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Week 21: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

"In the Potter's Hands"

James: I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We will go ahead and risk being a little closer than six feet since we are... We're going to be inseparable. But we have done everything we can to honor those in authority because we really believe that our leaders, these healthcare workers are just amazing. And all these that are trying to advise us, we're trusting for the best possible reliable information. So when you're telling us to do something whether it is to wear the mask or use the sanitizer, wash your hands, we're doing it. I kind of feel like if we'll learn some of these things when we just have the common flu or maybe the cold is spreading rapidly, just the common cold, we'll just kind of use greater wisdom. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we would become so health conscious that we would actually adjust the way we eat because most diseases...?

Betty: I really believe some good things can come from this awful thing that has happened to our world -- our whole world. But if we could grasp hold of those things that will help us in the future, we'll be better off.

James: We really will. That's what I'm going to talk to you about; about what we should learn and what we must learn. We're going to have a family talk. When God led Betty and me, took me off the crusade platforms in stadiums and coliseums, which all of my close friends from Billy Graham to Dr. Falwell to my pastors, to my friend everywhere were saying, "Why in the world are you doing this?" Because God really did tell me... as a matter of fact, he told me to take my name off the name of the ministry; that he wanted it to be totally Christ-centered. And that doesn't imply somebody else is not Christ-centered. He just said, "You've gotten too much attention. The gifted ones in the

body have gotten so much attention that the world looks at the somebodies rather than my glory in the body. You can take out of somebody or you can put them on a pedestal, which is not healthy. But if you get the whole body healthy receiving me through all these gifted ones, then you cannot take out the influence of that body. And it is the body that is essential to be the shining city set on a hill."

So the Lord just led me to take my name off everything and put *LIFE* on it and it became *LIFE Outreach International* and *LIFE Today* television. We watched the term *LIFE* just begin to spread through many other ministries. Thank God! Because we want the life of God to flow. But when God told us to come in here and sit down, I really want you to kind of hang on what I'm saying to you right now. He said, "I want you to call the family in the family room and help them get to know the Father."

Now stay with me because if you'll understand what I'm saying to you, God has really helped me understand that the people who have appreciated, not only *LIFE Today* television and all the guests that come in and show you Jesus and well-known gifted teachers and people you've never even heard of and you saw the glory of God on. Many of you say that, "Betty is the greatest source of inspiration, James, far more so than you are because we know she is a homemaker, she is a mom, she is dedicated as a wife and a grandmother and now a great grandmother, and we just see God's grace and glory on her."

Well, praise God, I know that you do. And so many of the people we have brought through this studio that you never heard of, you just see Jesus on them. And it seems to inspire people. Many people have said, "Your wife inspired me to realize, because we know she is shy and she wants to stay in the background, but we just see God's glory and grace all over her." And all the great Bible teachers that come in here, they tell her that. They may not say it right out here on the set but they tell her. I really believe that's true.

So what we did was in obedience to God. You wouldn't leave preaching to 10,000 people a night, or sometimes more but hardly ever less than 5,000 or 6,000 and you're seeing

literally hundreds of thousands of people come to Christ and you come and sit down by your wife? I remember Franklin Graham coming down and said, "Dad sent me down here and ask why are you not in the stadiums and coliseums and stadiums? You're sitting in a room with your wife on a sofa?"

I said, "Because Franklin, God told me we're going to serve you and others." And we gave him one of the first big checks to Samaritan's Purse before it ever got started. Aren't you grateful?

Father, thank you for Franklin, Samaritan's Purse. Thank you for all these healthcare workers. Thank you for these wonderful advisors that are having press conferences every day to try to tell us the truth. Thank you for our leadership that wants to lead us through these challenging times. We believe that every great decision and right decision is because of your wisdom and we believe it is an answer to prayer; in Jesus' name.

Now listen to this. When God said, "You call the family in the family room, you help them get to know me." Let me tell you where we are right now. I'm a father. Yes, we have a daughter in heaven. We have 11 grandchildren, and now seven great grandchildren. The product of a rape, James Robison; on a hospice nurse caring for an elderly man is raped by the alcoholic son. And at age 40, having never had a child, told by doctors even though she'd been married, couldn't have a baby, she finds herself pregnant. In desperation, she went to have an abortion and the doctor refused to do it. Now you explain why? She didn't know why. But he wouldn't do it. She said she went back to where she was caring for the elderly man and sat down on his screen porch and God said, "Have the baby. The baby will bring joy to the world." She gave birth, put an ad in the paper and asked someone to come get me and they did. And then I just went from place to place over the next nearly 20 years. But God had a plan.

I'm telling you that because every life is precious. And right now as I'm seeking to call the family of God, and if you're not in that family, the way to the Father is through Jesus. Jesus said, "I'm the way, the truth, and the life and no one will come to the father but

through me." That's the only way. A preacher didn't say that. You didn't hear that from somebody's pulpit necessarily, as though they were saying it of themselves. Jesus said it of himself. And when we proclaim the gospel good news of transforming truth, the only way to the Father and forgiveness and redemption is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way! Not religion -- not any religion. Not any part of even the Christian faith. But faith in the Christ of the Christian faith. And you're born from above. That's the family.

If you're not in that family, he says you just ask, and you'll receive. Seek and you will find. If you will receive me, I will come in. I knock at the door. You open the door, I come in. And I bring with you all the mercy and grace and forgiveness and life. I bring you the potential of fullness in life, fruitfulness in life, abundant life now and eternal life forever. So that's his invitation to all of us. You don't have to beg, you don't have to wait for a feeling.

He said, "I will hear you. I will come in. And I will eat with you. I'll take everything you face, and I will put it on my shoulders and lighten your load immediately. But I'll take you to dine with me. I'll set a table of sufficiency and provision before you in the face and fury of all the enemy. I will make you lie down in green pastures, not desolate, barren deserts." That's the Lord who is our shepherd. The 23rd Psalm, "And he will calm the storms and lead us to still waters." That is the promise of the shepherd. That's what happens when we come to know the Father. We want you to sit in the family room and he wants to pull you up real close.

So please hear this. This pandemic, Betty and I have been on this earth 76 years. Betty says, "Why do you always have to tell everybody we're the same age?" Well, because we are. I'm about a month older than she is. But we've been around a long time. Historians are telling us there's never been a time like this. Not a depression or a recession, not some kind of a collapse or even a 9/11 attack or world wars. Nothing has ever shut the world down. Nothing has ever shut America down like this. Nothing! And the only way we're going to come out of it is the miraculous power -- now listen to me -- of the wisdom that is offered freely from the Father. And he says, "If any of you lack wisdom just ask." And

he will freely give us that wisdom.

Do you realize America was on a beautiful upward incline? I mean it was amazing! Things were happening in this country that could only be explained as supernatural miraculous blessings that came from good positive decisions.

I'm trying to tell you that when God's people begin to pray for his will to be done on earth and believed it could be and believed that if the people called by his name who really knew him would actually humble themselves and call on him, and pray and be willing to repent and turn from their own wicked ways, if we would come like that, he would hear and he will heal our land. He would make up, as Joel said, "for all the years the locusts and the consuming pestilence that attacks our productivity, our blessings and prosperity." God says, "I will make it up for you. You will again grow grain, grow wheat. You're going to be blessed."

We began to see that. God used a man that virtually none of us in the church or Christian world would have picked. You know what I did find out? He really was captivated by the Jesus he saw in some people. You know what else he wanted? He wanted those people who believe God answers prayer to pray for him. And then he not only wanted them to pray for him, he wanted those who are really serious about it and who would be willing to love one another like the family of God to pray with him. And for four years, virtually every week, consistently by these years, he has asked for that prayer, joined in that prayer, listened to church leaders that I have known, many for 40 years, most of them for 20 years or more, and I have watched God work in their life miracles.

Betty, you and I have watched come through this studio the most diverse church leaders who were taught not to like each other, listen to each other or even get in the same room together.

Betty: We were taught that way when we were young in the ministry. You don't go to certain churches, you don't act the way certain churches do. There was a definite

separation.

James: As Baptists we were told to stay away from Pentecostals. Yes, we were! And I want you to know I thank God, I don't stay away from any members of the body of Christ that I may differ with or I may think, maybe they could make a correction. You know what I found out? I know I need to have corrections made in me. I know this is one vessel that needs to be shaped up by the shaping hand of God. I know I need to be willing to see him in others.

That's what Billy Graham told me. He said, "You spend time with people you've been taught to avoid." He began to tell me how these Christians that I'd been taught to stay away from had made all the difference for him all over the world to get God's arms around people.

And all of the sudden, Betty, we're seeing all these people that are taught to fight. They may disagree theologically, but they weren't going to try to destroy that other person that they thought might be weak. They didn't amputate that body part. They didn't divorce that personal relationship. They were like the father of the prodigal saying, "Even if you're wrong, I believe you can come back." They didn't try to destroy each other. They joined together. And we've seen this studio full of the greatest church leaders in the world in here in love with Jesus and in love with one another. And I believe we're seeing a miracle answer to that coming together of the family of God.

Betty: Absolutely! And you know God didn't create us all to be the same. We fell in love because we saw there was a difference there. We loved that different personalities. So he created us all differently, but he does like us to be in unison in his spirit, one with him. When we're one with him we're going to be one with the others with all our different creativities that God gave us.

James: Or even our different view or different perspective. We're not going to be unkind to each other. We cut people off. I'm watching God bring people together that never

would come together.

I'm going to be talking to you this week about the lessons we should learn from the pandemic and the lessons we must learn as the church. We must! And if the church will learn the lessons we must learn from this incredible pressure, we're going to be able to inspire the whole world to see the glory, the greatness, the grace of the one Father who is perfect in his love and his wisdom and in his guidance and in his protection.

In this world, we're going to be assaulted. There is a deceiver trying to destroy all the purpose of God in every life. The fruitfulness of God, the fullness of the Holy Spirit. But we're going to learn some things. As we are shaped by the pressure, I've said this many times, I cannot repeat it enough. If you put your life in the hand of the Master-Potter-God, he is going to shape Christ in you. Just look at Romans eight, I've gone over it with you right here before where all things work together for good. They're not necessarily good. They can be terrible! But they are working together for good to shape us into, literally, as Paul taught in the letter to the Ephesians to shape us into the fullness and the stature of Christ in that eighth chapter of Romans, we are being shaped into the creation of God Christ in us to reveal him through the body of believers to the world. So the pressure that comes, either comes from the pressure, fingers of God's pressing, shaping or is filtered through. But the purpose is to shape Christ in us for kingdom purpose.

I'm going to show you in the next program that one of the worst things Christians can think about and talk about is, "God get us out of here! Hurry up and come back!" He's coming back. We've got eternal life where there will be no enemy. There will be no need to suit up. There is no battle. It is over. But God left us here to get him in here in the fullness of His grace and glory so the people could see the resurrected Lord living in the life of every believer; and manifest in the body of believers which he calls the church. And he says, "Against that body, that church the effectiveness of the gates, the death, deception and defeat of the gates of hell will not prevail." That's what he wants. That's what the stage is set for.

That's what we're going to get so excited about this week. I really believe those of you who watch *LIFE Today* and you have looked at the least of these all over the world, just like you will now as we look at hungry people who will die without our help. Some of us will strain here without the resources and support but over there these people, the missionaries are reaching out to put God's arms of love around them, they will die without our help.

Those of you who recognize the importance of the least of these, it is your prayers and your love that's being answered right now to see us go through this pandemic and come out more of a family and stronger than ever before and reveal God more clearly than ever and the church can help the whole world know what it looks like to live in the shelter and shadow of the Almighty. And have the shepherd leading us to lie down in peace and security in green pastures; and have the wall, the hedge of his protection which is his word. And we live in that word. We don't just carry it in a leather binder, we carry it in our lives. And we write letters in the fleshly tables, Paul said, of other men's hearts and lives.

Father, that's why we're here. I pray this week everybody that watches *LIFE Today* will be so overflowing with life that it will be poured out all over this earth. And we will say, "Yes, Lord Jesus, come in the manifestation of your power, your glory, your grace, your mercy, your love and your life; in Jesus' name."

That's why we're here. I want you to do what you've been doing so faithfully. I want you to glimpse one of the least of these, several, and you become the hands of Jesus, which he says when you do this, you not only did it to them, but you did it for me, Jesus.

I want you to look. There is no question in my mind you're going to look and you're going to respond as he directs. But I also believe as you listen this week you're going to learn what it is to know what we must learn through this incredible pandemic and challenge. We're going to be shaped more and more into the fullness of his image. Watch

closely.

On the mission field:

Announcer: The people of South Sudan are facing a crisis they're unable to contend with. Severe malnutrition is sweeping through their villages and the extreme lack of resources leaves them vulnerable to its effect. Many children have already lost their lives, leaving mothers like Aghut in agony.

Open Captions:

>> My heart is in so much pain from the child I lost. The grief is overwhelming.

Announcer: Aghut carries a burden most of us can't imagine. She recently lost one child, a three-year old daughter and her two other children remain in danger from the lack of food.

Open Captions:

>> My children say, "Mommy, we are hungry." But I cannot find food for them, and I feel so bad. I'm afraid that another one will die, and I'm praying for God to save my children.

Announcer: In her village the circumstances are dire and she struggles alongside the other mothers to ensure the survival of their children. It feels like an impossible task.

Open Captions:

>> I am doing everything I can for my children.

Announcer: Aghut knows her own hunger even places at risk the unborn child she carries. Although she lives in fear and uncertainty, her determination to care for her children does not waver or grow weary. So Aghut presses on placing her trust in God and the people he moves on her behalf. It is the only hope that remains for her and other

mothers like her, fighting for the future of their families.

Open Captions:

>> I would be so grateful to anyone who shows mercy to me and my children and helps me to feed them. I know that God sees our situation and will make a way for my children to be saved.

In the studio:

James: Wow! That precious, precious mother saying, "God sees. He'll make a way."

Betty: James, my heart just goes out to her. Can you imagine sitting by the graveside of a little three-year old? And your other two children, you think, they could be there soon if we don't get some help for them. She is asking for mercy. She is asking for God's grace. She is looking for hope.

We are that hope to this mother and many, many others that so desperately want to feed their children, but they can't. I hope you see the heart of these mothers as they're asking for help, they're asking for mercy.

James: Betty, we've got a lot of pressure here but that little... That mother said she is asking God -- and I believe we're the answer. We're talking about those two little children she's got there. And we can feed three children for the next months for \$30 for several months; feed five for \$50; for \$100 we can feed ten. There are ten children right now whose mothers are praying for them.

I want you to listen to an email that I just printed off that came from Isak Pretorius. We've been there working in the mission fields with Peter Pretorius and his family, and so many of the missionaries. And he said with what's happening right now the COVID-19 is impacting the entire world. But Africa has a large percentage of our population that is highly immune-compromised due to malnutrition. The lack of

sufficient food supply, waterborne diseases, HIV AIDS, and other poverty related issues cause the risk of death to be much higher. He says in the southern part of Africa right now, and this is a direct quote from his email, he said, "We've grown from 120,000, listen to this, to 450,000 already in serious trouble." It's multiplied nearly four times.

Father, we face heavy loads here. And you have blessed almost all of us even who are listening today, and I pray for everyone challenged that is watching that you would meet their need miraculously, like that mother was praying. But Father, if we can be the answer to this mother's concern, please give us the joy and the excitement of doing it; in Jesus' name.

Could I ask you right now if you could help give life to three children with a gift of \$30? Or is there any way you can help five with a gift of \$50? For some of you that might be a real stretch. But I'm always going to ask you if there is any way you can help with ten, give \$100.

You know you've been the most amazing people. Over all these years, and I really do believe this, because God's allowed Betty and me to speak to leaders in the church community, the business community and the national community and they've listened because they've seen the demonstration and effect of love. That's why so many national leaders have been willing to listen to us. And why did that happen? Because of you. Because we couldn't have extended the hands of Jesus without you enabling us. The missionaries couldn't be there. They'd be there with a broken heart and empty handed, but you provide them the ability to be a miracle.

Would you go on line right now? Would you dial that number? Would you take your bankcard, go get it, and make the best gift you can? Would you do that? If you could give \$100 do it. Whatever you can give. We have some gifts to send you to bless you. Some of you say, "I don't worry about a gift. I just want to give life." I understand that. But we want to bless you with spiritual gifts that can encourage you.

Would you right now please call the number or go online? If you plan to mail a check, make it to *LIFE*. But call us on the phone, tell us what you're sending because we've got to let the missionaries know, yes, we'll be able to provide the food. We have the resources. You are the source of those resources. Thank you right now for responding.

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:

James: I've got a whole stack of journals and notes here. I told Betty, I may just open one of them and just take off. Here is the *Global Impact of Life Journal*. It gives you an opportunity. It has some fabulous quotes -- just fabulous quotes! Whether it is C.S. Lewis or other great people that you would have known, men and women, quotes in here but it's got great places for you to keep a journal. And you make a world impact. And right now God wants the church to impact the whole world.

That's what we're going to talk about. What must we learn as the church through this pandemic? Thanks so much for watching *LIFE Today*! Encourage your friends to watch.