

12/13/23 from 4/25/23
Week 18: Spring Mission Feeding
James and Betty Robison
Legacy of life #2

In the studio

BETTY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Thank you so much for joining us. I think you'll be blessed today. James and I are sharing our 60-year journey in marriage and ministry. I hope your hearts are blessed.

JAMES: Well, we've been married 60 years and just celebrated that anniversary. And this is 60 years of ministry, which you're going to find out how Betty, in a way, miraculously launched that.

BETTY: Without really realizing it.

JAMES: I'm telling you, I didn't know what was being launched. None of us did. Nobody could believe it because I was so shy. Nobody ever thought I would ever talk. I never gave a talk in school. I got zero if I had to give a speech. And I wouldn't eat lunch in the school cafeteria. For the whole time that we went to school, I think after I met Betty and we dated, I probably ate a few times in the cafeteria. But in the ten years I lived in Austin, I never one time ate in the lunchroom. I was too shy. I carried my lunch in a paper sack and went off and ate by myself because I was changing. I moved 17 times in ten years, so I was in a new area almost all the time. And I was shy is an understatement.

So anyway, I've now moved if you did miss yesterday, well, go back and watch *Life Today* online. You can get it in high definition and watch and see as I told the story of how I nearly killed my father. He tried to kill my mother and said he was going to kill

me. In self-defense I nearly killed him. And Betty, the only reason that I believe my dad did not move is because if he had moved, I would have shot him with a .30-06. And I will promise you, from here to the television camera, that's how close I was, it would have killed him. There is no way it doesn't. It's that big of an impact with a .30-06.

And I believe he sat still because I think that church where Brother and Mrs. Hale is, and you were a member there, you were a teenager now by this time, I believe that church never stopped praying for the little boy that lived with their pastor and his wife for the first five years. But he was dragged out from under the bed by his mother and hitchhiked all the way to Austin and lived there ten years until this horrible occasion when my father that raped my mother came in and nearly killed her, and I nearly killed him in self-defense. Had that church ever stopped praying for me, I believe I would have shot him. And you know that would have changed my world forever.

I want to emphasize what I just said and its importance. I said I believe the miracle occurred because the church never stopped praying for me. Can I tell you something about the 60 years that I've been married to this beautiful girl, the 25 soon-to-be 26 grandchildren we'll have, the three children we have, the one in heaven— and by the way, if you hadn't prayed for us through losing Robin, I don't know if we could have made it. And I want you to know that your prayers, I believe, are the reason why our family is so blessed. Because I was so busy preaching that I didn't spend as much time with my wife and our children as I should have. I've spent a whole lot more time with our grandchildren. And I just think that your prayers mean so much more than you realize. And your prayers for us, don't ever stop. I want you to know that Betty and I and our staff are really serious about praying for you.

Father, I do pray even now for everybody that's listening. I want them to hear the journey that I'm talking about in our 60-year journey together and 60 years of ministry. I want everyone here to know how special and precious they are to you, and how much you love them, despite their challenges or their failures. Please let them know that; in Jesus' name.

Well, I told you yesterday, I've now moved to Pasadena, a suburb of Houston, and I met this girl the first Sunday in church. Then they had Vacation Bible School, and we helped the young people. But we kind of spent time talking to each other. And really, I was falling in love faster than she was. But we, ultimately, did indeed fall in love. And as we were dating, and I had really and truly had a relationship experience with the Father, this Father, God had become so real to me. I remember I said something to you one night on a date and I want you to tell our audience how that affected you because you were the sweetest girl, as far as I'm concerned that God ever made— and you still are.

Isn't it hard to believe that we're going to be 80 years old this year? And you look at Betty and you say, we don't believe it. And I know, she looks like my daughter or my granddaughter. But the thing is that you all have loved us in your prayers and prayed for us, and from the bottom of my heart thank you. And thank you for all the people you've helped us put the arms of Jesus around. And we want to get his arms around you.

So I want you to hear what happened to this original first church lady. Boy, she was good! But I said to her one night on a date, I said, "Betty, Jesus is more real to me than the skin on my arms." And you said what?

BETTY: I said, "I don't know him like that. I don't know Jesus like that." How can that be? I mean you're looking at a girl who grew up in church. I studied about Jesus. I read about Jesus. I was there every time the church doors were open. My mother saw to it that we had that foundation. But James was talking about a relationship that was foreign to me. And I thought, what do you mean by that? And it just took me back. I was at a loss for words. I didn't know what to say.

Now, this was after God had called you into ministry, but before that, I have to go back a little bit. When you came back and you moved there— we always had youth revivals in our church,⁰ and the young people stepped in and took the place of the staff of the church, the pastor, the youth pastor, the music director, everybody, and we played those parts that week.

JAMES: Yeah, they would elect role models. They would elect a pastor.

BETTY: Yeah. And so I wanted James to be a part of that, but I knew how bashful he was. Can you believe it? This man was bashful? Anyway, I so wanted him to love the fact of just being involved with church activities. I wanted him to get involved. So I got the young people together and I said, "Let's elect James as youth pastor."

So he did not know this. And so I just— I was so excited. When we did elect him, he wasn't very happy with me because that meant you had to sit on the platform—

JAMES: I had to sit on the platform, yeah.

BETTY: You had to sit by the youth evangelist that week. He had to introduce him every night and that was just so foreign to what he had ever done. But I look back and I think, this was God's plan, even further than what I knew, so much further. And the week went on and Friday night came. And you tell them what happened.

JAMES: Well, God called me to preach. He just said I want you to be an evangelist. I'm sitting there listening to this 16-year-old evangelist named Daniel Vestal who had been preaching since he was 12. I said, God, how will I make a living? And God said to me, I'm just standing there on the platform, how would I live? And I've been poor for ten years, total poverty. I sure didn't want to be poor, and I figured preachers are poor. And I said how will I live? And he said, where's your faith? I said it is all in you.

And I floated down off that platform. I grabbed the preacher's hand and said, "God's called me to be an evangelist." Well, he announced it to the church. And I'm telling you, they were in shock. They literally said we thought God was calling someone else and you overheard the call.

But the point is, I know he called me. I'm telling you, Betty, I was a changed person.

Because in three days, I was preaching with the authority and power that I have preached with for 60 years.

BETTY: Absolutely. And so we began to go to every meeting we could find because he really wanted to grow in the Lord. I felt like I was kind of along for the ride because I didn't understand the relationship that he had with God.

And then this night came where he said, "He is as real to me as you are sitting next to me." I thought, dear God, I don't know you like that— but I want to! And you took me home from that date and I fell on my knees by my bed, and I said, God, I want to know you like that. And I stayed up all night talking to Jesus. Went to church that next morning.

JAMES: The next morning you taught a junior girl's Sunday School class. Then you went to the choir and sang in the choir like you did. And then you and your sister walked up to the pulpit, and they sang a duet before the pastor preached. She went and sat back down. What happened at the end?

BETTY: Wow! And so the pastor gave the invitation, and I was the first one down there on my knees saying, Jesus, I accept you for the first time in my life. I've gone to church, I've studied about you, I've known about you, but I haven't known you. And I receive you into my heart.

I walked over to the pastor who is the one that James lived with, and I said, "Brother Hale, I just accepted Jesus over there." And he said, "Betty, what do you mean? You're the best girl in our church." I said, "I don't care. I just accepted Jesus." And it was different from that day forward.

JAMES: You have never doubted your salvation. And yes, the sweet, perfect church lady became a different person. And God literally led us into ministry. And to say that my ministry exploded is an understatement. Here is a shy kid that within years, before I'm

even 20, in my early 20s, I'm filling up coliseums and stadiums overflowing the largest churches in America. I did 600 citywide crusades, eight-day crusades. I did 41 eight-day crusades in one year. Bear in mind, I was doing pre-crusade meetings to help raise the funds for all these crusades. We didn't have a big support base.

When I was still 19 years old preaching, Billy Graham found me. He saw God all over me. He set up our whole organization. I'm 19 years old. They named it the James Robison Evangelistic Association. Interestingly, 30 years ago God told me to take my name off everything; that he didn't want my ministry to be built around a person or a personality but around his purpose, a purpose-led ministry. And I literally had it legally transferred, all the board of directors, to *LIFE Outreach International*—*LIFE! Life Today* television. It used to be James Robison. It started out *In the Word with James Robison*. Joyce Meyer picked that up much later.

But the point is that I started preaching and God began to bless with attendance records everywhere. They would announce from the coliseum speakers, Mr. Robison just broke Elvis Presley's record. He just broke the Rolling Stones' record. He just broke the Beatles' record. This happened all over America.

So here I am, think about this, please think about it. We see millions of people make decisions for Christ. There were two million people that just in those years were baptized into churches. They set baptismal records in virtually every city wherever we went, people coming into the churches. So God blessed the ministry beyond anything you could ever imagine for somebody to have happen when they're so young what happened to me.

Now, please listen because you don't want to miss this. Here I am too much the center of attention. Billy Graham said, "You're the best." Jerry Falwell said that. Pastor at First Baptist Dallas, W. A. Criswell said it. Adrian Rogers said it, and Charles Stanley said it. So many people, you might know their names, said it. They just loved to hear me preach. "He was so anointed," they said.

But God told me, please, please don't miss this. This is just 30 years ago, God said, James, there is only one source that's to be the center of attention and that's Jesus, and the greatest in the kingdom is servant. Jesus said that to his disciples, "Greatest in the kingdom is servant." Quit discussing who is going to sit at the head, and who is going to be seen. "Greatest in the kingdom is servant. Remember, I came not to be served but to serve. And as my Father has sent me, even so, send I you." Jesus said when he came, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then he said later, "The kingdom of heaven is in you." Then he said later after the resurrection, "The kingdom of heaven is in you in resurrection power."

What he is saying that you must get, and we must get, the greatest on this earth is servant and the greatest servant is kingdom servant. The Father's will and the Father's dream is for his family to reveal the Father by being the family of the perfect Father in love with him, in love with one another, connected to one another like members of the body are connected so that each member connects and submits and supplies every other member what it needs. And they all submit to the one head which is Christ.

So God says I want a family that looks like me. I want a body that looks like Jesus. And that is the only force— and that is a kingdom servant force. That is a family of kingdom servants fulfilling the Father's vision. That is his will being done through his family and his body on his planet, his earth, for his glory. And the only force on this earth that the gates of hell cannot overpower and dismantle and destroy and disrupt is the church, the body of Christ. The gates of hell do not have the power to overflow the influence of the body of Christ.

The only way, Betty, we turned this nation back to the freedom and the peace that we long for, and for people to come back under control, for lawlessness to be overcome, by lawless hearts being changed, and being law enforcement being reliable and honest and truthful. The only way we turn back to the truth and to the freedom that we long for is for the body of Christ to come together and fulfill the Father's vision.

Betty, that is what God did in my life 30 years ago when he said, "I'm going to send you to the least of these all over the world." That didn't mean we quit preaching. We preach every day on television. But I try to bring the greatest people, the greatest testimonies, people that you've never heard of who have experienced God and they express his will. And we began to help all ministries and all ministers, and we began to lift people above the denominational barriers and all the isms and all the partisanship, and we began to see people get healthy.

That's what the supporters of *LIFE Outreach* make happen. That's what God wants to use you to spend the rest of your life doing. His kingdom servants doing the Father's will and seeing his vision fulfilled in our day. That's why we're here.

I am going to literally, in the next program, share where God took us as kingdom servants, where he continues to take us, what he is doing, but I'm going to take it one step further for you. I'm going to show you what God wants to do through his family, which is all of us and everybody that knows him. Everybody that goes to churches isn't the church. The church meets in churches but the church of the born-again, literally born into God, into a relationship with the Father, into a connectedness in the family where we know we have been born from above and we have become new creations in Christ. And when we come together in supernatural unity that Jesus prayed for, we're going to literally shake the gates of hell from their hinges. And you're going to behold the glory of the Lord before he comes in glory for the church that's adorned in his glory. We're going to talk about that in the next program.

Betty, all of our viewers know, when you watch us, we're going to ask you to become the miracle someone's praying for. You know what I'm praying? That you will watch what you're about to see with Tammy Trent, with children that need a miracle.

Now think about this, Betty and I had a daughter with cancer that there is no known cure. You may have a child, a grandchild, or a family member that's fighting a disease right now. What if someone came to you and said, "I'm going to give you the perfect cure. It's

a proven cure. It's not being tested. This is the perfect cure for your child, your grandchild, your family member, or your loved one. I want to give it to you. I'll bring it to you." What would you think?

What if you could be the person that delivers that perfect cure? Absolutely perfect! Well, you are. And I'm going to show you right now how you can deliver the perfect cure. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Tammy: It's something you hear about but it's something you don't see every day. This precious little child fighting for her life with every breath she tries to take. I can hear it. She is literally dying in front of our eyes. Not because of a disease, not because of a virus, but because she has no food.

Her body is frail; she is breaking down. She is fighting right now to live. Just one bowl of food, one bowl of food a day could have kept this little child from being in this bed, in this moment. It amazes me and it blows me away to think that it's that simple. That there's something that we can do but if we don't, then we'll see hundreds of thousands of more children just like this because of malnutrition.

End of clip

In the studio

JAMES: Little sweetheart, I wish you could hear me. Mom, I wish you could hear me. We want to be the miracle you prayed for. I want you to see the miracle you're praying for. And I promise you, if we had the cure, just like I know you would have done it for our daughter. You would have, I've said this to you from the time we lost her. You would have driven, you would have hitchhiked across America to give us the cure for our daughter. I know you would have. And I believe you want to give that little baby, look at

that— beautiful eyes. I've held so many thousands of them. But we, with your help, have saved 18 million little children like the ones you're looking at.

Would you be the one, just like you could wish for someone to bring you the cure for your loved one, would you be the one that would do it? Would you be that person? Would you go and just get a bank card right now? Or if you want to write a check, get a check, and make it to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving. But call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. But you can get your bank card and call that number and people will be calling to say we're giving our life to Christ, send us a Bible study, pray with us. That number is paid for by love. But you go and get your bank card and use it like a check. And use it for a check. Say I'm going to save ten children's lives, I'm giving \$100. Or \$50 for five, or \$30 for three— surely you can do that.

But I believe some of you can do even more than that. You might give \$1,000 and help us save 100 children, that's how many we can feed. Would you please? You can go online, you can take that bank card and use it like a check and go online. Would you do it right now? Would you provide the miracle that mothers and parents and families are praying for, and those that are suffering are longing for?

Father, please move everyone to do your will and make a kingdom impact; in Jesus' name.

Would you make that impact right now? It will last forever. We have some gifts to send you that I promise will bless you and build you up because that's what we always want to do. Please, just do what God's leading you to do. Do it right now.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Across the continent of Africa children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition, and even death. With food reserves gone, and many areas experiencing severe famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000

children who are counting on us.

Through *LIFE*'s Mission Feeding outreach your gift of love can be an answer to 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 three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the brand-new *LIFE* planner. Bound in soft-touch leather, this planner will help you with your daily walk, with space for you to record your appointments, goals, inspirational notes, and prayers.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "God's Promise" serving bowl. This beautiful and versatile ceramic bowl is decorated with Second Corinthians 9:8 and will make a lovely addition to your table or home.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds." Inspired by Jesus' words in Matthew 6:26.

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

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: I hope you do ask for the beautiful gifts that we've offered. I can show you the cardinals— this is absolutely beautiful. It was Robin's favorite, our daughter who is in heaven. I know she is watching. Betty told you about giving her life to Christ even though she was a church lady, and so dedicated and so good but she didn't know Jesus. If you prayed a while ago, Father, I want to know you. I want to know you like Betty came to know you. She came out of the choir to trust you, I'm coming to you right now. I want you to be my Father. I trust Jesus as my savior. I want him to be my Lord. I want to know

you as Father; in Jesus' name.

If you prayed that prayer, I'd like to send you a simple Bible study that introduces you to the relationship, *Knowing God As Father* your father. I'd be so happy to send it to you. Just call and let one of our staff pray with you and just ask for the book. We'll send it to you.

Thank you for helping us share life. Thank you for helping us give food to the starving. Betty and I are going to conclude this 60-year journey just in an overview in the next program. Don't miss it because it brings us right up to now. Thank you so much for watching.