

5/29/25

Week 22: SMF

James & Betty Robison

Tim Johnson

Studio discussion:

JAMES: Well, I just said -- I'm James Robison, by the way. Betty, we're Cowboys fans. Okay? I don't even need to say why. Well, one time we understood why we -- dear God, why? We're patient and prayerful. But here I've got a guy that went to Penn State?

TIM: I did.

JAMES: And you won the national championship. And then you beat, you might say, the Cowboys in the sense that they won the Super Bowl playing for, who were you playing?

TIM: Washington.

JAMES: Were they the Redskins then?

TIM: Back then, yes, sir.

JAMES: Back then they were okay. And you come in here and bring this book, *Fatherless No More*. I want to ask you about this picture because you told me your son took this picture. Tell me how that came to be.

TIM: First of all, I just need to honor you both for your legendary impact on the world, my life, and all who have heard you or seen you. So thank you for the privilege of being here.

That picture, believe it or not, sometimes makes me emotional because my wife and I were in Tennessee dropping our son off for his freshman year at Lipscomb University. And because he

was into photography, we were at lunch, and he would just take random, really great pictures. He took a photo. Weeks, it must have been weeks later, my wife showed me, “Oh, Sean took this picture of you.” I had no idea that he did. And so, when this idea of writing a book came up about six years ago, almost seven years ago, one impression hit me. It was the Father saying, “That photo.” We had different renditions of that photo because my son took a picture of me, and I've never seen a picture of my father.

JAMES: Well, I want to tell you, Tim, I just thank God for you. I want you to tell us and our viewers about your story. I hope you'll get this book because it's in the bookstores and you can get it online. But, we'd be happy to send it to you if you'll help us feed some starving kids because we want to say a big thank you for saving their lives.

Tim, tell me a little bit about your journey and how you ended up where you are now after winning a national championship in football. Winning the Super Bowl is a pretty big deal for an athlete, especially in football. Your whole world changed. Tell us about it.

TIM: So much of the details of what I would share are actually in the book, laid out pretty clearly. But I remember when I was in junior high, and like most kids, I was trying to find my way like everyone else. But I remember in junior high, I got in trouble being associated with some kids who were really in trouble. You know how sometimes you say, well, I wasn't in trouble. I didn't really do it. I actually did it. And so I'm in the principal's office, and I'm in this room, with just white walls. I realized I needed help. I felt like I was in jail myself because the principal's office was a very fearful thing, and I was a long way away from home. They bussed us 45 minutes away for school from our neighborhood. So, I realized I couldn't call my mom because she would work two or three jobs a day. I couldn't take her away. I realized I had nobody to call. I had no father to call. So, this is hindsight 20/20. I do believe that in my mind, I decided to never need him, to never need a father. Why need what you don't have? I began to move from there, adjusting my life based on whatever I needed to do for the moment to get by.

So, on my birth certificate, there's places on everyone's birth certificate for mom and dad. So my mom's place is filled in but in the father's space, it's empty. So, I walked around with a hole

in my soul for many years, feeling like I was a problem to be solved. I didn't know I was a person to be loved.

So through the course of time, just making it up as I went, I had a conversation in junior high, with a gentleman that said, "You can be different." He said, "You can be different." Now mind you, I had just quit the junior high basketball team and I was very average as an athlete. But he said, "You can be different." He told me about determination, motivation, discipline, and perseverance. So I just said, "Well, I don't have much to lose. I'm going to start applying myself." I started lifting weights. I started being more focused on just being an athlete after being a quitter and trying to see what this is all about. He said something that was critical, "There's someone around the corner that's always bigger and faster." So by the time I graduated high school, I was an All-American in high school, and I was recruited by most colleges in the country. I had a free ticket to go anywhere.

Fast-forward to my second year in college, I had another conversation. This time it wasn't about my athletics. It was about how I could live differently. And that scared me real bad because I'd never known how to tell the truth. I was a nice guy, prom king, All-American in high school, and one of the captains of the football team. I had a lot favorably going for me on the outside, but I did not know how to tell the truth, and it was evidenced by my relationship with my future wife. I hurt her so much. Out of the pain of my own fatherlessness, I didn't know how to treat a young lady. He said, "You can live differently." And he preached the gospel. After overcoming fear, I realized I didn't have to change my life, but I had to humble myself to trust that Jesus would. And when I finally let go of all the things that were barriers and things that I was gripping tight because I thought this was my life, I let it go. He gave me a new life and forgave me of all my sins. I'm married today to that woman that I couldn't tell the truth to because he restored everything that I had given away and lost because of the hole in my soul. He filled it with the love of the Father.

JAMES: Did you find in some way the reality of a real father?

TIM: Yes. You know mine was a pretty dramatic experience, and I've talked to people and they've had these. When I was with the Pittsburgh Steelers that first year, we would drive back and forth 3.5 hours one way to church, my wife and I. So weekend after weekend, I would work out, train during the week, get in the car, and we'd go to State College. Every Saturday, we would have the pastor teaching us young leaders. It was just a routine. We were so thrilled that we got to drive 3.5 hours. We didn't know you were supposed to complain. And so, one Saturday we do the same routine. We get in a circle and this time something happens that's unexplainable. Instead of praying, I ended up in the fetal position, bawling my eyes out, crying like a baby. I feel myself in the room and I'm wondering -- I'm sure you've had the situation where you're kind of wondering, why am I here? Like, what's going on? You're talking to yourself. I was thinking, why are you down here? Why are you crying? I'm a pro football player. I got a wife. I got a kid. I actually have a car now. My bills are paid. There was no reason. I'm on the ground and the pastor hesitated. I feel the room, but I don't see it because I'm bawling. He comes over and says, "Everything okay?" And out comes, "I've never had a father. I never had a father. I never had a father." I didn't even know that was in there. I had no clue that was in there. That little boy is the one Jesus found that he says, "I'm not going to leave you alone. I will not leave you as orphans. I am going to introduce you," because the pastor said this. He says, "God says he's going to father you." And now, salvation meant more than just me being forgiven for my sins and having eternal life. It's there's no reason for heaven without the Father. So it was that moment that began to shift my whole life to realizing that my birth certificate now has a name on it that no one can see but me. It's "Heavenly Father" written in red because it cost the blood of His Son to break the curse of fatherlessness over my life.

JAMES: You know as you were telling that I was flashing through all the years of -- I don't know because I never did have a father. Had some that would kind of fill in but I remember he became my Father. He became the Father of the fatherless kid. You've been so incredible! He's always listening. He's always ready to speak.

I want to thank you because you do talk to me so much, so clearly. And you're so patient, you're so loving. You're so inspirational, you're so powerful!

I think the exciting thing right now for me to be able to say, Tim is that I have lost my life in his dream and he knows it. I'm talking to him about fulfilling his dream. That's what I want. I said I want to fulfill your vision and your dream. But I'm telling him he's so real and he is to you. And now I feel like with what you're doing, you're seeing others come to know that Father. No matter what kind of father they've got, they've come to know the Father everyone can have, who is the ultimate Father.

TIM: Yes. My heart is compelled when you say “the Father's dream.” In March of 2022, I was in Nashville, oddly enough, and I prayed a prayer. Not what I want. I prayed, “Father, show me the secrets of your heart. Because I realized I don't have much past encouragement to give people to change the human condition. But one little word from your heart can change any heart.”

And do you know what he said? Two words: “Rikers Island.” He spoke to me. I don't always hear what he has to say. He says, “Rikers Island.” I knew what it was. I was aware of it. But I googled “Rikers Island” because I thought it was close. It's one of the most notorious jails in the world. It's an island of just jails on the hills of Queens in New York City. It is where the worst of the worst go. It's a very violent place. They call it hell on earth, basically. So I'm wondering, what does this have to do with me? Mind you, I ask, what's on your heart? I have a paragraph still in my notes where he showed me what he wanted to do. He says the theme of what he wanted to do was I'm going to move into that dark place in the lives of those no one has answers for. I'm shook. I end up on my bed in the fetal position, getting like, what are you doing? I don't understand this.

Long story short, in June of 2022, I landed on Rikers Island and the miracles, we don't even have time to tell you how I got there. It was absolutely divine. From that time, Rikers Island was at the height of violence. As we began the journey, I lived on Rikers Island, me and my former teammate, and lived in an RV. Never been done before, on Rikers Island for five months, with an original group of the Who's Who for crime in New York City in the 18- to 21-year-old population. So the violence is at an all-time high. This should have never happened to have these individuals in the same room, and it not be a bloodbath. I didn't have a weapon

except a word from the Father that he was going to move. And move he did! Because out of the 16, a couple of them had to go on, baptized 11 in the original group. In June it will be three years where we've had over 100 guys and have baptized over 80.

JAMES: Isn't that great!

TIM: And the violence in the jail went down that first year, along with other things that they did. And so, now on a regular basis, because he loves me so much, I want to learn to enjoy his love and be an extension, access point of his love to those around me. I pray, "Let my life reveal the secrets of your heart, whatever it may be."

JAMES: That's what he's doing, and that's what your wife inspires. Aren't they a beautiful couple?

BETTY: They really are! As I listened to your testimony of how God has worked in your life, the deliverance he brought you, I was sitting here thinking that not everyone will experience the same kind of deliverance. God knows our hearts better than we do. He knows what we need for where we are. It may be a striking moment like you had on the floor before him. But it may be just in the quietness of home. Many, many times, God in my quietness, when I take time to say, "God, talk to me," he brings such liberation and such compassion and such love for him and what he wants to do through this one body, this one person. He wants to do so much through you. You just yield to him and say, God, what do you see that I don't see?

JAMES: I want us to – I want you to hold my hand, Betty. I want you to reach over here; just lean toward me. I want all of you to know that I want you in this circle. I don't know what kind of relationship you had with your father, if you ever knew one, but you can know one. He loves you so much. He wants you in a circle of love. He wants you to help get his arms around a broken world, a dying world, a desperate world he gave his son to redeem. He wants to heal your broken heart. He wants to hold you. He wants to flow life through you like a river.

Father, I feel like there are people trying to press in around this table. Maybe they're just sitting in a public place, but they happen to see a TV, or they're at home. Maybe they're still in their pajamas. There they are, but they want to be in this circle of your love. They want your arms around them. They want you to hold them close enough to your heart that they can feel your heart, know your heart, and know your mind, and desire to do your will. They want your kingdom that has come to come in them in fullness. They want your will to be done on your earth as it is in heaven. That's what they're going to learn. Please, Lord, help them say to you, Father in heaven, be my father forever and forever, and let me help live to fulfill your dream. I want to be your child. I want you to be my Father. Lord, let them know you will be, in Jesus' name.

You can help fulfill the perfect Father's perfect dream. Not through perfection, but through lifting him up as Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Tim, thank you! Thank God for using you, buddy! Betty, thank you for being such a blessing to me and our family, all the people who have ever heard her when she didn't even think she could talk on television. Here she is. She's so precious. Well, you are too. You let him be the great father that he wants to be in your life, and let's share his Kingdom message.

Right now, we're trying, with your help, and it's the only way we can do it, to feed 350,000 starving children. Would you listen to our main missionary overseer's son? Peter Pretorius went to heaven. But boy, together we took millions to heaven. They got the pathway. Would you listen to him right now? My son was with him, Randy. But listen to him.

Transition roll-in:

ANNOUNCER: Villages in South Sudan are experiencing severe food insecurity. News reports tell us that over half the population are facing crisis-level hunger. Desperate mothers are doing whatever they can to survive. They forage for anything to feed their families in an effort to stave off the pain of hunger. The result? Their children are not receiving the proper nutrients for

their developing bodies and there has been an explosion in the number of children suffering from severe malnutrition. If not treated in time, many will end up in an early grave.

ISAK: These mothers with their children have come great distances. Some of them have walked one, even two days to get here. The reason they've come here is because we have a malnutrition clinic here. We're doing malnutrition screening. We're able to provide these children with what they so desperately need, which is food. Food that will save and sustain life. You're just getting a small picture of some of the mothers that are here that have come from all over this area. But this clinic is a much larger clinic than what you're seeing, that is filled to capacity with children. The screening areas just have mothers and children literally sitting outside. Inside the buildings, there are so many who are here, which is the true devastation of this story. Because the crisis that is, all those mothers being here is the crisis of malnutrition, of the fact that these mothers have come in desperate hope, hope that we will be able to answer what they need.

I need you to please be an answer to prayer today. I need you to open your heart. I need you to express God's heart and to extend his hands to the children like this, to the malnutrition clinics that so desperately need our assistance. But to the mothers out in the villages, if they get those resources, they can keep their children from ending up here and battling that battle of life and death.

Studio appeal:

JAMES: When I look at those little children, I can feel myself holding them. The missionaries warned us that we shouldn't hold the children. Many of them have very contagious diseases. But we never could help it, Betty. Don't you find it easy to love those children and want to be the miracle prayer that mothers are praying for? Don't you want that for them?

BETTY: Absolutely. James, the thing that blesses me so much is when I see the lines, the children lining up to get a bowl of porridge or whatever nutrition that they need that we've sent over there. Maybe you've helped us. You probably have. Please don't stop! These children need

care. The mothers have done all they can do. They have nothing to offer them. But hopefully, we do. I hope you'll join with us, and let's feed these precious little ones that God has given these mothers to care for.

JAMES: As I was watching the video and I saw the desperate situation in those children, many of them had reached a clinic that we helped establish, which is a last-ditch effort you might say, to save them. And they'd walk for days, sometimes, to get there. But we like to meet them in the field, and right there where they are, and take the food right to them. Which is what we do. Which is what we do when we drill a water well. We drill it right in the midst of the pain and the suffering.

But I was looking at that and thinking how many of them we watched come to get the food, and we put it in whatever they brought. Sometimes, they'd bring a plastic bag, and it would burn through it. Sometimes, little children would hold their hands out, and they couldn't hold it. It was hot. And then we watched many of them with old dirty tin cans. Something like that. This would have been a nice one. But when I was watching the video and I saw those little bowls, I remember where these came from. Someone like you watching said, why? Why are you giving those children that porridge in that dirty container? Why are you pouring it in that plastic bag and it burns through? Why don't we give them a nice plastic bowl? And the missionaries said, "We can't afford that. We can only afford the food. We can't afford a plastic bowl." Do you know what our viewers said? Do you know what you said? "Well, we can! We want to give them bowls."

We've given out millions of these, Betty. And there was – did you see that long line? Did you see how far it reached? And every one of those children, they'll stand there for two hours or more. Thousands, sometimes we'll start feeding 2,000 or 3000 in an area and 2,000 will show up three or four days later because they'll walk 50 miles to 100 miles. They found out there was food, and it was in a plastic bowl that love provided.

Betty, that's what our viewers are! They're expressions of love. Would you right now go and get your bank card and use it like a check, please? If you write a check, make it to LIFE but do it

now! Call us and tell us you're mailing it. Go online and make the best gift you possibly can. \$30, \$50, or \$100, you feed three, five, or ten children for the next months. Could you give \$1,000 or more and feed 100? Father, please, please move those viewing with your love, your compassion, and your help in Jesus' name. We are his hands and his arms. Would you reach out, put his arms around someone right now, and give them life? Please do it.

SMF Cause 2025:

ANNOUNCER: *Right now, 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, we'll send you Natural Remedies. This beautifully illustrated book explores ancient nutrition and the health benefits found in God's creation to help you live your best life. With your gift of \$100 or more, please request your "Health and Wellness bundle." This three-book set includes Natural Remedies, as well as Essential Fasting, a simple eating strategy to accelerate weight loss, crush cravings, and reverse aging, and the probiotic diet that gives effective strategies to improve digestion, boost brain health, and supercharge your immune system. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more, which will help feed 100 children, and you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

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

JORDAN: Hi, I'm Jordan Rubin, and for over two decades, my wife Nicki and I have been supporting the ministries of *LIFE*. With any gift to mission feeding, you will transform the lives of 350,000 children in Africa by giving them nutritious food and a hope for the future. With

your gift, you'll receive a powerful wellness bundle, which can bring the power of health and nutrition into your own home. Transform the lives of thousands and your own family. Do it today.

Studio good-bye:

JAMES: You know, I just feel like a lot of you are going to help us feed a lot of children. Please! Would you make the biggest possible gift knowing you're going to save lots of kids' lives? Be an answer to a lot of mothers' prayers and heal their broken hearts.

I know you've enjoyed Tim. If they wanted to write you or find out how they could communicate, or maybe even get you to come speak at some function, where would they go online to find you?

TIM: OrlandoWOC.org.

JAMES: Okay, that's a mouthful! So we're going to have it on the screen. You can get it from the prayer center. You can get it online. But, if you will help us feed as many of those children as you can, and we have the gifts from Jordan Rubin that we've told you about, but if you'd like to have this book and you say, James, I can identify. I sure would like to have it. I've got some friends that need it. Well, just help us feed those kids, and if you ask for the book we'll send it to you.

I love you, buddy.

TIM: I love you more!

JAMES: Amen. Thank you! And we love you. We want to thank you for helping us show so many people how much God loves them. Thank you. Thank you.