

Week 40

9/27/10

James: Thank you so much! Hey, appreciate it. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I have written a book that is in the bookstores; it's called "Living in Love." I have a couple that we have invited to be our guest today that really have had such a tremendous impact that I actually considered them -- in light of considering them, really discuss not writing a book because I said these people have spent their life counseling with married couples and they're awesome. I'm talking about Jimmy and Karen Evans, Marriage Today. They talk about marriage and family as effectively -- as a matter of fact, it's really... the only way I know how to put it, it's a very special touch of God because they actually invite you in. Jimmy said he really was a jerk. He wasn't just being accused of being a jerk; he was a first class, world class, award-winning jerk. He tells you what the journey was like as they really went through what was impossible reconciliation. They reached a point that they really did think they would divorce but God miraculously changed them and he took them on a journey. So when Betty and I were asked to write "Living in Love" and I'll tell you why we wrote it, because so many viewers said, "Would you please write it?" Then everybody that came through *LIFE Today* television would say, "You all have been a blessing to us, would you tell your story?" Here's how the publisher, which happened to be the largest publisher in the world, they came to us and said, "Would you please..." and they did publish it under a branch called WaterBrook, which is one of their inspirational branches, here's what they said to us. They said, "We want you to let people go on your journey because they've seen some that works." Here's what other marriage overseers have said. "It's not just a how-to book, it is how it did happen 47 years and you all are really in love with each other and really excited, really enjoy the relationship." I can't look at you and I love you to smile! I can't look at her and just not want to tell her how beautiful she is, how cute she is, how fun she is because it is the real deal. This isn't like show time. If you saw show time, you would think we're downplaying it out here. We're crazy about each other.

[Laughter]

There is a reason that we were able to really get through all of the challenges and arrive at a place of incredible joy after being together and in love 50 years -- really in love -- here's the deal, we're not supposed to be the odd couple. This is what God wants for you. Well, we want to help you. "Living In Love" is what God wants us to do. We've asked Jimmy and Karen who we really believe to be experts and by the way,

they're glad we wrote the book too, we hope you are, but we didn't consider ourselves experts, we believe we experience life and want to share it. Would you welcome Jimmy and Karen Evans to *LIFE Today*? Jimmy and Karen, we welcome you. I really hope you understand what I'm saying, I mean it in the truest sense of the word because we've had a lot of great counselors and I've never -- a lot of them are great and we bring any of them in that can help marriages because we love people, but you all really have a gift. But we felt like who are we?

Jimmy: Well, Karen read the book first and she was walking through the house one day and she said, "You're going to love James and Betty's book." She said, "It is fantastic." She loved the way that it read from a woman's perspective. Both of you guys playing off of each other and all that you do in the book is fantastic. The thing I loved about it is it is so real. You guys, you're like us, you shouldn't have made it really with your backgrounds... you were so different. And both came from a really kind of a -- especially you, James, a destructive background, and you Betty, you had low self-esteem and all of the things you were going through. I absolutely love the honesty of the book and every person can relate to this. When I was reading I just got blessed. It really helped me because when I was reading it, I thought, everyone goes through that but so few people talk about it. You're so transparent. But you talk about money, you talk about sex, you talk about communication, you talk about commitment, you talk about trust; and the way I feel about it is that just any person, whether you are married or divorced or struggling or wherever you are, reading that book just gives you a picture of a couple that's been married 47 years. You've just been through everything. Rather than letting it cause you to give up or to harm each other, you just hung in there, you were committed to God, you were committed to each other. And it's a story of commitment and what God can do with anyone who hangs in there and does things right. I just congratulate you on the book but Karen loved it then I read it and I just loved it too.

Karen: I loved it because it is personal. It is not clinical; it is not step two, three, four, five. It is very personal. You're very honest. I love the way you're open and honest about your stories. I found out things about you that I would never have known.

James: You may not know it but she's looking at Betty.

[Laughter]

Here's the deal, you are hearing Betty and a lot of you are saying, "I wish she would talk a lot on television." She's telling me, "I don't want to. Don't ask me to. I'm not." But in the book, she is all the way through it -- that's what you're saying.

Betty: Well, the title "Living In Love" didn't by any means mean that we had it all together, we had it all figured out. It wasn't perfect. We didn't start off that way. We had to learn how to live together because you have two different personalities. But "Living In Love" was... we chose that title because we were able to still be in love and work through all of the journey, the challenges that came because I brought baggage into the relationship, he brought baggage into the relationship --

Jimmy: Yeah, y'all brought massive baggage.

[Laughter]

Really... I was shocked. I've known you guys for a long time, I was reading that book, I was just shocked. This is the book -- if you want to be inspired. Like Karen said it is not a how-to, one two, three, four. It's just the expose of a couple who loves God, who is committed to each other but has been in the trenches of reality in every aspect. And it is inspirational because it is like a "Rocky" story. Yeah, y'all are underdogs. James, your background alone was so unbelievably bad that for you to --

James: It's typical of a lot of people today. The sad thing is a lot of people come from a dysfunctional family or an addictive family or a missing father and that is precisely the case. I really do believe that as I said, we're not supposed to be the odd couple or the exception to the rule, I believe we are the typical, like God story, that God can have a total affect in your life, a transforming affect. That's what we're trying to encourage you to go on that journey with us. Karen, you were talking about Betty a moment ago and I want to come back to that because so many of our viewers and so many people say, "I wish we could hear your heart more." You all know from the time you began your ministry to families, you're an encourager and we've done everything we could to help you. I don't talk freely about books we've written, and I've written a number of books, I talk about other people's books. This book I can talk about freely and openly because the great -- let's say a great portion of it, half of the book is Betty and it's Betty expressing herself. Like our viewers say, "I wish we could hear Betty's heart. I wish we knew what her feelings are. I wish we knew what she was going through." And women identify with her. Do you agree that's coming out? That the wish people have is coming out in book?

Karen: Honestly, no offense to you, that's what I got most out of the book is hearing her side. Because I'll hear that at seminars; we'll do seminars and I don't speak because I'm not a speaker and they'll say, "We want to hear Karen." It's like, no, trust me, you don't want to hear me because I'll go off in a million trails. But it's like, we all have a heart and we all have things in our past, we have all suffered, we all have pain, and just to hear another woman express the same thing that most everybody in this audience has gone through and in real terms. It is not on stage. It's not before a camera. It's this is my home, this is how I live, this is the fights we have, this is how we work through those fights. It is just so personal, the most practical, personal way of expressing a woman's heart in a marriage and to another woman. So I highly recommend it.

Betty: Well, Jimmy, you mentioned the word "commitment" earlier and I think that is truly one of the most important things that our marriage has been based upon; just has young as we were when we got married, I never -- and the disagreements -- well I call them disagreements, they were real arguments, fights.

[Laughter]

Because when we married it was for life, we really had that in our hearts and believed that. And even though we had these challenges -- big challenges as you said earlier -- these hurdles to jump over and everything, I never felt threatened that we were going to divorce or leave one another. I trusted his love for me enough that I knew we could get through whatever disagreement it was and that makes a big difference. I feel like he felt the same way.

Jimmy: That's what you guys are such a great example of. A lot of people have the misconception that if they marry their soul mate that it's just happily ever after and you wake up every morning look at each other and say, "Hallelujah!" It's just happening because of the chemistry. It's not that way. If you marry your perfect soul mate, you have to work at the relationship, you're going to go through tough times and great marriages are not soul mate perfect relationships based on chemistry, they are two people in the trenches of life that stay there together long enough that one day you wake up and say, "You could have left 100 times and you didn't! You're my friend." That's when you bond.

Betty: The love really does grow in those times.

Jimmy: Absolutely! So the picture that you guys are giving is 47 years of reality, of just living life together and all the things that come through life. Karen said it right, it is just so honest and it is so vulnerable and that's what people need. Your commitment to me, like James says, you shouldn't be the exception. America and the world needs to go back to a covenant based marriage. You talk about that in your book very well.

James: I actually use your teaching and Robert's teaching. We talk about the difference in a covenant and a contract and it is one of the most incredible things, where you're not just trying to protect your rights but you're actually laying them down and picking up your responsibilities. The whole country knows nothing about picking up responsibility, that's why we're about to lose freedom. That's why the church is less effective, not willing to take on the responsibility of living the Christ light. One of the things I think is important, we talk about in the book, that I want to throw this in, Betty, this is going to catch her a little off guard maybe, but we talk about confronting issues and dealing with conflict. You use the reference a while ago that we hang in there and I know what you meant because you mean we hang in but we're committed to what you're doing but a lot of people hanging in there and letting the rough end drag. They're just hanging in. What I have found is if you hang onto him and hang onto truth and hang onto one another, you don't have to hang in there, you can go somewhere. Here's what I'm saying, Betty, your natural response to correction is to hear it as criticism. Am I right about that?

Betty: You're right!

James: So you had to brace yourself for just a second. But here's what you needed to include, that beautiful smile that came because what that was was a confession of reality. But here's where the supernatural kicks in, if she has that tendency when you speak a word, however encouraging, I could come in and drape myself in flowers and say, "I want to say something to you."

[Laughter]

But you see, that ain't going to help if you're going to take whatever comes as criticism. You have to know you need to get past that. Here's what it takes -- now listen to me. You say, "Betty just needs to get over that." No, I need to understand that. That's called the wisdom that comes from above. Way beyond me, I'm not that smart. I neither that smart nor sensitive enough to realize what is happening. She feels that she has disappointed because she so wanted to do it right. Now she has failed in what is her heart's desire and to please and to help and now she has failed and she hears that. I have to learn, no wait a minute, honey, we just need to look at something. If I don't

come with supernatural enabling and then she doesn't have the ability to catch herself because her first response is to storm out of the room or often pout --

Betty: Pout -- a good pouter!

James: You said it, professional, like he had the degree on jerk, you had the degree on pout.

Jimmy: He keeps going back to it, Betty! He won't let it go!

[Laughter]

Betty: Well, I'm the one that made the list of his sins because I couldn't think of any of mine!

[Laughter]

James: She wrote them down and she asked if they had a bigger legal pad.

[Laughter]

Here's the thing, what I'm saying to you is that this ability for me to see how I needed to approach it. I talk about confrontation, Jimmy, and I'm grateful to say in the later years of my life I've become a compassionate confronter instead of an abrasive confronter which you see a lot of that. And we really talk about resolution of the conflict so we get to a harmonious place. I want to say to all of you out here, for those of you who had the partner and lost it, you didn't lose hope. A whole lot of the book is talking about hope. See God hates divorce because he hates what happened that led to the divorce. The divorce certificate or going to the courthouse, that's not the issue, it's what happened in the relationship, it's tearing at the relationship that God hates. He doesn't want you to be there. See, I love you. I want you to have relationship. I want you to have relationship I never had when I was a kid without a home, and I don't see many people with it and I want it for all of you. So if your relationship is broken or your heart is broken or it is strained, I want you to know it can be better than you ever dreamed. It can be beyond anything you ever imagined. It is not the unreachable star. It is really the possibility that he lifts and enables us to, to two of us, like Jimmy and Karen said, the impossible to have the possible because with God there is nothing impossible. We want you to get the book. You may think he is teasing, he is trying to sell a book. No, I'm trying to help save relationships. I want you to get a book. I want you to get a book but I want you to consider this, if you're a couple, strained or together or

wherever you are, how about both of you get one and read it and highlight it? Go ahead, when you buy the book, get a highlight pen and highlight what jumps out at you and then take note, are you hearing what you need to hear or are you hearing what you want them to hear? When we're talking about communication and confrontation and conflict resolution, I think if you'll sit down and trade books and see what each one of you highlighted, oh, it will get a good discussion going... especially if you're highlighting what you want them to hear. But it will get you talking. Then if you'll really read what the other person is hearing and begin to hear one another. Would you thank Jimmy and Karen Evans for being with us today and sharing?

[Applause]

I say it again, I don't know if there is anyone any more qualified to help than the two of you. And Karen, you would agree, he has a special touch of God.

Karen: Very much!

James: I remember when the vision was birthed in your heart. I remember sitting in the presence of God, basically with a small group and praying and I want to thank you. Let me just say this to you as directly as I can, I want to also put something in your hand for your children and for your family. Betty and I talk about rearing children and we talk about some of the references, part of the marriage relationship. The truth in this book called "Children: Fun or Frenzy," it changed our children. When I tell you it changed them in a matter of a week, I do not exaggerate, and they were all different ages. And then to tell you that it changed our 11 grandchildren to where they're -- I don't think I've seen more beautiful children. I say it is an honor to know you. These are the truths that transformed our children. We want to share it. And also, here is a message to teenagers. God put it on my heart to deliver what I delivered in thousands of settings to several million teenagers, dad talking to girls, dad talking to boys, "Dad to Teens." We want to send you this material if you'll do one thing for us -- and by the way, any time people ask, would you let me just have that? Certainly because love will pay for it. But what I'm going to ask you to do, I want to ask you to give us some help with some transportation for the missionaries. We've got trucks breaking down all over the country, all over the world, around the world and the missionaries are saying, "We've gone as far as we can go with a lot of them. We cannot deliver life unless we get some more." I want you to look in on this scene. Watch this.

On the mission field:

Marc: All day we've been fighting, for over four and a half hours now, coming up this mountain. I'm excited that I made it to the end of the road so that people like this can receive life. And the other part of me I think what's going to happen tomorrow? Every second we don't respond in the mission field, it's not that somebody doesn't get a meal, it is possible that a child dies like I experienced in Madagascar. And I felt the pain of looking at kids and knowing in my heart they weren't going to make it. As I listen to her cry and they say that little girl is in desperate need; she was moaning. If that was my little girl, what would I do? There is nothing I wouldn't do to help my little girl. The only thing that keeps me hanging on right now is all I can do is focus on coming back and saving the ones we can. We have dedicated missionaries all over the world who are stationed and ready, who have given their life and all they need is transportation to take the goods that so many of our friends help us with. When I look at this little boy my heart breaks, and I don't know if you can tell, his legs are trembling just to hold his weight. I wonder what's going on in his mind. Has he lost hope? I hope not. My heart, my prayer, James is that children just like this, that we would move them from a place of hopelessness to a place of hope and a future, and that's exactly what operation transport life comes to. We're at the end of the road and the missionaries are telling us, we can get to those places but we need the right vehicles, we need the right transportation. If that shuts down, death occurs, not life. And children just like these that are in desperate need, we must keep the wheels rolling. We must go the distance, we must show up with the needed supplies so that this child and so many others can have life.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Boy, those children are so beautiful. Surely you recognize how beautiful they are to God. Hopefully, you can see how essential it is to be able to get to them with the help that they need and delivered in love. If you listen to me or you read anything I write or the expressions that I share frequently, I always talk about all effective assistance has to come with a compassion connection, which is why socialism is so doomed to fail. It is take and distribute; it is not hands-on compassionate expression that brings about not only a demand and a requirement for observed responsibility but also accountability plus a legitimate concern that doesn't make you a target or an object of relief but an object of love. Betty, we see people transformed all over the world because of love. That's why we want to work with the missionaries. That's why when others on our staff or friends go, they go with a broken heart because they're involved. Then our viewers make it possible. When you look at transportation, you see these trucks, we've got so many different ones, different types and if you see a lot of

them they will make you sad when you realize the missionaries are trying to work with this equipment and they're spending about half their time trying to keep it running and they're wondering if it is going to reach the destination. Betty and I went to a lot of places years ago, we didn't know if we were going to get there or get back, we were deeply concerned about it. When we saw that, we said this is a very real need and we began to address it.

Betty: It is a long way from village to village, a lot of bad roads. Hardly any roads -- we wouldn't call them roads. These trucks take a beating, this transportation does. When I see that, I am no less touched than when we've shown you the food or the water needs, all the needs that children all over the world have because I am no less touched when I see there is a need for transportation because I believe that's part of the heart of it, getting the food there, getting the medical needs there, getting everything there that can possibly help these children to have a chance at life. So I hope you will join with us and let's be a part of getting them the vehicles that they need to get to the destinations that they need to go to.

James: And to put it in bottom line terms we need, according to the missionaries, and I always feel like they're very modest in their request, but to fulfill the need to replace the broken down vehicles that can't be repaired anymore; we need 30 of various sizes, four-wheel-drives to do the job. The cost is \$700,000. When you come in at this time of the year, you say, people we need some extra money to do this. We realize that people feel the pressure, but listen to me, life depends on it. It is "Transport Life." Would you help us with the \$700,000? I want to give you an example. A \$1,000 gift will deliver food to 10,000 people in need or deliver assistance -- sometimes it is medical aid, sometimes it is supplies, sometimes it is emergency aid. Would you dial the number please? Please do it! If your heart was broken, there is someone waiting to pray for you and it is paid for by love. Would you right now help us buy those trucks? You make a gift of \$30 and it's going to reach 300 people, it's going to touch them. Whatever you give is going to be multiplied out, carried onto people's lives. Would you make the gift God put on your heart? You can go online at lifetoday.org, make your gift. You can write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're mailing. I'd like to send you the gifts for your children and for your family and to help give guidance for your grandchildren, your children, or someone else you want to bless. We want to bless you and we thank you for helping us bless the lives of others and actually give them life. Thank you for your gift.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: It's a missionary's nightmare! Having food and relief supplies in your hand and no way to get it to those who are suffering and facing death. This is

happening right now. Many of our trucks, so vital to our outreaches, are completely worn out and another pockets of need no trucks are available. And additional \$700,000 is needed immediately to help purchase 30 new all-terrain trucks that will enable us to transport food and relief supplies to 7 million people around the world. Through Operation Transport Life your gift of \$30 will help transport life to 300 people. \$60 will help transport life to 600 people and \$100 will help transport life-saving food and supplies to 1000 people. With your gift of any amount be sure to request "Dad to Teens Straight Talk to Today's Youth" on CD and DVD as well as "Children: Fun or Frenzy," a time-tested guide to raising children and grandchildren God's way. With your gift of \$100 or more you may also request the popular NIV Adventure Bible, a great investment of the word of God into your children's future. And finally, with your gift of \$1000 or more to help us transport life to 10,000 people around the world, be sure to request our beautiful bronze sculpture titled, "New Creation." Please call, write, or make your gift online!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I do want to remind you about the book for your children and your families or your grandchildren on really biblically and with wisdom, how you rear children. "Dad to Teens," I really wish every teenager in the world could hear this message. When God told me a little over a year ago, go back and deliver what you delivered to millions of teenagers and our teenage grandchildren were sitting there. And you know what they said? They said, "Papaw, we've never in our life heard anything like that. We've never watched kids listen like that." Then they began to show it in other churches and calls came in saying, "James, you won't believe what happened in an auditorium full of young people! They were transformed by the truth they heard." We want to send that to you to bless you so you ask for it and then consider playing it in your churches. Remember, in the bookstores, "Living in Love" because God wants us to live in love. Would you say thanks to Jimmy and Karen Evans?

[Applause]

Thank you, Jimmy! Thank you, Karen! Thanks for blessing marriages!

Karen: Thank you!

James: Thank all of you for watching *LIFE Today* and sharing *LIFE Today*!

Announcer: James and Betty Robison share their personal journey and keys to an exciting and fulfilling marriage in their brand-new book, "Living in Love." James and Betty reveal insights into communication, how to face challenges and overcome failure to enjoy marriage as God intended. "Living in Love" is available wherever books are sold or order today at [Living InLoveToday.com](http://LivingInLoveToday.com).

Announcer: Tomorrow, relationship experts Jimmy and Karen Evans.

>> Good marriages are not marriages where you don't fight. Good marriages are marriages where you can resolve your conflicts.