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Week 16: Mission: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Tug White and Kyle Cox

James: I'm James, this is Betty; *LIFE Today* welcomes you.

I'm just so excited to show you something beautiful, show you love. I grew up a poor kid but the University of Texas would let poor kids go and sit in kind of a knothole and watch the football team, the Texas Longhorns. One thing we learned as little kids, we've got to really take on the Aggies. We've got to beat them; that's the biggest thing in all the world is beat the Aggies. We kind of grew up hooking horns and picking on Aggies. Someone says, "When an Aggie graduates, what does everybody call him?" -- in telling jokes. They say, "Yes, sir, boss. That's what you say." These are incredible students. I've got a grandson there now.

But I saw a glimpse the other day of some big ol' boys. As a matter of fact, I think I'll show you a little bit of that footage right now. The big ol' boys really helping a kid that was in a wheelchair that he wasn't able to do a lot of things. I saw in these strong guys, Betty, I saw God's love. I saw legitimate interest in somebody. These guys decided to take Kyle, a very challenged young man, Kyle Cox and he'll tell you about the disease, they tried to take him on a road trip. One of the ones that's here with us now that kind of helped head it up, his name is Tug White. I want you to welcome Tug and Kyle from Texas A&M to *LIFE Today*. Would you do that?

[Applause]

We saw a few glimpses when I was talking about you guys. Were there four of you or five of you? How many of you kind of went on this trip with him?

Tug: There were six total, including Kyle and myself.

James: Okay. What in the world got into you, man? You guys show an interest in this guy here and want to give him the trip of his life. What is going on?

Tug: Yeah, so Kyle is always kind of given me grief right when we became friends about taking him to do some of the fun stuff that I was doing or that some buddies would do. And I would just kind of rule Kyle out early on in our relationship thinking, oh he is in a wheelchair, he can't do that then didn't really explore the options to do some of the wild, crazy, fun things with

him.

So said, "We'll put together a road trip, kind of our last summer before we're out in the real world." We're still students so we rented an RV and toured through the southwestern part of the U.S. and did some crazy things that a lot of people would say is pretty foolish to do with someone who is in a wheelchair, with Duchenne and kind of try to defy the odds and have a lot of fun doing it.

James: And did you?

Tug: Yeah! A little too much fun at some points.

James: Were you surprised?

Kyle: I was really surprised. They had been planning it for a whole month beforehand. There were a couple of times that I almost found out about the trip. So they had been keeping me surprised for a month and a half. When that RV pulled up in front of my house, I was shocked, I was really surprised.

[Laughter]

James: Well, what did it do for you, the interest they showed in you? What did it do for you because you grew up, I think probably you didn't have a lot of people trying to look for ways to get out and have fun. Tell us a little bit about how you grew up and what you felt. And would you tell our viewers what this disease is and kind of give us a little understanding of it?

Kyle: Yes. Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is a progressive disease that only affects boys. It only affects one out of every 3500 boys so it's pretty rare. So there is not really a whole lot research treatment or even a cure out there.

James: When you were in school how did the kids treat you?

Kyle: When I was in school I really felt like my friendships were just really superficial, kind of by guy friendships. I felt like my friends when they would hang out with me they were just doing a favor. They didn't really genuinely try to get to know me.

But when I got to A&M that wasn't the case. I still remember the first time I met Tug we were at Impact camp which is kind of a Christian camp for incoming freshmen for A&M. He came up to me and was like, "Hey, do you want to play some checkers?"

I said, "Sure! Why not?"

So we just started playing checkers. And then once we got into A&M our friendship just kind of grew from there.

James: How did the other guys respond to you when you started bringing up all these ideas? Because they looked to me like they were in it in the pictures. I don't think they were showing off. It looked like something was happening to these big guys to say, "Man, this is the real deal."

Tug: The other guys on the trip love Kyle and are some of his best friends as well. We were all about it. The fatality rate for boys with Duchenne is pretty young. We kind of see it as -- a lot of people would say it is kind of morbid or sad to talk about or think about it, or shouldn't be talked about but we see it as like, man, we've got our best buddy. We want to live it up.

[Laughter]

And none of us are promised another day. No one is but especially boys with Duchenne.

And so we were like, yeah, it might be dangerous, but you know some of the things we were doing are pretty stupid but were a lot of fun and we're here now so everything worked out well.

[Laughter]

They were all about it. We took turns driving the RV. We drove for about six days non-stop. We didn't stop anywhere for more than about three hours at a time.

James: Did you get to see a lot of good sites?

Kyle: Mm-hm.

James: With some real buddies? All right. You were making like a documentary of this; right?

Tug: Yes, sir.

James: By the way, let me ask you. What do you think when you see this going on and see these big ol' boys showing an interest like this?

Betty: I think it is awesome! I'm curious to know what has Kyle done for you? What change has he made in your life?

Tug: Kyle has had a bigger impact in my life, I'd say probably than most certainly than I have in his. So it is real easy to look at things through the lens of what can I -- like he mentioned earlier, some superficial relationships. It's real easy to go get lunch with somebody who maybe seems less fortunate or disabled in a way, just kind of feel good about yourself.

Kyle, I was looking for friends, like going to A&M, I wanted friends and so when I met Kyle at Impact camp, I knew I'd met someone with a lot of similar interests; you wouldn't think so given like the physical side of things but we do. He showed me that it's not just about like what mutually benefitting, like how can I -- people are always asking, "How can I... what can I do for him? I want to pity him." And people will do that and they think, how can I help Kyle when in reality, my whole perspective has changed.

So we joke and stuff and we make people feel awkward a lot and I give him a hard time. Make a comment that someone around will go, "Oh my gosh! Did he just say that?"

[Laughter]

Maybe something about the wheelchair or when he he'll try to squeeze through people at a restaurant and I'll get all mad at him and say how inconsiderate he is. And like to mess with people.

[Laughter]

But really, just like at the end of the day, he's someone with a common interest who is made in the image of God and so because of that that's where our worth is found. So there is nothing really that I had to offer him at all. It was more of changing my perspective and taking my self-righteousness and saying, okay, well, this is a dude that has changed my life by his perspective and his lens and the joy that he has found and is rooted in Jesus. Whereas I know, okay, if I was in Kyle's situation, I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't be doing anything. I'd be griping, I'd be complaining. I'd be trying to be the victim. And Kyle is the total opposite of that. Seeing through the lens of him and being with him makes me a better man and know Jesus more.

James: Do you feel like Jesus helps you do that?

Kyle: Yes.

James: Do you think Jesus helped him do what they did?

Kyle: Yes.

James: Do you think Jesus is pleased with what they did?

Kyle: I think so. I know so!

[Laughter]

James: You're still remembering some of the things he's doing. Thinking about some of them.

[Laughter]

Now look, they did a whole film, video film and they had it all saved, and somebody comes into their camera truck that was covering all this and stole everything; and stole the hard drive it was on. They have no copies. So everything they did, they just wanted to share inspiration and maybe encourage people to research and support research. And it's all gone.

How would you want people to pray for you in relationship to that? Because nothing will change the love you poured out but you were trying to do something to say, "We want to show people something." That's what we're doing right here. So you don't mind people praying for you all that this will be able to be carried on. But is there any way that something could be done that you feel like you could still accomplish something that might have been accomplished by the film? Is there something you want people to pray with you about? Maybe you can find a way that you can do something to offset it or still accomplish your goal?

Tug: So in essence, we believe that all things work out for the good to those who love Jesus. We believe that somehow through the devastation of what we did, somehow that God's going to be magnified or glorified in that whether that is one person watching *LIFE Today* who has Duchenne and is hopeless at the time or whether that's another part two of *Kyle Goes to Prom*, the road trip that we did.

But all over the world where someone from an iCloud storage based type deal comes and says, "Hey, we'll sponsor that. We want to spread the hope and the joy that's found that people can have through a lens with a disease that a lot of people view as hopeless."

So prayer mainly that... it would be really cool if we had our hard drives returned. They're probably sitting in some pawn shop in Dallas but that would be really cool, that would be a great start. But also, just through where it is real easy to say, "This is horrible, it is devastating." Yeah it is in a sense but also that some way that God's going to be glorified through that. And we trust that, and we know that, and we don't always get to see the fruits of that but it would be really cool to see the fruits of that. It would be really cool to do a trip with a little more capital

than the couple thousand dollars we raised and take Kyle, maybe all over the world and do something really similar to give young boys with Duchenne hope.

James: Did they give you when they talk to you, Kyle, have they given you some kind of timeline that they say is going to be pretty typical for somebody with what you face? What do the so-called experts say to you?

Kyle: With this disease most boys don't live to see 30. There might be one or two rare instances where a boy lives to see 30.

James: How old are you now?

Kyle: I'm 22.

James: But you're not counting the days and the years are you?

Kyle: No. I know that's in God's hands.

James: Well, we're all in God's hands. Let me tell you, do you want everybody to know the Jesus that gives you a sense of peace even with the challenges that you face?

Kyle: I think what gives me a sense of peace is just knowing my purpose. I know my purpose is to glorify God in everything I do. And whether that is being that hope by just going on the A&M campus with a smile on my face.

James: Is he giving people hope, Tug?

Tug: Yeah. Absolutely! Kyle is probably one of the most recognizable people at A&M and you just say, "Yeah, the guy driving around with the really pretty golden retrievers and the girls following him."

[Laughter]

He absolutely has. I would say he's probably one of the most recognizable guys at A&M and it's the guy that's always walking around grinning ear to ear.

James: Do y'all graduate this year?

Tug: I'll graduate in December; I'm a little behind.

James: So you'll go through another football season. What about you? When will you graduate?

Kyle: I'll be graduating in May.

James: Okay, well, I was just looking for one more time for him to go out on the field with the bulldog and his dog, and have a little parade. I've got all these images going, the love.

Let me say to all the A&M students, y'all really are special. I'm glad you can laugh at the jokes. I know a lot of kids have gone there. I know about the great prayer meetings. Some of you may stay out of them. You may still be the party people but listen, you're so special.

One of the things that I've always said if I were a pastor, I would ask everyone in my church to have some kind of little garden. I would try to teach little kids to have a plot and try to grow something and understand that it is very difficult to grow in a field when that field is being attacked but when you love it, you can grow beautiful, beautiful flowers. The Lord says we are his fertile field, his cultivated field and he wants to grow beautiful crops.

I want to say to all you students at A&M and every student, you can grow beautiful crops, you can grow beautiful fruit and that's what you're seeing. So that's my challenge to you is to assist to do that. I think it is love that moves you guys. I'm just kind of letting people look at the images right now while I'm talking to you, of the things that you all were doing on the road trip. They're just kind of watching you. And they're seeing the joy and the smiles and the love. It's beautiful!

I need both of you to know and all of your buddies to know that when I saw you, I didn't just see some A&M students reaching out to a kid that was somewhat limited, I saw the love of God being poured out through big ol' boys on somebody that really recognized it and who had it himself. And me just seeing that clip of what's a stolen video, I saw Jesus and you can't steal that from me or anybody else.

I wish everybody watching us would show this world the love of God because it has no limit and it simply seeks a channel, a vessel through which it can flow freely. And you can be that channel of blessing.

And so, Kyle, I just want to thank you for being a blessing in a challenged situation. How are your parents doing? How have they handled your journey?

Kyle: You know when I was first diagnosed, it was very hard on them for a couple of months. When the doctor told them they said there was no cure, there was no treatment, and I won't live to see 20. And yet, here I am, still here at 22 years old. And we're looking at treatment even.

There is a cure on the horizon. So praise God, keep their hope in God. If not me, then at least it will be the next generation of boys.

James: Are mom and dad doing okay?

Kyle: Yes. But my mom and dad...

James: Mom and dad, thank you. Thank you! Lord, thank you for letting us see a glimpse of your love and I'm asking you to multiply it even today through every viewer, that you'll just start letting a river of love flow; in Jesus' name.

Kyle, I want to thank you. Tug, I want to thank you. I want y'all to be praying. We'll pray if you got that film and know where it is, how about getting it back? If you stole some stuff and you don't know what's on it, take a chance. If they needed to mail it to you, where would they mail it, Tug? Give me an address.

Tug: Yeah! 307 Fidelity Street, College Station, Texas. We actually won't give them -- whoever stole it, we have a \$5,000 reward. So even if you stole it, we'll pay you \$5,000 bucks for it.

James: We'll give you the reward for getting clean. Did you hear that? You're not going to get that selling that stuff. So mail it to them. And go ahead and give them a phone number. Figure something out because y'all are going to call the number and thank them. You're not going to get them arrested; right? You're not going to put a search on the phone. So don't go borrow somebody's phone and tell them to call that and get them arrested. Don't do that! Don't start playing games. Get this thing back and get it right. Let me tell you something, you made a mess, why don't you go ahead and be a part of a miracle? Let's just pray that happens.

Would y'all say thanks to this A&M guy and his buddies? And thanks to Kyle.

I want to thank all of you who watch *LIFE Today* because you see the main outreach of *LIFE Today* is this: We said when Betty and I were led by God to do this, that we would bring the family in the family room and help them know the Father. When you get to know the Father then you begin to reveal him through the son that connects you to the Father. That's what we're here for. We want you to see Jesus.

I was always kind of the center of attention in the stadiums and coliseums. I knew people meant well but I wanted Jesus to be the center of attention and I wanted to point to Jesus in others. I wanted them to look way beyond me. We've been able to help people do that. And one of the things we do, guys is we reach out to people nobody notices and you're going to see them now in

a little clip. We reach out to the hungry and the thirsty and the hurt and the ones who are being held prisoner and trafficked in sexual predation and bondage.

I want you to watch this because you're going to send somebody out of prison on a road trip. They're not crippled, they're chained. They're bound as children, girls and they're used and you're going to set them free. You're going to take them on the road trip of their life with the power of love. I want you to watch.

On the mission field

Open Captions:

>> We were left homeless and in debt. When the people we owed money to started demanding payment, my mom asked me to go find work. My friend told me I could go work as a waitress. She took me to the owners of a bar. They gave me something to eat. After eating, I fell unconscious. When I awoke, I was being raped. My friend was gone. I felt so betrayed. I was so scared. I didn't understand what had happened. Then they began forcing me to sleep with three to four men every night. If I resisted, they beat me with electrical wire. And if I still refused, they said they would kill me.

Sheila: It is clear to me today more than it's ever been that I know nothing -- nothing of suffering compared to this beautiful girl and thousands and thousands like her. It's really overwhelming. It's overwhelming because in Southeast Asia she is not alone. There are thousands of girls like this and the only hope is not the government stepping in, the only hope is the body of Christ.

In Luke Chapter 19, verse ten, Jesus said the son of man came to seek and to save those who are lost. That's why Jesus came and that's why you and I are on this earth. We can't wait for somebody else to move in and help. It's our job. It's our responsibility. The sex traffickers are not sitting back thinking we'll take a day off. They're there. They're relentless. If we as the body of Christ don't care more than they care then God have mercy on us.

End of clip

In the studio

James: There is no question you're hearing God, not Sheila. Jesus said in that first great proclamation in the synagogue, quoting Isaiah that he came to set captives free like that beautiful girl. And since Sheila's been here with *LIFE* she's walked into new areas that she had not seen up-close and personal. It's been life changing; not only life enriching, life changing. You can hear the passion, we have to set these people free.

Betty, we've been there, we know it can happen. We see what love does so it is not wishful thinking. If the people who are watching us in this last week will help us, the love of God will flow to them, we will set so many free. We targeted 2500 that the missionaries said we believe we can reach and take care of and restore them. Viewers said, "Whatever you do, we'll match it. So if you can raise enough support to rescue 2500, we'll match it and it will be \$5,000." So suddenly, when you say today "I'm going to be an answer to that heart cry, I'm going to set that girl free and others like her, she represents the ones we're after, and it takes \$128 to reach, rescue, and restore for a year, I'm going to do it" and it will immediately be doubled. So when you say, "I'm going to help one," you've just helped two because the love of God flowing through others.

So in this last week here's what I'd like you to do right now. I want you to go online or I want you to call that number that's a prayer line for all the broken hearts. And most of the calls today will be people calling to say, "Please pray for me." We rejoice in that because love even pays for that call. But I need many of you to call to be a life line and say, "I'm going to set somebody free with the love of God through my gift."

If you could help us set free and I ask as many times ten, could you make a \$1280 gift? I believe you can. Some of you can. You say, "I can." Well, it will immediately be doubled and you will not just rescue 10 but 20.

So this last week right now would you please go online, dial the number, take your bankcard -- go get it! Write the number down. If you say, "I can't make the call right now," write it down, go get the card, if you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us it's coming because we're going to let the missionaries know. Here's what we God's people enable you to do -- setting people free. Will you do it? We have some gifts to bless you but you are giving freedom for someone in desperate need. 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. This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your secure gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I just say from the depth of our heart, thanks for sharing God's love. Thanks for helping set captives free.

And would you join with our audience here and you join with us and say to Tug and Kyle, thanks for being a blessing to us? Thanks for being a blessing to each other. I sure hope somebody comes up with that footage. It would be fun to see.

Thank all of you for watching. Pray God will return that or give them an even greater journey. Blessings over it. Thank all of you.