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Week 21: Spring Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Jeannie Cunnion

JAMES: Well, we're so glad you joined us. I'm James Robison; my wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today* because you're going to experience... You're going to be exposed to life today, real life. We're talking about the Holy Spirit power now, with all the challenges that face us today. There are many mountains and many valleys, sometimes the valley of the shadow of death, and believe me, when you've lost a child as we have, you understand how great and grave and challenging that valley can be. But who is it that anoints our head with oil? Who is it that would enable our cup to run over? Who is it that gives us peace in the midst of the storm and in the darkest valley? It is the Holy Spirit. Another of the same kind, the Paraclete, "Just like me living in you."

Well, we have a wonderful guest, Jeannie Cunnion, who is from up north, Connecticut where she lives. When she came to tape the Yukon had just beat our Baylor girls. So we really had to have a real time of forgiveness. The point is, and Jeannie is just really anointed. I want you to look at this, *Don't Miss Out*. Don't miss out on what? "Daring to believe life is better with the Holy Spirit." Jeannie, we're glad to have you.

JEANNIE: Thank you! I'm so glad to be here.

JAMES: And is it nice to visit the Promised Land?

JEANNIE: It is so nice! I'm from the Promised Land so it's nice to return.

JAMES: I know you're having a very effective outreach there. And your husband has a wonderful job and what he does there is meaningful. Okay, you speak at conferences. If someone wanted to say, all right I want this woman to come and share in our church, our circle, our setting, where would they find you?

JEANNIE: They can just go to my website, JeannieCunnion.com.

JAMES: That's pretty simple.

JEANNIE: Very simple. Everything they need is there.

JAMES: All right. The book, *Don't Miss Out*, why did you write the book?

JEANNIE: I tried not to write the book to be honest. Several years ago my prayer was simply, Lord, I want more of you. I want all of you. I want everything you have for me. I want... and that's not in the context of spiritual, like blessings or material blessings, of possession. It was more of I just want you. I want to know you better.

His answer surprised me because really that began this journey of the Lord reintroducing me to his spirit. It was a reintroduction. I was raised as a preacher's kid in a Presbyterian church and the Holy Spirit was very much part of my upbringing and I experienced him

in church and at home. But I think in many ways I had lost sight of the necessity, the essential role that the Holy Spirit plays in the believer's life on a daily basis.

So the Lord just began to reintroduce me to his spirit, who he is, what he does, and why it matters so much. And it really looked like me sitting down and opening my Bible, starting in John 14 and just slowly reading what Jesus taught the disciples in the gospel about why he was going to return to the Father and why Jesus said it was for our good that he was going to send the helper. I missed that. My whole life I had missed that Jesus said, "It is actually for your good that I ascend because I'm going to send you another helper. And he is going to be for your benefit. And let me tell you all the things he's going to do for you." And I began to relearn who he is.

JAMES: It is hard to believe that it would be better for us, he said, "If I go away. But I'm going to send another just like me"--and this is the amazing thing. Everybody that got around Jesus wanted to stay around Jesus. And they watched God in all of his fullness, his magnificence in this person; in so many ways like them and yet in so many ways not like them. But when he said, "I need to go away" it was the last thing they wanted to hear. But he said, "It is necessary because I'm only in one place at a time. Even though I'm all-knowing I'm in one place. But I'm going to go away and I'm going to send another just like me and he is going live in every one of you."

You know when he said, "You'll do greater things than I do," well, because he goes to the Father and he sent the Holy Spirit and because there is more of him in more of us, all over the world so he can actually be everywhere in the world in the fullness of his person and power. And the Holy Spirit is the living Jesus living in us, with us all the time. And

it's like the disciples didn't seem to get it. They got it a whole lot better after Pentecost when the Holy Spirit that was in them resident became president in king power, kingdom of God reality. They were totally different. The shy were bold. They spoke the Word of God with boldness. They spoke it with the language of the people and the dialect where you could understand what they were saying. Holy Spirit infilling will help us communicate effectively with people of all levels, all tribes, all camps, all groups, all races, all nations. So this is Holy Spirit power. We're getting excited about this.

JEANNIE: Keep talking!

BETTY: That's why he sent his Holy Spirit. That's why he could say, "I will never leave you nor forsake you, I am within you."

JEANNIE: "I will not leave you as orphans." I love how Jesus said, scripture says that Jesus saw that sorrow filled their hearts. Because like you said, they didn't get it. They had no idea what was coming. I think a lot of Christians in many ways are like that. We say, Jesus, we don't just your spirit, we want you. Well, why do I need the Holy Spirit if I have Jesus? As he said to his disciples, "You know him because he is with you, but now he will be in you."

And so it is this incredible post-Pentecost promise that we have. What kind of God indwells his people? What a gracious and generous God we have that he actually, Almighty God takes up residence inside of us so that we are never without the power of the Holy Spirit.

I think so many Christians, I know I was, are trying to do the Christian life in our own strength. Meanwhile, he has given us his spirit to follow him, to grow in his likeness and we're striving to do all these things in our own strength. These are the beautiful benefits of having the Holy Spirit that I think so many of us are forfeiting. And it's why I'm so excited to be with you and to talk about him today.

JAMES: So how did you get people interested enough to become seekers and to yield this vessel to the fullness and filling of the Holy Spirit? How do you tell them to do that? How do you invite them to do it?

JEANNIE: I think one of the things not all Christians recognize is that we are all filled with the Holy Spirit. I think one of the things that we don't talk about enough is that in that moment that we put our trust in Jesus, God puts his spirit in us, and we don't talk about that. We talk about eternal life, but we don't talk about the victorious life that Jesus has given us now over sin and shame and temptation of the enemy because we have the Holy Spirit inside of us. I think there is this misconception that it is something that we achieve somewhere down the line. He's only for the super-spiritual or he's only for when you reach a certain level in your walk.

And so I think that so many Christians don't even realize that if you have put your trust in Jesus, the spirit of the living God dwells in you at this very moment. The same spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead lives in you today and he wants to champion you. We've attached so many stigmas to him and there is all this baggage that I think we need to unpack so that people realize he is this incredible friend. And he is a champion; he wants to help us in our weakness. And we're settling for so much less than what God

wants to do in us.

So I think we have to begin to take this open posture. We have to be willing to think about the misconceptions that we have about him, maybe the labels that have been attached to him that we're believing. And we have to get to know him for who he really is. We have to open the Bible and discover who he really is because we're believing a lot of things about him that maybe we've just heard or seen; maybe we've seen his power misused or abused and we fail to realize that he is a divine person. He is not just a power. He is not a power we wield. He is not an "it" or a force. He is none of the symbols that he's represented by. He is a person with a personality, with a mind and a will and emotion who is a dear companion and a loyal champion.

And there is so much that he wants to do in us and through us that we are forfeiting by neglecting his presence. So I just ask you to open the Bible, read John 14 through 16, read Acts, and just see who this incredible person is that God has given us.

BETTY: And I think there are times, I know in my relationship with the Lord and his spirit within me, there are times when you might just feel overwhelmed and there are no words to speak, but that is God's Spirit within you. He is interceding for us. And he brings that peace that you can't explain.

JEANNIE: You cannot explain it.

JAMES: I do believe there is something to... I love what Peter Lord said. I don't know if you've ever heard the name Peter Lord, but he was a great preacher that impacted many

of our lives. He went to be with the Lord very recently. And Peter was trying to show people the Holy Spirit is in you, but have you received him? They even ask that question, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" Well, if you believe and you're born again you're born of the spirit, you're born from above of the spirit, so the spirit is in you. But he may not be controlling all of you.

Peter told the story. He said, "My mother-in-law moved in with us years ago." This was years ago when she did. He said, "My mother-in-law had been living with us for several years." He said some challenging things. You got your mother, your wife; here you go. And of course, you have five boys, so you have a house full of challenges too. But anyway, he said he read that verse, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?"

And he said, "The Lord said to me, said, 'You know your mother-in-law moved in with you. You know your mother-in-law is living in your house. Peter, have you received her since she moved into your house?'"

And he said, "Boy, it was just Holy Spirit conviction. I hadn't received her at all. I was at best tolerating her. I was putting up with her or I was ignoring her." And he all of the sudden realized, you know we tend to do the Holy Spirit that way. He's here but we haven't received him.

And there is really something about giving God the yielded clay to let him shape us, to know that when we yield the full house to the fullness of the spirit, he will fill us to overflowing. Paul said, "Pray to be continually filled to overflowing." It's not like okay,

you've got this vessel, you've got this water in it, so we use it all up. Now we go put it back under the spout, the spout where the glory comes out, we get some more. No, he's saying you so yield this vessel to the fullness of Jesus, the fullness of his spirit that you live continually overflowing with the fullness, the fruitfulness, the love, joy, peace, and the self-control even--all those things.

Don't you think that there's something to a person reaching a place? I know I possess him, I want him to possess me! I want him to fill me. Does that make sense?

JEANNIE: It does. I think one of the things we overlook about when he says, "Be filled" that it's not a friendly suggestion, it's actually a command. He's commanding us to be filled because he knows that the Christian life cannot flourish without the Holy Spirit; that we cannot produce the fruit of the spirit without the power of the Holy Spirit.

I joke that one of the things that became very clear to me in the writing of this book is that I know it's called the fruit of the spirit, but I was very much living a way that suggested it was the fruit of Jeannie. That I was trying to produce all of these things in my life, that I was trying to manifest the character of God, the character of the Holy Spirit by trying harder in my own strength.

The beauty is that the larger we allow the Holy Spirit to become in our life, I'd like to just envision him becoming larger in our lives, letting him flood every room in our heart. And as we do that, as you said, as we yield, because we do, we have to submit, we have to surrender, we have to yield. It is like in Galatians when he says, "Let the Holy Spirit guide your life and then you won't be doing what the sinful nature craves."

So God has given us this incredible champion to guide us. So as these forces are battling, our sinful nature and the spirit, he has given us the power to defeat that temptation when we yield. But yielding is difficult. Laying our lives down, saying "Have your way in me" is difficult. And yet there is no greater joy, there is no greater prize than being in alignment with the will of God.

JAMES: And you use the word *yield* which is so much more appropriate than surrender because surrender can be under pressure; yield is a choice. The best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, I always said, I know it sold 30 million copies, way to go Rick, but the point is, I don't really, I'm not comfortable with "purpose-driven life." I'm comfortable with purpose-lived life. That's the kingdom purpose of God which the Holy Spirit, Jesus in us, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the kingdom of heaven is in you. I am the king of heaven. I am the King of kings, Lord of lords, I'm in you. So let's receive him as who he is in all of his fullness. The Father's will is done on earth through the Son who fulfilled every desire of the Father. He did only those things that pleased him.

But I feel like there is something about yielding our life to the Father to say, okay, you've always cared about my dreams, but I want to lose my life in your dream, in your desires coming true. And that means Jesus in us fulfills the Father's desire. So if we will say, and this to me is what you're inviting everyone to do, not miss out, present this house, this temple, this body, this vessel created for honor through which I flow my will, my love, my peace. See, it is one thing to look at people and talk to them, it is another thing to really love them.

When we are full of the Holy Spirit and you get around people they're going to know, he cares. You may disagree, but that guy cares. Somehow, I believe that person wants the best for me. Jesus came to deliver the best. He wants to live in us to reveal the best. He's greatest. And if we will yield our life to the fullness of the spirit, they can behold the Lamb, they can behold the glory of the Lamb living in this land, this fertile field. Does that make sense? Is that in line with your book?

JEANNIE: That is! And you remind me of what happened in Acts because Peter was so filled with boldness after he was filled with the Holy Spirit. And what happened? It made people say, "What does he have? What's happened to him?" And what did he do? He pointed them to Jesus.

So that's the opportunity that we have when we are filled with the Spirit. My prayer is that people will read the book and they will be so filled with the Spirit and the joy and the hope and the boldness that the Spirit gives us that we will be able to respond like the disciples did in the book of Acts where people will say, "What do you have? What's different about you?"

And we can say, "Let me tell you about my Jesus."

Because that's what the Holy Spirit does. His whole goal is to glorify Jesus. I think that's beautiful. His ministry is to magnify the work of the Son. And through the Holy Spirit we are invited into that love and into that intimacy.

So many Christians are missing out on the intimacy that we're invited into with God the

Father and God the Son. There is this rote religion and we're just checking the boxes and following these steps. And we have been invited into so much more. We can be in this intimate, beautiful relationship with God the Father and God the Son and that's what the Holy Spirit does.

JAMES: And that's the reason Jeannie's here. That's why she is saying to every viewer of *LIFE Today* all over the world, *Don't Miss Out*. Here's the thing. She used the term "yield." I think it is the most perfect word. You're not doing this because all of the sudden all hell broke loose, and the pressure came. But I just realized that I was created by God for God's purpose and his glory and his kingdom purpose and his will being done on earth in me right here through me.

So would you yield? Paul said we're his cultivated field, to bring forth the fruit. Would you yield your life to be a vessel of honor? Would you right now just say Lord, I place my life in your hands. Simon Peter had denied Jesus but when filled with the Spirit he became the keynote speaker at Pentecost. Filled with the Spirit of the Christ crucified and raised he had denied and now alive in him. Would you say, "God, do that." Just tell him right now, "God, do that that in me. Jesus, take this house, my body, my life, fill me to overflowing with your Spirit that is in me by spiritual birth. Fill me so that the fruit of the spirit, the gifts of the spirit, the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is manifest in me and through me to others, in Jesus' name."

Did you ask him? Don't look for a feeling. Just trust the promise. By the way, if you'd like to have Jeannie's book, and there is the address again if you want her to come and speak and share, but you can get it online, probably in bookstores.

But I tell you what, we're going to ask you to manifest the Holy Spirit's love and help us save some precious little lives, some precious families. And if you will help us we have some gifts to send you just to bless you because we love you. But if you want Jeannie's book you just ask for it. You love somebody with Holy Spirit love and say, "Would you mind just sending me that too? I think it will help me."

I want you to watch closely. Betty, this is very, very moving. God knows you and I have been all over and seen all this like close up. Watch closely. I want you to feel like you're right here in the midst of what you're watching.

On the mission field:

ANNOUNCER: These mothers are working hard. Struggling each day. They try to grow food for their families with little success. Not from lack of work. Not because they don't love their children. But because they just don't have adequate resources.

Ongoing drought in Angola and record-breaking floods in South Sudan have made it almost impossible to grow the food their families need. In South Sudan, mothers are forced to rely on feeding their children leaves from trees. Angolan mothers will forage for pods from the baobab trees. At best, the children can relieve their aching stomachs when they eat from the pods. But they receive little or no nutritional value.

Unfortunately, as hard as these mothers struggle to keep their children alive, a small grave is where the story ends too many times.

SHEILA: In January, this mother had to attend a third funeral for her children. I asked her, "On any given day, what is your number one concern?" And it is one thing: Getting

food for these children. That's all she thinks about--every single day morning, noon, and night. All she thinks about is where can I get something to feed these children today? And she said many times she has to put these two to bed hungry and she tries to encourage them. You know what she says to them? "Who knows what tomorrow will bring?" She is trying to keep hope alive.

Mission feeding saves lives! We've done it before, but the need has never been greater. We need your help today. We need your help now.

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: There is no expression of love any more clearly revealed than in the life of a mother. When you see a child, you love so much and you're trying to lead them, I saw that mother early in that clip, just looking at her little child, trying to lead that child to help, to food, you're the answer to her desire. Just like Sheila said to her when she is asking her, she just wants to find life.

And Betty, *LIFE Today*, *LIFE Outreach*, people full of the life of God, they share it. I'm praying that there wouldn't be a single person that wouldn't say, "I'm going to be the answer to that mother's desire and that child's need."

BETTY: And you can be the answer of so many children that are going without food and the answer to the prayers of that mother's heart. She would go to any outreach, any source that she could find to feed her children. Well, she's run out of options. We need to offer hope to these precious mothers that love their children as much as we love our own. Each one is so important to them. This mother lost three. She has two left. They're so important

to her. I'm just asking you to reach into your heart now and let's join together and let's save the lives of these children. Without food they will die.

JAMES: And we're asking you to help us feed 350,000 and I know right now that there are far more double that need that need help.

God, we need a miracle today. We have told the missionaries what we're going to ask our viewers to do. God, I wish you'd lift us above our dreams and our hopes to be the answer to the mothers' dreams and hopes and the needs of those children, in Jesus' name.

Now please listen. This is not total childcare. This is not housing. This is emergency life-saving nourishment. \$30, \$50, \$100 will enable us to feed three, five or ten children for the next months. If you give \$1,000 and feed 100, please do so. Go online, dial that number, take your bankcard and use it like a check. We're going to give you some gifts to bless your life. You're going to be giving the greatest gift, life itself. And they're going to hear about the source of life, Jesus because of the love of God through these mission and relief workers.

Would you make that gift right now please? And keep in mind, we need to rebuild 16 malnutrition clinics that were destroyed. This is the last step for life. It's the last hope for a miracle. And this is going cost nearly \$400,000. So if you could give \$1,000 or several toward those clinics, you'd become the indescribable miracle for some.

Please right now very prayerfully, following the lead of the Holy Spirit make the gift God put on your heart. Thank you for doing it.

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 life-saving 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: Well, we're really excited to send you the "It is Well Bundle," the Quiet Time

Bundle. You're going to love it. You're going to love the hymns and the thoughts and the prayers and the... "No Greater Love," beautiful, beautiful, framed picture of Jesus. You'll see.

And if you'd like to have Jeannie's book, what a sweetheart she is, a mother of five boys. The oldest one is adopted from Haiti. *Don't Miss Out*; "Daring to believe life is better." I mean life is really found in fullness in the power of the Holy Spirit. So Jeannie, thank you so much for coming. Bless you, your ministry.

JEANNIE: Thank you so much for having me.

JAMES: Thank you so much for helping us share life. God bless you for it and I know he will. I know he is.