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Week 48

Betty Robison & Blynda Lane

Anne Graham Lotz

“Hope For The Future”

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

ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ: And so many people, I don't know how you feel about Revelation, but they're sort of afraid of it, you know. They see all the beasts and the numbers, and they can't figure it out, but the first verse gives the key, and the first verse of Revelation says, "The revelation of Jesus Christ." So the primary purpose of the book of Revelation is not primarily prophecy or to say something about the future or to give all these prophetic weird things, it's to reveal Jesus.

ANNOUNCER: Anne Graham Lotz paints a hopeful picture of the end times, next.

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BETTY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today", thank you so much for joining us. And for the first time, I have with me Blynda Lane. We're a twosome today!

BLYNDA LANE: We've never done this together!

BETTY: It's gonna be fun. I'm gonna lean on you, and you lean on me, because this is new for both of us, but we'll have a great time.

BLYNDA: Well, you do such an amazing job, and I have watched you in the recent months doing this, and you are really, really special, you're very talented.

BETTY: Well, we depend on God to carry us.

BLYNDA LANE: Isn't that the truth, that's all we can do. But this is really an honor.

BETTY: Well, it's an honor for me too. And we have a delightful guest today, one that's no stranger to this.

BLYNDA: We love her.

BETTY: We love her very much. Anne Graham Lotz, thank you for being with us today.

ANNE: So glad to be here, Betty, thank you, and Blynda, it's just a joy, so thank you for inviting me.

BETTY: Pleasure to have you, and you have a book that you've kind of rewritten, as you said, updated, and it's called "The Vision of Glory", I love that title.

ANNE: Yeah, so it's the first book I ever wrote, and I received a Gold Medallion for Excellence when it came out. It's on the book of Revelation. And so many people, I don't know how you feel about Revelation, but they're sort of afraid of it, you know, they see all the beasts and the numbers, and they can't figure it out.

But the first verse gives the key, and the first verse of Revelation says, "The revelation of Jesus Christ." So the primary purpose of the book of Revelation is not primarily prophecy or to say something about the future or to give all these prophetic weird things, it's to reveal Jesus. And so it's the end of the story.

It tells us where history is going. And in the end, Jesus wins, and we'll be with him forever, so it's--.

BETTY: I think that's good to focus on that, because so many times, I'm one of those people that was kind of a-- didn't quite understand Revelation, you know? It seemed complex to me, and I just thought, "There's too many things to try to figure out," and stuff, but it's more about the glory of God.

ANNE: Exactly, in the first chapter, verse 3, it says that, "Blessed are those who read the book and take it to heart because the time is near." And so there's--the only book in the Bible that promises a special blessing for those who don't just read it but continue to read it, continue to study it, and I think the special blessing is that in the book of Revelation, you see Jesus in a way you don't see him in the Gospels or some of the other portions of Scripture. You see him in his glory, his majesty, his power.

And the chapters that people are afraid of, with all the beasts and whatever, those are for the bad guys. So the Lord is going to hold, you know, people accountable for their rebellion and their sin and their cruelty, and some of the things we see going on today, there is going to be a reckoning.

BETTY: And I like the idea That you're showing there's more hope in the Revelation than what we think, than a doomsday.

ANNE: Yeah, totally, well, it was written at a time in the first century, when Emperor Domitian was on the throne and he declared himself to be God, when the early church refused to worship him, that he poured out persecution, I mean, burned them at the stake, he fed them to the lions. It was just--he was like a madman with absolute power, and the early church didn't even know they had a future, and it was that moment that God gave to

the Apostle John a vision of the future, and it was to give hope that they would know that Jesus is in control. And looking at our world today, Betty, I mean, the corruption, the confusion, the conflict, the division, the polarization, the meanness, it's just breathtaking what's happening.

You just read the headlines and it's like you wanna say, "I can't believe it, I can't believe it, I can't believe--" but the book of Revelation tells us that Jesus is seated on the throne, he's in charge, he's working out a purpose in this world, and one day he's going to come back and receive us to himself, so John 14 says we can be where he is. So the last chapters of Revelation tell us about heaven and give us a glimpse into our heavenly home, and it's thrilling. So it doesn't give us enough to satisfy our curiosity, but it gives us enough information we wanna be there.

BLYNDA: So this book will help you read Revelation, understand it from-- really like a love letter from Jesus, like his glory, like, we have that to look forward to, but we also can apply it to our lives while we're on earth. We can live understanding, like, you even say in the book, to be "preoccupied with Jesus". I love that idea, that we're just gonna be preoccupied with him.

ANNE: Yes, and I think the "live in the light of eternity". This life is not all there is, the best is yet to come. So it's a thrilling book, and actually I go from Revelation 1 all the way through chapter 22, so every verse of Revelation is covered in this.

It's like a--I don't like to call it this, maybe to turn people off, it's like a devotional commentary. It'll take you through it, but in a way that you understand.

And all the details, the beast and the numbers, I can't figure out, nobody can figure out. So we work through that, but the whole purpose is to see Jesus in the pages of the book of Revelation.

BLYNDA: Man, I love that idea, that you didn't write this feeling like you had to have all the answers.

ANNE: I don't.

BLYNDA: Yeah, you--. No, we don't, but you wrote it pointing people to Jesus.

ANNE: Absolutely, yeah.

BETTY: What are some of the things personally that you found that helped you in Revelation in just your life and what's going on in your life?

ANNE: There's so many personal things, I'll tell you, I wrote it when my youngest daughter had been in Rwanda right after the massacre there, and she worked in an orphanage, and she came back and she was just debriefing. She would sob for three days, just the things that she had seen, the body parts that were still there and the hopelessness, and so the

book of Revelation, that's what prompted me to write this. I dedicated it to the hopeless, because people who seem to be hopeless, if you have faith in Jesus, you have hope.

But chapter 2, Jesus writes letters to the churches, and so chapters 2 and 3 are seven letters to seven different churches. And so the one he used to call me into ministry outside my home, and the door had been closed to me, but he said in there, "I know you've not denied my name, I know you have a little strength, so I've opened a door for you that nobody can shut." And it was when my children were five, three, and ten months old, and all you have as a young mother is a little strength.

I'd not denied his name, but--and then I applied again for the class, and he opened the door for me, and that launched me into ministry outside my home, so that one was meaningful. There's another church that's Sardis, that he said, "I have something against you," you know, "because you have a reputation for being alive, but you're dead." And he spoke to me through that once too, because I had depended on other people to pray for me, and I wasn't praying for myself like I should have.

And so he said, "Anne, you're going around with a worldwide reputation. You have a reputation for being alive, but if you don't put prayer life back, you know, then you're going to die on the inside." And I mean, it jerked me up, I went to Brookstone at the mall and got an alarm clock that, you know, when it went off, your heart would beat and you couldn't go back to sleep, and started getting up early in the morning to have that time with him.

And so there are many things through there, and even, you know, the glimpse into heaven to see where my husband is, where James is, so they're enjoying eternity with Jesus, and there's so much of Revelation, I love the entire book. And you know, when I was saved, I was eight or nine when I asked Jesus to come into my heart. I remember it was a Good Friday, can't remember the year, but I'd watched a picture about Jesus on TV, saw the scene of the cross, knew he had died for me, asked him to take away my sin, forgive me all the wrong things, and then come into my heart, and he did.

He came into my heart, and then I read the Bible, started reading the Bible through, so by the time I was 10 or 11, I'd read it through, and I came to the book of Revelation, and Betty, I don't know why, but I've loved it ever since. I've just loved the book of Revelation. So I don't know why, but the Lord has given me a strong sense that if I live out my lifetime, my natural lifetime, I'll live to see his return and what we call the Rapture, when he comes back to receive us to himself.

But Revelation tells you so much that I think needs to be taught for people who maybe won't be in the Rapture, and they need to know what's coming, those years of tribulation, to know that there is hope. When you think it's hopeless, and the whole world seems to be going to hell, then Jesus is in control. He'll come for them if they put their faith in him.

BETTY: And God didn't say we wouldn't go through those times of trial and tribulation, you know, he didn't promise that everything was just gonna be a smooth road. It wasn't for

Jesus. He had a rough road to travel, you know, and then he gave his whole life for us, that we might have eternal life.

But I just--what you're saying just so relates to me, especially with what I'm going through and the loss of my husband, and I just, you know, I just have clung, I find myself clinging to the Lord, and I find myself, in other words, not allowing the enemy to push me away from God's truth, but to grab hold of it. And I get up, just like you're talking about, every morning, and that's my first thought is, "I gotta talk to God". I've got to get in his truth and in his Word, and that means so much.

If you're watching there today and you say, "I'm desperate, no one's coming to help me," God's right there with you, with his arms around you, waiting for you to ask him to come and to direct you and to lead you and to deliver you from whatever you're going through today. As I get up every morning, I go to God's Word in Ephesians, and I say, "God, how wide, how deep your love is for me." And then I go to God in Ephesians 6, and I talk about putting on his armor.

I have realized how important that is, to be dressed up in God, and it just helps my whole day, it makes the whole day different. Not that I don't have those sad times, because I lost the love of my life.

You did too, you lost the love of your life, and it makes a big difference, but God is there. He's holding us, he's lifting us up, and he catches every tear we shed.

ANNE: He's the lover of your soul.

BETTY: He is, he's become so sweet to my heart, he has.

BLYNDA: And I just can't sit here, I can't, I can't sit here and have the audience see that I am sitting between these two giants of the faith, two women who have suffered great loss, but out of that loss, I just need to say, I just want to commend you both, because out of your loss is actually what fueled something remarkable in both of you. You both, after the loss of a husband, turned the dial up and said, "God, you're not done with me, there's purpose here." And for somebody in a different generation looking up at you, and for all of those that are watching that might be in my generation, God is not done with you until he calls you home, and these women right here, y'all are a testament to that, and I just wanna thank you, from the women sitting here in my generation, to say thank you for giving us an example to look at that says, "Wow, okay, that would be a devastating thing to lose a spouse," and maybe in an age that it's like, "Okay, well, I can just fold my hands and be done," and you both said, "No, there's more work to be done."

ANNE: Can I give you one of the keys, and I'm sure Betty would agree with it, but it's to develop your personal relationship with God now, so that--so my relationship with God, my husband enriched it for sure. We were married 49 years, I think you were--.

BETTY: Sixty-three.

ANNE: So it's a lifetime. But my relationship with God was developed and strengthened apart from my husband. I mean, with my husband, but when he went to heaven, my relationship with the Lord was already established in full, so I would just say to those who are watching that it's important for you now to spend time with the Lord in prayer, Bible reading, in the fellowship, you know, with other believers, sharing your faith, so that when something happens to you like that, and I pray it wouldn't, but you know, you never know what's going to take place, and whatever comes, you want your relationship with the Lord to be strong and vibrant and will carry you through that, so it's something to live for.

That's what eternal life is, actually. Jesus said in John 17 that he's come to give us eternal life. That's not just heaven when you die, it's a personal, permanent love relationship with Jesus now that death doesn't interrupt.

So death is just your faith become sight, you know, you just keep moving right on in the relationship that you've had, except Corinthians says that then we're going to know him as fully as we are now known, you know, so it'll be wonderful. But just don't neglect your personal relationship with God, because that's what's gonna carry--what you've seen for Betty and me, that's what it was. You just shift gears, but you continue in the relationship with God through faith in Jesus that you've established and worked on and developed, and it carries you through these hard times.

BETTY: What you're saying too is that God has prepared us along the way. It didn't just all of a sudden come up. We might not have known the--we didn't know the full path that he was gonna take.

I had no idea that God would say, "Now I'm gonna put you in the place that I prepared for you," and I thought, "God, what are you talking about?" So I just kind of said, "Okay." You have to say okay to God.

And before I might not have been-- I wasn't ready, probably, you know? Probably it would have frightened me if he had said, "One day you will be head of the ministry, you will be leading out," and I thought, "God, not me, not this little bashful girl that never thought she was good for much of anything, never noticed, you know, anything like that. I'm just alongside my husband.

What am I gonna do?" But God has a way. His time is perfect.

God was not surprised. I was surprised, but God's never been surprised.

He's already had that plan worked out, and yet, Anne, don't you find that on our journey that we've been on, you've been on it a little longer than I have, but even in those times, we're not gonna say, "Hey, you won't have those moments that you're not weeping, that you're not sad, the loneliness is not there," but you're saying if that relationship with God is

established, God brings it out, and I mean, I grab hold tight. Yes, I have family and I have friends that have just cared for me and really just wanna do anything they can to help, but only God can fill the inward need that I have.

ANNE: Well, the Holy Spirit is our helper and our comforter, and there's some comfort other people try to give, and I'm like you. I love them, thank the Lord for them, but only the Holy Spirit can comfort me deep down inside. And yes, there are tears, and I don't mean to discourage you, but my husband's been in heaven 11 years, and I still grieve.

BETTY: I know that's true.

ANNE: So, but that sense of purpose and knowing I'm here for a reason, that God has something for me to do. And I love the Lord Jesus with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength.

I love to serve him, I love to do what I can to get other people into his Word, like the book of Revelation, so that they will know him and enjoy him and look forward to seeing him face to face. And so I've looked forward to that day, and I've got quite a group of people that are going to be there to welcome me too, so my parents and my in-laws and my husband and his brothers, and there's so many, you know, and you'll have James.

BETTY: And many others too, our daughter Robin, our daughter. I'll tell you what I said, I'm sure she was the first one to greet him and say, "Dad, what took you so long?" So she's thrilled to have one of her family members there.

So they're rejoicing and they're waiting on all of us, you know. Someday we'll all be there, if you have asked Jesus into your heart. That is the key, and knowing him personally, for he will give you eternal life.

Can you imagine what God did for us? He sent his only Son, that we might have everlasting life, and I hope if you don't know him right now, you'll get on your knees and say, "Jesus, please come into my heart. I want to receive you for the first time," and God will do that.

So just do that in Jesus's name, and then call that number that's on the screen and let someone pray with you. They would love to encourage you and pray with you and talk to you about the needs that you need to call on the Father about.

They will do that with you. Anne, thank you so much for being here.

ANNE: It's been such a blessing, Betty, it was a blessing to see the Lord coming through you in such a beautiful way. And you too, Blynda, as well.

BLYNDA: You two have--I am so blessed by this conversation, and I'm encouraged, and I know your book will bring a lot of hope, because maybe not everybody watching is a widow, but we all know pain, we all know suffering.

ANNE: And it is a book of hope, the book of Revelation was written to give hope to the hopeless.

BETTY: And now we're gonna give our friends that are watching and already been so blessed, I know you have been. But if you've been blessed, we want to send you Anne Graham Lotz's book, if you will help us do what God's called this ministry to do, and that's to reach out to those that are in desperate need, these hungry little children. Please do that with us, God bless you, watch this.

ANNOUNCER: In the heart of Angola, Africa, lies a village not unlike any other. A mother, Julieta, walks with her son Jose to a meeting of elders and leaders to seek out a medical screening. It is there that their unusual story becomes known to the Life Outreach team, for the truth hidden behind the eyes of this young boy is that he is not a child at all, but actually an 18-year-old young man.

ISAK PRETORIUS: This is why these screenings are so absolutely critical. So, first I thought he was a ten-year-old that was really small.

ANNOUNCER: The missions team found it hard to believe Jose was 18 years old.

FEMALE: Maybe it was a mistake, there's no way.

ISAK: The thing is, they baptized him in 2009. This is from the church.

BLYNDA: I mean, it's official, it looks very official, it's even stamped.

ANNOUNCER: But his mother presented them with a record from their church certifying the year of his birth and his baptism. It suddenly sunk in how years of malnutrition had taken its toll on Jose.

ISAK: He's 18 years old, from multiple years of suffering from severe malnutrition, has literally been stunted, obviously has suffered again and again. We'll see what his measurements are, but they're going to be that of maybe a seven- or a ten-year-old or something. And then we looked earlier at how his belly is distended like it is.

You can see how thin his arms are, you can see the external, but that's going on inside. And so, this child actually needs to be in the clinic.

BLYNDA: Yeah, this is urgent.

ANNOUNCER: Indeed, the following day, Jose did go to the local clinic for a medical evaluation. From there he will receive the further care he so desperately needs.

ISAK: And it tells us the story of how malnutrition, sometimes it kills faster, other times it kills slowly, but what it does is it steals life.

BLYNDA: I'm a mom, and I actually had a son that was ill for part of his life, and I remember what it was like to get on my knees at night and pray over my son that God would heal him, and so she deserves the same hope, that her son could be made well. Would you just be moved to action today, to help? Jose deserves that.

BETTY: Wow, I can't believe that. That young man, he's a young man, 18 years old, and he looks like-- Blynda, he looks like he's about eight. You were there.

BLYNDA: I was there, and I did, I thought--originally I said he was seven or eight, Isak thought he was ten. None of us could believe that he was 18, and it was so heartbreaking because there was no life in his eyes, there was no life in his body. It's like his body had stopped growing at like age ten, and this is what malnutrition does.

BETTY: It's a miracle he's lived that long.

BLYNDA: This is what we concluded, it was a miracle he was alive, we were so grateful he got to the malnutrition clinic, but he has a long road ahead, such a long road, painful.

BETTY: He's not the only one. You understand that there's many, many, many of these children like this. Some of them don't live that long.

It's a miracle that he's reached the age of 18. Will you help us now with the children? We can feed them.

$44 will get 400 meals, can you imagine? $77, 700 meals, $110, 1000 meals, and $1100, 10,000 meals. That's a lot of children to be able to feed.

Eleven cents per meal, that's not much, and it can make a difference between life and death. Blynda, I hope they'll help us.

BLYNDA: And Betty, something that's really important that they may not recognize is we're trying to provide 20 million meals because we cannot, in these villages, just give them one meal for one day. That's not going to change the malnutrition crisis in that village. They need, ongoing, a daily meal of this hot, nutrient-dense, vitamin-enriched food, and so that's our goal, of 20 million meals, because they need them every day.

BETTY: Absolutely, I hope you feel this urgency, as we do, to help these children. Let's give them meals. We can make this happen, join with us.

We love you, God bless you, and if you will give and help us, we'll send you James's book, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom". It's a joy to read, God bless you.

ANNOUNCER: This holiday season, many families will gather around tables filled with food, but for mothers in impoverished communities, simply finding enough food to feed their children can be a daily struggle. Through Life's Christmas Meals Blessing, your

generosity can help provide 20 million nutritious meals for hungry children. One meal, one child, and one precious life at a time.

Eleven cents, that's all it takes to provide a life-saving, nourishing meal. Your gift of $44 today can help provide 400 meals, $77 will provide 700 meals, and $110 will help provide 1000 meals for children in desperate need. And with any gift, you may request James Robison's final book, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", as a thank-you for your support.

Discover the freedom James found in Jesus and how you can experience it too. With your gift of $110 or more, request the "Fruitful and Flourishing" bundle, a beautiful collection of daily encouragement to remind you of God's faithful care and his promise of guidance from Isaiah chapter 58, verse 11.

Finally, with your gift of $1100 or more, you will help provide 10,000 meals for children in need and can request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd". So please call, write, or make your gift online today.

ISAK: We've been hearing Rute's story. It's a tragic story. The story of a mother who lost her young child this year to malnutrition.

We can break the cycle of death in these communities through that silent killer of malnutrition that is literally coming and stealing their lives. And here's how we do it. We make sure that we can establish Mission Feeding programs here and sustain them so that we're bringing the nutrition every day that these children both need and deserve.

We have our teams on the ground, we have our infrastructure in place, thanks to many of you who've made that possible through opening your hearts and giving the gifts that you've given before. But what we need now is we need the support to be able to provide the nutritional resources that ensure that the food keeps flowing to these communities, that ensures that that vital life-giving nutrition is provided to Rute, to her family, and to the families that she represents in these communities here in Angola.

We're ready to do the job, we're in place to make it happen, but we can't do it without you. And that's why we need you to open your hearts today, and we need you to do everything that you can do to give that gift of life, to give the gift of food.

BETTY: Thank you so much for joining us today. I know you were truly blessed by Anne Graham Lotz's story. You can get her book if you ask for it, and you help us with the children, and you have a podcast, is that right?

ANNE: "Bible Conversations" with my daughter Rachel-Ruth, and you can find that at my website, annegrahamlotz.org, so-- but we just have discussed different things, but from the Scripture's point of view.

BETTY: That's wonderful, thank you again so much for being with us. And God bless you, thank you for joining us. We love you, please join us again.

♪From where you're standing ♪

♪On your own ♪

♪It's so quiet here ♪

♪And I feel so cold ♪

♪This house no longer ♪

♪Feels like home ♪

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KIRT SCHNEIDER: Look at their next door neighbor that doesn't believe in God, but they seem to be such a nice person, and they think, "Would God really send that person to hell?"

ANNOUNCER: Next week

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