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Week 40: Mission: Rescue Life
James and Betty Robison
Star Parker

James: We welcome you to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have a real star. I mean she is a star and her name is Star. As far as I'm concerned she is about a morning star. She is so like Jesus in so many ways that it's quite amazing. Star Parker is I think a transformed person that really came from kind of a background like I had. We're different colors but we had a lot of similarities. Would you welcome Star Parker to *LIFE Today*? She's been here several times with us and we're just crazy about her.

Star, I'm the product of a forced sexual relationship on a 40-year old woman, conceived me, the doctor wouldn't abort me, I'm born, lived in poverty for ten years, about as bad as it gets, lived on a dump, dirty river. I just was poor. But nobody was cruel enough or foolish enough to tell me that somebody owed me and needed to take care of me. Through all the misery, I did see possibilities. I felt like work was not a bad word. I guess I'd considered the birds, they get up early and they go to work but they don't worry.

I went to work at 12. It wasn't bad for me. I wasn't too young. Thank God there wasn't some smart politician telling me I was too young to work and that you're a criminal if you let a 12-year old work. Shut up forever as far as I'm concerned. Just shut up! Find another place to go spout off where nobody can hear you. I went to work. I'm 74, I've never stopped. And I'm telling you, I've been blessed and I've been a blessing to bless others -- and I love people and I help people.

You didn't have a real good start yourself, did you?

Star: Well, actually I lost track when I got lost because I did believe those lies, I did hear those lies. I heard that my problems were somebody else's fault. I heard that I was poor because the wealthy were wealthy. I heard that because I was black I shouldn't mainstream. And listening to all those lies I got very, very lost.

I started living in daily activities of anything that someone asked me to do; so everything from criminal activity to drug activity to sexual activity, in and out of abortion clinic after clinic. It wasn't until after the fourth time I went into one of those so called safe legal care clinics that I just had a gut instinct way down deep inside that there must be something wrong with killing

your offspring.

I didn't change any of my sexual patterns so I was pregnant again within a very short period of time and that's when I went on welfare to stay. I'd been in and out of the system already. It's how I paid for all those abortions -- the government did. But also, every now and then I would stay pregnant long enough to just get a check and on the first and the 15th and then go abort the child. So now I was just going to make it my life pattern. I lived there three and a half years watching my life spiral into a little dark hole and that's where God found me through some Christian people that they told me my lifestyle was not acceptable to God.

I suppose it was. I didn't know anything about God. But they did keep calling me to go to church with them. And when I went to church, I heard the gospel. I heard that God was in Christ, that he was reconciling the world to himself, that he wasn't counting my sin against me, that he loved me and that he died for me. And that he had a life for me. So I said, "Wow! That sounds pretty cool." So I changed.

James: How old were you then?

Star: I was well into my 20s probably.

James: And he changed your life.

Star: Yeah! Just started making new decisions, started going to church, started reading the Bible and found out that it worked. It really was good news.

James: You think that a lot of people have bought the lie that you were living?

Star: Yeah! Not only have they bought it, the challenge that we're confronted with today is the lies are now politicized. So not only are people buying the lies but it's taken a hold of their life even when they are Christians.

Looking into my community, I work in policy reform today, I run a policy institute in Washington, D.C. and the people have bought this idea of collectivism and political correctness. So what's happened is if you even speak truth, you're called out in your name and you make a lot of enemies and end up with death threats. So that's a lot of my life today.

James: How can you smile about that? How come you're happy about all that?

Star: Why am I happy about it? Because the truth is on our side. I still work in the grassroots. I still go into the housing projects. I speak for probably 20 pregnancy care centers a

year. So those that are rolling up their sleeves and getting the work done in the local communities for the people that are in need, I just know that God is a good God. I'm very happy about it. I'm not happy about the death threats though.

James: But you're happy about the life you're living. Do you believe that buying into the welfare system is in many ways death and bondage to the people? And do you believe that it perpetuates an inappropriate power base that's actually in fact manipulating and using the people to maintain their position to the demise and damage of the very people they're trying to help or say they're trying to help?

Star: I absolutely know it's true. One thing we need to know is less than \$0.20 on a dollar out of the \$900 billion that we spend every year in these anti-poverty programs, less than \$0.20 on the dollar actually reaches the home that we say we want to help. All the rest is bureaucracy. I also know that we've put \$24 trillion into this war in poverty and the poverty rate hasn't changed at all. It's still 25% of the population.

James: And the poor are getting worse.

Star: Well because we collapsed family. The rules of Uncle Sam are: Don't work, don't save, don't get married. We'll kind of keep you enslaved to this poverty plantation.

Do you know what else I know? The scripture said, "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what's God." Charity doesn't belong in a one-size-fits-all program. Charity belongs to the church. It belongs to the local community; people that can look you in your eye and talk to you about your life and try to help you recover. Because the poverty might not be economic, it might be spiritual. It could be just emotional. So we need to be able to look at the uniqueness of the Lord.

When Jesus talked about the poor, he said preach the gospel to them. How did we go set up this one-size-fits-all government program that doesn't even allow you to preach the gospel to the poor?

James: As a matter of fact, they will fire you or fine you if you do.

Star: When I wrote my caseworker and said I was leaving because I had gone to church and heard this stuff. She called me and cursed me out and told me I'd be back.

When Jesus was confronted with poverty, when he saw all those homeless people out there, a lot of them were hungry, he didn't say, "Send them to the Romans and have them set up a food stamp program." He told his disciples, bring them to me.

Then they're like, "What are we supposed to do with them?"

He said, "You're supposed to feed them." And then he multiplied.

And I just know now so much of the scripture that God has already taken care of people by telling the church, if they bring their tithes and their offerings into the church they have meat. We have a lot of programs in the private sector that are really helping people recover. They just don't have the finances to do it more, to be able to look people in the eye and talk to them about their lives.

James: Really, because so much of it has gone to the government in excessive taxation and useless meetings, ineffective taxation. We've allowed it to happen.

Star: And not only that the welfare department is on Independence Avenue. You talk about the mockery of the government. How do you put a welfare office on Independence Avenue?

[Laughter]

They're not independent at all. It's just like mad.

But things are different now. The new president is serious about making changes to fix the inner cities. He said it during the campaign, blacks, he told them what do they have to lose. They didn't buy it. So about 8%, a couple million voted for him. But then unlike other politicians he said it again in his inaugural. So people started thinking, maybe he is serious. Maybe he really is going to start looking at how to help poor people and fix the inner cities. He is a builder. The guy wants to fix stuff. Then he said it in his State of the Union last year.

And so since that time, my organization, CURE and others have been working with his administration to try to shape new ideas so that we can help fix what's broken down in our most vulnerable zip codes. He is very serious about getting this done and we might even see some changes this year.

Betty: Do you think many of the people in poverty think they can't be fixed so they kind of settle into that life?

Star: We know it for a fact. It is interesting. It's not only that they know it, they've been told it over and over and over again.

One of my friends who is from another country asked me one day, he said, "You know what I

don't understand about your book, Star?"

I said, "What?"

He said, "Why do they tell their children they're poor?" He said, "That's so cruel. Who would tell their children they're poor?"

And it's perpetuation to where now I went into Alabama recently and some teachers confronted me. They're like, "Oh so you run a think tank?"

I said, "Yeah, I run a think tank in Washington."

"Well, you need to go up there and think about this because this is what we're hearing now from our 14-year olds. They're saying, 'Mama said don't bring home a B on your test. Mama said bring home a baby. And mama said if you don't bring home a baby, you're going on to your uncle because you are going to have a baby.'"

Yes, it is entrenched. We've got a cancer and now it's stolen all dignity from the people and so they really don't believe that they have a talent, that God was a distributor of talents and that's another reason we've got to get the government out of doing charity work.

That's why you want to work with the established charities in the communities. Every community has them. Somebody is working with the homeless from a Christian perspective. Someone is working with the orphan, in the foster, with the -- every single place we see challenges. So what we need are churches to adopt up those places. We need people to bring their tithes into the storehouse and we need charity tax credits. The government should not have the system to where we send all that money to Washington and then Washington trickles it back to the people. They should be able to give dollar to dollar to the charity of their choice.

James: And oversight -- compassionate oversight.

Star: Well, the charity itself has to have the oversight. When you think about let's just take one example, the homeless shelters, the union missions, these folks, they're Christian people. They bring their tithe, their talent, their treasures, they're free people, they're working with free people, but their attitude about the poor is that they're uniquely made in the eyes of God. They look at them as human beings. Their humanity is there. So what they're trying to do to them is get them well. They know that there is something that they can do. Not like the government where they just want them comfortable in their state of affairs but to have them change.

So when we know that these services are available in our communities and we help them, they

can help more people. You're absolutely right. You don't want to try to take it on your own and just chip them a dollar because if you do that or if you give a quarter on the corner they're going to stay in that state of affair and they're going to die in that state of affair. You're just postponing the inevitable. But if you work with, even the pregnancy care centers, these folks are doing really, really incredible work all across the country.

So it's not that people are not benevolent and that they don't have compassion, they just don't know what to do because the government has been in this war on poverty for 50 years. So actually Uncle Sam has said don't worry about it, we'll kind of take care of it. Now everyone is looking at, you didn't do a really good job but we don't know how to get ourselves out of this one.

James: They compound the problem and they multiply the issues. It's just you and I both had a very difficult background but we had a transformation in our heart and we didn't believe the lies and we went to work. We're trying to go help other people do it.

One of the reasons, I'm telling you, now this is really the truth. I can show people a real serious problem here in America, as serious as you'll see overseas but it's very difficult to get American people to give to it. You want to know why? I already gave. I gave -- this is their mind. They gave but it didn't work.

Star: But there's something else going on too. They don't understand why is it that we allow such large percentages of people to not contribute? When you start thinking about our broken communities, their politicians and their leaders keep telling them, "You don't have to. This country is stacked against you." They're against all three of the founding C's. They're against Christianity, they're against capitalism, and they're against our constitution. So they keep pushing to these people that no, don't you dare try. Don't you dare! That's the reason then other Americans have attitudes because they're like, if I get up and go to work on Monday morning, why aren't you getting up and going to work on Monday morning?

We just had some major changes in Washington with Medicaid for instance. This administration has decided to lax the rules a little bit, give a little bit more flexibility for the states to put work requirements if you're going to be on Medicaid. The activists are there having fits. The left is coming apart and all we're saying is why can't they go to work? Well, they have three children! What do you expect them to do? Open a daycare? They already have three children. Let's teach them how to open a daycare. They've got three, bring them three more. So yeah, that's why people don't help because in our country, there really aren't any excuses. When you go and do your work abroad, they have nothing. Here we have opportunity.

What we've done though is we've allowed government to go places they shouldn't go. We

trapped certain kids in failing government schools to where all they hear is secular humanism and big government. We won't allow them out. 39 states actually have amended their constitutions that the money can't follow the children to the schools their parents want. When poor people get a voucher, an educational voucher, they actually go to religious schools, they go to Catholic schools more often than not because they know their lives are in trouble and they know that their children need that discipline.

James: They want school choice. They want to be able --

Star: That's absolutely right. Same thing with our housing programs. The HUD programs, we trap them in ghettos that are overrun with crime. Let them go live anywhere. When you think about the food stamp program, the government didn't go into the grocery store business -- not that they probably didn't try. But in housing they went into that business -- no, seriously, education, they went into that business. It's mad what we're doing.

So that's why we're trying to change things in D.C. Now, you say why am I happy about it? It's because we have a new administration that seems to understand that the way we've been doing business for the last 50 years has not worked, in particular for the weakest link.

You know when I think about that little lost sheep, when Jesus went -- remember when he went to find the little lost sheep? I would think about, okay, what were the other 99 doing while he was running around looking for the one?

And I heard one pastor say, "You know where he went to look first? The last time he knew he had 100!"

I'm like that's a good idea, kind of like your keys. You go, "When was the last time I had them?"

But the 99, what were they doing? And I started thinking, you know, they probably were talking to each other about how secure they felt that if they got lost he would go look for them. So it built that dignity and that worth in those other little sheep to follow the master and follow the shepherd when he returned. So what we've done is a real disservice to our poor and to those that are now generationally trapped in our impoverished zip codes but we're changing things. And my organization is at the forefront of helping those things get changed.

[Applause]

Betty: We've kept them helpless and hopeless instead of offering new hope and a way out.

Star: That's very well said.

James: Trapped them in bondage, in another form of slavery and prison. Well, what we've done is not working and you name the trillions of dollars, was it \$24 trillion you said?

Star: In the war -- the whole war. But it is \$900 billion a year. Just the federal a year! It's a quarter of the budget. A quarter! We have a \$4 trillion economy in Washington, the government -- a quarter! It is like the wheel in the car just keeps turning and turning and we're not getting out of this until we shed that tire.

James: Well, we're not going to get out of it until we return to sound thinking and principles. It will be built on love but you're going to have to bring these free spenders and these people that manipulate and keep people dependent, you're going to have get them out of office. I really do believe that we just need to change things in Washington by changing the thinking and the people and those who are thinking wrong and get people in who will think right. It's absolutely critical.

By the way, a lot of Christians who love the Lord, they don't think well. They don't have wisdom. They don't lead well and they join the collectivist mentality, the secular progressive socialist mentality which has proved to fail throughout history and yet we seem committed to continuing the process of failure. It creates more misery per square inch than any way you can do it.

Star, we're going to work together, you and I in every way we can. We're going to encourage people to pray. Do you think it is possible, do you think the stage is set now for us to actually make serious correction?

Star: Well, I absolutely do. There are quite a few things. First of all, the president is taking on welfare reform and a few initiatives and then so is congress. Speaker Paul Ryan came to Washington just for this moment in history. God called him years and years ago.

James: To deal correctly with welfare. Trying to set it up?

Star: Get it out of Washington and get it back to the local communities where it belongs. Let people engage in the lives of the poor again. So there is a commitment there. Now it is just a matter of doing it. Let's face it, now we have -- it's massive so we didn't get here yesterday. We won't get out tomorrow but there is a lot of energy to try to get it done.

James: Do you bear witness and say thanks for what Star is saying and believing? That if we'll adjust our thinking and our hearts it will correct our direction.

Star: You change the laws, you've changed lives.

James: That's right. Well, God bless you. She doesn't have a book. What is your website if people wanted to support you in whatever God puts before you?

Star: My website is UrbanCure.org. Just UrbanCure.org or they can just look up Star Parker and they'll find me. I've written a few books but I've got a new one coming out later this year. Are you going to have me back on?

James: I will!

Star: Oh goodie! [Laughing]

James: Hey, you've already got the invitation now!

Star: I just invited myself! [Laughing]

James: You don't even have to wait for the publisher or anything, you got it. In front of the whole world you got the invite. I want to help you do what God puts on your heart. I believe our viewers do.

Star: We are urban cure.org and we are a 501C3, non-profit. So I appreciate that.

James: I've got it. That means you can help her and get tax credit until the government loses their everloving mind and makes things worse. They don't have far to go. Right now we're swinging back right.

Star, we help people all over the world. You know this. I'm going to show you something that will touch your heart. I want you to look in here. I want you to listen to a little girl talking to a very gifted wonderful Christian woman, Sheila Walsh. I want you to listen close. Listen with your heart.

On the mission field:

Sheila: Some things you can't unsee or stories you can't unhear, and honestly, you would not want to. I've seen things on this trip that are worse than anything I could ever imagine.

I just spent some time with a little girl who is now 11 and she's been forced to have sex with men, with strangers, sometimes four a night since she was nine years old.

Open Captions:

>> I was born into a poor family. I have a stepmother who makes me go out begging for money... I beg until late at night. There are men who rape me and take me to a bad place.

Sheila: I'm so, so sorry! Do you have to go with men every night?

Open Captions:

>> Yes. I'm scared when I have to go out at night. I just want a good home with food to eat and a place to sleep.

Sheila: The scripture says the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. I've seen what it looks like to be crushed in spirit when you're 11 years old. So this is our moment to be Christ in the flesh to those who are broken.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Betty, Sheila and I watched that yesterday and I said to Sheila, "It's almost impossible to imagine seeing something like that and then to think that men can be so depraved and so defeated that they could exploit a little innocent child like that for some kind of attempt at gratification.

Dear God, it is such a sickness. Lord, I just pray for the ones that are held by that grip and that would hurt a little innocent child. And then God in heaven, we just pray for freedom; in Jesus' name.

Betty, we can't apart from God set those men free. They just can be set free but we can get that little girl out. We've been able to build rescue centers -- we, you, all of us together. And right now we can rescue 2500 that we're targeting and we've had a group of friends say, "We'll match whatever is given." We can actually reach 5,000. I'm just praying that everyone will help because it takes \$128 to rescue a child. Now that will be doubled if you can do that -- somebody will match it and we rescue two. I'm just praying that people looking at that little girl would say, "Let me help someone like that because our viewers can."

Betty: Absolutely! And you just listened to pure evil that's happening to these precious children. We have the opportunity now, we should not even hesitate. It should just be jumping

out of our hearts saying, "We want to help. We want to help." James and I want to help. I feel like you do too. Let's get the children out of the grasp of this evil. Let's give them a safe haven to go to. A safe place where someone is going to show them love -- pure love, the pure love of Jesus Christ.

So please join with us and let's help these precious little ones.

James: You said we want to help, we're going to help. Let me just say this. We really committed ourselves to God that Lord, we're going to do everything we can at every point and would you please enable us? And you know as we've gotten older, we've retired a lot of our debts and things, we never had many. We always lived so far below our income that we just didn't get ourselves in trouble. It enabled us to give. We say, "Lord, we want to do that."

Let me just say this, \$1280, we can get it. We can see 10 but now it is 20. In other words, that amount doubles; to reach them, to rescue them, and to restore them averages \$128 a year. It will be doubled, now it is two children. Some of you say I couldn't even do that but \$64 and that will now be doubled and you've got another rescue. So at some level you can help.

We've got some gifts to send to you that will bless you. Here's what you're doing. When you make that gift, when you go online or you dial that number and you take your bankcard and say, "I'm going to rescue a child," it is going to be doubled. Whatever you give, it's doubled. You're going to set someone totally free and enable the mission and relief workers to be the one who offers the hope and the healing that will not fail. You're providing it.

Please, right now, would you give this great gift? Go online, dial the number, use that bankcard like a check. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*. Thank you so much for doing it. We've got some gifts to send you that are going to bless you just to say thank you and you're giving the greatest gift, a gift of love and a gift of life.

[Begin video clip]

Announcer: Behind the bright lights there is a darkness where a world of violence and sexual abuse runs rampant scarring the souls of millions of young children. With their bodies broken and hopes crushed, these children are trapped in a never-ending nightmare.

With your help, *Mission: Rescue Life* can shine the light of God's love in this dark world to reach, rescue and restore children and young people to the beauty God designed for them to enjoy. With a generous opportunity of a \$320,000 matching gift, 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 of any amount today, we will send you the *Names of God* prayer journal. From Adonai to Yahweh, this journal is filled with beautiful photographs to help you reflect on 31 different names of God found throughout scripture. With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive the *Names of God* Bible. This special edition NIV large print Bible is engraved with the many names of God; a beautiful reminder that the God we serve is infinitely good.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,280 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 gift online!

[End of clip]

On the mission field

Lisa: These children are absolutely beautiful! They are filled with families that love them. Now they're poor -- and just because they're poor it puts them at terrible risk for being taken, for being kidnapped, for being trafficked, and forced into labor or sex trafficking. And if they get taken, nobody is going to know where to find them and people can't go after them and look for them.

We don't want to see that happen. Friends for life is building a network with partners around the world so that children in these kinds of conditions don't get trafficked, don't get taken away from their families. Won't you partner with us? I want you to pray and ask God what he would have you do. I want you to pick up your phone. I want you to go online and I want you to be a part of the Friends for Life to partner for rescue.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Would you join me here and the audience and Betty saying thanks to Star Parker? Bless you, Star. We love you. We're with you 100%! Thank all of you. Thank you! Thank you!