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Week 34

Tammy Trent

Betty Robison & Ann Pretorius

"New Vision"

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

BETTY ROBISON: And so I have answered this call from God to go forward. Yes, it will look different. I'm not James. I don't have that fiery personality that he had. But I have a heart that loves God, and I'm gonna go with what God does in my heart and in my spirit, whatever that might be. And I believe it's to lead Life Outreach forward.

ANNOUNCER: Betty Robison casts a vision for the future, next.

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BETTY: Welcome to "Life Today." Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty Robison, and I'm delighted to have two of my dearest friends here, Ann Pretorius from South Africa. We worked with Ann many years, and her husband Peter, on the mission field, and still do. And Tammy Trent, good to have you.

TAMMY TRENT: Good to be with you again.

BETTY: And we're gonna have some more good discussions today.

TAMMY: We are. Let me just say this, we did another fabulous show together that I love, so if you have missed any of the shows, you can go to lifetoday.org anytime and catch all the shows right there. But we get another fabulous moment together today, girls. And I'm thinking about, as we talk about life, where we've been, how life has changed for every single one of us, we're all widowed.

We're all widowed, sitting in these three chairs. And I know that there's many watching today that have probably been widowed, too, or life has taken an unexpected turn, and so I've written out a question to jump us in, and it's for both of you girls. We both--all three actually have spent years looking back on some incredible memories in our lives, we talked about that in the last show.

But now we're looking ahead, we're looking ahead in this show. So how do you embrace the future when it doesn't look like anything you thought it would? How, Ann, have you been able to do that? Because I think some people feel stuck, right? And I don't know how to embrace a future of the unknown.

ANN PRETORIUS: I think one of the biggest challenges for me is that I had to come to realize that my identity had been totally linked with Peter. I was Peter and Ann, or I was Peter's wife, and my identity was totally connected there, and I had to find my identity all over again, because what was my identity connected to? It was connected to God, and it was connected to our calling, to the precious calling that God had placed on our lives.

And with Peter gone, nothing had died except his physical body, but the calling of God was as alive as ever. And I remember feeling this sense of responsibility that hit me at first, to realize, "But I'm carrying this, and I can carry it, only because God is with me, not because I'm equipped."

TAMMY: What was that calling?

ANN: To reach out and reach as many people in Africa with a message of hope and love and care, and to bring transformation for them. But now, I was sitting in a situation where transformation was taking place. There was a transition, and I realized I needed to be the one who was going to walk us through this transition, because it wasn't just Ann and Peter, it was Ann and Peter and all of our teams in multiple countries, who were working hard every single day to reach out to the people and to achieve what our mission and our vision and our purpose was.

And so for me, individually, I had to realize how strongly that call of God was in me, and that God could divinely, supernaturally enable me to take on the oversight, because I'd been there right from the beginning. So I was more familiar with it than I even realized. And I could do it, and I did it with determination too.

TAMMY: That's right, and we're talking about the mission field. We're talking about the mission field when Peter Pretorius had this vision, and he's a great evangelist, and God's called him to mission work in Africa, and James Robison and Peter Pretorius connect, and all of a sudden James gets the vision, and he comes back to America and says, "I've got to tell everybody about this incredible mission and the incredible work of the Lord that we get to be a part of."

And so, Betty, for you, that same question I would ask, and it's so much more fresh for you today.

BETTY: It is pretty fresh. It hasn't been long, and I'm still dealing with the sorrow. And I guess you deal with that no matter how long it's been, you know, on and off. But there is a peace that God has given me that I cannot explain other than a peace that passes all understanding. Because when my husband went to be with Jesus, it's like God gave me an

unction in my spirit. He said, "Okay, just as your husband has always said to you, Betty, you can do anything God puts on your heart to do.

You can do it because he's called you to do it." Not by my own strength, only by God's strength. And so I have answered this call from God to go forward. Yes, it will look different. I'm a woman, I'm not James. I don't have that fiery personality that he had. But I have a heart that loves God, and I'm gonna go with what God does in my mind, in my heart, and in my spirit, whatever that might be. And I believe it's to lead Life Outreach forward with Jesus, and to continue with the mission work that God has-- but also to continue ministering to those that don't know Jesus in the first place, those that have never met him and want to know him.

We want to minister to you. Maybe you're struggling, you know, we want to minister to you. But God is showing me how big he is in these days, as I walk moment by moment. Yes, I weep a lot. I miss him. He was a strong man of God, and Ann, Peter was too. They were a lot alike.

ANN: In many ways.

BETTY: Ann and I would just kind of sit back and watch, and kind of snicker in our own spirits because we thought, "These are two of a kind."

ANN: Oh my goodness, yes. And there wasn't a dull moment. There was always a new vision, a new purpose, a new project that was birthing in them, and somehow we had to fulfill on that. And we did, and I remember there was one day when I just felt--I was totally spent. Tammy, I was finished. And you've been there and you've seen, and how it wears on you emotionally, physically, mentally, in every way.

And I was just really finished, and I turned to Peter and I said, "I don't know if I can do this anymore. I don't know if I can continue." And he looked at me and he said, "Do you know what your problem is?" And I thought, "Where's the compassion?" I mean, do I know what my problem is? I don't know how to answer him. Do I say yes, I do know or no, I don't know?

And I just looked at him, and he told me anyway. He said, "Your problem is you've just got to become like a shifting spanner." I said, "A shifting spanner?" He said, "Yes," and I think you call it an adjustable wrench.

TAMMY: Yes, yes.

ANN: And I thought, "What a man solution! What a male answer!" A tool, yeah, a tool out of the toolbox is all you need. But you know, Tammy, I've remembered that, and it has been one of the most valuable comments that I've been able to hold on to, because if we're going to walk through transformation, we have to be adaptable, and we need to be able to turn that little wheel on that instrument and just make that adjustment and realize that

God in us is more than able to bring that transformation, that adjustment, that enables us to have the tool in our hands to fit whatever the need is.

And Betty, I encourage you with that. God has given you that shifting spanner that you can use to make the adjustments that you are walking through, and it's a supernatural gift.

BETTY: And it's walking by his Spirit and through his Spirit, you know? It's not counting on what I know or don't know, it's what God knows. And he knows everything, and he's gonna go before me, and he's gonna be my rear guard, and I trust him with that.

TAMMY: Can I ask you, Ann, maybe even for Betty, for a word of encouragement for her as she looks ahead at the days ahead? What's one adjustment that God helped you make in your life that you go back to often as a widow?

ANN: I think the fact that the vision was so strongly implanted in me that it could rule and it could govern, and it was a God-given supernatural calling. And that calling wasn't dependent on my husband, that calling was dependent on God, and that the transformation that needed to take place was the God factor, that God is the one who would make the transformation and the adjustment, and it would be right.

Because all I wanted was to do the right thing, and did I feel equipped? No. Do we feel equipped? No. But we had learned over the years, and you've seen it, Betty, for even longer years than I did, that every time God commissioned something, he fulfilled on it, and he divinely enabled you to do it.

BETTY: And I think it's God saying, too, go with me on this. You don't have to have things you think have to be in order. I'm an order person. "This needs to be a certain place," or this, you know, and certain ideas of what needs to take place. God says, "Scrap it all. Follow me."

TAMMY: Yes, exactly.

BETTY: And that's a big step for me. James was already doing that. He was already following him to the extent that he didn't have to have a written out plan necessarily. God was his plan.

TAMMY: I love that. I think about you a lot right now. You and I are a little bit further along. I'm 25 years into my healing. You're eight years into your healing. You're just a few months. So I think about you in this moment. And on the days that you feel like giving up, the days that the enemy would lie to you and tell you that you're not enough, that you're not capable, that you're not smart enough, that you don't have what it takes, I've heard those same lies.

You've probably heard the lies. I can't imagine there not being plenty of viewers that hear those lies every day as well, with whatever they're carrying. So Ann and I, who have stepped into the journey sooner than you have, what could you impart to Betty today on

those days, what would you say to your sister if she texted you and just said, "I can't do it today, Ann, I can't do it today.

Help me, pray for me"? What word of encouragement would you give to her and to those that just don't think they have it?

ANN: You know what I think is the most important thing, Betty, is that we can know we have the God factor. And God doesn't only provide financially, God provides in every dimension of every need that we have. He provides the people. He provides the skills. He provides the experience. He is the provider, and we can trust him that he will provide. When I look back now and I see after the eight years, I carried everything for the first three years, and that enabled me to see where there were areas of lack, where there were blind spots. I always said, "If I'm gonna sail this ship, I need to sail a clean ship." And so I investigated to see where were our weaknesses, where did we have inadequate compliance issues or legal registrations or whatever it was, and God's enabled us to fill those gaps. And that's where I came to lean so much on Isak, because Isak was there.

God had spoken to him when Peter died and said, "Step up and be a support to your mother," and he was such a wonderful support. Tammy, you've been in the field with Isak, you've seen him in operation. You've seen the passion that he has for evangelism and for reaching the poor, and to bring transformation. And so for me, after those three years, when I felt the season was right, I turned to Isak and I said, "Are you ready?" And he smiled and he laughed and he said, "Mum, I've been ready for a long time." He used to tell his dad when he was six years old, "One day when I run this ministry, I won't do it like you do." So God was preparing him from such a young age, and that vision and that DNA of what we committed to do has always been inside his heart, and he's doing a wonderful job today. I am so fulfilled to see my son running with this vision and doing what he's needing to do.

Did I know it the day Peter passed away? I didn't. I didn't know how God was gonna do it. But I did know that the same God who's provided for every single thing that we've ever needed to fulfill the vision, that he would do exactly the same. The faithfulness and the blessing of knowing God. I don't know how people do it without him. And you know what? There are probably people who are watching the show today who are saying, "I've lost my identity because we lost our business, and my heart was so connected with the identity of this business that has ruled my life for the last 20 years, 30 years, it's been my source of supply." No, no, no, God is your source of supply, God is there for you, and you have lost nothing. Your identity is in him, and you are able to take on the impossible because you know him.

TAMMY: Hallelujah. Girl, that is a word for somebody today, so receive it from Jesus. That's a word for you today. And you can see why we are so passionate about partnering with this incredible family, the Pretorius. We are so passionate about partnering with you. It's been since 1989. You can see it, but it's the relationship, it's the commitment, it's the partnership. So it started with this vision in 1989, with these two incredible families, and it continues today. And that's why we jump in every single show and we give an opportunity

for the viewers to come alongside now and partner with what began all these years ago. Like, you now get to be a part of the family, you get to be a part of this vision that begun and that is not stopping. It is continuing, it is going further. The determination is even greater, the depth of the need is greater. And I know I've heard the passion in both of your voices, and with all of us here at Life Outreach, it doesn't end.

What James and Peter began, it will continue, through the mighty work of God and the mighty work of the anointing on these women and their vision and the family and Isak. Every one of us that gets the privilege of going on to a mission field, we will always come back and tell you an honest, real, true story of a great, real, true need that is happening right now. People are dying right now because of simple stuff, a lack of water, a lack of food. They need hope. And these women are filled with hope today. We are all filled with it. All of us have lost. We've all lost something. We've lost great here. We've lost our husbands. We've had to rebuild our identity. We've had to rebuild life and hope. But there are people right now that have lost even greater, I think, because they're still living, but they're holding the tension of suffering, ache, the letdown, watching their children before their eyes dying because of the lack of water in their life.

I can't help, girls, to say, thank you for the vision that you started and imparted into the lives of so many of us here and so many of our viewers that have partnered with you. And I think for me, when I think about them, and maybe somebody thinking, "Okay, I've loved this ministry, I've given to this ministry for years," because hopefully we've given back to you. Our heart is to give to the people on the mission field, but also to give to you every day, to give you hope and to give you purpose to keep fighting through the struggles you might be going through. So if somebody feels forgotten today, we know that many feel forgotten on the mission field, but if somebody watching right now feels forgotten, what word can we give them today?

BETTY: Well, as one that has newly lost her husband, the love of her life, I have to say that it has to start right here in your own heart. You're trusting the Lord Jesus with your whole heart, mind, and soul, and the Scripture that has meant so much to me when our daughter passed away almost 14 years ago, and now my husband recently left us, Ephesians 3:14-20. Let me please, quickly, I know we're running out of time, but I've got to read this.

I feel compelled to. "When I think of all of this, I fall to my knees and I pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down deep into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand," and this part really gets me, "as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is for us.

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to fully understand. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and the power that comes from God."

That is complete, and that's where I have come in my life, God's love. I have to trust his love.

TAMMY: That's right.

BETTY: It is deep. It is wide. It is long. It never ends.

TAMMY: His love is so deep and wide, and I think you've set up this next piece again without knowing it. It's a beautiful piece, with your son Isak going into a village and showing them great compassion and love. And then we're gonna show you on the other side of that how we can now show them love as well. Take a minute and watch this.

ANNOUNCER: When water like this is your only choice, you drink it. Otherwise, in three to five days without water, you can die due to dehydration. Delfina, now 58 years of age, has fought this battle her whole life, needing to give her children water to live, but having no other choice but to collect it from unsafe sources like this.

The result? Most of her children died from fever, vomiting, and diarrhea brought on by waterborne diseases. Now, as a grandmother, her life of sorrow continues with the recent death of her granddaughter.

ISAK PRETORIUS: I asked her how it feels when she thinks of the children that she's lost, and she just weeps as she remembers and then shares the pain and the struggle of seeing her children go through that, of losing her children. The pain and the struggle that she's experienced as a mother, not being able to give her children clean water, water that doesn't kill you. Yet when asked what she would say to those who could make it possible, and her response was that she would plead with us to be able to do that, but she said, "Not just for me, not just for my children, for all the mothers here.

For all the children, for our whole community, because they're all suffering the same." Like me, you can't imagine losing just one of your children, let alone multiple children. I can't imagine the heartbreak and the anguish of experiencing that. Well, I'm asking you from that heart to join hearts with us and partner with us to make sure that we can bring fresh, clean, life-giving water, not the water of death, but the water of life, to this mother, to her children and grandchildren, to the other mothers in this community that she literally speaks on their behalf, to the other precious children, the ones who are still here, but are still suffering.

TAMMY: The ones that are still here but are still suffering. The ones that are still here but are still suffering. It's hard to kind of wrap your head around that. That's just one story. That's one mother. But there are hundreds of thousands of mothers right now that are suffering, that are afraid, that are pleading with God and God's people for help. I think if any one of us was suffering and struggling deeply like this right now, we would say, "Please, can somebody help me? Can somebody help me? Is there somebody there that could just lend a hand?" And I think that's the cry of my heart today. That's the cry of all of our hearts.

Is there somebody watching today that can help? Is that somebody you? Could you help this mother? Could you help her children?

Could you help this village? It's really not that difficult. It's actually easy. It's an incredible opportunity that we've been given. Let me show you what that looks like. For \$48, you can provide water for 10 of those children that you just saw in that video. For \$144, you can provide water for 30. For \$4800, you could help provide an entire well, where we will come in there with our rig, we'll assess the land first, we'll find the exact perfect place to put that well, and then we'll begin to dig, and we'll go deeper and deeper and deeper until we hit fresh water, and then we'll watch it spring up like new life coming up before our eyes and before their eyes, and life is about to change for everyone around them. And you get to be a part of that with us today.

So please, won't you help us drill another well and another well and another well for people that are so desperate for water right now today? Go online, make a call, give the best gift that you can possibly give today that will begin to save a life right now. Our goal is 350 wells, but I'm hoping it's well beyond 350, and we're able to do it. We have everything ready to go, we just need you. We need some extra funds today to make it happen. We're believing, we've got the vision, we're determined, and we will change one life at a time, but we need you today. Come alongside us, partner with us, and let's do this together.

ANNOUNCER: Every day, far too many lives are lost to waterborne disease, and tragically, children under the age of five are the most vulnerable. Through Mission Water for Life, you can give desperate mothers hope and precious children a future by helping provide clean, life-giving water before it's too late. Our goal this year is to drill 350 water wells in areas where the need is greatest, but it won't be possible without you. Today, your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for 5 children.

A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime. In thanks for your gift of any amount, we'll send you "Prayers for My Spiritual Health." This beautifully-crafted prayer book will meet you in the places where anxiety, grief, and spiritual weariness run deep, guiding you through prayers for inner peace, emotional healing, and intimacy with God. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "Your Life of Prayer" bundle.

This collection includes "Prayers for My Spiritual Health," along with "Prayers for My Physical Health" and the "Life Prayer" journal, three companions to help strengthen your walk with Christ. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people, or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well, and request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd." Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

BETTY: Thank you so much for joining us today. I hope you were blessed, and if you have some problems that you're dealing with, if you have some concerns, please don't hesitate to call and ask someone to pray with you. The number's on the screen, it's really easy to do.

They love you, they'll be delighted to hear your thoughts and your concerns. Thank you, Ann, so much for being here. It's so good to see you again. And God bless you, Tammy, thank you. I love you both.

TAMMY: Love you, love partnering with you, love being a part of your life and you a part of mine. I've loved this time with you. Bless you both so much.

BETTY: Thank you so much, God bless you all. Please join us again.

[music]

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