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Week 46: Fall Mission Feeding
Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh
Dr. Henry Cloud

Sheila: Hello and welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh. I'm here with Randy Robison.

I have to honestly tell you, I have been so excited about this show. God has used our guest today in profound ways in my life. When I was really sinking fast this was the person that God sent into my life to make a huge change. You know him and you love his books but you'll be happy to see he's with us today. Please welcome Dr. Henry Cloud.

[Cheers & Applause]

Sheila: It's amazing to me when I looked at this new edition of *Boundaries* that you have out. That book has been out for 25 years? And every now and again --

Dr. Cloud: I was three when I wrote it.

[Laughter]

Sheila: Yeah! You and I were born the same year. Try not to lie like a rug.

[Laughter]

What's amazing to me is after 25 years it's still on the New York Times Bestseller List. When you and John Townsend sat down to write this, did you have any clue at the depth this was going to connect with people?

Dr. Cloud: In fact, I'll tell you a funny story. We were in a planning retreat and the facilitator said, "When y'all go speak what are most of the questions about?"

We started laughing and we said, "It's always about boundaries."

He said, "Why don't you write a book on boundaries?"

I said, "That's a great idea because if we wrote the book then it would answer the question and we would never have to talk about this again!"

Sheila: How did that work out? Yeah.

Dr. Cloud: And we can move on. But I think what happened was, especially in the Christian world but it's everybody. When people are taught, which is good, that we should be loving and forgiving and have patience with people and all of that, they feel like then it is not okay to say, "No, stop. I don't want you to do that anymore." Or to say no, I don't want to do this or that or have limits.

What it did was, I think it tapped into a deep need that people were feeling of I keep getting hurt in this relationship and I'm trying to be loving but I'm supposed to take it. And they needed to know, no, God says no. There is no verse in the Bible that says blessed are the doormats for they shall inherit the heels. It's not there. It's okay to say no. I think that helped.

The other thing is, you talk about really difficult relationships like in a marriage or some significant relationship where somebody's irresponsibility, maybe an addiction or an anger problem, it's hurting someone. Really the only way that person is going to probably turn around is when somebody finally stands up and says, "I'm not going to take this anymore." That's right out of the Bible.

Randy: Where is that? I'm curious. Does Jesus?

Dr. Cloud: It starts in Genesis and ends in Revelation.

[Laughter]

Sheila: I think it goes right to the maps actually. Yeah!

Randy: Give us an example. Did Jesus set up boundaries for himself?

Dr. Cloud: Oh my gosh! Are you kidding me? Don't even get me started.

Randy: I want to. I want to hear.

Dr. Cloud: I'll give you a great example. Matthew 18, and you hear the word *bind* all the time. People are binding Satan and binding this. Go to Matthew 18 and what you're going to see is it says if your brother sins against you -- or your sister, okay -- sins against you, go to them in

private and talk about the problem. Say "that's not okay." It says if they're wise they'll listen and then you've won them over the problem solved. I don't want you using drugs. I don't want you doing this. That hurts me. Okay, gosh, I'm sorry. I shouldn't do that. Light goes on and they stop.

But then it says, if they don't, then nag them. No, it doesn't say that. If they don't then maybe please them more and then they'll... No! It says if they don't then get a couple more people and go to them and say, "Look, we've all seen this. It is not good." Then they might listen.

And then it says if they don't do that then you've heard of the modern term "intervention," you get a group. And finally it says if they won't listen to that, then you separate from them. And sometimes you say to the addict, "Look, I can't stop you from drinking, but I can't live with you while you're abusing the substance. So you get to go somewhere else until you want to go get help." That's right out of scriptures.

Then right after that it says this: Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound and whatever you loose shall be loosed. Now we're talking about the boundaries, binding, containing a problem. In families, you let abuse and other things go loose it's going to be loose. The Bible always puts these two tracks together. Throughout the very beginning there is two tracks of God's character. There is love which is the connecting relational part and then there is truth, which is the structure and the expectations of how to love.

So you get a parent sometimes that are trying to love their kid but they're not loving them with limits and good truth then they're not loving them, they're enabling them. I said throughout the scriptures... I'll tell you a funny story.

So I fly a lot. If you fly and you want some quiet time on the plane don't ever tell the person in the seat next to you you're a psychologist.

[Laughter]

I mean your four hours have gone. So I usually say, when they say, "What do you do?" I say, "I write books about Jesus. Do you want to talk?"

[Laughter]

One day this lady says, "What do you do?"

I said, "I'm a psychologist."

She goes, "Oh I've got to tell you about my boyfriend."

I said, "What's wrong with your boyfriend?"

She said, "Well, I love him so much. But we just broke up and I miss him. I can't go back and I know I'm going to go back. I always go back. Then we get together and then I start getting hurt again and I can't take it and I break up. Then I miss him."

I said, "Why do you break up?"

She said, "Because of his anger. I just can't take it."

I said, "When does he get angry?"

She says, "Well, basically, when I don't do what he wants. But if I do what he wants it is okay," she said, "but I can't, ultimately, I can't live like that so we break up. Then I go back."

I said, "Well, there's this old saying that if you rescue an angry man you'll only have to do it again tomorrow."

Sheila: I think that's in the Bible.

Dr. Cloud: Well, she goes, "Say that again." I said it again. She goes, "That's exactly right! That's my life. Where did you get that?"

I said, "It's in the Bible, Proverbs 19: 19. You ought to read it sometime."

Boundaries are all the way through the scriptures.

Sheila: What are some of the myths about boundaries, particularly within the Christian community? Because I've heard people say, "Well, that's not very loving. We're supposed to be loving and merciful."

What are some of the common myths about what boundaries really are?

Dr. Cloud: One of the big ones is that if I set boundaries I'm being selfish. So in other words, if somebody wants something, if I don't say yes, I'm not being giving which means I'm being selfish. Well, that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says look, you've got two tunics, give one away. If you got your food, give some away. It says, "Do not merely look out for your own interests but also the interests of others."

There's nothing in the Bible that says somebody should not have a life. It says that God gives us life and that we're to share that with others. So self-centeredness where everything is about me, the Bible is very strong about that. But having a life, having food to eat and time and passions and hobbies and all that, that you're a steward over, you're absolutely supposed to, it's not selfishness.

Sheila: One of the things I love about this new edition that's just coming out because you think, well, I've got my copy of *Boundaries* I don't need it. Well, you need this new one because you've added this chapter about boundaries in this digital...

Dr. Cloud: We've also updated the rest of it. We don't use things like put this in your Daytimer, your rolodex. No one knows what a rolodex is; right?

Sheila: But particularly, I loved the chapter, I found it really helpful, the chapter on living in this digital age because I think of some of our viewers watching who may have teenaged kids and they're thinking how do I have boundaries?

Dr. Cloud: Me! I've got two teenage girls.

Sheila: You promised that one of them will marry my son.

Dr. Cloud: Let's do an arrange right now. We can skip all that brain damage.

Randy: That's where I draw the line. I'm setting the boundary right here.

[Laughter]

There is no marriage...

To Sheila's point, the digital age thing is pretty significant because we feel like since we're anonymous we have no boundaries online and a lot of times in our speech. And then there's the issue, I have four children too, I know the worries the parents go through of how do I even set boundaries when they've got that iPad upstairs or their smart phones and they're jumping online at Starbucks or whatever. How do we even handle this whole thing?

Dr. Cloud: One of the big problems, it is a great question because it used to be, God designed life where he's Omnipresent, we're present. We can only be in one place at one time and our lives used to be constructed around some of these things, especially the limits and boundaries of time and space. You just take those two. We used to, for example, in your work life and personal life, we used to go to work, it was in a place and you went to work from eight to five or whatever

your shift was. So boundaries of time and space put you there and then you left that time and space and then you had a personal life.

So then the internet comes and now you carry it in your pocket and so the boundaries of time and space, now the boss can find you at eight, nine, 10:00, 12:00 at night, time and space is gone and all the nightmare wackos in your personal life can find you at work and you can't do your job. So there's no time and space.

So the Bible has always, always, always talked about this triad. And this is what I tell my girls. There is a formula; it is throughout the scriptures. It is the created order. Freedom equals responsibility equals love. So in other words, we can have as much freedom as we have the responsibility to manage; and that's always measured by is it destructive to you or somebody else?

So when you're talking about the kids, at different ages, the Bible says in Galatians four, we're guardians and managers of children. Guardians protect. So we protect children from things that they think they're big enough to do and they're not. We also protect them from regression when they say, "I'm not big enough to carry my..." Oh yes, you are. So we protect them from their immaturity and they're grandiosity.

But secondly, you manage them. Now the goal there is self-control. The last thing a parent wants to do is to be in control of their kids. No, you want your kids in control of themselves and to do that you have to set up the boundaries of the right amount of freedom that they're responsible enough to use in a way that is loving to whoever is concerned.

So people want all these rules. Well, the rules can be helpful but the rules have got to be appropriate to that formula. I'll give you a good example of just the formula. I set my girls down when they turned into teenagers and I said, "Look, guys, I do not, the last thing I want to do is control you. I've got too much to do. I want you in control of yourself. Here is the formula: Freedom equals responsibility equals love. You can have all the freedom you want that you can use responsibly. So that's kind of the mantra in my house.

So we were flying back from spring break and we had been on vacation and we're in the airport and Olivia, our oldest had taken a friend with her and we were in the Salt Lake City airport. It's 8:00, our flight got delayed; we're going back to L.A. School night; right? School starts. She says, "Can Vanessa spend the night?"

I said, "Olivia, why are you even asking me that?"

She goes, "I know, it is a school night."

I said, "Olivia why are you asking me that?"

She goes, "I know, Dad. It is a school night."

I said, "Olivia, you're missing it. You know how I'm going to answer that question."

She goes, "Yeah, I know it is a school night."

I said, "Olivia, how am I going to answer that question?"

And she's looking at me like, what are you talking about? I said, "What's the formula?"

She goes, "Freedom equals responsibility."

I said, "Olivia. This is a school night. Why don't sometimes people spend the night on school nights?" "Because it is going to affect school." "Olivia, I have not messed with your school for -- you have a 4.4 grade average. I never monitor how you do your school. I've turned that over to you because you've been so responsible in it. I know you're not going to stay up all night. If you do, it is your problem. Don't ask me these stupid questions whether she can spend the night or not. You figure that out."

She's like... [Laughs] Her friend goes, "Will you talk to my parents?"

[Laughter]

But you want to empower kids to give them the freedom that they're learning to manage and this is true in the digital world too. You can't follow them around everywhere.

Randy: Do you think that's God's idea for us?

Dr. Cloud: Go back to the creation. What did he do? He did the most dangerous thing that is possible because it has the highest reward and that is he put them in a playroom. He set them free. He said, "Here's the boundaries. But if you make this choice this is going to happen."

He goes all the way throughout scripture. He comes back and Galatians 5:1 says: It is for freedom that Christ has died to return us to freedom so that we can have self-control and then our love and worship for him is out of choice and freedom not because we have to.

Sheila: The thing I love about that Henry is that if you just control your children up to the time

they go to college, then suddenly it's crazy time because they've not...

Dr. Cloud: They got out of jail. They do; right? I don't know if we're going on too long but...

Sheila: No, no, no!

Dr. Cloud: There's nothing I mean bad about people who do this. When our girls became teenagers, it's one of those harsh Christian types that said, "Well, I hope you're going to sit that young man when she starts to date; and sit him down and tell him." He wants me to scare the guy; right?

So I said, "I meet all of her dates." I said, "But are you saying that..."

"You better!"

"I think what you're asking is am I going to do everything I can to make sure my daughter is safe from bad guys."

He goes, "Absolutely!"

I said, "Well, let me ask you a question. In your method, what if I'm out of town and I can't do the interview?"

He goes, "Well, I guess she can't..."

I said, "Let me give you a better way. Because your method is pretty much limited to the walls of that house." I said, "I want every guy she goes out with to have to go through me and get an interview but what if they're in a car in a back seat somewhere or at a party? I'm not there. I still want them to have to go through me because I want our values living in her head where if I'm not there, he's going to give her a drug or do something and she's going to say no. That's how they're going to be protected."

See God's ways are to put his law into our hearts so he doesn't have to follow us around. It's freedom but we've got to build responsibility and boundaries are about self-control.

Sheila: One of the most beautiful things because Henry and I toured for a time. We would do this preconference at *Women of Faith*. I remember you saying that you would get back to L.A., you would have been working all weekend and be exhausted and your girls would come running and Olivia and Lucy would come running and you said all you wanted to do is go into your study, close the door and put your feet up. But you said, "I'm not going to do that because I

don't want to teach my daughters to look for a guy that's unavailable."

I think that is such a beautiful gift, Henry that you've given to your girls.

Dr. Cloud: Sheila, if you think about that, parents say all the time, "How do we teach them boundaries?" You don't teach them just with words, you teach them by having a relationship that has boundaries. So when they're being [unintelligible] you go, "I don't like that. I don't want you to do that."

Then when they -- there's something -- they have to have a "no" muscle too. So in the relationship how you treat them, that's where the hardwiring goes.

Sheila: It's beautiful. Is it ever too late to start to have boundaries?

Dr. Cloud: I've got to tell you a funny story.

Sheila: You've got a lot of funny stories.

Dr. Cloud: Well, I'm a shrink and I live in funny situations.

[Laughter]

So I'll never forget this. I'm doing a group in a hospital and we're talking about boundaries. And this lady, she stood up in the group and she says, "I get it! I'm tired of my mother controlling my life. From now on, she's not going to control my life. And I'm 68 years old!"

Sheila: Oh gosh! So the answer would be it's never too late.

Dr. Cloud: It's never too late.

Sheila: That's beautiful! You are going to want to get --

Dr. Cloud: By the way, I hate to keep going on about this, it's never too late. You know what they found the biggest predictors of well-being of seniors is in senior centers and the homes? How much freedom they give them to be able to control little things: What they're having for lunch, what they're going to do with their time. Their health begins to go up. That's how God designs us.

Sheila: One of the funniest things Henry ever told me is, "No is a complete sentence." That has helped me tremendously.

[Laughter]

But one of the things that we're going to tell you how to get a hold of this book and it really is, it is one of the few books that I read over and over again when I feel like I need to kind of adjust my sails a little.

But we would love for you to help us do something that is very much our life blood here. We care about children who are crying out right now. Not because maybe they don't have boundaries but simply because they don't have one meal to eat. Would you watch this?

On the mission field

Isak: I want you to walk through this village with me as I just explain to you what's going on here because for me it is difficult for me to fathom and I think you'll find the same thing, that it just blows your mind to actually understand what the people of this village have gone through.

The house just behind me and the family that's there, they've buried three children -- three children in the last year. I can point out hut after hut after hut, family after family that have lost at least one child in the last year. Not because of anything other than the fact that these people don't have the ability to feed their children. They're not lazy. People in this village have told us how hard they work all day long to produce firewood. They walk for three hours carrying heavy bags of firewood to get to a market where they sell it for enough money to buy one, maybe two meals. Seven days work for one or two meals.

This is not a film set, this is not a village that we created stories about, these are human beings -- these are real lives. These are children who each have a name. These are children who when they die their mother and their father, a piece of their heart dies as they bury their child.

What do we do, you say? It is simple. We bring Mission Feeding to this village and we save this village's children's lives. Without you we cannot do that. So please, please partner with us today. Join your hand with mine, join your heart with mine and save the lives of the children in this village. They need you desperately.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: I love seeing Isak Pretorius out there continuing this work his father and mother, Peter and Ann Pretorius were our earliest partners and over the years we have helped to save the lives

of countless children.

Recently, Isak walked through some of these villages and you can tell the difference between where the Mission Feeding program exists because the children are happy and they're smiling and they look healthy. Then you walk through some of the other villages where they desperately need food.

The solution has always been simple. All these years it's simply getting food to the right place. We've made huge strides over the years and increasing the numbers of children, over 400,000 a month now. We have built food factories in these areas to provide for the economy, to provide jobs to train them on how to feed themselves. We actually have an opportunity now beyond just the Mission Feeding to upgrade one of the food factories which will increase the production by 50% so it can do even more.

We need you to partner with us. You're seeing generations with me and my parents, and Isak and his parents in these desperate areas helping to save generations of children. We are committed because this is the expression of God to go in and give life to people, to express his love by being his hands.

Will you join us today? Join with Isak, me, all the other missionaries out there feeding these children? You can have a huge impact.

Sheila, you've been there. You've seen how effective the Mission Feeding program is.

Sheila: It absolutely blew me away. I've never been the same since I got back. We get so used to TV and fictionalized stuff. This is not fiction, people, this is real life.

One of the people I was with in Angola said, "Do you want to see where we bury the children?" So I went. The thing that touched me the most was that every parent had left something on the graveyard. For some people it was an empty water bottle, like a plastic bottle or one bootie or something just to say, "This was my child. And they were alive and this is where they are."

While we were there there were three empty graves that had been dug. I said, "Are these for people specific?" They said, "Well, it just happens so much." Even as we were speaking we saw this truck arriving and on the back were a mother and father and a tiny casket, and one of those was going to be used.

The thing is if this was something we couldn't do and couldn't make a difference in, I wouldn't be here. But I've seen with my own eyes the difference it makes. These moms are just like me. One mom who has buried two children said to me, I said, "What do you do when you lay your head

down at night?"

She said, "I pray this, the Lord is my shepherd." But she said, "I pray to God that he would help me shepherd my children."

Would you go to your phones and just do what you can? We're not asking you to do everything. But if you do what you can and I do what I can, we can literally change the world for these children. Go to your phones. Please make the best gift possible.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and famine-stricken areas of Africa, children are suffering. The need is great. And without food, they face death by starvation. With your support, you will help feed and care for children in crisis areas of Sudan, Angola, and Mozambique.

With Africa facing ongoing food shortages and drought, we urgently need to replenish supplies and come to the aid of 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 an additional gift to help provide critically needed upgrades to our food factory that will increase overall production by a staggering 50%. This is a \$216,000 challenge above our normal feeding budget that could help save even more lives.

With your gift of any amount we'll send you *In the Middle of the Mess*. In her new book, Sheila Walsh brings insight to knowing the peace and presence of Christ in the midst of life's inevitable messes.

With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed and care for ten children, we will send you Sheila's book, plus the "Arise" coffee mug. This heat-activated mug reveals Isaiah 61 each time you fill it with a warm beverage; a wonderful way to begin your day.

And finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our "Determined Eagle" bronze sculpture. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: If you haven't already gone to the phone or gone online, please do so now. Write it down and go later if you can, but do whatever you can. Every gift makes a difference in the lives

of these children. We've got something for you.

Sheila: Yeah, I'd love to send you a copy of Henry's book, *Boundaries*. It is an updated edition. It is fantastic.

Would you please join me in thanking Dr. Henry Cloud? Awesome!

Dr. Cloud: Fun to be with y'all. Thank you so much.

Sheila: And we will see you next time on *LIFE Today*! Thanks for being with us. Remember, we love you! We'll see you next time.