

11/19/21

Week 47: Fall Mission Feeding

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Mission Feeding Special #1

RANDY: Welcome to this special program. I'm Randy Robison. As always, Sheila Walsh is with me. We come to you today because we want to show you what's going on in an outreach that *LIFE Outreach International* has been doing for many years, over 30 years in fact. This is our mission feeding program, and it has been credited with saving millions of lives throughout Southern Africa.

But right now, we have a serious situation. For various reasons, there are food shortages. In some places, it is flooding; in other places, it is drought. We have people who have been displaced from their homes. So we have a serious situation going on in a few different areas where we're working. And we have the ability to change it. We have the ability to turn things around. But we have to do something. In fact, Sheila, you know because you've been there. In these places where they're experiencing food shortages, hunger, starvation, the ones impacted the most are the children.

SHEILA: Yeah. We're coming to you, honestly, I'm coming with a broken heart today because the situation has never been more serious and more acute. The levels of malnutrition of infants dying are unprecedented! And yet, we can make a difference. As Randy said, the most vulnerable are the children. These children are still developing. If they don't get the proper nutrition, if they don't get the care that they need, those children will die. I've seen it with my own eyes.

So whether it's the severe malnutrition in South Sudan or the extreme failure of crops in Angola or other places, the situation is a crisis. And we're asking you if you will help us today.

But I want to show you what it actually does to a little tiny one's body when they do not receive the nutrition they need. So please, I know it's hard -- I know it's hard, but please, will you watch this?

On the mission field:

ANNOUNCER: Life is precious. It's also fragile. [Clock ticking]

The early years of a child's life are a crucial stage of development. Their muscles are forming, their brains are developing, and their tiny bones are growing and fusing together. Malnutrition and the lack of food are serious threats to this development. Children often lose their lives to this silent killer.

Our teams have identified areas of critical need in South Sudan and Angola. Through no fault of their own, children in these areas were born into poverty, famine, and war. They have no safety net, and they desperately need our help more than ever. While this situation is grim, it's not hopeless. Mission Feeding's goal is to provide children like these with a daily bowl of food. It's a proven solution. It's an answer to these mothers' prayers, and it's yours to give.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: "It's yours to give." What an amazing opportunity that you and I have to fill those bowls. I'll never forget what it was like to go from one day being in the malnutrition clinic, hearing, almost, the cries of the mothers more than the children because they were so weak. They didn't have the energy to cry. But I saw tears rolling down the cheeks of the moms, and it felt so desperate.

But the next day, we were able to go on to one of the places where we've already set up mission feeding, and I was able to personally give each child a bowl of food that's been specially designed for their nutritional needs. So it was literally as if from that first bowl of food, it turned

from death to life.

But they're waiting now. There are still lines of children. I remember something that Betty Robison said many years ago, "We pray that the line will never be longer than the food we have." We get to fill those bowls, Randy.

RANDY: We do! And Sheila, you mentioned one of the clinics. On my last trip, I was in Angola, we saw three children die in one day. We heard those mothers wails, and it's heart-wrenching. I'll just be honest with you, as a father, you want to protect children. You want to protect your children. As a Christian, your heart aches for these people.

We went from that clinic to a cemetery. And in that cemetery, they were digging graves, and they weren't the normal graves you would think you would see. They were short graves. The mission workers there told me they don't have children to put in those graves yet, but they know they will. It troubled me, Sheila. It bothered me. It broke my heart, yes, but a part of it made me angry if I can just be honest. And then I knelt down by one particular short grave because I was curious. All there was, was a white cross where somebody had tried to write something on it. I thought, my gosh, these are children. Maybe their names will be written on a cross, maybe not. Maybe they'll just be forgotten.

It crushed me in so many ways. And I said, "God! Why don't you do something about this?" I'm telling you, I just heard in my spirit, "I am. I've sent you. I've sent you. It is yours to give." He's sending all of us. I know the Father's heart is that none should perish, but the Father has hands and feet, and that's you and I, that's believers.

So if we're going to save these lives and I'm convinced we can, I know we can, we've seen it, we have to fill these bowls. That's what we're asking you to do today. A very small amount goes a long way. We'll talk about that. But ask yourself this question right now, can I fill a bowl?

On the mission field:

ISAK: It really just breaks my heart how the children in this village know what it means to have an empty bowl because empty bowls mean empty stomachs. Empty stomachs mean going to bed night after night suffering from the pain of hunger, starvation, malnutrition, and ultimately, death.

The graves are full. Full of children, precious little lives, children who have a name. Children who mean so much to their families, children whose lives were stolen simply because they didn't have enough food. We can change that.

OPEN CAPTIONS:

>> Sometimes, we pick leaves so we can eat for one day. I am so tired of this life. I don't know how long we can last. I have nothing. What are we going to do to survive?

ISAK: We can end that pain. We can end the suffering of children going to bed at night with the pain of hunger. We can end the cycle of death, of a mother burying a child because she wasn't able to give them enough food. It's so easy to change it. So please, give the gift of life to these children and fill their empty bowls.

End of video**In the studio:**

SHEILA: And when you fill that bowl, you literally give life. I've seen with my own eyes the contrast between villages where the children have nothing -- and many of them, many, many of them end up in a malnutrition clinic. Can you imagine being five, six years old and already knowing several friends, brothers, sisters who have died simply because they had nothing to eat? And you go to bed each night thinking, will tomorrow be the day when I don't survive?

And that mother, that cry from her heart of not knowing how long she could go on. I couldn't go back to these places if I didn't understand that we could make a difference. The contrast between the malnutrition clinics where there is desperation and the places where we've already been able

to set up feeding programs and see life, it's like bringing life to the whole village. The children come to school to get their meal, so they end up with an education, and you break that cycle of hopeless poverty that goes from generation to generation.

I'm asking if you will join with us. We have been doing this for so many years, and over the years, millions of little ones' lives have been saved. But our partners are on the ground right now. Not only are our partners on the ground, but we also have the actual factories where the food is being made, mixed to exactly what these children need. All that's missing is you and me, and we can change that today.

RANDY: We can. And Sheila, you know very well how simple it is, from an economic standpoint. Look, \$30 will feed three children for three whole months. How do we do that? As Sheila said, we have assets on the ground, including these massive food factories where we take the grain that we've received, it is imported, process it there in-country, and then transport it to villages most in need. \$30 will reach three children for three months; \$50 will reach five children.

You can see the math: \$100 will help feed ten children for three months. Many of you can give \$1,000 or more to help feed 100 or more children for three whole months! And that gives us the opportunity to go into that place where there is a temporary setback. Again, whether it is a natural disaster, we've seen floods, we've seen droughts, we've seen crops failing, we've seen people displaced. Whatever is happening, we want to interrupt that process so that children don't die.

This is not something we want to do for the rest of their lives. We don't have to. They will work -- they work very hard to take care of themselves. What we need to do is interrupt that downward spiral of sickness and starvation, and malnutrition in order to let them get back on their feet, and we've done it. Sheila talked about it. You've seen the children going to school. You see them laughing, you see them playing, but most of all, you see them with a future -- a promise of a future. That's what the feeding program does.

Mission feeding is designed to step in with the love of God in the name of Jesus and say, we're here for you in your greatest time of need. If we don't fill those bowls, the sad reality is they will fill those graves. So we're asking you to partner with us right now to stop that death process, to reach out with life, to give life. Will you go to the phones or go online right now and give the best you can? When you do, you will be saving a life.

Begin video clip:

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. This urgent need is \$392,000 above our normal feeding budget and is critical to help save the lives of those suffering most.

With your gift of any amount, we will send you *Christmas Grace*. This eye-opening, new 31-day devotional will give you a fresh perspective on the greatest gift ever given and the life-transforming hope found in Christ's birth.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "Love and Thanks" tumbler set with scriptures reminding us that "God's love never fails" and to always "Give thanks." These tumblers will keep drinks hot or cold wherever you go.

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

On the mission field

Sheila: I woke up this morning in this village, this is my first time in Angola and I honestly don't know what I expected but I didn't expect what I experienced. I didn't expect to see a child who is a year and five months old and weighs six pounds. How does a child like that even survive?

I think one of the things that surprised me most was the profound affinity I felt with the moms. If you're a mom, all you want is for your child to be healthy. You want to be able to put a meal on the table at night and know that your children go to bed with a full tummy. But here I've seen what the ravages of malnutrition do.

In many places where we've been the crops had been destroyed this year and that's what they depend on. So, so many of the moms have to go out and work for two days to get one small meal for their children at night. The meal that they provide has no protein. So when they get sick they go down so quickly.

But the other thing and this is the thing that blew me away, is I saw the difference that Mission Feeding makes. To be able to be in a village and to see this long snake line of little kids who are behaving like little kids should, they're laughing, they're excited and happy. That's why I know there's hope.

Mission Feeding is not some great idea we came up with. It's simply living out the gospel of Christ. And when we put one simple bowl of food into the hands of these children in Africa, it changes their lives forever -- thousands and thousands and thousands of lives, one life at a time.

End of clip

In the studio

SHEILA: When you go to bed at night, in those last few moments when you're just laying down and you're reflecting on the day, what kind of things are you thinking about? Maybe about a meal you need to get ready, or your child needs new shoes for school. I can't imagine what it would be like to lay down at night not in a comfortable bed but wherever I can, and the only thought consuming me is how on earth will I feed my children tomorrow? Because as that piece said when these children get sick, they have no resistance -- zero resistance. When there is no protein in their system, they're not able to fight. A child should have fight left in their life.

But I've seen what happens. The contrast is so stark. It's literally death and life from a malnutrition clinic to where we have our feeding programs set up. And it's the way it should be. Think of how obsessed we are in the western world with how we look, where we exercise, what we eat? And these mothers, all they're asking is, could you help me give my children one meal a day? What could you and I skip to be able to answer that very simple, honest prayer? We can skip something that we do not need, that we can live without, to give those mothers the food that without that food, they cannot live. And we can all be a part of this, Randy.

RANDY: Really, yes, sometimes it does require a sacrifice, but if kids in my neighborhood were starving to death the way I've seen them starve to death in Southern Africa, I'd open my wallet immediately and be, let's get this child some food. That's where we're at in Africa right now. These children are facing death by starvation.

Here's what we're looking at. \$30 will feed three children for three entire months. \$50 will feed five children for three months. \$100 will feed ten children for three months. And your gift today of \$1,000 will help feed 100 children for three months.

But here's what I think is just as important as the financial support that we have given, Sheila, and that is the fulfillment of scripture. "What is pure and undefiled religion," as James wrote. You know what it is. And you see in these roll-ins, many of these, it's women, and it's children. Where are the men? The stories vary. Sometimes they're off working somewhere else. Sometimes they have died. Occasionally, there are tribal conflicts, there are wars there, there are

situations. Many of these are widows and orphans in their distress, and it is severe distress.

We're asking you to be the hands and the feet of Christ, the church. Christ is the head, but we are all part of the body. We can do something. I really, Sheila, believe this is more than just a humanitarian crisis. It is a humanitarian crisis, but I almost believe this is a spiritual crisis. This is a test. Will we be the people God has called us to be? How do we do it? We do it together. I'm saying right now, we are in place. We have the people on the ground; we have the facilities on the ground. We're rebuilding the ones that might have been destroyed by natural disasters. We just need you. Will you reach out? Will you go online, make the best gift you can, and say, you know what? I'm going to respond to that humanitarian need, and I'm going to respond to that spiritual need. Scripture tells us you will not go unnoticed in that.

So please, go online, go to the phones right now. Give the best gift you can to save a life. And when we join together, we will be saving hundreds of thousands of lives. Do it now.

Begin video clip

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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.

End of video

On the mission field

OPEN CAPTIONS:

>> One of the urgent things for this challenge is the high mortality rate. Most of these children, some of them are not even able to live up to 5 years. Kwashiorkor causes high mortality in these clinics if we don't assist.

RANDY: Kwashiorkor is a specific type of malnutrition that's common in rural Africa. I've knelt by the graves of children who died from malnutrition, so I know its deadly effects. But while knowing and hearing about malnutrition is one thing, seeing it is another. Malnutrition, hunger, these words fail to convey the suffering of a child whose body is shutting down from the lack of food. And words alone will not heal that suffering.

My parents started mission feeding as an act of love and honor for human life. It continues to save lives in Africa today, but only if it's supported by our viewers. We cannot forget that there are those that we can still save. All those children who are on the edge of death, they're malnourished, they're hungry. When you help us get mission feeding to a village in need, you're stopping malnutrition in its tracks. You're telling these children that they matter and that they are loved. Help us provide food for children who desperately need it now. Help save lives today.

End of video

In the studio:

RANDY: Let me mention one other thing. You've seen these clinics; we've talked about these clinics. Many of these were recently destroyed through some floods, and we are rebuilding those, however. Some of them are mobile, some are fixed, we're rebuilding them, and we're getting them back into the field, but the average cost is \$24,500 each. So we do need your help to finish rebuilding those clinics there. They are the last stop for children who are malnourished, who are almost about to die, and we've saved so many there. So please keep that in mind. And of course, whatever gift you can give will help provide the food for the children.

Sheila, I just pray that people will see the power of what we're doing and the power of their involvement in it.

SHEILA: And it's a beautiful thing when we work together as God's sons and daughters on the earth at this moment. It is not an accident that we're on the earth at this moment.

So please, if you haven't called yet, please do that. To think that \$30 will give food for three children and that \$50 will give food for five children. \$100 that will feed ten children! So please, if we all do something, we can make such a difference in this world that seems so hopeless. But we have the hope of Christ, and we have the privilege of bringing life and hope and food in his name.

So for Randy, I'm Sheila, from all of us here at *LIFE*, thank you so much!