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Week 45: Fall Mission Feeding

James and Betty Robison

Sheila Walsh

James: Y'all are great! You're great! Thank you. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have you. We'll be talking to Sheila Walsh in just a few minutes.

Let me tell you this. You can barely see his picture here but the title of the book is *Death Defying Faith*. It's the extraordinary life of a miracle man, Peter Pretorius. God used him to change our lives, in many ways our ministry. Peter is in heaven. I bet Robin found him quick. Because it was Robin's little kids that would come running out every time we got to Tulsa with little bags of money. "We're going to feed the kids, Grandpa and Mimi" -- that Peter found. I hope you get this book. And I hope you keep reaching out to all the people. Peter said, "I don't want to watch them keep dying."

Well, you saved millions of their lives. Would you just applaud the life of Peter Pretorius?

[Applause]

You can get the book. We're just glad all of you are here. Sheila Walsh is here. Would you welcome Sheila Walsh to *LIFE Today*?

[Applause]

Sheila is here. She is on *LIFE Today* a lot because she hosts *LIFE Today*, and she

teaches. New book, *It's Okay Not to Be Okay*. Where did you ever come up with that?

Sheila: James, I was looking at a photo one day, I'm 21 years old, I'm in a graduation gown, I'm graduating from seminary and I have this look on my face of I'm just going to go out there and save the world for Jesus. And I found myself thinking, I wish I could take that face in my hands and talk to her and tell her this will not be the life you imagined. You're going to disappoint people and they'll disappoint you but you'll survive. Your heart will break but it will change how you see people, not as causes to be saved but people to be loved. There's times when you'll think God is not with you, you're totally alone. You will never be alone for a moment.

And part of my heart was to say to women and to men, it really is okay not to be okay because Christ has made us all right. I lived with such a list, an internal list of everything I needed to do to get right so that God would love me and it was only when my life crashed that I discovered God had loved me all along.

Betty: I think especially a lot of women feel that way. I know I did as a young girl growing up in church; and church was my life. Also, there were some expectations there that weren't necessarily from God but they were from people that meant well but it was heavy on me. I thought that I could never reveal that I had a weakness or that something was wrong. First of all, I didn't want to disappoint God but also, I didn't want to disappoint those that thought I was such a good person.

Sheila: I think that's huge. And that's why I tried to make this book different than things I've written in the past. I wanted to make eight steps, things that God showed me, of how to move forward in my faith. The first step is dare to have a gut level, unedited conversation with God. I think to the level that we're willing to be honest with God is an indication of how much we trust him. If we think we can't show our whole selves to God then I think we've missed the glory of who he is. You get to come as you are, you get to pour everything out and then you get to be held.

James: He can handle whatever we want to dump on him and he holds us when we think that no one would. He does.

You have got some chapters here that... There are eight of them. We could just read off the titles real quick. But one of them that you indicated to me you wanted to talk about in the brief time that we have because I'm hoping everybody will get the book. It's in the bookstores. I hope you'll get one, maybe you'll get one for someone else who needs to know *It's Okay Not to Be Okay*. You probably know someone like that.

By the way, when you buy a book for somebody, don't go say, "You really need to read this!" That is just not a good start. Just say, "I found something that really encouraged me and I thought you might enjoy it." So how you approach it, just take that little word of counsel.

"Change the way you think." That's one of them you're wanting to talk about.

Sheila: I think that's huge. So often we grow up in church and it is our behavior that we modify. We think, we don't do this and we don't do that; but unless it is an internal transformation, that we actually change how we think. My son, Christian when he went off to Texas A&M he said it was interesting watching the first year, some of the kids that he knew from church or from school, when they got away from their parents suddenly their behavior completely changed. Because it was no longer expected of them so they just behaved any way they liked. I know part of it in college is you're stretching your wings but he said, "It is really interesting, mom, to see that."

Why do you behave the way that you behave? Do you behave that way because it is expected or has there been an actual transformation in the way you think? I think too, sometimes people think like... take a scripture. I did a little thing for myself when I was studying for this. I went through my Bible and I looked at every verse that I'd underlined and I tried to understand, why did you underline that?

So one of them was when David said, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord." I thought on that for a while and I thought clearly, whatever I meditate on is what is going to come out of my mouth. So if I spend most of my time just coming home and flopping down in front of the television and that's all I take in, then that's going to be what's coming out of my mouth.

Whereas if I take time to every day I choose a scripture, just one verse, and I stick it on my car, stick it on my mirror, stick it on my mirror, stick it on my mirror –

[Laughter]

And I meditate on that, I think it's like re-wallpapering your mind. Changing the way you think changes the way you behave.

James: And if you could think on the things that are true, whatsoever things are true, think on these, that Philippian passage is very powerful. It is pretty tough to even find a verse in Philippians that's not applicable right now.

Betty: Excuse me. This doesn't just happen though. We have to make a choice to do it. I know that when we first married and everything, I kind of had a negative attitude about life in some ways and James was very up and very positive. He always has been.

James: I've been mostly perfect since we got married.

Betty: I don't know if I would choose that word.

[Laughter]

James: Just an incredible example -- it was like living with Jesus.

Sheila: Lightning strikes!

Betty: Where did that conversation come from?

[Laughter]

How did you know what I was thinking?

[Laughter]

Where was I? But I just kind of had a negative outlook on things sometimes and he was -- he still is my greatest encourager. But he said, "You know you use the word *can't* too much. You can do all things through Christ." So I had to change my way of thinking like you said.

Sheila: That's huge, Betty! One of the words I've banned in our household is *should*.

James: Is what?

Sheila: Should -- I should have done that.

[Laughter]

James: I thought she said shoot.

[Laughter]

Sheila: Yeah! We don't shoot each other because we shouldn't shoot each other.

James: Should!

Sheila: But you know how much -- when people live with regret, I should have done

that. I should have gone to college. I should have done that. If you live with regret then you don't move forward. I heard somebody say that's why the rearview mirror is small in the car and the window in front of you is big because you're supposed to take a little look at what's behind you and a huge view of what's ahead. People can get stuck in regret instead of should-ing each other they shoot each other.

[Laughter]

James: Let's get down here to this chapter here.

Sheila: Oh wow! This is going well.

[Laughter]

James: This is an exciting book! You wanted to talk about -- now this seems strange, celebrate -- I'm learning to speak Irish. Celebrate your scars as tattoos of triumph.

Sheila: Yep! I'm big on that.

James: Tattoos?

[Laughter]

Sheila: Oh! Well, maybe.

James: Okay. Celebrate your scars. Okay, you've had some because you made it clear that you've had some. But celebrate them?

Sheila: Absolutely! Our scars are proof that God heals because they're no longer open wounds, they're scars. And God tells his story in scars. The only thing in eternity that will be left as a scar from earth are the wounds of Christ. He could have chosen to walk out on

that resurrection morning and leave the scars behind but he didn't. He chose to walk out with the scars and said to his disciples, "Look!" So if Christ is not ashamed of his scars, why should we be ashamed of ours?

[Applause]

James: Expand on that so someone will understand what you mean and how they would take that on in the right way.

Sheila: Let me give you a good example. I was speaking at a conference a couple months ago, a woman's conference, maybe 1,000 women but there was one gentleman sitting on the end of a row. I wondered if he was maybe church staff or how he got there. At the end, when everybody else had gone, he was still standing there. So I went over to him and he turned his full face to me and a good part of one side of his face was gone. He could hardly speak.

I said, "Sir, nice to meet you. Tell me a little bit about yourself."

He said, "When I was 15 years old I took a gun and I put it under my chin and I pulled the trigger. And in a millisecond between when the bullet left and entered my skull I heard Jesus say, 'Do you want to live?' And I said, 'Yes.'" He said, "The bullet is still in my brain, they can't take it out."

He is now married with three daughters. One of them was there. Beautiful! But this is what I said to him, "When you look at yourself in the mirror is that a horrible reminder of a choice you made?"

He said, "Absolutely not. It is a daily reminder of the grace and mercy of God."

[Applause]

James: You know when I look back at my life and know that contrary to this earlier moment when I said it is like living with Jesus, I just realize that I missed the mark sometimes it seems like as far as you can miss it. I feel like sometimes you just make a mistake or sometimes its foolishness. Sometimes it is almost like you just decide I'm going to do what I want to do and you just feed the flesh or you try to satisfy your own appetite or desire. And you realize that you're just kind of trampling on the very blood of Jesus and his love.

When you come to your senses, like the prodigal did in the pig pen, isn't that amazing that this kid has been given everything that his dad had for him, no reservations, and then he not only wastes it with riotous living but he ruins the family name and reputation -- he just wrecks everything. And he ends up in a pig pen. But he remembered what it was like in the father's house. And in the midst of that mess he thought about the father's house and he got up and went back to it.

What's happened to me when I miss the mark, I've always remembered what it's like to be in the Father's presence and the love that's there. And that guy, that kid that shot himself, he heard it poured out on him. It poured out on him enough that he could glorify God with the scars. You've been through a lot of things in your life that could have left some very deep scars and did, but you've glorified the Lord.

So when you look at all the people here and the people watching on television, what would be your suggestion? Because you know you go into great detail with every issue that you discuss, every challenge, all the eight steps. What would you say to the viewer today? Okay, their scars and failures, like James just talked about, we've missed the mark and make a mess, what do you say to them? Just talk to our audience a little bit.

Sheila: Well, I think one of the most beautiful things about our Lord and savior is that he is the redeemer. There is nothing -- nothing that you have gone through that is wasted. Psalm 56 tells us that Christ, God catches every single tear that has fallen from your eyes in a bottle. Why would he do that? Perhaps because he wants us to know he knows the

weight. Maybe you thought nobody on this earth understands the pain I've been through. Nobody knows how I've soaked my carpet with tears. I want you to know God knows. He has caught every tear.

And the beautiful thing is if you read in Second Corinthians chapter one, he said that we are comforted so that we can then comfort others. I think that's one of the most beautiful things. You know this, Betty that when you have gone through something that has broken your heart, that when our pain is offered to Christ, he uses that to reach the lives of other people.

Betty: Absolutely! You talked about the tears. I know when we lost our daughter, I shed lots of tears -- still do at times, but there was a point that I got to in that journey with God, just alone with God that I felt the weight of the tears changed. There was something about it. It was more tears of rejoicing because God was there in the midst of all of my heartache.

And it changed for me. And the relationship with God changed so much. You don't realize that when you're going through pain sometimes but if you can come to a point to where you say, "God, I can't make it without you right here with me." Yes, you love your family. You love your friends that's there praying for you and they love you but God is in the midst of it -- right in the center of your pain.

If you allow him to, he wants to wipe away your tears and fill your heart again with joy and peace that passes all understanding. And you think, I don't know if I can get through this time but with God you can. He promises he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Sheila: That's beautiful, Betty!

James: I want all of you who are watching, I don't know what's going on in your heart, but as much as we could and we can we're trying to get God's arms around you for you to know how much he loves you. He really understands your heartache, your loneliness,

your pain.

I want to pray for you. Father... You might just want to get down on your knees. Father, join them right there and comfort them. God heal the hurt. And God, do a deep work; in Jesus' name.

Just look up at us, look at me. I'd do anything in the world there to lighten your load. It's why we're here. If you watch *LIFE Today* you say, "Well, you help people all over the world." Yes, we do. But we start by wanting to help you right where you are.

You see the phone number there? It's a prayer line that's paid for by love. Somebody that loves God and loves you. If you'll just call that number and say, "Would you pray with me?" You'll find somebody that's anxious to pray with you and pray for you that love you. So don't hesitate to call.

Sheila's book is in the bookstores. I'll just tell you, we've got Peter Pretorius's book, *Death Defying Faith*. We're going to give it to anybody that will try to reach out and touch someone with love. If you want Sheila's book, we'll send it to you because we want you to know it is okay not to be okay. God's going to hold your heart.

I want to show you something. Sheila, you know because you've seen it so often. You've seen the love of God that our viewers make possible all over the world. I want you to watch because this man helped save millions of lives and we joined him in it -- you did. I want you to watch this. I want you to really watch, I believe you can you the eyes of Jesus. Watch.

On the mission field

Open captions: Juliette used to help in the garden and with family chores, fetching water, washing dishes or in the kitchen. But now she's gone.

Announcer: In the unforgiving terrain of Angola, Africa with its scarce water for crops, an overwhelming number of mothers struggle to save their children from starvation and illness. Too many lose that fight. Catalina is one of those mothers.

Open captions:

>> We had a short rainy season followed by a drought. That's why we are harvesting so few crops. Sometimes we have to go to our friends and beg for food.

Announcer: Usually it's barely enough and sometimes they go without. In the daily desperate fight to feed her children and keep them healthy, Catalina is given no respite and no reward.

Open captions:

>> Last month my daughter, Juliette, was admitted to the hospital. She was complaining of a sore mouth and severe stomach pains. The hospital found no nutrients in her blood. So they took her to intensive care and treated her for a couple of days. But then she started feeling feverish again, and not long after that, Juliette died.

Announcer: Juliette was the second child Catalina has lost. The heartache is familiar and overwhelming, intensifying her fear for her remaining children.

Open captions:

>> I'm afraid for my other children. I just don't want to see this happen again.

Announcer: There wasn't anything we could do for the two children Catalina already lost but her remaining children and the multitude of other mothers, with your response we can help ensure their story is different.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Just watching that image at the end of digging those little graves, Betty and I started watching more than 25 years ago, about 30 years ago; some little graves are just about this big, and some a little bigger. We watched hundreds and then thousands of them. And just like that mother, she represents hundreds of thousands of mothers that would like to keep their children. It is really important for you to understand this, they don't have a lot of entertainment. Their children are their joy. They love them so much.

And so we started because of Peter Pretorius showing us God's love. He and Ann and his family -- and we didn't know if you'd help. Thank you. Millions, way over 10 million people, children, families saved because we fed them. We've got thousands right now, 400,000 that the missionaries have organized where they're hungry and they say, "If you'll come here, we'll feed you."

Who is we? We -- you. Betty and I can't do 400,000. We feed a lot. I mean we really are faithful givers. And we're asking you to join and let's feed those children. So what we are asking you to do is go online or dial that number, take your bankcard and use it just a check. I want you to make the largest gift you can: \$30, \$50, or \$100 and I'm going to ask you to consider the \$100 so we can feed three, five or ten children. Would you help us feed ten? \$1,000 we can feed 100 -- would you do that? At whatever level you can help. And don't you dare think, well, I can only do \$30 because what does that mean to the mother of three children?

So would you please dial the number that's there? Hundreds of people are calling right now, somebody pray for me. You better believe it because God loves you, we love you. But would you please help us feed these children? Would you please stand with these missionaries?

We want to send you Peter's book for any gift. We've got some beautiful, beautiful pens, "Faith and Hope" pens; and then the "Bridge of Faith" that Thomas Kinkade painted. It

will be a blessing to you. Betty, I believe everybody watching is going to help.

Betty: I believe you. You've always been so faithful to help us to feed the children. Isn't it worth it when you find out how many lives have been saved? Please continue helping us. We love you.

James: Thank you so much for doing it. Go online or dial the number, take your bankcard. By the way, if you ever call and you get a busy, a lot of people will be calling to give their life to Christ or to get right with God, but you be determined, I'm going to get through because I want to help some of those children find life. Thank you so much for doing it.

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.

Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach you can save lives by feeding and caring for children currently suffering in parts of Angola, Mozambique, and South Sudan. With previous reserves gone and Mission Feeding helping in areas with severe crop failure, we urgently need your support to replenish food supplies to reach the 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. With your gift of any amount we'll send you *Death Defying Faith*, the extraordinary life of miracle man, Peter Pretorius. This autobiography, completed just days before his unexpected death, chronicles the thrill-seeking adventures of missionary, Peter Pretorius. You will love reading how God took this ordinary man and performed extraordinary miracles throughout all of Africa.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the beautiful "Faith and Hope" pen set; two

beautifully crafted pens featuring the key words of Hebrews 11:1; a key verse for every believer especially when facing adversity, trials and challenges.

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 gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I just say in behalf of so many families and so many precious little children, thank you. We'll send you Peter's book and it is terrific -- it's his story. I'm glad our story is a part of his story. It's just beautiful.

And if you'd like to have Sheila's book, it's in the bookstores. Go online and get it. It's going to bless you because Sheila is a blessing.

But you help us help those kids that she's been asking people to help for a long time, because she is right there with her arms around them, you want her book and you just reach out and touch with love, you ask for it we'll send it to you. Join us in saying thanks to Sheila Walsh.

[Applause]

We're glad you're part of the *LIFE* team.

Sheila: Thank you.

James: Thank all of you for watching. I hope you were blessed.