, conviction, and joy -- and kingdom purpose in Jesus' name.

We really do love you and we thank God for your witness. It's been an honor for us to

have you because you're such a bold witness.

Our viewers, I think are among the most amazing people in the world. I used to tell the missionaries, "You're the greatest Christians I've ever seen." The missionaries said, "No. The greatest Christians are the people who watch the need that we meet and make it possible for us to have more than a broken heart, we have the ability to meet the need. We're not empty-handed because of the viewers of *LIFE*."

I want you to look in right now on mission feeding and a crisis situation that a miracle opportunity has come. But we're going to have to have I've said we need 270 people who will say, "I've got \$1,000 to meet that need that will feed thousands of people." And our grandson said, "Papaw, we've got to do it."

And we're asking you to do that in addition to feeding the 400,000. Just listen closely and then would you be a miracle? Whether you give \$30, \$50, or \$100 to feed three, five or ten or you help us take this additional leap. Watch very closely please. Try to hear the heart of God and do the will of God, become a miracle for someone -- an answer to prayer. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Luke: During my time in ministry, I've often discovered the need is far more severe than I anticipated. So here in Uganda, children and people have literally been forced out of their homes. I know Isak here has been able to meet some of these people. We're here with three precious siblings, and I know you've gotten a chance to talk with them and hear their story and find out kind of what's going on.

Isak: It's kind of hard to repeat that story. This little guy just -- you can see how he just cries. His whole world has been destroyed. This family of children saw their mother and father slaughtered in front of them -- killed right in front of them.

Luke: After witnessing her parents murders, 15-year old Joyce took her brother and sister, ages six and three, and fled for their lives.

Isak: They've literally spent the last five days trekking through the bush in this area. Let me tell you, that's a hostile bush. No food.

Luke: Today, Joyce and her siblings are safe from immediate danger but they're faced with an insurmountable task of starting a new life without their mother and father. They need our help.

Isak: We can't change what's happened to them but what we can do is we can honor the fact that Joyce had the power inside of her to say, "I'll grab my brother and my sister and I'm going to get them to a place of safety." And she's done that. But now we need you to turn that place of safety into a place of refuge, a place where they can receive food. I need you to do it. Joyce needs you to do it to give this family a second chance, to give them life.

End of video

In the studio:

James: That family is just a picture of many. And Betty, for now nearly 30 years we've watched millions of children's lives totally transformed. And it's because viewers, like you, decided to make all the difference in somebody's world of pain and suffering -- and you made the difference with love.

Betty, it thrills us to see our grandson there who has a beautiful little girl now, a wonderful wife in love with Jesus, and yet he really wanted to go there because he's actually been caring about it since he was a little boy, and he's been several times to the mission field. He is literally making an appeal for that family but it's representing many families.

Well, 400,000 right now are already organized that we found just like these. These were coming to a place where they heard there would be help. But there could only be help if our viewers provide the help, otherwise there's just concern and heartache. But you're the miracle. And our viewers have been faithful to provide that miracle of support. And right now I'm believing they're going to do it.

And we need an extra surge of support because there's been a crush, a rush to safety. But several of the national agencies saw the compassion of the missionaries and said, "If you can bring in more relief workers that have a heart like you, and you can get the ability to deliver it, we'll give you this much more food and you can add all of these to the feeding."

Luke said, "We prayed with those workers from UNICEF and United Nations." He said, "Papaw, they just started crying because they could see the love of the people that will go right in to hell to take heaven, to take love with them."

So we need a surge of extra help right now. We need \$270,000 right now additional, and I've just been praying, God, give us 270 people who will say, "I've got \$1,000 to make that happen." Because we've got the 400,000 that we're feeding every week and we're going have to have a tremendous surge of support and I'm believing God is going to grant it.

Betty: I believe God is going to grant it too. As I watched that family my heart was broken. I saw those little children. They're not jumping up and down with joy. James and I just recently went to a birthday celebration for one of our great-granddaughters! There was much joy, much celebration.

I want these families to have that kind of celebration. We were celebrating a birthday. I want them to be able to celebrate a life that wasn't lost because they didn't have the food and the things they needed to survive. Please join with us and let's do that for these families.

James: What we're asking you to do is simply right now dial that phone number. It's always a prayer line if your heart's broken or you need help, call for prayer. Or go online. Would you go get a bankcard immediately? And would you use it like a check?

Now remember this. We need that surge of support. That's a \$270,000 surge but we need to let them know the miracle can be there to make that even possible because it is actually of such great value what's happening. But the 400,000 we've got located, we feed -- now think about this -- for \$30, \$50, or \$100 we feed three, five or ten children for the next months. Where can you put \$100 and have that kind of impact? It's going to change their lives. It's going to save their lives! And we're going to point them to the love of God that inspired you to touch them with love.

Would you right now please, go get that card? If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but please call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail because we have to know, and we have to let the missionaries know, yes. We can do it. We will do it. We have some gifts to send you to say thank you and to inspire you. But you're giving the greatest gift, you're giving the gift of life. Thank you. Thank you for making that gift.

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.

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 for three full months!

Please consider an extra gift to help ease the suffering of innocent families who, due to tribal warfare, have had to flee their homes in South Sudan to neighboring Uganda, in

desperate search of food.

World Food representatives have asked for our immediate assistance. That's why an additional \$270,000 is urgently needed to help provide food to those who are starving.

With your gift, we'll send you *The James Code* by O.S. Hawkins. You'll also enjoy this beautifully crafted leather bookmark.

With your gift of \$100 or more request *The Passion* translation Bible. This edition ignites *The Passion* of the Bible to modern readers by merging *The Passion* of God's heart 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.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, we're really grateful for the love of God that is shared so freely through you. I really believe, listen to me, when you can listen to someone you enjoy and be blessed, and then we say, "Hey, you're going to see some pain. You're going to see some suffering" and you don't turn away. But you do what Jesus said, "You look and notice the least of these. And when you do it to them you've blessed me, you've done it to me." And you know what? You watch, you listen to the Lord and you touch the least of these with God's love. Thank you.

We've told you about those gifts that we send to inspire you. If you'd like to have Elisabeth's book, *Point of View*, and join in the prayer, God, what do you want to do with

her now? And what do you want to do with all of us? Let's learn together. And you'd like to have this book just ask for it. To say thank you for helping others, we'll be glad to send it to you.

Would you in the audience join Betty and me in thanking Elisabeth for sharing with us? Thank you. We appreciate you. Thanks for being here.

Elisabeth: Thank you so much!

James: Thank all of you. Thank you for watching.