

1/21/22

Week four: WFL

Sheila Walsh

WFL special #1

SHEILA: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Sheila Walsh. I'm so glad that you have tuned in for this particular program. I've had the privilege of working at *LIFE Outreach International* for coming up to six years, believe it or not. I have to tell you it has been absolutely life-changing. One of the reasons for that is the mission trips that I've been able to take.

So what I'd like to invite you to do over the next few minutes is to come on a trip with me. I want to show you what it's like to take so many of these trips to different parts of the world. So imagine we're at Dallas airport, and we're getting ready to board our flight. I go into the store, and I just pick up a bottle of water, and I put it in my backpack and get on my flight. Then, just a few hours later, I land somewhere in either Cambodia or Southern Africa, different parts of the world, and this becomes as rare as a pink diamond.

Do you know that almost 800 million people in the world do not have access to clean water? That's a staggering figure -- almost 800 million! And when James and Betty Robison began to understand the great need, they determined they were going to do something about it. So 23 years ago, they began Water for LIFE. We've been able to drill 7,000 wells, which has provided clean drinking water for 7 million people.

But as you can see, the discrepancy between those who have no access to what we've already been able to provide is a vast chasm. The problems that happen when there is no clean water are immeasurable. Disease -- so many children who die in the world, waterborne disease is one of the number one killers, and the greatest victims are children under five years of age.

There are all sorts of dangers. Going to a river to get water, and that's the only source, and there

being crocodiles or other wild animals. I have seen with my own eyes the absolute terror in the eyes of mothers who, the only water they have to give to their children, has already taken the lives of other children in the family. It is devastating!

But I have also seen with my very own eyes that we have the solution. The first time I saw what that looked like, it took my breath away. And the other thing that was astonishing to me was how doable this is. Yes! This is a vast problem and a huge issue right now, but I'm here to tell you that you and I can do something about it. Watch this.

On the mission field

SHEILA: I've been on many mission trips for *LIFE Outreach International* all around the world, and I'm heartbroken every time I see the hardships the children and their families face. But the cost for one of these hardships is never more apparent than when we make a trip for Water for LIFE.

This water is filthy. Look at what she is pouring in here. I can't imagine as a mom that that's all I've got to offer my daughters. That is a *Sophie's Choice* that no mother should ever have to make.

These desperate mothers have no options for a clean water source, so they reluctantly give their children whatever water is available. And many times, the consequences can be deadly.

I've talked to so many mothers since I've been here who have buried one, two -- one mother has buried three children simply because they have no clean water source. There are hand-dug wells, but I've looked at the water; it is filthy.

Hand-dug wells are common in remote areas around the world. They serve as a last-ditch effort to find any kind of water to drink. I've seen with my own eyes why this is not a life-giving solution.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in there. Children get malaria; they get diarrhea. This little one, this nine-month-old boy, died with diarrhea. In some of the places we go at *LIFE Today*, we see hard situations, but we see a spark of hope. What I've seen here in this village is if hope has died.

But here's the best part about going on a Water for LIFE mission trip and meeting these precious families, we already know the answer to the need for clean water. And we can bring hope and life back to every one of these villages.

This is what love is all about -- the fulfillment of seeing a *LIFE Outreach International* water well right here so that these children can grow up and have healthy happy lives! Let's do this again and again and again 'til this is the norm in villages all around the world. Cheers!

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: Honestly, it gives me chills watching that because I'll never forget that day. We had come from one of the worst places we've been, where so many mothers were weeping as they told us what had happened to their children. As a mom, I cannot imagine what that is like! You know that the very thing you're giving to your child could end their life, and yet, you have nothing else to give them.

But when we drove into that village and saw these children playing and pumping water, it was fresh, clean water, and I saw "*LIFE Outreach International*," I wanted to dance. And yes, I did drink it, in case you're wondering. Well, you said, "Cheers!" So I did drink it, and it was amazing!

There is so much that you and I have a privilege of being a part of, but this, literally, we call it Water for LIFE because that's what it is. It literally will change their lives. But, not only that, this is something that Christ gives us the privilege of doing for him.

Let me read you just a little from Matthew's gospel. This is Matthew: "Then the King will say to

those on his right, 'Come you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink.'

"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink?'

Verse 40: "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth. When you did it for the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it for me.'"

Isn't that phenomenal? That every time you and I reach out and do something for the least of these, we're actually doing it for Jesus, and he notices, he pays attention. What a gift to be able to be part of his kingdom world.

I kind of think of us as God's secret agents on the move, not listening to everything that's happening on the news and people yelling at one another. But rather, we have a greater vision of why we're on this earth.

This problem is urgent right now. One of the hard, hard things is seeing someone who is technically still a child herself grieving because of the loss of siblings and worried that it might happen one more time. But if you and I will hear and receive this call and determine that today we're going to be part of the answer, we can be the answer to these prayers; it will save another little girl just like this from having to say goodbye to those she loves. Would you watch this?

On the mission field

Burundi, Africa

Open Captions

>> I remember when I would come home from school, my two little sisters would come running, saying, "Look, it's Solange!"

ANNOUNCER: Fifteen-year-old Solange loves her family and works hard collecting water for them. However, drinking the water in her village comes with great risk.

Open Captions

>> When my little sister got diarrhea, we took her to the hospital. But she did not survive. One week later, my other sister became sick with diarrhea. She died shortly after.

ANNOUNCER: Due to the scarcity of water, Solange can spend up to eight hours a day collecting the water her family needs. You and I spend eight hours a day on something we value: A paycheck, time with family, or friends. Solange spends eight hours a day on this.

Open Captions

>> I feel so sad because I know this water took my sisters. They loved me so much. Before they died, they asked for me so they could say goodbye.

ANNOUNCER: Parasites in the water are causing fatal cases of diarrhea every day in Solange's village and in numerous villages throughout Africa. The number one victim, children under the age of five.

Open Captions

>> So many people here are dying from this dirty water. Not two weeks go by without someone dying; I am surprised no one has died today. I'm afraid my other siblings might die also because we must draw from that same water. If you could bring clean water, we would no longer die from drinking this muddy water. If we had clean water, we could live full lives.

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: She is fifteen. What 15-year-old should have to say goodbye to her sisters? I remember it used to be one of my favorite things in the world to come home after school and

there was my little brother just waiting to say hey! Do you want to play soccer?

Can you imagine the agony of a 15-year-old girl? She spends her whole day trying to find some kind of water source, knowing full well that that very water is what took the life of her sisters, and she is so worried it is going to happen again. That is too much for a 15-year-old to bear.

But you and I can do something about it. Our commitment here at LIFE is to drill 350 wells in over 20 nations. A well takes on average about \$4800 to drill. But do you know that that well will give clean water to almost 1,000 people? The wells last for a long, long time. Now some of you could do that. Some of you could say you know what? I'm going to do that. We're going to drill a well and make sure that that village will have clean Water for LIFE. That's too much for some of you, but could you do \$48? Do you know that for \$48, you could give clean water to ten children for life? \$144 will give clean water to 30 people in a village.

For any gift at all, we would love to send you this *Bible Promises For Life* book. It's wonderful! If you ever feel like you just want a verse to encourage you and strengthen you in your faith, you'll have it right there. It's a beautiful little book.

And I know you don't do it for the gifts we send. It is just our way of saying thank you. But there is such a need. I'll never forget what it was like when I met this one beautiful woman, her name was Merci, and she had lost her precious child. And she hadn't been able to go to the place where her child was buried since the actual ceremony day. It was too hard. She gave me the privilege. She said, "Would you like to see where I buried my daughter?" And as we got close to that place, she almost couldn't stand; the grief was overwhelming.

I remember thinking, Lord, I will never forget Merci's face. I will never forget her story! So I'm sharing it with you. And lots of you, you've helped us before, but I'm asking, will you do it again? We're living at a time in our nation where people are angry and divided, but you and I, as the body of Christ, as sons and daughters of the King of all kings, we live differently. We're determined to fulfill this mission.

So please, whatever level you can join, would you do it right now? So \$48 will provide clean water for ten. \$144 will provide clean water for 30. One of the decisions my husband and I have made for this year is we're going to drill one of those wells from our family. So it's 350 wells, I'm not quite sure how many we've done this year, but that's one less.

Will you join Barry and me? Will you decide that you're going to skip something you don't really need? We've been doing things like we've canceled some of our TV coverage and stuff that was just -- don't cancel anything where you get this program, but a lot of stuff is just fluff, and we don't need it. One of these days, Jesus is coming back, and we're going home. But let's make sure that before that, we're his hands and his feet. So please, will you go to your phone right now? If you give \$48 clean water for ten. \$144 clean water for 30! And if you could join Barry and me and say we're going to drill a well, \$4800 will give clean water for an entire village of almost 1,000 people, and it will be Water for LIFE. And then, we have the privilege of sharing Jesus, who is the water of life.

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

On the mission field

Announcer: Here at *LIFE Outreach*, we constantly encounter heartbreaking need around the world. But there are times when we meet someone experiencing a depth of pain which stops us in our tracks. That's exactly what happened when we entered the home of Ingtorn, a mother who couldn't hold back her grief as she showed us the photo of her daughter who was recently taken by contaminated water.

Open Captions:

>> My baby, my baby, I miss you so much. I want you back. I hurt so much. I wish you could come back to me.

Announcer: The heart-wrenching cries of this mother overwhelmed us. Eventually, she explained their tragic situation.

Open Captions:

>> I had to give my baby water from the river. It's all we have. When it made her sick, she got a high fever and cried so much. I'd do anything to have her back. I get so scared every time my son now gets sick. I'm afraid our water will kill him too, and then I will have no children. Clean water would change everything and bring so much joy.

Announcer: Clean water, that's all it would take for this community to not only survive but

begin to thrive. Thanks to you, we were able to provide exactly that.

[Cheers and laughing]

Open Captions:

>> Thank you so much. I can hardly express what this means to us. I'm so overwhelmed.

End of clip

In the studio

SHEILA: That's exactly why we do what we do -- to see that smile on a mom's face like Ingtorn's face. Where she was in agony, praying that somehow what happened to her child didn't happen again; and that she had her child with her again. But to see weeping turned to celebration is exactly why we do it. And we can only do it with your help.

With our commitment to drill 350 wells in over 20 nations, we want to see that kind of joy. We want to bring you story after story after story of families whose lives have been changed, perhaps for eternity, because we showed up in Jesus' name and made a difference. So often, they want to know why did you come? Why are you here? And to be able to say, God heard your prayers, and he sent us. We're coming in his name.

So if you haven't called yet, would you call now? Just do what you can. If you can give \$48 today, that would give clean water to ten people. If you can do \$144, that will give clean water to 30. And if you are able to say you know what? Either as a Sunday School class or as an extended family, we want to drill a well; that's \$4800. I can't think of money better spent than putting clean water into a village where the children, having to march for hours sometimes trying to find water, will be able to go to school. It's changing the face of a nation. It's saying to them, you have a hope and you have a future -- and his name is Jesus. And that's why we are here.

So please, would you go to your phone? Would you just give the very best gift you can? We know that the times we're living in are uncertain. We know that there is a lot going on in the world, but we also know that we are not alone in this world. So if you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, then we get to continue his work.

Do you remember that Jesus said, "These things and greater will you do who love me"? That used to confuse me because I used to think, Lord, you've raised the dead, you gave out of a little boy's lunch and fed probably 8,000-9,000 people, when you include the moms and the children. How could we do greater? But the thing is, during Jesus' ministry, he was confined to a small area. On the day of Pentecost, more people came to Christ that day than in Christ's entire three-year ministry.

But now, we're on the march. We're boots on the ground in Jesus' name, and we can go to all these places. We have people; we have partners that we love and trust who are on the ground and waiting for our help. We've shared our vision with them, 350 wells, and they've said, okay, we will join you in prayer. Right now, there are mothers, sisters, brothers all across the world who are praying that God will send someone to help them, and we get the privilege of saying, yes, we want to respond to those prayers.

So please, would you call that number on your screen? Don't wait until tomorrow for the need is now. Please call that number. We have some lovely gifts that we want to send you as a reminder to pray for these people that you have helped. But please call now. And if the line is busy, be persistent. Don't allow the enemy to discourage you from being an answer to people's prayers. If you can drill a whole well, that's \$4800, and we cannot wait to tell you what God is doing around the world! This is something that James and Betty began 23 years ago. We've been able to put in 7,000 wells that have provided clean water for over 7 million people.

But as I mentioned at the top of today's program, almost 800 million people in the world right now do not have access to clean drinking water. So let's determine that you and I will make a change and make a difference in Jesus' name.

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.

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End of video**On the mission field:**

James: These are beautiful children and beautiful families that have come here to contaminated water sources. With your help, we're giving, not only here in Africa help to people but in countries all over the world where people are dying of diseases from contaminated water. We can drill wells in scores of countries if you would just help drill one well. Maybe you could drill a well or join one or two other people to drill one.

We need every person watching to do your part in helping provide families like this and children like this water sources, non-contaminated water, clean water in nations throughout the world. And every time we do it, we inspire others to join us. So would you be that source of inspiration and help by making the best gift you can today?

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: James and Betty have been faithfully doing this for years, and it's an absolute joy. Wouldn't it be amazing if we exceeded our goal? Our goal is 350 wells in over 20 nations. Wouldn't it be amazing if we exceeded that? Why don't you think about your small group, your Sunday School class, whatever -- your extended family determining, why don't we drill one well? That's \$4800. And if that's way outside of what you could do, do you think you could do \$48? If you could do \$48, that will provide clean drinking water for ten people. Let's save the lives of little ones all across the world. Let's do it in Jesus' name. Thank you so much for taking this trip with me today. We're about to land right back down in Dallas. Thanks for coming with me. And thanks for caring. Thank you so much for caring. And we will see you the next time here on *LIFE Today*. God bless you!