

**5/7/2026**

*Week 19*

*Randy Robison & Blynda Lane*

*Kathie Lee Gifford*

*“Living Hope”*

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**MALE ANNOUNCER:** The following program is sponsored by friends of Life Outreach International.

**KATHIE LEE GIFFORD:** Every one of us needs a savior about something in our life.

So have hope in that, that your Savior is here for you right now, for your addictions, for your brokenness, for your loneliness, for your desperation, everything that you're facing.

He's here right now, but he's also coming again.

**ANNOUNCER:** Kathie Lee Gifford shows how the God that transformed Paul can transform you.

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**RANDY ROBISON:** Welcome to “Life Today.” I'm Randy Robison. Blynda Lane is with me. Great to have you with me, Blynda.

**BLYNDA LANE:** Thank you. So happy to be here.

**RANDY:** I'm so excited about today's guest, Kathie Lee--yes, Kathie Lee Gifford is back with us, and you know, we always get great feedback when she's on.

But she's got a new book called “Nero & Paul,” and as someone who appreciates context and history, Scriptural, that kind of thing, I like--some people refer to it as almost like historical fiction, which it's not, no, but there's a creativity to it.

**BLYNDA:** That's actually, for me, that's why I liked the book, because I am not necessarily the biggest history buff, or if I just hear history, like maybe in high school, the history teacher talking about it, I didn't find it that interesting.

But when it's presented like this, because what they do is they give you historical accuracy with, obviously, people who really lived, but in a way where there is some creativity in the writing that draws you in.

**RANDY:** Yeah, it draws you in. And I think that's key, and for me, it helps me understand the context of the founders of our faith, and it applies today.

So let's talk to the author, Kathie Lee Gifford, welcome back to "Life Today."

**KATHIE LEE:** Thank you, thank you, Randy. And hi, Blynda. Nice to see you guys again. Thanks for having me on, thank you.

Actually, I just--I take a little issue with the fact that it's fiction, it's not. These are true stories. These are true stories. And anywhere where we're not sure of exactly what happened, we notate it.

That's why I wrote it with a gentleman, Bryan-- Dr. Bryan Litfin, because he's the one with the PhD after his name, not me. And if I was to write these kinds of books, I don't have time to do five years of research or ten years of research on each book. He's already done it. He's already done it.

And then he comes into the picture with my son, who's producing all these things with me. And it was Cody's idea to say, "Mom, let's take your obsession with these epic stories in the Bible," because I truly am. I'm a history buff about everything, all kinds of history, but especially Biblical history, because the Bible, when we read it the way it's written, is really black and white.

It's just too much detail to put--it would be a full encyclopedia if we had every detail of everything. But when you study the way I study, which is rabbinically, meaning what does the Greek and the Hebrew tell you about every single word in the Scripture, then it comes to life.

It goes from being a black and white Bible that you've been reading forever into Technicolor and Dolby sound, and you get--my faith started finally coming back when I started studying this way, because you also get cultural relativity. You get geopolitical content. And then it's thrilling, and it's like a--it becomes a thriller, because it's thrilling.

**BLYNDA:** That's right. And you almost find that ways that you've thought about things haven't even maybe been historically accurate, because we haven't really broken it down into those measures.

And you kind of correct some of that.

**KATHIE LEE:** Well, I don't try to because I'm "right," you know? I try to because I've done my homework. And I've done the studying.

The Word of God is to be read, yes, but it's also to be ingested into us, you know? And we don't do it.

**RANDY:** I have a question though. The book, “Nero & Paul.” I get it, there’s a lot of great books about Paul. Obviously Paul is a cornerstone of the Christian faith and our understanding of it. Why Nero?

**KATHIE LEE:** Well, because we’re in a series of books. This is the second. The first one was called “Herod & Mary.” Second one’s called “Nero & Paul.” And it’s subtitled “Ancient Evil, Living Hope.”

People ask me all the time, “Kathie, do you think there’s more evil in the world today?” And I go, “No, it just seems like it.” Everybody’s got a cell phone. Everybody’s got, you know, cable television, and there’s just such an abundance of information. It’s almost--you almost can’t even deal with it. It’s overwhelming.

And I said, but you know, you look back at the very beginning, as in, dawn of time, Adam and Eve in the garden, in the cool of the night as Jehovah God walked with Adam and Eve, who was there? The serpent. Evil’s been with us ever since Creation.

And then when I had a little lull in my life, heaven forbid I get a lull, my son says, “Mom, let’s take your obsession, not obsession, but your fascination with these ancient evil characters that we know so little about, and let’s make them into thrillers.”

And then what we do is we juxtapose the evil that we didn’t even realize. I mean, each of our books start out with you’re going, “Are you freaking kidding me? This was Herod? Are you freaking kidding me? This is Agrippina, the mother of Nero, and he’s looking at her dead body because he just murdered her.” These are real stories.

The point of it is we wanted to show, and this was fascinating to me, I’d never thought about it this way. We know the lust for power that exists in people that do not know a personal God. You know, there are many--most of the religions in the world are polytheistic. They worship the sun, they worship the moon, they worship Aphrodite, they worship sex, they worship all of those things. But the one thing they all have in common is a lust for power.

And that’s where it’s juxtaposed against a man like Saul of Tarsus, we start out with, of course, who didn’t realize that he--he thought he had a zeal for righteousness. We’ve all thought that--well, we’ve been taught, well, he thought he was doing the right thing by killing the original followers of Yeshua Jesus. He thought that they weren’t following Mosaic law. They believed in the Messiah, and he didn’t believe the Messiah had already come.

He had heard about Yeshua, of course, but he didn’t realize that he’d missed him. He was one of the greatest Biblical scholars, or Mosaic scholars. There was no Bible at the time. He was one of the greatest Mosaic scholars of his day. He was on his own zest and zeal for power, to be in the Sanhedrin. That was his power world. And to be the next Caiaphas, the next high priest, who was the one who actually, you know, architected, was the architect of Jesus’s torture and crucifixion. So that’s the road he was on.

So who's the bad guy? Who's the bad guy? Not until Saul of Tarsus hears the voice of Yeshua Jesus on the road to Damascus, and then Jesus says, he says, "Who is this?" And he says, "Saul, Saul, why are you--why are you persecuting me?" And he goes, "Who are you?" He says, "I am Jesus, Yeshua, whom you are persecuting." And then he's blinded, right?

He'd been blind already, to the truth that had been in front of him forever, that all these people were being martyred in the name of their Messiah, Jesus, Yeshua. Remember, you guys, and this is what we don't understand in our culture, in the West, in Western Christianity. We don't understand that the story of all the Scriptures from beginning to end is a Jewish story. Jesus was Jewish, Mary was, Joseph was, all of the disciples.

And we talk about how Jesus's apostles were there at the--no, there were no apostles yet. The apostles came once Jesus had ascended, and that's when they went out, because of persecution, as apostles, which means to be sent forth with a message. And what was their message? The good news of the gospel that Jesus came to save, the message of salvation. And that's when they were first called Christians.

You know why? Because Nero named them that. Nero realized they were losing power to these people that believed in Yeshua. So he said, "We have a problem with these little Christians," and he said it very derisively, why? Because he did have a power problem with them. But that's the first time the word "Christians" was used.

**BLYNDA:** Interesting. So when you're juxtaposing this evil person with this really righteous, godly person, and you do such a great job in the book of describing Nero as how evil he really was, like you said, he killed his mother. But when we're thinking about today--

**KATHIE LEE:** And many, many others, Blynda.

**BLYNDA:** And many others, yes. But when we're thinking about today and the--what it reminds me when I read something so historical like this, is the human condition really hasn't changed over time.

**KATHIE LEE:** Nothing under the sun, as Ecclesiastes says. I think it's Ecclesiastes.

**BLYNDA:** So without Jesus coming in and changing who we are, we have every possibility of being like a Nero, meaning just living for ourselves. How would this book encourage viewers today to really understand that there is a spiritual battle that we face every day, and we get to choose which path to take?

**KATHIE LEE:** Well, Scripture is so clear about that. It says that, you know, out of our mouths, we can speak garbage or we can speak life, and every time, the Scripture says, "Choose life, that you may live long in the land."

Now, how do you want your story to end? We all start out as babies. Nero started out as a baby, and so did Saul, and you and I did, all of us, all of creation does. And my belief is that

every baby comes directly from the heavens. A baby is perfect. A baby's never sinned. And then the world gets ahold of us.

Nero didn't start out evil. He became evil. But the point of it is, Saul, if he hadn't heard the voice, the genuine audible voice of Jesus, Yeshua, the Messiah, he would have kept going to Damascus. He would have found Peter there. He would have found Mary there. He would have kept his horrendous zeal for what he thought was righteousness.

So let's ask ourselves in real time, in our lives today, what are we wrong about? What are we zealous about that really has nothing to do with Jesus? Nothing to do with this. And we all have stuff. We all have stuff that's more important to us than pleasing our Lord. So thank God Jesus showed up in that form.

If only he would do it for absolutely everybody, there'd be far more many believers in the world today, because nothing like Jesus getting your attention, you know, that way. There's showing up visually, which he's doing quite a bit now in the Muslim world, I hear. And I believe it. I have friends who--yes, he's in dreams now. Yes, nothing's changed.

He's still saying, "Why are you persecuting me? I'm the one that died for you. Why are you persecuting me? I'm the one that loves you so much that I died for you." And thank goodness he doesn't have to do it again, but he would if he had to. I know that.

So, I just think it's important to find new ways to tell the old stories. Just--but really, really clever and artistic and excellent ways. And because of--that's important to me in my career all my life, that was our intention, is to give people hope in today's world who think that we're losing the battle, somehow losing the battle. We're not losing the battle. The battle's won.

**RANDY:** No, I think that's really important for people to hear, because yeah, we do see things and we think, man, the world's, you know, it's all going to hell in a hand basket kind of thing.

But when you look at the evil of Nero, which you do lay out even more graphically than you've discussed here because it was--it's hard to even comprehend how awful Nero was, and Rome, how corrupt it was. And then you see Paul, and his obedience to go into these difficult situations and boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. And it took a while, but it--

**KATHIE LEE:** And persevere. That's right, it took--yes, it took a long time.

**RANDY:** What do you get from that as you look at the world and you keep proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in your books and in your ministry and the things that you do? I mean, there's got to be some encouragement there that even if we may not see the full completion of the seeds that we're sowing and the gospel, it will overcome the darkness.

**KATHIE LEE:** It totally will overcome the darkness. You light one candle, a black room becomes lit up, you know? And I think the reason I've always proclaimed it so boldly, that's what a lot of people say, "How could you be so bold? You're the only one on television for years that talked about Jesus, no matter where you were."

When I was 12 years old, I did hear the voice of Jesus. It wasn't audible in the same way, but I had just watched a Billy Graham movie called "The Restless Ones," and at the end of it, there was an altar call. And I remember hearing Jesus say to me, very clearly into my soul, "Kathie, I love you, and if you'll trust me, I'll make something beautiful out of your life."

And I ran down that--to ask Yeshua Jesus into my life. I call him that now because studying the way I've been doing, with the Hebrew and the Greek, I'm so much more aware of my Jewish heritage, my Jewish blood. My father was a Russian Jew, but I didn't know very much about my history. I didn't know much about my father's heritage.

I first started going to Israel when I was 17, and the minute my feet landed in the Holy Land, I was forever changed. And the Lord gave me a lyric, it says, "Oh, the ancient blood that flows through me, from the dawn of creation through eternity," and that changed me.

And because I had heard the voice of Yeshua as a young girl, that's the voice that kept me on my path and gave me the ability to become bolder and bolder and bolder. Never missed an opportunity, that I can ever remember, to not share the hope that is within me, because how could I, after I've heard the voice of Jesus, you know? I can't, and I won't.

And everybody, wherever I worked, whether it was, you know, on top of a mountaintop directing a movie or on a Broadway stage with Sondheim, or on a daytime, whatever, daytime talk show for ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, I didn't care where I was, because I never separated the secular from the spiritual in my life. That's the biggest mistake we make as believers.

We are one child of God. We're not a different person when we're doing plumbing or when we're on our face in prayer before Jesus and our Father. You know, no. It does not please God. We're supposed to take him--"In him we live and move and have our being," it says in Acts, and that was Paul who said that.

**BLYNDA:** In the conclusion at the very end of the book, you kind of sum up that the message of this book is that for the followers of Jesus, that they know that the presence of God is in them and will never leave them.

And so as we're concluding, do you have a message for the viewers today to encourage them about continuing in their walk with Christ, pursuing Christ? I'll give you the last word.

**KATHIE LEE:** Well, you're saying Christ, and you know why? Because now you know where the word Christian came from. Christ in Greek means Messiah. It's Christós. So that's why

people are--in Christ Jesus, Paul would speak often. "In Christ Jesus." He's saying, "In Messiah Jesus." Don't forget that. You'll never say it again the same way.

Everybody needs a savior, whether people are watching me right now, watching the two of you, or listening to us. Every one of us needs a savior about something in our life. We need a Messiah. And don't be a fool like Saul of Tarsus was. Many of us feel like we--and miss him. He's already been here. He's already been here. He's already shown us the way, and he's coming again. And then that's only up to the Father. Only the Father knows when that's gonna be.

So have hope in that, that your Savior is here for you right now, for your addictions, for your brokenness, for your loneliness, for your desperation, for everything that you're facing. He's here right now, but he's also coming again, to bring salvation to all of humankind, redemption for all of humankind. And if we don't understand that, we don't understand our Jesus.

**RANDY:** So encouraging. Thank you very much for that.

And by the way, if you're watching right now and you're like, "You know, I don't know what she's talking about. I haven't had that encounter that Kathie Lee had," there are people right now on the phone, and that phone number there, that would love to pray with you, and just be there for you to encourage you.

And if you just need some other encouragement, maybe you are a believer and you're like, "You know, I want to have the passion that Kathie Lee has. I want to have the steadfastness that Paul had," again, there's someone that will will pray with you. So we wanna be here for you.

And by the way, if you'd like to get the book "Nero & Paul," Kathie Lee Gifford's latest book, it's available lots of places, but we would love to send it to you by asking you to do what we love to do, which is to reach into an area where people are hurting, where people are hungry, literally hungry, and give them something in Christ Jesus's name. Watch this.

**KATHIE LEE:** Christós.

**RANDY:** Yes, Christós, that's what we do. Everything--every good work we do is a God work, and here's one that we would love to show you, that you can be a part of right now.

**ANNOUNCER:** Rural health clinics in Africa serve as a lifeline for children suffering from severe malnutrition. These clinics provide emergency nutritional supplies, therapeutic foods, and life-saving treatments that restore a starving child's strength and saves their life. But there is a crisis today, leaving many clinic shelves bare.

**JOHN YEATTS:** We showed up at one of the clinics today where we were supposed to be doing screening and handing out for children that are--they're in the crisis mode, they're in danger but they're not hospitalized yet. But unfortunately there's no aid to give.

And so we are desperately needing your help to make sure that the Mission Feeding can continue on, that we can continue to support these families, these mothers that work so diligently. And can you imagine this mama having to come 45 miles to a clinic hoping to get aid, and there'd be none available? How defeating, how hopeless is that feeling for her, knowing that her baby is days away from dying?

We're the ones that have a responsibility to step into the gap, and to bring hope and help to these mothers and these children. With your help, we can provide Mission Feeding in villages before a mother would need to bring their child to a malnutrition clinic. But for those children in need of emergency care, it is critical that we provide clinics with these nutritional supplements. It could mean the difference between life and death. The time to act is now.

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**RANDY:** I know that's tough to watch, and Blynda, you know, those clinics, they're necessary, I thank God for them, but it's a hard place to be.

**BLYNDA:** I can't even really imagine, that what it has taken for them to get there means they've probably been without food in their village for a long time. And then like it said, they walk this really long way to go to what is necessary to keep their child alive, and then they may not even be able to get help.

**RANDY:** Yeah, and fortunately so many have gotten help over the years, but the reality is I've also been in a situation where, you know, children have died at the clinics because it just took them too long to get there.

The greatest concern we have right now, as they talked about in that piece, is that we wouldn't have the supplies in place. And when a clinic is a last stop to save a child's life, you've got to have everything you need to make every effort to save that life. We need your help. Children's lives are hanging in the balance. That's just the reality of the situation.

We do have clinics in many countries. We have workers there who have dedicated their lives to helping people. We have medical professionals in place. They are giving their whole lives, and so, you know, it's a tough situation, but in a sense, it's a little bit of an honor to be able to speak up for them and say to you, the viewer, would you be a part of that?

It's a part of our Mission Feeding program, the clinics being the last stop, unfortunately, for many, but also that place where they do finally get the nutrition they need. The Mission Feeding program actually goes into the villages before they need to go to the clinic, and that's why Mission Feeding is so important.

Your gift of \$30 will help feed 3 children, where they're at, for several months. A gift of \$50 will help feed 5 children, \$100 will help feed 10, \$1,000 will help feed 100. You can see the math there. It will also fund the clinics, which are depleted right now.

And there's been a disruption in a lot of global supplies of foodstuffs, and there is a little bit of a disarray going on with global aid and global transportation and things like that. The one consistent thing is our presence through our mission partners all across Africa. But we cannot continue to do it without you.

So my hope, my prayer, is that you would say, "You know what? I'm gonna do what I can." When all of us do what we can, it moves mountains. Mountains of hunger, mountains of malnutrition. Let's move those today. We need to hear from you. Please go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can.

**ANNOUNCER:** Right now across the continent of Africa, children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition and even death. With food reserves critically depleted and many areas experiencing devastating famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000 children who are counting on us every single day.

Through Life's mission feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to a prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need. Call now with your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for 3, 5, or 10 children for 3 full months.

With your gift we'll send you "The Father's Heart" devotional. Drawing from Scripture and his past, James Robison takes you on a 90-day journey to help you experience a deeper, more personal relationship with God as your loving Father.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you will receive The Father's Heart bundle. This stationary set, paired with the devotional, is a thoughtfully-designed collection created to help you share encouragement, prayer, and the love of our Heavenly Father with those you care about.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, which will help feed 100 children in desperate need, request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd. So, please call, write, or make your gift online today.

**JAMES ROBISON:** This is the sound of hope and life. Look at these beautiful children. What put the joy in their heart? Not just bowls given in love, but nutritious soup given in love.

Let me just say to every one of you who've ever helped and every one of you I believe will help, thank you for supporting Mission Feeding. I pray that you will keep the sounds of joy and life in feeding centers all over Africa.

Many places they can't sing. They're too weak to sing. Health is being restored here. These children are so happy, and it's because of Mission Feeding. Would you respond right now by making the very best gift you can to help these children keep singing because we're able to keep giving them the nutritious soup mix?

This entire outreach depends upon God's love expressed through you. I don't think there's a person watching that doesn't want to keep the sounds of joy alive in Africa.

**RANDY:** We do need to hear from you now. I hope you'll go online and go to the phone, make the best gift you can. The situation obviously is desperate, but there is a way, and you're a big part of that.

I hope you've enjoyed Kathie Lee Gifford. I know we have, Blynda.

**BLYNDA:** How could you not? I mean, someone with so much passion and knowledge. She's done all the work.

**RANDY:** And you request that book, we'd love to send it to you. Kathie Lee, thank you so much for being with us today.

**KATHIE LEE:** Oh, bless you both and the great work you've always done for years and years and years. That's why you're still doing it, because the favor of the Lord is on you, and because you put him first.

He loves that. He loves--well, shalom, shalom to you and all of your viewers. Thank you, everybody.

**RANDY:** You too. Keep up the good work. We appreciate you so much.

**KATHIE LEE:** Thank you.

**RANDY:** Come back, there's more. We'd love to see you next time here on "Life Today."

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