

4/3/17

Week 15: Mission: Rescue Life
Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh
Nick Hall

Sheila: Hi! Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Sheila Walsh here with Randy Robison. We're so glad that you're tuning in. We have a fantastic guest for you today. There's a passage of scripture that he outlines in his book and I just want to read you these couple of verses from Psalm 71. I love the way that he's made this a kind of plumb line for his ministry and also for his heart. Here's what it says:

My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long though I know not how to relate them all. I will come and proclaim your mighty act, sovereign Lord, I will proclaim your righteous deeds, yours alone.

Since my youth, God, you have taught me and to this day, I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I'm old and gray -- trust me, getting there -- do not forsake me my God until I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.

Psalms 71.

Yeah! Awesome! So please, help me welcome our guest, Nick Hall. Great to have you!

Nick: Glad to be here.

Randy: In this case, I love your book title, *Reset: Jesus Changes Everything*. Because man, if there's ever a message people need to hear is that you can reset, you can restart. Where did this come from?

Nick: Well, hopefully it was inspired from God. We were praying as students really, ten years ago up in North Dakota, of all places. We were really praying for revival on our campus. Actually this movement started through an English paper I wrote when I was a junior. We were praying like crazy, we were seeing destructive things happening all around us and out of that prayer this kind of paper launched this movement, it was called: Pulse. We were like, "Man, we're going to take the campus!"

And actually, so many students started coming to Christ that we kind of were like, man, how do we describe this to a generation that is biblically illiterate, that's unchurched?

You're saying, "Come to Christ."

They're saying, "Where is he?"

You're saying, "Hey, come and be saved."

They're saying, "From what?"

There is just all these confusing terms.

There was actually a student who actually played a lot of video games that he said to us, "You know what, Nick, what we're praying for is a reset."

I said, "Okay, what do you mean?"

He said, "Well, you know I play a lot of video games."

We said, "We know." As if it was a surprise for us.

We're like, "You should shower more, first off."

[Laughter]

He said, "When you hit reset it clears the errors and it gets it working again."

So we looked it up and we're like, "Okay, what is the definition of reset?" And reset literally means to clear past errors and get this system working toward its intended or created purpose. Man, isn't that the essence of the gospel? That God made us to work a certain way? You and I mess up the system and God offers us a second chance through Jesus.

So literally, at our student events we would say, "Man, tonight, we just want to tell you no matter where you are, no matter what you've done or no matter what your understanding of faith is that there is a second chance available to you. Just like your phone or computer, we all mess up the system but the bottom line is that God gives us hope and if you're willing to come to him tonight, admit your need, admit that you are broken, that you have messed up, that we have all sinned as scripture says, that Jesus offers a reset to each and every one of us."

Sheila: One of the things I love, Nick is that you have such a heart for millennials. My son is a sophomore in college and I know some of the issues that kids are struggling with, even Christian kids. There's suicide, there is anxiety, there is depression.

What do you find are the main needs of kids and why are they not flocking to the church? Why are so many of them flocking away from the church?

Nick: Yeah, I think some of us may have experienced Christianity in terms of rules or regulations or maybe a place where people aren't being real about the issues that we're seeing, facing us, inundating us every day. You think of a typical teenager or college kid, they're online all the time. They're being bombarded with all kind of messages and content and all kinds of things. And then they go to this abstract place where we're talking about these ideas but it doesn't seem like it is making a difference in daily life.

I think most of these kids are really hurting and broken. So they want to hear somebody talk about things that are real. They want to hear about, man, how does God relate to self-harm? How does God relate to depression and suicide? How does God relate to the temptation for pornography and all the things that are around us? I mean my self-image, my self-esteem, my relationships, my purity?

And so I just think sometimes there is a disconnect and our passion with our events is really, we want to build a bridge from where the students are to the community of faith because we believe these people that care about these kids they're there and ready to build the relationship but oftentimes it is a massive disconnect between those two worlds. And that's where we believe God comes in, offers this hope, and ultimately, the message is there is a reset, there is a new beginning. There is a community here that loves you, that wants to journey with you through these situations.

Randy: There is one story in this book I know you know this, to me kind of illustrated what you're doing because it is one thing to talk about the need and like you say, sort of abstract ideas but it gets real when you talk to someone like Michelle.

Nick: Yeah. And really, this is where I would say this message turned into more of a movement because we felt this sense in our heart that God was calling and offering a reset to our generation. So if you think about a broad message of man, there is a second chance. So literally, five years ago I packed up my family in an R.V. We started going from coast-to-coast literally saying, "God is offering a reset; there is a second chance."

It was this crazy thing. I mean I've got a newborn, my wife and another family, their newborn and we're hopping in this R.V. That's breaking down all the time. We're like what are we thinking? But God had called us and we're sharing this message, if there is a reset, there is a second chance. I started to say, "On your phone or your computer, there are specific things that are wrong. You download the wrong file, you go to the wrong place, so what is it in your life

tonight that is standing between you and your relationship with God?"

And that night as I gave the call this girl comes up to me after the night and her name was Michelle, I found out later, and she is basically just angry and looking at me and saying, "Nick, I came here tonight. I didn't want to be here tonight. I hate Christians. And I hate preachers."

And I'm just sitting here thinking, like this is going really well. This is off to a great start, a very affirming moment in my life.

She's like, "I didn't want to listen to anything." And she said, "But something happened tonight during the music and during the message I heard this voice, it kept saying, 'Michelle, I love you. Michelle, I love you. Michelle, I love you.'"

She looked at me and all of the sudden this anger was starting to break away. She said, "Nick, I think it was God." She started shaking. She said, "Nick, tonight when you prayed, tonight I surrendered to Jesus. I just said, 'God, I'm broken. You're the savior; you did what I couldn't do on the cross. I need you.'"

And she threw her fist out at me and I thought she was going to punch me -- like really! And I was kind of like ducking. I'm just scared. Anybody tries to punch me, I'm going to duck.

[Laughter]

But somebody maybe wouldn't.

She threw out her fist and she said, "Nick!" I just could tell there is something in her hand. She said, "Nick, I've been wearing this necklace every day for five years. I put it on; it reminds me that I'm worthless."

And she opened up her fist and there is this razor blade that was strung on a chain. She said, "Every day I would put it on and it would just remind me, 'You're nothing.'"

And she would take it off during the day and use it to slice up her arms and her legs. She said in that moment, "Nick, I don't want to see myself the way the world sees me one minute longer. I want to start seeing myself the way God sees me. Will you take this?"

It was one of these supernatural moments where it was like light was piercing the darkness, which is what the gospel does. But I think all too often, those of us that have real struggles, we hold those dark things in. We think, I can't tell anybody. I can't share this because if they knew they would hate me, they would judge me. But actually, the opposite was happening. Like God

was bringing healing and restoration and life.

And as Michelle shared that story to me and offered it to be shared with others, it was like God was bringing freedom to a generation. We actually started setting out what we called "Reset Bins" where every night lines of students would come and bring in razor blades and bullets and pill bottles and hateful letters. And they would write down on cards like what was their thing that they needed to come to Jesus because he was offering a reset to them.

So it was just this powerful moment. Literally, God used Michelle to start it.

Sheila: I read something today on my Twitter feed, which honestly, I think most of us would find pretty shocking, although I don't think you will. But this is what it said on my Twitter feed this morning: "Sex before kissing. How 15-year old girls are dealing with porn addicted boys."

That was -- obviously, I'm a lot older so that was not the way things were. How huge a problem is this with our young people?

Nick: It's an enormous problem. Pornography is an epidemic and I think it is one of those things that is often not talked about. I would say not even just amongst young people, I think this is across the board. I think there are adults and even grandparents, just the access. That's the thing about pornography, it's just been made readily available to everyone everywhere and people don't have self-control.

Even, I go back to my own story. I was a teenager, Christian kid going to youth group, saying all the right things, knew the songs, prayed the right prayers but yet, all of the sudden I find out that there's these websites I can find or things I can see and I have buddies that are encouraging it, talking about things, dirty jokes, whatever you want to say, and all of the sudden I'm battling this thing kind of on my own. I can't tell anybody. If I told somebody they would really think I was awful. I'm supposed to be a leader.

So it was just kind of this thing that God had to set me free and literally, it was through the vulnerability of somebody else opening up about their problem that it was like God brought healing to me.

But what we're seeing is that in this generation, whether it is a young guy or a young girl --

Sheila: So that's what's surprising to me because most of us think it is only guys that struggle with porn but the statistics in your book make it clear that is not so.

Nick: Honestly, both sides of the coin are struggling. I think one thing also is that the girls

expect it of the guys. So there's not even like a shock of you're looking at this. It is more like why wouldn't you look at that? So there is this whole system of understanding and acceptance of it that I think it just really broken.

So there is a generation that has been robbed of purity. So that's one the big things that we see so many young people coming and saying, "Jesus, will you reset my purity?" You think of the innocence that you have that has literally been stolen from you and that God creates a new creation. He begins something new. He cleans up what is so dirty, what is so broken, he can put it back together again but we're seeing it as an epidemic.

Sheila: But what would you say to somebody, somebody even watching this program whether they're a millennial or whether they're a church elder or whatever -- because you're right, there is some things that have very little curb appeal within the church. We don't talk about mental illness, we don't talk about pornography. What would you say to somebody who is struggling right now and thinks, I cannot get out of this?

Nick: I would just say you can't go it alone. Number one, God doesn't want to leave you there. God wants to free you even in this moment. He is one prayer away. Literally, just cry out to God and he brings healing.

Conviction, I think is one of these things that when God brings realization of something wrong, that is the moment to say, "God, I need a savior. I need your help." He always responds. "Just call out to me and I will come to you, I will rescue you. Seek me and you will find me." There are so many of these passages.

But I think beyond that there has to be an opening up to bring somebody else into your story. I think, especially with things like pornography, especially with things like self-harm, I think these issues that have been entrapping people for so long, this isn't just like a one time thing. Most of this is really habitual; this is a daily struggle. I think that there is something when we include others, when we open up, literally, you think of the darkest thing, when you open up and let the light break in, it brings freedom to everybody.

So if somebody was watching even right now I would challenge them, man, there are people in your life that love you, they're not going to judge you, they want to hear, they want to pray for you and you are actually going to be God's instrument to bring them freedom in some other area. You don't know about it now but your vulnerability is going to open up something that you don't even know. So you've got to be real, you've got to be honest, and you've got to have a conversation.

Sheila: To me, that's what it means when it says, "Confess your sins one to another and pray for

each other so that you may be healed."

I struggle with depression and I have two or three girls that when I'm in my darkest moments I get -- if I can't physically call, I text them and they're with me because the enemy wants to isolate us and make us feel you're the only one and you should be ashamed. But Jesus said, "No." He took our shame on the cross so that we could be free.

Nick: Yes! And I think that's really the message that we carry and I would say as really a millennial type of message. We talk about reset, this isn't a message for them. We try to be very clear about that. This isn't a crusade to reach those people, whoever "they" are. And oftentimes we all think of, they're the ones that really need this. It's him! It's her! It's them. We all have a "them."

For us it's saying, man, of all the people that need a reset, I'm the first one in line; right? Of all the people that need Jesus, I am the first one. If everybody in my life that needs Jesus, I need him more than anyone else that I know. So I'll tell people, "Man, if you want to come, Jesus is offering a second chance. Come and get in line but just don't get in front of me because I was here first."

So it's kind of flipping the script a little bit from a generation that is more coming from, "Oh man, we got this. You need to be saved." This is more coming, "No, like we're broken people. He is the healer. He did what we can't do. We're not here because we have it all figured out but we're here because he is the one who did it, he's still doing it, and he brings us peace and hope." Because otherwise, whether it is our depression, whether it is our struggles with lust or pride or a million other issues, man, we can't make it on our own and no one is immune.

Randy: So you respond to your own invitations at the end of the sermon, in a sense. Yeah?

Nick: I really feel that. There has never been a gospel call that I've given, sometimes when I first started preaching because you'd read about all these kind of preachers back in the day. I was called as an evangelist when I'm 18. I'm like, "I'm going to be Billy Graham." And you read the biographies of some of these old men and women of God and it's almost like they never did anything wrong. It's just a highlight reel. Like I read the biographies, I'm depressed!

[Laughter]

I know this is supposed to encourage me but I feel like a horrible person.

So I want to get around people and like, "Tell me your struggles. Tell me that you're human." You get around them and it is very clear but I think vulnerability wasn't necessarily a high value

for a previous generation whereas I think for us it very much is. Tell me what's going on. Tell me about the struggles of your faith, of your marriage, of your life. Let's be real with each other because man, when you show your struggles, I can be real. So when I'm giving a gospel presentation, when I'm inviting people to Jesus, it's very much like I'm the first one on that altar. Like I'm the first one in line saying God -- it's just a thought that right now God would offer something new, that God would offer perspective. How often does my mind go the wrong direction? How often do I prioritize the wrong things? How often do I put treasure in the wrong place and get judgment in my heart? It's like God, I need a reset. God, would you change this heart and turn me back to you? Would you bring back the joy of my salvation?

Randy: I noticed that because when I picked up your book I thought I was picking up an evangelism book, which is great and needed and wonderful and it is, but it is more than that. Because I found it challenging me, your message challenges me to reset my habits, to reset my relationships, and not in the sense of needing salvation because I've been a Christian for quite a while but you emphasize that Christ gives us the ability to fix those things that still aren't quite where they need to be; not for the sake of fixing but for the sake of living in a fulfilled way that he desires for us. So that reset is an ongoing, kind of daily -- it's a lot like renewing your mind.

Nick: Yes. You can have a 100 people in a room in need of a 100 different needs of things that need to be reset. But I tell people, "Man, we all have something." I think when you get to the point where you think, I don't need it, it's kind of like, there's a problem here because we are on a journey. We're not home yet. He's making us whole but at the end of the day, we want to follow Jesus. So let's spur each other on toward love and good deeds. Let's sharpen each other as iron sharpens iron. Let's call each other to confess our sin one to another that our prayers might be heard. There is something about this that matters to God and matters here.

Sheila: One of the most profound things I think is, it is such a relief to me when I finally got it that I'm not the good news, Jesus is. That's such a relief!

Even when you talk about salvation, I love when it says: Those who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. I used to think salvation was just a one time thing. In terms of eternal salvation it is but if you're about to pick up a drink and you're an alcoholic, you can call on the name of the Lord. If you're about to go online and you're a believer, you can call on the name of the Lord. I need to get saved about 50 times a day.

Nick: Yes! I think that's the thing, to your point, I think the message of "reset" is an evangelistic message in that -- this is coming from a evangelist -- I guess I share the gospel and I travel and talk to young people, old people, whatever. I just wanted this message to make sense to a technologically driven culture. We all hit the reset button on our power outlet, on the dash of our car, on our computers -- it is everywhere. If you start looking for the word *reset* from today

on you'll see it all over the place. It was in an elevator today. As I was getting in there I'm like, I hope I don't need that button but it's there.

There is something about this that I think is a message that resonates and it is a lens through which to communicate the message of Jesus. What I love about it is it implies that something is wrong. There are a lot of gospel presentations that it's all just, God wants to help this and heal this and fix this and good, good, good and there is no dealing with what's wrong. There is no dealing with the fact that we are broken and sinful people but reset implies that something is broken in the system. And I personally don't meet anybody who comes and says, "I don't need help with any area of my life." I meet a lot of people who say, "Man, my life is messed up. If I could have a second chance that would be amazing!"

So it actually opens up the door to talk about how literally, no matter what you're going through, that there is a second chance available; that Jesus offers life from death, healing from brokenness, and I think that's the good news of the gospel.

Randy: I will take that second chance and that third chance and that fourth chance in that daily reset that he offers to us.

Right now there are a lot of people who need to reset -- a pretty major reset and we want to offer it to them. Because you know resetting is really about grace, it is about God's grace.

Sheila: And about second chances. I recently got to meet some people who are in desperate, desperate need of a second chance. Would you take a look at this?

On the mission field

Sheila: Honestly, it's overwhelming. My first night here I got... I went back to my hotel room and I just cried because I thought, Lord, I can't believe this! I can't believe that this is happening!

It's just like this spiritual battle between good and evil and evil is making a lot of money over there. You walk along the street and these girls are all dressed up in their makeup and short skirts. And it gets darker and darker. And you go back further and you see these little rooms and the locks are not on the inside to keep a girl safe, the locks are on the outside to keep a girl trapped.

As I looked at these doors knowing that behind these doors are girls that are being held against their will or their will is so broken down, it was so clear to me, we have got to be the answer to their prayers, to some who have given up hope, to some who don't even think there is any other way to live because they've been told, if you escape we know where you live and we'll go get

your family.

We need to be the answer. In Jesus' name, it's all about freedom. It is about hearing chains break. Isn't it interesting that it was a slave trader who wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace."
I once was lost but now I'm found; was blind and now I see.

Let's do that in Jesus' name.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: Sheila, as a father of two girls, four children, two girls who are in the age range of those girls over there, seeing those locks on the outside of the door, as a guy, I want to go Liam Neeson and go crack open some doors and beat some people up and pull those girls out of there and rescue them. There's a bit of that that goes on, I think, for men.

I think God has a little of that too where he is waiting to bust those doors down and set those girls free. And you go, "God, why don't you?" I think God says, "That's what you're there for. That's why I've got my bride, my people on earth. It is to set the captives free," -- to do what Jesus said we would do, set the captives free.

The only way that we know how to do that in the natural, to get them literally out from behind those doors is to intervene and that's why we have set up all the programs and we have people in place in many of these countries where this goes on so that we can go in and intervene.

Yes, we pray. We want you to pray because we know that the spiritual chains are oftentimes harder to break than the physical chains so we need to focus on that front as well. But from a physical standpoint, you can join with us to literally get those girls out of the sex trade. That's what we want to do.

Sheila: Yeah. We're praying; it's our prayer that we'll rescue 5,000 girls this year. It's so doable. I got to see the worst of the worst on those streets. I've never been anywhere like it in my life. It literally felt like hell on earth.

But then I got to see the other side. I got to see what happens when we break through and rescue one of those girls and tell them, you're not a number stamped on your leg. You are a daughter made in the image of God! And to be able to have those girls rescued and to put them in a place where they discover who they are -- and it is so doable!

Do you know that for \$128 we can rescue and restore one girl? So we need you to join with us. We actually have this amazing gift that came in. Some of our friends called and said, "Listen, we want to put up a \$200,000 matching gift." For \$128, that will be doubled, you'll actually rescue two girls. And maybe you're thinking, that's kind of a lot for me. If you can do \$64 they will match that and together you will have rescued a girl.

I've seen with my eyes what it looks like but I've also seen with my eyes what it looks like when those girls are rescued and brought to a place of safety and freedom and told, "There is a God in heaven who heard your prayer and we are his people. And he placed it on our hearts to come in his name and let you know you have a future, you have a hope."

But we can only do it with your help. Would you go to your phones? Would you make the best gift possible? You can go online but just let us know. We care. We're going to do something now.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Innocent children and young people longing to be loved and cared for are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators, their spirit and body 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 help restore their lives and give them a future.

Now a generous opportunity of a \$200,000 matching gift means your gift of \$128 to help rescue a child will be matched to help two children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help rescue one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.

With your gift we will send you James Robison's new book, *Living Amazed*: How divine encounters can change your life. As you read these inspiring stories you'll learn how to live amazed in the presence of God 24 hours a day.

With your gift of \$100 or more you'll receive James's new book, along with the companion Amazed Journal so you can record accounts in your own life where you're amazed at God's goodness.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help rescue 20 children and you may request our beautiful new "Determined Eagle" bronze sculpture.

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

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: Do go to the phones, go online, do what you can. Together, we can make a big, big difference. Don't forget today with your gift we want to send you *Living Amazed*. I'm actually in the book. It wasn't named after me. I'm not the amazing part of this book but what God has done through a yielded vessel, my father, it's pretty amazing. We want to give you that book.

And today, we want to send you, Nick's book, *Reset*. It is good stuff as you already heard. Nick, thank you for being with us.

Nick: A privilege to be here.

Randy: Get Nick's book, go online, do what you can and join us again every day at *LIFE Today*.