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Week 50: Fall Mission Feeding

Mission Feeding special #2

Sheila Walsh

In the studio

SHEILA: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh. And I'm so glad that you're going to spend the next few minutes with me. I have a slight confession to make upfront. Have you ever had one of those moments where you're caught in something that seems important and then you think how ridiculous it is when you put it into the perspective of everything else that is going on in the world?

So this morning, I don't know why I did this, but I decided to weigh myself. Never a good thing to do before you've had your coffee. And I was kind of frustrated with myself because I have all these great ideas of what I'm going to do and how I'm going to eat healthier and all that stuff. And the scale basically said to me, come back when you're alone. So it was clear that things were not going well.

And then I came downstairs, and I thought about today. I thought about being here in the studio at *LIFE* and the incredible privilege I have of a perspective that perhaps all of you don't have. I've been able to travel to different parts of the world and see the real needs that are going on. And also, to see the difference that you and I can make.

So I was sitting down at my desk, and I was viewing the different pieces I'm going to share with you today. And suddenly, I was just overwhelmed with the sense of how easy it is for me to get caught up in my own life at moments and forget the bigger picture. For those of us, for you and I who love Jesus, we're on this planet for a purpose. We're not

just here by accident at this time in human history. We're here for a purpose. And what is that purpose? That's what I began as I watched the final pieces beginning to roll, I found myself sitting there at my desk with tears rolling down my face thinking how quickly I could have forgotten some of the things that are going on not months ago, not years ago, but at this very moment. And also remembering some of the women that I met on some of my trips.

I'll tell you what I did expect, and I'll tell you what absolutely blew me away. I knew the first time that I was flying to Africa, and I would be on a Mission Feeding trip, I knew that I would have to see children who are severely malnourished and hurting, clinging to life. I knew that I would meet their moms. And as a mom myself, sitting beside them, watching, trying to see through their eyes as their little ones struggle, I knew that. Now you're never prepared for how brutal it is, but it was in my mind and my heart.

Here's what I was not prepared for. I was not prepared for the praying women I met. These women, living in abject poverty with nothing to feed their children weren't worrying about what they might look like in a reflection. What they were doing was looking at their children who are suffering. But then what they were doing was they were getting on their knees under an African sky and lifting their requests to God. These are amazing women. I want you to meet one or two of them. Watch this.

On the mission field

Open Captions: "If you want your prayers answered, be an answer to someone else's prayer."—James Robison

SHEILA: When I'm on a mission's trip, my heart is continually touched by mothers facing some of life's most devastating situations.

>> As a mother, I feel like a failure because two of my children died. It starts with lack of food. Then malnutrition leads to other terrible diseases. It's really hard for me to think

back to the times when they passed away.

SHEILA: This is Armeda. Can you begin to imagine the crushing impact of losing your children because you could not feed them? It was devastating for Armeda, but she knows she must carry on for her other children. How does she manage it? Through fervent prayer.

Open Captions: Jesus is the only hope we have, when we go to sleep, we pray, "Jesus, thank you for sustaining us for another day."

SHEILA: I would love to tell you Armeda's story of losing her children because of a lack of food is rare, but it is not. These women, by show of hands, shared how many children they each had lost. They well know the same heartache as Armeda.

Mandolina lost five children. Yngo, two children. Margarita, one child. Julia, three children.

One thing all these precious mothers have in common through prayer is they put their hope for tomorrow in the hands of Jesus.

I will never forget that here in this village, my sister in Christ gets down on her knees even though she may not be kneeling on a carpet, she might be kneeling on sand or dirt, but we are thanking the same God for his provision that day in absolute confidence that the God who is with us today will be with us tomorrow.

God is moving in Africa, and you and I get to be a part of it.

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: I love what James said, "If you want an answer to prayer, be an answer to

someone else's prayer." You know what? That very first trip that I took left an impact on me that honestly has only increased because the situation in so many areas of the world is getting worse and worse. The great irony of a place like Africa is you can have one area where it is devastation because of flooding, and then you can have another area where it's devastation because they haven't seen rain in over a year.

I watched. These mothers are not women who sit around hoping that someone will come and give them a handout. No, I've watched them digging through the dirt looking for anything that they could give their child.

The first lady that we saw there on that first piece, did you notice she had the name Jesus written on her headband? One of the things I was so struck by was she said, "At the end of the day we thank the Lord for his provision for one more day." And what they have is almost nothing. But I think sometimes when you literally have nothing, and then you find a little something you're so aware of the fact that your dependence is completely on the Lord.

And perhaps we forget that. We have so much that we forget that literally, every good gift comes from the Lord. But watching our sisters on their knees praying -- I read something, I used to work with an organization called Tear Fund in England, and I get their newsletter. I read it this morning and it said this, "Poverty and malnutrition are never God's will. We are. We are the answer to those prayers."

Sometimes we think that well, I could never go and be a missionary. The Lord doesn't need all of us to do that. We have our partners who are on the ground right now waiting. We've made a commitment at *LIFE* to feed 350,000 children this year. And when we talk to our partners, we'll present the need. We'll help our people understand.

So that's what I'm asking if we'll all do something. \$30 will feed three children for three months. You can't feed three children with \$30 at a restaurant on one night here. \$50 will feed five children. \$100 will feed ten children for three whole months!

One of my friends has started a campaign that I loved, and it is called "Skip it." Skip one thing you don't need to be able to give children something that they literally cannot live without. Sometimes we think, how do these crises happen? What led up to those children being in that situation? Well, that's a great question. Would you watch this? and I think it will answer that question for you. Watch this.

On the mission field

ISAK: People often ask me, "What does crisis look like? When you say, 'There's a crisis in the field,' what is that?" This is the picture of crisis. Mother after mother here, they're in the screening clinic for malnutrition. You can see how overcrowded it is. Mothers that have come here in absolute desperation.

Crisis is when there are more mothers than we can handle. Crisis is when there is not enough food for each and every child. Crisis is when the silent killer of malnutrition comes in and starts to literally rob the lives of each and every one of these children. But I need you to understand where their crisis starts. It doesn't start here. This is where it ends and many times it ends with a tragic ending. But this crisis starts from the village. It starts because of failed crops due to the worst drought in 40 years in this area. It starts because the mother is not able to produce enough food to feed her family. It starts because a child goes to bed without a meal that day, and the next and the next. That is how this crisis starts.

It's not because these mothers are not doing everything they can to provide for their children, it's because everything they can is not enough. How do we change that, you ask? We change it by reaching the mothers out in the villages. We change it by bringing Mission Feeding to those mothers, providing that bowl of food each and every day. The nutrients that that child needs, that's how we avert this crisis. Not here in the clinic! By the time we get here, many times it is too late.

So please, help us today to take Mission Feeding to the mothers out in the villages. I can give you a guarantee that we will literally bring hope to those mothers and life to those children.

In the studio

SHEILA: Hope and life! That's the kingdom of God. That Jesus came to give life to each one of us. And because of the hope that we have been given, we get to reach out and make a difference.

I could almost guarantee that if you and I could get on a flight tomorrow and fly over there, and you saw with your own eyes what was going on, you would do everything within your power to help alleviate the suffering of these children.

But the great thing is that's why we bring these stories to you because it is not practical for us all to get on a flight and go. So we bring the children to you. That precious little one at the end, when you see that skin peeling away, that's one of the effects of malnutrition where there is simply not enough nutrients or protein in the body. What we want to do and Isak, we love working with the Pretorius family. His dad and mom started it and he's carrying on his father's work, Peter Pretorius.

But the thing that we want to do is we want to get to the villages before the children end up in the malnutrition clinics. And we can do it. And so I'm asking you, I'm asking you to help us. We want to feed 350,000 children. We've broken it down in such a way that every single one of us, whether you're a teenager with an allowance, whether you're a successful businessman, whether you're a stay-at-home mom, whether you're a retiree, every single one of us can do something. \$30 will feed three children for three months. \$50 will feed five children for three whole months!

We have some beautiful gifts that we'd love to send you. This is the LIFE Planner, and it

is great! There is a place for you to put your goals. There is a section for Sunday where you can write the sermon notes down. And there are wonderful things that are written in here to encourage you; little things like when you've got the Word of God tucked right down inside of you, you will find it comes to refresh you. It is just our way of saying thank you. So for any gift at all that.

And for a gift of \$100 or more, we have these beautiful pens with scriptures on them so even as you go to write in your journal you're reminded of the power of the Word of God. This is a crisis, and it is a crisis right now. And you and I are God's hands and feet on the earth at this moment. Is there any doubt in your heart or mind that if Jesus was literally walking this earth at this moment that's where he'd be? He would be with those who are hurting and those who are broken and those crying out for help. These moms, these grandmothers, these children, they're family. So let's determine that this year we're going to make a difference.

So please, will you call the number on your screen? You might think, well, I don't have a lot. But if you give what you have and I give what I have and we all do something, then together we're going to make a massive impact. The kingdom of darkness in our nation is getting darker and darker by the day. And this is not a time for you and I to sit back and say, well, Lord, come and rescue us. No! This is a time to say we are here at this moment on this planet at this time and we're going to reach out in Jesus' name and we're going to save lives.

Do you know what the other thing is? We often get the privilege of then praying with some of these mothers who don't even know who Jesus is and leading them into a relationship with Christ that will last for eternity. So please, go to your phone, dial that number on the screen, call that number, go online, just give the very best gift you can and together you and I are going to change this world.

Begin video clip

ANNOUNCER: Across the continent of Africa, children are suffering and facing severe malnutrition. Lack of rainfall and severe drought has led to one of the deadliest food crises in 40 years.

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. Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need.

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. With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the *LIFE Planner* bound in soft-touch leather. This planner will help you in your daily walk with space for you to record your appointments, goals, inspirational notes, and prayers.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the scripture pen set. Perfect companions to the *LIFE* planner, these beautiful wooden pens are inscribed with scripture references to keep your heart focused on God's plans for you.

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, *Let the Children Come*. This beautiful bronze is a reminder to care for children around the world in both word and deed.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video**On the mission field**

ISAK: We've come into this village because we've heard of how bad this situation is here. The only thing that they're eating here is there is this wild, sort of berry-like fruit

that they're getting off of the tree. And then the only other thing is that they're actually taking these worms, drying them, and then they're eating these worms. That's all they have to eat.

I was just talking to the people. This lady responded the moment I stopped, and she started speaking.

Open Captions

>> We hope you will come back and help us. We don't have any crops. If you don't come back, we will die.

ISAK: That was the cry of her heart. Help me to honor my promise to this mother that says yes, we will return. We will help you. We will save your lives.

It's good to see you again!

ANNOUNCER: The mission team was able to fulfill their promise and return to the same village with emergency food supplies because of the support from the friends of *LIFE Outreach International*.

ISAK: I know you remember me because we were here maybe just three weeks ago.

[Translating]

ISAK: And I made you a promise that we were going to go away, and we were going to see what we could do to be able to come back and help your community because there was no food here because of the drought. And so I'm excited to be able to say the truck is here, the food is here, we are fulfilling our promise. But not just today, we will continue to assist your community as much as we can going forward. But for today, we will do the first distribution. God bless!

ANNOUNCER: There are many more villages just like this one in Angola. The record drought has left countless children and their families without enough food and at risk of extreme malnutrition. Join the friends of *LIFE* and be the answer to the cry of those in great need.

The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Proverbs 22:9 NIV

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: Some of you have written and said sometimes, "Do you ever get a chance to go back to those villages? You show us a situation, do you ever get to go back?" So we really wanted you to see that very immediate answer to prayer. That darling woman crying out, "If you don't come back, we will die." And three weeks later, Isak was able to go back with the team.

But let me tell you, there are women in hundreds of other villages and their cry is the same and the need is now. And we can only do this if you will help us. We have promised 350,000 children, that's our commitment, we would love to blow that out of the water, honestly, because the need is so great. And if those of us who claim the name of Christ took that seriously in terms of when Jesus said, "I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me water."

Whenever we reach out in Jesus' name, it's as if we're literally feeding the Lord, reaching out and touching him because he is with those who are hungry and suffering. That's where you always found Jesus. He was always with the broken, with the downtrodden, with the forgotten.

But whenever we go into these villages we tell them, "You are not forgotten. We will come back, and we will tell your stories." And it is the most glorious thing in the world to

be able to then go back and let them see we're not just coming to tell you about a God who loves you.

First of all, we're going to come and show you how he loves you; that we're going to help feed you, help take care of your children. So often we set up the feeding programs in the school, so the children have to come to school to get their meals. And then it breaks that cycle of poverty and illiteracy that goes from generation to generation.

We believe -- we're believing that in that great continent of Africa that God is going to raise up men and women to be leaders in their nations, but it starts with something so simple. It starts with you and it starts with me saying, yep, I'm not just going to sit and watch this. I'm going to go and pick up my phone and I'm going to dial that number on the screen and I'm going to make a commitment. Even \$30 would feed three children for three months. If you're able to give \$100 that would feed ten children. And if God has blessed you and you think you know what? I could give \$1,000 some of you could do that. Do you know that would feed 100 children for three months? What a blessing!

So often I think we forget that we're on this planet just for a short time, it is like a vapor. And then one day Jesus is coming back, and we are going home. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see so many children, faces from around the world who could say I am here because you reached out in Jesus' name?

So please, would you go to your phone? Would you go online, would you just give the best gift that you can do, and let's change this world in Jesus' name? There are a lot of women on their knees right now in huts all across Africa saying God, can you hear my prayer? Let's be the answer to that prayer.

Begin video clip

ANNOUNCER: Across the continent of Africa, children are suffering and facing severe

malnutrition. Lack of rainfall and severe drought has led to one of the deadliest food crises in 40 years.

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End of video

On the mission field

JOHN: So I'm in Angola and we've been here several days, and we've discovered the tremendous need with mothers who are still losing their children because of the devastating drought. But today is a fabulous day. It is a day of celebration because Mission Feeding is in this village. Mission Feeding is in this school. And as much as a

great day it is that we get to serve, I still have in my mind every mother we have talked to this week who's lost a child.

And so I'm asking you, do not delay. Go to the phone right now. Go online right now, whatever way you give go and make your best gift today so that we can make sure that other villages have days of celebration just like this village rather than days of mourning where they're having to bury their children.

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: So John, that's exactly why we are doing this! Thank you so much. That was so powerful! And to see that line of children with their little bowls, hope in a bowl, life in a bowl and it is only possible because we all join together. When you see those beautiful faces all lit up like that, that's the way a child should be. A child should be happy. They should be able to play. So let's deliver some hope today.

If you haven't called yet, please do. Give the best gift you can. And from all of us here at *LIFE*, God bless you, and thank you so much.