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Week 46: Fall Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Isak Pretorius

James: I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. Betty and I are so glad to spend this time with people we believe are the most special people on the planet. You've already seen and you already know there is a crisis. It is something we're still learning about. We don't need to fear but we need to be wise.

I want to say thank you from Betty and me for your prayers for us. We're both basically 77, Betty will be pretty quick. I've already reached that point and I have Type 2 diabetes that doesn't show up much. But the doctor told me that I'm very vulnerable. And this lady said, "You be really careful." There's been one time my hand was shaking and that was when the secretary of state, Pompeo reached out and grabbed me and Betty's hands. We did put on the immediate little alcohol cleanser.

But here's the thing. You prayed for us. I want you to know we recognize that and appreciate it. We know you're praying for everybody in the battle and you should. Some of you have faced loss. We've lost some of our closest friends. If I named them, you'd know many of them because they're very well known. So we're living in a crisis.

But Betty and I want you to know right now, please hear me, I'm talking, let me say this directly as though I'm just sitting there in the room with you. I'm talking directly to the people that I believe represent the heart of God as much as any people on this planet. I really believe that. If you're listening to us anywhere in the world, you're listening because this program is about life today, every day! The life that God offers, the life we should treasure, the life that he wants to be abundant and blessed and bless others. That's what you do. Betty, our viewers are amazing.

Now we're going to show you something. You remember I rushed away from the house and ran up here so I could talk to someone after the sun had already set there in Africa. And that was Peter Pretorius' son that we've worked with now for over 30 years. Peter is now in heaven looking down. Ann, Isak the son, the family has taken this over. It's awesome. I came up to talk to Isak about what the pandemic is doing in Africa. I want you to listen to this conversation. Then I want to talk to you about becoming as great a miracle as the world can possibly see in the lives of so many people. Listen to this conversation with Isak Pretorius by satellite communication.

James: Well, I've rushed up here to the studio, literally, after dark in Southern Africa. The seven hours or so difference has made it where I am talking to Isak Pretorius, Peter Pretorius' son. You see there behind Isak right now, Peter, who is with the Lord, but who brought the Lord to millions and millions of people that we worked with feeding all over Southern Africa saving millions and millions of lives.

Isak, I know that the COVID pandemic has impacted Africa but not as it has specifically here and other places where the tourism and the travel has infected people. But you have many people who are not living in those traveled communities. They're living out, in many ways you might say outdoors in very difficult circumstances. But COVID has actually impacted the children and the people in Africa drastically because it is limited the ability to get food and even deliver it. Can you explain how this pandemic has made the situation even worse for the precious children that we're reaching out to help? Can you explain that?

Isak: Yeah, James. The reality is that this pandemic, that the virus itself has, many thousands of people have died in Africa as a result of the direct impact of the virus. But the honest truth is that the number of people dying from what we would call "food insecurity," that's a nice way of saying people who are dying of malnutrition or starving to death are literally dying because of a lack of food is far higher than the number that will die from the virus. We're seeing growing food insecurity all over our continent.

Just to give you an idea. Just in one country alone where we were previously helping over 120,000 children a day, we're now needing to help almost half a million. It is about 470,000 people every day that we need to help in that same area.

Because as a result of the pandemic, of course, economic impact all over the world, same here in Africa. Very fragile economy. So an impact of something like COVID, the African countries don't have the resilience to be able to survive that kind of shock. That trickles down to the poorest of the poor. You've got many people who are just managing to survive before, just making it that aren't.

And then we've also had the impact of lock downs coming into place. In some countries almost a panic around what might happen, and so a freezing of any movement across state borders, etc. And so what that's done is that's also meant that there is many isolated pockets of people. And I say "pockets" as in hundreds of thousands of people that have been isolated and cut off from the food supply. And then you have a scenario where, of course with suspicion here in Africa many people are so suspicious of what is going on and what is happening that they're not prepared to actually go into communities and help those communities.

Thank God for our staff who have been on the ground. James, I know you often talk about the missionaries as heroes but I've got to tell you, at this time, during this pandemic, they have been absolute heroes because they've literally put their lives at risk. They've been on the front line each and every day and that has meant that we've been able to save millions of lives through this crisis.

James: Let me just say this, Isak, because Betty and I, I rushed up to the studio just to talk to you because you needed to bring this report. Let me say of our viewers, and Peter, your father said many times, "The greatest Christians on the planet are not the missionaries, they're the people that watch *LIFE Today* who keep us on the field not empty-handed but with the food."

So you've talked about those vessels, those chosen yielded vessels ready to flow the love of God freely but they can only flow what they're receiving from people all over the world who love

God and love their neighbor and enable the missionaries to do their work. So I'm asking God, right now even while I'm talking to you, in my mind, I'm praying, God, move the people watching us right now to extend your hands of love and keep those missionaries rescuing precious lives.

I'm praying, do you remember that Betty said, and this is one of the most powerful things God put on her heart years ago when we first started in the mission programs and we kept seeing us run out of food because the line was longer than the food supply. And Betty prayed, "Dear God, let the line waiting and ready to feed the children always be longer than the line that needs the food." Boy, we've seen the miracle of that prayer answered.

Isak, with what you're saying, we need that miracle right now perhaps more than ever for the line to give the help, to provide the food, to be equal to or even longer than the lines in need. Will you have all the missionaries and all the staff there at the Jesus Alive and joint outreach headquarters where you are right now, will you have everybody praying that that line will grow right now while we're talking and more people will reach out with the hands of Jesus and take those who need to be rescued and pull them up to the heart of God? Please get everyone praying for that miracle, Isak.

Isak: Absolutely, James. We 100% will because we know what that means. We cannot do what we're doing without you, without the friends of LIFE that open their hearts, that do, you taught me as a young man, travelling with you in the field when I was just a young kid and I would hear you say so often, if we are to live our lives in the right way, we will express God's heart and we will extend God's hands.

And James, the reality right now is that this food crisis that is a little second pandemic, if we do not have people truly expressing God's heart and truly extending his hands, we are going to lose millions of people on the continent of Africa. And it's not going to be because of a virus. It is going to be because of a lack of food. So we desperately need that line to extend, of those true heroes who say, "I will give sacrificially, I will do whatever I can do because I know that when I give that gift, I'm truly going to be giving a gift of life." I can give them that guarantee today, James.

James: Let's do what Jesus said. Let's be the two agreeing right now. And not only agreeing with one another, I want you to just join me in prayer. But we're joining with Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit and I believe millions of people.

Father, we're asking you for a miracle. We're asking you, Father to help every person watching to notice the least of these, the too often overlooked, the hungry, the thirsty, the hurting. And when we reach out to them you tell us we're touching you. So God, give us a miracle release of love, compassion, resources to become the miracle that is needed all over Africa; in Jesus' name.

Isak, you be praying for us now. As Betty and I talk to our friends that are truly friends for LIFE.

Isak: Thank you, James! Thank you so much! We're praying for you.

James: So grateful for the means of communication, Betty that allows us to talk to someone on the other side of the world about putting God's arms around people that God loves so much. We want all of you to understand that you're the miracle--the only miracle that can save those precious children and those who need that food.

Betty, you know that Isak and I talked about what God put on your heart. I remember when God put that on your heart. I was watching it birthed in Africa. At the time it was Angola where the children were starving by the thousands and we ran out of food. And we watched the children crawl in the barrels. We saw it many times. And God put a prayer on your heart, we just talked about that the line to feed them would always be longer than that line. And it is really exploding right now.

Share with our viewers how that came to be such a big thing for you to pray about.

Betty: You know we've been over there many times personally and experienced and seen the heartache to see a little child to come up, finally from the very end of the line and we've run out of food. That will break your heart! As I watched that over and over again, I thought, O God,

let our line to give, the reaching out of our hands in love to give be longer than the line of the children are forming to get the help that they need to survive.

James, I think about the thing that our nation is going through right now. The whole world is going through with the pandemic we've been going through. But I've seen through all of this how people have felt the heart and the hurt of those all over our nation and they've reached out. They've reached their hand through giving of food, through giving of appliances for the children to do their schoolwork at home, and just reaching out in every way they could to help people. That blessed me so much as I saw and watched on TV the people that their hearts were touched.

I know your hearts are touched right now as you see these children. We need to extend our hearts in love and let's join with the missionaries and get them the resources that they need.

James: You know, Betty, when we started talking to all of you, we let you know that we'd already organized 350,000 hungry children. But you heard Isak in our conversation say that they've actually been in areas where they were kind of beginning to start and it just exploded. So they're experiencing shock effect, just like when you hear about a loved one, or we've heard about our nation's leaders having this horrible, horrible COVID virus.

They're looking and all of the sudden there is thousands of children and they don't have the virus, they have what the virus caused. They don't have anything to eat. And we're believing because you're the most amazing people, I'm telling you! I believe that what gets on God's heart gets on yours. And I believe you do realize what Isak talked about. When you express God's heart and his love you extend God's hands.

We're asking you to do that today. We're asking you to call that number that's there as a prayer line for you to join praying for those you love and for the challenges you face. But today it is a line answer to prayer, the heart cry and the need of literally thousands and thousands of precious children and their families.

And we have the perfect cure! We're still looking for the cure for the COVID. We believe we'll

find it. Well, we found the perfect cure for what these children and their families face. So would you dial that number? Would you go online please! Please do it now. Go get your bankcard and I mean make the largest gift. We tell you we can care for three children for the next months for \$30 and five for \$50, and for \$100, 10! But you know we can take care of 100 for \$1,000, and for hundreds for several thousand. I don't know what you can do but I know you and I know the God that influences you. And I'm asking you to let him expand your borders and your vision to fulfill his vision that he gets his arms around those he gave his son to redeem. Please express that love right now.

We have some beautiful gifts to give you to bless you and to build you up in your faith, to encourage you. But you're becoming a miracle of life today in the lives of everyone you'll reach out and touch. Please, go get that card. Use that bankcard like a check. If you write a check make it to *LIFE* but call us--call us and tell us it's in the mail.

Father, hear our prayer. Touch the need. Give us the miracle they need, a miracle of life because of the miracle of love; in Jesus' name.

Thank you. Please let it be the greatest love gift you can possibly make.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Today on top of the daily fight for life and food, families and children across Africa are now forced to deal with the challenges of a global health crisis. Because of COVID-19 food scarcity has increased drastically and the fear of dying from lack of food is far greater than the virus itself.

Even in these unprecedented times, mission feeding won't stop. With your help, mission feeding will continue to be a daily source of food, encouragement, and health for the 350,000 children counting on us.

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 *40 Days of Healing Promises*. This beautiful hardcover devotional will encourage you in your faith as you dive deep into the healing promises that are yours in Jesus' name.

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the "Blessings for your Home" bowls and tea towel set. This set of bowls and two beautifully designed tea towels will make a wonderful addition to your home and serve as a reminder of your help in blessing others as a friend of *LIFE*.

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

On the mission field:

Announcer: What sort of choices could a child possibly make to go from looking like this--to looking like this? It's not even fair to call them choices but rather, it is the lack of choice. Starving children have little to no options for food. While we usually think of progress as a positive trend, for children like these, the progression of malnutrition is measured by ever-increasing despair.

Ralph: When I walked into the clinic today, I saw Pedro. My heart was just broken. It all goes back to that malnutrition. Where there is no food, there is no nutrition in this village for these children like Pedro.

Announcer: The pandemic of 2020 wreaked havoc on the world's economies and severely diminished the capacity of families in rural Africa to earn a living. Sadly, those most affected have been children who are beginning to show the unmistakable signs of malnutrition brought on

by a lack of food.

Ralph: Without food these children will not survive. They're not wondering what they're going to eat tomorrow, they're wondering are they going to eat tomorrow. So mission feeding is so important. It gets their life back to living. It gets them going to school.

Announcer: Your gift of mission feeding today will reverse the course of malnutrition in a child like Pedro and will be a gift of life for a special child who is desperate to live.

End of video

In the studio:

James: When I look at those little children, Betty, I just...I want to hold them. But Betty, you and I have held so many of those little children. And then we've watched those...I'll never forget Beth Moore praying over that little boy that the missionaries had to tell her, "He'll likely die before the sun sets." And then because of you, let me just get it real personal, because of God's love in you, he was saved. Beth Moore got to go back and play soccer with him.

Betty, I'm thinking about all these children and we're giving away a book, *40 Days of Healing Promises*. There are so many people we're praying for. And that's what we should do. God's promised to answer. But the healing for these little children isn't even from COVID directly. See they didn't get the virus because most of them are in remote areas where travelers don't come and the disease doesn't get there. But the effects of the disease are killing them. Even where there was some food and there was stability or where they were able to deliver it to the communities, and now that's broken down. And in the areas where they were able to have the workers to produce it, that's broken down. Or all the equipment to transport it, that's been disrupted.

So Betty, these children, they're already vulnerable now, it is just like you put a bulls-eye on their chest and you're going to take them out. And it will be the lack of food which we have the perfect miracle for. And our viewers are the miracle.

Betty: That's right! And we must remember the children. They're God's precious little ones. Also, remember the parents. They feel helpless toward their children. They hold them, they cuddle them but they can't heal them. They can't help them. But we can. We can give them the tools. We can give them the food to save the lives of their babies. So I hope you will join with us and let's continue to reach out as faithfully as you always have with us. Let's feed the children.

James: Betty, there are many watching now that never have helped. There is not a single person that ever helped us share food or water or set the trafficked free or just give shoes to precious little children that have a need for shoes for the first time in their life. Every one of you told us, "We've never experienced greater joy." I'm telling you, people walk up to me every time I'm in a public place and say, "One of the greatest things that ever happened to me was not only just getting to watch you and Betty and those wonderful guests but to be the miracle that somebody so desperately needed and see how it works!" Because it is love that never fails.

Look, we're handing these to you as a thank you--these beautiful, beautiful prayer towels. The greatest of these is love, faith, hope, and love--the greatest of these is love! You're as great an expression of that as anybody I believe on planet earth. So I'm asking you please.

By the way, if you dial the number, which today is a lifeline, always a prayer line, you get a busy, you be determined and you call until you get through. Because you're going to be the miracle someone is longing for. Go online, take your bankcard now, use it like a check and you make the greatest gift you possibly can. Because you are actually giving not only a miracle, you're giving the greatest gift a person can receive, the give of life. And we tell them how to receive the gift of eternal life, but first, we show them the power of that gift by expressing his love. Please, make the gift God puts on your heart now.

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End of video

On the mission field:

Isak: In Angola right now we're seeing our malnutrition clinics fuller than they've ever been. Literally, in certain circumstances there is more than one child per bed. There are mothers on the floor with children. The situation is absolutely critical right now. But we have the solution. We're in place. We're ready to save their lives. But the last and final ingredient we do not have and that is the resources to make it possible for us to procure the food we need and to get the food to those people that so desperately need it. Open your hearts today. Partner with us giving the gift

of life by giving the gift of food.

End of video

In the studio:

James: I say with Betty and all the missionaries and everyone that receives the miracle of your love, thank you. We're going to send *40 Days of Healing Promises*: "Miracles of healing in the Bible." The beautiful bronze, "A Mother's Strength" to say thank you. But you've just become a mother's miracle answer to prayer.

Thank you so much for sharing *LIFE Today*. Thank you from the bottom of our heart for the effect of the love you just shared will have.