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Week 31: WFL

James and Betty Robison

"Greatest of These is Love"

James: Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. An empty studio but our hearts are full -- full of the love of God and gratitude for all of you who watch *LIFE Today*.

Betty, I've been amazed during this pandemic at the love of God flowing so freely through so many of you. There is no question a lot of our viewers are in that senior division that we divide numerically by; over 50 for sure, and some over 60 or 70. You've been amazing.

As a matter of fact, all of you, whether you're millennial or whether you're down in the 20- to 30-year old group, you poured God's love out on people that are so often overlooked, just like you're trying to pour it out on your neighbors and people around you. But you know when you are helping the least of these that are seldom noticed by anybody, they are continually threatened, and oftentimes just clean water will change their whole world, food will save their life. It is not like the cure that we look for, for the Coronavirus or other terrible diseases but it's an instant cure delivered by love.

Betty, that's the same way the answer to this challenge is going to be delivered. It's going to be delivered by love. All the healthcare providers, first responders, all the people trying to find the cure. You can say well, they're just doing it for monetary gain. Well, the more you do to help people there is always blessing and gain, just like the faithful farmer that gets the great crop that blesses many people, it blesses the farmer. God is by no means opposed to that. He just wants us to guard ourselves against greed.

But the transforming effect that will take place, Betty, is exactly what Jesus said of the two great commandments, love God, love your neighbor. And then Paul the apostle said, listen to this incredible statement, "Herein is all the law fulfilled in a word, that you love your neighbor, you love others."

One of the things that I've been sharing... by the way, we can see you do that. Thank you for your help. Right now we're at the last part of drilling the 150 wells that we have left to reach and obviously the pandemic is a tremendous distraction and a weight and limits some, which is why so many of you are so sensitive to God and you step up and you say you know what? I'm going to step in for someone else. But that really is, that's what it takes.

One of the things that I've been talking to you about as Betty and I've been with you is the importance of loving the other members of God's family, the members of the body of Christ. I want to talk to you about that today.

Betty, I believe we're going to come through this pandemic, I believe that if the church will stand up and let Jesus shine through us, we can actually move forward into more positive, let's say even prosperous time than ever. If we just won't make prosperity and blessings a god, I think we're going to be moved into a place where we're going to have the greatest blessings that our nation has ever witnessed. And God wants his love to prevail in us, but we share those blessings with people all over the world.

Betty: We're not talking about sameness, James. We're not supposed to all be the same or have the same gifts or do the same type of ministry but the oneness in us should be our connection with God and Jesus and his love for us because we all had to come to the same God to be received unto him and we're all in the same family.

And family members aren't all the same. We have three children and all these grandchildren and great grandchildren now. They're all different! I get so blessed as I

watch them because I see the different personalities God gave them. I see the different gifts. I can see the qualities. And sometimes there's things that aren't so good and I think, oh I can pray for them in that area.

So let's don't try to make everybody the same. Let's express the way God has created us individually to express our love for him and for those around us.

James: If we do that, if we have that love for God and our neighbor and then what I said a moment ago and you referred to it with family, sometimes it is more challenging to love family, and even in marriages than it is the neighbor next door or up the street. But God wants us to love not only the neighbor but so often that person we don't understand the importance of loving fully and that's the other members of God's family, his body.

I want to talk to you about the most important thing I believe that will happen in order to turn everything around in the most positive possible way. And I believe we'll witness the greatest spiritual awakening in the history of the world. This is what it is. It's the coming together of the body of Christ, every member appreciated for its unique design and its designated purpose. And every member appreciating the other members whether they're connected directly or indirectly, and supplying one another the need that that member of the body has, whatever it is and not comparing one member with the other.

In First Corinthians Chapter 12, and I want to tell you, this is just absolutely a powerful chapter. Paul is talking about spiritual gifts and how they differ. He makes it clear that we're not to put too much emphasis on the importance of the gift that we magnify it above the giver. And we are to appreciate the gift in each individual and not think someone is short-changed if they don't have what we have, or we have what they have.

Paul teaches us that we're never to compare ourselves with one another or measure ourselves by one another and be void of wisdom, void of understanding from God's point of view. And we waste a lot of time comparing. Oftentimes in a church setting you feel like your clothes are being monitored, your look, your hair, your size. That's not the way

God wants us to look at one another. He wants us to look at one another with admiration for God and his greatness and his unique design and the diversity of all members. And all those members are to submit to the body of Christ.

In First Corinthians 12 Paul is pointing out, don't complain because as a part of the body the ear doesn't say because I'm not an eye I'm not part of the body. If the whole body were an eye where would the hearing be? And it just breaks down the uniqueness of each part and how we're never, never to complain because we don't have what someone else has. We appreciate the uniqueness of all the body.

You may say, James, why do you think understanding that is so important right now? Because the only way we're going to see the healing power of God to restore all that God wants to restore and to bless us beyond anything we could ever imagine, for the shepherd to lead us in the greenest, most lush fertile pastures of blessing possible, to calm the storms in our life, as I've said over and over, prepare a table before us in the presence of all of our accusers and all of our enemies, anointing our head with oil, knowing his goodness and his mercy will follow us all the days of our life. Now that's the way we are to live. But we are to live that way as a healthy body.

Later in the week you're going to hear a message from Ravi Zacharias that I believe is very important. Ravi went to be with the Lord. The last call he made to me where he still had vocal strength and volume enough that I could hear him. He was deeply concerned about the country. And Ravi said, "James, James, the body of Christ, the church, the family of God, the body against which the gates of hell will not prevail," the only force on this earth that those gates of deception and destruction cannot prevail and that's my phrase, that's what I'm referring to, I knew what he was talking about. He understands the importance of the body of Christ, the church that stands against the adverse negative, deadly, divisive, deceptive, destructive influence of the gates of hell and the intention of the father of lies, the murderer, Satan himself, Lucifer.

Here's what he said, "James, if we're going to see our way through to be what God wants,

for the blessings to flow, we've got to lay aside those points of view and opinions that we have within the body of Christ." And he's referring even to leadership, where our point of view divides us, cuts off and separates us from the other important members of Christ's body.

He's not talking about lay aside sound, biblical, irrefutable, undeniable truth. He's not talking for one moment about changing God's truth into a lie or denying any part of it. He's saying we have, as individuals we're seeing through a glass, a mirror, a window darkly. It's not totally clear as we will someday see. And as we look through that, if we take our view and our point as a point around which to build a church or churches, not the church, the body of Christ, but churches like a tribe, a group, a club, a lodge for heaven's sake! That's what we tend to do. And when we do it unknowingly, unwittingly, we've divided the body.

And the only way we're going to turn the tide in the essential direction we must go as a nation, as individuals, as communities, as families, as cities, as states, the only way we're going forward positively is with the influence of the body of Christ that comes together in supernatural unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17. And that was the last part of what he was emphasizing. He said, "What Jesus prayed for must happen! The unity he prayed for in 17 must happen!"

I've known that, I've preached that, I've proclaimed that, I've shared that, and in this studio and in this ministry we've watched the greatest leaders in the nation, church leaders, godly leaders, love God with all their heart, they have different points of view. They see things differently. But when they differ with someone in the body, even if they think it is not functioning, that body part is not well. They will speak correction redemptively. If we don't, if we speak it condescendingly and in a condemning fashion, we are destroying that person.

And if a person is actually guilty in sin and we do the same thing with a person that has really missed the mark, and we come across condemning and condescending, it causes

that person to not just say what I did is bad but I'm bad. And they're covered with shame.

We have covered people sitting in our churches with so much shame, oftentimes from the pulpit, that when they know they're wrong, they don't say, "I'm wrong, I need help." But "I'm just bad! I'm awful!" And many times if they've got something going on that's not right, they wouldn't dare tell another Christian or church person or some church leader knowing they're going to be condemned. We've got to lay this incredible dagger, this hatchet that's amputating body parts, that bludgeoning them, we've got to lay that aside.

Betty, pray with me right now. Father, we find it so easy to divide over a different viewpoint, over a weakness, over a failure. Sometimes people live in defeat. They can't control appetites or desires. And rather than being convicted by the power of your word and love they feel condemned and beat up and dirty and ashamed. And they don't understand that they can come like the prodigal to the Father that will cover their nakedness, put a ring that says you're family, put sandals on their feet, peace on their feet. God, help them to see that.

Please, please! If you felt condemned, you felt miserable and like a failure and somebody has put those words on you. Please overlook that. Church, stop doing it! This is what Ravi was saying so clearly that I heard. That if the church today, the body of Christ will come together and look like a healthy body, not severing members that are sick, damaging those members, but offering healing to them. We have literally sliced the body of Christ apart thinking we're doing it with the sword of the Lord, but we've used it as a battle axe. We've damaged the church. God forgive us of this. We've all had a tendency to be guilty of that.

I don't know where you are in your journey. You may say, James, I can't even control my appetites. I cannot control my desires. I can't seem to control my desires, James. I've had such a load on me. I feel like got to escape with some kind of medication. I'm in trouble. I would want you to know that you can call that phone number there and you could say to someone when they answer, you could say, would you please, please pray with me? And

you're going to find someone with a loving heart, perhaps identifying with you in the very challenges you face and telling you how God will lighten your load. You don't need to ever hesitate to share with us the heartache, the hurt, the concern, the need that you have. We'll pray with you.

Everyone watching this program right now I believe are whispering a prayer to God, heal every broken heart, give people a job, let them see that they've got a future that is safe and secure in your hands as they place their life fully in the potter's hand. Comfort them. Pray that prayer of one.

And for all of you watching, would you ask God to help you be a healthy member of the body of Christ? I just to want reference this. He's talked about the spiritual gifts, he's talking about the ones that are gifted to lead, but after he's talked about the body and the health of the body, you go on to the next chapter. *"I want to show you a more excellent way."* That's the last verse of the preceding chapter: *"I want to show you a more excellent way."*

And you go into First Corinthians 13: *Though I speak with tongues of men and angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and I know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains but I don't have love, I'm nothing.*

All teaching, all correction, all encouragement must be delivered in unconditional, redemptive love. The reason you, who watch *LIFE Today* often, and decide not to just watch but to become a miracle answer to somebody's challenge or need, you have found out love never fails. You've been moved to action because you've seen the love of God through missionaries who have placed their life, overflowing with the love of God, in the midst of indescribable suffering and pain and need, and you've watched the redemptive power of God flow through them. You see that lantern, that light burning in the darkest parts and areas on the planet and you say, I'm going to keep the oil in that lantern.

And do you know it was the oil that the people pressed that they brought to even keep the lamp burning in the tabernacle of God and in the temple? The people brought the oil. That's what you do. You do it with your prayers, you do it with your attention, you do it with your care and you've done it here. When you see someone thirsty and Jesus says, "If you just give a cup of water, you won't lose your reward." I don't think you stop and think that reward is a bunch of money or a bunch of wealth. It might be but it's the blessing of God. And the greatest reward, Betty, when we give a drink of water or we give food is knowing we've blessed them with the blessing of the Lord and the love of the Lord. You sure are pretty. I'm so glad I married you.

Betty: I am too!

James: I'm so glad we are one in Christ. Do you know what? You are one with us. We could not put our arms around the suffering and release healing if you were not a part of it. You are a connected body part in the body of Christ. But you're also directly connected to the outreaches of life.

Betty, we're giving more than a cup of water right now. We're giving villages and families a well of water that changes their world forever. The gift you make today gives life and keeps on giving for the rest of people's lives.

Right now we're trusting God for the last 150 wells to be drilled this year and in the face of all the challenges, we know God is going to supply through yielded vessels like you. I want you to watch and listen very prayerfully. And then, would you be the miracle someone longs for? Would you become the kind of miracle you may need, that you pray for? Would you become one of those miracles for somebody? Watch closely.

On the mission field:

Announcer: These mothers are on a mission to collect drinking water for their families. The irony is their water sources are contaminated and a threat to their very lives. When

asked, "Why do you go back each day?"

They will sometimes say to you, "What choice do I have?"

Isak: Here's the reality. This woman has two choices. The one choice is she takes this disease-filled contaminated water back to her children and that's what she gives them to drink knowing well, she's not confused, she knows that this water could give her children a waterborne disease and could steal their lives. But her choice is either to do that or take no water at all. And she knows that no water at all means a sure death.

Announcer: These women have learned to live with the consequences of collecting contaminated water. It is something they must do to avoid dehydration and certain death. No mother should ever have to live this way.

Isak: That's why I need your help today. I need you to help us to bring a water well to this village so that through Mission: Water for LIFE we're able to reach out to this mother, to the children of this village and give them a water well, give them fresh clean water. Give them life in the form of water!

End of video

In the studio:

James: I pray that as you look at that last little family there you see hundreds of families like that. And knowing that when you give a village, let's just say it averages a thousand people, and you give them a water well in their own community, you've actually given them a life. You've provided clean water for the rest of their lives. And the wells are still an average, which is miraculous, I really think maybe because petrol has gone down a little bit.

We may find that if we get these 150, we may be able to drill a few more. I don't know. We don't know where things are going. There is a lot of challenge but its \$4800. And if

you break it down, \$48 toward that \$4800 will give ten people water the rest of their life. If a well, let's say averages a thousand people. So where could you better place \$48? If you've never helped us would you start there? But keep in mind that \$144 will give 30 people water the rest of their life.

And Betty, we're blessed in that we asked God to let us give a well when they were \$3600. And we prayed that God would let us give a well every time the missionaries called for help. And you know God answered our prayer.

Betty: He really has.

James: We've been able to do that. Many of our viewers tell me that's their greatest joy.

Betty: Absolutely. I can understand why. As I was watching along with you, many times we've shown you a mother walking to a well source and it's just a dirty hole in the ground that has so many diseases. I wondered what's going on in that mother's heart. You can just imagine. They've got to have the water. My child has to have the water. But this water is not good for them.

Can you imagine the difference walking to a well that you've helped us provide, how that mother must feel and say, "My child is walking toward life not death."? That's the difference that you make. So thank you very much!

James: Betty, that's exactly what happens. When you reach out and give a cup of water, in this sense it's a well of water, you have provided a miracle. The greatest gift you can make is the gift of life.

Would you go to the phone? Or would you go online and take your bankcard? Could you give a well? Could you give \$4800? I know the times are challenging but perhaps we'll be short in some area and you'll say, "I'll cover the whole well." You could give \$1200 and pray three join you or \$2400 and say, Lord, let one more join me and we've

got it. At whatever level you can help, please do. You know what? I believe you will. I believe as a member of the body of Christ you're going to extend his hands of love and mercy.

Please! Go online, dial the number. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're mailing it. Remember now, we're getting at the end of this time to get these 150 wells. We need a lot of help. So please, make the gift God put on your heart. We have some gifts to bless you, but you really are giving the greatest gift, you're giving the gift of life. If you mail a check, call us and tell us what you're putting in the mail. We need to know. And thank you for using that bankcard like a check. That's how we should use them all the time. Thank you for doing it!

Begin video clip

Announcer: Dirty, diseased filled water! How desperate would a mother need to be to consider giving this contaminated substance to her child? For many mothers and their families living in extreme poverties, this is their only choice.

With your help, they won't have to make this choice ever again. Mission Water for Life provides clean disease-free water for thousands of children and their families, giving them a life free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish the final 150 water wells this year. Your gift of \$48 will help provide water for ten people. \$72 will provide for 15. \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime. And a gift of \$4,800 will help sponsor a complete well, serving up to 1,000 people.

With your gift we'll send you Today is a Good Day, seasonal devotional sets, broken out into the four seasons of the year. This beautiful set features a daily scripture, inspirational

thoughts, and a place for you to journal your own thoughts, prayers and insights from God's word.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the leather-bound life-giving Proverbs Journal, filled with wisdom and daily encouragement from Proverbs, including lined pages for your personal notes.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4,800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request "A Mother's Strength" bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online!

End of video

In the studio:

James: You're going to be blessed by the beautiful journal you're going to get. You're going to love these devotions! I'm telling you, it's just a blessing to bless you. But Betty, our viewers really do show people the love of God. Not just in word but in deed. Thank you for doing it.

Encourage your friends to watch *LIFE Today*. I think they'll experience refreshing when they watch. Let us know if you enjoy *LIFE Today* and do encourage your friends to watch too. God bless you!