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Week 44: Rescue Life: Last week

James and Betty Robison

Russ and Tori Taff #2

James: Betty and I want to welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We had Russ Taff and his wife Tori. A movie on his life is out. If you didn't get to see it, well, find a way to get it. Maybe get it back in theaters and get everybody to come who didn't see it. But we were really moved by God. We just kept talking. I want us to move to that continuation of what I think was just a move of God.

Begin video clip

Russ: This is such a special woman. I was trying to get away from myself. I didn't like me. I hated me, what I had turned into. In my mind, I had become my father. And through the addiction, I traumatized her and that broke my heart. But she would come to me and say, "What do you think Jesus feels about this?" It would go right to my heart -- right to my heart. She fought for me. She yelled at me, she screamed at me, she loved me, but she would not take anything less than a person that submitted to get well. I want to be well. I will pay any price to get well. But she was such a strong kick in the butt. Sorry!

James: Well, when you were saying to her, when you're saying, Tori, when you're saying, "What do you think Jesus feels about this," were you implying that Jesus is really upset with you or that Jesus would not approve, but don't you know how much he wants to help you? What were you wanting to communicate to him? You might have just been frustrated.

Tori: I was going to say you're making it a lot nicer than it probably was. I honestly have very little memory of actually saying that, so my guess is that that was born out of extreme frustration. What I remember feeling and saying most of the time was, "This is not who you are. This is not who you are. It can be who you become and you can go out in a blaze of fury and be

another statistic but it's not because you don't know where the help is. It will be a choice." I couldn't accept that this was it. That he had a rough childhood and then he has the same disease as his father and it was just one of those sad stories of some broken down alcoholic on the street.

James: You didn't want him to stay there. Betty, you know you walked -- and our story has been pretty... I remember David Wilkerson calling me, (*The Cross and the Switchblade*) saying, "Shut up! Quit telling everybody your weaknesses and your failures!"

I really fought and I was tormented. Sometimes people used to say, "You preach like you're really mad." And I was. And you can say, "It is righteous indignation." That's what I'd like to think. But what I think I was, I was screaming at my own tormenters. I was trying to shout them away, drive them out. I didn't know how to resist them.

But you would weep over me when you knew I was tormented. And she saw -- she saw how the enemy was after me. And you would say things to me with a broken heart that you didn't want me to miss.

Betty: I think I felt a lot like Tori did. I could see the heart of God in you, the heart that had been changed by him. And then to see you tormented by the enemy. I could see it when the -- it was like a light switch, it would go on and off. I knew how much you loved God but you were being tormented by the enemy. That's when I felt like somebody had to stand strong and say, "You will not have this life. God created this man for the purposes of God and you will not take that from him." I think that's where we have to come in our lives. We have to say, "Enemy, you're under my feet and I will not let you overwhelm me or take me."

I was eat up by fear. It was just eating me alive. Then when I saw that I didn't have to live like that, and I became aware that I could stand strong and resist. It's not that it went -- yes, it went away because I resisted but the enemy comes at every opportune moment and so you have to be aware of that. Now when that fear comes at me I recognize it and I say, "No! You will not enter this life because this life belongs to God." And I think that God gives us that strength. The more we fight, the more we battle, the stronger we get.

James: You know you were a sweet precious girl, so gentle. You're strong too, you have a lot of fire. People don't necessarily see that. I see it.

[Laughter]

You've got a lot of it. But she just wanted God's best for me. She would say, "I just don't want you to miss what God wants."

All right, what was it? Did she contribute other than just her prayers and her passion to helping you see yes, I've got to get this enemy's foot off of my back?

Russ: When we first came to the realization and I got honest with her; that was one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. She could have thrown me out. In fact, we were at the point of divorce. I had just -- it just seemed like I couldn't get it. But she said, "I will fight for you until you can fight for yourself." That's the kind of woman she is.

James: That's what the church really needs to do in behalf of others who are defeated, not add to beating them up. When the enemy is accusing you and he's got you down and got his foot on you, he doesn't need other people jumping on to help him succeed. What we need are people who are going to try to break the yoke, who are going to break the chains and lighten the load and love them right there in the pit.

I've said it and now please don't miss this. If Jesus is kneeling beside the pit inclining his ear, no matter how you got in it, what we need are some people to get dressed up in Jesus who would put the Holy Spirit in a physical body here and show them Jesus down there by that pit trying to get them out.

See, she was trying to get you out. She may say, "I didn't do it all perfect." But the love that drove her to want to get the perfect up in you, that was God's love. I'm telling you, he never lets up. We've got to be the people the ones that are being defeated are not afraid of. We've got to see

them as the salvation and deliverance of God manifested in them.

Tori: Yes! And there's nothing I could have said to him that he hadn't already said to himself a million times. Why would I continue to pile on and say...? There was no point in that. That's where the wound was, that isn't where the help was. So the point of saying, "This isn't who you are," instead of "Oh, my gosh, is this who you are?" That was God-given; that wasn't something I worked up. I wish it had manifested itself prettier. But I just would get angry and I would -- I had those nights of him sleeping next to me and laying there and saying, "You're not getting him. You got his dad."

James: To the enemy you're talking to.

Betty: That's where your anger was because he was trying to rob him.

James: That's where it should be aimed, at the enemy.

So when you were broken, didn't you actually reach a point where you went out on stage and just basically fell over where you weren't able to hide it? Did that happen to you?

Russ: That happened. One of the most embarrassing moments in my life. My mother had passed away and again, I was just trying to deal with the pain quickly. Because when both my parents died it wasn't a good day. There was so much tension between. So once again, after years of sobriety, I thought, well, I'll just take a little bit and it will just ease me. I've got to do a concert tonight. I wound up drinking too much. I walked out on stage drunk. And the next day, I just thought the career is over. I just overshot this thing. But he used all of that to lead me; just that embarrassment of like, I don't ever want to do that again. It just so shocked me that the other artists that were there, they gathered around me. They held on to me and prayed for me.

James: Were they basically unaware that you had the drinking problem until they saw that then? You had kept it that hidden? So they were broken though? You were embarrassed but they were broken for you.

Russ: Yeah, they were.

James: So you saw Christianity in them?

Russ: Yes, I did. And to the point that I remember reaching out to Gaither a couple months later. And Tori asked him, "Have you heard any..."

Tori: "Did you hear what happened?"

Russ: And he said, "No." But I'd never seen the body of Christ. And Gloria Gaither says that, "I've never seen the body of Christ pull together to protect."

James: Wouldn't that be wonderful if the whole world could see us do that? If we would stop -- when you pray for God to do something and you see things happening, maybe not according to your game plan but you've asked him to do something, then don't get in an argument or discussion or analysis of how he should do it. He simply doesn't function -- his ways are not ours. If we could just keep asking God to do it.

What you just said, if the world could see the family of God love each other just like when you heard that man in the testimony you gave in the earlier program we did with you, and that man let you know what you wanted to hear from your Father, that he was pleased with you and he affirmed you. That affirmation is even a greater form of let's say building us up than just encouragement. Affirmation is that you have heard that I'm really valuable. I'm worth something. I'm valuable to you. I'm valuable in life. I've done something. And I think everybody longs for that.

That's why, Betty, being shy and being this beautiful little flower that everybody says she just kind of sits there. My own family says, "She'll sit by you like a potted plant, with a flower in her mouth."

Betty: Well, I even felt that way.

[Laughter]

I thought, they're right!

James: One of the greatest joys of my life as a Christian has been to water this garden and encourage it to bloom to be what it is. That's encouragement. And then when you do what you... And you've been marvelous. You're amazing. You didn't have to wait for somebody like Joseph Prince or other people, or Beth Moore, said, "Oh Betty, you say more than all of us have said all of the program." You don't have to wait for that because I'm telling you all the time, affirming you.

Betty: The miracle of it is he was the little boy that never got encouragement but he has always been my greatest encourager. Isn't that God? That's just God.

James: I want to be that for everybody. I want to be it for everybody sitting here. Before we leave the studio tonight, I'm going to pray for every person in here to hear the Father tell you what only he can make you hear it the way you need to hear it. But sometimes he'll use somebody to just kind of voice what you want to hear. You all heard me walk over to a lady when we opened tonight, before any of you came on air, and tell this beautiful lady that's been working here 40 years, how beautiful she is. And let me tell you something, everybody that talks to her, because she is one of our greatest prayer warriors, prayer partners, everybody that talks to her, they hear Jesus, they see Jesus, they know Jesus. See, she needs to hear that. It's an encouragement to her. We all need it.

I want everybody watching -- I wish I could run into your living room. Oh no! You don't want to see me where I am now. You might be in a bar. You don't want to see us here. I don't care where you are. You know something? Betty, you watched me stand up in Canada just a little while ago. We were having a board meeting up there with the board members and their wives, and there was a big loud party of women going on right next to us. You couldn't hear anything from

them screaming and yelling and carrying on.

Betty: They were having the biggest time!

James: So we assumed they were all drunk. Well, they're drunk! They've got to be drunk. Okay. So all of the sudden I just looked at the board and I said, "Well, get ready because you're going to watch something." Well, Betty knew what was coming.

I said, "I'm fixing to walk in there and I want to go in there and talk to those ladies." I said to the board, "If you want to behold the glory of God just find a spot and watch."

I went in; didn't I? You kind of watched me standing there for a while. You remember how you used to get nervous because you knew I was going to stand up in the restaurant. Sometimes I'd pull a chair up and stand up in a chair and say, "Listen just a minute!" And I'd just pour Jesus all over the restaurant. I'm not kidding you.

So I said to everybody, "Just watch." I know it took me a little while. Didn't it?

You say, "What were you doing, James?"

I'm just asking God to talk to me about those women. And all of the sudden -- this is crazy why I'm in Canada. My opening line.

You say, "Why would you say that?"

I don't know. "I'm from the south." Oh! Oh! Maybe they want to shoot you.

[Laughter]

But in the next few minutes, was it beautiful to watch? These women realized, somebody recognized, we hadn't seen each other in 30 years and then you stood there and told us how we

could be like this forever. And you wanted us to not miss it. You know what my board told me the next day? They said, "We looked at those women and every one of them looked up and said, "Somebody noticed and somebody loved me. Somebody we'd never seen before."

I'm telling you, the stage is set for us to show people what you felt that night, the affirmation. Let me say what I feel when I look at all of your faces. See, I know Jolene is up here just to cheer me on because her husband texted me and said, "I can't come tonight because he was with those little girls while you're making a little brother for those little girls. But she said, "He said she is coming up here just to encourage you." Just a precious couple. She went to encourage you.

Do you know what I see in your faces, all of you here? I'm talking to -- (At camera) I can't see your faces. Some of you say, "I'm sure glad!" You know what? I don't care where you are, what mess you're in, how deep a mess you've made or how deep a pit you're in, you could not stop me -- you couldn't lay enough garbage in front of me for me not to love you right through it and know that I've got a savior and a Lord that wants to cover it and bury it and take it as far as the east is from the west. But here's what I see when I look in your faces: Thanks James. I really think you're trying to be an encouragement to us. I think you're trying to help people that feel like nobody noticed.

And then when we show you these little children and people we're trying to rescue, I think you're saying, "Thank you, you showed me somebody that needed a healing like your daughter needed when she needed to be healed of cancer." Only this time we've got the perfect cure. We don't have to look for it. It's the love of God expressed by giving them food or water or freedom. Thank you for letting us do that.

See, Russ, all of the joy that you're expressing for that man that showed you what your father should have showed you, and what this Father, even if you have a great father, only this Father can show you what you really need to see. My kids would say, "Well, we had a dad that was there and loved us and loved mom but I promise you, our children looked past this dad that traveled way too much preaching and they saw that Father and fell in love with that Father. And that's why I'm sitting here trying to get people in the family room to get to know the Father

so we can behave more like a family that affirm one another and lift them up.

Don't you think that's what would please God if we would do that? Do you believe that's what we ought to do?

Russ: Absolutely!

James: That's what all of you here are helping me do. That's what all of you who watch are helping. By the way, he had a movie on this week that's his life. It's been in the theaters. I think it is RussTaffMovie.com. Can people somehow get it and watch it? Later, will they be able to? Or can we ask the theaters to bring it back and show it?

Russ: That might happen too.

James: Let's say let's ask for a miracle. Because what God did in your life is a miracle. Let me show you this because you've already watched it, you know what we do to help people that nobody's noticed. Let me tell you something. You've got to agree, Sheila Walsh is one of the most gifted communicators. Let me tell you what makes her unique. She is not just communicating her heart, she's communicating the Father's heart. You see if you don't agree.

Then here's what I want you to do. I want you to do what's in the Father's heart. What the Father would do for you, what the Father wants for all he gave his Son to set free to redeem. Watch closely.

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: Sheila, I want you to know we love you. We thank God for you. That precious girl, Betty -- to even think that some precious girl like that could be so mistreated, that any of us as individuals could be so gripped by the enemy that we would either use or abuse someone like that is just almost beyond the ability to comprehend. But the thing that overcomes that damage is the love of God that will bring healing and relief. We actually can set her free. Our viewers have enabled us to do that.

Betty: Absolutely! You have so many, many times and thank you so very much. Sheila said something very important. It's about the body of Christ. That's us. That's God's church. That's his children. We are responsible for reaching out and helping these precious little ones that have

been so deceived. They've been lied to. They've been tricked. They thought -- this little girl thought she was going to help her family. She was going to get a job. They fed her and then all of the sudden she's out and she wakes up and doesn't know what happened to her. How tragic is that?

We must reach out and help these children. Won't you join us please as you've done many, many other times? Thank you!

James: When I listen to Sheila and then I listen to you come off of that and ask for help, I realize that the only reason that we can show you that situation and promise you help is that love has made a way of deliverance. Betty we can rescue a child and take care of them and get them going in a new direction for an average of \$128. Think about what I just said -- \$128 a child. How many would say, "James, I'll do that to set somebody free like that and give them a new future."

But now listen to this. I think this is an answer to prayer. I call it a miracle. Some of our friends said, "James, we're so moved by that need, we will put up a \$320,000 matching gift. We will match what your viewers give." That means that if you could give \$128 gift you just rescued two. You just reached them, rescued them, and restored them. That's a miracle of love! I'm praying every single person watching, you can think that out and say, "Well, I don't even know if I have \$128." Well, if you had \$64 that will be doubled and you just rescued one.

We asked people and I don't make any apology for this, I want you to think beyond the normal way of thinking. I want you to think with a great vision, cast a great net: \$1280 we're able to rescue 10, now 20 -- it's doubled. Would you right now just ask God what he wants you to do? Keep in mind this is the last week so if you're going to help and take advantage of this opportunity, we need you to respond right now. Please do it.

Go to the phone, dial that number, take your bankcard, and use it like a check. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* because that's what you're giving, new life and a new future. If you want to go online, go to that website, you can make your gift there.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart in behalf of precious girls just like that one that need the love of God expressed directly to them. Thank you so much for doing it.

[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. This is the last week! Please call, write or make your gift online!

[End of clip]

In the studio

James: I'm not doing too good. I started crying again after we gave you a chance to respond. I'm just -- I just want you to know how important it is to let God's love flow through you like a river. Maybe you ought to tell everybody good-bye and thank Russ and Tori; would you?

Betty: We do appreciate so much you watching. I hope you were blessed today because I was blessed just listening to their testimonies and renewing our own memories of how much God has worked in my own life. So God bless you. I hope you have a wonderful rest of the day. Let's all thank Tori and Russ for being here with us today.

James: Thank you for watching! Thank you for helping! God bless all of you. Bless y'all. Love you, buddy. Love you, Tori.