

2/13/24 from 6/26/23

Week 7: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Olivia Lane

In the studio

BETTY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty Robison and this is James. We have a wonderful guest with us today, Olivia Lane. You're going to really be blessed.

JAMES: And this girl was an atheist. I mean she was a proud atheist. She didn't have any interest and then something happened to her. She's going to tell you about it. She became a very popular, very well-known Christian singer. Because she did write a song that became so popular, it is amazing, which you're going to get to hear with her in person here today. It's titled, "Woman at the Well." So I would just say every woman that needs to go to the well, every person that needs to go to the well and take the well home with you.

By the way, we're going to be drilling water wells today. Can you believe that we're getting close to 8,000 water wells drilled? That means people like you gave water to children and their families that never had anything but disease-ridden, death-for-certain water with all kinds of contamination. And we're going to give clean water.

Well, Olivia Lane, Olivia, we're so glad to have you on *Life Today*.

OLIVIA: I'm so happy to be here!

JAMES: We're so glad to have you here in person. And you don't look like you could have been an atheist. I mean, did you smile and look happy when you were an atheist?

OLIVIA: I tried to have it all together, but I didn't.

JAMES: Did you have to take something to get high to be happy as an atheist? Or did you just tough it out?

OLIVIA: Too many things. I was looking for -- asking all the right questions and looking in all the wrong places. I grew up going to church. I'm from Houston, Texas, so fellow Texan.

JAMES: I was born in Houston.

OLIVIA: Yes! It is a good place to grow up. It was a wonderful childhood. Like everybody growing up younger, you go to church with your family. But for me, I think being so young, I must have missed the day that they taught on like having a relationship with the Lord because all I remember is getting there early to get donuts, maybe seeing my friends, maybe hoping my crush of the week was there. I really don't remember any sermon when I look back on that time.

And as you grow older, and you experience personal setbacks and personal failures, I arrived at this question that I think so many of us do if you don't have that solid root of having a deep intimate relationship with the Lord. If there is a good God, why would bad things happen? And there was no purpose for my pain. I didn't understand why I was going through what I was going through. I had a brief high school and college time in Los Angeles. I sort of categorize that as my spiritual wheels fell off the wagon. Because I just saw a lot of kind of crazy spiritual stuff and I just said, nope! We're not going down that road. I'm not even going to entertain having a spiritual life.

So flash forward to 2017, graduated college and I've been in Nashville for about five

years, and I was on the road. I was playing lots of shows and kind of living that rock star lifestyle where you're in your 20s and you're having a ball and you can have three hours of sleep and still function, and late nights. I started to lose my voice and that's when everything changed.

JAMES: What was causing that?

OLIVIA: I wasn't taking care of myself. It was totally me. I had no idea what I was doing with my life.

JAMES: And was your voice doing something for you at the time? Were you progressing in some way or were you making a living with your voice?

OLIVIA: I was making a living, but it was probably the bare minimum. I felt like I was doing so much and trying to put so much control of my future in my hands, and the weight of that began to crush me.

JAMES: Where would you sing? In clubs or what?

OLIVIA: All over the country. It was opening for big country artists for like 9,000 people at a state fair. And then it was like for two people at a biker bar in West Virginia. It was more so those kind of shows versus the big shows. And so you begin to question like what am I doing this for? Like what is this all for? All these big questions began to creep up in me. While I'm losing my voice, I'm not taking care of myself, my performer identity was being ripped from me. And that's when things started to ruffle my feathers in my life because that's what I identified with so much. Now that I couldn't be the best performer, I didn't know who I was.

I had to make the difficult decision to go off the road and get into -- I went to vocal therapy to heal my voice and then I actually went to regular therapy. And this is where God really ramps up, because I didn't know it at the time, but both my vocal therapist and

my therapist were believers. My therapist, I found Jesus in the therapy room.

JAMES: Did they have a personality that got your attention? Or did you find yourself wanting to push back even because they were associated with religion? How did that encounter begin to be a discussion?

OLIVIA: Yeah, the Lord was so good because I didn't know my therapist was a believer for about a year. She had talked -- she explained to me that spirituality was important in healing, but I was so not there. And she had the discernment to be like okay, we're not going to go there yet. And my vocal therapist, love her -- I loved her, but she was a categorized coo coo for Jesus cocoa puffs. She loved Jesus. She was like Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! I was like, that's too much. Too much! But I like you so I'm going to keep hanging out with you. But she was always preaching the gospel to me even though I wasn't quite receptive to hearing it yet.

So anyway, about a year in, it was like 2017 to 2018, I was doing a lot of great healing in the therapy room. I felt like I was falling back in love with myself and answering a lot of big questions that I had. And I remember coming into the therapy room and I asked my therapist, "Okay, what's the next step for me? I want more healing."

She said, "Olivia, you're going to have to figure out what your spiritual life means." And of course, I didn't want to do that -- you know, being an atheist. I was like is there another route that we can take? Like I know like you're the therapist in the room but.

So I eventually swallowed my pride, and we began having beautiful discussions of who I thought God was. And I realized I had so many wrong preconceived notions of who God was. She so beautifully explained it to me. I was able to go to her with all these big questions, well, if there is a good God why would bad things happen? Is this coincidence or is this God's voice?

It was really the early forms of discipleship for me before I even knew what that word

meant. And we sort of settled, she was like, "Olivia, if you want God to reveal himself just ask him. He will." And that was like December 2017. And then for about four months, I basically woke up every morning and I was like, God, if you're real, you'll reveal yourself to me. You're going to do something big, it's going to be amazing! Of course, I wasn't ready.

But as those four months went on my heart began to soften, and I began to say, you know what? If this truly is real, God, I'm just so desperate for you to just come in and blow up my life because I need it! And I got my answer on April 29th, 2018. I was sitting in my living room, and I was reading this beautiful book that my therapist had recommended to me called *Walking With God* by John Eldredge. It was the most beautiful display of what a deep intimate relationship with the Lord looked like. I had never been presented that gospel before. This was finally sinking in for me that this is the life that I want. I want to find that kind of purpose for my life. I want to have that kind of relationship in my life.

I remember reading a sentence in the book, "We are in a world at war." Then all of a sudden, tears were dropping onto the page. I was happy. I mean I was like why am I crying? This is so bizarre! And then it kind of felt like all of my emotions were being felt at once. And then I sensed a presence in the room, so I looked up. And the way that my living room was situated was I was on my couch and then I had a really big window right here. And so I looked up into this window, into this beautiful blue-sky day and I saw a shadow silhouette of Jesus with his arms outstretched. And in that moment, I knew.

JAMES: And it was a vision, right?

OLIVIA: Yeah! It was a visual encounter with the Lord in my living room. And I immediately texted my therapist after and I was like, "I think I'm having a panic attack! I think I'm having a mental breakdown! What's happening?" Because I mean, for perspective, I hadn't been to church in years, I didn't own a Bible. I didn't even know what the words Holy Spirit meant. I had never even heard those words.

And so she texted me and she said, "Don't worry, you were just in the presence of the Holy Spirit for the very first time."

And I was like, what? So that was my encounter.

JAMES: And you had a supernatural vision and a transformation of your life. All right. Betty, isn't this an interesting story?

BETTY: It really is! And isn't it amazing how God knows exactly what we need when we need it? And then he presents it to us, and we can accept it or reject it.

OLIVIA: Absolutely! Absolutely! And I love in my encounter too, I was asking for God to reveal himself, but it was Jesus who showed up. There have been many, many faith lessons and foundational lessons I've had to learn along the way these last five years, and I feel so grateful that I had people just scoop me up and disciple me -- just intense discipleship. And my song, "Woman at the Well," I feel like my career --

JAMES: Now you wrote the song, right? All of it and it became popular. Were you surprised at how it took off?

OLIVIA: Absolutely! Because I didn't move to Nashville to sing songs about Jesus. I never thought that was going to be my life ever! But when the Lord does a work, you know?

JAMES: Okay. Now did you read the story of the woman at the well and then this came to you?

OLIVIA: Yeah.

JAMES: Did you kind of see yourself as a woman at the well in some ways?

OLIVIA: Absolutely.

JAMES: And could you see a lot of women that need to be at the well and a lot of people?

OLIVIA: Yes.

JAMES: Okay, so when the song took off, then did you realize it was kind of moving you now in a whole new direction away from say, pure country music and you were going to do Christian music? Is that primarily what you do?

OLIVIA: Yeah. So it was absolutely terrifying when the Lord started to prick my heart about hey! You haven't surrendered your music to me yet. You need to ask me what you want me to do with your music. And I was like, I don't know because it had been a part of my identity for so long it ran me. But now, my identity was in Christ, and I needed to honor what the Lord wanted me to do with the music and the gifts he had given me.

And so I'll never forget, I was on a long hike with him, and I was just wrestling with him and like, Lord, what do you want me to do with my music? Singing songs about Jesus? I feel so ill-equipped to do that. And I just heard the words, "Make the music."

JAMES: I know that our whole audience wants to hear this song that God just put in you. Would you sing it for us?

OLIVIA: I would love to.

JAMES: And then I want you to tell us what it did for you and how all of our viewers can find out how maybe you might come to their area, their church, or their community. I want you to tell them how they can do that. Would you like to hear her sing it? Olivia, we're looking forward to hearing this.

OLIVIA: I'm very excited to play it!

[Woman at the Well]

I heard a story from the Bible
When I was just a little girl
About a brokenhearted woman
Who met the Savior of the world
Thought it was just another story
One that the preacher man would read
But as I'm sitting here at home
Drinking red wine all alone
I think that woman might be me

Cause tonight our futures
Like the woman at the well
Wondering how someone could love me
When I can't love myself
But you want me as I am
And that sounds crazy
I guess maybe that's why grace is so amazing
Staring at that empty bottle
I swear I caught a glance of him
He met me right there at the bottom
And turned that wine into living water
And taught me how to love again
Yeah, tonight I feel just like
The woman at the well
Wondering how someone could love me

When I can't love myself
But you want me as I am
And that sounds crazy
I guess maybe that's why
Grace is so amazing
It's no longer just a story
When I read it
Cause I've seen him for myself
And I believe it
Yeah, tonight I feel just like
The woman at the well
Wondering how someone could love me
When I can't love myself
But you want me as I am
And that sounds crazy
I guess maybe that's why
Grace is so amazing
Just like the story from the Bible
I heard when I was just a girl
I'm the brokenhearted woman
Who met the Savior of the world

JAMES: Wow! Wow! I wish you'd go read that woman at the well story. Now think about what I'm saying. Jesus had no business talking to a woman, and we sure don't go to a well in the middle of the day; it's not the right time. And you know you need to go out and get some food to eat with the boys. And there he is, and this woman has been married five times, Jesus told her, and said, "Now, the man you're living with is not your husband."

Now, this is quite a conversation to strike up when men are not supposed to talk to

women. And Jewish people certainly don't talk to that Samaritan woman. Just everything was wrong. But that woman, Olivia, left and became everything he just told his disciples when they came back that you need to become. Because I've got meat to eat y'all don't know anything about it. While you're out after MacDonald's burgers, I'm sitting here doing the will of the Father and you pray the Father will send laborers into the field.

That woman at the well, the moment she left that well, she took the well with her and she became a laborer in the field. And she went and told all these people, "Come meet a man that told me everything I ever did but he ain't telling you. I'm covered, I'm shameless, I'm blameless, I'm a new person, no matter what's happened." That is the Jesus that's inviting you. That's the Jesus you met, isn't it?

OLIVIA: Absolutely.

JAMES: That's the Jesus that came into your heart.

OLIVIA: He met me in my shame and in my broken. And the thing is, my encounter was such a powerful display of God, but the true gift is that Jesus offers us to meet in our broken and our shame every single day. No matter how far we fall he's there. He just wants us to invite him into it.

BETTY: And he's ready to meet any of us at the well to put his arms around us and share his love that we might go away and share his love with those that will listen.

JAMES: That's what she did. What we're all supposed to do. It's what you do. If you watch *Life Today*, you're not going to watch *Life Today* and not start sharing *Life Today* with someone else because that's what we do.

If people wanted you to come and sing in their area, how would they contact you? Where would they go on a website to invite you? Tell them where to go.

OLIVIA: Absolutely. So you can go to OliviaLane.com. You can also follow me on TiK ToK, on Instagram. And honestly, you can DM me and I'll get you to the right people. I like to respond to people in my direct messages. But yeah, if you just Google Olivia Lane something will come up. And we'll -- I want to bring my one-woman show to you. I want to tell my story to anybody who will listen, and I will sing my songs to anyone who will listen.

JAMES: I think she means that. I think she's met this man that was at that well. I think she has taken the well home with her.

Would you do this? Would you look in and watch where you're going to see with the broken heart God's given me and Betty and all our viewers, and yeah, Tammy Trent, you're going to see, I think the compassion of the Lord for the needs of those that are so obvious, and the cure is so simple, so perfect.

We want to drill another 350 wells and we found where the water is but there is no well. And everything around them is contaminated and disease-ridden. It is instant death, basically, a horrible painful death. Would you watch this? And then would you let God make you like that woman at the well and start giving people a well? And giving them life? Watch this closely.

On the mission field

ANNOUNCER: These worn paths provide routes for people and animals alike so they can make their way to water sources. The problem with that is in most villages families have to share the very same water source with the animals.

JAMES: Animals drinking and sad -- is feces -- these ladies are here washing, and you can see by looking at the water that it's -- you wouldn't want to wash your clothes in it but they do. The problem is people drink this and it is absolutely 100 percent contaminated. And it is killing people here in Africa.

ANNOUNCER: It is hard to imagine the impact these polluted water sources have on a person until you take a look at the facts. The lack of safe water is one of the world's largest causes of illnesses. And even more tragic is the fact that these waterborne illnesses are one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of five.

TAMMY: What you see behind me is their only option for water every single day. To know that this water is affecting their little lives, and frankly, has killed many, many, many children. That just seems so horrific to think that this is what they drink every single day. And the thing is, it is something that can be fixed. We can change this. We can do something about it. We can come in here with our rig, we can set up the drill, we could drill them a water well that within days would change everything, turn their little bodies around and give them life. I promise you, it will make a difference. Let's bring them Water for LIFE.

In the studio

JAMES: I don't know how you could even look at those precious children and not want to give them a well. Betty, I would not be able to show people the dire conditions in Africa if I didn't know we had the perfect cure and we really do. And that's not an exaggeration.

BETTY: We really do. And if you could be over there and see, actually face to face with that water that they drink, it would turn your stomach. You'd have to turn away. You'd think, those precious little ones are putting that into their bodies -- and they keep putting it in there. The mothers are offering it to them because that's all they have.

Please join with us and let's drill the wells. They need them now as soon as we can get started on them. Let's give them a cup of fresh water.

JAMES: Would you please very prayerfully ask God what he wants you to do right

now? What can I do? Everyone can do something. Jesus said, "If you just give a cup of water in my name you won't lose your reward."

Do you know what the reward is for me that I gave a cup of water? That I gave a chance at life? I'm not waiting for some big return. I don't think about the return but you can't ever stop sowing and reaping. When you sow you reap. God is going to bless you. We don't need to get into that discussion. Why don't we think about others, knowing that God is thinking about us? But God wants to flow through us Water for LIFE.

Would you, right now, go get your bank card and use it like a check? Dial that number or go online. Take that card and make the largest gift you can. The wells cost an average of \$4800. It's been that way now for years. That in itself is a miracle. That's a lot of work from people managing all the resources, the petrol, all the machinery that you have paid for over the years, the drilling rigs, everything! You support the missionaries and the workers. Right now we need a miracle response.

Could you give a well? They cost \$4800. Many of our viewers tell us that the most exciting thing they do every year is drill a well. And they did what Betty and I do, they ask God to let them drill one every year. We've been able to do it. And I mean we've been doing it a long time. When they started, they were \$3600. Then they jumped to \$4800 but they stayed there a long time. That's a miracle. Would you drill a miracle well?

Or would you give so ten people could have water? \$48 will do that. If you can give part of a well, \$1200 or \$2400, and pray others join you, we've got another well. At whatever level you can come in, please, go get that card or make that check to *LIFE*. But call us and tell us what you're sending or go online and give it. Thank you so much.

We've got some inspirational gifts to bless you. We always want to bless you. Thank you for giving people water.

Begin Video

***ANNOUNCER:** Every day, thousands of lives are lost to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five. Through mission Water for LIFE, you can give mothers hope and children a future as we provide clean, life-giving water for thousands of children and their families before it's too late.*

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will provide for ten. \$72 will provide for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Daughter, written by James and Betty's granddaughter, Laney Rene. This insightful book invites all girls and women to walk in the freedom of their God-given identity and embrace who they really are.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "Great is the Lord" decorative blanket featuring the words of Psalm 145:3. This beautiful blanket is perfect for comfort and cold weather and a reminder of your help with Water for LIFE.

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 new bronze sculpture, "A Cup of Water," inspired by Jesus' words in Mark 9:41.

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Well, Betty and I want to thank you for doing what God leads you to do. You know, we really are, Olivia, thankful to God for sending you to the well, giving you that

song. There is her address, and you can go online, several places you can find her. But invite her to come and share how to know the person you meet at the well so you take the well home with you and you become laborers in the field knowing he's got you covered. He will give you grace and life.

Olivia, we're going to be praying for you. You're a beautiful girl. I'm so glad you're not an atheist. You look like somebody that's been to the well.

OLIVIA: Yes, yes, yes! Well, I'm so honored to have been here. Thank you for your time.

JAMES: Well, and these people out here have drilled lots of wells. And you pointed people to the person at the well, Jesus. Thank you for doing that. What a joy to labor alongside you. You have been such a blessing. Thank you!