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Week 52: Fall Mission Feeding: Last week

James and Betty Robison

Jimmy Witcher

James: You make us feel good. Thank you! We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. My wife Betty and I welcome you.

I like the title of this book. It's *Kingdom Come*, I'm just going to go ahead and say it, the kingdom has come. The king has come. The king is coming but the king has come. *Kingdom Come* is actually a confession and a prayer that has been answered because the king came and he said, "Repent. Change your thinking because the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then he said, "It's in you. It's not of this world but its here."

Jimmy Witcher is pastor of Trinity Fellowship out in Amarillo. Jimmy Evans pastored there and they were there together. Jimmy is at Gateway and he's one of our senior pastors, along with Robert who is the lead senior pastor. We've got all these titles but we'll give you a title. You need one? It'll make you feel better. But Jimmy is the pastor there. He really understands this.

I was excited when I saw that he put the beauty of the kingdom in a very simple presentation because this is not a kingdom theology. The gospel of the kingdom is the gospel. It's reality. One of the things I say over and over is Jesus didn't leave us here to get us out of here. Let's elaborate on that a little bit.

If you'll welcome Jimmy Witcher to *LIFE Today*, we're going to talk about it. Would you welcome Jimmy? I'm glad to have you. I can't shake hands with this. I had some surgery

on this hand and this is just covering the gauze and so forth.

I just made that statement that he didn't leave us here to get us out of here he left us here to get him in here and he actually re-emphasized that clearly when this bunch -- now think about it a minute, Jimmy. He's been -- he's the greatest teacher that ever lived. He's had this bunch and we know the kind of bunches because we've been part of the bunches ourselves. And he had them for three years and now he is getting ready to leave. And as he is getting ready to ascend, promising them he's coming back, but they want to know is now the time you're going to set up the kingdom?

In other words, I just told you it's at hand, it's in you, and we're going to set it up. There's a kingdom to come fellas but there is a kingdom here and I want you to be witnesses unto me of the kingdom. And you'll be filled with power, the Holy Spirit like me that's in you will not just be resident, he will be president, he will be king. The king that's come will be a king. You'll manifest that. Get on with the program. Am I misrepresenting what he was saying there?

Jimmy: Absolutely not! Jesus came to say that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He kept saying it over and over again, "The kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom of heaven is at hand." It is right here if you will grab a hold of it.

We grow up, certainly when I grew up with the idea that I get saved and then hopefully I'll get to make it into heaven if I live a good life. That's kind of what I thought when I grew up in the church.

James: That's crummy theology.

Jimmy: It is terrible theology! I agree with you. And that's the idea because Jesus didn't come just so we could make it into heaven when we pass. Jesus came that we might have the kingdom of heaven right here right now. That we could experience it, that we could have all the fullness that his Father had.

You know what he told his disciples when he was teaching them how to pray? "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done." He wants us to call in his kingdom everywhere we go. That's what he was challenging his disciples to do. And that's what he was telling them, to get filled with the Holy Spirit and now go into the world and take the kingdom with you everywhere you go.

James: And the only way that his will can be done on earth is because the kingdom is here in us because the king is here, he is in us, he made it absolutely clear. It's even necessary for you in this kingdom reality for me to leave and to send in you, each one of you individually, the same spirit, another of the same kind, the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit to live in you, to reside in you, which I will be with you everywhere to the ends of the earth. Now go and represent that kingdom. Go and make a kingdom imprint, a kingdom impact on planet earth.

And we can live with the presence of the king, kingdom reality here. It doesn't mean that we're not going to have all of the awful things of the kingdom of darkness and deception, principalities and powers of prevailing darkness everywhere they can take control and deceive and defeat and divide and destroy. That's what they do; that's in this kingdom. In the next kingdom that reality will not be there. But the reality of the king and the kingdom is here now. Why do you think it's so important for people to get that? Because it looks like a lot of people don't get it.

Jimmy: Well, I certainly didn't get it. I realized, especially, as I was raising my kids and realizing, I want them to recognize that their role, once they enter into God's kingdom is to advance his kingdom. And it's so simple. And in God's kingdom is where we find his provision, it's where we find his protection, it's where we find his blessing. A kingdom has a king. We obviously know that God is the king of heaven and our job as his children is to represent his kingdom here on the earth everywhere that we go.

We read the story you were just referencing in Acts talking about how the Holy Spirit came and empowered his disciples. And sometimes we get this crazy idea that that was just for kind of the disciples or maybe that was just for the religious folks. But he wants every one of us to be empowered with his spirit and be able to carry his kingdom everywhere we go. When we're going to school, when we're raising our kids, in our marriages, as we're going to work. Every aspect of life is our opportunity to advance his kingdom.

Betty: So many grow up thinking it is just within the church family. But as I've come to learn in my many years here on this earth is that I'm to be that expression of what God came to do and what he's done in my heart and it will overflow. But I'm to be active.

Jimmy: Exactly! Active! And a part of everything that God wants to do on the earth. He wants us as his church, if we think of his church which is the body of believers, all of us, no specific denomination or label on the door but altogether as his church he has called us to help advance his kingdom, to see his rule and reign, advance in every aspect of our society and every aspect of our families, everything that we have on the earth. That's why he left us here on the earth. If it wasn't for the role of advancing the kingdom we would just get saved and go to heaven. There would be no reason for us to hang about.

But kind of a way to think about it, when we think about kingdom, sometimes we think about citizenship. It's the idea that if we're to become citizens, if you will, of the kingdom of heaven we actually have a translation of our citizenship. We leave this world and we're now citizens of heaven. We have a passport, if you will, the mark of the Holy Spirit is part of that sign and seal of that passport but we have the kingdom of God within us and we're citizens of that kingdom. That's how we get lost, if you will. We give up our rights and claim to this world so that our rights and claim can be in the other.

And then we have the responsibilities that come with that. The responsibility of advancing God's kingdom and taking that influence, the opportunity, the blessing, all the things that come from doing things God's way. It even helps us define what sin is because

Jesus obviously died on the cross to eliminate all of our sin. So we have aspects of our life where when we do things God's way, when we do things with our finances that are God's way, our marriage, it's God's way, when we work God's way, we take those aspects of our life, we move them into where we are citizens of heaven and God's blessing, his provision, his protection then comes on those aspects of our life.

And then it gives us a platform to work out and to advance his kingdom to those that we come into contact with, and work with, and go to school with, and our kids play ball with; it's just a way for us to take that empowerment and expand his influence.

James: One of the things that has so come alive in my life is the importance of every member of his body. And if everyone watching would understand that the body of Christ is the family, the true expression through a family that he desired in creation. He wanted a family, he wanted a people through whom he could bless all the people, all the nations of the world. And he revealed himself after man failed and listened to the deceiver, he then revealed himself in fullness as a Father to Israel to be bless the nations through them. He made a covenant with them. All right. Later we find out that the redeemer actually came to Zion, the Messiah that many are looking for that will come again. He has been here.

We had Dennis Prager, who is Jewish, here with us not long ago. He really was -- he was really wonderful to be with because he loves the truth of God. He wants people to know the freedom God wants for everybody but he said, "One of the things I'm going to ask the Messiah when he comes is, have you been here before?" That so says, "I'm a seeker." People ask me, "Well, did you talk to Dennis about Jesus?" I said, "Well, first I wanted him to see Jesus in me and us." And of course, the relationship was great. This is the way we should live.

I believe if we recognize how God left us here, that we're members of this body, of his family, the church and we've all been uniquely designed, uniquely gifted with great diversity, distinctives that are great and important, and if we will release all of the gifting

that God has placed in us and we lose it for his purpose we're going to begin to make a kingdom impact.

I want you to pray with me about this. What if all the incredibly gifted entrepreneur minds, the people that have created enormous wealth and met tremendous needs, their greatest gift is what Jesus said is the greatest gift and that's the gift of a servant. When you're a servant that's the greatest gift you can make. These successful people, I don't care whether they're in retail to sell a product, something you need or desire or that's important or even like Bezos has done to deliver to us as we get older. Betty can shop and she doesn't even have to go to Walmart. Sam Walton told me before he died, "I started Walmart wanting people that didn't have a lot to be able to go and see everything they could imagine and be able to afford it."

I said, "Sam, that's a servant."

He said, "Yeah, and that man, David Glass, that really built Walmart, that's the greatest servant on the planet. He's just a servant."

I said, "See that's a servant heart!" He wanted to do something.

I believe Bezos makes it possible for her to shop and order things she needs. It will be delivered in 12-24 hours! It's just amazing what God does through somebody that's yielded. What if all these gifted people realized, not only do we do a service and we get wealth, what if they began to pray? How do we, with our God-given genius and ability to create and meet needs, what if we started focusing on the poor? What if we started focusing on the people with needs that are overlooked? And we started reaching out with love and our resources and not turning it over to Pharaoh by just giving Pharaoh our taxes and rendering unto Caesar?

Because the New Testament Christians you just talked about in the book of Acts, they were in trouble because they preached another king other than Caesar. They were

preaching the kingdom of heaven. And if we would begin to live that and preach that and all these leaders and gifted people would suddenly look through the eyes of the king and see the least of these and say let's get involved with them, what if all these people who have been so blessed showed them that they love them with all their heart and wanted the best for them because that's what the king wants.

Does this make sense? Does this sound like kingdom theology? I need to know. Help me out because you can correct me.

Jimmy: No, it would change everything. Jesus said, "I came that you may have life and have it to the full. The enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy but I came that you may have life and have it to the full."

So when we live our life, every gifting that we have, these entrepreneurs that you're talking about, those are gifts that came from God. Every gift that we have, every talent that we have, every ability comes from the Father.

James: Absolutely! For his kingdom purpose! And that's blessing people.

Jimmy: Exactly. So when we embrace that and recognize well, this isn't just for me. I've got a responsibility. I've got a kingdom here. I'm got a citizenship and a responsibility that comes. God has given me these blessings and it's for me to apply those and see his kingdom advance; and take the power of the Holy Spirit and apply that creatively in every aspect that God gives us.

One of the things that is so pervasive in our society is this idea that we have to have -- take your religious self, you can be religious if you want, but kind of keep that on the weekend. That's what you do on the weekend. And maybe we'll call that "church theology" versus "kingdom theology." You go on the weekend.

But what God wants us to embrace is the kingdom, the fullness because he came not just

that we would be able to do good and get our family to church on Sunday morning but that we would take his Holy Spirit to work, we would take it to school, we would take it to every aspect of life and say, okay, how do you want us to advance your kingdom? As an ambassador, literally, as a son of the king, as a daughter of the king, as an ambassador for Christ, how do I take your kingdom and how do I advance it on this earth? What are you calling me to do?

For every single one of us, our highest need, ultimately, is to make a difference in the world. Every human is built with this desire to make a difference.

James: And we make a difference in the world but making a difference in somebody's life.

Jimmy: Exactly right. It is all about people. Jesus said, "Love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself." That's the purpose of life. It's one of the things we talk about. The purpose that all of us have. At the end of your life, it's a little morbid to think about but when you're at the end of life and maybe if you were to see your funeral, they're not talking about all the money you made, they're not talking about all the things you did, they're talking about the lives that you impacted. That's when we realize that the kingdom is about the lives that we impact and how we make a difference in the world.

Betty: It shouldn't depend because a lot of people say, "Well how do I live that kingdom life?" Because I look around me and there's not any hope out there and there's trials I'm going through, things you run into, tragedies and all that. Kingdom life is so much more than that. It should inspire us as Christians to want to be able to go out there and make a difference and show them what kingdom life looks like.

James: It doesn't mean you won't have a trial or a challenge.

Jimmy: He says you will.

James: You're going to be more than a conqueror, you've got somebody to conqueror, somebody to overcome. You become overcomers in this life is what God wants. That is kingdom life, that's kingdom reality and it's for everybody.

Now okay. So you wrote the book, it's probably from a series of messages that you taught and you put them together; right?

Jimmy: Actually, I did it the other way around. I actually wrote the book and then pulled the messages out of it. So actually, I did it the other way around.

James: You learned a great lesson that Robert Morris learned because he taught *The Blessed Life* right here on *LIFE Today* before he even had a church. Then he went out and taught it to the church. So you wrote the book and now you're teaching it. The thing that I see is that anybody ought to be able to grasp it. Do you believe it is important not just that somebody grasps the kingdom reality but that kingdom reality grasps them and carries them with purpose?

Jimmy: I actually believe it is our ultimate purpose in life is to live in the kingdom of God and to fulfill the call of God on our life that is only found within the kingdom of God. So not only do I think it is important, I think it is everything. I think it is the ultimate purpose other than just loving God and giving our life to him, it's everything that he's called us to do -- every joy, every blessing, every success. All of his provision is all found when we cooperate with God and we live in his kingdom doing what it is he's called us to do, empowered by his spirit doing what he's called us to do. That's where it's all found. That's where all the joy comes from.

James: We can actually have a whole lot of what's in the kingdom to come right here in the kingdom because the same king that's there forever, no enemy, no darkness, no deception, no Satan, but that king is here. The peace that he offers, the power, the freedom that he offers, that if you'll abide in him you'll know the truth, he is truth. And

the truth will set us free. It is his truth that sets us free. It is his truth essential to keep us free and to share that freedom. That's kingdom living.

Would you all say thanks to Pastor Jimmy Witcher for sharing this? This is, and I'll just tell you right now. This is such a beautiful and simple understanding of the gospel of the kingdom. Jimmy, one of the things that has thrilled Betty and me is when we see a need that love meets and you look out here at people who have come to understand that we can make a positive kingdom effect and they do it.

Let me just say this to you. This is the last week now. We're kind of coming toward the end of the year but this is the last week where we're talking about our mission feeding emphasis to 400,000 children, the missionaries have found where there is a serious malnutrition situation. It's a crisis. We're asking you right now to help us take care of these precious, precious children because malnutrition is a killer. It's a greater killer than any disease you could ever name or think of. It's a horrible death. It's heartbreaking. It has a perfect cure.

You are the one who delivers this miracle, this perfect cure. Ask God to use you to do it and become a miracle answer for many, many who need the miracle and answered prayer.

On the mission field:

Announcer: I am a mother's worst nightmare. I thrive on the pain of children. I thrive on the pain of children. I do not discriminate, and I show no mercy.

Sheila: You look into the eyes of a child who is seriously malnourished and there's just nothing. It is like somebody just turned the light off.

>> You won't see me coming but you will soon hear me in your children's cries.

[Child crying]

>> My touch brings bloated stomachs, thinning hair that changes color, painful skin disorders and tiny bodies so thin and frail they appear as living skeletons.

Sheila: And to see this little helpless one with the skin literally peeling off his arms and his legs was such a horrifying sight.

>> I am slow but sure. My name is malnutrition and my legacy is death.

Sheila: I heard someone on the news one day make a comment about the devastating deaths of children in some countries in Africa. Yet, the reporter suggested that perhaps the mothers there were more accustomed to that because it's very much a part of their life.

I've seen with my own eyes what I knew in my gut – No mother will ever become accustomed to burying a child. The thing that really has blown me away the most... all of this is reversible.

End of video

In the studio:

James: I love to see that beautiful smile! Sheila, I love you! Thank you for going all over the world with *LIFE Outreach* putting God's arms around the precious and the suffering.

I want all of you to listen real close now. Please hear me. Betty and I traveled all those places for 20-25 years and we marched into hell, you might say, for a heavenly cause until Betty experienced a potentially life-changing experience of being paralyzed from being hurt where there are no roads and banged around. So we know what it is.

And Sheila, you're just such a blessing. When you look at this horrible killer, and I can't help but think of all the little children we watched die, sometimes in their mother's arms. I remember one of them when Betty and I were in Luanda, Angola and we were watching them try to pump -- they didn't have an oxygen machine. They didn't have oxygen. They had a little rubber tube and they were squeezing it trying to get oxygen to a little baby that wasn't breathing. We watched that little baby take his last breath that nothing could save. And we watched the mother in the hall, and you and Ann Pretorius, Betty trying to comfort this mother.

We appealed to you and said, "We can save these children. They're literally dying by the millions." You know this. This is not an exaggeration. The reports have come back to us from the African countries that we've saved between 14-15 million children's lives. When we say "we" that's you. Somebody just like you -- you did that.

Listen to me. When we saw... this is one of the most famous pictures that has ever been taken in history, it was Lady Di, Princess Diana holding a little African child in her arms and that little baby was the healthiest, prettiest little baby any mom would want to take home. She was standing in front of that orphanage where those babies were dying and we watched them. And we said to you the viewers, "We can save those children." And here's Princess Di holding one of the babies, love through someone like you saved. Not only that one but millions because somebody said, "I'll be the miracle. I'll be the answer to prayer."

That's what we're asking you to do. This last week of mission feeding right now, we're asking you to make the greatest gift you can possibly make. If you could give \$1,000 or \$10,000! Think about it. With a \$1,000 we can feed 100 children -- 100 children the next months! Let me break it down more simply. For \$30, \$50 or \$100 we can feed three, five or ten children for the next months. I don't know what you can do but would you be a miracle for as many children as possible? Would you right now?

Father, please move people to get your arms of love around those that are so precious. Give them life; in Jesus' name.

Would you do that right now? Please? Would you go get your bankcard, or get a check and make that check to *LIFE*? Get your bankcard, use it like a check? Please! Go online right now, it is so easy to do it that way or you can dial that number, it is a prayer line, and make the gift. If you mail it, call us and tell us what you're sending in because in this last week we really need to hear from you. We're going to need a lot of help. We have 400,000 precious, little malnourished lives that you can change with love.

We have some gifts to send you to say thank you. But you're going to be giving the greatest gift, you're going to be giving life all because of love. God's love. Thank you so much for doing it.

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."

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

James: I'm really believing God is not only hearing our prayers here but the prayers of many mothers and you're going to be the miracle. Here we are celebrating the greatest love gift ever, Jesus, in the Christmas season.

We've really been praying, Betty for the greatest year end gifts from all of our supporters that we've ever witnessed. We've actually had some people say they wouldn't help us anymore because I pray for our nation's leaders and pray with them, and always download the truth. I've done this forever -- for 40 years steady. I just want to tell people the truth and love them. Not only pray for them but with them. Some people have said, "Well, you prayed with them so I won't..." Oh God! I'm trying to help our leaders because I love you. I love your children, your grandchildren, love your family. I love the least of these. Love you too. We really need to hear from all of you.

We're sending you Anthony Evan's incredible CD and other gifts. But if you'd like to have *Kingdom Come*, understand what a great way to end the year and start a new year making a kingdom impact. Thank you so much for your help.

Would all of you here in the audience thank Jimmy Witcher for his incredible blessing?
Thank you, Jimmy for being a blessing in Amarillo. Thank you for being a blessing to us
and all our viewers.

Jimmy: Thank you guys!

James: All right. God bless all of you. Thank you so much! Remember special year end gifts!
Thank you for what you do. Thanks for your love.