

Week 34

8/17/11

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. It is that special day that I know many of you look forward to, Wednesdays with Beth. I'm Betty Robison and this is James.

James: Well, we're excited to have Beth talk about the God of all comforts. You and I were just discussing, before we knew we were going to welcome all of you, Beth is going to tell a story that -- a true story -- it's not like I'm telling a story. It is something that happened and it is something that happened on one of these mission trips where as Beth put it, God took her beyond her comfort zone and we took her beyond the comfort zone, when we began to go to the mission field there was little comfort on the part of the missionaries, on our part, and no comfort on the part of the people who so desperately need to see the love of God in action.

You're really going to be blessed by the story that Beth tells of what happened because I think you're going to relate to it in some way and perhaps many meaningful ways.

Here is Beth Moore.

Begin video clip:

Beth: Listen, if you are not agliophobic and if you're just now tuning in with us, that is a word that means phobia of pain or discomfort, you want to stay away from rural Africa. You probably want to stay away from any mission trip. But wouldn't you miss the adventure of a lifetime!

I just wonder how many people are just bored -- just bored. I have people tell me continually, "I just found church boring." You know what, buddy? You may have found a boring church but you don't have a boring God. You talk about a drama king!

[Laughter]

There is nothing boring about God. You just have to go with him -- you just have to go with him. Talk about discomfort -- where we went over and over again, stop after stop, and day after day, all your senses are completely assaulted. Your sense of sight you

see things that you think, I'm never going to get over that -- never get over that. When you think to yourself, I'd swap the flies that from child's face but they'd come right back.

We saw a little bitty guy who had fallen in their village fire hand down. It assaults my sense of sight, my sense of smell. The hearing -- to hear the babies cry, and not just like babies cry here, unless they are sick and very hungry. In order to do what God had called us to do we had to be willing to look straight in the face of human suffering without glancing to our right or glancing to our left, looking straight in the face of it with some thought.

Listen if you ever let it get to you to where you think, there is just nothing that can be done, you have had it. Because if I've learned anything at all, there is something that can be done. And you think, but just one life at a time? Listen, to that one life it is everything. I guarantee you, to that one life, to those hundreds of thousands of kids that are now getting fed, I promise you it is everything.

To see children lined up for a country mile, tiny as can be, our kids wouldn't even know how to stand in line that long, holding their little bowl because they know you're going to put food in it and to watch the adults stand there because it is a children's feeding program. There is not the money to go around to every single person of adult ages except the nursing mothers in that village. Stunning -- stunning!

To where you think, I don't know if I can recover from this. Glory to God, you don't. And then you come home and you're totally exhausted beyond any kind of exhaustion I can describe to you; you have given everything you have got. You sit back and you close your eyes and the tears roll down your cheeks and you say to the Father, "I would not have missed that for the world." I've got chills all over me. I would not have missed that for the world.

That's what I'm saying to you today. What are we missing for the world? For the world? I promise you based on the authority of God, it is not worth it. I mean we've got just a little while on this planet; just a little while in this garden, and to live compelled by the love of Christ instead of the comforts of this earth, to have known when we lay it down, I lived the adventure with him.

It doesn't take going to another country -- take going to the other side of town, being able to be willing to get down on your knees and look in the face of someone you know is hurting so badly because when we feel like we don't know what to do, we just want to turn our face from it. But to risk feeling the pain and knowing that if I have to

look in your suffering, I'm reminded how fragile I am. I'm reminded how easily I can cry and how quickly something like that could happen to me. And the vulnerability of that face-to-face, man-to-man, woman-to-woman encounter is just about more than we can handle unless we are driven by the love of Christ. And then it is worth anything we've got to do, anywhere we've got to go to fulfill that calling.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, we've seen all that is at stake if we're going to live a life motivated by the comforts of this world; we're going to live in one relational rut after another, we're going to live a life of addiction. We're going to miss the adventures of our calling, if not our calling altogether because we have already substantiated and the Word of God is way outside what we're comfortable with. But also, we will miss the comfort of Christ, the very comfort of Christ. If I can get it somewhere else, I'm going to get it. Wouldn't you agree with that? If you could have found -- I just ask you, how many of you found Christ as your personal savior that had found a human savior, that had really worked well for you?

I would like to suggest to you that one reason you finally came to Christ is because you found out pretty quickly there is no other savior. The only reason you will ever truly go to him for the comfort that he can bring is to find out that really, people cannot manage the length and depth of the comfort that I've got to have and I've got to have it -- I've got to have it -- the comfort of Christ, to know his presence, to know his very present help in a time of trouble. Not just his comfort but he himself, the comforter, the comforter.

I want to tell you one last story about our trip to rural Africa because it makes me think of the kind of presence that is the embodiment of comfort before we conclude this series together. We were staying in a motel not a hotel, I'm using exactly the word I mean to, which is a motel in a town in Angola. Really, it was wonderful because it was very, very clean. It was a spotless room but it was the very basics; the kind of bed, kind of like a board and it is a double bed and it is me and my big husband. The very basics -- the very basics and the kind of thing that you would be in the middle of trying to get ready and there would just be a blackout all over town. You had no idea how long it was going to last, you just had to wait it out. It's the kind of things you deal with, and you don't sit there and pout and whine about it, it is just reality. We were not at the Hilton. Anybody get what I'm talking about? This was not the Hilton.

So one of the things I found very challenging was that our room -- we had a little room here, here was our bed and here was the door to the bathroom. And then there was, of course, the toilet and there was the little bathtub right there. But it was a swinging door and it would not shut all of the way. I've been married almost 30 years but I'm

still modest! Anybody know what I'm talking about? I would still -- I don't know if you can go with me here, but I would still rather my husband think that all I go into the bathroom to do is to put on my mascara and my lipstick. I've never been one much for bathroom talk. You're going you could not tell us that by today! I'm really not comfortable with all that.

And the door, the way it was on its hinges, it opened like this. Keith, if he has something to talk to me about and the door is not locked he is just going to kind of like come on in. I couldn't even concentrate! I was like, there has got to be another way.

So I had spied a public restroom down on the first floor where the lobby was. I thought that is what I'm going to do for now on. I thought, I'm going to have to think of a myriad of excuses starting tonight.

So I told Keith and he knew it was true because we'd had a problem the morning before. I said, "Honey, I'm going to go down to the lobby and talk to them about our wake-up call." Because they speak Portuguese there and I had tried to call them the day before to get a wake-up call.

Let me tell you, you've got to have one. It is not like you have your little phone that will work with your little alarm clock on it. Your cell phone -- you forgot that way back in New York City when you connected. So we're way outside of any of those kinds of things that you can depend on.

So you're dependent upon a wake-up call and you're in a major time change. So you know if you ever go to sleep you're not going to wake up. It is not like you've got a clock that's going to tell you what time it is to get up. We were getting up at like 5:30 in the morning. I said, "Honey, I'm going to go down to the lobby so that I can act it out to them."

I was going to do all this -- I was going to do all my sign language. I was going to make it up as I went. Tell them, I need to wake up and I was going to hand them the numbers 5 and 30 and then I was going to try to do morning.

So I said, "I'm going to go down and make sure, I'm going to say it face-to-face so we understand what we're doing." And he believed me. And I really was going to do it but that's not why I was going down there right then.

So I went down to the lobby and I had to go all the way -- our room was quite far from where the lobby was and we had to walk outside like a motel would, we were a couple

floors up. And so I was walking back down and there was like this spiral kind of staircase here. I know when I say "spiral staircase" you're thinking mansion -- please don't think that! Please don't think that!

So it kind of wound around like this. So I went down the stairs and I went and it was about 8:00, 8:30 at night. So I found where the little hall was that led down to the public restroom and I had gone in there and finally, I thought, oh, praise God some privacy! And then all of the sudden blackout! Of course, because the Lord thinks he is funny!

[Laughter]

I don't know if he just does this -- I don't know if he is bored. I don't have any idea. He is never bored with himself. Maybe he gets bored with us, I don't know. But when he is in just this kind of mood, things like this will happen and they usually happen to me. Some of you are like that too.

So there I was -- I hate to say, "There a sat" but I have no other way to tell you. I'm talking as black as your slacks. I'm talking I could not see my hand in front of me. I couldn't even remember for sure how that public restroom looked when I came into it. All of the sudden I'm feeling all down the walls like this and back behind me I'm thinking, oh, my word! Oh, my word! And I can feel -- I told you I'm a scaredy cat so I can just feel the fear overtaking me -- just feel it overwhelming me.

So I go through and I'm walking against the wall thinking, I don't know where the door is. I finally feel all the way around. I finally bump into the sink and so I started going for where I think the door is, feel all down, just flip the switch just in case that one light in that entire part of the nation will come on and God would say one time here. This is no big deal to you, let there be light and there is. You can do this! I'm your servant here! Of course not!

So then I walked out into the hall, it is just as black. I thought I was going to get some relief when I walk out because in the lobby there is going to be a little just a little shred of light. Nothing! I cannot see one thing before me.

I begin walking down the wall like this and I finally get out into the open space where I can tell I'm now in the lobby.

I don't know what it is about darkness that makes people whisper but at the desk they started whispering and it just totally freaked me out! Because I thought, not only can I

not understand what they were saying, they were whispering it. So I felt like something was about to happen to me. I don't know what they would have wanted with me but I just started having all manner of vain imaginations -- I was scared out of my wits! My heart was pounding so hard that I was afraid they were going to hear my heart and know I was there. So I just stood there. I didn't know where to go. I had no idea where to go from there; stood in the blackness of that night with them whispering in such an eerie tone over there to my right. I just stood -- I just stood still.

I have no idea how long I stood there but then suddenly I began to hear footsteps. And I mean heavy, where you know a man is coming toward you. I'm telling you, I am now shaking all over. I'm shaking all over and I can hear those footfalls, one right after another. So I started thinking to myself, okay, what do I say? I need to say something because there has got to be something to do -- there has got to be something to do!

Where I come from if you don't know anything else to do, be polite; if you have no idea what to say, just be polite. So in my most polite voice, I began to say, "Here I am! Here I am. I am right here, here I am. I am standing right here."

Now I already know whoever is listening to me cannot understand one single word I'm saying! I'm beside myself I'm so scared. I just -- I could just feel him come closer and closer. And this voice says, "Baby, it is me. I'm coming for you."

[Laughter]

He said, "You just stand there and I'm going to come get you, I'm going to come get you." So I'm going tell you, I reached out my arms like this and I just --. I could not see anything in front of me. I just kept going, "Right here, honey."

He goes, "You just stand there, I'm coming to you, baby. I'm coming."

I go, "Right here, baby. I'm right here. I'm right here, here I am. Right here." I didn't know what else to do. I just stood there and went, "Here I am! Here I am!"

[Laughter]

I have never been so glad to get my hands on my man in my entire life. I had a choke hold on him. He had to walk me up the spiral stairs just like that. One hand, I'd never ever heard a voice so sweet as that one saying, "Baby, I'm right here. You just stand there and I'm going to come get you."

That -- that is what the God of All Comfort does. You don't have to go anywhere to find it, all you have to do is reach out your sweet little hands and go, "I'm right here. Here I am. Come get me! Come get me! I'm right here. And it is so black outside, Lord! I cannot see my hand before me but I'm asking you, come get me."

Your God will never forsake you. You will never ask him for his presence that he refuses you himself! You go for the comforts of this world, you will miss the comforts of Christ and there is nothing like a divine encounter when you know that the voice of God has said over you, "I'm coming! I'm coming. You just stand right there and you reach out your hands with desire. And I will come for you."

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Boy, that's powerful! I don't know how many of you have read the commentary I wrote on David Wilkerson.

Betty, when David died in a head-on collision, while I was actually flying back from Louisiana south of all the tornadic damage that destroyed so much of Alabama and Mississippi and all the way on up into the north. We were trying to stay out of that, of course, thank God, my friend was going to be with the Lord.

But that day, and I actually read this -- go to JamesRobison.net. Go to it and go to columns and then scroll back to "David Wilkerson, A friend in Heaven." Betty, I talked about the harmony of spirit. I talked about a real comfort, about God going to be there.

Here's the neat thing. I read to David's son, that night, while he stood at the hospital there with his mother and his Dad's gone, what Dad wrote that day. It would be well worthwhile for you to read it. When the program is over, I would really suggest you read that. It's what David wrote about these challenging moments and it is what Beth is talking about, you wait, God, He's coming. Wherever you are, he is coming.

I want you to look in, please and I want you to hear a desperate cry, Betty, of a woman who is talking about little twins. She is talking about her children and you're the answer to the cry of her heart. I'm telling you, you are. You know how you wish your heart cry would be answered? Well, this is how this heart cry can be answered, and you're really a part of it. Watch it.

Translator: Life is hard for us here in the villages of Madagascar. We are very poor and we have to get our water from wherever we can find it. My name is Avizio and everyone here in my village is sick because of this water. I am sick. My children are sick with diarrhea. I hate giving them this dirty water but it is all we have. It is so bad that some of the children in the village have died. I have a feeling that I have a dying child in my lap. But what can I do? Who can help us? Who can help me?

James: I find myself wanting to put my hand up. I can!

You know, Betty, the missionaries and our incredible staff that put together that piece and translated it for us to hear that mother, exactly what she was saying, they knew that they would not just bring it back to Betty and to James but I can tell you what the missionaries say because I hear it over and over, "If we could just tell the people who watch *LIFE Today*, if we could just tell them." And when the missionaries come to us, literally, they're coming to you, I think they're coming to God because we've tried to represent his love and we couldn't do it without his love through you.

I really believe the missionaries have confidence, and that mother has been offered hope now that she will have a well for her children, that her heart cry and her desire will be met. Betty, I'm believing that viewers all over the world will go to the phone or go online and make the best gifts you can to give the great gift of fresh clean water. I believe they're going to respond.

Betty: I do too, James. I think you just heard the heart of a mother that so loves her children that she would do anything and everything for them to help them live healthy. But she says -- she asks the question, "What can I do? This is all the water we have." There are so many others that are asking that question, "What can I do?" They have to have water. Will you help us? Join with us and let's build the water well so they can have a choice. They can take and choose the clean water, the pure water that will help their children be healthy.

James: We can do it. We can help and this is the last week of our emphasis for the over 400 wells that we're asking you to help us drill. Could you drill one of them? Would you be the answer to "Will you help us?" I will. Would you drill part of a well? So often we have people who will give \$1200 or \$2400 and pray one person or three people will join them and then we have got the \$4800 necessary. But we rejoice that

we've got individuals and couples and small businesses and churches, I will drill a well. But what will you do?

Betty, we could not drill 400 wells in these various countries of the world unless people said, "I'll give \$48 or \$144" and give ten people water for the rest of their life or 30. It takes all of us coming together. By the way, the \$48 gift or the \$144 gift, it's just as great in the eyes of God and to the people that you give water to as it is who can give the \$4800.

The widow's mite was the largest gift, Jesus said the greatest gift. You simply give your best. Would you do that? Would you dial the number? Would you make the gift God put on your heart? Put it on a bankcard or if you write a check make it *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail or you can go online LifeToday.org. We've got some special gifts for you to bless you to say thank you for giving life. Please make that gift. I do remind you, this is the last week for this emphasis to drill the 400 wells. Would you help?

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy, polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is that there is a solution -- Mission: Water For Life is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. The suffering can end because clean water changes everything in life.

With your support we will drill 415 new water wells in remote villages in 15 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people! A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10 people! \$72 will reach 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh clean disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

In appreciation for your gift to help drill these new wells be sure to request the Kingdom Life Journal. This beautiful leather bound prayer devotional includes both Psalms and Proverbs, as well as a place to write your own reflections as God speaks to you through his word.

Also please prayerfully 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 the journal as well as our beautiful commemorative bronze sculpture, "Heart of the Father."

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today!

End of clip

On the mission field:

Lisa: I have spent my day traveling up and down this river. We have seen the graves of children that have died because they drank from this river. We want to do something about it. Mission: Water For Life can drill wells but we need you to respond. This is a global problem, this isn't just isolated to this river. This river is just a small picture of rivers worldwide. The need is desperate and urgent. Open your hearts and give freely so these children won't die.

In the studio:

James: I pray that you will ask for "The Heart of the Father" because you've expressed, literally, the father's heart. Help us drill a well. If you can actually give the \$4800 for a well or \$1200 or \$2400 and pray others join you, do that because you'll make it possible to turn things around for a whole community. But your gift of \$48 will give 10 people hope, it is so important. Thank you! And remember, He is the God of all comfort.

Announcer: Tomorrow, America's number one female comedian, Chonda Pierce.

>> I don't know if we're the most joyful or we just found the right meds.