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Week eight: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Tim Conway #2

JAMES: Listen. Call everybody you know right quick. Whatever you do, if you want to feel better no matter what you're facing, go to *Life Today* right now. Whatever you do, don't go to bed without watching it tonight. I think we come on like at 11:00 on Day Star. You know, Day Star, central time, 7, 11. You know the 7-Eleven stores? 7-Eleven, I came on 40 years ago with them. Marcus is with the Lord looking down, saying, y'all be sure and watch this! Call your friends.

You're going to see Tim Conway like you never dreamed you'd see him. By the way, he was coming back. He got sick, and he's with the Lord. You need to hear him tell you not how to just find, Betty, that laughter is good medicine. And I listened to you laughing at what we did years ago. And you were laughing so hard. I was trying to watch something I needed to listen, and I'm hearing you through the door of the bedroom. And I can't even hear what's on TV. You are laughing, and I opened the door. You say, "I've never had so much fun and felt so good!" I said, "Betty, the Bible says that laughter and a joyful heart is good medicine!" And boy, do we need some good medicine and joyful hearts.

So you get ready! I think you're going to be so glad that you watched. Don't you miss where Tim Conway is going to take us. And then you're going to get God's loving arms around people who never knew anyone cared. The ones Jesus said, "the least of these." Watch Tim Conway.

Begin video clip

BETTY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Thank you so much for joining us. We have a wonderful guest. I'm Betty Robison; this is James. We've got Tim Conway back with us.

JAMES: I've already laughed -- my face hurts! You may not know this. In television we have to wear make-up.

BETTY: In life I have to wear make-up.

[Laughter]

TIM: I wear a little base around the house.

JAMES: Mine's cracked. Tim, you haven't been introduced yet – just stay quiet.

[Laughter]

TIM: Oh! I'm sorry!

JAMES: We really haven't decided if we're going to introduce you. Would you welcome Tim Conway to *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

BETTY: Have you always been funny? Growing up, did it just come natural?

TIM: What makes you think I'm funny? You mean looking or what?

Yeah, when I was in school, I was short. I was only about 5'2", 5'4", something like that -
- that's quite a difference though, isn't it? 5'4" you're kind of tall.

[Laughter]

I weighed about 95 pounds. I was actually going to be a jockey when I was small. I was galloping horses at a track in Cleveland. But at this weight, horses ask you to get off.

[Laughter]

Come on! And if I hadn't fallen off as much as I did, I would have been a great jockey, I really would.

[Laughter]

I was exercising a horse one day, the first time I'd ever been in a starting gate and these guys go from zero to 40 like right now. You know? Gates open and I look down the track and here goes my horse and I go, "I should be on that horse!"

[Laughter]

And people who are betting on you really get upset! [Whistles] Hey! Catch up with that thing, will you? I had funny parents too.

JAMES: I think you were trying to get him to tell you when he found out he was funny.

TIM: By watching my parents, I swear to God. They didn't know they were funny but they're the funniest people I ever saw. My dad was Irish and you know the Irish drink a bit. We know that. As a matter of fact, I was 12 years old before I found out that all brown paper bags didn't have a bottle of Seagram's in it.

[Laughter]

You know?

But my dad, he was Irish. You could not tell him he was wrong. Whatever he did -- he bought a doorbell one time and hooked it up. Button on the outside, the thing wire fell on the inside. He hooked it up backwards so that it rang all the time except when you pressed the doorbell.

[Laughter]

And on this program, I swear to God, this is true, I'm not kidding. So we would sit at home at night listening to this -- zzzzzng. And when it would stop, my dad would go, "I'll get it."

[Laughter]

I swear! Well, you know don't ya? I'll deal with you.

My grandson, Tim, made a cuckoo clock for me. You know you get those kits, a dollar and a half, and make a little clock-- and there is a bird in there, two cones and the chain

and everything. So they make one for his grandparents -- their grand -- somebody's -- my mother and father. And the cuckoo was bothering my mother at night, r-r-r-rh all night. So she goes to my dad and says, "Hey listen, fix that so that it doesn't cuckoo." Right? So instead of tying the cords together and everything, he scotch-taped the door shut.

[Laughter]

So now all night you hear k-snorda, k-snorda.

[Laughter]

I swear to God this is true because ABC came out one day to do some shooting in Cleveland and I happened to be in Chagrin Falls where I live. They came out and they said, we'll take you on the town and everything. So I'm telling some of these stories to these people. And my mother says, "Oh, you lie so much! You lie just to be funny!"

I said, "Really? Come here." I took the guy with the camera, went over to the cuckoo clock, right? Un-taped the door, and in there is this bird like this --.

[Laughter]

So that's when I became funny.

JAMES: Did you have any other challenges when you were growing up other than living with your parents?

TIM: I was in the Army for -- ours -- in the Army for two years, a little more than two years. When you are court-martialed you get a little more time. So I had two years and I think about three or four weeks or something like that. The Army had no sense of humor. They didn't! I was stationed in Seattle. I defended Seattle for two years. As you know we were not attacked!

[Laughter]

[Applause]

So I'm on guard duty one night and they are sticklers about you having your gun with you when you're on guard duty. And they are heavy! You go on for two hours; you're off for two hours. You're on, you sleep, then on -- it's all night this on and off duty. I'm guarding a service club which has ping-pong balls and cards and Bingo in it. It is peacetime. First of all, who is going to steal Bingo during a war anyway? "Give me the I-31. Come on! "

So I'm walking around this thing all night with this gun and I go, eh! Pbstt! So I get in the back of a Chevy and take a little nap. So I'm like this and I wake up and I go, uhmmn! Oh, my gosh. The guy is coming -- the lieutenant. He is going to come around the building. What you do is take your rifle and you go, "Halt, advance, and be recognized." And they give you name, rank and serial number and all that. So I go around the corner, and I go, okay -- my gun! My gun is in the Chevy. So I go oh, boy. So I go in the trash barrel there and they have a long neon tube, like you have in the light fixtures. So I have this thing and the guy, the lieutenant comes around the corner and I go, "Halt, advance, and be recognized."

He goes, "What's that?"

I said, "It is a light bulb. If you come any closer, I'll turn it on!"

[Laughter]

So, I paint rocks white and put them from here to over there. I started out, I swear, I started out life I was meant to be something -- I don't know, what I am, I'm nothing.

When I was born, I was very sick. So I didn't get baptized right away. I was about five months old before I got baptized and my mother was Romanian. Listen to the silence here. Carson used to say, "Why don't you ever tell somebody where you're from?"

I'd say, "Romania."

That's why I don't tell anybody, nobody cares. So when I'm being baptized, they put me up on a cushion up on this little altar thing and everybody goes around -- I'm Greek Orthodox. You kind of hang on to like a big cloth and everybody is praying and turning around. And as they're going around and they're doing the prayer and everything, then they stop.

Now in the meantime, because I was five months old, I had moved around a little bit and I had fallen off this thing. So the priest turns around he goes, "And maybe --." Now my dad goes, "He is risen!"

[Laughter]

And the priest says, "No, he has fallen." So with that kind of start, I would assume you're probably going to be in comedy in your life, I would imagine.

JAMES: Did you have some challenges? I know you've written a lot of the movies that you and Don Knotts did, but did you have any reading issues?

TIM: I have dyslexia. I can't even say it. [Laughing] Yeah, I'm dyslexic. I couldn't -- yeah, that's why on the Burnett show, I'd memorize -- I memorized everything in life really. I can't read squat. Well, I could read "squat." Because I know the letters, "squat." But "squit," I couldn't read. That would be backwards to me.

JAMES: Are you able to be serious?

TIM: I don't think so. Yes! Oh, sure, yeah.

JAMES: Faith -- faith -- faith -- faith?

TIM: State capitals for two hundred!

[Laughter]

No. Faith!

JAMES: Tell me what has impacted your life, your faith -- spiritual aspects.

TIM: I have always believed that there was a God. There is no question. When I was small and I didn't have a religious upbringing. My dad was Catholic but he never -- they didn't go to church. I went to Sunday school and things like that. My dad did go to

church once. We went to church. The choir started to sing and my dad, when they got through, went...

[Clapping]

Sit down, Dad.

But I always believed that there was somebody that you could communicate with besides your friends, your parents, whatever. I always selected God. I truly believe that he was there and was with me my entire life.

JAMES: Now when you were -- Louise Du Art told me --

TIM: She lies a lot.

JAMES: She said that you saw some kind of cross that -- tell me about it.

TIM: I was at a carnival; I was about 11 years old in Chagrin. A carnival came every year and had those impossible games, throw the ball, you can't get it in there. I used to work there -- I know you can't get it in there. So there was this fish pond and you throw in this rod and it had a magnet on it. It would go down and would catch another magnet with all these fish. You could pull it up and have a prize you'd win. So I spent one dime on a ride and already thrown up so I decided enough of that. So I went and saw this little piece of ribbon, green ribbon and it had a little white cross hanging from it that glowed in the dark. I wanted that so badly. So boom -- I spend four dimes with this stupid thing trying to get it and nothing. He is giving me little monkeys and things like that. I'm going shplttt.

So I go, well, I'm going home. And as I'm walking home I look down on the ground and here is a dime. So I pick this dime up and I go to this tree -- I swear to God, I do that a lot. Because I'm telling the truth! So I go to this tree and I go -- and it is not like I'm testing God. It is not like a test; it is just like can I have some help? So I go, "Could you please, if I do that again, could I win that cross?"

I go back. I give the guy a dime. He gives me a pole. I go, hmmn-hmmn! I pull it up. He goes up and reaches for this cross and gives it to me. Now you could have knocked me over with a balloon. I'm telling you I was just like -- oh, my gosh! Not only did you hear but you actually gave it to me.

As I say, it is not testing, it is like maybe validating that somebody is around on those times, and he was there.

To this day, I'm still amazed by that whole situation that I asked, I got, so I know there is somebody up there.

JAMES: And the cross has meaning in our life because of the gift of God. Tim, what do you hope for America right now? It is hard for you to say a sentence and not be funny because -- I believe it is a gift from God. I believe what you have is rare. Would you agree? Do you believe God has blessed this man?

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Tim, well, you communicated with me and Betty and told us that something

wonderful happened here. I appreciate the note. I know you're listening. He was coming back, I told you on the program yesterday, but he got sick. He didn't get to come back. He wanted to; he's with the Lord.

That was a fabulous answer to prayer. I want you to know this, please; God wants to answer your prayers. Do you remember something that I've said over and over? If you watch us regularly, you hear this often. Because people have told me a lot of times that one scripture, or just one truth, or one kind word or one moment of inspiration or wisdom, it changes us. The thing I've said over and over, is if you want your prayers answered, and you do, seek to be an answer to someone else's prayer.

Somehow that captured your heart. You actually said, and I said this yesterday, you're going to hear me say it often because it not only changes the person that hears it, but it totally changes the people who see the benefit of you hearing it. Our viewers, Betty, are telling me perhaps few things they've ever heard have impacted them that deeply. Because they realize we can be -- and I say this, you can be somebody's miracle. Have these people been somebody's miracle?

BETTY: Absolutely! You truly are. You stand strong with *Life Today*, *LIFE Outreach*, and you say let's all go together and make that difference through the water wells. What a joy it is to join with you and to go forward into those places that have known death so many, many times. The water, James, is so diseased that you can see the disease. The water odor is so bad you can smell death. So thank you for always joining us.

JAMES: I hope you heard that as directly as God wants you to. Thank you for joining us sharing *Life Today* every day all over the world and so often, with what Jesus called "the least of these," the unnoticed. Do you know what he made very clear? If you want to know who the sheep are that are going to heaven, they're the ones that notice the least. They feed them when they're hungry, they give them water when they're thirsty, they set them free when they're in prison -- and you're doing it to me. To me! You're not only ministering to them; you're ministering to me, Jesus, who gave my life that you might

have life and share life.

Every one of our viewers helps us with everything we lay before them to pray about. You're the most amazing people. Right now, we need an overflow of love, so I'm asking God to let us drill more than the 300 water wells we're targeting. I'm praying it will. It's \$4800 to drill a well.

There are many of you watching who can drill a well. Many who give \$2400 and pray another joins you, we've got a well. \$1200 and say, God, let three more join me, and they do, and we've got another well. Most of the support comes from people who give \$48 because that's what they can do. I'm asking you to do what God leads you to do because he will only lead you to do what he enables you to do. \$48 gives ten people water the rest of their life; \$ 144 gives 30. There's a level at which you can help.

Would you go get your bank card or write a check and make it to *LIFE*? Call the number and tell us what you're sending or go online or call the number and take your bank card and say I'm giving \$48, \$4800, \$2400 -- whatever it is! And just know, just like a joyful heart and laughter can be great medicine like we've shown you this week, love never fails. In love, let's give people Water for LIFE. Go get your card. Go online or call the number and just do what God tells you to do.

On the mission field

SHEILA: You can probably see the road stretching out behind me. That's maybe, I don't know, I would guess about a mile. But do you know that many of the mothers, that's how far they have to walk each morning? I've asked several mothers, "So when do you get up?" They say we have to get up at 4:00 because we have to make the hour-long, 30-minutes, 40-minutes whatever walk to the hand-dug well where the water is filthy, it is contaminated. But they have to get there early, or there's no water left, knowing that the very water they're taking back to those they love might potentially be what kills them.

Honestly, I wasn't sure what a hand-dug well looked like. We walked up to it, and it is just literally -- it is just a hole in the ground. Most of them are surrounded by a tire. That's the kind of perimeter of it or a couple of sticks on either side. It takes two people a week to dig deep enough to get some water. One of the moms told me that so many of the children end up getting diarrhea that comes from drinking this kind of water.

I'm asking you to help us. The need here is urgent. So here's what I'm thinking. Can you think of one thing that you can live without to give them the one thing they can't live without? What they need is clean water. I'm not asking for a car or a television. They just want to provide their children with clean, healthy water so that they don't get sick. It will give mothers hope, and it will give children a future.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Sheila, you're amazing. I don't know how many of you know, but Sheila said she wanted to do evangelism and wanted to teach the Bible. But the third part of her dream was she wanted to help the poor, the least of these. And she's getting to do that at a very important time of her life.

I hope you notice that Betty and I are here about half the time now. And you love Sheila, and you love our son Randy. So obviously, you recognize our love not only for one another and for God and for you, but that we want to share the very best with you. And you notice we always try to bring through others so that we, as much as you might appreciate what we're doing, we're not the center; these are our focal points. And you can see the glory of God, and you send Sheila to fulfill the last part of her three-part vision, the one she thought would be most difficult.

And Betty, our viewers are changing millions of lives by giving clean water. Isn't it amazing to watch?

BETTY: It really is. I have to comment on Sheila's spot there that you just watched. I feel like Sheila was pleading on behalf of those mothers. Because you see, as a mother, I always feel the hearts of those mothers as they're pouring that dirty, filthy, contaminated water into that bucket. And then they're going to offer it to their children? You say, why would they do that? Because that's all they have. They have to have water to even survive, maybe even another day.

So let's remember that when we're showing you the children, we love to show you the children. We love to show you when they've been helped and when they've been restored again. But think about the heart of the mother when you give. And say, what would I want for my child as you offer the best offering God asks you to give.

JAMES: Thank you, Betty. Do you know that the attributes of the Holy Spirit are so much mother, so much the sweetness of beauty, feminine qualities? Betty, I'm asking God for a miracle, and I'm asking that everybody watching would say, "I'm going to give a drink of water. I'm going to identify with the mothers and the need, and I'm going to be the answer to that mother's prayer and her heart cry. I'm going to make the greatest gift I can make." If you can give a well, do it. Part of a well, do it. \$48, 10 people water the rest of their life. There is some point at which you can help. Get your bank card, write a check, make it to *LIFE*, go online or call the number. Make the gift of love and life God put on your heart. You have been blessed today. Now let's bless those who never thought anybody would notice. But God did through 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 *Bible Promises For Life*, the ultimate handbook to everything God guarantees you in his word. A powerful resource that will give you the confidence to face life's troubles. With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "I Will Give You Rest" throw. It is a reminder of our Savior's promise of rest to those who trust in His grace and love.

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. You may request our new, inspiring bronze sculpture, "Let the Children Come."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: I think this is one of the most beautiful bronzes. The children look so filled with peace, like the Rwandan orphans who climbed in my lap. I said, "That looks like Jesus," when somebody showed me the picture. I couldn't be happier. We want to send this to you for a gift of \$1200. You're going to put the arms of Jesus around a lot of precious children and families.

Thank you for helping us share God's love so clearly, so effectively. We'll send you some gifts that will bless you, but you're giving the greatest gift; you're giving life. Thank you!