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Week 25: Mission spring Mission Feeding, Last Week

James and Betty Robison

Sarah Jakes Roberts

James: It is a joy! I'm telling you, it is a joy to share this time with you. We are so glad that you have given us this opportunity. I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*.

T.D. Jakes is one of the most gifted people on the planet. He and I have been friends from the moment we met and I was able to be a part of that dedication of the Potter's House. His daughter was there. She was pretty young but she well remembers. But Sarah Jakes, now Roberts, has had quite a journey. She actually came on with Sheila and boy did Sheila Walsh enjoy -- I tell you what, go ahead and just welcome Sarah to *LIFE Today*. We're just so glad you're here.

I'm telling you that Sheila Walsh had such an inspiring time with you and was encouraged by all you shared and your openness and your willingness to share. Did you enjoy being with her?

Sarah: I did. I had such an incredible time. She is a dear friend.

James: And she is a treasure. Well, we're just honored to have you. You come with a new book. I'm going to touch on the title, *Don't Settle for Safe*. Boy, I'm telling you what, one of the things that makes her testimony so powerful is that she has been so open and honest.

One thing people have told Betty and me is that we seem to be vulnerable in our own walk. I've been in some pits. I've been thrown in some but I dug a few and she has had to help with the Lord get me out of some of them. She pretty well walks on high ground, most of you know that.

But you have had some pretty hard blows. In other words, you missed the mark and you were very open about that. I think you're going to capsule a little bit of that. So tell us something about that journey where you know it wasn't pleasing to family, to the father, and as you look at it in your own eyes. What happened in your life?

Sarah: Well, obviously, growing up in the Jakes' household there was quite a bit of pressure to kind of either follow in our father's footsteps or pick up some of the mantle. I found myself lost just trying to figure out who I was. As a teen I got pregnant; I was 13 years old. I had my child at 14. Those created so many insecurities within me that I tried to stray further and further away from the pressure of being T.D. Jakes' daughter. Found myself in a toxic relationship that

ultimately ended in divorce. So at the age of 22 I found myself lost, broken, hurting, but in an incredible place for me to create an authentic relationship with God.

James: Wow! Can I ask you a question? Because I see so many girls, and you can't think of them being so dense and foolish that they're just manipulated like a plaything, but why is it that girls fall into that trap of suddenly finding themselves used in a sexual exchange that so often leads to what you faced? What makes that possible?

Sarah: I think it's searching for validation and ultimately value and affirmation from other people. So we don't necessarily think that our minds can get us there or our spirituality can get us there. In culture, looks are celebrated quite a bit. So we find broken little girls trying to be women to win the validation of people in their communities.

James: Wanting to feel attractive, wanting to feel desired, wanting to feel something treasured and they get manipulated; don't they?

Sarah: Absolutely. But I think the manipulation first starts with what our insecurities tell us and not necessarily what other people manipulate us into doing.

James: But boys play off of that insecurity. And they use it. I wish we would be men enough to treat women the way they deserve to be treated.

You know what I say to girls when I'm talking to them, what I said to my own girls and what I said to our granddaughters and that is that I pray you'll find a boy, a man that will always love Jesus more than he'll love you because that's the only way he can ever love you the way you desire and deserve to be loved. Does that make sense?

Sarah: Yeah!

James: Well, you've got a husband sitting out here that is I'm telling you, sir, you're a man of God. The glory of God and his manifestation is all over him. Where did you all meet? I'm curious, Sarah.

Sarah: We actually met in a business meeting when I was touring for my book *Lost and Found*. They told me about this incredible church in Los Angeles where there was a pastor who had a heart after God. I fell in love with that heart.

James: How long have you been married?

Sarah: Almost three years.

James: Well, you're an awesome couple! And I just want to say to the whole world, I pray the supernatural, double portion anointing of God on both of you for his glory and kingdom purpose in these troubled times because I believe you're really a treasure, both of you together. Now I want you, Betty, what did you think about those statements there?

Betty: The one I want to ask her about is the title here, *Don't Settle for Safe*. What do you mean by that?

Sarah: As I shared with my story, I had so many insecurities and so many fears, and honestly, just stipulations on what I thought was possible for my life because of what I experienced. Don't settle for safe is all about removing the stipulations that come with our fears and insecurities, and trusting that through God all things are possible. That we can have thriving marriages, that we don't have to settle for less than what God wants for us just because of mistakes we've made in the past.

James: Do you feel like the enemy told you over and over that you were disqualified for a highly visibly effective purpose in your life and you had just failed and you were done? Did you hear that a lot?

Sarah: Absolutely! And not just for a highly visible purpose but for a man who really loved and honored me, for a relationship with my children that was one where they would admire who their mother was. He told me all these different lies. And I'm constantly, still, with a life that I love, fighting those lies. I'm fighting the fact that I do have this ministry and God has qualified me but I still have to fight those insecurities because as we know, no matter what age or stage you are in life, insecurities come to threaten us all. But when we choose to really step outside of our comfort zone we tap into unstoppable strength and power to be all that God has called us to be.

Betty: And when we find ourselves in a comfort zone for so long it is hard to even imagine that it is right to step out of it. Because the unknown is kind of scary.

Sarah: Absolutely! That's why the subtitle is "Embracing the Uncomfortable." To not just anticipate that unexpected things would happen but to embrace them. Because when we embrace those uncomfortable moments there is wisdom on the other side of that. There is a new revelation of who we are and who God is on the other side of that that we never get to experience if we stay within our comfort zones.

James: You had a child, you said around 13. You kept the child.

Sarah: I did.

James: That had to be a tough decision.

Sarah: It was! It was a tough decision but obviously, there are so many options that this world offers us but I felt like it was more important to me that I kept my child, that I loved him the best way I knew how. And he challenged me to keep from making certain decisions, to live a wise life and to really know that he is watching me. And because he was watching me, I say all the time, I really believed he saved my life. I couldn't be careless and carefree, I had someone at home grounding me and it really spared me.

James: Did your family struggle with it at all? I mean highly visible parents and family situation, were they right with you and coming around? I know they wanted the baby to be born. Were they signing on with you to help you in that journey?

Sarah: They did help me. Obviously, no one dreams that their child is going to have a baby at 14 years old so they were hurt. And they were disappointed but just like God does with us when we choose to not settle for safe, they met me right where I was and led me to where I needed to be. Through their love and their commitment I've been able to make it to the other side.

James: That's beautiful!

Betty: And God can take those difficult circumstances and turn it for good.

Sarah: Absolutely, as he has with even having the opportunity to share about not settling for safe and empowering other women to kind of dig through their stories, to discover what their patterns are and to come out on the other side. I don't know that I would have had that opportunity had God not taken what could have been meant for evil in me having this pregnancy but ultimately turning it to good.

James: Let me just say to Bishop and Mrs. Jakes, thank you for being the kind of parents that showed the love of the Father in very difficult situations. Love you! Praise God for you!

I love these statements up here in the little circle. You just referenced "embracing the uncomfortable to become unstoppable." I can already tell that your husband has that unstoppable tenacity, that determination, that immovable for the right reasons and moving forward for the right reasons. And obviously, that's in you.

But when you see this and write it here and you want every reader to get it, what is it you want them to come away with that they feel like they're unstoppable in what ways if they handle these

difficult situations right?

Sarah: You're so right about my husband having that unstoppable mentality. And as we were blending our family and coming together in marriage, I had to recognize that I struggled with being vulnerable. In order for us to have an unstoppable marriage I had to embrace the uncomfortable, I had to vocalize my emotions, I had to tell him how I was feeling and through that we've been able to have this unstoppable bond. That's ultimately what I hope readers take away from this. Is that they are able to identify areas in their life that are uncomfortable for them. It is uncomfortable for me to think about going back to school and dreaming again. Or to even look back over my life and see these issues; I'd rather just leave these behind me and not deal with them at all. But when we embrace the uncomfortable we become unstoppable mothers, unstoppable wives, unstoppable students and people in our workplaces. So I truly believe that there is such courage that comes with embracing those moments.

James: Do you find people encouraged by your willingness to be vulnerable, to open up about your own failures, and the amazing grace of God and the divine enabling that he freely offers if we will actually give him the yielded life, the yielded clay and really mean it? Do you find people somehow being moved to join you in this unstoppable journey that they're inspired and motivated by what you share?

Sarah: They are. I like to call it an unstoppable movement. I think there is this myth that had I been raised by T.D. Jakes that my life would be so much different. I'd have such a strong relationship with God, I'd have unstoppable faith. And then they see T.D. Jakes' daughter saying I've struggled too. And there's this leveling of the playing field that comes when you realize that everyone has a struggle. My struggle may be different from yours, it may have affected me differently than yours but ultimately, I believe that we can make it to the other side of that mountain. So let's together inspire one another by walking out this thing.

James: You know what parents hear when a child fails in any way? The enemy tells them, "You're a failure. You failed. You missed the mark. You messed up." And you know your parents had to hear that. Your dad, it had to hit him pretty hard on the chin. Did you ever find yourself having to minister to dad even in this journey? Do you ever feel like you've lifted his spirits? I know he is amazed at what God is doing but have you felt like you've ever been an encourager to him? You might understand what he felt a little bit when his precious baby seemed like she missed the mark and she is hurting and she is hurt?

Sarah: Absolutely. I think that one of the gifts that came with me having my son Malachi is I understood what it is like to be a parent and it gave me so much compassion and grace when dealing with them. Now that our relationship has evolved less from parenting and more into this friendship, there are certainly moments where he calls me and maybe he is having a tough day or

maybe something has been disappointing for him and I get an opportunity to pour back into him all that he's poured into me and I just love that so much.

James: Well, that's beautiful! Your church is called One Church. It is in the Los Angeles area. Your husband had been in Watts; he said he knew my friend, E.V. Hill. We were very, very close. He was one of my heroes. We've got great precious memories together. But are you located close to that area even now? Where are you exactly?

Sarah: We are right in the heart of Hollywood, right in the place where they're saying that God can't be lifted up. We've got millennials flooding into four services throughout the week really asking God to use their gifts and talents for his glory.

James: Is yours multi-racial?

Sarah: It is.

James: Any actors coming?

Sarah: Oh my gosh! From Oscar award-winning actors to --

James: Any hope for the actors -- that they don't have to live as actors?

[Laughter]

They could be real people?

Sarah: Absolutely! And we like to tell them about a real Jesus who wants to share his message. And we really see our mission there. Because we see it as missionary work to really change the entertainment industry for the benefit of God so that he can be glorified through the gifts and talents that he's given us all.

James: Well, I know your dad feels this way and I've said it for years: Don't criticize Hollywood, pray for them. Because these gifted people, they don't even realize their gifts came from God, and their ability. Even the creative genius that they have. It is amazing what they can do. Tolkien and Lewis never dreamed what they wrote could ever play out like this on the screen.

But do you see them actually coming to Christ and realizing that God gave them the gift for the right reasons?

Sarah: Absolutely. We had one of our members who won an Oscar last year and he was on stage and he said, "I first want to give honor to God who gave me this gift." That just meant so much to us because he had this opportunity in a room full of Hollywood A-list celebrities and millions more watching to say, "First of all, before I acknowledge anyone else who had anything to do with this film, I want to acknowledge God who gave me these giftings and talents." And he's there every Sunday. He was there the Sunday before he went and won the Oscar.

James: That's great! I love it. Don't you appreciate her testimony? I think it is going to be precious. Your church is One. If people -- do you go speak at different places?

Sarah: I do! I speak at different places but I'm at One Church every Wednesday and my husband and I minister together on Sunday.

James: But you do go do some conferences? So if someone wanted to know, Sarah, if we want to invite you to some special function would they go to that website?

Sarah: They can go to SarahJakesRoberts.com and they can learn if I'm going to be in a city near them or even if they would like to bring me to come and speak at their event.

James: So they go to that website. If you want to learn about the church go to One -- say the website.

Sarah: OneChurchLA.org.

James: Got it right? Now I want you to tell me when you saw this book go into the bookstores and we're saying to people right here, the story is worth reading because it's his story working in what might seem to be an impossible situation. First of all, it was tough to live in a very highly visible preacher's home. Our kids know that, our grandkids know what they're exposed to.

And I just want to say this, Betty was an awesome mom. I tried to be a dad that as a kid that never had a dad. But your prayers for us moved mountains, I think, relating to our kids. So don't ever think that your prayers don't make a difference. I want you to really praying for her. Y'all pray for people like Bishop Jakes and his family. Y'all pray for these visible leaders, pray for national leaders and pray for their families; their protection, but also God's direction in their life.

So when this book now hit the bookstores and you said these things and you tried to not only share your heart but God's heart and a woman gets this book, somebody goes into it, what is your prayer, what you want to see happen in their life?

Sarah: That fear would break chains after reading this book. That as she is reading this book, that that woman would recognize that she doesn't have to be afraid of who she used to be. She doesn't have to be afraid of what may come in life, that she can stand strongly declaring the work of the Lord in her life knowing that whatever comes all things are going to work together for her good. No weapon formed against her will prosper. And it doesn't mean she won't hurt, it doesn't mean she won't cry, but it does mean she will come out on the other side better, stronger, and wiser than she was before.

James: Wow! So well said. You do have a gift. And it didn't just come from dad because when you've gone through what you went through and you went through a deep valley, you know what it is to be in a pit and hear the Lord inviting you to let him lift you out and put you on the solid rock, but now he is enabled you to communicate. But you are communicating I think, out of an overflow, and it is the overflow of his abounding grace, his limitless grace and love. And you want that to be like something that is imparted to people when you're talking to them. I think you're seeing that happen. Am I right about that? So you watch people changed as you communicate?

Sarah: I do. I was blessed to speak at my father's church recently sharing the message of this book. And just to see so many people just being awakened to the knowledge of what God can do in their faith life was just transformational to me. I get messages on Facebook and Instagram all the time about how God is allowing my voice and my story to be used to help them push forward in their destiny.

James: I think that I'm looking at the people you're just referencing there at the church, some of them who knew what you went through are amazed and inspired. Others who have tasted the pain of missing the mark miserably, and I think they're encouraged. I think others feel like they're commissioned now as ambassadors and witnesses for Christ. You sense that?

Sarah: Absolutely!

James: I think that's what the book is going to do.

Sarah: Yeah, I can't wait for that!

James: Would you say thanks to Sarah for opening up her life? Not only to the Lord but for all the world to read of God's grace.

What we see is when the people who feel like no one notices, no one would notice, maybe no one cares. When people see that you do, it is transforming. Now please listen to me. When you see a child and you're going to see some beautiful little faces. Now they may be in distress but

they're precious to the Lord. They become very precious to Betty and to me because we've seen how precious not only they are to their families but how precious they are to missionaries who took their families into incredible discomfort in order to put comforting arms around those who felt no one cared or noticed.

Now listen to me. You're going to look at some of those and you're going to be the miracle of the ages for them. You're going to be a miracle as great as anything you've ever read in the New Testament or history. I want you to watch but I want you to know you are the source of a miracle and the blessing of our great God and our Father. Watch!

On the mission field

Announcer: Life is precious.

It's also fragile.

The early years of a child's life are a crucial stage of development. Their muscles are forming, their brains are developing, and their tiny bones are growing and fusing together. Malnutrition and the lack of food are a serious threat to this development and children often lose their lives to this silent killer.

Our teams have identified areas of critical need in South Sudan and Angola. Through no fault of their own, children in these areas were born into poverty, famine, and war. They have no safety net and they desperately need our help more than ever. While this situation is grim it is not hopeless.

Mission Feeding's goal is to provide children like these with a daily bowl of food. It's a proven solution. It's an answer to these mothers' prayers and it's yours to give.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, I want you to know that every one of those children represent over 400,000 that we have located. We had them in place and the missionaries and relief workers are prepared to feed them. All they need is the resources to pay for the food, to get it there so they can distribute it in love.

So we're asking every one of you -- now this is the last week for this emphasis. Think about what I'm saying here. Since the United Nations was founded, the greatest crisis of malnutrition and

total starvation and death we're facing now in Sudan and Angola, two of the most critical places. Our missionaries and relief workers are right in the midst, right in the, you might say, the very pit of hell of pain and suffering and they are there full of the love of God. It doesn't take those people in desperate need long to know I'm in the presence of love. But love without any ability to meet a need is just everyone weeping together while they die. But when you've got the solution it's proven, it's perfect, it's works! And we can deliver it.

So the key, really is your willingness to release what God has entrusted to your oversight. You can save the lives of three children, five children, or ten by feeding three, five or ten children. Now just think about it: \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five or ten -- that's not an exaggeration. And it is because of many things the missionaries work together to make that possible, and then your support makes it possible, and building the food factories that our viewers have paid for over the years. The United Nations has asked us to make food for them. We can't! We're trying to keep up with what our missionaries have got. But that's how good and effective the food is.

So what I'm asking you to do is go online right now, this last week. We need a miracle today. We need a miracle of love that manifests in life -- life given, life saved, an eternal life presented, not in word only but in action, in deed. So would you right now go online? Take that bankcard, I hope you use it for the wisest reasons, this may be the greatest reason ever. But use it like it's a check. Or dial the number, take that card and say, "I want to be the miracle someone prays for."

Father, help everyone listening to me right now, moved by your spirit to now put legs to your prayers. Get the card, make the call, go online, make the gift; in Jesus' name.

Now remember this, please. If you make a check, make to to *LIFE* because that's what you're giving but please call us and tell us you're mailing it because the missionaries want to know, are we going to reach our goal? Can we take care of this particular area? Will we have the support? You're the answer to that request. You're the answer to the prayer.

We have some gifts to send you that will bless you in your spiritual life. A wonderful seasonal devotional, beautiful CD, beautiful DVD story of *The Garden*; and Kari Jobe is such a blessing, she and her husband. She started here in our ministry, grew up here. Her dad was our missions director for many years.

Please give us a chance to bless you but above all, be the miracle someone needs right now. Go online, make the call. Thank you for what you're doing!

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and even now famine-stricken areas of Africa, children are

suffering. The need is great and without food they face death by starvation.

LIFE's Mission Feeding program is ready. With your support, we're able to feed and care for children in famine areas of Sudan, as well as Angola and Mozambique. With all of our previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding facing the worst drought and food shortage in years, we urgently need to replenish our food supplies to reach 400,000 children counting on us.

Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for the next three months. Please also consider a special gift of \$1400 to help sponsor a school and help feed 140 children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you My Daily Word Devotional. This boxed set of four seasonal devotionals will help you read, reflect, and renew yourself through God's word with space to journal your thoughts and reflect each day.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you'll also receive Kari Jobe's newest music project, *The Garden*, along with the story behind *The Garden* companion DVD.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, please be sure to request "Determined Eagle," our 2017 commemorative bronze sculpture.

This is the last week! Please call, write, or go online today and make your gift of *LIFE* to help feed and care for hungry children.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I just say thanks from the bottom of our heart. We have the beautiful gifts. I hope many of you, if you can, will ask for the beautiful eagle bronze, determined to soar on the turbulence of the times and the challenges of the day. I'm telling you, it is a beautiful bronze. You help us save the lives of 100 children, make a gift like that and we just want to say thank you.

If you would like to have Sarah Jakes Roberts books, this book is fabulous! Her story is fabulous -- it is a miracle! And you say, "James, would you send that to me?" I tell you what. You just give some food, you just notice someone and love them and you say, "Would you mind sending me that? I think I need it." We'll be glad to send it to you to say thanks.

Join Betty and me in saying thanks to Sarah again for being a blessing. You're a blessing, Sarah!

Your family is a blessing. I sure love your husband! Look forward to spending time with him and just learning from him.

Thank all of you for watching and for sharing!