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Week 48: Fall Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

T.C. Stallings

JAMES: You know we're going to say it is a joy to have you join *LIFE Today* because it is. I'm James, and this is Betty. I saw this guy, T.C. Stallings, in a tremendous movie that just blessed us. As a matter of fact, we were sitting pretty close to Tony Evans and his wife, and Priscilla was one of the stars in the movie War Room. Boy, what a powerful movie! And what a tremendous need for that kind of prayer room and answered prayer. Our guest was married in that movie to the part that Priscilla Shirer played. T.C. Stallings, he's an athlete. Thought he was going to be N.F.L. bound forever. But he really came from an almost impossible situation. I won't even tell you about it.

T.C. this is a book he wrote on, *Eyes Fixed*. So go ahead and just tell people what you mean *Eyes Fixed*, like fixed where?

T.C.: *Eyes Fixed* on Jesus and his purpose for your life; that's really the essence of the whole book. I've been saying that ever since I realized that's what's kept me on track. It's not a whole bunch of good things about me and how strong I am or anything like that because you see from the book, I had so many opportunities to get bumped off track. But keep your eyes focused on Christ and what he wants. That's the way to kind of just, where are you going, Lord? I don't care where it is; I just want to make sure you're leading. And so, if we can get that down, we will be all right. This comes from Hebrews 12:2. It's one of my favorite scriptures.

JAMES: You and I both had a rough start. I didn't have a father. My mother was raped. I grew up in total poverty, just an impossible situation. And you basically had the same situation. So tell us a little bit about your childhood and what you actually faced and went

through.

T.C.: Yeah. Cleveland, Ohio, is where I was born, and even that didn't happen. We were talking a little bit in the back about you possibly being aborted. I pretty much faced the same thing. My mother had, I was the youngest of six. So by the time I'm coming along, at least I can say I got the best version of my mother because she was in her 30s, and she had kind of started to crash at that point.

But my mother had already faced an abortion situation before and had done it. So she was already comfortable with it. And then I'm a 6th unplanned child. My father was completely out of the picture. She was considering doing it again but something in her this particular time helped her not to be comfortable with it. And I believe the church had a lot to do with that.

So I was born in a situation where we didn't have a lot of money; the neighborhood was very, very rough with all the crime and all the drugs and all that stuff. And just every ingredient that today people would say it's going to be really hard for you to be anything. You'll be lucky to even be alive.

I didn't even know that that was the environment that I was in. When you're young, it just seems like it's the norm. All the kids were like that. So I didn't even know it was dangerous until things started happening within my life that could pretty much end it for you. And you start to want or desire to get out of that situation. So that's where my dreams and desires come from, to get out and hopefully make life better for my mother and my family, and my siblings.

JAMES: So what did you do to get out?

T.C.: Well, I picked up a little ball and started running around with it. [Laughing] That was, I'm watching TV, and you just start seeing commercials and things like hey, you can go to college for free if you can play this game well. You can go to the N.F.L. I was

seeing guys buying their moms houses and all that. And I would just look around and watch my mother come home tired and everything. I'm just like, you know what? That's my goal. That's what's going to get me out of here.

I knew no one could afford to get me to college or anything like that; nobody in my family had ever been. It's not something we ever talked about, but I was seeing it on commercials all the time. So I'm just like, you know what? That's going to be me.

I'll never forget, Cleveland Municipal Stadium is what it used to be called; it's called First Energy Stadium now. My stepfather, who came into my life when I was about nine or so, worked downtown. So we'd go to pick him up, and a game was going on. So you could just hear it. And I knew I would never get inside there because we couldn't afford it. But I said that's okay because I'm going to be -- the first time I'll be in that stadium I'll be playing in there.

I was about 12 years old or something like that. And my dream started then. So I started playing ball, and they did deliver on all those things, college, and eventually some pro football.

JAMES: Okay, so what got you out of that and got you in a new direction? Explain what in the world went on in your life to take you away from that. Because you can look at him and tell, he looks like an athlete. Somebody would've picked him if they were picking teams. Somebody would probably say I'd take a chance on him. What took you in a different direction?

T.C.: Well, I'm playing, and the only problem football had for me -- football gave me so many things, but the thing is I almost did like you'd see in scripture where you credit the thing instead of the creator of it. I started to worship the sport. All my friends, all my opportunities, everything come from football. And so the Lord used football just long enough to where he could get me to the next thing. Because a lot of great things happened throughout my career, but in 2008, I had a great season over in Europe. I was like, I'm

going to bring all that back, and I'm going to go to the N.F.L., it's going to be great.

But I went to a movie; I went to see *Fireproof*. And I remember my friends telling me, "Hey, we're going to go see this movie. It's about fixing your marriage or something like that." I'm like, I've been married seven years. I've got it all figured out. Just ask my wife! I'm the best husband. You go in there thinking that you are great. At the end of the movie, you're the worst husband ever. It makes you feel like, oh, you've got so much to work on. I just saw the power from that film. I remember just my heart started to really beat for acting, and that came out of nowhere. Acting had been just something I played around with. But now I feel like, wow, I think I want to do this.

I turned to my wife, and I said, "Who made this movie?" She said, "The Kendrick Brothers." I said, "Well, let's just start praying about working with them. Because they do the type of film that I think I could do." And a year and a half later, I, sure enough, got an audition with the Kendrick Brothers, and I landed my first ever role. So it was a direct answer to prayer which gave me the courage --

JAMES: Was it *War Room*?

T.C.: It was *Courageous*. I played the gang leader in *Courageous*. That's a whole other story. I did everything I could to get that audition. But they gave me a shot at it. From that point, Hollywood saw *Courageous*, and then they called me and asked me had I ever thought about coming out there.

At the time, I'm living in Louisville, Kentucky. I kind of thought that that was like, every time my wife was like, "This must be the devil asking me to come out to Hollywood. I do one movie, and now all of a sudden, I'm supposed to be some kind of superstar? I'm like, "Nah, I'm just going to stay here."

But we prayed about it. Kept praying about, like what could be the impact? Well, a lot of people that are Christians go out to Hollywood, and they compromise their faith. They

leave Jesus behind. There's a stigma that says you have to do that. What if I went out there, and I stayed completely clean, never compromised, and still made it to the top? That would kill that all together, and I could encourage other up-and-coming actors that you don't have to leave Jesus behind.

Sure enough, I went out there, and that wasn't enough for me to get it done. Three years later, I woke up as the number one actor in the number one movie in America. When they started interviewing me out in Hollywood, I was being interviewed as an uncompromising actor. I could brag about how Jesus had led me to do that. And so once that happened, I knew what the Lord wanted me to do, and I never looked back. That's still my mission today is to just keep showing that you don't have to leave God out of anything. He doesn't need the sin to win. If you can't do it in front of him, it shouldn't be done. So that's -- you lose a lot of opportunities, but you gain so much more in terms of the approval of the Lord. That's why I do it.

JAMES: You go ahead, darling.

BETTY: Was your wife already a Christian when you met her?

T.C.: Yeah! It's so cool because we're both really growing in our faith in terms of like, I, in college, my college years is where I truly learned that it isn't enough to just believe in Jesus; you have to be a follower as well. A lot of believers don't fully transition into followers. The rich young ruler, he believed, didn't transition. The Bible says demons believe; they never transition. So you've got to take that belief and transition into a follower. I learned that in college, and so did my wife.

So it was like he was preparing her at the same time he was preparing me to meet. I just say in the book, he also taught me to play a little bit of basketball because, without that, I might not have had a shot. You'll read in the book; my wife took me on a basketball date. She told me if I'd lost, the date's off. The relationship is over. [Laughing] I won the game by one point. Y'all can read about that. But yeah, we both were praying. She told me

when we got together that she was praying the Lord would send her someone on the same path as her, which is growing in Him. And I was praying the exact same thing. So we met. It was God's will for it to happen.

JAMES: Is she excited about where you are?

T.C.: Oh man! Yeah! I always liken our relationship to this roller coaster that she never chose to get off. But she would like for that thing to steady out a bit, and it has. So yeah.

JAMES: You told the story here in *Eyes Fixed*; bottom line, if somebody goes through the book, where do you want it to take them?

T.C.: I want them to know that if you're familiar with the scripture when Peter was in the boat, and they're crossing, and they look, and they think they see a ghost, but it really is Jesus. And then Peter is like, "Is that you, Lord?" Jesus is like, "Yeah, it is me." "Well, call me out to you." He jumps out of the boat with faith and eyes locked in on Jesus. He was doing everything that Jesus wanted him to do, walking on the water and everything.

Then the storms come, he takes his eyes off Jesus, and he starts to sink, and everything is getting messed up. Jesus saves him and says, "Why did you lose your faith?" And it is obvious why he lost his faith because he took his eyes off Jesus. As long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he was doing everything he needed to do. It doesn't say there weren't going to be any problems because there were problems; there were the storms and winds. But when he took his eyes off Jesus, everything started falling apart. That is the essence of my life.

I believe for sure that's the essence of everybody's life in this world. Jesus, he made you for a purpose on purpose to do something. Called you to do it, live this life from start to finish. Keep your *Eyes Fixed* on him. You can get through the pain and the troubles. And notice I didn't say everything is peachy. Stuff is going to happen. Keep your *Eyes Fixed* on him; you're okay. You take your eyes off of him; that's where Satan can get all in there

and mess everything up.

So I hope people can see it is coming from a real person who has been through things. I wasn't handed anything. But there is nothing special about me. I never was just so strong that I could resist sin and temptation and all that. The only thing I got right is keeping my eyes locked in on Jesus. And I'm glad that my mother led me in that direction. You'll see throughout the book that he kept depositing people in my life that helped me stay focused on Jesus and know what that meant. And now it is locked in to the point where I don't know any other way. I get really scared and freaked out and weird if I'm not connected to the Lord through Bible study and prayer, and that's the way I keep my eyes on him.

I feel like if I had one message, if someone is done talking to me or reading this book, they're like, gosh, I don't want to take my eyes off Jesus. But, man, I know I've made a disciple, and that's somebody I'm going to see in heaven. That's what living this life is all about. So that's why I wrote it.

JAMES: How did you end up in Texas?

T.C.: Oh, that's an interesting story. The COVID thing hits; I lost my mom at that time. The career slowed down. It was like everything you're involved in came to a screeching halt. I think everybody in the world can relate to that. Just everything stopped!

So at this point, it really takes you to a deeper place in thinking. And I'm just saying all right, I just want to hear the Lord in this situation because this is weird to everybody, me, my wife, and my two children. Lord, what do you want me to do right now within this? Even in this, I know you still have a purpose. We're locked in this house, but what do you want us to do? Do I still need to be in southern California?

I started questioning everything because I just wanted -- everybody was just going so crazy, doing all kinds of different things. There is a God thing here. There is a God idea; what is that?

And then all signs started to point to this state, whether it was getting closer to other friends. There was a TV show that I'm on now that's filmed here. It's called Vindication. It shoots here. They offered me a role, and I took it. It was supposed to be a one-time thing, but if you move here, it is recurring. So I'm like, hmm, that's interesting. So we prayed and said, Lord, close any door you don't want open, and just open the ones you do want. Just shut everything else off. And everything opened up here for Texas. And so we were nervous about it, but we boldly came. And it was just the best thing that we have ever done so far.

JAMES: How would our viewers pray for you if you just say pray for me a special way, me and my wife? How would you want them to pray for you?

T.C.: For me, I'm in the entertainment business; I've seen so much. I've got this thing where I say, if you ever go to a restaurant and complain about what's on the menu, you can either keep eating and complaining, or you can become a chef. That's the way I felt with Hollywood. Or I shouldn't even say Hollywood, just in the movie entertainment, whatever, it's one of Satan's strongest weapons, all the stuff that he pumps.

So I've always complained about that. I've fought against that. I want to be a chef. I want to cook and put entertainment out that I know is God-honoring. It just takes resources to do that; it takes a lot of connections to do that. And those are the types of things that deter people from doing it. But I don't feel like the Lord wants me to quit. I feel like he wants me to prepare.

So I've written scripts. I've gotten actors together, and I want to pray for the ability to make my own films and help other uncompromising actors like myself make it because we're the ones where it's really hard for us to get stuff. If you're going to say anything, do anything, do nudity, do pornography, do whatever, oh, there's plenty of work for you. But if you want to do it with a God-first mentality, it's really hard to get in. But not if there's a cook that's looking for people to eat that kind of food.

So I want to make my own films and employ other people like myself. And carry the message of Christ throughout the world. That's my goal. So pray for that. It's big but --

JAMES: And the *War Room* was one of those kinds of parts. And a great movie and great producers and then *Courageous*. So if somebody, let's just say people say, we want to help you do what you're doing. Is there a website or any way they can communicate, we've got you on our heart? You've got to be careful. People will want to get on your bandwagon. That's not what we're sitting here talking about. We're talking about people who want to help him do what God wants him to do and be a servant to help the kingdom purpose of God in his life. How would they get a hold of you?

T.C.: My website is WWW.T.C.Stallings.life. And then my manager, who is also my wife, if people want to reach out and say, hey, what's T.C. got going? How can we help? It's Levette@T.C.Stallings.Life. Like I said --

JAMES: I like that title, "Life."

T.C.: Everybody is dot com or dot net, and I was like, what could we do different? And I'm all about pursuing your God-given purpose in life above all else. So I was like dot life, nobody has got that. Let's do that! And yeah, if I could just wake up one day and meet with my manager and my wife, and just say, what's the next project the Lord's prayed about? Hey, you want to make a movie about this or about that that could bring him glory and be able to say, let's do it.

JAMES: Father, I want you to bless him beyond measure. I want you to open doors. I want you to lead people who may be watching to really pray for him, and his wife, and his vision. But also, maybe some folks watching are saying, you know what? We've got to get involved. We know how we can be a help to him, in Jesus' name.

You know, T.C. we, for years, I've been preaching; really, can you believe I've been

preaching 60 years? And been married to this lady 58 years. I'm glad. Do you realize that the greatest joy that we've had is to literally put the arms of Jesus around the overlooked? So often, T.C., it is the least of these, it's the people that live out of sight. But when you see them through the eyes of Jesus, you want to get his arms around them.

One of the things I've been saying to all of our viewers, and you know this, is that if the family of God would get healthy and come together in supernatural unity, submitted to his headship, his Lordship, we could put his loving arms around the world that he gave his life to redeem. That's what we do when we feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, set the captives free, put shoes on little feet, do everything we can to express the life and love of God freely.

Listen to the lead missionary's son, Isak, and what he's seeing. He basically, like his dad, left everything to be a missionary. Peter went to heaven just a couple of years ago, but boy, he left so much life behind. Isak continues. Listen to the heart of God through this wonderful missionary, and you're going to become the miracle someone longs for, even pray for. Watch!

On the mission field

OPEN CAPTIONS

Pandemic No End in Sight

War on Terrorism Continues

Health of Economy in Question

ANNOUNCER: With all the problems facing each and every one of us, it would be very easy to pull back and close our eyes to the plight of children in this world. Children who, through no fault of their own, are suffering because of the lack of food.

ISAK: We're here in an area of Northern Mozambique. We've been going from village to village. We've been speaking to mothers in all of these villages. And there is one

common thing that these mothers have been sharing with us, and that is the fact that they have no food. Many mothers have told us how they've lost children as a result of simply not being able to feed their children.

The situation here is at a crisis level. Children die simply because there is not enough food. In Angola, we're seeing multi-years of drought; we've actually just this week got a report from our staff in Angola showing that over 200 percent increase in the number of children being admitted into the malnutrition clinics there. We know that more children coming in and being admitted into malnutrition clinics doesn't just mean a statistic. It means more mothers whose hearts are broken.

In South Sudan right now, we're seeing flooding. We've got malnutrition clinics that, because of your love, we've been able to rebuild, but there are many that we still need to rebuild. And if we're not able to rebuild those clinics, we're not able to extend the lifeline that those clinics give to the mothers and the children that so desperately need it. Many of those mothers are relying on us, counting on us.

Please, it's a crisis situation here, but it is a situation that we can turn around. We can change these conditions because the solution is food. The solution is opening our hearts, bringing a heart of love and a pipeline of food because that literally is the gift of life.

OPEN CAPTIONS: There's LIFE in every bowl and hope for every life.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Do you realize who it is that provides that porridge mix, that soup mix? It is kind of like cream of wheat as far as texture. It is just amazing. Will you do it? Do you know who provides those bowls? Our viewers, Betty. They said, "Why don't you give them something to put the porridge, the soup, the food in? Rather than bringing a tin can or some plastic bag to get the hot soup? Why don't you do it?" That's what you said.

Do you realize that you have shown us, as viewers of *LIFE Today*, the heart of God, the mind of God, the will of God, the love of God? Would you right now, please, become the answer to those mothers' prayers? Do you realize how many times they must say, "God, please help me get food for my baby, my child!"

You want your prayers answered. How about you be an answer to prayer? That's what our viewers are, Betty. They're the answers to many prayers. Please keep this in mind because there is a level at which everyone can participate. For \$30, \$50, or \$100, we can feed three, five, or ten children for the next months. \$1,000, and some of you can do that, we can feed 100. You heard Isak say, "We still need to rebuild some more of these malnutrition clinics." That's \$24,500. You may say, wow! But God, you've done it. There are people who can do that.

Betty, I'm just praying that everybody watching will just say, "Let me be the answer to some mother's prayer. Let me be the miracle!" And I believe they're going to do it.

BETTY: I believe you will, too. As I was watching along with you and I watched those precious little children, they were coming because something was being offered to them -- nourishment! I remember just recently one of our great-grandchildren came over, her name is Addie. And usually, when she is there for a short time, she will say, "Mimi, can I have a snack?" And she goes straight for my pantry; she knows where the snacks are.

So I'm thinking, these children aren't looking for a snack. They're looking for life. They're looking for nourishment. I want them to know there is a place prepared for them that they can come and get that nourishment. I know you do, too. So please join us, and let's offer that nourishment to them.

JAMES: I really believe you will. I want you to go get your bank card and use it like a check; if you use a check, make it to *LIFE*. But I want you to dial that number and tell us

what you're sending. Or take that bank card and make the gift today. Or you can go online and make the gift.

We're going to send you these beautiful tumblers: "His Love Never Fails" and "Give Thanks." By the way, you prove his love never fails. For those of you who will give a gift of \$100 or more, along with the gift that we're giving for any gift, *Christmas Grace*: 31 meditations and declarations on the greatest gift ever, Jesus! Wow!

Thank you! Thank you for getting that card. Thank you for making that call or going online and becoming a miracle -- a miracle answer to prayer. And Betty and I are praying every one of you watching will give life to some precious children right now.

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

In the studio

JAMES: Let me just say that I really -- I just really believe you're going to help. By the way, this is, boy, such a good-looking guy! His wife is just beautiful. They're a beautiful couple -- they're dressed up in Jesus. Everybody looks good dressed up in Jesus. If you'd like to have the book, say, James, we're going to help feed those kids. I'd like to read that story. I've got somebody I want to share that with. Please do so.

You know, if you can communicate with T.C. and say, we're praying for you, but maybe we know how we can help you do what God put on your heart.

T.C., thank you so much for being here. I'm glad you moved to Texas. It must be preparation for Promised Land life.

[Laughter]

T.C.: Is that what it is?

JAMES: Yeah! We've lived up here 50 years in this area, and we're glad to see you. Thank y'all for watching *LIFE Today*. Hey! Thanks for sharing life! Thanks for giving life. We sure do love you.