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Week 17: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Dr. Robert Jeffress

JAMES: I'm so excited to welcome you to *LIFE Today*. It's an honor to be able to speak into your life because you bless us as viewers. I'm James Robison. Betty and I have a guest that we, to say we love him and respect him is almost like an understatement, Dr. Robert Jeffress. He's pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas. And he listened to me when he was a teenager preaching there. I was there a lot because Dr. Criswell really did, he really liked me. He really thought I could preach. I guess Dr. Jeffress there when he was a kid must have too.

But he's here and he's got a book called *A Place Called Heaven Devotional: A 100 days of living the hope of eternity*. If we would show people the reality and beauty and the magnificence of the Father that gives us heaven and an opportunity to make a heavenly impact on earth we'd all be more excited.

Dr. Jeffress is here. Normally everybody is clapping but you know we've got this, we're still just trying to be careful. We're not going to be foolish, we're not going to be fearful. What in the world led you to at this moment, I think if you had to be... That you were into this ahead of the pandemic. You were already seeing something and you felt like, I've got to get this through to everybody to understand it. What moved you to do this?

ROBERT: James, first of all, thanks for having me. You and Betty were so kind a couple years ago to have me on to talk about my original book, *A Place Called Heaven*. It generated such interest that the publisher came and said, "What if we turn this into a devotional and gave people a bit size, a piece of heaven every day for 100 days?"

So we planned this daily devotional challenging people to spend four minutes every day

meditating on the truth of heaven. Little did we know when we planned this a year and a half ago that the week the book came out, we'd be in a global pandemic and we'd be in the middle of a political Civil War in our country! But God knew that, I think. And we need heaven, the hope of heaven now more than anything.

Meditating on heaven, it doesn't erase our problems but it puts them in perspective. Paul said, "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth." I know some of our viewers have probably heard the old trite phrase, "Oh, they're so heavenly-minded they're no earthly good." I've never run into anybody like that. C.S. Lewis said the problem is not that we think about heaven too much, it is that we think about it too little. And then he went on to say history has shown that Christians who have done the most for Christ in this world are those who have been thinking the most about the next world.

JAMES: What I've found, and you and I have been doing this together because I've been watching you, and even in these challenging times, we've tried to show people that God's will can be done on earth in so many ways as it is in heaven. Every time you see a marriage restored, every time you see people go through a struggle and come out with the love of God in control, God's will is being done on earth. It is being revealed right here.

I'm telling you, you have made an impact, not only on your church family, all the churches where you have led, you've made an impact. But God led you back to the church where you were when you were a young man, when you were a boy and I was privileged to be preaching there. And the church has had let's say impact on history that's undeniable. It appears to me that you've actually, now I'm just being honest with what I see, you've taken the impact of the kingdom of heaven from First Baptist Church to where it's going all over the world.

So for people to realize there is *A Place Called Heaven*, but we can also make a heavenly impact now by thinking in a heavenly manner while we're in this dark world. We can be the light illuminating the way. That's what you do. I feel like your church has caught that.

ROBERT: Well, I hope so because that's what we want to do. As Christians we're not supposed to be in some silo somewhere in a bunker hunkered down waiting for the end of the world to come. As you said, when we pray that Lord's Prayer, "Your will be done on earth as it is being done in heaven," most people don't realize what they're praying for. But God has called the church not to be in the defensive position but to be in an offensive position. We've been called to be that salt and light right now.

I think again, we all need the hope of heaven and realize, and I say it in the book, what we do on earth reverberates in the halls of heaven forever.

That's one of the things people don't understand about heaven. I talk about ten of the myths people have about heaven that frankly makes it unappetizing. The idea that we're going to be doing nothing but worshipping. It's going to be an unending church service 24/7. That sounds like hell to most people.

JAMES: Especially some church services.

ROBERT: We are going to worship but we're going to work in heaven. God has things for us to do. And this is, James and Betty, the biggest myth about heaven people have that somehow when we get to heaven we're somebody else. When we die it's not somebody else who goes to heaven, we go to heaven with our personalities, with the gifts and interests God has given us. I think very well, you all could be hosting an eternal television show in heaven with a far bigger reach than even you have right now which is unbelievable.

The relationships we have. I know it's a very sensitive topic for you, but Robin, your daughter is in heaven right now.

BETTY: She is! And I think that's one thing that I've become more, better way to say it, "heavenly minded" since we lost our daughter. And it has brought such peace and such

comfort to me. And it's not a getaway but it is heaven right here in my heart. And I know I will see her today. So therefore I started reading more about heaven. And I think if we read more about it, it is in God's word, we're going to become more God-minded and we're going to care about those around who live to participate in what God has prepared for us.

ROBERT: Betty, I really believe that your relationship with Robin is going to pick up exactly where it left off. You're going to know her. She is going to know you. I think we're going to have family distinctions in heaven. No, marriage won't be the same as it is right now but that doesn't mean we don't have the same family relationships. Paul talks about the families of God on heaven and earth; these families continue. So I think if people really knew what heaven was going to be like it would give them a whole new interest in the kingdom of God.

JAMES: A great man of God, Jack Hayford, actually says he's had two, what you'd call full high-definition Technicolor visions, and one of them was with one of his family. And then he saw Robin go into heaven. He said it was the most glorious thing to watch her pace increase as she went on.

The thing about it is that he said he saw the beautiful hosts coming. And as an evangelist I just wanted to say to all of you, don't miss where our daughter went. Where, as Jack said she was saying, "I was so glad when they said let us go into the house of the Lord." Meaning the fullness of heaven and his glory. And I've just said after Robin died, I felt like... I felt like I heard her saying words of comfort. You could say this is just something in your mind. It doesn't matter, it's true. I believe she was saying, "Dad, this is so great! Don't let anybody miss it, Dad. Dad, you've just got to tell them. Don't miss this!" In other words, she was saying, Dr. Jeffress, "It is better than anything you've ever imagined. And I'm seeing it."

You have a gift to take people through God's word to where the Word of God begins to carry you. I've always felt like it is a big step from carrying the word and the word

carrying us, and it being written in our hearts and then written in the fleshly tables of other people's hearts by the way it's communicated through our lives. You've seem to be able to open up heaven to where we can see it and we have the hope of heaven but also the fact that we could show people that hope here.

I see the stage right now, in the world, set in such a way that the enemy, the deceiver, the divider, the spirit of murder and death and destruction, dissension and division, all that's evil, he has manifested the ugliness of his character and the consequences of being deceived by it. You don't have to look to see how ugly this deception is. If there has ever been a time when the church could reveal the glory and the grace and the greatness of God as a healthy family it is right now.

ROBERT: Absolutely. And remember Jesus' prophecy. He said, "Upon this rock I'm going to build my church and the gates of hell are not going to prevail against it." It's not the church that's cowering behind the gates as Satan is trying to ram the door. It is Satan that is behind the gate. We're the ones, his gates will not prevail against us. We're to be on the offensive. No matter how powerful and terrifying these forces are that you described, the force and power of Christ is more forceful.

And you know, as we're taping this program, people are all up in arms right now. I talked about it Sunday in my church, "Oh, Dr. Seuss has been cancelled! Dr. Seuss has been canceled!" Well, I don't like the cancel culture, but you know what I told my church? I said, "I've got some great news for you. The great news is this, the gospel of Jesus Christ doesn't depend on *The Cat in the Hat*." There is nothing that is going to restrain the Word of God from going out. And we're the ones who are to give it.

And you're an evangelist, James, you'll appreciate this. We've seen more and more people taking this book, *A Place Called Heaven Devotional* and use it as a witnessing tool. Nobody is offended by a book on heaven. People's hearts are hungry for heaven. I would just remind people this is a great time, the darker the background the brighter the light. There has never been a more opportune time for the church to share the hope of heaven

and the way to get to heaven through Jesus Christ.

You know in my book, *A Place Called Heaven Devotional*, I talk about six ways to prepare for heaven. But the most foundational is to make sure you have a proper passport that will allow you into heaven. If you're going to a foreign country you've got to have the right passport. And I described in the book how I found that out the hard way.

Back when I was a youth minister at the church I now pastor we took 200 teenagers to the Soviet Union and it was an oppressive time during the Cold War. We couldn't wait to get out of there. Finally, the night came we were going to leave Moscow for Rome. So I sent all the teenagers through passport control. I was the last one to go through. I reached for my passport and it wasn't there. I started arguing with the Russian guard that that was my group, my kids, I had to be there. He couldn't have cared less. My wife and I had been married one year. She was on the other side seeing what was happening and she was crying. She could just picture me in a Gulag forever.

Finally, at the last moment a friend of mine who was already through, he reached into his pocket, picked out my passport. He had taken it as a joke and started waving it.

JAMES: That was really funny.

ROBERT: There's a place called hell for him, I think, just for doing that.

[LAUGHTER]

But let me tell you what I remembered that night. I remembered the panic I felt when I realized everybody else had made it to the other side and no arguing was going to allow me in.

Folks, the Bible says on the judgment day there will be many people who will argue with God. Lord, I deserve to be in there. Look at what I did in your name!

And the Lord will say, "Depart from them. I never knew you."

Listen to me. If you're watching this program it is no accident you're tuned in today.

There is only one passport that will allow you into heaven. It is not one stamped Catholic, Jewish, Baptist, Muslim. The only passport that will allow you into heaven is one that is stamped "Forgiven by Jesus Christ."

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me."

If you wait until the day of your death to confess your sins and trust in Christ, you've waited too long. I would encourage you right now to say, "God, I accept that I'm a sinner. And right now I trust in Christ as my savior."

James and Betty, could I lead our audience in a prayer right now? Today if you've come to that understanding, if you have a fear of death right now and you want to make it certain that you'll be welcomed into God's presence, pray this prayer along with me, would you?

Dear God, thank you for loving me. I know that I have failed you in so many ways and I'm truly sorry for my sins. But I believe you sent Jesus to die on the cross for me, to take the punishment from you that I deserved to take. And right now I'm trusting in Jesus not in my good works but in what Jesus did for me, to save me from my sins. Thank you for forgiving me and help me to spend the rest of my life following you. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

JAMES: If you prayed that, and I believe you did, many of you, I wrote a book titled, *Knowing God as Father*. Remember I didn't have a father. I was a product of a forced sexual relationship, a rape and a doctor just refused to abort me. I didn't have a father. I met the Father. I wrote a book called *Knowing God as Father*. The last part of the book, the greater part of it is knowing God; biblical studies in the Word of God on how you can

know the characteristics of God as your Father in a very personal way. I'll send it to you.

If you simply call the number there, it's always there as a prayer line, you say I prayed that prayer with Dr. Jeffress. I'd like to have the book, *Knowing God as Father* and the Bible study to help you understand through the Word of God the greatness of your Father, now your personal Father and God in a very meaningful and personal way.

Dr. Jeffress that was so beautiful and so clear. You know I had the privilege of leading millions of people to Christ in that prayer just as Billy Graham did and how we thank God for his ministry. We would love to send you the book, this incredible devotional, "100 Days Living in the Hope of Eternity" and showing people how they can have the hope just like Dr. Jeffress just did for you.

Dr. Jeffress and I are going to continue to stay very close because we're brothers in Christ. We're sharers and elders in Christ and we want to help the body of Christ literally get the loving arms of the Father around all the people he gave his son to redeem. That's what we do. Here at *LIFE* we share God's life, not just in word but in deed.

Dr. Jeffress, right now we're feeding 350,000 children in Africa alone, every day--every day! And when I say we, you know who the "we" is? It is not me and Betty. Betty and I are among the most faithful and strong givers to LIFE. Boy, we've got many. Thank God we've got people right now who are in their estate planning who are leaving to help this incredible outreach continue for as long as the earth exists before the new heaven and new earth, winning people to Christ. Thank you for that.

But let me just say right now we've got 350,000 children. They're ready. We have found them and organized them and we've told them we're going to bring the food and we've been doing it in many, many areas. We need your help; \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five or ten children for the next months. We've got another crisis. We need to restore and rebuild some malnutrition clinics, which is the last hope these incredibly challenged people have.

I want you to watch very closely and just kind of flash back over 30 years of what God's love has been doing and what you're going to continue to enable people to receive that love firsthand in demonstration power. Watch closely.

On the mission field:

ISAK: There is a proverb that says: He who gives to the poor lends to the Lord. James, that has truly been the testimony of our partnership, your partnership with my dad; that started with my dad and has gone on for three decades now; has literally been a partnership that has been a legacy of love. A love that has been rooted and grounded in the heart of God inside of you, Betty, the friends of LIFE and inside each and every one of us here on the ground, in the mission field doing the work; a love and an empathy for the children of our continent, a desire to see those children reach their God-given potential through mission feeding. And we've been able to achieve that in so many lives-- hundreds of thousands, millions of children's lives who have been saved, turned around and given opportunity.

But James, as you know, we are facing a crisis in many areas that is greater than we've ever faced here on the continent of Africa. In South Sudan we've seen raging floods, the worst floods in recorded history that have destroyed our malnutrition clinics. In Angola, as a result of continued drought we've got malnutrition clinics that are literally bursting at the seams, totally over full, two or three children on one bed, children on the floor. Mothers arriving every day. Many of those children are not leaving those clinics alive.

That is why we have to continue this legacy of love. We actually have to raise it to another level because if we don't, those children we love so much are going to die because they don't have enough food.

Please James, help us! Help us to continue the legacy of love.

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: You can't imagine the memories, Betty, that rush through our mind when we're watching those images. That little child that was so emaciated there, Betty, reminded me of when we were talking about the malnutrition clinics when we took a little squeeze bottle in Angola, and we were trying to squeeze it, with the rescue people and the nurses, the people were trying to say they didn't have any oxygen, just a little squeeze tube, and the little baby died. And then I watched you out in the entry area trying to comfort that mother and it was just horrible.

BETTY: It's a great devastation for these mothers. They're coming to these clinics because it is their last hope for their child that they love so much. And some of those children don't make it. But if they get there soon enough they can help them and restore their little bodies, James. And it is so important that we continue those clinics.

JAMES: What we did there that's such a miracle, we immediately got them some breathing apparatuses, oxygen. We furnished that clinic, it's a malnutrition clinic. See we already were establishing the feeding all over Angola, saved millions of their children's lives. No question about it.

When I say that, it's you, you the viewers, because you're the ones that gave the food. But what I remember so much about that clinic is that we made it effective. And a few years later, one of the most famous people that we've ever known in the world, Lady Di, Princess Diana stands at that clinic and holds up the most beautiful, healthy little baby you've ever seen that the love of God through people like you restored and saved and got that child totally restored. And Princess Di said, "We've got to take care of the hungry of the world! We're got to help the suffering!" And that went around the world. It did have an impact that we've got to notice others.

I don't think there are any people anywhere on this planet that demonstrate the love of

God any more directly than you do. Because when you see people filled with God's love planting their lives in the midst of that suffering to lift them up into peace and comfort and life, and save their life, you give them the wherewithal. You put the oil in the lantern, the light that they are sharing and the love that they're pouring out.

We right now need your help. \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five or ten children for the next months. Not total childcare! Lifesaving nutrition. We need every one of you watching to say if you could help us feed ten that's \$100, five is \$50, \$30 is three. There is a level you can come in. But I'm telling you, there is some people who can help us build, restore those malnutrition clinics; 16 of them right now have got to be restored or totally rebuilt. The average is over \$24,000. Somebody says, got it! I'd say probably not likely 16 of us can say that. But could hundreds of you say, I'll put \$1,000 toward it.

Father, just help everyone to do what you need them to do, in Jesus' name.

We've got some beautiful gifts to send you. You talk about "It is Well" Quiet Time Bundle, the most beautiful hymns, 31 prayers. And I want you to know this. If you'll help we'll send you Dr. Jeffress's book devotions on heaven to say thank you. A beautiful portrait of Jesus, "No Greater Love." You're going to cherish these gifts. Why do we send them to you? Because we love you. We want to inspire you. We want you to know you are appreciated because you're sharing the greatest gift, God's love, his life through Christ. Thank you for doing it.

Go online, dial the number, use your bankcard like a check or make a check to LIFE but call us and tell us what you're sending. Thank you.

On the mission field:

Announcer: Across the continent of Africa, children are suffering facing severe malnutrition and even death. With food reserves gone and many areas experiencing

severe famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000 children who are counting on us.

Call now with your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. Also, please consider an extra gift to help immediately rebuild malnutrition clinics destroyed by record flooding in South Sudan. The urgent need is \$392,000 above our normal feeding budget and is critical to help save the lives of those who are suffering most.

With your gift of any amount we will send you "It is Well" Quiet Time Bundle featuring an instrumental music CD with 12 classic hymns and a 31-day prayer booklet to help renew your soul.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "No Greater Love" framed print. This portrait is a reminder of our Savior's love and the price that was paid for our salvation.

Finally with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children be sure to request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Divine Servant." Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: I'm not sure... But let me just say thanks for your help and I believe you're going to do it. But I wanted to make this comment. I'm not sure there is anyone who comes on *LIFE Today* as much as Dr. Jeffress does.

[LAUGHTER]

It's not just because he's close at First Baptist. It's not just because I started preaching there when I was 23 years old. So I'm 77 now. How much older am I than you?

ROBERT: You're 13 years.

JAMES: So you were a teenager. So I started preaching with Criswell when I was 23 but I preached for him until basically, till he left the church. So we've been around a long time. There's nobody that comes any more than you. I want you to know it is not because you're asking. It's because you really touch our viewers' hearts. They know that you're going to tell them about the Word of God and the ways of God and you're going to love them. So I know you're going to thank us for having him.

He has his program several places. If they want to go online and find all the places and times on the radio and stations, all the places on television, what website could they find that?

ROBERT: It is PTV.org for Pathway to Victory is our program: PTV.org. And it is growing and we thank you. And James, I've got to say this one thing. My dad believed in what you're doing at *LIFE Outreach*. When he was 64, that was 30 years ago, he was dying of pancreatic cancer. He wrote a letter to you and you wrote him back. And when I went to his safety deposit box after he died there was that letter. He treasured it. He remembered you in the will because he believed in what your ministry was doing but more importantly, he believed in James Robison.

JAMES: Wow! Thank you, Doc. Well, thank all of you. That's encouraging. And some of you may say, James, we want to make a gift when we're not here anymore. Betty and I will be doing the very same thing. I hope we stay right here for a long time. We say we want to go together. She says, "But not right now!"

Thank you so much for watching. Dr. Jeffress, thanks for being with us. See you next time.