

1/19/17
Week 4: WFL
Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh
Sandi Patty

Randy: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! We're so excited to have you because we have someone special. Sheila, introduce your good friend!

Sheila: I'm so excited! I get to interview so many amazing people but very rarely do I get to introduce somebody who is like one of my closest friends in the world. We've been friends for over 30 years. We know each other's stuff and so we're both safe because we've both got stuff on each other.

[Laughter]

Please would you welcome the most awarded female Christian vocalist in time, Sandi Patty! Yay! It's so great!

Sandi: So great to be here.

Randy: Now you've known each other a long -- we won't go over the how long it's been.

Sheila: Over 30 years!

Sandi: Over 30 years.

Randy: How did you meet?

Sheila: Can I tell? The funny thing, when I first came as a contemporary artist I was a little -- they thought I didn't look very Christian because I had --

Sandi: Well, she had purple hair. I'm just saying that.

Sheila: There's nothing in the Bible about that! So I had short spikey hair and they couldn't work out how to introduce me at Estes Park, this Christian artist seminar and let people think I maybe loved God. The only thing they came up with was they said, "If Sandi Patty will introduce her people will believe she is a Christian."

[Laughter]

And that was what happened. Do you remember that?

Sandi: And I always loved so much Sheila's -- you still are -- just such a professional, attention to detail. You just did these things with the lights and I thought, oh, man! That's so cool.

But we got to have lunch and there just was this common denominator in our hearts. And that was before Anna was born; so that's 32 years. So I think we're like going on like 35. You're my old -- you're my dearest -- can't say "oldest."

Sheila: Nobody missed it. Nobody missed it! I'm actually five days older than Sandi and she rubs it in every year. No grace there. None!

Sandi: None whatsoever!

Sheila: But the tour that you're on at the moment, I love the title, "Forever Grateful." Unpack that a little. Why did you choose that?

Sandi: I have been traveling for a long time. I really am kind of a reluctant artist because I wanted to teach school. But I sang with my family; my mom and dad are both wonderful musicians so music was something I grew up with. My dad was a minister of music. When I got to college I studied music.

But Bill and Gloria Gaither were alums of that university and called one day and heard me sing. "Hey, we're looking for a backup singer to come travel with us. Would you be interested?"

I said, "Wow! Let me pray about it. Yes!"

[Laughter]

It was just an amazing four or five years with them, but to the point where I had to kind of make a decision. Is this what I'm going to do? Or am I going to go back to teaching? It just felt like God was opening those doors.

So I just said I want to do my very best to honor you as I walk through these doors. But reluctantly so, as I did that because I was a shy kid and words were hard for me. But when I would hear a song, I would think, that's how I feel. So I really learned music so that I could

talk. So music has always been my voice.

So I find myself now 35-40 years later in a season and anticipating what is to come. And a couple of reasons that this tour exists, one is according to the metropolitan opera world a woman's vocal prime is between the ages of 45 and 60. So clearly, Sheila and I, we are there at 60. It is...

Sheila: We're on the way down fast.

Sandi: It is what it is. And I just want to be mindful of the art form. But that doesn't mean I won't still have something to say. But then also, we have grandkids; our kids are grown, and it's a new season. I look back on the years and there are so many things for which I'm thankful. And I can even almost say 100% that I'm thankful even for the hard times now as I look back because they have shaped who I am as a woman of God.

So I didn't want to call the tour farewell or good-bye; and as we began to talk about it and thinking of all the things that I have been so thankful for, and especially the people who have come alongside all these years, it just became really obvious to call it "Forever Grateful."

Randy: Great title!

Sheila: One of the things that I've always noticed about you and you've done it for as long as I've known you, you are always mindful of the people around you. You are the only person that ever stood on the Women of Faith stage and said, "Could you please help us thank the camera guys, the crew, the people who are doing it?" You have always been very intentional about recognizing, I don't do this alone.

Sandi: I really do feel that very deeply but I think part of it came from an understanding of when I traveled with my family. My two younger brothers and I, we had to set up all the stuff every night. We brought cinder blocks and set up a stage and snapped a little curtain around, and plugged in the stuff. It's hard work. I'm glad my parents made us kind of do that because it is, we are a village and we just need everybody.

Sheila: I want to revisit one thing. You said you were a reluctant artist because you really wanted to be a teacher. Now I know we're 60 but we're just getting going girl. So if the music thing is being put aside, does that mean the teaching thing might potentially come to the forefront now?

Sandi: I couldn't have any bigger prayer than that. I would love to speak into the generation coming behind; to encourage one another as we're all in the same season of life. It's funny,

Sheila, because I feel like 25 years ago, I had a lot more people listening to what I had to say but I honestly didn't feel like I had anything to say. And now I think maybe less people are listening but I feel like for the first time in my life I have something to say. So I'm excited about what that next season looks like, whether it is in a church setting or an academic setting, I would love to finally check off that list, teacher.

Randy: What do you want to say?

Sandi: I'd like to really speak about what worship is. I am learning first in my own life so much, that worship is so much more about who we are than it ever is about music. Worship is how we step into our day every single moment of the day, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. This -- this is your spiritual act of worship.

There are so many words that speak of worship throughout God's Word. But only two really have to do with actual music. The rest are our body posture, our heart posture, our mind posture. I think that sometimes we want to short circuit the system and go right to music when really it is who we are that we bring to those short, very small settings of music. So I would love to explore that with generations and just to bring an understanding of what worship really is.

Sheila: Well, you heard it here, people. There is going to be a lot of people that are going to be recruiting Sandi so if you would love to have her to be part of what you're doing, what a gift that would be! Because I think just the wisdom of the years, but also your understanding of what worship really is.

You and I have had long conversations about how easy it is to stand on a platform and talk about the love of God and sometimes not fully grasp it yourself. I'm just wondering, I think that's the richness that is coming out of you in this season of life. That you're actually starting to believe for you what you've believed for everybody else.

Sandi: You are so right. We've sung "Jesus Loves Me" forever and I've told a lot of people, God takes you just like you are. He made you just like you are. But somehow, in my mind, it was always "except for you." And that I was kind of sequestered to the Island of Misfit Toys. Then I began to understand, you know what? I think he does forgive me but maybe he is not going to use me anymore.

He's so crazy about me and I am beautiful in his eyes. My daughter-in-law, she has the most fabulous long gorgeous legs and just one day I'd want them but I'm okay with who I am. Like I'm hot!

[Laughter]

Sheila: Yes, you are! Your husband tells me that regularly. Yes!

Sandi: But you know what? That has been a journey.

Sheila: For all of us, I think.

Sandi: It's not even about weight or height or anything because I know women who we look at sometimes and think, they've got it all. They still struggle with who they are in God's eyes. So I'm grateful to be at this season where I would be my friend. That's okay. I like being here.

Randy: We've thought of you as our friend for many, many years. Listening to you but not really knowing you, it's interesting because we feel like we know you a little bit through your music. I think a lot of people watching are thinking, would you let her sing?

Sheila: Yeah! Will you shut up and let her sing?

Randy: Would you please sing for us?

Sandi: I would be honored to.

[Sandi Patty]

When it's time to tell your story
When it's time to turn the page
How we wonder
How we worry
How to finish every phrase
Everything I knew for certain
When the day was still so young
Only to pull back the curtain
Finding songs that are still unsung
It was at midnight
When the shadows hit me
It was the morning
When I found new mercies
This is my song for you
This is the one thing I can bring
You've taken all that's broken

Every bruise
And handed me a song to sing
If I could find the words
That might repay

I would tell you every single day
You've been so faithful
And I'm forever grateful
Forever grateful

[Cheers & Applause]

Sheila: Isn't that awesome? You don't just sing, that's the thing, it is like -- you know one of the things I've noticed about audiences? -- Because I do it myself. When you're singing we all go kind of like... It's like we lean in because we believe you. It's such a gift, Sandi.

One of my favorite things, when we did our final tour for Women of Faith, the last year, it wasn't just you. You brought the gang. You have a redonkulously talented family. The first time that we heard that Sandi's husband was going to go up on stage and sing a duet, we thought oh, bless his heart!

[Laughter]

Then we heard them and we were like, "Oh, my gosh!" But it's not just Don, all your kids are amazing!

Sandi: So we have eight kids between us and it's always been kind of a dream to sing with them but we never really wanted to push them to that. It's been so cool this year for this "Forever Grateful" tour to have Don, who is our tour pastor as well, to have the kids, not only on stage but then Donnie is our road manager, Molly is our business manager. It's just the sweetest thing. It is very, very special.

Sheila: One of the things that I've loved watching about you is how you have very carefully and intentionally worked on being a blended family. If somebody is watching or maybe even in our audience and they're kind of at the beginning of that journey, do you have any wisdom you would throw their way?

Sandi: I do have some wisdom and it's not what we did right; it really comes from all the things that we got wrong. Don and I are excited, I think, in this next season to maybe just really empower blended families. There is not a lot of literature out there so there is beginning to be some conferences and we're excited to get to be part of that. But the first thing, there are two things; the first thing is every blended family is born out of loss. That's not good. That's not bad, it just is. But I think you really have to acknowledge that. It can be the loss of a spouse, the loss because of divorce. A lot of times kids will lose where they are in the birth order. It might be the loss of the home you're used to, a school. I think acknowledging that, it doesn't make it good or bad but I think we've got to start there.

And then the second thing is that really, as the adults you're the only one who have chosen it. So really nurture that relationship. We often said to the kids when they were little, "You don't have to like each other but you do have to respect each other." It's really interesting to me because they are closer now. You've seen that. They are closer as siblings than honestly I've ever seen siblings. They really have each other's back. But those are two places to begin.

And then there are so many things like have the conversations, are they step kids? Are they bonus kids? What's the name that's going to work for your family? Honoring the other parents; they may not live with you every day but they're part of your kids' lives. Just so many things that if we can just begin and have a conversation I think it can empower a lot of blended families.

Randy: I can tell that she's got a lot to share, and a lot more ahead of her, and just sharing a lot of wisdom.

But let us hang on to the music for just a little bit longer. I want to revisit this real quick before we're done. The new CD, tell me a little bit about the songs on here and some of the background here.

Sandi: Some of the songs, I've not been a songwriter, really. I think it's because where that place in my head I've been raising eight kids. But this is the first project I've written about half of the songs with people like Michael W. Smith and Nichole Nordeman. That just has brought me a lot of joy.

But there are two songs on here, one is an old song that Steven Curtis Chapman wrote and I sang it early on in my career, "Love will be Our Home." Well, I have my family singing on this CD with me and it is just -- it is bucket list kind of stuff. It really, it's a special project for me because I really feel like my heart is so in the words and in the arrangements and in the story of what happens on this project.

Randy: I want to give you "Forever Grateful." And I want you to do something for us in return. We have an opportunity right now to bless a lot of people and you can be a big part of it. Will you watch something real quick and then I want you to prayerfully consider how you can participate with us to save lives. Watch this!

On the mission field

>> We all know what it is like to be hot and thirsty, dry mouth, dry throat, whatever it is and then to know that feeling of going to a refrigerator and getting good, clean, cold water. Now just think about how desperate you would have to be to come to a hole like this and say, "Yes, I'm going to try to drink that to make me feel better." But this is their life every day; just trying to survive drinking this type of water.

What do you see here? You see a cup of dirty water. That's what I see, just dirty water. What should really alarm us is what we can't see. What we cannot see is the germs and the disease that is contained in this one cup of water.

We have heard testimonies from mothers who have lost five children from drinking just polluted, filthy, disease-infested water. One lady cried out and says she doesn't know of a mother who hasn't lost a child to this filthy water. They have no other choice. They have no choice but to drink this germ-infested water.

We have a choice and we can drill a well in this very village. We can drill down and bring clean, beautiful water that will bring life to this village. We can stop this disease. We can stop the deaths. We can stop the burials. We can stop the tears and bring beautiful, clean water to this village who desperately need a touch of God's love.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: That shot of all the women holding up their hands -- one, two, three, four -- that was the number of children they had lost due to the dirty water. Sheila, can you imagine holding up your hand to show how many of your children you had lost to polluted water?

Sheila: It's a tragic situation but it is not a hopeless situation and that's the difference. That's why we, as the body of Christ are on this earth to bring hope to the hopeless, help to those who cannot help themselves.

As Ralph said, there's not a mother in that village who hasn't lost a child. I can't imagine -- and not because some tragedy like cancer. Something so fixable. We can do this. I've seen the

difference it makes when we are able to put -- when we put a well in a village, do you know that that one well will last for 70 years! It will provide clean water for the whole family for their life!

These are children for whom Christ died. They are not people in Africa, they are our brothers and sisters. I cannot tell you the number of women that said to me, "Please, will you ask..." -- not "Will you ask people to America to give us stuff." They said, "Will you ask them to pray for us?"

I said, "I promise you. I promise you we will pray but we're going to do more than that. We are going to be the answer to your prayer."

Our goal is 188 wells in African villages. The need is great. But Randy, it is so doable.

Randy: It is! \$4800 is the average cost of a well. It varies according to the depth and difficulty of drilling a well. But that means that it will serve an average of 1,000 people in a village in the remote areas.

So \$48, we say will give clean water to 10 people for a lifetime on average; \$48, \$144 for 30 people, of course, \$4800 for a well. Look, the need is huge but it is doable. We have proven over and over that we can meet needs in areas with desperate need. Let me tell you, we've got some area with some desperate need right now.

So what we need you to do is partner with us. Go to the phone, go online, give the best gift you can and know that when you do, you will be saving lives. You will be reducing that awful number of the woman holding up her hand. We can intervene, we can save lives. Sheila, how critical is it right now that people act?

Sheila: The deal is we can all do something. If you're watching this and you're 14, you can give us some of your allowance, you can do something. Some of you can do a whole well. But if we all do what we can do then the work of Christ will be done.

Randy: Absolutely! Go to the phones right now. Go online. Give the best gift you can as we take water, as we take life, as we take the gospel of Jesus Christ in action to people in Africa right now.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Every day children living in extreme poverty are forced to make a dreadful

choice, drink filthy polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

Our teams have recently located remote villages in southern Africa where children are dying from contaminated, disease ridden water. The situation is desperate. They need clean disease-free water immediately.

With your gift today you can help drill 188 water wells in remote villages across seven African nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. \$72 will provide for 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift we'll send you Sheila Walsh's devotional, 5 Minutes with Jesus, a fresh infusion of joy to help you find perspective in the midst of daily life and experience a deeper connection with God.

With your gift of \$100 or more you'll also receive our No Greater Name canvas, a beautiful artistic expression of our savior's name and a daily reminder of his presence in your life.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our beautiful new hand-painted "Determined Eagle" bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

On the mission field

Betty: This little child is probably between two and three years old, maybe four. But you know he may not make it past five, four or five if he doesn't have the water that he needs. He has water but it is contaminated.

But you know, we have to give him a choice. They don't have a choice right now in so many places all over the world. Because they don't have that choice their bodies are being contaminated with this bad water and their families are dying.

Our missionaries have been there and seen them in the hospitals. They're there because they haven't had good water. They've had contaminated water and it is waterborne diseases that will kill them if we don't reach out and help them in time. Please help us do that! Please, all around

the world give these children a chance in life. Thank you so much! And God will bless you richly!

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: I hope you are going to the phones, go online right now and get this. You want this one?

Sheila: Oh, yeah! Trust me, I had it the minute it came out. Phenomenal CD! Also, just to hear Sandi's kids on it, it's just wonderful! For any gift we will send this to you. I know you want to help.

Sandi, what a joy! Would you please help me thank the amazing Sandi Patty?

Sandi: Thank you guys so much!

Randy: Thank you for being here.

Sandi: My pleasure!

Randy: Thank you for being with us. Do go to the phones, go online right now and join us every day for *LIFE Today*.

Announcer: In his new book, *Living Amazed* James Robison shares how divine encounters can change your life. *Living Amazed* -- coming soon to online and retail bookstores.