

4/23/18

Week 17: Spring Mission Feeding
Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh
Victor Marx

Randy: So good to have you here. I'm Randy Robison. Sheila Walsh is with me. You know, Sheila, a lot of times as spiritual warriors as it were, we feel like we're sort of fighting behind enemy lines as we battle the principalities and powers. Well, we've got someone today who literally goes behind enemy lines into areas where I would -- I would be terrified to go.

Sheila: Oh I think any of us would.

Randy: Victor Marx is with us.

Victor, so good to have you and your dog.

Would you welcome Victor Marx to *LIFE Today*?

[Applause]

Sheila: And Scout.

Randy: Yes! Introduce your companion here.

Victor: So Scout is a two-year old Belgian Malinois. She was bred and trained specifically for the work she does; first as a service dog, for me as a veteran, and then other things we do overseas, helping reach children who have been affected by ISIS.

Randy: I want to talk about all of that but explain why you would even have a service dog for P.T.S.D.

Victor: To get in front of the lines at like Disneyland.

[Laughter]

Sheila: Excellent! I've always wondered about that. Yeah!

Victor: No! We operate in hostile environments when we're reaching children. A lot of our

work this past summer, we have a home in Iraq, was reaching children who had been held captive by ISIS. We were doing work in Mosul. So she has other skill sets that are needed. And right now, as far as we know she is the only canine that actually came face to face with ISIS fighters and then within three hours children were playing with her in our home. So it's rare to have that combination.

But yeah, she is amazing. And she was actually donated to our organization by Baden K9 out of Canada. So we're so grateful. We're looking forward to actually getting our second one.

Sheila: You passed over that really quickly, Victor that you actually have a home in Iraq. We've seen the pictures coming out of Iraq and out of Mosul and devastating pictures of just children covered in the devastation, blood. What is it like to actually be there on the ground?

Victor: Well, it is heartbreaking, for sure. Our first time in was just about six months after ISIS had invaded into Iraq. We put together a team just -- we were going to help girls who had been held captive for trauma relief because -- the whole area is traumatized and you see the effects of it. But my wife, actually went on the first mission in and I didn't want her to and she was like, "Well, I just feel led."

I was like, "Aah!!" I said, "Why do you want to go?"

She said, "Because when you find the girls and I know you will, you can't hug them but I can." She was willing to risk her life just to hug girls. She put it in perspective and it gives you a glimpse into her faith. She says, "What's the worst that can happen to us? Death?"

I said, "Yeah! Death! Yeah, that's it."

She goes, "But then don't we win?"

And when she said that I was like, "Oh my goodness! You're wearing me out, woman!"
[Laughter]

Sheila: That's powerful and she is right. For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.

Victor: And it is such a great opportunity. So we started going in and out and we ended up getting a residence there. Actually, we're immigrants into Iraq. How's that? Because we've immigrated.

But it's very, very sad. We use a lot of humor to break up the intensity of it. But like I said earlier, it is such an opportunity for God's love to be shown in such darkness. You don't even

have to be some super saint. I'm just like a spark but it is so dark it gets everybody's attention.

Randy: Yeah. Well, it's a Muslim country obviously, so what are you finding as a Christian coming into minister in a Muslim country. What's been the reception?

Victor: Well, you've got to think of the environment; right? It's been totally upside down for more year after year after year. To a lot of people's surprise I was able to sit down with a very senior Islamic leader, not only of Iraq, but in the Middle East, he had 12,000 mosques under him and still does, but he was a spiritual mentor to al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS. That mission was 72 hours in and out of the country because of the threat.

But it was through that relationship, this high ranking influencer and me, a Christian leader in America, that he took me to a mosque, and I went to in prayer and because I did that and risked it for him, because they test you out, he ended up bringing me to a where a bunch of persecuted Christians were that he said, "They need help. These are your people. Where are Christians in America? Y'all need to help your people."

So that was the beginning of it. Believe it or not, the audience may not believe this but the Iraqi government and Muslims, they know that their country is out of balance. So many Christians have been killed. They just found more mass graves outside of Mosul and fled.

They say this, "This land was theirs before ours." A Christian to Iraq is like the scent of a flower. So yeah.

Sheila: It is interesting that the very power of love, I imagine that is why they've been arrested by who you and your wife are because you're loving on their broken children.

Victor: That's exactly it. Me and some of our teams and our associate teams, we were embedded with the ninth division; it was an armor division, Iraqi. And also, Peshmerga at times but we were really leading, clearing villages, and then FBR, (Free Burma Rangers), with David Eubank too, more so!

But I'll never forget the general over this division. He said, "You've really shown us -- you guys have shown us what Christianity truly is and who Jesus is." Because they would ask us, "Why are you here?" -- Mortars dropping on us, ISIS shooting.

We said, "Because God loves us and we love y'all; that's why he's brought us here."

Sheila: It's so powerful.

Randy: It's opened up a lot of doors, I'm guessing. What do you see in the future? Is this something that you're going to be able to do more of and maybe expand?

Victor: That's a great question. Right now there is a great need to have Christians come back into Iraq but there are towns and villages need to be rebuilt, infrastructure, their homes, and then security be provided. I've been given an opportunity to -- I'm going to meet with the prime minister of Iraq and the head of the Parliament to talk to them about the Iraqi government helping Christians out and other minorities in their country. So God's given us really great favor. They've seen what we've done for three years, that's why they trust us.

Randy: What can our audience do to support that?

Victor: Y'all just come on!

[Laughter]

I'll give you a tour.

No, we need prayer. Really, the biggest thing of people watching and it sounds cliché but we need prayer. If they go to our social media or website they can watch videos where they can see we have encounters. I've witnessed to a captured ISIS commander and was able to get into his heart, head, find out why he does everything he does. I asked him, "What would I tell young men, the next wave coming up?"

He said this, "Tell them do not come to the darkness."

And that's very critical. At that point he realized -- he let me pray for his family.

And then I said, "Do you know what's going to happen when you die?" Because where we were in Mosul with the situation he didn't have long.

He said, "Insha'allah, whatever God's will is."

But I shared the gospel with him and then he actually prayed the sinner's prayer all the way to the end because his hands were shackled behind him. We have pictures of this. And right at the end where he's -- and I close "In Jesus' name" he stopped. He wouldn't say it. And this -- this very real darkness came over him. His face contorted and he broke out of his shackles. It was evil. That's when little girl --

Sheila: That's when you need little scout.

Victor: She keyed up and then my security guy jumped up. They got him, bound him again, and the last thing I was able to tell him is when you're going to die, Jesus, you can still call out to him. I thought of the thief on the cross. He laughed.

But my head of security who is an Iraqi. He said, "Boss, I saw him break. I was just going to shoot him in the head but I wait. You say the nice things first."

[Laughter]

Sheila: There's always a better order. The nice things then shoot them in the head.

Victor: I was like, "Thank you."

Sheila: It's like when we just watch the news or read the newspaper it looks like war and this and that. But what you're encountering is true spiritual warfare -- heaven and hell, good and evil.

Victor: We call it the manifestation of evil. It's the manifestation. It's one thing when you see it. There was a day when we were out west of Mosul, getting ready to do a push and this car comes bumbling down the road. Everybody is like, whoa! Because there's lots of car bombs. This guy jumps out and get this, we're in the middle of nowhere and he starts saying, "Help! Please help my wife! Psychological problems."

I thought what? I just finished a film on trauma. I thought it was a joke. We went over there and sure enough his wife is in the back seat. Her face had been burnt. He says, "Please help her!"

Come to find out she has these reoccurring troubled thoughts to cut herself, to burn herself, or to drink poison and die. As I talked to her and him, I did an assessment from a trauma standpoint. She definitely was traumatized but I said, "I think this is more than just psychological. I believe there's another realm and this is evil." I asked them both. I said, "Do y'all believe in demons?"

They said, "Yeah."

I said, "Well, I think this is demonic; planting thoughts in your mind to try to have you kill yourself." I said, "Do you mind if I pray for you? But the only power I have over evil is in Jesus' name. Can I pray for you?"

She said, "Is Jesus still alive?"

I'd never heard that in my life: "Is Jesus alive?"

I said, "Yeah! He is. And he is the one that can free you."

I started praying. It was the worst prayer you've ever heard ever because I got one eye open, I'm holding a rifle and I'm going, doubt still tagging me. I hope there ain't bombs in this trunk. Prayed the prayer and man, all the sudden she starts yelling, "My mind! My mind is free! My mind is free!" And she was.

Sheila: That's like the demoniac on the shores of Galilee!

[Applause]

Victor: Can you imagine her going back to her village telling people, "First of all, I'm not crazy anymore. Second, Jesus is alive and he healed me."

Randy: It's like straight out of the New Testament; right?

Sheila: Yeah! Is it your own experience with posttraumatic stress disorder that has given you this huge avenue into the lives of other people?

Victor: I think so. As a kid my father, he didn't claim me. So I experienced rejection as -- my mother would end up marrying six times; I went to 14 schools, 17 houses and my dad went through this dark, dark phase of being a drug dealer and a pimp and a practicing warlock. So with that background because of the insecurity I went through, bad things happened. I was physically and sexually abused, and emotionally for several years.

I was tortured, that's what the professionals called it when a kid is electrocuted or dunked in a tub. These are things that I really didn't want to ever have to remember or talk about and I never did. I never started telling people about my story 'til I was almost 40. Because one, I thought, everybody has problems. And then the Lord showed me, "I've redeemed you." And he did, which is the miracle because I was left for dead in a cooler and God, sustained me and redeemed me.

People say, "What about your grandparents if your parents were messed up?"

One of my grandfathers died in a mental hospital, it was the same one my grandfather was in -- I mean my dad. And then my other grandfather killed himself right after he shot his wife. So with all that I joined the Marine Corps. I came to faith through my biological dad coming back into my life.

Randy: So you've got -- it's not just something in theory that you're dealing with, people with

P.T.S.D. you've had to deal with this in your own life.

Victor: Absolutely, 123 visits to a trauma specialist in nine months. I've been on depakote, depakine, Prozac, Zoloft, lithium. To have a psychiatrist look at you and say, "You'll never fully function because of the acute levels of inner trauma."

I went, "Well, I never functioned anyway."

[Laughter]

Sheila: Isn't that just the gospel? That the Lord loves to take the least likely, the ones that everybody else would write off and say, "This is the one."

To me you're like a modern day Paul, the apostle. You're just going where you know your life is in danger but your whole thing is if I die, I'm with Jesus, if I live I'll continue to spread the gospel.

Victor: Thank you, Sheila. I think I pray for more like Peter waving a blade around chopping ears off.

Sheila: That's good too! We need that too!

Victor: It was the last miracle Jesus did taking care one of his disciples. But God's been very good and he's able to do that in anybody's life.

Sheila: Tell us a little bit about this new movie.

Victor: We have a new film out. It's called *Triggered Too*. We have a *Triggered One* for military, *Triggered Too* is really, it's a look at what trauma does to the brain, the psyche of a human, from children to adults. We have some unbelievable first time people ever shared their heart.

Randy: There are some pretty amazing stories.

Victor: And we wanted something, we'd prayed and it was a long project but this is something that if people watch it can definitely save lives, save marriages and give context. I tell people, "Crazy thoughts don't make you crazy." And just a little truth like that when somebody is really struggling. And then we bring in the spiritual aspect as well. But it's a powerful film that people can actually watch online or go to our website.

Randy: I find that amazing because you're not trying to make a movie to get rich or anything like that. You made something to genuinely help people. You put it out there where they can see it right now if they'll just go to VictorMarx.com or TriggeredTheMovie.com.

We looked at it and we said, "We're either going to be in it for the money or for the message. We can't really do both." Because we're poor we enjoy it. We don't know what we would do if we had a lot of money.

Sheila: It's hard to go shopping in Iraq. Really, isn't it?

[Laughter]

I watched the movie and just from my own experience of my father committing suicide when I was five and my own experience with depression and being in a mental hospital, I found it tremendously helpful -- really so helpful.

Victor: There are so many of us in the body of Christ that truly have struggled or still struggle and we want people to know, you're not alone. You're not alone. A lot of times the church doesn't want people to look at this or they're uncomfortable. It is part of us.

Randy: I don't have much time but I want to hit this real quickly because not only are you helping people overseas but with this the whole trauma thing, you've been helping people here in the states, and in particular one group of people that the church does not know how to reach really. Not everybody should do it. You have to be called.

Victor: Yes! Especially the men.

Randy: Quickly tell us a little bit about that.

Victor: We'd been praying and we actually found the adult entertainment, it's a porn convention, it is the largest gathering of professionals in the porn industry was in Vegas and we went to it. We rented a booth. And we handed out over 1,000 resources from my testimony film to the movie Triggered.

You know what? None of them rejected us. They were actually shocked that we would come and enter their world and care about them. We got to pray for people. I mean it is pretty staggering; and are still getting fruit reports from it to this day. So yeah, Jesus was a friend of sinners so we just went and made a bunch of friends. The only ones we got a little negative feedback from are believers.

Sheila: Isn't that just typical?

Victor: I got interviewed. One guy goes, "Now as a Christian man, how can you be here with all of this?"

I said, "Because my wife is three feet behind me and she's a black belt."

[Laughter]

She will knock me out if I look too long.

Sheila: I really encourage you to go to Victor's website. Watch this. It is phenomenal. But not just that, I'm asking our partners to build a garrison of prayer around these people because they're on the front lines serving Jesus. So the least we can do is get on our knees on their behalf. How exciting!

Randy: There is also something that we are doing to reach behind enemy lines. Our enemy in this case is hunger and it takes children just as viciously as ISIS. Sheila, tell us about what we're about to see.

Sheila: Yeah, I was in Angola and I've never experienced anything like it. When you walk into a clinic and you see a tiny baby that you think is maybe just a couple weeks old and you learn that they're a year and a half. It's hard to put into words so maybe you would watch this with me.

On the mission field

Sheila: I woke up this morning in this village, this is my first time in Angola and I honestly don't know what I expected but I didn't expect what I experienced. I didn't expect to see a child who is a year and five months old and weighs six pounds. How does a child like that even survive?

I think one of the things that surprised me most was the profound affinity I felt with the moms. If you're a mom, all you want is for your child to be healthy. You want to be able to put a meal on the table at night and know that your children go to bed with a full tummy. But here I've seen what the ravages of malnutrition do.

In many places where we've been the crops had been destroyed this year and that's what they depend on. So, so many of the moms have to go out and work for two days to get one small meal for their children at night. The meal that they provide has no protein. So when they get sick they go down so quickly.

But the other thing and this is the thing that blew me away, is I saw the difference that Mission Feeding makes. To be able to be in a village and to see this long snake line of little kids who are behaving like little kids should, they're laughing, they're excited and happy. That's why I know there's hope.

Mission Feeding is not some great idea we came up with. It's simply living out the gospel of Christ. And when we put one simple bowl of food into the hands of these children in Africa, it changes their lives forever -- thousands and thousands and thousands of lives, one life at a time.

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Once you've been on a trip like that you can't un-see what you've seen and you can't walk away. Because I sat in the dirt with some of these moms and a lot of these moms love Jesus. Their only prayer every night is, Lord, don't spare my life but spare the life of my child. To watch your child try to go to sleep at night with an empty belly because they're so hungry.

I went with one of the moms one day and we're literally digging through dry ground to try and find any kind of nuts or seeds. But as you saw in that piece, there is no protein there. I made the uninformed comment to a mom about the color of her child's hair because it was kind of a bronzy color. But that's because there is no protein in their diet. So these children are literally starving to death.

And I have to tell you, something rose up in me because if you think of how we live, you and I are always trying to lose weight because we're eating too much and over there, all they want is to be able to give one bowl of food to their children. So one day, I'm in the malnutrition clinic and I'm holding a mom who is holding her baby who had ten minutes left to live and in the next village where we've already set up the feeding program, from the first bowl of food they turn from death to life.

I tried it. It looks like oatmeal. It's not. It's full of all the protein and the vitamins and minerals those children in that part of the world need. It is like a miracle.

So as long as we can do something we need to do something. It is not an accident that you and I are on this planet at this moment. We have not the obligation, the ridiculously outrageous privilege of feeding these children. You can't tell them Jesus loves them when they're hungry. But when you put a meal in their stomach and then the moms want to know why did you come here? Then we can tell them, we came here because there's a God who saw you. There's a God

who heard every prayer that you've ever prayed. Who caught every tear that you've ever cried.

So will you help us? We want to feed 400,000 children this year and I'm asking you to do it with us. Randy, would you tell them what the numbers are and how much of a difference that will make?

Randy: Oh my goodness! There's life in every bowl -- every bowl brings hope to every life. You can give a bowl to ten children for three months for \$100. You can give a bowl to five children for three months for \$50. Everyone can do something.

Three months, Sheila as you saw, you go from one village that needs the feeding outreach to another one that has had it for three months, complete different scenario. It is tough to watch and I appreciate you watching the tough footage of what we brought back but the good news is we can actually change lives. Will you join us today? Will you go to the phones, make the best gift you can, go online, give out of joy -- joy that we're going in the name of Jesus to save lives and to bring hope. That's what you can do and you can do it right now.

So please do that. When you do, we do have some things that we would like to give back to you which will bless you. This is about your spiritual growth because we want to bless you as you're blessing others. But whatever you do, really just take a moment and pray and say, "Lord, what would you have me do?" Give us a call, go online, we can share life and share hope when you join us today.

Begin video clip

Announcer: In impoverished and drought-stricken areas of Africa children are suffering. The need is great and without food they face severe malnutrition -- even death.

With your support LIFE's Mission Feeding outreach can save lives by feeding and caring for children in the hardest hit areas of Angola, Mozambique, and South Sudan. With previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding helping in areas with severe crop failure we urgently need to replenish our food supplies to reach 400,000 children who are counting on us.

Your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. And with your gift of any amount, we'll send you *Proverbs Power: Successful Communication*. This powerful CD series, along with study guide featuring Steven K. Scott unveils the secrets to incredible wisdom found only in the book of Proverbs. This series will give you the tools to transform your relationships in life.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the complete *Proverbs Power* library featuring five

power-packed sessions that include: The Power of Vision, Breaking through Mediocrity, and much more.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request the "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

Randy: I do hope you're going to the phone or going online right now and doing the best you absolutely can. We are privileged to have you as a partner sharing God's love and life around the world.

We're privileged to all be part of the ministry of this man, Victor Marx and all that you are doing. Would you give Victor a warm thank you? Thank you for sharing with us. And we're going to pray for you. We're going to pray for you as you go behind enemy lines and storm the gates of hell.

Thanks for watching. Join us again every day on *LIFE Today*.

Sheila: See you next time!