

4/3/18

Week 14: Mission: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Matt and Martha Fry

James: We welcome all of you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Matt Fry. He pastors up in the northern part of North Carolina. Now he may have to come back and correct me and say, "No, it's in the southern part."

[Laughter]

I don't think I'm missing that. But he is a pastor of C3 Church. He will tell us what that means in a minute.

Christine Caine wrote the forward of the book. Now that's pretty good when she's such a great communicator and she writes the forward: "Matt Fry is a wonderful pastor. He has a great gift, a great church," -- and frankly, I think a great state. North Carolina, I love you. I had a lot of unbelievably blessed crusades there all over your state. You talk about precious and eternal memories, I've got lots of them.

Well, Betty and I are just really thrilled to welcome Matt and Martha Fry to *LIFE Today*. Would you welcome them? Glad to see you!

Matt: It's great to be here. What an honor.

James: I wish we could play basketball down here as good as y'all.

Matt: Oh yeah. We're blessed up in the triangle.

James: C3, what in the world does that mean -- C3 Church?

Matt: Well, it is a location name. Our name was Cleveland Community Church when we first started and so to clarify it people started calling us C3 because Cleveland Community Church is so long. So I thought why don't we just change the name?

James: And Clayton, is that the name of the community?

Matt: It is Cleveland Community Church but we have a Clayton address. So it was so confusing.

James: I'm confused. How does anybody find your church?

Matt: Exactly!

[Laughter]

James: But it is near Raleigh.

Matt: It is a miracle. It's just outside of Raleigh.

James: Martha, how long have y'all been together?

Martha: We've been married 25 years, almost 26.

James: Isn't that great? And 55 for us.

Martha: That's awesome!

James: It's amazing how young we look to be –

[Laughter]

Had to get close to her because everybody tells her she looks young. I never hear it -- so send me a note.

You wrote a book, *I AM*. It is kind of captured my attention. So I want you to just take off on it and tell us why you wrote *I AM* and what you are implying that you want people to get.

Matt: Well, the book came out of my own life journey of trying to find my identity personally. When I had an encounter with God and I realized that my identity doesn't come from my title, my past, words that have been spoken over me but my identity comes through Christ, that I am a child of God, it just radically changed everything. Now I was in ministry and my identity at that time was I was Matt Fry the youth pastor.

When that was taken away and I was unemployed, I was no longer at that church, and I found myself trying to provide for my family. We had two young girls at the time and I was traveling

on the weekend. I wasn't near the communicator that you are but I would travel the weekends and speak at churches. Then during the week I found a part-time job cleaning just different places. I cleaned a police station. I'll never forget one time cleaning that police station as a part-time custodian. There was a policeman sitting there at his desk because of course they have to be there for security.

I said, "Sir, can I get that trash can for you?"

He said, "Sure!" So he backed up from his desk and he looked at me and said, "Now, wait a second, don't I know you? Aren't you Matt Fry, the youth pastor of the church down the street?"

I said, "Well, I used to be."

I went home that day and I'll never forget sitting there just thinking, who am I? Like my identity was all wrapped up, my whole life had been wrapped up in what I did. And God spoke to me and I went to Philippians Chapter three, verse ten where Paul says, "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection."

I'm like, "Yes, Lord, I want your power."

But then the next part says, "But you must fellowship in my suffering."

I'm like, Lord, can I just have the power without the suffering? I've had enough suffering.

He said, "What I'm trying to do is I'm trying to help you understand that you are a child of God who just happens to be a youth pastor, who just happens to do whatever ministry God has called you to do."

That was a life changer for me. And so many people today find their identity in what they do or their title or their position or words that were spoken over them by a parent, by a coach, by an ex --

James: It could have been a critical word. You could have been called "dumb" or "stupid" or "you can't do anything right." That really does become so often an identity to people. That's why we have to be careful what we say. You mentioned to us, we were just visiting briefly that you also struggle with the identity; in what way, Martha?

Martha: Well, I was sexually abused as a kid for many years. And so that just -- when something hurtful, it doesn't have to be sexual abuse, Satan comes in and starts to speak things to

you like shame and condemnation and you're not worthy and God can't use you. And so it was just through learning my identity was in him and not only that but beginning to declare and speak out loud who God says that I am, began to change things.

They even say in psychology that what you hear yourself say you believe more than anything else and more than anybody else but the problem is we repeat what our parents have said, we repeat what Satan whispers in our ear and those are the things that we repeat over and over. And Matt's book talks about this. As we begin to declare I am the head and not the tail. I'm the righteousness of Christ. I am more than a conqueror, you will begin to believe that and it begins to transform your thinking and who you are.

James: When did that happen for you? At what point?

Martha: So we were in ministry and had kids and...

James: And you still had a little identity problem.

Martha: Oh absolutely! Yes!

James: Which means a lot of people need to read this who are watching us right now who have an identity problem. That *I AM* is somewhere, this is what I think you want everybody to get in here and so just kind of take off on that *I AM*. Moses was told to say the great *I AM* -- *I AM* sent you. That was just the start but you've really carried this over into the New Testament reality in Christ. Tell people what it is you're wanting them to be, sure registers and then why you would put it in print where they can really meditate on it.

Matt: Well, God speaks to Moses and tells us his name. He tells Moses my name is *I AM*. I'm the great *I AM*. I always have been, I always will be. I'm more than enough. Then Jesus shows up and I was reading through the gospel of John and seven times he makes seven *I AM* declarations. *I AM* the way, the truth, and the life. *I AM* the bread of life. *I AM* the light of the world. I began to study that and I realized that those search *I AM* declarations because Jesus is also the great *I AM* because he is God, that those seven *I AM* declarations address seven questions that people are asking today -- not just believers, we're talking about unbelievers. Questions like how do I know who I can trust? People put their trust in a person, they put their trust in the government, they put their trust in their occupation and their finances.

But Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd." When I realized that sometimes we've been hurt and wounded by people and we don't know who we can trust anymore. But we understand we can trust in the great *I AM* who declares *I AM* the good shepherd who will never leave us nor forsake us. It gives us the security in Christ. So then here's the deal. It still hurts me if people let me

down but it doesn't devastate me like it did before. It doesn't send me spiraling down like I have no hope and all my identity is tied into what you think about me or if you hurt me or not. I'm okay because I know who I am in Christ.

And on and on we see these seven *I AM* declarations that are so powerful. You need more power? He says *I AM* the resurrection and life. You feel lost? He says *I AM* the light of the world. These are questions that people are wrestling with today. And at the end of the book I think is probably the one I get the most feedback on is in Chapter 8, there are 31 *I AM* declarations. This came out of my own personal journey because I needed a breakthrough in my life so I began to...

James: This is while you're pastoring? So this isn't like too far back. This is when you already had a good church, what most people would call successful, a big church and yet you're processing all this?

Matt: It was about five years ago, had a daughter in college and we just kind of hit a wall and we just needed a miracle. And it looked like on paper there was no way that God -- that anything could happen. So we began to declare the promises of God. I looked throughout the scripture and I found -- I didn't know there was going to be 31 I just came up with my 31 favorite "I AM" declarations of who God says *I AM*. And I counted them and there were 31. We began to declare one every day of the month.

James: Do you share those 31 in the book?

Matt: Yeah, they're in Chapter 8.

James: And you feel like everyone will find some application probably for several of those *I AM* -- it is his sufficiency right? The enemy is always showing us our deficiency.

Matt: We had these words that have been spoken over us and these sometimes negative words and we repeat them over and over. So we have to take those thoughts captive. When I was competing in wrestling and I had a coach that kind of yelled at me. He was doing what he thought he was supposed to do but I lost a state championship match. He looked at me and said, "You didn't want it bad enough. You didn't want it bad enough."

And this label came on me that I'm a quitter. That wasn't his fault but the devil used that and throughout my journey I realized wow! I would often quit if it got too hard because the devil let me put this label on me. But then I can declare I am more than a conqueror. I'm a warrior for Christ. I am an overcomer. I don't have to be a quitter but I can trust that God is going to give me the power to do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

James: That's what you're trying to pass on to your whole congregation. How many attend C3? How many will be there on a weekend?

Matt: We have between 2,000-3,000. Of course, at Easter and Christmas, the whole town shows up.

[Laughter]

James: Where are you all the time? Out there listening to the enemy.

Here's the deal. God has given you a wonderful gift. When you watch, Matt, and you talk about your own challenges, are you pleased with the journey and let's say the positive progress when you see the Word come alive in him? Not only his preaching but his life, that God is doing something. He is plowing up the ground and then he's bringing forth the fruit of good seed in him and you see it around the house?

Martha: Absolutely! It changes everything because we talk about we're all born sinners so we're born messed up. And then when you have something happen to you, be it a divorce or abuse or something that hurts, so we have stuff that happens but then hurting people hurt people and then I think out of our hurt we hurt other people. So when you can know what God says, "I'm the righteousness of Christ." So I am forgiven and all this. If I can declare, you know what? Hurting people hurt people. So if Matt hurts me, even as a wife or something or hurts my feelings, I can quickly forgive and go, you know what? Hurting people hurt people but this is who God says I am and God can help me to forgive and to love unconditionally. So yeah, it's definitely made a change in our lives.

James: One of the things he talks about in the book that I think probably I've heard people have found significant are the key words of *discover* and *declare*. Explain that a little bit.

Matt: The two aspects: First of all we must discover who we are in Christ. I talk to many believers that still don't completely understand who they are in Christ. They find their identity in other things.

But the second part is equally important. We must discover who we are in Christ but second of all we must declare who we are in Christ. If you think about the 12 spies who went and spied out the land they all 12 came back and they agreed that there were giants in the land. They all agreed that the land was full of milk and honey much but only two of them declared the promises of God, Joshua and Caleb. I ask people this all over. Can you name the ten negative spies? I haven't met anybody yet that can name the ten negative spies. You don't remember them. But I

believe all 12 could have been history makers. All 12 of them could have been world changers. But only two were world changers, Joshua and Caleb because they declared -- rather than declaring the problems they declared the promises of God.

James: They saw it from God's point of view rather than what the eye said they saw what the invisible realm reveals and they knew greater is he that's in us, New Testament truth, than those that are in the land. That God will give us the land.

I think if people just understand -- first of all, please understand this. The first land, the first garden that God wants to plow and plant good seed in and get good fruit is your life, Paul says is a cultivated field. You are God's field to bring forth good fruit.

One of the things when you see the great *I AM*, he is the one that says *I AM* greater, in you I'm greater and you can be more than a conqueror because I will lead you to be overcomers of the enemies in the land so that you can live in a land of fruitfulness. Now doesn't that sound like an exciting adventure?

In my opinion, Matt, and your face just beams. Doesn't she have a pretty glow on her face there? See, is it just living with you that puts that glow?

Matt: Pretty much.

James: She just read the book.

[Laughter]

I have an idea she read this book over here.

Martha: Yes!

James: But see your book is helping people get in the book and get the truth in them. Matt, I know because I've known you for several years and I know you just have a heart for God. I feel like and you tell me as a wife, does he not want the best possible for the family?

Martha: Oh absolutely!

James: As a shepherd, a representative of the shepherd, does he not want all the sheep to find the best pasture and to find the security?

Martha: Yeah.

James: And all that God offers in his shelter -- isn't that what he wants?

Martha: Oh absolutely!

James: Isn't that why you wrote the book? Do you feel like God gave you, Matt, some real insights that you were able to put in print that could go straight into people's hearts?

Matt: Yeah. I just knew that God's hand was on it, the only way to explain it. The revelation that God gave me that when I encounter the great *I AM*, that's when I discover who I am. There's a direct connection between the great *I AM* and who I am.

James: And who he says you are.

Matt: Who he says I am.

James: Instead of who the enemy tells you who you are -- and a lot of times your own self-condemning tendencies. Sometimes the enemy says, "Well, you're bad." You realize, I think that was pretty bad. The devil must be right. And once we get in agreement with the devil we're in trouble. That's why you've got to hear the *I AM* to get him into the situation.

Let me ask you, where's your website if people want to know where do I find more material or even can I get the book on the website, where would they go?

Matt: You can go to EncounterTheGreatIAM.com and you have resources there. You can download five free videos that go along with the book. There is a guide as well.

James: They are teaching videos.

Matt: There's teaching videos, they're 15 minutes apiece and we make those available for free. And then also there is a guide that goes with it that small groups are using. They take the 15-minute video, they watch it, and then they have the small group guide that goes along with it and they study through the *I AM* statements and the 31 declarations.

James: And you worked real hard to get that ready for one reason, to try to help people know how great he is -- the *I AM*. You're wanting them to walk in the shelter and shadow of the Almighty. Is that why he did it?

Martha: Absolutely! We've seen it in our church. It's a part of our church and people's testimonies in there and on the videos because we've seen it work. So we're like this works! So

you want people -- I didn't grow up in a home...

James: You live with him and it works.

[Laughter]

He says your life has been changed and it was changed even before you got to read the book because you probably helped inspire what's in the book because he saw what the great *I AM* was doing.

Would you say thanks to Matt and Martha and the C3 Church? You see the website there if you want to go there and get some of the material he's talking about and the book is in the bookstores.

Matt, our son wrote a book called *The Age of Promise* where he's trying to show the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and truth and the shadows in the reality of Christ fulfilling it, but also, the fact that we can live in kingdom power with kingdom purpose now in *The Age of Promise*. We're giving that to everyone who will help us set some captives free from sexual trafficking and predation.

But we'll also if our viewers say, "We want to help," we'll be glad to send them this book just as a gift. You don't mind us doing that; do you?

Matt: That would be fantastic. Yeah!

James: Here's what I want you to do. Now listen to me please. I want you to look in and I'm pleading with you for the sake of those Jesus died to redeem and was raised to live in and through them even in the impossible situation they seem to be in but they're not because love never fails. See the only way love seems to fail is when we don't release it or express it.

So what I'm asking you to do right now, I want you to see a target; I want you to see a person in need of love. And I'm going to tell you something, you're the vessel. Yes, you are! You are the channel through which that love, God's love will flow freely. Watch!

On the mission field

Announcer: In impoverished areas of Southeast Asia all too often, girls like 15-year-old Srey Neang fall for too good to be true offers of a better life in the city. It's most often presented as an honorable job but is soon discovered as something much darker.

Open captions:

>> A man came to us and told us that there was a good opportunity with good pay to work in another province as a maid in someone's home. When I arrived, the people locked me in a room. It was a brothel. I found out that I had been sold. If I didn't sleep with clients I was beaten and starved. When the man came in, I didn't know what to do. Afterward I would just cry out for my mom.

Announcer: The cries of this child are lost in the noise of the city around her. The brutality she's endured has left her utterly demoralized.

Open captions:

>> I am so desperate. If I cannot escape this life, maybe I will kill myself.

End of clip**In the studio**

James: Wow! I just want to tell her, don't even think about that. Someone died that you can live.

Betty, I think there are a lot of couples and I know many times during the daytime hours there are women who are watching the show, I thank God for you. But I can't help but think there are individuals and couples saying I wish I could take you home. I'd take you home. We'd put arms of love around you. Pretty little girl, you're beautiful. We're so sorry you've been exploited because you're such a beautiful person and God loves you so much and he wants to heal your heart. Betty, wouldn't you just like to take her home?

Betty: Absolutely! My heart as a mother goes out to her. She said, "I just want to talk to my mother. I want to see my mother." And yet she can. Her whole life changed the moment she was captured and put into that captivity, and her innocence was robbed, taken from her against her will.

I just say, "God, please help these precious little ones."

We have five beautiful granddaughters. We have two beautiful daughters. We have two beautiful great granddaughters. I can't even imagine them having to experience something like this. It would crush me.

Well, this should crush us because we're Christians that care about the little ones. We want to help them. She feels hopeless. We need to offer them hope and we can. So I hope you'll join with us. Let's offer them some hope.

James: See because of just the love of God in people, it's very real. It is not religion it is relationship with a God that is love. People who know that love want to express it. Just think about it. There are literally hundreds and hundreds of mission workers and relief workers who have left all the comforts of whatever country they were in, many of them from the United States and Canada and South America and places in Europe, and they have gone there as mission workers to rescue them. They're asking us to simply enable them to be able to have a place to take the girls. And it is unbelievable; I mean it is a House of Destiny, of hope, it's just amazing. It's what love does. And thousands and thousands of girls like that now have been reached and rescued and restored. Many of them now grown with their own families, many of them teachers, some of them are professors, some of them are community leaders transformed by the love of God.

Here's what it takes. It's \$128 a year to rescue one, and we're targeting this year to put God's arms around thousands. And you know what some of our supporters said? "We will match the first \$320,000 that comes in." If \$128 -- and if you can give that, I'm asking you to do it because that will take care of one we rescue and take care of them for a year. Here's the thing. It will now be two. If you give \$64, it is \$128. Then if you know me, I'm going to ask you if you possibly can, let's rescue ten, that's \$1280. Now it will be 20. There's a level at which you can help.

We have some gifts to send you to bless you but you're giving these precious ones the gift of freedom, a new life because of love, God's love channeled through you. Would you go right now please, get your bankcard and dial that number? Or go online and use that card like a check? If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us -- please! Call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail. And remember this, it will be matched. It will be doubled.

Please rescue that girl and hundreds more like her. Thank you for doing it.

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 bodies broken under horrific emotional and physical abuse. Through Mission: Rescue Life you can reach out to warn children vulnerable to sex traffickers. You can help rescue those already enslaved. And you can help restore young lives and give them a future.

And now a generous opportunity of a \$320,000 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'll send you *The Age of Promise*, Randy Robison reveals ten promises woven through all of scripture that will transform the way you view God, yourself, and others. With your gift of \$128 or more you'll receive "The Prayer is Powerful" wood plaque. This unique scripture art piece is printed on premium Birchwood, a beautiful reminder of the power of prayer.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280, which will now help rescue 20 children and you may request the beautiful "Bridge of Faith" framed canvas print by Thomas Kinkade. Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I'm believing that many of you said, "We'll take that girl home. We'll give her a home." She will have eternity in the presence of God because those missionaries are going to win her to Christ because they're going to show literally very clearly the love of Christ.

We're sending Randy's book for any gift, and the beautiful prayer plaque, and the "Bridge of Faith." I hope that many of you will help us rescue 10 that now will be 20. If you'd like to have Matt Fry's book, *I AM*, I think it will really bless you. So you just help us rescue someone and I promise you, what Matt shares will lead you into a deeper Promised Land of life, a land of promise in his presence.

Let's again thank Matt and Martha for being with us. Bless you. C3 Church up there in that place up in North Carolina, near Raleigh. Thanks so much for helping. Thank you for being here.