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Week 47: Fall Mission Feeding

Sheila Walsh

Mission Special #2

Sheila: Hello! I'm Sheila Walsh. I want to welcome you to this edition of *LIFE Today*. Today is a bit different. This is something I've been looking forward to doing for some time. I have been really impacted by the privilege of being part of this *LIFE Today* family. Every week we get an opportunity to interview some amazing guests and hear stories of how God has impacted lives. But there is one part of what we do here at *LIFE Today* that has impacted me eternally and that's our mission trips.

When I have the opportunity to travel to different parts of the world and actually see the difference that we've been able to make together, it's something that just makes me glad to be alive and glad to be on the earth at this particular moment. I think perhaps, unlike many trips, Africa has been the one that has probably impacted me the most.

Often when I'm on the road I'll share stories and I'll tell you about different things. Or I get mail from you or you'll put things on my Facebook page to say, "I watched that piece in Africa and it really impacted me." But there has been one thing that occurs over and over again. And that is when I'm out on the road somewhere I'll hear this almost every weekend, "I wish I could come with you. I wish I could actually get on that plane and that when we finally touch down that I find myself in Africa."

I thought about that for some time and so, right now here's what I'd like to do. I want to invite you, if your husband is in the kitchen, if your children are out in the backyard, why don't you call them all in and sit down? Because today I'm taking you with me on a trip to Africa. Watch this.

On the mission field

Sheila: I woke up this morning in this village, this is my first time in Angola and I honestly don't know what I expected but I didn't expect what I experienced. I didn't expect to see a child who is a year and five months old and weighs six pounds. How does a child like that even survive?

I think one of the things that surprised me most was the profound affinity I felt with the moms. If you're a mom, all you want is for your child to be healthy. You want to be able to put a meal on the table at night and know that your children go to bed with a full tummy. But here I've seen what the ravages of malnutrition do.

In many places where we've been the crops had been destroyed this year and that's what they depend on. So, so many of the moms have to go out and work for two days to get one small meal for their children at night. The meal that they provide has no protein. So when they get sick they go down so quickly.

But the other thing and this is the thing that blew me away, is I saw the difference that Mission Feeding makes. To be able to be in a village and to see this long snake line of little kids who are behaving like little kids should, they're laughing, they're excited and happy. That's why I know there's hope.

Mission Feeding is not some great idea we came up with. It's simply living out the gospel of Christ. And when we put one simple bowl of food into the hands of these children in Africa, it changes their lives forever -- thousands and thousands and thousands of lives, one life at a time.

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Quite a trip, huh? I will never forget the mothers that I met in Angola. Those I met in malnutrition clinics who had taken the little they had to be able to get on a motorbike and bring their child to the clinic. And some of them, their children didn't make it the whole way to the clinic. Even those that I was able to sit and pray over, they just showed the worst possible signs of malnutrition: That little swollen belly, skin beginning to peel off, hair color turning orange because there's no nutrients in their system.

One child, and this child didn't make it, but the thing that blew me away was the child didn't even have the energy left to cry. I didn't even think about the fact that it actually takes some energy to cry. There was just this stillness over the child as the mother watched with every breath knowing it could be the last.

But then to go from there to the villages where we already have mission feeding in place and it was literally night and day. The night after we spent all that time in the malnutrition clinic I went back to my tent and I laid down on that little army cot and I sobbed because I thought of all the ways I waste money; the extra fancy coffees that I get that I don't always drink all of. The shoes that I have more than I need in my closet. I thought of the contrast between me as a mom and these moms because they're not asking for fancy school uniforms. All they're asking is would you be able to provide my child with one meal a day? That's all they're asking for.

But the amazing thing is when we set up in that village then the children, we serve the food at school on purpose because then the children will stay in school and they'll get an education and break that cycle of poverty that goes from generation to generation.

If you think about our culture in the western world we are over-prescribed medication for anxiety, depression. We're overwhelmed. What if some of that is because we just want more and more, and the latest thing and the newest thing? How might it impact our lives if instead of grabbing one more thing for ourselves, instead we did something for a child in Africa?

That's why I'm here today. That's why this program in particular is so important to me. Because I'm going back to Angola and I want to go back with good news. I want to be able to say to these moms, I know you heard about a feeding program in a village a hundred miles away, well, here's the good news now, we're setting up in your village too.

We can do this together. And some of you might be like my mom was. When my father died when we were little, she lived on a widow's pension. We lived in government housing, we didn't have a car, but my mom took a portion, she took 10% and then a little extra of everything she got

to be able to reach out to others who were hurting. So this is something we can all do. If you're a teenager, start now. Start a lifetime of giving. So little helps so many.

Do you know that for \$30 a month you can feed three children for three months? \$30! What can you do in our culture with \$30? Skip a meal. Don't go out for dinner on Friday night and determine, you know what? \$50 will help feed five children for three months. Let's stay home and let's put a meal into the hands and the hearts and the tummies of these little ones across Africa.

Would you call that number on your screen? Let's do this together in Jesus' name. Let's feed the hungry. Thank you!

On the mission field:

Sheila: We've met a lot of moms on our trip to Angola. But I have to tell you, Mariana's story has touched me so profoundly.

Open Captions:

>> I have lost two of my children. They both died because of hunger. There was nothing I could do to save them. I have nothing. My heart aches when I have to put my children to bed hungry.

Sheila: She said that when she goes to bed at night she just lies there. And she said honestly, she wishes she could just give up. She feels such despair. But she said, "I can't give up because I've still got three children who need me." But when she only has a little bit of food, she makes sure that she gives it to all three of her children and many nights this mom goes to bed with nothing -- nothing in her stomach! Just a prayer on her lips, Lord, will you send me some help!

Open Captions:

>> I am very worried about my children because I know their bodies are not healthy. I know they're not getting enough food.

Sheila: Maybe you think well, how can we change her life? It's really easy -- through mission feeding. Can you imagine the burden that it would take off this mom knowing that her kids get one good meal every single day? It's not a lot to ask.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: As a mother, all you want to be able to do for your children is make sure that they're healthy. To be able -- I remember when my son Christian was just a little boy and he went through a little period where he wouldn't eat and I remember as a mom being really worried and he was perfectly healthy. But can you imagine what it's like as a mom if you have nothing to give your children?

Someone said something to me some time ago, and I'm sure they didn't mean it quite the way it came out but it struck me. She said, "I've watched your program for years and I see that so many of these mothers lose two or three children. There must be a sense in which they get used to it." It kind of caught my breath because I thought, when on earth would a mother get used to burying her child?

And for Mariana, she was such a beautiful person. But the thought of her tonight lying on her bed hungry herself listening to the cries of her children because they're hungry. We can't prevent our children from suffering. Everybody in life is going to suffer. But to have that daily, to wake up every morning thinking, this is one more day when I have to try and find enough to give at least the three children I have left the little I can find.

When the rains don't come and the crops are not there, because that's what they depend on, and they're going through extreme drought in Africa at the moment, then they literally have to dig through the earth. I went with them and when I looked at what they were getting, little bits of corn. And I thought, this is supposed to feed three children and hopefully a mom? No! You

and I...

I mean think of the percentage of Americans or Europeans who are spending money because we need to go on a diet because we're overeating and killing ourselves that way. If we were to shift, if by the Holy Spirit he opened our eyes to see and our ears to hear their cries and we began to give out of our plenty to their nothing. She said, "I have nothing."

So here's what I want to ask you to do. I used to be a guest on *LIFE Today* and I remember my own son Christian when he was just a little boy. He saw mission feeding and he saw the little red bowls. So he saved up his pocket money for a year and then he came with me and gave James this big bag of coins. Let's do this as families. Let's get our children involved too.

So what I'm going to ask you to do is to go to your phones. \$30 feeds three children for three months. \$50 will feed five children! \$100 will feed ten children. And if God has blessed you, perhaps you've had a great year in your business. Do you know that a \$1,000 will feed 100 children for three months?

Scripture makes it very clear, that on that day when we stand before the Lord and he said, "You know when I was hungry you fed me." And we'll say, "Lord, when did we do that?" Jesus said, "When you did it for the least of these you're doing it for me." Please! In Jesus' name, let's feed the hungry.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Mission feeding began with a promise to be there in times of crisis for thousands of hurting and hungry children in their time of need.

Now more than ever we need your help to save lives by feeding and caring for children across the continent of Africa. With food reserves gone and many areas experiencing severe famine, we urgently need to replenish our supplies to reach the 400,000 children who are counting on us. Your gift of love can be the miracle answer to a desperate mother's prayer.

Call now with your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50 or \$100 that will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. With your gift, we'll send you the authored worship CD by Anthony Evans. This powerful full-length album includes unique versions of some of today's most cherished worship songs that are sure to uplift and inspire you.

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the "Filled with Faith" and "...Joy" travel mug set. These 12-ounce mugs are crafted with large handles, double-layered insulation and vacuum sealed lids to prevent spills. Each mug includes a message to remind you of God's blessings and faithfulness.

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 video

On the mission field:

Sheila: I'm here in just one of the malnutrition clinics. And as you can see I'm here with this beautiful mother and this little one. It's Africa, it's warm here. But look at her legs. She is completely wrapped up, and her little hands. The need is so urgent. I've heard about it, I've seen the things that James and Betty have done for years but to actually come here myself and see with my own eyes how urgent the need is,

I'm asking you in Jesus' name, would you go to the phones right now? Or would you go on LifeToday.org and make the best gift possible? We can all do something. It doesn't matter if you're a 14-year old kid watching this or if you're 84 years old and you're living on a limited income, we can all do something. No mother should have to travel 25 kilometers to bring her very sick child to a clinic because she is so malnourished.

Would you give your best gift now? Please go to your phone right now, go online right now and give the best gift you can. If we all do it, we can change the world for these moms and for these children.

Open Captions:

>> Every day thousands of mothers will watch their child die due to the effects of malnutrition.

Sun shines bright but the day feels colder to me
 And now all the hope that I had are shadows in me
 Going out of my mind
 Out of my mind
 Not that I say please don't go but the words fell away
 You left my world but the hope on my heart seems to stay
 I found the words but it was too late to tell you
 And now all the hope that I had are shadows in me
 Going out of my mind
 Out of my mind
 Out of my mind
 Out of my mind

Open Captions:

>> But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish. Psalm 9:18

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: Could I just say thank you for staying with me? I know those images are hard to watch. I know the temptation just to flick through the channels and find something that you can

just forget about the suffering in the world. Scripture makes it clear as we saw, Jesus never forgets the suffering or the hungry or the needy, those who need clothes, those who need water. But there is something so basic about a mom being able to give a meal to her child.

When we're in the villages where there is mission feeding already set up, and you saw that line of children and they're with their little red bowls, I knew that I was going to have the privilege of being the one to give each one of the children their meal. So I thought, well, I'd better taste it first. I'm giving it to these children. And it tasted really different than anything I'd ever tasted before. It was good! But the thing that's amazing about it is it's specifically engineered to have exactly what the needs of these children in Africa are. It has the vitamins, the protein, the minerals -- everything! So literally, from the first bowl of food you're turning that child's life from death to life. It's like they're looking down this endless chasm and suddenly, you've turned them around and they're looking at the sunrise. That's all they're asking.

Who knows what children are out there right now that God wants to raise up to be church leaders, to be women who make an impact in their community? But they need our help to get there. We can do it so easily.

I'm trying to think of if I was to go out with my family for a meal, \$30 wouldn't take us very far. But do you know that that \$30 will feed three children for three months? Think about that! Think about skip a movie; maybe you were going to go see a movie. Skip that and decide no, because \$50 is going to feed five children for three months. Maybe you were thinking of getting yourself a new pair of shoes but you actually have four or five or six pairs of shoes. But a \$100 will feed ten children for three months!

Perhaps you had a bit of a raise or your business is doing well or you felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to put aside a little money and you weren't quite sure what it's for. This is it! \$1,000 feeds 100 children for three months!

So please, go to your phone right now. Go online, give the very best gift possible and then maybe give a wee bit more. That's one of the things my mom used to say to me, "Sheila, give the

best you've got and then why not give just a wee bit more?" We're asking you to do the same. It will literally change the world for these children. Thank you.

Begin video clip

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End of video

On the mission field

James: Beautiful children! They're lining up because of love. Not just food -- they're lining up because of love. I just thank God for his love. And then I thank God for the love that you expressed that is the love of God for all these children. Betty is here right now and she is serving up the soup.

Betty: We've seen lots of lines over in states, kids lined up for games, kids lined up for parks, kids lined up to go to a movie. But these lines are different. These kids are lined up for food for life.

Won't you join with us? These are the kind of lines that really count. These children need our help. They need someone to make a good choice for them and that's for life. Please join with us and help us with the mission feeding. Thank you so much!

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Thank you so much! Thank you for watching. Thank you for coming with me to Africa! And now that you've seen the tremendous need about how we're able to meet that need, I pray you will. There's a few lines open. If the phones are busy, keep calling until you get through. I would love to be able on another special program to let you see the difference that you, watching this program, made.

So we have some gifts we'd love to send to you. I know that's not why you do this but perhaps every time you see it, it will remind you A, you made a difference, and B, it will remind you to pray for all those children in those villages, and our phenomenal mission partners on the ground with mission feeding.

So for James and Betty, and for myself, I just want to say thank you for being a blessing. God has blessed us so let's bless others in the powerful wonderful name of Jesus.