

6/16/16
Week 25: Medical Cure Partnership
James and Betty Robison
Samuel Rodriguez

James: You make us feel so welcome. We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have you.

Sammy Rodriguez is with us. This is one of my best friends. He's kind enough to call me Dad a lot. He's such a good looking kid! I just tell you what. I used to have black hair like that. People used to think I was Latino; I was Hispanic.

[Laughter]

When I preached crusades in Mexico they said, "They really like you. You sound like their dictator." So I just took off with all this authority that I would speak with.

Sammy Rodriguez is a gift from God. You think about it. With over 40,000 Hispanic churches that he has oversight of and really gives encouragement and insight and inspiration to them but also, worldwide with the organizations of these Hispanic and Latino groups, I'm talking about overseas, I mean the whole world, there's 500,000 -- 500,000 congregations of Evangelical believers that Sammy's giving oversight and encouragement to. He wants to light their fire but more than anything, see them become the light of the world and have a light effect on illuminating the way out of darkness. That's what the subheading, "Shining God's beauty" -- I mean he's radiantly attractive. Light is that way. It's magnetically attractive. "Truth and hope into a darkened world." That's why we're here.

Would you welcome Sammy Rodriguez telling us to be light? Be light! Jesus said we are light. He is the light of the world but we are because he's in us. We become the light of the world. He says we're salt and light. He says if the salt loses its effect then it's good for nothing but being trampled under the feet of men. And everything precious is being trampled under the feet of men: Innocent life in the womb done away with, marriage desecrated, the family belittled, religion and faith ostracized, criticized, minimized, and even illegal now in some expressions. And light, if you grope in darkness, you won't find the way anywhere meaningful, it is just

chaos. He left us here to be light and you're saying it loud and clear in this book and every time you speak.

Samuel: First of all, thank you, Daddy James and Momma Betty. You inspired a great portion of this book. Years back you instilled in me the idea of you need to go beyond asking for God to answer your prayer and you need to shift and pivot to God, make me the answer to someone else's prayer. That came from you.

We live in dark times; arguably some of the darkest times in recent history. Dark hour indeed! In the midst of this darkness, we can take our time, energy, resources, pulpits and platforms to curse the darkness, to damn the darkness, to whine about the darkness, complain, protest the darkness or we can take all that energy and turn on the light.

So the mandate, the clarion call from Jesus in Matthew chapter 5, verses 14-16: You are the light of the world. You are the light of the world and a city on a hill cannot be hidden. And neither do you light a lamp and place it under a bowl but rather you place it on its stand so it can provide light to everyone and everything in the room.

That's the call. It's to be light. Rather than complaining about the darkness, why not turn on the light? And there are certain like components that guide me. I call it my prophetic rubric.

One is: Today's complacency is tomorrow's captivity.

Second: We are what we tolerate.

Third: There is no such animal as comfortable Christianity.

Fourth: We should never sacrifice truth on the altar of political, cultural, or sexual expediency.

And number five: And respectfully, while the church is waiting for Jesus to come down, Jesus is waiting for his church to stand up.

James: That's exactly right! And adorned in light and glory! -- His light and his glory because he is coming for a church adorned in that glory. Not for a defeated church, divided, desecrated, dissentious church but a victorious church being the light he left us to be.

Samuel: James, that's where we have to reconcile our eschatology or [inaudible]. Because again, I believe in John's admonition in the book of Revelation given by the Lord to pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, come! Amen!" I make that prayer. But he is not coming back for a

defeated church or a whining church or a complaining church or a church in the fetal position. He's coming back for a glorious, thriving, wonderful, holy, righteous bride.

So really, this is a clarion call but it speaks to you personally and corporately. It begins by, "You are the light of the world." God always defines us. He always defines us first. Who are we? So we have to answer that question, who are we now? We, as the church and we, individually, what defines us? Are we defined by our circumstances or are we defined by his covenant? Are we defined by our surroundings or by the Holy Spirit inside of us? Are we defined by what people say about us or are we defined by what Jesus already did for us?

As a church, are we Google? Are we Starbucks? Are we Ford? Are we another institution, another entity? Are we a political ideology or construct of man? We're not any of that. We're not Google. We're not Microsoft. We're not Ford. And we're not even Starbucks. We are the church of Jesus Christ and the gates of hell will never prevail against the church of Jesus.

James: And we're not supposed to be covered by anything. If any man has a covering on him other than Christ that means we're not submitted and covered by a denomination or by a political party or by a system or an ideology. We're covered by Christ as his body and we proclaim his truth. We release it like a river of life in love, that's light -- that's what we do. So we don't join or become an institution. We're a living organism, the church, the body of Christ expressing who he is, his will and we flow it like a river.

Samuel: And there should be no greater institution, of course, shining the light and no greater person. A born-again Christ follower is light. But then, there's a reason why Jesus said, "But you don't light the lamp and hide it under a bowl." So what are we hiding under right now? Under fear and under apathy, complacency, comfortable Christianity, and unfortunately, to a great degree we're even hiding under the idea that there are -- oh, boy! This is "selfie" Christianity. The narcissistic Christian brand and it's all about me. I praise God because in my praise I will experience my breakthrough. Remember back in the day when we used to praise God because he was worthy of being praised?

Betty: Yeah!

Samuel: And it is all about me. My blessing, my breakthrough, my thing, my circumstances, and Christ is no longer the center of it all. Then we're wondering why things seem to be like going to hell in a hand basket and Christianity seems to be marginalized, at least here in America, is because Christ is not the center of it all. We can't be light unless Christ is the center of it all: the center of my life, the center of the church, the center of our Christian movement and Christian walk and Christian experience. So it's a clarion call.

In the book I lay out a biblical antidote to our pathetic times and I do believe God provides a prophetic solution to every pathetic circumstance without exception.

James: There's not a thing that the believers can't do to download transforming truth on this nation. If two agree and he agrees there is nothing impossible -- nothing impossible with God. We don't have a problem we face in America, we don't have an issue or a challenge that the people of God, submitted to the will of God, committed to be the light to provide the answer, not curse the darkness, turn on the light -- we don't have a problem we can't correct as quickly as Nehemiah rebuilt the walls. He rebuilt the walls with all the ridicule and the skeptics out there mocking him and trying to stop him. He rebuilt the walls in just over 50 days. We could correct our perilous course if the church would stand up and stream the truth and be the light that you have called for right here and Jesus said we are.

Samuel: We have to remove the bowl of complacency.

James: The covering. Get it off!

Samuel: Wow! We have to remove the bowl of political correctness. We have to speak truth to power. And we have to remove that because there is no mandate in scripture, be conservative, be liberal, be republican, be democrat, be donkey or be elephant -- that never happened! Be light! Be light! The call is to be light!

James: To the donkey and elephant, to the democrat and the republican, to the conservative and the liberal, period! Don't let somebody nullify us by sticking a label on us when he's already said, "Let me tell you who you are, you are the light of the world because I'm in you and I am the light of the world."

Samuel: That is my primary label. I'm a Christian first and foremost before I am anything else; before I am republican or democrat, conservative, liberal, black, white, yellow or brown, Hispanic, charismatic, or automatic, I am a Christian. I am a born-again blood-washed Bible-believing Christian and my mandate is to be light. But to be light means we must remove that bowl of complacency and apathy, which means as Christians we have responsibilities. We have a mandate. We have a call.

I was quickened and motivated to write the book. There are many things that led me but I had an experience in my living room, my wonderful lovely wife of 26 years was preparing a Hispanic, sort of a Puerto Rican cup of coffee. By the way, that's just wrong on many levels; you should be careful of that because it is -- and you explain why I speak at such an accelerated manner; right? I'm like, "Glory! Hallelujah! Whoa, glory!" But she was preparing, I kid you not, this is what happened.

I had a moment and I'm an Evangelical trekkie so I'm not, though I'm excited and I preach in a very excited manner, I doubt a lot of things; meaning I'm very skeptical about emotional exuberance. I knew it was God. I felt the Spirit of God in my living room. I was alone. And I was asking God why was he -- and I went on my knees and I felt the Holy Spirit speak to me in my heart about, "Samuel, if there is anything I want you to do from now on, wherever you go, and wherever I give you an opportunity to preach, tell them the following: Be holy, be one, be light. Out of all the messages, Samuel, just tell my people to be holy, remind them to be holy; to be one, unity in the kingdom and the body, the fragmentation, the division is the reason why it seems right now that Ahab and Jezebel are winning. And be light." Be holy, be one, and be light in that pecking order, in that chronological order.

If we can do that, if we can just focus on the righteousness, pursue righteousness, not legalism, but grace-filled, Christ-centered, Bible-based holiness, and if we could work on being one instead of dividing the kingdom. We are so divided; so much fragmentation in Christianity. While the other side, darkness, is united. And there are a bunch of different lamps hiding under so many different bowls of religiosity and denominationalism, of different streams and threads and we critique each other and we fight each other instead of coming together and being light. If we would ever come together then we can be light. But I understand my assignment for the rest of my life. And for my children's sake and my children's children's sake we can't get this wrong.

If I could reference back the reference of First Kings 18 that I just alluded to, Jezebel, the spirit of Jezebel is alive and well in our day and age -- the spirit of Ahab. Jezebel is a very interesting figure because Jezebel was responsible for the construction of Ashtoreth poles all over Israel. The Ashtoreth poles became the quintessential standing physical reminder of pagan subjugation which meaning, if you would wake up in the morning and walk out of your house you would see an Ashtoreth pole. It would remind you the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has failed you, supposedly. There is a new king in town! And the Ashtoreth pole, your God is no longer with you. And today, we have Jezebel constructing Ashtoreth poles and demanding that we worship to the altar of Baal.

James: We worship a source other than God. It can be Pharaoh, Caesar, federal government, Uncle Sam, or some idolatrous religion. Anything to replace our dependence on God and the wisdom that comes from divine providence and the one who can really give us oversight correctly and how to deal with the issues we face, and the personal responsibility to assume that responsibility which without you cannot have freedom nor keep it or preserve it or protect it. We're being asked to trust other sources other than God and this is being marketed very effectively.

Samuel: And we're being called to submit and to be subjugated under the confines and laws and mandates of Jezebel and Ahab. But in First Kings 18 and 19 -- and I love something beautiful in First Kings 19 where -- it's 19:19 where it says that Elisha was pushing the plow and he was breaking the ground and sowing the seed when Elijah saw him and threw his mantle on him. I believe -- here's the good news -- there are a bunch of people who have been pushing the plow and breaking the ground for a long time and I do believe this is the hour where God is going to place a mantle of authority upon an entire generation that will in the name of Jesus confront the spirit of Jezebel and the spirit of Ahab in the name of Jesus, and we will be light in our day and age. And we will be a generation that will declare when light stands next to darkness light always wins.

James: Isn't that great? Don't you appreciate Samuel Rodriguez?

Betty: Can you imagine what that will look like when we all become that light that God has created us to be? How bright the day will become? And people will be drawn to that light.

Samuel: Indeed! It doesn't say be happy or be the choirmaster of kum ba yah Christianity. Respectfully, I'm not demeaning any -- because all these things are tangential derivative benefits of your Christian walk. It doesn't say, "Be rich!" It's "Be light!" Everything else will follow by the grace of God but it's, "Be light!" Not politically correct -- but be light! If we can turn on the light, I mean, "Oh, I can't believe the Supreme Court! I can't believe congress. I can't believe the political climate of America!" And all we're doing is whining and complaining about darkness. Oh, knock it off already. Turn on the light in the name of Jesus! Come on!

James: He left us here as witnesses! We've been left here to be witnesses for him, ambassadors for Christ -- more than conquerors.

How are you doing? We are light. And we're going to take off the bushel covering, the bowl covering, and get it on the lampstand.

Do you thank God for Samuel Rodriguez? This is in the bookstores. Get a copy for everyone you know. Sammy, we have been putting God's arms around hurting people all over the world. Our viewers, I believe are light. And I believe because they're in the yoke with Christ and the load is light because he is light, they love to lift someone's burden. You referred a moment ago that you heard me say, "Become an answer to someone's prayer." Our viewers love that.

You want to be an answer to someone's prayers? Let me show you something. You're going to hear a prayer, you're going to hear Sheila Walsh, a wonderful gift from God to *LIFE Today* and *LIFE Outreach* and our mission outreaches. You're going to hear her heart, I believe God's heart. Watch very closely and be a miracle.

On the mission field

Open Captions: I discovered when I got home and undressed him. I told my mom, "My baby's foot is deformed!"

I don't know what we are going to do. I called out to God and I began to cry. "Lord, you gave me my child this way and I almost died giving birth."

Every day when I wake up I pray to God for my baby. That he would give him a good life and restore his health.

[Sheila Walsh singing: Jesus Loves Me]

Sheila: There is nothing a mother wants more than to be able to take care of her child. Nothing! You wait nine months and you can't wait to see that little face. You can't wait to count those fingers and toes. And when Rosario got to do that everything that she had been hoping and praying for fell apart in that moment. That's why we're here -- that's why *LIFE* exists to be able to say, "We care for you. We care for you. We stand with you; we stand together. You're not alone in this. You are not alone! We're going to be there for you."

I know that you, our viewers care about moms like this. Isn't it interesting that the little one's name is Angel? I'm asking you, would you be like an angel right now and answer this mom's prayer?

End of clip

In the studio

James: O God, would we be able to find the angels, the messengers. Sheila Walsh is here in our studio. She is part of *LIFE Outreach* and *LIFE Today*. You shared the compassion of a mother over a mother for her child. What do you hope and pray that all the viewers who are watching right now will do?

Sheila: It is so easy to watch a piece like that and you think, that's some woman on the other side of the earth. But she's not -- she's our sister in Christ. She told me her husband is not a believer yet but her other two children are. And when she started to cry because she saw what happened to her little baby, her son said to her, "Come on, mom! You've told us since the day

we were born that God is good and he answers prayers. So we're going to pray that God will send an answer."

And we were able to do that because of you guys, because you care. This is a beautiful woman and that darling little baby can get help.

The thing I see is that we can all do something. I got to take my son Christian with me and when he met that mom, Rosario and saw the baby, he went into his backpack and my 19 year old son emptied his wallet and gave it to her because she's malnourished and she can't produce enough breast milk to feed her baby. He said, "Mom, how can I go home and order a pizza when this mom can't even give her baby milk?"

But here's the great thing, there's hope! We can change this baby's life so this little one won't just run. This little boy will be able to run into the arms of Jesus if you'll help us.

James: Thank you, Sheila!

I just found myself saying, "God, you're going to answer that prayer for Angel with messengers who have an angelic blessing to offer."

Betty, I'm believing everyone watching is going to say, "We'll give your baby a simple little brace like this or whatever it takes, or the surgeries." The surgeries for these more difficult situations are \$400; that's because medical doctors go like missionaries and offer their services and that's what serious surgery cost. But these little braces are \$17 each. Here's one for a little bit older child. And while their bones can still be shaped easily, they just begin to sleep in these and it begins to correct it. It happened for our own daughter who had a little bit of a pigeon-toe effect that was causing her to trip and she had to wear them when she was young and even had to wear them quite a while.

Betty: James, God performs miracles in many, many different ways. We don't have to look very far; just open our eyes every day -- every day is a miracle. We have an opportunity to join our hearts together right now and to reach out and be a miracle for these children -- for these babies -- for that mother! She's asking God for a miracle. Will you join with us and let's give the miracles that we can help these babies?

James: Well, we've actually believed God in prayer that we have an assignment to give 10,000 mothers and little children straight feet. And there's 1,000 people a day who can say, "We'll buy two braces for \$34" -- \$17 for each brace. Some would say, "I'll give \$68" and we'll take care of four and some can give over \$100 and help six. You're going to be the miracle mothers like that pray for. I really do believe that.

Go to LifeToday.org. I pray you just say, "Thank God I can walk over to get my mobile device" or "my laptop" or "my computer." Or you can dial the phone number and take your bankcard, either way, use your bankcard like a check and make the largest gift you can.

We need some people who will give those \$400 surgeries because there are some serious things and sometimes the children have gotten a little older before they knew they could get help and that does take surgery.

Would you please make the gift God put on your heart and what Sheila Walsh just asked you to do and to pray about? Would you please? LifeToday.org, use your bankcard like a check or dial that number and become someone's miracle, the answer to a mother's prayer -- to a child's need. Thank you so much.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Children born with birth defects in underdeveloped nations are often overlooked, uncared for, and even abandoned. For tens of thousands every year born with a condition known as clubfoot, their deformity leads to a struggle to just survive. The good news is there is a simple and life-changing solution. This summer with your support, *LIFE Outreach* will provide 10,000 children with corrective braces that will give them a chance to walk like any normal child.

With the cost of \$17 per brace your gift of \$34 will help provide two children with corrective braces, \$68 will provide for four children, and \$102 will help give six children braces and the opportunity to walk. And for children with a much more severe need gifts of \$400, \$800, or even \$1200 will help provide life-changing corrective surgery for one, two, or three children in need.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you Beth Moore's devotional, *Blessed Mornings and Restful Nights*. With your gift of \$102 or more to provide six children with corrective braces you'll also receive the journal edition N.I.V. Bible.

Finally with your gift of \$1200 or more, you may receive "Majesty," our 2016 commemorative bronze sculpture. This summer join with us to give children hope for a future. Let's give them a chance to walk.

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: I want to say thank you. Father, thank you that we can see mothers' prayers and hopes and dreams come true for their children; in Jesus' name.

Thank you for being that answer to prayer, for being that miracle.

Sammy Rodriguez is a gift from God for this day. Not only can he preach but he can write. It's like fire when it comes off the page; it will get down in your heart. You help us, you be a miracle, we want to send you what can inspire us all together to become a miracle, to reveal the living Lord to a world in darkness. We can shine that light. We'll send it to you to say thanks. I encourage you to get one in the bookstores or go online and get one for a friend and say, "Let's be light together."

Join Betty and me in saying thanks to Sammy Rodriguez.

Samuel: Love you!

James: Thank all of you. Thank you. Go to stream.org every day. Make it your home page: Stream.org. Check it out!