

Week 16

4/18/13

James: What a joy! What a privilege to be with you and to share. I'm James Robison. Betty and I, my beautiful wife, I think you know, this is 50 years we've celebrated our marriage and the next one will be 75 year anniversary and we hope you'll be around to push us up here.

But you know what? We have also, 50 years of ministry. We've got a wonderful conference -- an anniversary conference at Gateway this summer, July 18 to 20. You don't want to miss it. You'll see the speakers. Go online to LifeToday.org, go to that web site. They're putting it up right now so you can see where to go; navigate yourself over, register. Let us know that you want to eat with us, we'll all eat right there together, thousands of us, but the seating is limited. If you like our guests, if you like what we do, you don't want to miss this.

Dennis Jernigan is with us, and Dennis Jernigan, he says, kind of received a little encouragement years ago. Dennis has a story. He has nine children; that in itself is really a miracle because Dennis was held captive as a homosexual, and set free by the power of God to become a great praise, not only leader and singer, but writer. Many people call him the Psalmist of our day, and in so many ways, that's true.

Would you welcome Dennis Jernigan to *LIFE Today*?

Hey, Dennis, I'm glad to see you.

Dennis: Thank you. Good to see you too.

James: We've got a limited time, even though Oprah gave up her show, she didn't give us the one hour time slot paid for. So we don't have a whole lot of time but I want us to cover a lot of ground. I want to say that I thank God for you. I thank God for his greatness to deliver anyone from any form of bondage.

I personally, although I believe the homosexual attraction or that bondage is one that the person trapped in it probably feels a certain animosity coming from the community, even that is supposed to be the community of love, the church, oftentimes -- that's sad. I personally don't think that grip would be any greater than it would be for a heterosexual that is just driven pretty strong toward women or compulsive

toward men. They've got a lot of names for the nymphomaniac or somebody that is just filled with lust, and I can definitely understand that power.

When somebody tells me "I'm the way I am and I can't help it," I want to ask you since you've battled that problem that I am now learning from this small percentage of the American population, that the rest of us don't know how to think, we don't understand battles, that this is simply the way God makes people and that's the way you are and you're stuck. I just need to know if that's so.

Dennis: No, it is not so. The Lord set me free back in 1981. I thought that's the way I was. In fact, I'd given up. I'd said, "This is just the way I was born. I'm going to stop fighting it, I'm going to embrace it." The minute I embraced it, I dived headlong into a relationship; I'm very ashamed to even admit that. But I gave myself to this life and I expected peace to come.

And for a season, I guess it did but after a while I became so frustrated, felt so used all of the time, I thought, well, this can't be right either. So I went on this incredible journey of discovery. I cut off this relationship I was in. I decided I would go into seminary and then God began to speak to me three days before I was to go to seminary because a friend called me and said, "Dennis, the Lord has been speaking to me about you," which scared me to death because I thought, man, the Lord doesn't speak to me about me so what is he saying to this guy?

Well, he said the Lord came to him in a dream and in this dream God was giving me music and people all over the world were singing the songs. And he said, "To confirm it to you, my mom had the same dream this week. We'd like to know if you would be interested in moving to Oklahoma City, live with us, give God a chance to work this in your life."

So three days later I'm living in Oklahoma City driving a school bus to make a living; that's the only job I could find. But God's hand was all over that because what it forced me to do was cry out to God in this sense. Here's homosexuality calling my name. I'm being tempted, dragged that way all the time. Here's my friend telling me the things the Lord's telling him so I'm being pulled in two opposing directions and a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. I didn't know what to do. I thought, I'm losing my mind.

So after my morning bus routes I would take my Bible, go to my friend's piano, open to Psalm one because I remember the stories of King Saul when he was beset by those evil spirits. They would send for that shepherd boy to come and play and I just

imagined David just worshipped there, and it says the enemy would flee. So I thought, I'll do that for myself.

I opened to Psalm one and I literally began singing through the Psalms. After a while of singing -- I literally sung through the Psalms, I realized David committed adultery, David committed murder yet David's commemorated as being a man after God's own heart. I thought, I want that. If you can do that for David, Lord, do it for me.

Through a series of events this friend who had the dream found out what I was struggling with and confronted me -- but he confronted me in love. I'd never had anyone respond to me this way at all. He said, "Dennis, I don't know how to help you." He said, "I just know I know the answer."

I said "What?"

He said, "Yeah, the answer is Jesus."

I said, "I've heard that my whole life."

He said, "Not like this you haven't."

He said, "I believe Jesus is the answer so much I'm willing to walk towards him with you as long as it takes. If you fall down, I will not kick you, I will not tease you, I will not say 'I told you so.' I will just help you up every time."

He said, "If you need a shoulder to cry on, I'm your guy. If you need someone to yell at when you don't understand, yell at me; I can take it."

I had to go outside the church to find somebody who would love me like Jesus, and that guy did and he still walks with me to this day so that, in itself, God used in a humongous way. I can't even overemphasize it enough to tell you what just one person stepping outside of their comfort zone and saying, "Here, I'm going to walk with you. I don't even understand it myself but I know the love of Jesus is the answer."

So lo and behold, I had a Second Chapter of Acts concert, November 7th of 1981. I got set free to such a degree I only imagined happening. So much healing came in a two-year period that it gave me a wife. And it's true, Melinda and I have nine children. We're not Mormon. We're not Catholic. They're not adopted.

[Laughter]

And yes, we know what causes that. But here's the deal. I remember being a little boy sitting in the church pew. By the time I'm ten I already knew my struggle. And one Sunday morning before church started I was playing with my brothers and cousins and I overheard the men who taught me about God from day one discussing what they thought of a homosexual.

So guess what I thought God thought about me. I thought God hated me. And no one ever told me that I could be free. They only said, "You don't get to pass go. You do not get to collect \$200. You get to go straight to hell because of your sin." I thought, oh, my goodness! Once the Lord set me free, if I can help it, I'm not going to let anybody else go without hearing the good news that freedom is possible, hope is possible, somebody loves you right where you are but loves you enough not to leave you there."

So that brings me to a point where I believe this so much that I'm going to host a conference myself this June in Muscogee, Oklahoma and just call it an Inner Healing Conference. Because whether we like it or not, people categorize sin; they give it different levels. They think mine is really bad. So if Jernigan can get honest about his stuff, then maybe I can get honest about mine because it is not quite as bad as his. With God, there's no difference -- you know that.

But if I, by telling my story, can give somebody else hope then we're going to do it this summer, June, in Muscogee, Oklahoma, Inner Healing Conference. We're going to teach not only how to be free in your own life but how to lead others in freedom, how to be the love of Jesus to those around them.

So what I'm trying to communicate is love is the key. Love is the answer. And God's very nature is what? Love! We don't even get to decide if God loves us. But how much time do we spend, how much time do we waste trying to hope God loves us, or trying to perform our way to his acceptance when all the while we only have two choices, we either can embrace his love or we can reject it. Well, guess which way my healing has come. Embracing his love and being embraced by it. So I believe I've learned some keys through the years that I can teach others and at least help them get on the road to success as far as overcoming pretty much anything. I believe the love of God can overcome anything.

James: Question: June dates.

Dennis: 20th through the 22nd, in Muscogee, Oklahoma.

James: Is it in the civic center or where?

Dennis: It's in Boulevard Christian church. It's got seating for 1500.

James: I invite you to go. Those of you who have any kind of battle and if they're fighting this battle, it's not like everybody wants to walk in comfortably and saying, "I'm fighting same sex attraction." We should -- we should be able to go into the church and be able to say, "I've got an addiction." "I've got a drug habit." "I'm on prescription drugs and I'm in trouble." "I'm a closet alcoholic." "I've got a pornography problem." "I've got a homosexual problem." We ought to be able to say that and feel like we've said it in the safest place in the world; not where our sin will be covered but where the covering of that and the release of it is offered in love. We ought to be able to say that openly.

Dennis: Well, John 8:32: You will know the truth and the truth will what? Set you free. Well, the first step towards truth is always our own honesty. If we don't get honest, we don't get healed. That would be like going to the doctor and him saying, "Show me where it hurts." And you respond with this: "What will people think? I'm not going to show you where it hurts." Well, that's ridiculous; that would be ridiculous to walk away and die.

When the Holy Spirit, who is the physician, he is the great physician, says to us, "Son or daughter, show me where it hurts," and then we get honest, that's the first step -- it's part of the first step. The body of Christ should be the first place people can turn to for help. I believe it should be without question, we have something we need help with? Where is the body of Christ? How do we find them? I really do believe that.

James: I want you to tell people your web site so they can know if they need to register, get more information. Where do they go? And if they want to get all of this incredible music, these great praise songs that you've written, as great as anybody has written in our day, where do they go?

Dennis: DennisJernigan.com. It's a one stop shop. You can find anything you need there. In fact, we've got one button that says, "Need Help." If you have somebody who does struggle with homosexuality, and you want to know just how to help them, there is a button, "Need Help." You go there and it can tell you a lot of resources and a lot of things you can do just to extend love to them.

James: You're trying to point them in the right direction. You have here -- tell me what this is.

Dennis: That's my latest recording. It is called *Here in Your Presence*. It was recorded live in San Antonio.

James: And it is praise music; it's music you've written. And do you have enough copies that if our viewers wanted us to send them one today we can send them? Are you sure you can go find some?

Dennis: I'm sure we could.

James: I'll tell you what, if you help us rescue these precious children and women who are trapped in the sex trafficking as prisoners and you just help us -- anyway, this is the last week that we're asking people to help in this particular emphasis now on Rescue Life, we'll gladly send it to you. I want to know about these books here. They're on your web site too. What every boy should know. Is this basically your story?

Dennis: Well, no. I wanted my boys to have no doubt about what real masculinity looked like. So it's called *What Every Boy Should Know*, but the real title is *What Every Man Wishes His Dad had Told Him*.

James: And they can get this on your web site?

Dennis: Yes.

James: Will some bookstores have some of these?

Dennis: They have to order it from my web site.

James: Now these are two interesting books because you had dreams that made you feel like you were worthless, based upon what you knew that the world made clear and biblically you could read that this is not the way we're supposed to live any more than we live in heterosexual sin or held captive by any addictive or compulsive behavior. But these are stories that are fictional but yet they deal with the spiritual struggles you had and you wrote them for young people who may feel like I'm not loved, there is no hope, and you feel like it takes them on a journey. Tell us about them. This is on your web site too.

Dennis: And Amazon and Barnes and Noble, they can get those --

James: *Captured* and *Sacrifice*.

Dennis: They're called *The Chronicles of Bren*, the series. Bren means tears.

When I was a boy, by the time I'm ten, I already knew what my struggle was. And every night from the time I was ten years old until after I graduated college, I had the same dream. As soon as my head hit the pillow, I was on the starship Enterprise. My dad was Captain James Tiberius Kirk, and I got captured by aliens every night. And just as I was about to be put to death my dad would materialize with his phaser not on stun but on destroy, and I woke up rescued every morning. And I thought, "I'm losing my mind!" But I woke up rescued every morning.

And so after the Lord set me free I thought, what was the deal with that? I thought I was losing my mind to have that reoccurring dream. The Holy Spirit said, "Who do you think that was? Who do you think gave you that imagination? There are other lost boys and girls out there who need to know what it looks like to be identified by someone greater than themselves." Because my past does not identify me, my present circumstances do not give me my identity, the things that tempt me don't even identify me -- only one has that honor and that's my God, my maker.

So these books, the first is called *Captured*. It is the story of a boy who was bullied as a kid; falls into this realm where he is the son of the high king and he's a prince and he's captured. And the whole book is him going on these incredible adventures and his dad seeking to rescue him. I'm not going to tell you the end of the story; it is awesome.

Sacrifice is the same boy, same kingdom, this time he himself is the king and it is the journey of how we got from the boy to be the king, and it is discovering the keys to the kingdom. It is not written for the church. It's written for little boys and girls who need to know the sense of adventure, a sense of identity, a sense of purpose -- and it's just fun stories.

James: Let me ask you something, why do you come -- why do you write me? Why do you come to us?

Dennis: Why do I come to you guys? Because I know your heart -- that's easy. You believed in me when nobody else did. In fact, I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing, James. I wrote you a letter because you were using my music, Jeanne was using my

music, and I thought, well, he needs to know what I came out of so he can stop using my music. I thought they'll want to can me. So you went and read my letter on national TV and I had a ministry whether I wanted it or not.

[Laughter]

So thanks a lot! Why do I come here? Are you kidding me?

James: I love you buddy!

Dennis: You want to set people free. I love you too!

James: Would y'all say thanks to God and thanks to Dennis Jernigan? There on the screen, there's the web site.

And Dennis, I hope you'll be with us at our anniversary conference too. Sing over us, the Lord does; you know how to help us know that.

Listen to me. I don't know where you are. There's that web site but just listen to what I'm talking to you. I don't know what's going on in your life and I don't embrace -- I tell you who's out of step with scriptures, issues, disturbs me most? Any of mine -- and they should. Let me tell you something, if I had a whole list of them, I'd like to find somebody I could share them with, and you could love me. And you say, "Let me walk it out with you." I really would because you'd be revealing Jesus.

I don't know where you are. You may be watching and you may think, well, James Robison, he doesn't like homosexuals. Well, it's just not so. I've often quoted what a friend said, "If you don't love homosexuals, you need one in your family." Because see, you're going to love them. You wouldn't approve -- I wouldn't approve of a child who was using drugs or on drugs. I sure love them.

Billy Graham said to me of his son Franklin, "Some of the greatest advice I got, James," concerning Franklin... and I tried to win Franklin to the Lord when he was just living like the rebel, he said, "A rebel without a cause." And Billy said, "A great counselor said, 'Billy, you and Ruth, don't ever approve where Franklin is, always let him know the door is open at home.'" He said, "James, we did it. Franklin came home." Franklin Graham, head of Samaritan's Purse, head of the Billy Graham organization came home and I got to hear the story right after it happened, and Franklin and I have been good friends. We gave him one of the great gifts he got for Samaritan's Purse right here in our office facilities and on television. We love him. We've had him here many times.

Listen to me, God loves. No matter where you are, I would love you. We do love you. You want help? You can find it. Go to that conference that Dennis talked about. Go online, go to his web site, go be with him.

Dennis, we're really doing our best right now to rescue girls and children that have been taken captive in the sex trade, literally as sex slaves. It's one of the most exciting and meaningful things we've ever done.

This is our last week now that we're asking you to help. I want you to watch very closely and then you just answer, because this isn't wishful thinking. This is not you wishing you could help them and you can't. This is an absolute win -- we will help them! But we have to do it together. We can't do it by ourselves. Each one of us does our part sharing God's heart. Watch this.

On the mission field:

Announcer: This is a prison. Not a real prison run by a government and police officers but it is a prison nonetheless. Room after room contains not much more than a bed. Depraved visitors to these types of prisons pour millions of dollars into human trafficking worldwide. The prisoners are scared young girls held captive by violent slave traders but the prisoners that live here did nothing wrong. They have broken no laws. The girl in cell 4D is innocent.

Open Captions: I have no control over my own body. I don't want to do the things they make me do. I feel trapped here like I'm in bondage. Even my heart feels like it is in bondage. My life is over. I have no more hope. When my life gets really bad, I cry out, "If there is a god, please save me."

Jesus was sent to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, and that the oppressed will be set free.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Okay. Lord Jesus, we know that's why you came. And you set me free. Betty's little story about being set free as a little church girl, *Free to Be Me*, we've experienced it.

Let me tell you something, because we've been set free, because the Lord is alive in us, and his love is in us and because of people like you watching me right now and watching that beautiful girl, she is now set free. Yes, we got her out.

Betty, when you see that and you remember how we wondered if our viewers would even tolerate watching those scenes, our viewers didn't tolerate it, they pressed in on us and said, "Let's go get them. And we will rescue them." That's what they said.

Betty, that girl's set free. And our missionaries have pointed now that they've got 6,000, so to speak, in the zone that they can reach out to rescue before anybody gets them because they can get them out of their family and poverty situations where they're so vulnerable. The ones that are in there, they can work carefully to get them out, and then they restore them. They reach them, they rescue them, and they restore them and they actually give them a future. It works, in other words.

Betty: It does, James. I was sitting there watching that and I thought how many tears have they shed -- all those that are like this precious girl? They cry time after time and no one hears them. They're hurting.

And I think, James, when our children were small, if I heard a whimper, if I saw a tear, I wiped that tear, I took away the pain if I could, or if they were frightened about something. These children stay that way. They're frightened, they're hurting, they're scared; they have no one to reach out to them unless we do it. Please join with us and let's reach out to these children. Let's wipe their tears, so to speak and give them a place that they can be safe and they can smile again.

James: Betty, I hear you talking about that, how much it is in your heart as a mother, to wipe away the tear and to make it -- I just watched you so much with our beautiful daughter when she was fighting. She never admitted she was fighting for her life. She was fighting with life. But you wanted so much to fix her. You would come home and say, "I feel like I just want to do something so bad." There wasn't a thing you wouldn't have done. And we weren't -- she's totally healed forever. Looking down here and saying, "Mom and Dad, keep loving people because it is wonderful."

Let me tell you something, Betty said, "I would have done anything." We can rescue girls and children like that, but we do it together. And so here it is... I want you to

understand how *LIFE Outreach* works. We're a minister to you every day, that's primary to us; bless you so you bless others. Bless the Lord by blessing others releases love; be an expression of the father's heart and extend the father's hands. We want to help you.

But listen, there is tremendous joy in putting God's arms around somebody else. So we give you an opportunity to help us rescue the perishing; to reach them, rescue them, and restore them. It takes an average of \$128 the missionaries tell us. All the missionaries say that's the average. Every \$128 we can send to help those girls and rescue them, we get another one. We've targeted 6,000, the outreach of the missionaries that we support. Would you dial the number during this last week? Would you make a \$128 gift? Could you give \$1280 and rescue ten? Some of you can. I believe people give at the level at their God given ability and the desire he puts in their heart. So give all you can.

Remember this, the *LIFE Center*, the outreach center in the Ukraine burned. We not only want to restore it, we want to expand it and I believe that cost is \$275,000 and it is going to double the outreach. So we're going to build it better and bigger. I've prayed, God, will you just touch 275 people to give \$1,000? You could be one of them, see, if each of us do what God puts on our heart and just extends his hands of love.

Would you dial the number? Take your bankcard, use it like a check. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*. Go online, LifeToday.org and make the gift there. But please, be persistent during this last week and say, "I am going to reach out with God's love. I'm going to rescue someone." Thank you for doing it!

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Human trafficking... it's hard to believe it's happening but at this very moment innocent boys and girls, many very young are being forced into sexual slavery and exploited in every way imaginable and someone must save them.

Through *Mission: Rescue Life* you can help reach, rescue, and restore thousands of children from the horrors of the sex trade in Thailand, Cambodia, India, Ukraine, and many other nations. Your gift today of only \$128 will help rescue a child and change their life forever. And with gifts of \$64 or \$32 we will combine your gifts with others to help reach, rescue, and restore one more child from the horrors of their kidnappers.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you *Free to Be Me*, Betty Robison's updated account of how she moved from fear and insecurity to true freedom. You'll also receive the companion journal for your quiet time and daily reflections.

With your gift of \$128 or more to help rescue a child, be sure to request your copy of the *Life Application Study Bible*.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help rebuild the *LIFE* Center in Ukraine destroyed by fire or \$1280 to help rescue 10 children, and you may request the limited edition bronze sculpture titled Christian.

This is the last week so please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I just thank you. Betty, it's our last week for this emphasis. I don't want one person that you can reach not to be reached, so whatever you can do. I will mention again if you'd like to have Dennis Jernigan's new praise and worship tape, all the songs that he's written, I'm telling you, he is absolutely one of the most gifted psalmists of all time! And bless God for him. Would you join us saying thanks to God and thanks to Dennis Jernigan for sharing?

Thanks, Dennis! Appreciate you! God bless that conference. You can always go to LifeToday.org and share this program and get your friends to watch it. But you can also go there and try to find out how to get a hold of Dennis and when that conference is going to be. And come to our anniversary conference in July at Gateway, our church. Bless you!