

Week 16

4/15/13

James: Thank you so much! We're glad to have this opportunity to share with you. I'm James Robison; my wife Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

We have a friend that for many, many years worked in our ministry, and actually, for period of time, Betty, she did our makeup. She left because I became too much of a challenge.

Betty and I just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. You know this summer, the 18th through the 20th of July -- now would you please note that? Because it really is important. As a matter of fact, I'll tell you something. Those days could be as important, if not the most important of your life because it could change everything in your life for the better, for the glory of God and for the betterment of a lot of other people. It is our 50th anniversary ministry conference, and of course, we've been married 50 years.

You want to show them -- maybe they can get a close-up. Show them what you got. I want everybody to know I gave you a very, very pretty ring.

See this? After I bought the ring she couldn't afford to give me anything so here she got this pretty ring. And this is, in case you don't know, that is her birthstone and it comes in two colors, but since it was our golden wedding anniversary I gave her the one that was gold. Do y'all think that is pretty? Do you like it?

Betty: I do! I like it!

James: I love you!

Now I'm asking you to give us those days to share Beth Moore, Christine Caine, Governor Mike Huckabee, who was ministering here with me a long time ago, to hear Sammy Rodriguez, to hear all of our guests speak: Dr. Tony Evans, Andy Andrews. Don't miss it.

Well, Linda Godsey who worked on me, like I said, finally gave up, and helped Betty, is a wonderfully gifted counselor. And she is now a part of the Gateway ministry staff

and works in the... really, the Freedom Ministries, which helps people do what we believe and what Beth Moore teaches and what Jesus said he came to do, set people free. Her story became not something she just taught and helped people with but because of letting go, seeing regret from God's perspective, she shared it so effectively that the people she was sharing it with at Gateway and other places where she would go to assist other churches, they wanted her to write it. So Linda Godsey has been doing this.

And she has blessed us, not only with her love for the Lord, she formerly worked for Jack Hayford out in California, very good friends. She blessed us not only with what she said in her story as she talked with us, but she blessed us as she began to counsel people to tell us what God was doing in their lives. There is nothing too big for God.

I'm anxious for you to hear her story and meet Linda Godsey. Would you welcome Linda to *LIFE Today*? Linda, you're not back behind the camera, you're right here.

Linda: No, I'm right here.

James: Do you want to do it again?

[Laughter]

I'm excited for you. I'm excited about what you are doing because I know many times we would talk when you were trying to make me look better and you would tell me your heart -- you would tell me what God had done in your heart. But you always wanted -- you wanted to help others; you wanted them to know what you experienced could be for them. That's -- I believe -- why you've been led to where you are today.

Tell us a little bit about your story. When you talk about regrets, did you have any?

Linda: I had a few, yes. And I didn't know that I had them; that's the key there. But I knew God had been preparing me for ministry for over 30 years, and even during the time when I was here working with you guys, God had put it in my heart to help people.

But I had some areas where I was really stuck where I felt insecure, inadequate, and just couldn't seem to move forward. So what happened, what really kicked this whole thing off was one time before I went on staff at Gateway, I went to lunch with one of our pastor's wives. We went because they were leaving to go pastor in another part of the country... or another part of the state. So as we were having lunch we had a great

time and right towards the end of the conversation she looks at me and she says, "Linda, God doesn't want you to live in regret anymore."

And I said, "Really?" And I didn't know that I was so it was such a shock to me. So two weeks later I'm going home late at night from a church conference and all of the sudden, James and Betty, the presence of God filled the car. I mean you could cut it with a knife.

And the Lord said to me, "Linda, why don't you ask me about those regrets because you don't even know what they are."

And I thought, wow. Now there's a concept, ask God about the prophetic word, but we tend to do that sometimes. We think we know what God is saying to us and I didn't have a clue. So I said, "Well, God, tell me how do you see those regrets?"

And the first thing he said was, he said, "You regret having not finished your college education right out of high school." And the "right out of high school" was the key because he wasn't saying I was lacking in education but mine had not been the traditional experience that I had compared myself to everyone else because I had a couple of years of Bible college, I had two years of business that got me some great administrative jobs. I even went and studied sociology when I was doing a lot of counseling. I just thought I needed to understand more about the human psyche and all of that. Then I became a makeup artist and also became a color analyst and that is just part of the list that goes on and on.

So I won't bore you with the rest but the Lord was saying, "You didn't have that traditional experience so it's made you to feel unqualified and that you can't do what I'm calling you to do."

I was like, "Lord, that's really right." So again, remembering what the Lord said that I didn't finish the degree right out of high school I said, "Lord, how do you see that? What is your perspective on that regret?"

And he said, "Neither did I. But I was called and anointed of my father."

He said, "Linda, don't look back. You move forward because I have a glorious future ahead for you." And it was just like -- it was just like somebody pouring warm oil over me that day.

So then I said, "Lord, what was the second regret?"

And he said that I had just felt that my life had not had a direction to it and I regretted that, and that was part of what made me feel so inadequate.

So as I asked the Lord about that he said, "You feel like that you have gone from -- instead of going from 'A' at its beginning to 'Z' at the completion," he said, "Your life just has been all over the place and it's made you feel that way."

I said, "Lord, how do you see that?"

He said, "Well, the letters haven't been in the order that I would have placed them if you had been 100% on track." He said, "But all the letters are there and all the components are there that will form the entire alphabet." He said, "I just want you to move forward and know that I'm going to take you where I want you to go. I don't want you to live in that regret anymore."

It was like -- I can't explain what happened in the spirit realm that night but it was something really big. I felt kind of like Humpty Dumpty when all the parts go back together again, and I just felt a new release to be who God made me to be. Sometimes you just can't explain exactly what it is that God does. He knows how these little lies are woven into the innermost parts of your being, into the tapestry of your life, and how they affect you in the way that you think, and you don't necessarily know all of that until the Holy Spirit shines his light into those dark crevices of your soul and you begin to see the truth of what God is saying to you.

James: When you're talking to people about regret, what are you finding typical of people? And if they have a regret, are they being stuck or held captive at that point?

Linda: Oh, yeah. A lot of times they are. Some regrets are real obvious. "I spent too much money out of my checking account, now I can't pay my water bill." That's pretty obvious. Or "I've been eating too much and I've gained too much weight."

But most of the time I think a lot of the regrets that we deal with are regrets that are so interwoven into us just like the ones that he showed me. They can seem almost insignificant unless you understand how much they had crippled my life, and regret is the past crippling the future.

I was talking to one of the gals in the back a while ago, I was thinking about the Apostle Paul. Think about the regret he had to have had to have killed all those Christians, the way he persecuted Christians; even after he came to Christ that had to

eat at his soul. But you remember what he said? He said, "Forgetting those things which are behind," he said, "And I move toward the future and I move toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." And he was going for the prize that he knew God had for him -- for the reward that God had for him.

James: He said he was chief of sinners but he also understood the grace of God to understand that he was totally, totally freed and totally cleansed. He could see that. He could see where he was but he wasn't stuck there. He had the regret but I feel like a lot of people are held captive. You look over your life, Betty, how do you identify with what Linda has shared?

Betty: I agree with you, that most of us do probably have some regrets in our life. Our own insecurities cause regrets because we will not step out in faith a lot of times when God is directing us in a certain way because we feel so insignificant or we failed in this area. And then guilt sets in and guilt can paralyze you. So I think they're closely tied there, the regret becomes a guilt.

James: You talked about and even share in your book, some of your testimony of regrets even related to your children.

Linda: Yes. The third regret that was in the book was I regretted not having trained my children more effectively in the things of God early on. Sometimes we come to the Lord, even if we're born again, we may really get into a life of obedience with the Lord at a later time so we miss some of those formative years. And I had this core belief system that unless I was perfect, that my kids would suffer the consequences of that. The thing that the Lord showed me when I brought that -- he showed me that regret -- that was the third one in fact as he showed that to me.

Then I said to the Lord, "Lord, how do you see that regret?"

And he just told me. He said, "The influences that your children have had have been from the evil one, or from the enemy and from the world." He said, "They didn't come from you. You gave them everything you could. You couldn't give them something that you didn't possess." And he says, "Now, you've done your job, now let them do theirs."

Here's the thing he reminded me of, there are a couple of things really. He reminded me first of all that he was a perfect father and he put his children, Adam and Eve, in the garden in a perfect environment with a perfect parent and they blew it.

And he also reminded me that my mother, who is here in the audience today, that she had prayed for me probably every day of my life. But it was me, it was my choice to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling; she couldn't do that for me. And that's been so freeing to a lot of people that struggle with blaming themselves for the things their kids...

James: You're not talking about working for your salvation. Don't misunderstand that. You can't do anything to earn it. You can't do anything good enough to get it. When she's saying work out her salvation, that's working really, out the release and really the revelation and the testimony of that salvation where it's more than just something you said, but it's a reality and the expression of that life within begins to work out of you and you begin to really reveal Jesus and see him lifted up through your life.

Linda: Even choosing the Lord.

James: It's releasing him in the fullness of his glory. It's just the river of God's life flowing out. A lot of people never let it start and they really stay stuck. It's like they're stuck in a ditch. It doesn't matter what it is.

This is the thing that is so important. It doesn't matter what you've done, how deep the ditch is you've dug or fell in or jumped in or if somebody pushed you in, like Beth Moore says when she is teaching Breaking Free. It doesn't matter how you get in the ditch or how you get in the pit, it's God's grace that will get you out. You don't just dig your way out. You really admit, "I've made a mess, I've missed the mark, I've failed. I'm not going to live in the past failure." He died for you. Jesus gave his life to give you life. He paid for all the ways you fouled up and messed up and you don't need to live stuck regretting what you did. He died and is raised to live in you and take you beyond that regret and beyond that place.

Linda, I think that's the joy you're experiencing. And then the very thought that you would actually be able to help other people, and their stories in many ways are more amazing than your story because it's like they came out of a pit that's so obvious to everybody. They wouldn't even have had to guess at it, they just knew, it jumped out at them. And you're seeing people in the Freedom Ministries be set free.

There's Linda's web site. If you'd say, "I'd like for her to come and help us sometime." Well, that really is what our church does. You want to get the book? Well, there's a way to get it. You may find it in the bookstores.

Would you say thanks to Linda for sharing her story? It's really helping everybody to literally find the freedom God wants them to have.

Our whole ministry really, I think, honestly -- I've told you, and I know some of you have heard me talking with Betty after we lost our daughter, we learned something else that's very significant about that past is that Jesus quoted from Isaiah when he talked about coming to set captives free; he set liberty to those that had been in prison. But the first phrase in Isaiah is, "I came to bind up the brokenhearted." See, when you've really had your heart broken, no explanation for it, only Jesus can bind it up.

I really want you to hear that's what God wants for you. He doesn't want you to be stuck in your pain. He doesn't want you to live with a heart shattered and crushed. He wants to give you a new heart. He wants to heal your broken heart, bind it up -- the wounds. Let him do it. Father, everyone right now with regrets, with hurt, with pain, in bondage, with a broken heart, reveal yourself as the healing balm, the healing oil to bind up the broken heart and to set people free; in Jesus' name. Receive that. He loves you so much.

The phone number there, you want someone to pray with you, God may have spoken to you just like he spoke to Linda through somebody talking. You say, "I want to help."

Betty and I are going to ask you to do something that means as much to us as anyone we've ever asked you to do. I want to ask you to rescue somebody. You see it is one thing to be held in bondage by your own personal defeat, it is another thing to be taken captive like a slave, oftentimes as little children who have been told, "We're going to help your child have a good education and make some money." And they're telling this to very poor families. Or they will capture a girl, at whatever age and they take them in total bondage. You're going to see such a story. Don't miss the ending because you can rewrite the future for many people. Listen closely.

On the mission field:

Announcer: If brokenness had a face it would be Dalene's -- her spirit, her will, her body. All at the cruel hand of sex trafficking.

Dalene: After my mother died, a lady came and told me she would raise me like her daughter. But instead, she sold me to a brothel to pay off her debts. I have scars from the chains they put on me. They force me to service eight to ten men each night, and

we are not allowed to eat or drink unless we do. If girls are disobedient, they're sent away by boat and they never come back. I haven't felt love since my mother died. I want freedom. I want to not live in hell anymore. This life, it is like hell to me.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Do you see... when I listen to something like that, I don't... I don't take it lightly at all. I want her... to be free. If I want it, imagine how much God wants it.

Betty, I don't have to just wish that we could see girls like that set free who are crying out, I don't want to live in this hell anymore. It's like a lot of people live like, "I don't care if I go to hell." They just go around telling people to go to hell. They live like hell and act like they're proud of it. That girl has really tasted hell. And everywhere God is not, you've got a little glimpse of hell. But everywhere is sin and horrible seductive abusive practices prevail, you've got a hellishness that is almost indescribable -- but she doesn't want it. She wants to know, how can I get out of this?

I want to tell you something, because of someone like you -- maybe you think you would be the last person in the world that could have been an answer to her prayer but somebody like you was. We got her out. She is not in there anymore. She is free. And she's free because of the love of God; not because she read a love letter or she read a verse in the Bible, or somebody preached God loves you. Somebody showed her the love of God. The missionaries that God has called us to support -- and here's what we do. We go out hopefully looking through the eyes of Jesus and we see someone with the hand of God on them and the love of God in their heart and they just want to rescue the perishing. And we help them do it because they don't have time to say, "Would you help us?" They're too busy rescuing people.

And then all of the sudden they find somebody that noticed and said, "We'll help you do it." And it isn't just me and Betty. You see we have eyes to see, we have the cameras to capture it and bring it back to caring people but it is people like you who say, "We'll do it. We'll support the missionaries."

This is the last week for this emphasis on rescue life. We need your help. It takes \$128 per child. This is what the missionaries tell us as we break it out. If we can get -- every \$128 we can put there, we can rescue --

Betty, the missionaries have pointed out we've got 6,000 that we know we can rescue. "This is what we can handle," the missionary says. "I can get that many."

Another one says, "I can do this." Another this... Many of them are working in place -- we can't tell you where they are.

Would you dial that number? Would you give \$128? Could you possibly rescue 10 and give \$1280? Let me tell you this, our *LIFE* Center, reaching out -- and I just got a letter congratulating us for our 50th anniversary, from the missionaries in the Ukraine telling us where they had just been and what they had seen. And they said, "Betty and James, I knew you were the ones that helped us rescue them. And I saw others I knew you would help." Who would help? You would. Would you please dial that number?

This is the last week. We have some gifts for you but you're going to give that girl the freedom that she cried out for. You're going to be the answer not only to her prayer but her heart cry. You're going to give her freedom. We're going to bless you with gifts that will help grow in your spiritual life but I'm asking you to make the largest gift you can today during this last week. 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

On the mission field:

>> So this is my first time in Southeast Asia and my very first opportunity to come face to face with the victims of sex trafficking here. The girls that I met in the brothel really express so much of feeling trapped, feeling hopeless, feeling like there was no way out for them. I can just remember myself as a young girl being sexually abused by my stepdad over and over again, as a child, feeling like there was no way out. There was -- I had no voice. I had a secret to keep and there was nothing I could do about it.

These girls are living through the same thing day after day, night after night. And I can just imagine how hopeless that felt. I even asked one of them what help looked like. What would it look like to be helped out of the situation? And she couldn't even - she couldn't even come up with an answer because to her, there was no help, there was no option.

That broke my heart because that's what we're here for. That what we as Christians are here to do. We're here to help people. Jesus came to rescue these girls. And here she is telling me that she doesn't feel like she can be rescued; that this is what her purpose is in life. I feel like when I walked into those brothel rooms that my life changed.

I've always asked God ever since I got rescued from my situation that if He could break my heart for what breaks His heart, that that was my ministry. Here I was sitting in a brothel room with these girls who have not been rescued. And God was answering my prayer, he was breaking my heart for what breaks his.

My only answer is that I want to bring hope to these girls -- I want to bring rescue to these girls. They shouldn't be living through this. We can be the answer. We really can, I believe that. But we've got to become an army against this. The body of Christ could

totally change the culture, could totally change the world when it comes to modern day slavery. But we have to be willing to let our hearts be broken for these girls.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: From the depth of my heart I want to thank you. I pray that you've made the gift God put on your heart. Always use your bankcard like it's a check. And do remember this, LifeToday.org. You can go on there any time, make the gift. You can watch *LIFE Today* online. A lot of you don't know that and hopefully you will.

Thank you so much for watching. Remember the anniversary conference in July. Go online and register. I hope we'll see you there.

Thanks to all of you. Thanks to Linda Godsey for being here.

Linda, thanks so much for blessing us. We love you!

Her book, *Letting Go*. There's her web site. Go on! Visit her!

Announcer: Join James and Betty Robison July 18 through the 20th for the Awaken Now Conference at Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas! Featuring inspiring speakers such as Governor Mike Huckabee, Pastor Tony Evans, International Bible teacher and author Beth Moore, New York Times best-selling author and speaker Andy Andrews and many more, including musical guest such as Big Daddy Weave.

Register today for this once in a lifetime event, celebrating fifty years of ministry with James and Betty Robison. Go to lifetoday.org.

Anniversary 1