

Channel Surfing

Spotlight

Doing 'Life'

James and Betty Robison are celebrating 40 years of ministry together.

For millions of people tuning in around the world, the crossroads of spiritual, physical and emotional health meet in the living room-like TV studio of James and Betty Robison. And like the many twists and turns of life, the couple's LIFE Today talk show offers viewers both the expected and the unexpected with each in-depth interview.

"We've talked to ex-Playboy centerfolds, a man who had been in prison for acts of pedophilia, people who have lived homosexual lifestyles," James Robison says. "Our desire is to show that whatever challenges we face ... Jesus Christ is the answer to all of life's issues and that He loves everyone where they are."

The couple's down-to-earth appeal has attracted many interesting guests over the years, including comedian Tim Conway; actor Robert Duvall; George W. Bush, as governor of Texas; Amber Hagerman's mother, who fought to popularize Amber Alerts for missing children; singers Amy Grant and ex-Korn member Brian Welch; Wild at Heart author John Eldredge; controversial talk-show host Bill O'Reilly; and many others.

A little-known fact is that popular author and Bible teacher Beth Moore made her somewhat reluctant debut on LIFE Today in 2002. "She had no plans to do television," Robison recalls. He says they began airing Moore permanently in February 2006.

Known for frequently and candidly sharing stories of how God's grace has touched their own lives, Robison calls LIFE Today "reality television in the purest and truest sense of the word."

He normally takes the lead in interviewing guests while his wife, Betty, often generates what he describes as "E.F. Hutton moments." When she speaks, he says, "People hang on to every word."

But their potential worldwide audience of more than 250 million viewers didn't come overnight. Robison launched his TV preaching ministry at the prompting of Billy Graham in 1968, and it wasn't until 1992 that the program took on a more purpose-centered focus, changing its name from James Robison Evangelistic Association to LIFE Outreach International.

Today, aside from intriguing interviews, the end result of each program is to reach the world's poor. Every episode of LIFE Today eventually shifts focus away from guests to the urgent needs of Third World communities, appealing to viewers for their help in feeding the hungry, and digging wells with portable drills in Africa, Asia and South America.

Robison said he and his wife want to "inspire viewers to look beyond themselves, look up to God, look out at others and release God's love."

MARCIA DAVIS-SEALE

GMA 39th DOVE AWARDS

»The GMA Dove Awards will air on the Gospel Music Channel April 23—the show's first live broadcast since 2002. Nominees for Artist of the Year include The Clark Sisters, Chris Tomlin, tobyMac, Natalie Grant, Point of Grace, Skillet and Casting Crowns; the latter garnering six total nominations, two of them for lead singer Mark Hall. Chris Tomlin, David Crowder Band and tobyMac followed closely with five each.

»**The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) wants to fine ABC** television \$ million under indecency violations for airing "adult female nudity" on a 2003 episode of NYPD Blue. The FCC proposed the fine, the second largest in its history, because the controversial scene was aired outside the commission's recommended late-night "safe harbor." "The law is simple," says FCC commissioner Deborah Tate. "If a broadcaster makes the decision to show indecent programming, it must air between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. This is neither difficult to understand nor burdensome to implement."

»**The new and original weekday program Every Day With Marcus & Lisa began airing exclusively on FamilyNet** in late January as the network relaunched under the new direction of Charles Stanley. Marcus and Lisa Ryan address family issues and current events from their distinctive married-with-children perspective. Aside from interviews with authors, musicians and celebrities, the husband-and-wife team offers tips for cooking, home organization, technology, financial planning, gardening and decorating.