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Week 14: Mission: Rescue Life

David and Jason Benham

James: Well, we thank you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison.

Betty and I are thrilled to have two young men. I recognize gifted communicators, and I also can recognize genuine commitment to the faith, to a relationship that is a meaningful relationship, not religious hype but reality. When I heard the Benham brothers, they're twins, and they actually do look alike. Of course they will tell you one of them is smart, the other one is not. They'll tell you one of them is really sharp, the other isn't. One of them is successful, the other is not. So we're going to find out which one is which because they can't tell each other apart. But then I can't either.

But they've got a book titled, and this is fabulous, this is Dave and Jason Benham. This is *Whatever the Cost: Facing your fears, dying to your dreams and living powerfully*. This is David and Jason Benham, the Benham brothers. Would you welcome them to *LIFE Today*? Hey guys!

David: Thank you very much.

James: Yes, sir. I notice one of you can shave and the other one doesn't.

David: I'm the smart one and Jason is not so smart.

Jason: He can't grow any facial hair -- never been able to.

David: He's trying to hide his puffy cheeks. He doesn't have a jaw line so he's got to put some scruff on. But I'm two minutes older than him and I've got five children, he has four. We live on the same street. We spent some time in professional ministry.

James: You mean still you live on the same street?

David: We still live on the same street.

Jason: You haven't given him a chance to ask you any questions yet. You're just coming out of the gate.

David: But I'm letting him know who is in charge; who is the boss here between the two of us.

James: Y'all have a business. Are you the boss of that too?

David: Absolutely not. We have somebody in the crowd today who is a franchisee of ours and he can tell you who the boss of our business is.

James: What's the name of the business?

David: Benham Real Estate Group.

James: And is it in several states?

David: We grew, at one time, to 100 offices in 35 states.

James: So did you reduce this a little bit for some reason so you'd have more time to speak and get at each other or what?

David: Well, what we're doing right now, we're doing quite a bit of speaking. We've written this book and it outlines the story -- what we did was we outlined the story of what happened with the H.G.T.V. reality show. In a real quick nutshell for you because Jason wouldn't be able to put this in a nutshell, it would just go every which way. But I can precisely put this together.

But we're raised in a Christian home; our dad taught us how to be biblical thinkers. He told us, "If your theology is not your biography then your theology is worthless." So we were taught that our faith applies to every area of life; not just an isolated incident on a Sunday morning and a Wednesday night.

So we graduated in '94, went to Liberty University, Jerry Falwell's school in '94, graduated in '98. I got drafted by the Red Sox; he was drafted by the Orioles. I was drafted ahead of him.

[Laughter]

And then we played four seasons in the minor leagues. And that was the only four years we've ever been apart. He had, at that point, he had a binky and a blanket for four years as an adult -- but I was totally fine but he had a very hard time.

Jason: Listen, the empty wagon always rattles the loudest. You guys are getting an opportunity to see this in full flesh.

James: I didn't know you could talk.

Jason: He doesn't ever give me a chance!

David: He won't talk much on this show. I'll handle it.

[Laughter]

So after we got out of pro baseball we went to Charlotte, North Carolina and started a little real estate company from scratch; by 2010 we had 100 locations across 35 states. And a production company found out about us and they said, "Hey, would you guys be interested in reality television?" We thought there was a catch at first but then we realized okay, yeah, just interview us.

James: They just thought you were interesting personalities that they had seen or what?

David: They had heard about our business success.

James: It wasn't your big baseball careers. He was a total flop!

David: Amen! In 2010, under my leadership, our company experienced some real success that got the attention of Ink Magazine, Wall Street Journal, a bunch of different publications and that's how all these reality -- these networks had heard about us.

James: So they asked you to do a reality show and you all agreed.

David: We said, okay, we would consider it. They took a three minute sizzle reel out to Los Angeles, five networks were interested. And the first offer we got was T.L.C. And we know the Dugger family so we called the Duggers and said, "Hey! We're going to be on T.L.C. with you."

But then H.G.T.V. came in and gave us an unprecedented offer. They bypassed a pilot, six one hour episodes straight to series. So we, in-between the time that they made us a verbal offer and the time we signed they did all the background checks on us and they found out that Jason and I hosted a prayer service the night before the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte in 2012. We took a very strong stand on pro-life issues and pro-marriage issues but we also, we called it Charlotte 7:14 (Second Chronicles 7:14.) "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I'll hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land."

Jason: I'm glad you quoted it because he would not have known.

[Laughter]

David: That was actually --

James: It's true. Betty would have helped me.

[Laughter]

David: So we really want to see this land healed and we know that it relies on the church. The church has got to take leadership for our own sins. So in the context of that service, Jason and I spoke about pro-marriage and pro-life issues.

When H.G.T.V. found the videos and the web sites that we're talking about, my brother and I and our stances, H.G. said, "Okay, well, just talk to us. Tell us about these stands that you're taking."

And we did and they said, "Okay. We're okay with that."

So they signed us to a network deal. Then we start filming last year in the spring and they started airing commercials. And then they announced us at the upfronts in New York City and that's when GLAD and Right Wing Watch heard about us. When they heard about us they went back and created a new story; basically said that we hate gays and we hate Muslims and we hate women.

Of course, these things are not true. And so we always say if you're acting hateful then you're not lifting up Jesus Christ.

James: And you don't hate women if you've got four kids and five kids.

[Laughter]

Number one, you very much don't hate.

Jason: That's it exactly. It's a very good point!

David: That's exactly right. So they created this story, and a long story short, we put the details in the book, H.G.T.V. was not ready for the amount of pressure they received. They got just viciously attacked on their Facebook page, thousands of comments saying, "Get the Benham brothers off your network." So H.G. called us and said, "Guys..." and in tears had to fire us.

James: Well, you had happened to you what happened to Duck Dynasty but you didn't have all the people that had watched Duck Dynasty got to know the family, loved the family come to your defense. You were like the guys that they might have known you around town, might have known you in your real estate company but basically, America never even got to meet you until now, which I'm glad all America is meeting them.

And the web site, because I want all America to hear you, not only here on *LIFE Today* and they've got a standing invitation to come any time they want to and download on *LIFE Today* television, but if people said, "We'd love for you to come and communicate something in our community; we get the community together or we've got a great opportunity for you to speak to the entire community or to an entire church situation," where would they find you?

David: They can go on BenhamBrothers.com. You can also go on WhateverTheCost.com. We're all over the Internet. All you have to do is Google Benham Brothers and you'll find half good stuff and half bad stuff.

James: Part of it is about you, part of it is about him?

Jason: That's exactly right!

James: No, you really find people who are shooting at you and others who are actually hearing you. But you also have lessons and things that you share too on the web site; is that correct?

David: Yes, sir, we do.

James: Let your brother answer the question, just a minute here. Jason, tell me.

Jason: I like this guy!

[Laughter]

Betty: It's his turn!

James: Don't be talking, Betty!

[Laughter]

Betty: It's my turn!

[Laughter]

James: What's on the web site?

David: I'll tell you this one thing is that what we realized after going through this situation is that the secret to courage is first recognizing your inner coward and then letting the Holy Spirit come in and unleash your inner lion.

See we had to go through our own little "Peter" moment where Peter had denied his savior. Disciples didn't do that to rabbis back then and you still be a part of the club. But then Peter ended up becoming the one that was bold after the day of Pentecost and boom, the church begins to spread. And Jesus used him in a powerful way.

James: Least likely to succeed, most often to fail, most certainly to fail, became the keynote speaker at Pentecost when the real great birthing, let's say, of the multiplication of the church happened, and people from all the different languages are hearing the gospel where they could understand it -- which people need to hear today.

I think these two guys are really gifted to speak the language of the day. I think they can speak with the dialect of the times. I don't think there is an age limit on who they reach because it's just pure truth and love and they're just an interesting pair. It's the first time anybody has ever really said something nice about you.

Do you feel better after what I just said?

Jason: It's heartfelt.

David: We thought that would come from your wife. But thank you!

Jason: What's even more amazing that your teeth are so white! You said it, and your teeth are so white and they're so vibrant.

But what we said is that I remember Glenn Beck asked us, "So how did you balance the truth in love?"

And we said, "There was no balancing act because truth is a person and love is a person and that is the embodiment of Jesus Christ." Our one role was to lift up Jesus Christ. And God had to put us at the bottom of ourselves and get us at the bottom of our identity. We found our identities in what we did as professional athletes. And God had to teach us that you are not what you do, you are who I created you to be. And then after he took us to the bottom there and we went through some Peter moments where we really did think, hmmn, maybe I should nuance my speech a little bit -- he did quite a bit more than I did -- but still, we went through that.

James: You're saying he compromised more than you; is that what you're saying?

David: He wanted to!

James: You guys really build each other up; don't you?

David: It's iron sharpening iron.

Betty: Don't we all have to come to the end of ourselves so God can really use us and what he wants to bring out in our lives that he's put there?

David: We tell a story in our book about -- and it's a story about me where I retired from baseball, was a minor leaguer, never made it to the big leagues, had to learn how to die to that dream. And I went from, I was in major league spring training with the

St. Louis Cardinals, six months later I'm pushing a broom in front of nobody as a janitor at a local high school in Charlotte, North Carolina before I got my real estate license.

It took about a year where I just wrestled with God, I'm a janitor? I thought I was going to do great things for you, Lord. Isn't that the way you work? You give me a great platform; you increase me so that I can increase you?

And the Lord just whispered to me, "You must decrease and I must increase. David, will you be faithful to sweep these floors and plunge these toilets with the same zeal and fervor that you had when you were swinging bats and signing autographs?"

I had to repent and ask God to forgive me. And it was at that point that God got me to the end of myself.

And he tells his story in the book as well but mine is better than his -- and I repented. You know what? When you get to the end of yourself and you die to your dreams, Lord, whatever it is that you put in my hand, I'll give you the 100% best effort that I've got.

James: Let's hear your mediocre dream.

Jason: My mediocre? Well, I remember getting done with professional baseball. See I got out of the game voluntarily. He got out because he couldn't hit a curve ball.

[Laughter]

That's the different in the both of us. I remember getting out of the game and it truly was the identity crisis that I had faced. And here I was, I was sitting in a cubicle; I was actually working for John Maxwell. I was selling his Maximum Impact simulcasts. I remember sitting in a cubicle and I had my head phones on and David was playing in his last year with Saint Louis at the time. And I remember him calling me and I could hear the crack of the bat in the background and he was telling me about Albert Pujols

and Mike Matheny coming to his Bible study. I was just, oh, my heart was at the bottom of my feet. And God was whispering to me the whole time.

James: Why was your heart at the bottom of your feet? Because he was with those pros and you're sitting there listening to John Maxwell? No insult, John! Be all right, John.

Jason: And I'm a big Maxwell fan but I didn't want to sell his simulcasts, I wanted to be hitting a baseball. But I let go of the game. I knew that I wasn't on the fast track to the major leagues and I had just gotten married. So to let that go, I realized that when God gives you something, you've got to hold it with an open hand because if you squeeze -- if you grab a hold of it like this then he's going to have to pry your fingers loose when he's wanting to move it somewhere else. And this was the beginning for us on how to die to a dream.

And people say, "Well, when you have a dream or a goal what do you do?"

We say it is a two-step process. Die to it first in your heart, and then move toward it with your feet. You go after it with all your gusto but you be dead to it in your heart. So you're like the living dead. That's what we're called to be in Romans is living sacrifices. So as we laid up on that altar and the heat starts to turn up we're going to have a tendency to want to crawl off that altar. We're going to have a tendency to want to grab a hold of our dreams and that platform, and all the stuff that we've got and those good things that we have.

Whereas God says, "Look, you just hold it with an open hand. My Holy Spirit will keep it connected to you if that's what I want for you."

So that was a lesson that we learned and something that he never would have come up with himself.

[Laughter]

And we look at what Jesus asked us to pray, thy kingdom come, thy will be done. Today, even in churchianity, today, it's all about your story. What is God doing in your story? Share your story and all these things; and those things are good, and God gives you testimonies but we need to be about his story.

James: Yeah, and his story can be in us, because that's really what you're talking about. Because see, the thing that we've got to realize is that he is vitally interested in us. We need to be focused on him but recognize the fact he's focused on us. He's a shepherd. He can get one of you out of the fold and the rest in, good and safe, but he's out of after that one. He's vitally interested in us. Everybody that's watching, he's interested in you. You don't have to be like the dumber brother of the two.

[Laughter]

He's interested in all of you. You can see the joy and the peace in these two brothers. Can y'all not see the joy and peace in these brothers? You were about to say something, David. It was a rare moment but I thought you were going to say something.

David: Yeah, it's just a rare moment! But dying to our dreams, as Jason and I spoke in the book with this whole H.G.T.V. story, we really wanted this platform. We were super excited --

James: It was a great platform to communicate with.

David: A hundred million people, and they were talking back scenes with Jason and I about being stars on the network and all these other things, and that was really exciting for us to hear. And Jason and I just kept thinking about the ministry platform.

James: And it doesn't have to be selfishness, you could have been thinking about it for what you could do to help people.

David: That's what we were thinking. We were honestly thinking that.

Then when it was taken from us, it was one of those -- it was that feeling of Lord, there is something far greater in this for the advancement of your kingdom than just him and I being on a reality television show. You know something more than we do because you are God.

When we just let that go in our heart, we didn't respond bitterly. We were on C.N.N. the first night. We put out a press release and Hannity and O'Reilly and Greta, all of them called us. All the C.N.N.'s -- everybody was calling wanting an interview. We went on C.N.N. for that first interview and we had been only fired like -- we were fresh off being fired. We didn't even know what we were going to say. But we had no bitterness, no resentment in our heart, no anger because we trusted God.

Now only God could do that for guys like us, especially a guy like him. But we really truly said, "Lord, may your will be done. Our dreams pale in comparison to your ultimate dream for our lives so we just give it all to you."

James: You know what I see when I watch both of you? And we had dinner together and we've laughed, we've been like family. Do you agree? -- From the minute we got here. We actually found ourselves praying that the whole family of God could have the feeling of family that we had, the first time we've ever been together, where we were able to sit and talk. This is what God wants for his children. We want it for you.

But you know what I see as I watch both of you? And boy, you're really sharp -- you really are! You do look alike and it's okay. And the thing about it is, the respect you have, even while you're picking at one another, when one brother is speaking, I watched the countenance of the other, you're proud of your brother. You pick on him but you're proud of him. And even though you just beat him up all the time, he is proud of you, he loves you. And the way you guys honor each other, it is an honor the Lord and it is the Lord in you and it is really great to watch. I want to ask you to get this book for your friends.

This is a great American story. Thomas Nelson published the book, great publisher -- this is a fabulous book! I'd love to see it become a bestseller immediately. So what I suggest you do is go online, go Amazon, go to Barnes and Noble, wherever you want

to go, and get several copies, give it to some young people that just really need to hear two guys tell it like it is. And tell everybody on Facebook and on your Twitter about it and say get this!

And then for all of you who are watching, if you would simply help us pay the cost of love to set someone free from being a sexual slave, in the sex traffic industry, which is second only to drugs as the horrible, criminal producing of massive wealth -- tragic! You do that, we'll send this just to say thank you.

Would you say thanks to these brothers again for their testimony? And I do pray with all my heart we'll get several copies of the book.

I want you boys to look. Now whatever you do, do not turn away because if you turn away you're going to miss an opportunity of being a part of a resurrection of an impossible situation to life, to see what happened to someone's little four year old because they were held captive. I'm telling you and I'm not exaggerating, you can absolutely change this for thousands of people if we'll just move together. Watch.

On the mission field

Announcer: Raine's blessings are few. Life, here under an overpass, offers little; little in provision, little in protection. Yes, Raine's blessings can be counted on one hand.

But now those blessings she holds dear have become targets of predators, so dangerous and volatile, her environment, we felt we could only capture her story from the safety of a moving vehicle.

(Open Captions)

>> We have no doors. There is nothing to protect us from being taken. Men come down to where we live. They look for those who are young, weak, and helpless so that they will be easy to abduct and rape.

Announcer: Young children are a prize to the predators of the sex slave trade. And these areas run rampant with the most vulnerable and at risk.

(Open captions)

>> There was a man who came down from Bihar. He tried to take my older daughter. He was unable to get her, so he took my 4 year old daughter.

Announcer: Sometimes those taken disappear forever, held captive and sold again and again. Mothers are crippled with questions unanswered. Other times those questions are answered.

(Open captions)

>> He raped her and threw her into the sewer drain. We searched the entire night and found her dead.

Announcer: While Raine's loss will forever haunt her she's fighting to protect her treasured ones who remain. But it's something she cannot do alone. With your help, Raine and her children can be provided the safety and security they so desperately need.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I just really find it hard to even fathom or imagine that a little four year old, they're trying to take the older girls and use them as little sex slaves but they couldn't get them so they took the little four year old they could catch. And then they just selfishly raped her and killed her and threw her in a sewer.

I want you to see the picture earlier where you could see the family of the children that are there, and she is living in a situation where all of them are vulnerable. They are at the age to be trafficked. We can stop that.

As a matter of fact, I can promise you, we've already reached out and secured her situation. That would be the kind of thing that when Betty and I see that whatever we had to do we would cover that family; we would just do it -- we would just find a way to do it. But there are thousands. The missionaries say they have located 5,000 situations where if the support is there they can get them out, they can set them free.

The keys to freedom are in our hands. And the relief and mission workers say, "We can do this."

It's amazing to me, Betty, but the average to get one of them reached and rescued and begin to restore them is \$128 a year. You've got to understand the value system of costs of overseas is so low in these third-world countries and situations so the dollar goes a long way there. But how can it go any further than saving a life from that? And taking all of those children now and get them safe because that's what we can do.

That's when we've asked you to build a safe house, you do it! You're amazing! I mean you! Yes, I'm complimenting, I'm thanking you. I'm thanking you for expressing the love and grace of God freely, however meager your means may be or however large.

And don't belittle people who have succeeded and think they don't care because many of them will give \$5,000 or \$10,000 or even sometimes more to help us accomplish a goal that otherwise we couldn't accomplish. But most of the support comes from someone who says, "I'll give the \$128."

We'll have many who will say, "I can reach ten of them and I'll give \$1280 to help rescue ten." Well, do that. But don't say, if I don't have that or the \$128 I can't do something because \$64 doubled and we've got another one; \$32 and three others join you and that's another.

So see, Betty, if the widow's mite was the biggest gift Jesus said that was given, there's not a single gift that will be given that's small because we're going to rescue every one of those precious little children and be an answer to that mother's heart cry.

So I'm asking you right now, just get up, get moving, please. Take the keys and set them free with love. Go online, LifeToday.org. Make your gift. Use your bankcard like a check. That's how you use a bankcard, like a plastic check. Or dial the number there on the screen, it's always a prayer line, if you need prayer, it's there for you, but today it's there to rescue someone and set them free.

So dial the number, take your bankcard, and say, "Here's what I'm giving." Put it on the card. Please do it right now. Be an answer to that mother's plea in her heart cry, "I want to protect my children."

We can do it and we'll do it together. Thank you for making the call and the gift!

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

In the studio

James: *Songs of Freedom*, for setting captives free, and to bless you. And I think what you're going to find is as you read the book and if you're like me, I mark books up but

even if you want to give it to another person all marked up, that will be all right; they'll just see some things that pop out. Here's their family and it's beautiful. Just really and truly, this is a phenomenal story. Thomas Nelson has done a fabulous job with the book. We're going to send it to you to say thanks for your help.

You make any gift to help us we'll be sending *Indivisible*, Freedom, and we'll send this to say thanks.

Betty and I want to say thanks to the Benham brothers. Would you say thanks to the Benham brothers?

I love you guys!

There is their web site. You see it on the screen? That's their web site -- the Benham brothers.

Then remember visit STREAM.org every day -- that's your news and your good news. I've asked them to be contributors to it. Thank you so much. Thank all of you!

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