

7/7/22

**Week 28: WFL**

**James and Betty Robison**

**Anne and Isak Pretorius**

**JAMES:** Well, to say that we have guests that we love beyond words, I don't even have the ability to tell how much we love the Pretorius family. And Peter Pretorius, he left us over three years ago. It won't be too long it will be four years. It just seemed like it was last year. It's like, how can Peter not be here? We were within just a matter of months, the same age. I'm 78. Now 35 and going toward 40 years we've been putting God's arms around the overlooked. And really, it was Peter that brought the whole family and his family. He went and saw what he never dreamed he'd see, and it changed his life forever. And then God used Peter, really and ultimately Ann, and ultimately his kids, here's Isak, which you'll see in a moment, but they changed our lives forever -- and many of your lives. And you've saved millions of lives.

And Ann Pretorius, Peter's wife sitting right here, and Isak, the son that we thought you'd probably just play rugby and mess around. And then we thought we'd be business and all of the sudden here you are in leadership along with mom, and Peter's not here. Yet, you are seeing God do more than you've ever seen happen which has to stun you. Ann take it.

Okay, we can't spend time talking about how much we all miss Peter, but we do. And you know our arms are around you.

**ANN:** Absolutely! And thank you for that. We certainly do miss him. And having lived with him, worked with him for so many years, 42 glorious years, taking upon us challenge after challenge after challenge, the moment he was gone was just so hard for me; not just because he was gone but because of the weight of responsibility of the people depending on us. And it hit

me so hard.

I was standing in the emergency room, standing over Peter's body, and God spoke to me. He said, "Tend to the foundation and expand." And that was a bit of a shock to me because it was the last thing I expected. I used to say to Peter, "If something happens to you, please don't ask me to step into your shoes. I can't do that." I'm happy to have been a helpmeet and support for all of these years but to be the leader was a terrifying thing for me.

But when God said, "Tend to the foundation and expand," I knew it was part of God's plan, and that's all I wanted was God's plan. So I stepped into that role with fear and trepidation. But James, one of the most valuable aspects was the fact that I knew that people were standing with me. That you guys had your hands reaching out, your arms around, your support there, that it wasn't going to change anything. Because we all loved the mission, we loved purpose, we loved the plan of God, and we're dedicated to that. And with Peter not there, it did not change that. The dependence, we're depending on you, your donors, those that contribute, those that love the children and the work in Africa, and I knew I could lean on that.

And the success has been astounding! As I made sure that we were sailing a clean ship, Isak was right alongside me supporting me. I was bouncing ideas off him. He was giving ideas. And I was watching the maturity that he had and started to hand over the process after a while. And then, I must tell you, after two years the numbers started coming in from the field. And with COVID, we had to adjust all of our programming. But thank God we employ people on the ground, that we work grassroots level, so the people were reaching their people. And we didn't have to relocate anyone because we couldn't.

So instead of just reaching the child, we were now reaching the family of the child, and the community of the child, and so the work expanded. And after those two years when the figures came in, and I looked at the expansion that we'd experienced, I just wept because I realized God's plan for the expansion wasn't my plan, it wasn't Peter's plan, it was a desire we always had but that expansion to almost four times the number that we were reaching just overwhelmed me. And I realized that what God had commissioned me that day had been achieved.

**JAMES:** And our viewers stayed with it in their challenges, which that in itself was a miracle. Because we couldn't have imagined that it would happen.

**ANN:** Yeah. But there was compassion that came on the people, and I believe on every one of your viewers and your partners; that same compassion that said the world is changed. We're all in a pandemic but I can still do something. And that's the biggest thing -- we can all continue to do something. And to me, I can honestly tell you after walking so many years in this wonderful commissioning of God, to change the life of another is the greatest fulfillment that you will ever experience.

**JAMES:** That's great, Ann. Isak, all of the sudden your world changed too.

**ISAK:** It did! I lost my dad, my hero, my mentor, the man who taught me so much about Jesus that I know. I often said to people my dad was the greatest example in my life, you the second in that way, James of really understanding what it was to love Jesus -- to truly love Jesus. And to then really embrace that, and to speak that gospel, to share that gospel, to live that gospel out loud. So to lose all of that, to lose your father is a big thing, to lose your best friend is a big thing, to lose your mentor and your spiritual father, but to lose all of those in one.

And yet, as mom says, I think it was almost like an empowering that came from that. And what we saw and part of what mom is talking to is that this is God's work. I believe this is not about -- and I just spent four weeks traveling around many of our programs. The thing that struck me most is not the impact we're having, not the lives that are being saved, James, lives are being saved every single day right now, whether it is in a famine crisis in Angola, as a result of drought, or over a million people displaced in South Sudan because of flooding. We're rebuilding 16 malnutrition clinics. People don't see all of what's done. They see the feeding, they see the water, they don't realize all the warehouses, all the trucks, all the management, the over 600 missionaries --

**JAMES:** Our viewers prayed for that. They were part of all of that happening.

**ISAK:** There are 600 missionaries, more than 600 working full time, and more than 4,000 working part time. We can't employ those people without the viewers who say, yes, we're going to make that happen. But they're supporting a child with food or with water. But they don't see all of the rest of what has to be done. And traveling around our programs, what struck me most, I found myself many times, I was in tears one night in our room talking to Terry and I said, I stepped back today, and I watched our people. I don't know if I'm worthy to lead these people -- the commitment, the dedication.

**JAMES:** Many of them are missionaries who left their homeland, brought their families there, and moved into what a lot of people say is moving into hell compared to where they had lived. And they were planted by God there, which is really how we found you all. It's how we began to find -- we found the anointed of God, gifted by God, called by God, who yielded to God and planted their lives in the darkness that God led them to plant it in and become the light. And all we became and our viewers, and we said this to you, you keep the oil in these anointed lanterns, these people who planted their lives in the misery, the suffering, among the least and the unnoticed, and they became a light, and let's keep the oil in the lantern. And you have done it!

But the point is, it's all happening because people are making it happen. They're putting the oil in the lantern. And I know you want to express thanks to the viewers who are watching us all over the world right now.

**ANN:** Absolutely! We can't do it without them. We can't do it without you. We need you every single day to carry our hearts, to carry this mission, to continue to enable us to have that anointing, to have our hands full so that where we go we can take to the people the love of God that they so deserve. You can imagine going through struggles as these people go through wondering if there is a God. But we become that demonstration that there is a God, that he does love, he does care. And we are honored to be a part of the body of Christ all over the world who care about those that need that intervention in their lives, and you are the ones that do it.

**ISAK:** I think, James, that's what makes the viewers such heroes in this process. People will

come to us and say, "Man, you're such heroes." My first reaction always is, well, let's rather pat the backs of our missionaries in the field. They were telling me a story recently, no vehicle to get to a program or malnutrition clinic. She put the boxes on her head, and she walked for eight hours. I said to her, "Why did you do it? Why didn't you wait till the next day?" She said you don't leave your children in that condition. That's the level of ownership.

So my first reaction is always, no, we're not heroes. Our people on the ground doing the work are. But then I said, but actually, you're a hero, the viewers that contribute. Because I get to see, you've seen, you've had the mothers say to you, "Thank you, James." You've seen the look in that child's eyes when they get that clean cup of water. You've seen the children dancing and singing around the drilling rigs just when the water starts splashing out.

**JAMES:** It's like an entertainment center for them and all it is is water. Clean water!

**ISAK:** That is -- I mean that's so fulfilling. But many people have supported us faithfully year after year after year and sacrificed to give to make it possible for us to do what we do, who never get to look that mother in the eye, who never hear the thank you, who never see the child physically dancing. We try to show it to them on video, but they never experienced that child, and yet they remain faithful to give because they believe that God has told them to give.

Well, to me, those people are the most incredible heroes because they're doing it without anyone -- I know we try to say thank you to them, but it is not the same as a mother whose child's life has just been saved.

**BETTY:** I think it is because through the television we've been able to effectively show them the need, and God has grabbed their heart and they are a part of it. It is not that they're just giving to *LIFE Outreach*. They're giving to something they believe in, and God has put on her heart to give. And they continually do that because it is in their hearts, and that makes the difference. It is not a way of just saying, oh, I've done my part. Their part continues because God says, "These people need our help." And it is through your love and your care and your continued seeing. And also, we're able to show them what their love gift does -- that makes a difference.

I know we've been over there many, many times and our hearts would be broken. But if I wasn't able to see some of the results of what we have been able to do just personally in our giving to help them, it would have devastated me. Because it will. If you don't see that there is a good place they're going because of the water, the food, the life that we give them through that love and showing them that somebody cares. They're not by themselves. Those mothers are saying, please help my children. Their children are all they've got.

**ISAK:** Betty, you talk about that ultimate place to go, and that's why I just love the fact that all of this is undergirded. And many times, the viewers don't even see or know the support of the gospel outreach, of what we're doing to bring -- I mean 452,000 people who registered decisions for Jesus last year in our outreaches. They're going ultimately to the best place.

**JAMES:** That's to trust him, the Savior. And it is because of the viewers! They're the ones that keep it going. I know you want to say a big thank you but we want to thank you for the oversight and all those missionaries, and those literally 4,000 volunteer-trained workers that you often pay with clothing or food for their families in a very well specific way to take care of all of their family. But you've got the hundreds of missionaries, many of them who left everything of comfort and planted their lives amid that challenge.

**ANN:** Totally! The gratitude is overwhelming. Really, it is. The word *thank you* is just not big enough. But the fact that it's continuing, and I think for me that was a real challenge with Peter's passing. Where are we going? How can you be prepared for this? You can't be prepared. But God had prepared the way. And to see -- it's like his capability as he's now taken over the lead and given me a very much more comfortable position. Thank you, my boy! [Laughing]

**ISAK:** That's why I'm going gray now.

**ANN:** But I just love to be able to assure you and your viewers that what we do is in good hands and that they deserve a return on their, not just investment, a return on their sacrifice. They've given so much. They've done without so much so that others can benefit. And what a privilege.

**ISAK:** You say thank you, but I think there's something also that I would love for the viewers to know is that while we don't get to engage and interact, and I wish we could meet every single one of them, I really do because I would love to give them a big hug and say a massive thank you.

But part of how we say thank you, James, is as we get together as a team in our devotional time and in our prayer time and with our prayer networks around the world that are supporting us, as we ask them to pray something over each and every one of those viewers. This is what we ask, pray that Jesus blesses them extravagantly! That they are blessed extravagantly because our hearts are so filled with appreciation. And every time I'm in the field and in our program and I'm maybe at a malnutrition clinic where I see the fact that we're saving lives, or I'm talking to one of the 1,000 ladies in South Sudan, who meet us because their children were malnourished, who now themselves feed more than 60,000 people out of their own production because of what we've been able to do together with them. When I'm in those programs, I often find myself stopping and saying, Lord Jesus, bless the people that contributed to making this possible. Bless them extravagantly!

**JAMES:** It is very important that you hear exactly what he said. We don't keep them dependent on the feeding. We get them stabilized and healthy, and then we show them how they can not only care for their family but we get them to feed others who are hungry, and that's what he just referenced. Talking about mothers whose children have been saved who are now being used to save thousands of children by the work that they do. And it is miraculous. We don't create socialism, we have the love of God flowing through yielded lives and hands who give sacrificially. But then we take them into a place of responsibility and productivity and blessing others themselves.

To you Isak, Ann, to all the missionaries, thank you. Do you know what we're able to do? You're not able to go there necessarily to hear it, but like Betty said we're able to show it to you. By the way, Peter said please don't come over here unless you're going to stay at least six months. We don't have time to take care of Americans and Canadians, and all these people from these

advanced countries. We don't have time to take care of you. We're too busy. If you come over here and plant your life, but don't come over here as a tourist. We can't take care of American tourists over here looking at the mission fields. And the cost to get over here, send it to help us drill water wells. That's what we're asking.

We want you right now to join us as I look at these supporters that we've all been thanking. We need your help right now to complete the 350 fresh water wells. We've already seen the sites, we already know there is water, we need to drill the wells, \$4800 a piece; \$48 gives ten people water for the rest of their life. Do you want to give 30 people water for the rest of their lives? \$144.

Could you give a well, \$4800? Betty and I give a well every time it comes up on the air. I'm not talking every day. Every time we have the emphasis. Okay? Could you give a well? Could you give \$1200 and pray others join you? Three more, we've got a well -- whatever you can do.

I want you to watch. I want you to listen to Isak as he's showing you a real problem -- you're the answer.

### **On the mission field**

**ISAK:** How does she feel about having to use this water? Is she concerned for her children?

**INTERPRETER:** There is no option.

**ISAK:** There is no option. Sure.

**ANNOUNCER:** *This mother's dilemma is one shared with millions of mothers in rural villages throughout the world -- not having access to water that is safe for their children to drink.*

**ISAK:** We've been told what their story is. The mother is too sick to be able to go and fetch water so these young kids, as little as they are, are having to go down to the river. We're

following them now and they're going to go and fetch water for their sick mother and their family.

**ANNOUNCER:** *A mother's heart is to provide the best for her children. But what is this mother to do when the best is not available? She has no other choice but to send her children to the dangerous and diseased waters of the Nile.*

**ISAK:** Just take a look at this water. The water here is just so dirty. There is no way that I would ever be able to give my children this water. There are crocodiles in this river. It is not safe for him to be in there, but actually, his greatest danger is the very water that he's going to be carrying home knowing full well that this water may steal their lives. It's stolen other children in this village's lives.

The reality is, as their mother told us, they have no option. There is no option here because they don't have a water well. How do we change this, you ask? It is actually quite simple. It is you opening your heart and partnering with us and making it possible for us to bring Mission: Water for LIFE to this village, to this little child.

Please help us today. Help us save this child, his family's lives, and all the other families in this village by drilling a water well here, by giving the best gift we can give -- by giving the gift of water, giving the gift of life.

**End of video**

### **In the studio**

**JAMES:** Boy, oh boy, oh boy. Isak, I'm so glad when you said giving the greatest gift is when you can give the gift of water. You said the gift of life. I've said it to you over and over, I don't care whether it is feeding, rescuing somebody that's being trafficked, being used, being kept a slave, or whether it is water, you're giving the greatest gift there is, you're giving life. And because you give life -- and think about this -- we're giving Water for LIFE because of the water of life. And when those precious people -- it changes their whole world.

I mean, when children line up to be fed and they'll wait and wait and wait just to get food. People will oftentimes go to an entertainment center, Six Flags, wherever they want to go, and they'll stand in line a long time to get on something fun. But these children are standing in line to have food. Well, they do the same thing for water except they have to walk miles to get it, and there is no joy because normally they're bringing home sickness, and they're bringing home death to the family and the children. But it's all they have!

But then you give them a well, Betty, and then you give them one that children can function, we have even -- this is just how ingenious the missionaries are. They found that there is a merry-go-round well pump that you can let children get on and push. And then they can put a holding tank and they're pumping water up into the holding tank. And they can give them more places where they can get water, so they don't have to come to one pump.

These missionaries are amazing! We've shown people how they can grow their crops better if they can catch a little rainwater, and they make little holding tanks out of skins, and then they can put water on their crops. These people are so easy to teach.

It would be easy to teach them here in America and Canada if you'd stop doing it all for them. Stop the nonsense for heaven's sake! God wants responsibility, productivity, and oversight of all that he has given us to oversee wisely. That's what we do when we give people water. We give them life. And it is a celebration, Betty! When the water comes out, it is like the greatest thing that ever happened in their town when they go to the well and they get the water. And only when the missionaries have us come will they just let them play there with the water pump because they're all so happy. They don't let them do that all the time. This is precious water. But I'm telling you, the love of God flowing through you has an eternal impact. It changes everything forever. But also, right now, I wish we could understand Jesus is here now.

Would you please represent Jesus by giving not just a cup of water but a well of water? Could you give \$4800? Could you give \$48 to give ten people Water for LIFE? \$144 to give 30 people water? You can do it! God, please help everybody watching to do something. Would you do it?

Would you go get your bank card and use it like a check? Dial that number or go online and make the gift God puts on your heart. If you could give a well, \$4800, I don't have to wonder if you're going to do it. If God has given you the -- you're going to do it and I want to thank you for that because you're giving life.

Thank you so much. Thank you for praying. Thank you for giving what God put on your heart. Make that call, make that gift, and know this, you're giving life.

### **Begin video clip**

**ANNOUNCER:** Across the globe, hundreds of thousands of lives are lost each year to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five. Through Mission: Water for LIFE, you can give mothers hope and children a future as we provide clean, life-giving water for thousands of children and their families before it is too late.

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 of any amount, we'll send you the *God's Daily Promise* devotional set. These four seasonal devotionals each contain a daily scripture, inspirational message, and room to journal your prayers and insights from God's Word.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "Faith, Hope, and Love" coaster set. All four beautiful sandstone coasters come in an elegant natural wood holder and artistically display the words of First Corinthians 13:13.

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, "Let the Children Come."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** I want to make a real point. If you give a water well or a portion of a water well or just help, you're putting the arms of Jesus around precious children. And boy, you think you don't bless their parents and their grandparents? Please! Just know that when you give a cup of water in Jesus' name, and you do it to the least of these, Jesus said you are doing it to him. Wouldn't you have liked to have given him water when they gave him wine with gall and vinegar? Sad! We give him water.

Isak, Ann, I know God's got his arms around you and you're putting his arms around millions of people. I want to thank you for that. Thank you for making it happen because you do send the light, you give the life, and you share the life! Thank you for doing it!