

6/7/21

Week 24: Spring Mission Feeding, Last Week

James and Betty Robison

Shannon Bream

JAMES: We want to welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Shannon Bream. We have got her book here, *The Women of the Bible Speak*. And Betty, you have already read this. We're going to talk about it, but I want you to know, Shannon, we welcome you to *LIFE Today*. Thank you so much for giving us this time! And thank you for writing this book. We think it's fabulous!

SHANNON: Thank you so much. It's such a blessing to be with you. Thanks for including me. It is my mom's favorite and she'll be so excited to see me here with you guys.

JAMES: Well, we're excited to see you here too. Betty started reading the book and she started talking to me and just tearing up because... What was it that just grabbed you as you began to read what Shannon was sharing about the women of the Bible?

BETTY: Well, first of all I do have my own book. I wish I could get you to autograph it for me. Someday maybe that will happen.

SHANNON: We'll make that happen!

BETTY: It's such an easy read as far as I feel like it's a story being told of women that people might not have really, really known, like you said Mary, the mother of Jesus. I got to reading about her and I can relate to her in a way because we lost a daughter, and to a point I could really feel her hurt and her pain. She knew her son's destiny but yet at the

same time she was a mother and she cared for him. She would have loved it if it had been a different outcome, I think just as we would have with our daughter.

But thank you for writing this book. I think all through it, women will be encouraged. I have been just reading through it. And like I said, it's easy to read. It's hard to put down. I think it will let women see their value that God has for them; let them see them through God's eyes. So that's why I'm so excited about it.

SHANNON: Thank you so much! You mention encouragement. I was encouraged in writing it. I was doing this in the middle of the pandemic and a really rough divided summer last year for our country going through so many things. All of us suffering some kind of loss, and the people we love going through some kind of loss.

I thought, I know these stories. I grew up in Sunday School and church, but really digging into them I learned so much more. I was just encouraged to remember God's promises and his faithfulness and how he was working in their situations even when it would be years or decades when they would see finally his promises come to fruition.

So I think women today experience so many of the same problems whether its financial or an illness, a chronic illness or infertility or widowhood or just family squabbles; we can all relate to those things. But it was really encouraging to me to see how God worked through all of them. He is the same God today he was in these stories centuries ago. And there is a reason he included them in the Bible.

JAMES: What was it that really moved you to take this challenge? Kind of tell us how that journey started.

SHANNON: You know, FOX actually came to me and said, "We're starting a book label. We're thinking about doing something in this space. Would you be interested?" I thought, yes! Lord, thank you for this wonderful assignment and opportunity. I'd love to do this. And we came together and started thinking about the women that we would

include and how this would work. I thought for a couple of people that I thought, I really wanted to see their stories in there. Rahab, the prostitute, I thought, I want people to see God working through all different circumstances in women. And we have some women in the book who try to go their own way. We try to have our own plan as if God needs our help. And some of them made really bad decisions. But when you see how God redeems it, how he is faithful to work through our messes when we come back to him. We see some of these women who made the worst decisions end up in the lineage of Christ. He thought it was important to include their stories and to include these women.

So I've just become so passionate about their stories. You all know because you're deep studiers of the word, these stories need no addition. They are page turners on their own. But my hope is that people who may not pick up a Bible or may be intimidated by it will say, oh this is a story book. Betty, as you said, these are stories. So hopefully people will pick up the book who will not pick up the Bible and be blessed by it.

BETTY: I feel like you brought out the heart of the women, even those who were struggling with themselves and with life and their situations and everything. It kind of helped, you felt like you were there walking through it with them. I think that's so important for women to feel that they understood themselves a little bit better from reading the book.

SHANNON: And what I love too is the New Testament, we threw in an extra chapter because there was so many interactions that Jesus had with women that he thought it was important for people to see that yes, when he met them in the difficult places, like the woman who was caught in adultery that was going to be stoned, he asks everyone there, "Who without sin, you can cast the first stone." Everybody leaves because there is none of us without sin. There is no one left there to condemn her. Jesus says, "I don't condemn you. Now go and turn from your sin. Don't live in that but I don't condemn you."

He had such compassion on these women. He related to them. They were friends of his, part of his inner circle. He showed such great respect in these relationships with women

and going to women who were outcasts as well. I thought, that's such a beautiful thing because that is the same story today for us with Christ. We don't have to get ourselves are cleaned up and perfected and come to him. We come to him because we need him, and we need his forgiveness. And he's there waiting with compassion and forgiveness and mercy for all of us.

JAMES: I've said many times to our viewing audience, and those of you who watch *LIFE Today* know that I think the greatest powerful influence on the planet is the influence of women. I don't think anyone influences for more good and even great things than women do.

I just want every woman to know how precious you are. I've watched mothers getting their little kids to go into shop and maybe they'll have to bundle one up and leave the others, and all the things they do, at home and all the things. You're the most amazing people. And what you've done here is you've shown all the challenges they faced and how God worked through it. You showed them their value no matter what the circumstances or the challenges.

I'd like every woman that wants to know somebody understands the journey, the challenges, the pain, the hurt, the joy, sorrow, I want them to know that God revealed so much here that he allowed you not only to see but to share effectively. I'm sure not just your grandmothers but you would give all the people who helps you with it a big thanks. But I want to see every woman know how special you are to God. I mean I'm telling you, you are. And maybe some dad didn't make you feel that way or a husband, a date, even, they didn't make you feel the way God wants you to feel because you are such a blessing, and you can bless so many people.

Shannon, I'm praying dear God, let every woman that needs to hear your heart and your love for them, and get some divine direction read about the women in the Bible that Shannon has shared so beautifully, in Jesus' name.

Shannon, I want it to happen. So I'm just telling you, I want to ask you this question. Any particular things that just kind of jump out in your mind as you studied these women that really got your attention and really blessed you that you might not have noticed before until you began to research and search and share? Any of those things that jump out in your mind?

SHANNON: I learned so much about every one of these women. Deborah -- an amazing story from the Old Testament that I'd heard a little bit growing up but learned so much about her faithfulness, her obedience to God, her following him into this battle against the Canaanites that nobody would have thought on paper that they could win. She didn't question it. She followed God and I thought, what a challenge to be that obedient and to be that faithful despite whether it makes sense to the world or not, what God is calling you to do.

I just saw his enormous faithfulness in the waiting. I saw Hannah who prayed and prayed for years for a child. The woman with the issue of bleeding that we know she had for 12 years. She, when we meet her, has nothing left. She has gone from doctor to doctor, spent everything she had. No one could heal her, but she has this enormous faith and says, "If I can just get to this Jesus person and touch the hem of his garment, that will be enough to heal me." And we watch her story play out in the gospels where she does that. We're told she is immediately healed.

The fact is, probably, in those days, she would have been considered "unclean." She shouldn't have been out there in that crowd or certainly reaching out to an esteemed rabbi or teacher that people considered Jesus at that time.

But he turns to her and she is trembling when she knows he has realized that she has reached out, that something has happened. And she falls down and he says to her, "Daughter!" In every account we see he calls her "daughter."

That to me was such a special thing because I think he sees all of us the same way today.

Whether you're reaching out with a financial problem, a heartbreak, a lost loved one, whatever it is he's not judging you. Christ is standing there waiting to say, as he did with this woman, he gave her credit, "Your faith has made you whole."

So seeing his faithfulness through all these periods of waiting and of trial was a reminder to me that there is pain, there is purpose in the pain. He has his perfect timing and he's working even when we don't know it or don't see it. God is faithful.

JAMES: Shannon, I preached that Mark five chapter about the woman with the issue of blood for many years. It's so significant. There is just so much there in the chapter. She knew what her fate was. She was in trouble. But when the Bible story begins it says "a certain woman." Now after she's touched Jesus... and by the way, it's interesting. The crowd pressing in around Jesus that didn't necessarily actually touch him. They may have looked like they were there but there was someone there that touched him. And even though they may have been hindering her in a way as oftentimes crowds gathering, even around Jesus, can hinder people actually touching Jesus because we actually keep them from seeing Jesus. They see religious folks or just churches. But this woman touched him, and he said, "Who touched me?" And they could have said, "Look at all the people touching." No, no, no! This was a contact.

And then it says, he spoke to that certain woman as, "Daughter, thy faith had made thee whole."

You know what I want all the women listening today to know? You are a daughter, the child of the perfect Father and he wants to pour his love not only out on you--but let me just get really personal with you--he not only wants to pour it out on you, he want to release it through you. I don't know if there is any being on this earth that can release it more beautifully, fully, and effectively than yielded women.

I'm telling you, Shannon, I believe you're going to inspire a lot of women to see how God notices but also see how God can flow his truth, his life, his love through them freely.

And I'm just telling you, even as I hold this book in my hands, I'm praying women will put their life in the Father's hands and allow his love, as it is, as women understand, it is very interesting that so many of the aspects of the Holy Spirit are feminine qualities more than masculine. So you have got this incredible ability on the part of women to inspire men and children and other women and all people to become what the Father designed and desires us to be.

Are you in an agreement with me on that? That somehow that happened through this book, God will use it that way?

SHANNON: Yeah. I hope that it will be something that I... I've prayed, when we first started on the book and started writing and working, Lord, everyone who touches a copy of this book, may they be blessed, they be encouraged, may they grow in their faith or come to faith in you and to know you through this.

So I pray every copy, whether it is a gift, whether it is yours then you pass it on to let someone else read it, you can study it together. We do have study questions here that you can do alone or do as a group. I've been really encouraged that a lot of people have said, "We are doing this as our Bible study." I just pray it will have God's anointing to draw people to him to see his glory, to see his love, to see his promises, his faithfulness, his acceptance, his forgiveness and mercy. And I just pray that he will be glorified by every copy that touches someone's hands.

BETTY: Well, I know I'm being blessed by it, Shannon. I love the study at the end of each story there. I think its thought-provoking and it also takes you deeper into seeing these women and their lives better.

But one I was specifically touched by was Sarah and Hagar. And when Hagar was sent out the second time, her and her son were sent out because Sarah didn't want her there anymore. And she was somebody that was a slave. She'd never had any freedom of any kind but yet she went out into the desert. I believe God met her there and he said, "I see

you. I notice you."

And I believe there is a lot of women that get lost in the busy-ness of life. And they think, I'm forgotten, no one's noticed. But I want them to know from your book and I believe they will come away saying, I'm someone God created, that he loved so much, that he gave his only son that I might have life. God has a purpose for me. He wants to use me where I am and make me effective for his Honor and for his glory.

So thank you for writing... being inspired to write this book. I just believe it is going to bless many, many ladies. Thank you!

SHANNON: Thank you so much. Yeah, the story of Sarah and Hagar is a complicated one like all of these women. They are flawed just like we are, showing us that God can work through every situation. But I love what you point out about Hagar. In that time she has that moment where she says, "You're the God sees me." I love that. That's the name she gives him because I do think it is so important for women to know that you are valued, that God created you in his image, that he does treasure you. You are a daughter as we talked about. And I find such encouragement and hope and inspiration in that. If you know you are a daughter of the king nothing else can stand against you. You are his child. You are his chosen and his treasure.

I was just reading in Psalm 139, one of my favorite Psalms this morning just about how God sees us. He searches us, he knows us. As the Psalmist says, "I can't believe all these thoughts you have toward me." And that is God, aware of our every circumstance and exactly who we are, each one of us.

JAMES: Shannon, I want to thank you. I'm going to look straight into the faces of our television audience for a moment. Say please, get the book. You can get it online, in the bookstores. But I tell you what. All of you who watch us know that we notice the least of these, we notice the too often overlooked and we literally put the loving arms of Jesus around these who thought no one noticed. You're the ones that enable us to do that.

I would like you to have this book. I want you to ask you to help us, not only feed malnourished children but rebuild some malnutrition clinics that were destroyed by horrible flooding and consequences that were totally unexpected. You're going to want to do that.

For all of you who help in any way to feed these children, to rebuild these clinics, we're sending you some gifts, but we'll gladly send you Shannon's book too. I want to promise you, when you get in it, it's in many ways like the Bible. The Bible needs to get in us. This is Bible stories and the lessons that are revealed here will get in you and help carry you and lift you up. So we'll gladly send it to you.

And it is just a thrill, Shannon to tell these viewers here that love us and boy, they do love Betty, I'm grateful. I know a lot of times they watch me because Betty is here. I understand that -- I totally understand. But Shannon, I'm going to pray for every woman watching right now that God will put his arms around them.

Father, just pull these precious women that feel sometimes unnoticed, unappreciated and maybe not even loved. Lord, I want you to embrace them right now in a way that they sense it and feel it and lift them up. And then help them to reach out and touch someone with your love, in Jesus' name.

All of you who you are watching, help us put God's arms around the overlooked. We'll gladly send you Shannon's book too. Shannon, I'll be back with you in just a moment to tell you good-bye but I want all of you who are watching to just listen to the situation and crisis that we face and just see because you're the miracle.

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: Honey, that little child there in the bed, so typical of what we see in the malnutrition clinics. I think if you'll understand this, the reason we ask for you to feed in those feeding lines, that's where we've located the beginning of the deadly malnutrition. And those children come and they're so patient because they know, they're not only going to get fed and feel better they're going to be loved. It's love that never fails. You're the

ones that work the miracle. So \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five or ten children for the next few months. I always say, if you can feed ten, give the \$100. If you give \$1,000, for instance, then that will feed 100.

But Betty, we were showing them the malnutrition clinic. That was one of the more stable ones. That was where they had everything. That was a very expensive malnutrition clinic. Most of them are smaller and they cost a little over \$24,000; 16 of them were destroyed. Now think about what I'm saying. Some of these were mobile clinics and the flooding in South Sudan destroyed them. They need to be mobile. Everything in them was destroyed.

Betty, we provide the pharmaceuticals, if they have x-ray. All of that is given by people like you. I don't think there has ever been a time we've had 16 of them destroyed. That's the last hope; that's where that little child I just referenced that was so thin, the one there that Sheila was sitting by, only a miracle can save those.

So would you do this? If you can give \$30, \$50 or \$100 it's big. It's huge! Think about it. Save three lives, five lives, ten lives -- how important is that? The malnutrition clinic, that's the last chance they have. We need to rebuild them. And I believe with all my heart you want to help. When you think about it costing over \$24,000, my mind says, I wonder if there is 24 people today that could give \$1,000. Maybe one person, or a couple could say, we can! We want to. We want to do it. I don't know what God is leading you to do but I believe you'll do it.

Father, Betty and I join right now in prayer because we understand how a parent feels losing a child. We do know. Would you give us the miracle needed right now to save those lives, in Jesus' name?

I'm believing you're going to do it. This is the last week of this emphasis on mission feeding. Would you respond please? Go online or dial the number. Use your bankcard like a check. If you write a check, call us and tell us what you're sending. Put it in the

mail. Thank you so much.

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."

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

On the mission field:

Sheila: I'm here in just one of the malnutrition clinics. And as you can see I'm here with this beautiful mother and this little one. It's Africa, it's warm here but look at her legs. She is completely wrapped up and her little hands. The need is so urgent!

I've heard about it. I've seen the things that James and Betty have done for years but to actually come here myself and see with my own eyes how urgent the need is, I'm asking you in Jesus' name, would you go to the phones right now or would you go on LifeToday.org and make the best gift possible? We can all do something. It doesn't matter if you're a 14-year old kid watching this or if you're 84 years old and living on a limited income, we can all do something. No mother should have to travel 25 kilometers to bring her very sick child to a clinic because she's so malnourished.

Would you give your best gift now? Please go to your phone right now. Go online right now and give the best gift you can. If we all do it, we can change the world for these moms and for these children.

In the studio:

JAMES: I do want to remind all of you who are watching that this is the last week that we're asking you to help us with this mission feeding emphasis. We will send you Shannon's book, *The Women of the Bible Speak*. God speaks to them and through them and we learn from God about them and their lives and their circumstances. So just thank all of you, if you help us put God's arms around someone, we're going to send you the book.

Shannon, you keep being a bright witness. I love everything we're watching you do. You just know we're going to be praying for you and we're available to help you in any way get the word out because it is God's word and his love. Thank you for sharing this time with us.

SHANNON: It is. It's been such a joy and a blessing to me, to my day, to be with you

guys. God bless you.

JAMES: Thank you. God bless all of you for watching! And this is going to bless you and a lot of people. Thanks for helping us.