

4/15/20

Week 15: Mission feeding

Sheila Walsh

Mark Moore

Sheila: I'm Sheila Walsh. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I know that when you see me on the set I'm usually by myself but every now and again I either meet someone or I read a book and I think, okay, people would love this. This book, *Core 52*, I cannot remember if somebody sent it to me or how I got it but the minute I got it my husband said, "Can I look at that?" And its totally... I haven't got it back since. I had to kind of beg, steal, and borrow to get it today. So I invited the author. I want to thank you, Mark Moore for being here.

Mark: Thank you.

Sheila: And thank you for writing this book. I wanted to ask, it is kind of an intriguing book, *Core 52: A 15-minute daily guide to build your Bible I.Q. in a year*. What was the Genesis of this book? What was in your heart writing this?

Mark: Thanks for asking. I serve in a local church and it is one of those churches that... the Lord's just blessed us. I can't explain what he is doing. It is out in Phoenix, Arizona. Last year we baptized 4,235 people. So all these people are coming in.

And what we know is that engaging the Bible is a number one spiritual discipline for spiritual growth. So as a pastor, I'm a teaching pastor on staff, how can we get our people who need God's word to progress in their faith, how can we actually get into it? Because it is a big book, where do I start? It is an old book. I get lost every time I get to Leviticus.

So I ran across this idea. We've all heard of the 80/20 principle where 80 percent of the results you get from anything, whether it is business or sports or studying for a test, 80 percent of your results are from 20 percent of your effort.

Sheila: Wow!

Mark: So why am I telling new people, "Read the Bible" instead of showing them where the treasure troves are. I mean you've been in the business long enough, you know there are certain verses that just pack a little bit more punch. And so I've identified the 52 verses that preachers across the country have preached more often.

And we've just given a simple guide so that people can get into those passages. Not only get into those passages but see the connectivity of those ideas across the Bible. So for example, we begin with "In the beginning God created." There are hundreds of verses about creation through the Bible but if you get that one, suddenly you begin to put into place all those other verses that really take that one single important idea and drive it from Genesis to Revelation.

Sheila: So when somebody works the whole way through this book, what's your prayer at the end of that? That they will have a greater understanding of all the tenets of the faith?

Mark: Actually, understanding is the least of my concerns. It really is. I don't want to -- I don't just want people getting into the Bible nor the Bible getting into them, I want the Bible coming out of them. And again, I'm dealing with people in a real church and we're trying to win our valley for Jesus Christ. How are they going to do that if they don't have confidence? I want to give the Holy Spirit the ammunition he needs in every individual's life to have that conversation around one of these 52 ideas of the Bible.

Sheila: Okay. So there's so much. Obviously, we can't hit on all 52 in our wee program,

so I'm just going to throw out a couple of titles out to you and see if you'll unpack them for us. I found the chapter on identity fascinating in a very self-absorbed culture.

Mark: Yeah. So Genesis 1:26, which I would put in the top ten verses of the Bible, not just the top 52: God created us in our image. What does that mean? Well, I'm not sure I can unpack all of that, but it at least means that where I am different than animals I'm like God.

So for example, what did we do that animals don't do? We eat communally. No animals sit at the table. No animal calls a meal. No animal has Thanksgiving. That's one. Time. No animal looks at his watch in the morning. That's the first thing we do. No animal communicates with abstract thoughts. No animal -- actually, no animal sings. Well, birds sing. No. They call. They don't sing. They don't write songs, they don't write poetry, they don't write novels. Here's another one, and women are more of this than men, we decorate everything. So unless you're in nature right now you have something on your body or around you that is artwork.

So if you look at those four, this is what is extraordinary to me, where we are most like God is where life is most mundane: In our conversations, in our meals, in our art. So that every day in every important way we can connect to our creator. And if you would wake up for just a moment and just realize who you are, this creature that expresses the nature of God in the most mundane ways, what a difference it would make when you look in a mirror.

Sheila: I should probably move on, but I want to ask another question about that because one of the things I get back from Facebook is the number of people who are desperately lonely who think they're connected but they're actually not in community. You talk about the importance of community.

Mark: Yeah. There is one chapter where we actually unpack the communal nature of the church. Our culture has this gravitational pull to individualism, which is pulling us away

from our created nature. So God created. In Genesis 1:26, this is the Jewish text, "Let us create man in our own image." God himself is a community. When you take yourself out of community you lose your identity. I'm not me without we.

Sheila: That's a heavy thought. Because I think of the number of people who think they are connected but are... it's almost like its soul destroying because you're not... there is joy and sorrow and accountability in community and you don't get that.

Okay, I'm going to move on to one that I think is an intimidating concept and that is holiness.

Mark: Oh yeah. In fact, one of my coworkers after he read it, he came into my office the next day and said, "Dude! Just blew my mind!" Because we think of holiness as being morally right. It's usually what we don't do: We don't drink, we don't smoke, we don't sleep around. So Christianity is more known for what we hate than what we love because of the misunderstanding. Holiness is not your behavior, it is God's declaration. So holiness, technically, the Hebrew word means set apart. So there is something that you have, I have, we all have that is set apart. It's our toothbrush. A toothbrush is a pretty versatile instrument. You could scrub grout with it. You could clean vents with it. But you don't. Why? Because you set it apart for one person for one purpose and that's to clean your teeth. That's a silly illustration maybe but it makes the point that God set you apart.

Now all of our moral behavior is a consequence of God setting us apart. It's not the cause of God setting us apart. Man, if I could just beg you for a minute to give yourself permission to just be God's child and not try to work for it, that chapter on holiness is a game changer for our perception of the kind of relationship we can have with God.

Sheila: Yeah. That's one of the chapters that my husband has underlined more than anything. Because he and I were both brought up in traditions where it was things we had to do so that God would love us more as opposed to just waking up with this delight

every morning and knowing that God looks at you and says, "That's my boy!" Which is a beautiful thought.

Okay. You have a chapter on God as shepherd. Can you talk about that?

Mark: That's an interesting one for me because my past is I'm a bit of a biblical historian, and I've traveled in the Middle East extensively and so you look at shepherding in the Middle East, the reality is shepherds are on the lower rungs of the social totem pole. They're dirty. And for Jews, that rendered them unclean. So when you look at a shepherd, you don't go oh boy! You go, oh boy. And yet theologically shepherd is applied to God, to Jesus, to elders in the church, to the leaders of Israel. It is like really elevated. There is I think this message in there that is about leadership, that to be exalted as a leader in the Bible you become humble and serve.

The coolest thing about shepherding for me is, in most parts of the world, Scotland included, they drive sheep. Not in the Bible; they call sheep, they lead sheep, they know sheep. So to me that's... If you want to be a leader of a business, a family, or even of yourself, that's probably a good chapter to dig into.

Sheila: There's something so profoundly comforting about that image because my mom was a farm accountant. She did the accounts of the shepherds in our neighborhood. I was used to seeing the spring lambs being born. I was used to seeing the shepherds coming behind the sheep with the two dogs. But the idea that Christ goes ahead is just a beautiful, beautiful picture.

Now you have obviously, one core is Jesus. What would be surprising to people in that chapter?

Mark: Are you talking about the one on the incarnation or the prediction of Jesus? I was talking about the one on the incarnation. But I like the sound of the other one too.

Mark: So the incarnation, again I'm a classically trained theologian by trade -- not bragging, confessing. And so guys like me usually get around the incarnation and we go, how could God become a man? And we start trying to describe the physics of it, which is frankly a worthless conversation. We're never going to understand it.

So I want to turn the question around. Instead of asking is Jesus God, what if we ask is God Jesus? So here's the way I would ask it: What do you know about God that you know about God because you believe Jesus is God? And there are three things that literally, this is not a criticism of any other religious tradition, it is just a fact, there is no other religion that I'm aware of that has these three views of God: Number one that God is near. Now some religions will say God is near but their pantheistic. You give God a name and you push him far away. So God is near. Number two: That God suffers. Nobody believes that but Christians. And number three: That God loves his enemies.

The most powerful things we believe about God, we believe about God because of the incarnation. And here is where it went a step further for me. If I want to be a good man, a good husband, a good father, if I want to be a good leader in the church, guess what characteristics I need? I need to be near, I need to love my enemies, and I need to suffer for the people I care about.

Sheila: Wow!

Mark: So incarnation for me is not a theological tenet. It is a way of living that even if I didn't believe it in the Bible, I would still have to preach it in the church because it is the only way of being fully human -- and being made in the image of God. That's a mouthful, sorry!

Sheila: No! That's profound. You talk about the cross and the importance of the cross. Are we the only religion whose God died for us?

Mark: I think there are some Greek mythologies where gods die but they do come back.

It is not like the resurrection though. I think that is... Yes, I would say yes.

But here's where for me that idea of the cross is even thicker than just God dying for you. Because as I think about it, how can I get up to God? And every religion offers a path but how can a human being ascend to the divine nature? We can't. So that God came to us is critically important, that he died for us is unbelievable. But it's not the majority but a strong percentage of cross talk in the Bible is not the cross of Jesus, it is your cross, that you pick up a cross, you carry a cross.

I got to thinking through that whole process, why did Jesus keep saying that? And I'm just going to say this simply and crisply as I can. When Jesus died on his cross, he saved individual's souls. When Christians pick up their cross, we save society.

Sheila: What do you mean by that?

Mark: When Christians live on the path of Jesus self-sacrificially, women's rights, human trafficking... I know you're going to talk about feeding the hungry in Africa, that only happens when Christians begin living this cruciform lifestyle. So truly Jesus' plan was to save the world. He saves our souls by his individual death. He saves the world when the church lays down their life and lives for the world that Jesus died for.

Sheila: I'm thinking of a mom watching this program, you know she's got three children at home and she loves the Lord but she's like how do I pick up my cross every day and follow him? What does that mean for me?

Mark: You just said it, she is a mom. There is no one more viciously sacrificial than a mother. And my concern for that mom at home is not that she would feel insignificant as a Christian but that she would understand what she does in her home is become a transformative agent. She's sacrificing herself, her finances, even her physical body for children who will live a life and address needs of society beyond her. I can't think of a more sacrificial Christ-like thing than being a mom.

Sheila: You talk about gaining grit. What do you mean by that?

Mark: I ran across this study by Angela Duckworth who looked at West Point graduates, salesmen who were successful; she looked at first year teachers in poor districts and spelling bee champions. Those people have nothing in common.

Sheila: Very diverse.

Mark: But she looked at the winners in each of those and asked, what makes them winners? It had nothing to do with I.Q., gender, nationality or education. It was grit -- it was grit! Simply to find it is the ability to get up one more time than you get knocked down. You've got grit.

Now the question that Angela Duckworth didn't answer is how do I get grit? The Bible actually answers that. It is Hebrews Chapter 12. It is a four-step process of gaining grit where you look at something ahead and you live for a reward that's in the future. Also it says, turn your eyes on Jesus because you are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Those witnesses, they're not like beer-bellied people in the stands. Those are the saints that are standing on the sidelines having run their lap and passed the baton to you. Their grit gives us grit.

And it is gritty people like Abraham and Noah and Rahab, all have checkered pasts, and sometimes the reason I have to look at the people around me is because I realize they're not better than me morally, they just got up one more time than they got knocked down.

Sheila: That's powerful. I have a new book out. I wrote a book called *Praying Women*. I would love to know what you say in your chapter on prayer.

Mark: Well the Lord's Prayer is this magnificent genius template for praying. I'll just be honest with you, I need to read your book because prayer is probably my least...

Sheila: That's why I wrote the book. It was mine too.

Mark: Yeah, because we're doers and we want to be out there doing things and we forget that going to the God of the universe, if you're in a company in secular you'd say going to the C.E.O. and asking for what you need is the most powerful thing you can do in a day. So I'm trying to look at how the Lord's Prayer becomes a template for us. I will tell you just to condense it down, there is one word in the Lord's Prayer that if I understood this, it would change my prayer life, which indicates that I don't, it is the very opening word *Father*. There is no Jew, other than Jesus ever prayed to God Father and you look at Jesus' prayers, every single prayer begins "Father" -- except when he is quoting a scripture on the cross that's the outlier. If I knew that God was my father, I would ask more, I would ask better, I would ask incessantly. So whatever else you get out of the book and you read that chapter on prayer, understand God's your Father.

Sheila: That's beautiful. I think we're only got time for one more. You write on mentoring. I think that's a huge thing. I'm getting a lot of requests from younger women, and honestly I'm not quite sure how to do it. What do you say about mentoring?

Mark: Well, I've been... Before I give the answer let me just say, every chapter in this book also has a five-minute teaching video on *Core 52.org*. It is free, it is online. Anybody can access it. And if you want to take seriously memorizing the verses, there is another three-minute video on memorizing those verses. Again, that's *Core 52.org*. So tons of other resources other than just the book.

I will say this about mentoring as I've been doing this with young men for 25 years. Nobody is ever good at it. What I do for young men has nothing to do with taking the book and leading them through it. It is not about giving magic bullets. I'm mentoring three F-35 pilots right now in Phoenix. The only thing... I look at these guys and go, why would you want me? Because nobody sees themselves in the mirror the way people see you on stage.

Here's the secret of mentoring, 25 years, I can help the person in front of me see themselves through the windshield instead of the rearview mirror. All of us look at our past and we see ourselves through our past. If I can get a young man or you, a young woman to see their potential instead of their past, then that's a game-changer.

Sheila: Thank you for calling me a young woman! There is so much more. Obviously, you can tell we haven't even scratched the surface. We also say to all of you girls out there, even though I will get this back from Barry, this will be a great gift to give to your husband as well and get one for yourself.

But as you know one of the things we're passionate about here at LIFE is that for everything that God has deposited in us that we reach out and be an answer to the prayers of those who desperately need some help and they need it right now. So I want to ask, would you watch this with me? And then we'll talk about how you and I can make a difference.

On the mission field:

Announcer: The birth of a child is one of the most transcendent moments in time. The miracle of life! Tiny hands and feet. We instinctively see they're created in the image of God. And over time they grow into the young men and women they were designed to be. At least that's every parent's hope and prayer.

Sheila: I don't know if you can see... Darling, I don't want to touch it. I don't want to hurt you. But can you see her skin? Her skin has begun to literally peel off her body.

Announcer: Throughout Africa terrible events like famine and drought have decimated entire communities and left many with little or no food. The devastating effects of severe food shortages are most visible in the children.

Sheila: With severe malnutrition the first organ to shut down is the skin. It is as if all the

reserves go to try and protect what's left inside.

James and Betty, you have sat here over and over and over through the years faithfully serving and feeding millions, but I know you see this. This mom who is desperate, like any mom would be, to save the life of her precious child had to travel 30 kilometers to get here. But it is why mission feeding matters so much. We talk about life where it is needed most. Where it is needed most is in the villages where these darling children live. Because this mom shouldn't have to travel 30 kilometers with a desperately sick little lamb. They need our help and they need it now.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: I will never ever forget my first day in a malnutrition clinic in Africa. Honestly, I was brought up in Scotland to be aware of things like that. My mom would sit us all down and we'd watch and we'd give to different things. But it is totally different when you're on the ground and you feel the heat and you're aware of the aromas, of the smell everywhere, and then you see the children. I mean I had no idea. I was so ignorant. I asked one of our translators, "Why does this child have red hair?"

He said, "Because there is no protein in her system. That's what happens. And that's why her skin is peeling off."

And so that's why mission feeding is so important to us. Because we don't want a mother to have to travel all those miles to come to a malnutrition clinic. We want to go to the villages, so they never have to show up in a malnutrition clinic.

And the great thing is we've worked with those who know that's needed for those particular people in that particular area in terms of nutrition. And we have our own factories now where we make this food. Before I handed out those bowls, it kind of looks like oatmeal, I thought, well, I'm going to try it myself first. It's got all the vitamins and

minerals and protein. And literally, honestly, from the first bowl you're turning from death to life for that child.

And these moms, they're just like you and me. You might even think well, if that family lived next door to me, I'd take care of that in a heartbeat. We're bringing that family and placing that family right next door to you. You don't have to get on a plane and fly for 17 hours. You don't have to do that. We will go and show you what the needs are and then ask will you help us? And you can do it for so little.

We've made a commitment to be able to feed 350,000 children this year. But let me break that down for you. If you can give \$30 that will feed three children for three months. Think about that! You go to a movie, some terrible movie and buy popcorn, you've already blown more than \$30. But you could feed three children for three months. \$50 would feed five children. \$100 feeds ten. If you're able to, if God has blessed your business, then \$1,000 would feed 100 children. That's like a whole village!

I've been to both places. I've been to the malnutrition clinic and wept with these mothers who are desperate and I've been to the villages where we set up the feeding programs in school so they'll have to come to school to get a good meal, to get an education, to break this cycle of poverty.

We promised that we're going back soon to Angola and we promised we're coming back with help. Would you help us please? Go to your phone, make the very best gift possible. Let's eradicate hunger in Jesus' name.

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 350,000 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 life saving 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 *Global Impact of Life Journal*. This softcover journal includes pictures from the mission field and inspiring scriptures as a reminder of your impact in giving to bless lives around the world.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the *Global Impact Bible*. This English Standard Version presents a fascinating guide to the impact of the bestselling book of all time filled with quotes from well-known figures, photographs and reproductions of fine art. It highlights the many surprising ways scripture has shaped civilization.

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, "A Mother's Strength."

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: Thank you so much! And for any gift at all, I will send you a copy of, well, it actually won't be me, it will be other people here, of *Core 52*. Fantastic book! Impacting my family. And Mark I just want to say thank you for writing this and we just pray God's favor on this book because I really think it would impact our nation. So thank you.

Mark: Thanks for having me. Give a good gift!

Sheila: Thanks for being with me. I'll see you next time on *LIFE Today*. So have a good day and we'll talk to you later.