

Week 44

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>> Jeff had said, "I'm giving up. I'm going to quit. This is too hard. It is tearing us apart and I can't do this anymore."

Announcer: Next, a couple overwhelmed by life's circumstances found themselves on the brink of giving up until they were challenged by Edward John to not quit.

>> I met him face-to-face and I told him the word exactly the way it was. Jeff looked at me and he said, "Who are you? Where are you from?"

Announcer: Lives changed with real living -- next!

Music

James: Thank you! You're gracious. Thank you very much. Welcome to LIFE Today. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Edward John with us and a guest whose family, marriage relationship, business and everything was impacted because he actually in experiencing what he calls "Real Living," which is releasing the river of life freely in such a way that it blesses others that it brings to light that which oftentimes is lacking, the nourishment that water gives by nature's necessity, you've got to have it. Jesus said out of our innermost being will flow rivers of living water. With that comes a lot of insight, it is being available to God, in unexpected ways, in unexpected places, unexpected times. "The times and seasons you don't know but you will receive power and you shall be witnesses unto me." Well, Edward John has a new series that is not only truth shared and taking you into the word but also musically, to be able to sing and communicate effectively, something I can't do. I'm smiling about it because it is laughable. I'm so not gifted. Sing -- not! That's exactly the way it is with me. So "Don't" would be what people would be saying. But Edward is really a blessing and he impacted a couple who actually -- I want to show you this -- this is where a chapel in an area called Adriatica that is in part of Stonebridge Ranch, which is a major subdivision north of Dallas in which they planted, as developers, a community, a village, really unique but a spiritual center but they were struggling. But they weren't just struggling with what was going on there, in some ways maybe about to give up as I understand it but their marriage was suffering. And all of the sudden, into this situation walks Edward John and impacts Donna Blackard and her husband. I want you to welcome Edward John and Donna to LIFE Today. We're going to hear the story. Edward, good to see you. Donna, good to see you.

Edward: Thanks!

James: Edward, set this up for us because I think this is kind of unusual how you just suddenly stepped into the picture as though you have a message from God in some way.

Edward: Well, yes, it is a message from God. [Chuckling] It has to be. In November, a year and a half ago or so, I'm out jogging, I'm up in McKinney. I had two bags of clothing to my name because everything else was gone. I'd repositioned myself from Europe to America and followed the leading of the Holy Spirit to come here. So I'm out jogging and I'm praying and I've got my iPod on and listening to some music and I'm cold. And I see this new construction area coming up and it looked nice and it said, "Open house." So I thought, hey, what a great place to get warm. [Laughter] So I'm in there and I'm looking at this project and this house and it was immaculate. I'd never seen anything like it. It was so detailed and it was done with such excellence that I walked around and went wow! This is really, really nice! So I run out again ready to embark on that trip back home and boom! This thought hits my head. Now let me explain this. Some people wonder how does God speak? You know? But after a while when you read the word and you pray a lot, you start recognizing thoughts that line up with the Word of God. So this thought comes on and I felt it with my whole being and this is what the thought said to me inside, and this was the Lord. And he said, "Eddie, I want you to tell the man that's building this property that if he'll stay close to me and stick close to me, I'm going to finish this area stone by stone and I'm going to help him accomplish it. But if he doesn't do that, it's over today." Now imagine this situation, James. I'm in America running outside. Don't know anyone. Don't know where I'm at per se and I get this thought and I'm thinking, no, that can't -- that -- no, Lord. Thank you! I'm not going to do that. So I'm running home and my mind starts rehearsing how I'm talking to this man that I don't know about how to say this. And I'm like, "No, don't want it." Go to bed and I think about it again and I dream about it at night and then I wake up in the morning and I said, "All right, Lord." I said, "If I meet this gentleman face-to-face, I'll tell him what you just told me." A few days later I get a phone call from a guy that was helping me do some bookings and stuff and they said they had a house party going on down in McKinney and they need a singer. "Would you mind stepping in? Bring your guitar and just do a few songs and just bless them a little bit." I said, "No problem." I walk in; I'd been there for probably 15-20 minutes when Donna walks in. She introduces herself as the wife of the man building this project. I thought, now that is interesting. [Laughter] Now talk about fear factors -- that's when I got warm. I started sweating and I said, "All right, Lord. If he comes in I'm going to tell him." So I asked her, "Is your husband coming?" She said, "He'll be here in a few minutes." I met him face-to-face and I told him the word exactly the way it was and Jeff, my friend's name now, my friend, looked at me and he said, "Who are you? Where are you from?" [Laughter] I said -- and I was probably more scared than him. I said, "I'm from Norway and you don't know me." He said again, "Where are you from? How do you me?" And I didn't realize at the time what was going on in their lives and that's where I let Donna take the story from here.

Donna: Right.

Edward: Go ahead, sister! [Chuckling].

Donna: It was absolutely a meeting set up by God. I just have to say God loves me a lot to have brought Edward into our lives because there was just a lot of chaos. There was a lot of -- we call it stress but under, I would say stress you have fear, you have anxiety, you have all of these other spiritual things going on. So we had a lot of stress and just through the project, it is a very difficult, unusual, and it takes so much of Jeff's time and energy and leaves me very few scraps left over at the end of the day and I was just -- [Chuckling] Any way, we had just had a really exceptionally difficult day relationally and Jeff probably 30 minutes -- and we weren't going. It was at the very last second that we decided to go even though we knew we were invited and supposed to be there. We were going to a movie and we just looked over there, across the lake from us, a friend of ours calls and says, "Where are you?" And we just on impulse decided to go and met Edward. But just before leaving Jeff had said, "I'm giving up. I'm going to quit. This is too hard, it is tearing us apart. I can't do this anymore." So that was kind of the end of our conversation. We get there and the first thing Edward says to him is, "God says don't give up... [Chuckling] That if you'll put him first." Well, that was a huge impact. We knew it was from the Lord. It was an obvious from God moment. Over the next now it's been a year and a half, over the next few weeks, my expectation is that Jeff is just going to be all over God first. But when there is so much work involved there is such a -- it is like God gave me this vision, I've got to get up and go do it now and there is just not enough time. It was just so hard to make any kind of transformation with that. I've been interceding with a couple of other ladies for about four years now for our husbands and I'm just crying out to the Lord, "God, we want is to be equally yoked." And just the spiritual battles going on and the relationship battles. Over the next year things just got worse there instead of better -- in some ways, in a lot of ways it's just been more difficult and yet, just relentless. First I think I'm supposed to be the Holy Spirit's helper and go tell him and remind him if he put God first, that's when it is going to work out. And just remind... and it got to the point to where the Lord is just teaching me so much through this that, "I give you discernment not to go and just make something happen." That's witchcraft, controlling with words. "This is to go and intercede, this is to cry out in prayer and call it down just between us. You don't have to try to force it through him." So I would say my experience and our experience of our relationship with Edward has been the Lord has brought Edward in even closer recently in the last couple of months. He's been coming and meeting with my husband every morning at 7:00 in the morning. They climb seven flights of stairs to the top of the bell tower in Adriatica. And you have to know Jeff, I love him. He loves the Lord and he's done wonderful things for God but he's been doing so much and God is wanting to get this relationship thing closer. So to talk spiritually or pray a couple minutes, okay, on to the next thing. They're spending an hour every morning and I've prayed with Edward. There is no inhibition, absolute

freedom, and that's rare. It's rare to have that kind of relationship with Christ that is so open and free and honest. And Jeff is just coming home and now he wakes up in the morning anticipating going. He is so excited about meeting with the Lord. He is talking with me 15, 30 minutes about spiritual matters instead of just -- you know it is like he is not shutting it down. I just see God really opening up his heart more and more and more. That, to me, is just the real living. It is discipling others through -- I would say Edward has been like Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ."

James: That really is the key because it is so easy to follow somebody and not follow Christ. Edward inspires us to look at Jesus. I feel like that's the gift God has given you in what you share inspires people to do that. By the way, I've met Jeff and Jeff would be a little bit more ready to identify with you Betty saying, "I'm not comfortable out in front of everybody" but I tell you what, he is just full of life and excitement. As a matter of fact, I found myself just wanting to pull him out here. Kind of like Betty, she says I brought her up here kicking and screaming to get her to come up here and sit by me on television, but I knew God had so much to offer. But God is changing this man's life and everything is turned around and relates to building and to a village community in the midst of let's say a great subdivision and development near McKinney. And his insight is very much something of God but it never could have happened if God hadn't been put in first place. What I see you doing, as he talked about, is something God let him see and that was a possibility and talked about building it with the right stones, when he stepped in and gave this message of how God has to be first, he has to be the foundation, and then you build with living stones. He was actually saying far more than anything to do with the development, even though the development has done remarkably, when this message came before the crash of real estate and the very fact that you're even there developing and being successful is in itself miraculous because he was ready to quit. But the real development, Edward that was more important to God than any subdivision or any house development was this house development and to build up that relationship in the marriage. So that really is the heart of God, he wants a family. But the real family that he's working on is the real family everybody -- they don't have to be in the building business. God is in the building business but we're the house that he wants to build and he wants to build this house in relationship. Again back to your husband's vision where people live together and they don't think we're the uppities and they're the lower but rather we're all family and we all get along. He really built and is building your relationship on a solid foundation. Am I right about that? That was more important than any subdivision. More important than any place where people live is he wants to live in you. To me, your excitement, because I think you kind of pull back out of the quote business aspect, more home-focused right now, and you can see positive progress that is more important than any subdivision. Would you not agree, Edward, that's the bottom line?

Edward: Oh, absolutely! Every morning at seven when we get up there, it is so exciting, James, because we climb these stairs up into the bell tower and we get into this area where we can just see the water, we see the development. We're up there and we begin to pray and we read the word together -- loud. We read the Psalms, we read the Proverbs, we're going through the New Testament. And then what we find is that the Lord gives us names of people to pray for. So we write them down on the wall. We kind of engrave it in the stone up there. So now our walls are beginning to pack up with names and what you find is that when the Lord begins to work in your life or in my life or in Jeff's life it is like you said, it is rivers of living water about to pour out into other people's lives. And that's what real living -- I think if we can be like that, where it's forget ourselves a little bit. You know what's this all about us all of the time? Let me tell you one example. We're up there praying -- I pray in the spirit. I'm not afraid to just let go. I need to pray in the spirit so I can get my engines going. And the Lord knows what I need before I need it.

James: Did it scare Jeff where he wanted to jump off the bell tower?

Edward: He was standing on the edge there a few times but I closed the latch so he couldn't get down. But then we were praying one morning and my friend's name comes up, Trundt and he is sitting here in the audience today. So I get his name and I write it down, Trundt.

James: And he is in Norway. But now he's here.

Edward: Now listen to this, a few hours later he calls me and says, Eddie, I booked a ticket, I'm coming over." I'm like, "What? What do you mean you're coming over?" He said, "I need to get away. I need to get refreshed and I'm coming over." Now God already knew that when we were in the tower so he just had me put the name down, prepare for it, and here we are and he's here in the studio with us today. That's real living.

James: That's supernatural living. And really, you may think this sounds like just so much religious stuff but really and truly -- and by the way, I see a lot of people that get -- excuse me but a little wacky religious and they're bouncing off every wall and they want you to bounce with them. It is scary sometimes. People say, "I've got a word for you." Oh, my God! It is the Holy Ghost! God doesn't need our help. There is a lot of spooky stuff going on in the name of God so you've got to be real careful. But here's the thing, God really wants to carry in his spirit in real living, not pretense, not real religion, that could be spooky too but real life and let the river flow. This is what I feel like God has blessed Edward to share a journey that is not just unique in the sense that it's him or from Norway or you've got to look a certain way but you just let the spirit of God work through you, just yielded clay and experience real life. Conquering fear, letting the river flow, loving people. See, if you don't -- if you go out to obey God and not to go out and prove I'm successful, prove I'm -- no, no! He said, "I was not even wanting to do it." Just let the river flow. By the way, you don't have to produce results.

Rain and sunshine bring forth abundance. God wants you to have that fruitfulness in your life. This is a great teaching. You want to say thanks to Donna and to Edward John? Pray for Jeff. You may want to look at Adriatica on your web site and see what's going on here. Pray for them in their journey. Just pray for them and know they are interested in you. Edward, we're going to share with our viewers what I know is on your heart right now and that is helping people. And the children in Africa, there are thousands and thousands of them and their families, we want to help them. I want you to look at this because I think when you see -- if you could throw a life preserver to someone and know they'd get it, you'd save their lives, wouldn't you want to do it? Well, I'm giving you an opportunity to toss someone a life ring. I know you'll want to do it and you're going to rejoice in the effect of it. Watch this.

Edward: When we first landed in Mozambique this time I was very excited to come to Africa. I love this continent and the more that I travel here, the more I realize that my heart is over here. It wasn't until the next day that truly made me -- truly my heart began to break. It's when you walk in and see the suffering of your sisters and your brothers and your people around you that your heart begins to break. There are so many thousands of kids -- all across this continent that even until this day or today maybe won't make it. They won't live another day because they don't have food, they don't have what they need to survive. So every bowl of food that we serve, it is also a reminder that there is probably a hundred times, or a thousand times more kids that don't get that bowl of food and that breaks my heart. I'm reminded of the words that Jesus said when he said he left the 99 to fetch that one. Sometimes it feels hopeless to go about such a big mission but if we do it together and say "Yeah, I'm going to save one -- just one -- I'll save one! If nothing else, I'm going to save one little child." Just one!

James: Whoo! I would not be able to look at a child that is suffering, especially when you're seeing it personally over and over, and then show it to you if I didn't know we could totally turn it around. Fanny Crosby wrote a song, "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying" because somehow it was in her heart, and I've been spending my life doing it. Approaching 50 years, I've been trying to rescue people and listen -- care about you. Relationship strain, pain, hurt, I want to see you lifted up out of that pit of defeat or despair or a sense of hopelessness. I really want that for you. Jesus offers it to you. But I also want it for the suffering, for the hungry and it's so simple. Not to depend upon some government program, which we the people decide we want to do some things together and we bear the load as we the people for the glory and the purpose intended. Well, the missionaries are there, hands on, hearts full, but they would be empty handed if you didn't give them something to give the children like you heard Edward John talking about it. So that's why we ask you to help us feed the

children and their families who are in need and get them on their feet and give them a future, give them hope. That's God's plan for all of us. So I'm asking you if you would, as we share with you an opportunity to grow and learn from what God has shown Edward so you can have real living, we're asking you to share a part of that real life with somebody else who needs life. Would you dial the number that's there on the screen? Take your bankcard and use it like a check. That's how you use bankcards. You never have a problem that way, it is a check. But use it -- what better place could you write a check and you can make a check to LIFE. Mail it in but call us and tell us what you're sending. Please do it. I know you'll intend to. I always intend to do good, we just tend to put it off and pretty soon it's put aside. You see, their lives depend on it. Some of them won't make it through the day but they can have a future. So would you dial the number or would you go online, lifetoday.org and make the gift God puts on your heart? Remember for a \$100 gift we can care for ten children for the next months -- ten of them! I'm asking you to help with that. It may be that some of you can give \$1,000 and care for 100. But \$30 or \$50 will help us care for three or five. Please, don't think that if I just help three that's not important. How important is it to those three? Or those five? But I'll always ask you to help ten or a hundred if you can. So please make the call. We want to send you the inspirational music videos that will impact you and the teaching that Edward shares so you'll experience real living while you're giving real life to somebody. Thank you so much for making that call. Thank you for helping us give life to someone and give them a chance.

Cause 44

The way I feel for you
So pure and true
It is just like a dream come true
Feels like I'm walking on air tonight
So how can I deny a feeling so right?
When holding your hand is so easy
Knowing that you'll never leave me
Peace like a river
Joy inside
Is what your love always provides

James: You know we are going to send you "Real Living" if you'd like to have it if you'll just help us care for the children, as many as you can. And again, help us to take care of five or ten of those kids but whatever you can do is important. You may want to go on the web site and find the Adriatica. This is -- I think this might be part of that little church he was talking about, I'm not sure. Beautiful homes! I'm looking at the incredible unique design that we took some pictures off the web site. It is absolutely

beautiful! But it can be a place for everybody. Just look at it. But the main thing is that you'll build your life the way this couple found they're the stones fitted together by God. And Edward John blessed them. So "Real Living" will be a blessing. And Betty and I want to say thanks to you, Edward. Donna, thank you. Jeff, we want Jeff to come back out here and just kind of take over and share because he will, he's full of it. Thank you! Would you just say thanks to our wonderful guest. Thank you and thanks be to God for the great things he does and he does them through people like you!

Our love is for real
Only time can tell
What will be
But it sure feels like eternity to me
It feels like I'm walking on air tonight
So how can I deny a feeling so right?
When holding your hand is so easy?
Knowing that you'll never leave me
Peace like a river
Joy inside
Is what your love always provides

>> Just imagine if you learned how to deliver miracles for God. And this became the norm?

Announcer: Next week, bestselling author and Christian teacher Bruce Wilkinson.