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Week 31: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Jonathan Evans

JAMES: It is such a joy to welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I've got a big grin on my face because we've had Tony Evans here so many times some people thought this was his show. So I said we're just glad to pay for it because you bless everybody.

I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We've had Priscilla Shirer on, one of Tony's kids, and we've had Anthony, and he sings. Well, now we have Jonathan. I am so excited. Jonathan has got a book called, *Your Time is Now*. Man, that's very significant.

We welcome you. I'm telling you I'm excited because I've heard you preach. I've heard you communicate in all different settings. The anointing of God is all over you, just like dad, and your sister, and your other sister, and your mom, who is now in heaven, pulling for you right here. Hey, Lois, we're right here.

And I guarantee you, you really want to say something, and you're gifted to preach it, and now you've written it. So tell me what you mean by *Your Time is Now*; what is the significance of that?

JONATHAN: Well, I think it is important because I had to realize that in my own life, being the last child in the family. I was always the baby saying, when is it going to be my turn? When is it going to be my time? My parents would always tell me, "Your time is always now. That God uses everything in your life to prepare you for where he is taking you. So now is that moment. Now is the time for you to soak in your relationship with God, go through the trials and tribulations, the journey he wants you to go through and

realize that even when you're in the pit, that's still your now moment to realize that there is evidence in the pit of your future promise."

So God is teaching us that time is always now to settle in on who he is calling you to be, your relationship with him, so that you are ready for him to take you where he has you.

JAMES: By the way, when you watch how your dad's been used, and your sisters, and you see this, and your brother that sings so well, does it ever cause you to wonder, wow! Where do I fit? Because you were in sports. We want to talk about that because that's part of you finding not now moment when something happened with the Dallas Cowboys. But did you look at the other family and think, how do I fit in in all of this? Or did you just think I'm going to be in sports all of my life and be a witness? What was going on in your mind?

JONATHAN: Well, that's big that you mention that because I was kind of depressed and experiencing anxiety because I felt like well, God is using everybody else, but here I am, the baby of the family again trying to figure out what's going on. And so I retired in 2009 in Washington playing football. And like many athletes, you're trying to figure out what's next? Does God have a plan for you? I see how you're using my dad, my mom, my sisters, my brother, but what's going on? And God reminded me, no, no, no. You don't realize that what you've gone through and where you are right now, all of that is going to be used for where I'm taking you. So I learned that.

Talking about that story is that my time in the N.F.L. was tumultuous. I played for five years on six different teams. I was hurt, carted off the field. I was booed. People were throwing cans at me as I'm getting...

[Laughter]

I had it all happen to me. And while I was in that environment, I always asked the question, why is this happening to me? Like I'm praying for you to come alongside me,

be my Robin so I can be Batman. I had those prayers. You know you be the pedestal, so I can stand higher. And to know that God really wanted me to run out of the tunnel one day, but he wanted me to run out his way, not my way. So he would use me to transition me to be the chaplain for the Dallas Cowboys, which was the original team I signed with and the original team that cut me, the original experience of pain to come back and minister. That's when I learned that your greatest ministry would come from your greatest misery. And when you realize that *Your Time is Now*, the whole kit and caboodle, it's right now, you realize that God is doing something all the time.

BETTY: Well, we've always heard we're all on a journey. I remember when our children were small. They'd say, "Mom, when will I get to where I can do this?" I said, "When you get bigger." But at the same time, what you're saying is while we're on that journey, God is building us through where we are now to get to the goal that he's taking us.

JONATHAN: We have to believe God works all things out for good for those who love him and are called according to his purposes. And when the time doesn't feel right, we don't believe it when it doesn't seem like things are happening and things are being catalytic at every moment. But they really are. God is teaching us and growing us, and we really have to believe that. Paul says that he has confidence that he who began a good work will complete it. So we have to have that confidence, not just when it is good, we have to have that confidence all the time. That God is saying, "Oh no! It's always right now." And you have to believe that and be confident in it.

JAMES: I want to tell you something, you've got an anointing. I do believe this. I think a lot of times like Tony Evans has laid a track, Priscilla has also, but there's been something in Priscilla that has called people to take the message and put it to work, which is what I believe is the greater anointing on you. Tony is laying an understanding of kingdom reality; that the king has come, there is a kingdom at hand, a kingdom in us, and we can be, as Tony's recent book, *Kingdom Men Rising*. I believe this. I told you this, remember, I said it to you. I said it to your dad, and your family that I believe that you will be able to take the truths that your dad has laid out and get people to begin to act on

those truths; not just discuss them, not debate them, not defend them, not just declare them but demonstrate them to become a demonstrator.

When you build that house that can stand the storms on the rock-solid foundation of all the truths your dad, your sister, both of them, your mom did, y'all have been laying it out but if you don't just hear what he says but do what he says, that's the house that stands.

By the way, that doesn't mean you never miss the mark. You're going to get knocked down. We don't like it, that's part of the journey, and we don't like to fail. We don't want to strike out. But you're going to. The greatest hitters strike out the most, but they keep going back. So don't you want people to hear that no matter what's happened to them, the best is ahead of them if they'll keep their life committed to the best purpose for them?

JONATHAN: Absolutely. One of the chapters in my book is "Go!" I have one word to describe because you're preaching to me. That is my thing. I always see my dad as that teacher/preacher who helps you understand the nuances of God's word at a whole other level.

JAMES: By the way, you probably don't have the anointing and gifting to do that. I sure don't. Tony, I gave up on that.

JONATHAN: I can't walk in his shoes, that's for sure! Those shoes would hurt my feet. So I understand that. But like I said, one of the chapters is "Go," because I'm a go guy. So my thing is taking the play call and executing it.

Because I remember Genesis, chapter 12, when God told Abraham, "I want you to go from your country and from your relatives and from your father's house to the land which I will show you." In other words, there is a land that God wants to show. There is a purpose that he has, but he is waiting on you to go. A lot of people don't realize that. If you don't go, even when you're uncomfortable, as he tells Abraham, "I need you to leave your relatives, your father's house, and your country." This means he is basically saying, I

need you to leave your comfort zone. It is better to be called than comfortable, but a lot of Christians would rather be comfortable than be called.

And so, a lot of times, God is holding purpose and destiny, and he is not going to let it go until he sees your feet moving. Without faith, it is impossible to please the Lord. So it is about feet. It is about moving even when you're uncomfortable. So I think that's an important step.

JAMES: Well, he calls us into a battle. He didn't call us to a playground. That doesn't mean we're not going to have joy unspeakable and full of glory. But, oftentimes, even in the midst of the storm, there is peace even in the valley.

Even in the valley of the shadow of death, which you and your family know a whole lot about having lost mom. I know that's part of what you had to learn. It had to be tough. We lost a daughter, and this is tough. Right now, Betty and I, at age 77, we're saying goodbye to a lot of our lifetime friends because they're going on to be with the Lord. But people have got to understand that God will walk with you through those challenges, and we've got to walk on.

Give us some more insights that you've got in this book that you want people to hear. If you want to turn right over there and preach to that audience, what do you want them to hear right now that might help them understand what it means to actually get moving--their time is right now.

JONATHAN: That's right. Well, actually, he is talking about my mom. We got the news in 2019 in March that my mom had terminal cancer. And I mean, it was like somebody rubbed Icy Hot all over my body. I just remember feeling the chills of not understanding what was going on.

But I remember after we shed all the tears and after my dad was crying and my sister Priscilla was crying, and we were just--it was just chaos in the room. I remember my

mom saying, "Are you guys finished now? Are you guys done?"

We said, "I guess so. If you want us to be done crying, we'll be done."

And she said, "Well, I want you to sit down." She said, "This is spiritual warfare. These attacks on our family, don't just see it as just an isolated event or just something that's bad that's happening to our family. It is actually spiritual warfare. And one thing we will not do in our family is tuck tail and run. One thing we will not do in our family is not be who God has called us to be and lose confidence in what God is doing in our life just because we're facing a battle. What we're going to do in our family is we're going to pick up our shield. We're going to put on our helmets. We're going to put on our shoes. We're going to tie our belt up. We're going to grab that sword. We're going to go to the Lord in prayer, and we're going to continue to fight on. Because realize that this whole moment, even though it is bad is still a part of the catalytic opportunities that God is going to do in our family, in our country, in our world, and he is going to do it through you. So if someone asks you to preach, that's exactly what you're going to do. If someone asks you to sing, that's exactly what you're going to do."

I remember saying, "Mom, how in the world can you be talking about ministry at a time like this?"

And her response, she looked at me and said, "Son, because that's why you exist." She said, "That's why you're here. That's why you're on this planet. And anything else is a distraction. Anything else that comes into your life is trying to pull you away from your right-now moment and your time, son, is right now, even when you're hurting."

So I want to let the people out there know your time is right now, even in the struggle, even when you're hurting, even in the pit. There is evidence in that pit of your future promise. You just have to look at it the way God is trying to show it to you. So keep moving, keep putting one foot in front of the other and realize that the whole kit and caboodle is saying to you that your time is right now. Maintain the faith. Maintain

confidence and keep on walking.

JAMES: Wow! I thought it was very significant, even in the pit. Think about this. Joseph was thrown in the pit by his family, by his brothers. Now he might have been blessed in such a way that he might have come across a little bit arrogant. Let's just say it; maybe it was there. But that's not the reason they threw him in the pit. They might have used it, but he was thrown in that pit. Who would have ever thought he could become the most powerful force in a wicked kingdom? And give people life miraculous? Who would have ever thought that he could be falsely accused and put in prison? And in prison, begin to deliver the word of God? Yet, there he is, right there where it looks hopeless, and God gave him something.

Do you know what I believe every Christian needs to hear? Your dad talks about kingdom life. There is a kingdom to come. He is preparing that; that is a prepared place for a prepared people. But he left us in a kingdom where there is conflict, where there is an accuser, where there is a deceiver, where there is a divider, where there is a destroyer, and we're to overcome that. He said we are to be more than conquerors. We put on armor because we're in a battle. We're not in a rest home, we're in a battle. Even in a rest home, if you're a Christian, you sign up for kingdom purposes.

But here's what people need to realize, we may lose some games, but he said we're going to win and walk over the intentions of the devil. Don't you believe when your dad is preaching kingdom he wants the king to be so in charge of men's lives, women's lives, husbands and wives, mom and dad, children, that we actually defeat the enemy in his purpose and overcome with God's purpose, which is kingdom purpose? Is that what your dad is trying to help us understand? But a lot of the church doesn't seem to get it. Jesus' own bunch didn't get it. But when they got filled with the Holy Spirit, this is exciting!

Tony, I want you to take off, tell Priscilla too, she can work, and he will get over here and help knock it out of the park after you guys work on it a little bit. But I'm telling you if you look at the book of Acts, these guys still didn't even understand the kingdom when he

is ascending, even though he taught them for three years, taught them for 40 days after the resurrection, and now then he's leaving. So they're still talking about that next kingdom when he left them here to impact this kingdom.

But here's what I want you to know. When they were endued with power from on high, they came out of the upper room. Now you just get your Bible. You do this Bible study on your own. If you haven't done it, you check it out. You start right there when they came down, and the last guy that should have been speaking, Peter, who denied Jesus is preaching the keynote message, they started doing kingdom impact. They told all the powers that be who the real power is, told all the religious people that were totally deceived about who it was they just killed. They killed the promise of God, they killed the Messiah and didn't even realize it. But he died for them so they could know the real Messiah and deliver it.

They preached another king than Caesar. It ain't Uncle Sam; it ain't somebody in Washington. The will of God doesn't arrive on Air Force One like your dad said over and over; it is in Christ. This is, in my opinion, you are the kind of guy that is going to help people begin to do what Jesus told us we were to do. Does that make sense?

JONATHAN: That absolutely makes sense because right before you get to the book of Acts, you have the gospels, and he said, "Go." He said, "Go make disciples." They might not have had all the understanding. They might not have had a full understanding of what was going on and all those different things, but they were with them long enough to know this is the truth, and I'm going to go with it. And when I go with it, that's the reason why we're sitting here because they went with it. And they were beaten for it, they were put in prison for it, James was killed for it. All of these things were happening in the book of Acts. But they did what God told them to do and were doing what God told them to do and being faithful even though they were in a culture that was against them even though their own people were against them and rejecting them.

JAMES: And the powers that be, the government was certainly against them. Sadly, the

religious hierarchy was against them. The greatest problem he had was the self-righteous people that thought they were something when they didn't know who the something really was.

JONATHAN: That's exactly right!

JAMES: This is a whole new day. I'm telling you what, I honestly believe, Jonathan, we're going to see come to life what your dad preached.

Father, I pray that. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. And somehow, I believe, Lois, you're part of that cloud of witnesses. And I believe you know you're about to see what your husband preached, your daughters taught, your son sang, and what Jonathan is going to do, raise up a mighty army, not discussing it, not discussing truth, but demonstrating it in the power of your spirit just like those New Testament Christians, in Jesus' name.

I believe we're going to see this. Don't you believe now is the time to arise and shine with the glory of the Lord upon us?

JONATHAN: Now is the time. There is no better time than right now. God is waiting for us to move.

JAMES: I love you, buddy. I love your family. The book is in the bookstores. You can get it online. You help us give somebody water, and although we're giving away a book I wrote, a book our son Randy wrote, if you want this book because you want to know about your now time, you just ask us.

But would you do this? I know the whole Evans family wants this, would you help us give a cup of water, a well of water? I want you to watch the following scenes and listen to the sounds with your whole heart and prayerfully. Watch closely.

On the mission field:

INTERPRETER: My name is Miriam Venegas. It was sudden. He was five months old. He had never been sick. I was carrying him in my arms and then I felt he had quit breathing. He couldn't breathe and he didn't want anything. Here is where I saw my son die.

ANNOUNCER: The doctor said it was the water that took him. For a grieving mother this somehow hurt more. Miriam had given everything as a mom. But giving her son Tyson water to drink wasn't optional. Unfortunately, neither was her water source: River water, contaminated. Left with no choice, Miriam gave Tyson water that attacked his body like a poison.

INTERPRETER: That morning my son woke up feeling bad, vomiting, and wouldn't eat. I got scared and started to take him to the health clinic, but it would take three hours to walk there. He couldn't breathe. It was sudden.

It's hard because I always remember what happened there. I miss him so much.

ANNOUNCER: Tragedies like this should never happen to any mother. Together we can do something to stop the spread of waterborne disease by providing mothers like Miriam with fresh, clean, drinking water.

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: Oh boy, do we understand what it is to miss. Our beautiful girl that's in heaven, her fourth grandbaby, is going to born this year before the end of the year, and they're so beautiful. You don't forget a child when they're gone. And the thing I want you to see,

and I pray, let me try to get you to just really listen to me real close. When you notice the overlooked, the unnoticed, Jesus called them "the least of these," and you give them water, food, clothes, visit them when they're trapped in prison, you do it to me. Boy, if you ever wanted to give Jesus a drink of water, give it to the least of these.

I want you to know this. You are really anointed by God to be the answer to somebody's prayer. And don't think it is a small thing to give a cup of water. Or if you're enabled by God to drill a well and give 1,000 people instantly water the rest of their life. All of us can do it.

Betty, the people that watch our show, the viewers that watch us, they notice the least of these. They notice them, and they give them a cup of water, and so often, they give a well of water.

BETTY: Thank you so much for all that you do to help us drill these water wells. As you can tell, it's been almost nine years since we lost our daughter. The tears still flow, and I watched that mother with the loss of her little baby; her tears still flow, I promise you. But she did all she could do. She had no other resource but that dirty, contaminated water to give her precious little one. Let's give them a choice, please, to know that there is hope, that people care, and that people love them. So join with us, and let's drill those water wells and give those precious little ones a chance in life.

JAMES: And honey, there is no doubt you're going to do it. Betty is wiping away tears, understandable. God says he will wipe away our tears. We can wipe away mothers' tears. We can turn their situation of pain and heartache and fear into joy and wipe away tears even before they come by giving them water. Three hundred fifty water wells are our goal this year and I believe we're going to reach that goal. I say, God, I believe you can take us beyond that, and we can call the missionaries and say, guess what! People are so full of God's love and so willing to sacrifice themselves that we're going to be able to go past 350.

We have some gifts to bless your life, but would you right now go online, or would you dial the phone number there and take your bank card and use it like a check? That's how you should always use a bank card, like a check. But if you could give a well, \$4800, do it. You know you can.

We had someone write in the other day and say, "We were able to give five water wells." Praise God! I don't know what you can do. You do. God knows. But remember this, you can give \$1200 and pray, God, three more join me, got a well. \$2400, one join you, got a well. Most of our support comes from people giving \$48 and giving ten people water for the rest of their life. Or \$144 gives 30 people water for the rest of their life.

So there is a level at which all of us can take part in sharing God's heart. Right now, go get that bank card, go online, or call. If you plan to mail your gift, make the check to *LIFE* but call us and tell us it's going in the mail so we'll be able to tell the missionaries and the drilling crews you've got the support. You be a part of that miracle. Do it right now, and thank you.

Begin video clip:

ANNOUNCER: Waterborne illness is a killer that strikes the most vulnerable. For many impoverished families, the death of a child is the tragic result of having no choice but to drink contaminated water. But with your help, they won't have to make this choice ever again. Mission: Water for LIFE provides clean, fresh drinking water for thousands of children and their families giving them a life free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten, \$72 will provide for 15, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift, we'll send you James Robison's book *Living Amazed* full of inspirational true stories. You'll learn how divine encounters can change your life. In addition you'll also receive Randy Robison's brand-new devotional, *Upgrade*: "Seven moves in seven weeks to a better life."

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the N.I.V. Thinline Bible with easy-to-read large print. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Divine Servant."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: We really do need to hear from all of you. All of you! God, I've prayed many years, someday let every single person watching give something to the least of these. Please do it, in Jesus' name.

I really believe you're going to do what God leads you to do, and it's going to give life. We will send you *Your Time is Now* by Jonathan Evans. By the way, this is a family that has part of the family of God trying to get God's arms around the world. You know, Jonathan, the only way we can get God's arms around the world that he gave his son to redeem is when the body of Christ, the church, puts his arms around the world. Don't you think that's a lot of what our ministry does?

JONATHAN: That's what our ministry does! Is trying to get the body of Christ--we're the body of Christ, and the body has to function and get all the information from the head. So a lot of times, what we're doing is we're getting our information, not from the head, and wondering why we can't operate as the body.

JAMES: Wow! I like it!

JONATHAN: It can't happen that way.

JAMES: Wrong head! Thank you so much for watching. Thanks for sharing life. Bless you.