

Week 36

9/1/11

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: Well, I'd just like to take this crowd here --

Betty: It's wonderful!

James: This is the church and it is people from all different churches who don't understand that it's all right not to have walls dividing them, and there is a harmony; there is a heart harmony that is very pleasing to God and he inhabits this, this presence where you don't draw the lines, you just love God, and you love one another and we love you.

Wish you were here! You say, "How do I join up?" Well, we just connect to Jesus and we don't let anything get over us that separates from him in all of his fullness, that's really life.

Jack Taylor is our guest. Years ago, more than 40 years ago, he wrote a book called *The Key to Triumphant Living*. He was a Southern Baptist pastor when he wrote the book. He's been an itinerant speaker and speaks at churches everywhere, all denominations, no walls.

But when he wrote this book it became the best seller among Baptists for years, *The Key to Triumphant Living*. He talked about the fullness and power of God in the life of the believer and there would be some people who would say, he is talking about something beyond Baptists, it must be Pentecostal or Charismatic. And they meant that to diffuse his effectiveness. It was the best way to put it down.

They might not have meant it quite that intentionally but that's the effect that some were trying to have but it had no effect because there was a river being released that effected Betty and me and millions of people.

The book sold over a million copies. They just brought it back in print and you'll be able to get it. It is absolutely a must read and it impacted me when I was -- the first time I met Jack I was still a teenager.

Well, let's Jack talk about maybe the first time we met. Here's Jack Taylor. Would you welcome Jack Taylor to *LIFE Today*?

Jack, go ahead and tell them, when we first met I was a nice easy going guy?

Jack: Oh, yeah!

[Laughter]

James: I didn't get stirred up then.

Jack: Oh, you opened the door. I could drive a ten ton truck through here. 40 years ago -- yeah! You were what?

James: The first time we met I was 19. Now I'm 32 -- I'm 32.

[Laughter]

Jack: I was just 29 myself.

James: Well, you are ten years older than I am.

Jack: Yeah, yeah -- still am!

[Laughter]

James: Jack, tell us about *The Key to Triumphant Living*.

By the way, I want to go ahead and put the web site up.

Tell us the best place to go because I want people to get the book. It is in the bookstores but if they say, "Hey, I want to go online and get it." Where do they go?

Jack: Well, you can get it at JackRTaylor.com. That will start you on the information.

James: Can they find out where you're going to be speaking because I know you travel and speak?

Jack: I have a calendar; they can get a hold of the calendar.

James: If they wanted you to come to their area to help them understand Triumphant Living, they could go to that web site?

Jack: I might consider that.

James: Tell us what's on your heart and what led to Triumphant Living.

Jack: A crisis... a deep crisis, a crisis that really comes to everybody, many of whom manage to have that crisis all through their lives. But somehow by the grace of God, I pushed God to the edge. I said, "God, if this is all there is, I want out."

James: And you were a pastor?

Jack: Yeah! "If this is all there is, I think you got a bad deal when you gave your son. I think he got a bad deal. And I think I got a bad deal if this is all there is." And I pushed on that for a good while.

James: Can I ask you if you think after being a pastor and being around pastors and being around church people, do you think a lot of church people actually feel that way inside if they're honest?

Jack: Very quietly and can't find a venue in which they feel safe in sharing it.

There are some people here that are on the edge of devastation and that's a wonderful place to find the real Jesus.

So I somehow knew... I loved the word and I loved Jesus to the fullest measure of the possibility of a spiritual ignoramus. I did love him but I didn't know him well so I just, on and off, with enough depression said, "Lord, I can't go on. I don't want to go on. I'd rather you just take my life. If this is all there is, break it to me quickly. I'd rather go to heaven." I was pretty sure I was going to heaven.

I just kept pushing him. One night I remember kneeling down by my sleeping wife, my children in the room next to us, my mother-in-law snoring down the hall...

[Laughter]

That was very -- all of that was very clear to me, one of those cameo moments. I said to the Lord, "Lord, I've prayed and you haven't answered my prayer. Maybe I need to

pray a little more intensely. So this is what I want you to do. I ask you to take me if this is all there is, take my life. I'd rather you not hurt me much and I'd rather go painlessly and mysteriously, and at least we could save our reputation out of this deal."

[Laughter]

I said, "If you don't do it tonight, if I don't wake up dead in the morning..."

[Laughter]

"I'm going to take it from you that there is more... more than I've heard, more than people have told me." It's probably obvious to most people watching here that I did wake up the next morning.

[Laughter]

I don't remember being sad, mad, or glad. I just said, "Okay, where is it?"

Now my love for the word caused me to know that somewhere it was in that book, and I started reading the Bible to get an answer to life rather than getting a sermon.

One day I chanced across Colossians 1:27, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles. I thought that was a pretty good build up. I'd read that before and all of the sudden it was just given to me to see the mammoth size of this, ages, revelations -- to whom God would reveal.

And then the words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." I didn't see much but I saw enough to absolutely grab my life and shift it in another direction.

I was afraid of the Holy Spirit. I didn't want much to do with him. I thought there was just a lot of nuttiness going on and I was a Baptist and we didn't -- we had a good Trinity: God the father, God the son, and God the holy Bible.

[Laughter]

I was afraid of the spirit. Generally, we're down on what we're not up on and I was not up on the Holy Spirit. But that night, that day and the nights following, this thing exploded in my soul and I knew one day I would write a book.

The book itself is a miracle. It is too long a story to tell but one thing after another. And when the fact of Jesus became a revelation coupled with the fact that this wonderful matchless person was alive in my day, my contemporary, and very much alive, living inside me, that captured me. I'm not over it now. It is the hope of glory. It was the hope of glory.

Jesus, up in the tree saw the man. He said, "Zacchaeus, if you'll come down I'll come home with you."

Imagine Jesus going home with you. Well, we've got something better! We've got something better and he didn't deserve Jesus to come to his house but he went to his house.

James: He was a despised person and Jesus went home with him.

Jack: And then to think this Jesus would not just come to my house, he would come into what he considered the upgraded place to live, inside human beings like we are. I never got over that so... [Sighing] Miracle after miracle, I'd see this happen in people; if I hadn't seen it in people I would have gone crazy.

James: You know, Jack, it was 50 years ago that all this took place and you wrote the book some 40 years ago. What God was doing in your life impacted me because I was gifted to preach, loved God, loved people, but it is amazing how shackled we become with the weight of religious performance, practices and somehow Christ in us, the hope of his glory, his presence, his weight, the reality of who he is; I reached the same point, prayed to die. It is so crazy.

Betty, you were not happy; you were defeated. We found what Jack was talking about.

Betty: As I was listening to your testimony, do you think -- and I believe this in my own personal life -- Jesus was just waiting for you to ask him to show you his fulfillment in you? Like on ready, waiting.

Jack: Looking back on it, I saw again and again and again, he wanted me to get over my religion that I'd pretty highly developed. You know every time you have an experience with the word and don't have an experience with the God of the word you've just refined your Pharisaism and that's what I did and I was pretty good at it.

James: We have the very thing you're talking about, The Key to Triumphant Living is a presence of the Lord, the weight of his presence, the reality of it filling us and it is

triumphant living. It doesn't mean you don't have any challenges. You get knocked down but the guy inside won't stay down, he is getting up. There is this great getting up morning every day! I'm not waiting for the undertaker, I'm here.

Do you understand I got what you're talking about and it is a lot later and I still got it and I just wish everybody would get what you wrote here because it is real. Not so they read it but so it affects their life!

Jack: They will get it -- they are getting it! And they're getting it not because of what we say but because of what we are. I pray --

James: Well, he is in us.

Jack: He is in us. We're not real until he is in us. There is no reality to a lack of Jesus -- there is just none. And when he, who is everything is in us, we have everything. We have the kingdom. We have the king. If we can have everything and not have him and have nothing.

James: By the way, you have -- in finding this triumphant life -- you've not been free of problems. Tell us about the loss of a wife, and then another. Just hit that quickly. We've got about three or four minutes left for you to tell us about several life cycles right here.

Tell us see, you're smiling, you're happy. It is not like -- you say, you're living in la la land. No, we're living in something that lifts you above the fake la la land. We're living in the reality of a comforting God, regardless of the crisis.

Jack: Nothing in the earth demonstrates the ultimate proof of the worth of Jesus like suffering; slammed against impossible circumstances.

My wife was a wonderful woman, my first wife. She died on January 23rd, 2001 and the love we had for each other, I had for her, splashed against a blank wall and I was acquainted with grief, ultimate grief.

But I'll tell you, the presence of God was so strong in that room, I really never hoped to know that presence at that level again in my life. And so after a year of suffering cancer and really, seeming healing, she suddenly took a turn for the worst and left. I married again.

You know the habit is women grieve and men marry.

[Laughter]

In a couple of years I married again. A wonderful marriage, a wonderful woman and in 21 months she died. She had cancer.

When we were engaged she was found with cancer and I never thought of leaving, I never thought of cancelling our plans. So we married and it looked like God had healed her and she traveled with me 21 months and then took very ill.

We went on a trip to get her in better condition, a 94 day cruise. And we went on that cruise and she was stricken ten days out. And to make a long, long story short, we were held captive on the island of Tahiti, beautiful place in the South Pacific. But she was -- half her brain was gone by a massive stroke.

Well, we brought her home to San Antonio, her home, and she was at one time my youth director and W.A. Criswell stole her away from me and she came to Dallas and married, and her husband died. We had 21 wonderful months and she died.

I was again more desperate than before. Tough times come God allows to enrich our lives. It's the stretching of life, and grief becomes an enormous enablement. I don't feel like I've suffered.

James: See, Jack, the only reason you can say that and I really wanted him to go there, because I think a lot of times you will look... like you looked at me and Betty and you say, "Y'all are so happy and you've got three children and 11 grandchildren and they've all got happy families." And don't even realize I never had a home, never had a father, didn't even live on a street, lived on alleys, dumps; the kid nobody picked to play on a team. I understand suffering. The joy that I have came from God and it is still here.

And when you come into the triumphant life it doesn't mean you'll never have another heartache it just means that God is bigger. Many of you are going through them right now. Some of you in this audience, your heart is broken.

God is bigger than every mountain, bigger than every challenge. He will be with you in the valley of the shadow of death and pain and suffering.

Jack, I want our viewers to go to your web site, I want them to get the book because I want them to experience the triumphant living that only he can give. All you do is share about what he does and I thank you for that.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks so much to Jack Taylor for enriching our lives? And inspiring -- literally inspiring pastors and church leaders all over the world.

There again is his web site and I pray you'll get the book, I pray you'll pass it on. I pray you'll live in the fullness of his presence and his power.

Jack, we're doing something that's really exciting. We're putting shoes like this on little feet and on older children. We want to give shoes to children, a special gift. I think what you're about to see is going to touch you. You're going to hear Kathy Troccoli, such a gifted musician, gifted singer and communicator. She's gone to the ends of the earth to put the arms of God's love around the suffering and does it with us, *LIFE Outreach* because you make it possible to touch the needs.

Watch this closely. Listen to the heart of God even as Kathy Troccoli shares. Watch closely.

On the mission field:

Kathy: It's been a privilege to come on these trips with *LIFE Outreach International*. I always think I've seen it all or you think the poor are the poor. When they have nothing, they have nothing. Then I'm coming into these places in Central America, village after village and I'm seeing the wounds on these kid's feet and it is just boggling my mind, it is breaking my heart.

Look at him; he can't put his heel down. It is awful! It's wrapped up in a dirty rag and he's got infection in his foot.

I'm sitting here with little Brian. And I'm trying to unwrap this to show you he was just -- he stepped on a bark of a tree.

Okay honey, its okay.

And I don't want to pull this because it will really hurt him but it is stuck to the wound. What is he supposed to do now? He stepped on a tree bark. That's crazy!

It makes me really frustrated and really sad because it is just a simple -- there is a simple solution and it is shoes. We can change his life and the lives of children all over the world like right here in Central America with your giving.

Will you reach into your heart at this season to give a gift so children like little Brian and children all over the world can get a gift of a pair of shoes? Just a simple thing -- to put a smile on his face and also to protect his little feet. What a blessing that would be.

Remember the poor this Christmas and partner with *LIFE Outreach International*. Thank you so very much! Well, what could we do?

>> Look for the mom and see if we can take him to a clinic.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Well, that's so typical of the missionary, saying here's what we can do. Really, they can't take them anywhere unless we enable the missionaries to even be there and to have the support.

When you look at those little feet, those beautiful little children, Betty, I wanted to hug every one of those kids and we've done it all over the world. We've held thousands and thousands of children but we didn't just hold them and leave them and see a need that we couldn't meet, in so many places, because of you, we could meet it so we didn't have to walk away.

I'm asking you right now to reach out and literally touch someone with the hand of Jesus and let's give 200,000 children shoes as a special gift. We get you to help us ahead of time so everywhere it is possible, if the missionaries can do it, we give them, as Christmas gifts, and tell them about Christ.

Would you dial the number there? And just think what I'm about to say, \$36 will give ten children -- this is amazing -- ten children shoes! We want to give 200,000 pairs of shoes. That's costly but if you will help ten children, \$72, 20 children, \$144, 40 children?

You know I suggest several levels and I know some of you, you've listened to me long enough to say, "I know you'd like us to give 40 pair" -- more than that! I'd like you to give hundreds. I don't know what you can do but I know if it's ten children, \$36, it's huge.

I know every person can participate in releasing the river of God's love at whatever level God leads you and enables you to do. So I'm asking you to dial the number right now, please, or you can go online LifeToday.org, I know you want to do it. I think you're excited about doing it. I think you're going to be an answer to the need and the prayerful concerns of the missionaries.

Go to LifeToday.org and make your gift. Dial the number, take your bankcard, use it like a check. Make the very best gift you can, please!

We're also going to be doing some surgeries for children that have disorders like cleft palate, and we give them smiles, \$500 for those surgeries and we're praying that friends will join to make that possible too. So we give them shoes and smiles -- it's a gift.

We want to send you something.

Betty, you and I are reading *Jesus Calling* every day by Sarah Young. I could just almost start weeping when I hold it. They're very short daily devotions: 365 of them. So many times what she says just speaks directly to us from the Lord because this woman had running conversation with Jesus as a missionary. Absolutely awesome!

The Christian bookstores tell us, "We can't even keep them!" Betty went to Mardels and had to wait several weeks before they could get back, the ones you asked for some weeks back; said, "I want to give them to our family." We want to give them to you to say thank you for helping us give shoes and give smiles.

Thank you so much for your help. Thank you for making that call.

Begin clip:

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it children needlessly suffer, not only from a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we take for granted such as a healthy smile or a simple pair of shoes. For most of these children they've never owned a new pair of shoes and while that may seem minor in the light of all their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections that could lead to crippling consequences, disease, and even death.

LIFE Outreach International has developed a durable all-terrain shoe especially made for the harshest conditions in children of all ages. By responding today you can help

life immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 200,000 children around the world just in time for the holidays!

Your gift of \$36 will help provide 10 pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will provide 20 pairs. And a gift of \$144 will help provide 40 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

In appreciation of your gift be sure to request the bestselling inspirational devotional by Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide two children with corrective cleft palate surgeries and you may request the heart of father bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

James: I do want to encourage you to make the gift God puts on your heart. If there is any way you can give \$1,000 to provide many pairs of shoes, and perhaps help us provide those smiles, we're sending you the "Heart of the Father" bronze. It will be a real blessing.

Also today, if you'd like to have Jack Taylor's book, we will send you *The Key to Triumphant Living* just to say thank you.

Jack, when you talk about triumphant living, and we could have just continued the story of triumph in the face of challenges, and you know you lost the second wife and now you've married a beautiful woman who is here right now. Introduce her to our audience, would you?

Jack: This is Friede. We've been married six years and more. Stand up Friede, let them see you.

James: Friede, you're so beautiful! You're so beautiful, the joy -- the joy of the Lord.

Father, I pray for people with challenges and broken hearts that they will experience what we've talked about today, the triumph of your presence in Jesus' name.

Thank you so much for watching.

Jack, thank you!

Thank all of you for being with us. Encourage your friends to watch *LIFE Today*. And thank you for helping us give shoes and smiles.

Announcer: Next week, a high school football team made up of convicted criminals discovers hope when the opposing team's coach and community express God's love in a unique way.