

3/16/15
Week 12
Mission: Rescue Life
Todd Starnes

James: Thank you! Thank all of you. You're so kind and we welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have this time with you. You may not know. We've had another anniversary time, which we've been married 52 years.

Betty: We're getting on up there.

James: You think that's pretty good? Aren't y'all proud of Betty? What a woman! No doubt about it. I think this is sadly a very appropriate title too often. We've heard "God bless America" and Todd has written a book, *God Less America*. Would you welcome Todd Starnes to *LIFE Today*?

Todd, I appreciate you.

[Applause]

Tell me what you hope will happen as a result of the truth I think that you have very effectively communicated?

Todd: Well, James, I'm hoping for revival in our country, that's ultimately what I hope for. It was back in 2007 or 2008 when President Obama was in San Francisco and he was recorded, by the Huffington Post talking about folks who cling to their guns and their religion. I remember I had just -- I had been at FOX News for several years and I remember sitting there listening to those remarks and I thought to myself, as a son of the south, well, I'm kind of proud to call myself a gun-toting, chicken-eating, Bible-clinging son of a Baptist. I don't think I'm all that bitter, I think I was blessed.

[Laughter]

So that got me to...

James: You put me on edge, there! Some people will call you something else.

Todd: That's true! It really got me. I remember that day, and started thinking about the condition of the country and where we were at and where we are going. I started covering a lot of stories dealing with the culture. Really, that's when I came up with the idea for this book, *God Less America*. Because ultimately, when you turn on the network news you're not going to see the stories that I cover at FOX News channel.

A lot of folks are just not aware of how far religious liberty has been eroded in this country. Ultimately, when people read this book, 270 some odd pages, it really is the evidence that I believe demands a verdict. The issue is very clear; there is a war on religious liberty in America. It's not targeting people of the Islamic faith or the Jewish faith or the Buddhist faith. It's specifically targeting people of the Christian faith. I really do believe that people need to be made aware of that.

James: When it's an attack on Jesus, it's an attack on Christ, because he is the manifestation of what God looks like when he's with us and in us, the very life of Christ.

Think about it, even when he was on earth, religious people did not receive him. They contributed as much as the government or the political powers to take him out. It was the suffering and hurting and needy people that were attracted and drawn to him. But even today, he's being now assaulted by these same power structures, sadly, even in religious settings but there is a direct assault on, quote, and I'm not really happy that we call Christianity a religion. I understand religion is a relationship with God in worship but a lot of times it's just become what people go through trying to get to God rather than experiencing God and expressing God.

The thing about Christianity is it is a relationship with a living father through faith in this person Jesus Christ so you could actually have a relationship, a personal

relationship. And that just seems to draw the fire of every person to attack that. And now we're actually watching it pushed out of the country to where we even have laws against the giver of law and the giver of life and the expresser of love. We're now shoving that out.

Todd: That's true. As a matter of fact, I tell a story in the book about the United States military, the greatest fighting force on the planet. Many of our service members were forced to go through a diversity training seminar. They were told, these young 17, 18, 19 year old kids from all over our country, were taught that examples of religious extremism, they talked about al-Qaeda and Hamas. But they said, "Here in the United States, examples of religious extremism include Roman Catholicism and Evangelical Christianity."

You have to step back for a second. You go wait a second, why is it that our military under this administration is now teaching these young kids, very impressionable kids that what's happening down at the local First Baptist Church on Sunday morning is akin to what al-Qaeda and Hamas are doing. So this really is how far we've come as a country.

James: Well, they're making... really, they make Christianity look sick and they compare it to the sick element of any other expression of religion. And yet you can't talk, you can't even call terrorism, Islamic terrorism in this politically age.

Betty: Even the mention of God, almost, has become politically incorrect. Everything that -- the values that we believe as Christians, the principles by which we stand by God's Word, it's all considered to be out of place in the public.

Todd: Betty, you're right. When I write in the book, I'm more than happy to fellowship with any religion that doesn't want to blow me up. Unfortunately, we're in a situation now where you can't even talk about those things. How long is it going to be before it's a hate crime in our country to say the words *Islamic extremism*?

But I live in Brooklyn, New York among the kale chip and the yoga crowd and it's not too far from where Miley Cyrus did that unmentionable deed, the twerking on that

television show. It was about that time that my hero of the faith, Phil Robertson, from Duck Dynasty was catching all sorts of flack for defending traditional marriage. That really became the opening thesis of my book. I sort of feel like a Duck Dynasty guy living in a Miley Cyrus world.

[Laughter]

James, you know what I'm talking about. Where right is wrong and wrong is right. And Washington, DC is twerking on all of us. It is terrible!

[Laughter]

James: Is that in here?

Todd: I'm afraid it's in there. That may get me put on a prayer list.

[Laughter]

James: I want to tell you. You see what you've got right here. This is life. We can laugh. We can laugh at ourselves. We're pretty funny. The son of a Baptist, over here, we can have fun together. But the deal is that people right now are saying, "Don't bring God into the picture!"

I've said many, many times that I really believe a lot of things that are being pushed out we took lightly. And I don't think Christians have really stood up to protect the preciousness of the freedom that was given to us, purchased at a great price, protected at a great price and today, it's like we've opted out. It's like Bonhoeffer said, "To not speak is to speak." And Christians won't even stand up and speak.

Phil Robertson did, look what happens. You know what did happen? People stood up for him and they didn't take that program off. The same way with Chick-fil-A, when people stood up. But I don't think we ought to have to be going through that but we ought to be willing to. I think if Christians don't come out of the closet, everybody else

is; if Christians don't come out of the closet and stand up for God, I think we're going to actually lose the freedoms that have been so precious to all of us.

Todd: And unfortunately, we really have no one to blame but ourselves, James. Many of our churches and their quest to become culturally relevant have become spiritually irrelevant. This idea of being salt and light, I write in the book that unfortunately, many Christians, many churches are on a salt free diet these days. We don't want to make an impact.

James: And we don't protect the precious which is one of the great aspects of salt. And what's more precious than innocent life? My own story; I wouldn't have been born today because I'm the product of a forced sexual relationship on a hospice type nurse when she was 40 by the son of the elderly man she was caring for. She asked for an abortion. She seemed to have every justifiable reason.

I have to wonder when that doctor looked at her if he saw maybe, there is possibility in her womb -- potential. And our children and people we've helped are very glad. I'm very glad that doctor said no to the abortion. Today she would have just walked somewhere else, no problem.

Todd: James, that's one of the exciting things that I write about in the book. My book is not a downer because we know as believers that true hope and change doesn't happen at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, it happens at the foot of the cross. I write about how I believe God is doing something with this young generation of believers, these young college kids and high school kids, and that maybe the next Billy Graham or Billy Sunday might be coming out of this generation.

I tell the story about Roy Costner, 18 year old kid from Liberty, South Carolina. You'd love this guy! He was valedictorian of the class. His dad's the local youth pastor. So he wrote his graduation speech. The principal calls him and says, "Roy, we've got to censor your speech."

So they took Roy's speech and they marked out every reference to God, Jesus, the Bible, church, the whole nine yards. So Roy gets this speech back. He goes, "Dad, this is not the speech that God laid on my heart to deliver. What do I do?"

He says, like a good youth pastor, he says, "Son, go talk to the senior pastor about this."

So he goes and talks to the senior pastor and they pray about it.

Come graduation day these educators, they were not going to be fooled. They refused to let Roy walk on that stage with anything in his hands. They put the government approved speech right there on the platform. Roy walked up to that platform. He stood out in front of that big audience, his momma and his daddy, grandma, grandpa, everybody there, he picked up that speech, that government approved speech in his hands and that 18 year old Southern Baptist boy tore the speech in half and set it aside and led the entire crowd in a recitation of the Lord's prayer. Roy Costner took a stand! He took a stand.

James: I love it! Well, I think if we would do that, we would be amazed at how quickly we can correct the course. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls in just over 50 days. A lot of people think it is going to take decades to correct the course. I think it may take decades to clean up some of the mess we've made and fill in some of the deep ditches that we've been digging. But I honestly believe we can turn this titanic mess, this ship of state, our own personal lives and we can head towards safe harbor and get a good crew in place.

Here's the thing. The people in a nation like ours, this in the thing you've got to understand as a Christian, in a democracy where the majority rules and where we're the ones who choose, then those we choose reflect the heart conscious and convictions of those who vote or who don't vote. Too many Christians have checked out. You've been told it's politically incorrect for church people to be involved. That's one of the biggest lies that ever came through the lips of Satan. Do not believe it! Of all people on this earth that ought to stand up and protect the precious and be light to illuminate the way out of this present and pressing darkness, we're the ones to do it.

And if we stand up together, if the people who profess to believe in God and his son, Catholics you mentioned, and Protestants, if we would just stand up for what we profess to believe, we could correct the course and rebuild the walls and we would be amazed at how rapidly it would happen. Do you believe that?

Todd: I absolutely believe it. We have a modern day example of that happening. In Houston, Texas when the mayor tried to subpoena the sermons of Christian pastors. And guess what happened? The body of Christ rose up together and they stood as one people, one voice. When they did, the city had no choice but to back down in the face of an unified church. Ultimately, as you said, if we're able to do that, if we're able to rally the troops and stop being, you've got the Presbyterians doing their thing and the Methodists doing their thing, let's do it together and see what happens.

James: Betty and I were there with them in the big rally there in supporting them, and of course, had the lead pastor here on the program. But do you know who the primary voices were that stood up? They were minority voices. You know what we're thinking? I know that Sammy Rodriguez says that God has put the Hispanic here because they are his and they are going to bring panic to America to turn back to God, to show you the way.

And then you've got Dr. Tony Evans and T.D. Jakes and other great men who are minorities who are praying for racial reconciliation. We need to be praying for sectarian healing and restoration where we quit being tribal and allowing ourselves not to be the family of God. If we ever come together, the gates of hell will tremble and that's precisely what they're to do. I believe the government should fear the people, the people don't fear the government and they've got to listen to us.

Hey, government, we can take control. There are only 500 of you.

We can get rid of the whole bunch in one smooth swoop and we can really reroute the whole ship!

Listen to me! It's not too late. Later than you think, but it is not too late if we wake up.

I want to tell you something. Hearing somebody like me and Todd sitting here, and this sweet little girl sitting here by us, you know who is trembling? All hell is trembling -- the gates of hell tremble. The very fact that people who love God and know God and love their neighbor, whatever stand up, speak up, and become a shining city set on a hill, oh, the demons shudder!

[Laughter]

We're going to stand up. Do you believe we are? You want to see Christians stand up and be the light of this world? Do you believe it is time for us to stand up? And speak up? And refuse to bow down to the gods of this world.

I love what Sammy Rodriguez says, "Uncle Sam, you may be our uncle but you'll never be our heavenly Father ever!" And that's a great statement.

Well, did you say anything worthwhile in the book other than what we talked about?

Todd: That's pretty much it, James.

[Laughter]

James: I will tell you what we want to do. We want to send it to every viewer that would like to have it because I think it is fabulous. And I want you to get it. I love you. I think you're a great commentator and you're a great Christian witness.

In the last few minutes we've got before we tell people how we can rescue precious children and women who have been captured, held in bondage, sexually trafficked, how we can rescue them, what do you want to say to America and to the church? The church is tuning in right now and the nation, I've got their attention, what do you want them to hear?

Todd: James, we have to love people. We can't be hollering and screaming out there. We have to love people.

James: Is that just because I raised my voice that you're saying this? Are you calling me to repentance right here in front of the whole world?

Todd: Tone it down just a little! Not I'm just kidding. I went to a church of God school so this is tame. No, I really think...

James: By the way, I agree with you wholeheartedly.

Todd: I think the church needs to stand firm in the faith. Yes, you can defend religious liberty. You can take a stand for religious liberty without being mean and nasty and ugly about it. We're here to love people unconditionally. I think that's really the message of this book.

Also, quite frankly, for the moms and dads and the grandmas and the grandpas, we're going to have to stand not behind this new generation, but alongside this generation. As quite frankly, we enter some very interesting waters.

Quite frankly, as the pastors in Houston, Texas proved, they were willing to go to jail for their faith -- they were willing to go to jail. Rick Warren told me he believes this issue of religious liberty will be the civil rights issue of our generation. What does that mean? It may mean that we may have to march in the streets. Are we willing to do that? If we do so, we do so in a spirit of love.

So ultimately, that is the message of *God Less America*. I want people to understand we live in the greatest country on the face of the earth. This is a country that was founded, every founding document was flavored with the Christian faith. I hope that we don't forget that, and I hope future generations don't forget that as well.

James: Do you agree and want to say thank you very much, Todd? I thank you so

much.

[Applause]

I think when you watch *LIFE Today* you watch Betty and me, and I know I can be pretty fiery. By the way, I do try to wake people up. I think sometimes you sound a little note on the trumpet to try to awaken those that are at ease in Zion. I do that. I try to make sure you understand that it's my love and concern for you. I think you know that too, Todd.

I really believe there is no substitute for love and speaking truth in love. I think you've done that here. I want to just simply say to you that we have an opportunity right now to reveal the love of God.

And every day, Betty, when people watch *LIFE Today* you see the greatest expressions of love all over the world in mission and relief workers that have planted their life in the midst of pain and suffering.

But I have said this and I repeat it, I bring back what the messengers and the missionaries say to me. They say, "You go back and tell the people that keep us here they're the greatest Christians because they're keeping us able to do what God sent us here to do. And if they didn't keep us here we couldn't stay here."

How shall they preach unless they're sent? How will they minister? So I'm going to ask you, if you would right now, to reach out and help us put God's arms of love around children and women that have been sexually trafficked, sold in bondage, concerned their own children will be there and we can rescue them and see them totally set free. I want you to watch closely and see if you wouldn't like to reach out and touch someone very directly with the love of God.

On the mission field

Announcer: Sima's story is not that uncommon. She is one of the hundreds of thousands of women around the world that have fallen victim to human trafficking.

Sima set off from her small village with her two young daughters to work for a good family in the city. She thought she would be helping out with household chores. But soon after she arrived her daughters were taken away and she was locked in a room for a week.

Open captions:

>> When I realized I had been sold they made me do things I did not want to do. They would close the doors and windows so that when I shouted no one could hear me.

Announcer: Held captive by the threat of violence Sima not only fears for her own safety but she worries every day about her daughters who are only seven years old and three years old.

Open captions:

>> I have to see 10-12 men a night. If I refuse they beat me severely. If I am lucky I get to see my daughters for only a few minutes a day. I know if I don't get out soon my daughters will end up working in the brothel as well.

Announcer: With the help of our partners, Mission: Rescue Life is providing hope to women all around the world and is desperately working to help save Sima and her two daughters before it's too late.

Open captions:

>> This life is so painful. I'm afraid I will never be free. I want a new life.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Dear Lord, please, please touch hearts. When I hear that woman and if you wonder why we were blurring her eyes and even the children because she's still in the brothel, she is still trapped there, and we're trying to get her and the children out. That's why we call it "Rescue Life" where we reach out and we rescue them and restore them because you, our viewers have helped us build *LIFE* Centers to put these women and these children in and rebuild their future.

We've just completed one now in India which is where that was taken. And reaching into Nepal where the little children there are taken and they literally are taken from their parents because they've been told they're going to take them and get them an education and get them a good job and then they'll be able to help their poor families, and then they never see them again.

Basically, that's what's happened to her. And now she is afraid if she doesn't get out they're going to get her children. We want to get her out. Here's what it takes. We've asked you to build the *LIFE* Centers, the places of rescue and you've always been so wonderful to do that. But in order to support the work, right now we need over \$600,000, right now, to just support keeping them and rescuing them and taking care of them.

And the average cost, this is what it takes on the average to take care of them, get them out, care for them a year, it's \$128 a year. To me, that sounds meager. I like to think in terms and always try to stretch your thinking because we have a tendency when it comes to giving and sharing, a lot of times we reduce it. We're pretty good at doing that. So I like to stretch it; \$1280 we can rescue and restore ten. Would you do that? There's just a family right there. Would you help us do that? Would you right now go to LifeToday.org? Please, just go get your laptop, go to the computer, get your iPad, whatever you do, take your bankcard, and you're going to use it like a check, that's how it should always be used or you can dial the phone number there.

There are people calling for prayer for help every day; 80% of the calls that come to that number are to "pray for me," "help me." Fewer than 20% call to say, "I want to help." We understand that because we want to help you. But you can call and say, "I want to rescue someone" and make a gift of \$128 or \$1280 or more than that. Some of you, thank God, have been blessed where you can do more than that and I believe you will.

But if you say, "James, \$128 would really be a stretch for me." Well, \$64 doubled, we've got it; so could you give that or \$32? There is no level -- Jesus said the widow's

mite was the largest gift. So whatever you're led to give, you give. Go to LifeToday.org or dial the number and make the gift God put on your heart.

We want to send you the incredible worship CD, *Songs of Freedom*. Integrity music joined with us to present this to you to say thanks for the freedom you're offering. I wrote a book with Jay Richards, as an Evangelical Protestant and a Catholic philosopher commissioned by Evangelical Protestant leaders and Catholic leaders to write the way out of this present darkness. This gives us understanding of the times. We will send it to you to say thank you.

If you make the gift of \$1280 we want to send you the Thomas Kinkade, "Forest Chapel." Would you right now go online or dial the number? I pray you will. Make the very best gift you can. We're going to rescue lives.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Innocent children created to be happy, loved, and cared for are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators, their spirit and bodies broken under horrific emotional and physical abuse. Through *Mission: Rescue Life* you can reach out to save children vulnerable to sex traffickers. You can help rescue those already enslaved and you can restore their lives with hope for a future.

Your gift today of only \$128 will help rescue a child and change their destiny forever. With gifts of \$64 or \$32, we will combine your support with others to help rescue one more child from the shame and pain of sexual slavery.

With your gift of any amount we will send you the *Songs of Freedom* CD, a collection of ten uplifting worship songs that are sure to become a favorite for your quiet time, drive time, or personal worship.

In addition to the CD, you'll receive *Indivisible*, a powerful soul-stirring book by James Robison and Jay Richards.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 to help rescue ten children and you may request this beautifully framed canvas print of the "Forest Chapel" by the Painter of Light™, Thomas Kinkade.

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

End of clip

On the mission field

>> Finally, all of these children that we've rescued out of human trafficking situations are going to be able to have a safe home, a loving home, a place where they can play, where they can be safe, where they can start to smile again and heal, where we can take care of them. Thank you so much for helping us to do this.

But our work isn't done. We need your help to continue to reach, rescue, and restore so many children. This building will provide safe shelter, a safe and loving home, and complete care for so many children that have been trafficked and enslaved and are suffering right now.

So please, give the best gift that you can. Go to your phone, go online, please help us. Help us to reach and rescue all of these children that truly need your help.

End of clip

In the studio

James: We're going to send you, if you'd like to have it, *God Less America* because we want it to be godly America. We want it to be God bless America and America blessing God by blessing others. I know that's what Todd wants.

If you'd like to have the book, you help us rescue someone, we'll gladly send it to you and we can rescue this country. I want to mention something that I want you to do. I want you to go to stream -- stream like a river -- stream.org, and you go there every day because we're going to stream rivers of living water. Todd will be contributing to

it. We want you to know the truth and we're going to bring the streams of wisdom and the people you love and respect to show all of us together the way out of darkness.

Would you say thanks to Todd Starnes for being with us?

Todd, I really appreciate you. I admire you. You've got a wonderful gift! And you're a treasure. Thank you.

Thank all of you for watching *LIFE Today*. Tell your friends about the book. Stream.org -- check it out! Get everyone you know to go there. Bless you!

Announcer: Be sure to visit stream.org, a rich and lively source for breaking news, analysis, and entertainment! Stream.org