

10/08/18 Modified from: 3/26/18
Week 41: Mission: Rescue Life
James and Betty Robison
Jentezen Franklin

James: I wish I could smile like Betty. Show everybody your smile, Betty. Look over at this camera and smile. Smile at all those people. I fell so in love with that girl.

But I've got a smile on my face because I'm introducing somebody that -- I can't even describe how much I've come to appreciate him, respect him, count it an honor to be a real friend. I'm talking about somebody that when I first heard about him, David said, "You know there is a guy on television. People think he preaches like you a little bit. He reminds people of you."

I said, "Really?"

He said, "Yeah, he's got black hair. Of course he is young and trim like you used to be. But it's a guy named Jentezen Franklin."

I got to watching him. He is probably a whole lot past me but I could see what they were talking about. There was a lot of fire. I've gotten to know Jentezen real well and it's been a great blessing to not only preach at the Free Chapel there in Gainesville, Georgia but to be his friend.

Here's a book that's just out. He's got New York Times best-selling books. As a matter of fact, we're going to do another program where we'll talk more about this but we're going to talk about one of them that really got people's attention was on fasting. We're going to talk about why does that matter? It has nothing to do with dieting even though maybe we could use that. But just hang in there, the next program, he'll be on another one.

But *Love like You've Never Been Hurt*. This is huge. So what in the world does this successful pastor of a great church and wonderful viewers on his television program, what is it that he's talking about? It seems to me like he is talking about understanding hurt, and then loving like you've never been. Let's hear what Jentezen Franklin has to say. Would you welcome Jentezen Franklin to *LIFE Today*? Good to see you.

Jentezen: It's an extreme honor to be here with two of the greatest Christians that I've ever met in my life. You guys have inspired me. I love your compassion. I love the way you care for the needy and the poor and the broken and the hurting. You model so well Jesus and I honor you

tonight. You are a great man of God and so are you a great woman of God.

James: Thank you, Jentezen, appreciate it. I want you to just take us on a journey here because I know enough about the content of the book, and that you had a heartbreaking situation that even in your own life and family made you feel disqualified to even lead your church for awhile. There was a lot of hurt. People would probably be stunned to know and you've probably figured you'd never even have to have the occasion or even ever bring it up but take us on that little journey.

Jentezen: I had a season where I never wanted to quit so bad. I really look back on it now and I realize so much was just hanging on a thin, thin cord there. What happened was I have five children, my wife and I, Cherise, have been married 30 years and we had five kids, two years apart -- that's a lot.

[Laughter]

James: Good timing.

Jentezen: Four girls in a row and then a boy in that order. My girls take after their mother and they're beautiful girls. They're beautiful inside and out. The enemy came after my girls. We went through a season about nine years ago that I'm just now writing about. I don't think you need to write about stuff when you're in the middle of it but this was about nine years ago. It began a three year process of darkness that hit our house that most people knew nothing about.

Ironically, at the same time, James, the ministry began to explode then. We began to be on national TV and Christian stations began to ask for our program. The church grew from hundreds to thousands and then another campus and another campus and another campus. All of this strange thing of turmoil in our home, my daughter had gone off and into college, a model kid, and got around the wrong group, got around the party life. The enemy deceived and made some terrible choices.

I'll never forget a Wednesday night I was about to go speak at our church and my wife came into my office and she said, "Jentezen, we're going to get our daughter. If we don't get her, we may not ever have her again." And she said -- I'll never forget how she said it. She said, "I'm going to get our daughter. Are you going to care about this church and preach or are you going to go with me?"

And I dropped my little sermon outline and we got in the car and we drove three hours to Tennessee to find our daughter. We knew something -- we didn't know all but we knew something was really, really wrong. We found her and we left everything there and we put her in

the car and we rode back. And she began to share what had happened and what was going on in her life.

We thought it would get better. Sometimes you think, well, this is the end of the darkness. I can see the light in the tunnel. Like in your situation with your daughter, I'm sure there were times when you had good reports but then the bad reports come and it just crushes you; that was the kind of scenario. We would have those days and then when we got her back home it started all over again.

One thing led to another. She ultimately ran away and for about a week we didn't know where she was. We were having a meltdown like you wouldn't believe. Ultimately, ended up getting married and we received a text on a Saturday as I was preparing to preach that our daughter's married. I'll never forget the next --

James: You had no idea.

Jentezen: No! And the next Saturday I had a wedding of one of her best friends and I watched that father walk his daughter down the aisle and it was everything I could do to hold myself together.

This story is not just about that, that was the beginning of the message, *Love like You Never Been Hurt*. I heard that phrase, Satchel Paige, a professional baseball player, an African American who was the first pitcher in professional baseball had the saying that you've got to love like you've never been hurt. It came when he would pitch and there would come racial screams from the stands. He had several famous sayings and one of them was, "Love like you've never been hurt." And right in the middle of all that I was going through I hear this phrase and when I heard it it just hit me so strongly. The Lord said, "If you're going to get through this you're going to have to love like you've never been hurt."

But see it is easy to love people when you don't have a conflict. It is easy to love people who have the same viewpoint, the same vantage point. There is a sickness in the body of Christ and in Christians that we need to deal with. We have parents who don't speak to their own children. We have grandparents who have never even seen their grandchildren; they live in the same city but we just don't get along. Or "My kids aren't living right."

See the thing that I began to do is almost resent my own flesh and blood and feel like the enemy will deceive you with self righteousness to feel like well, I can't really love her like I ought to because how she is living so offends me when actually it ought to be the opposite.

Somebody is watching this program right now and one of their children probably, it's possible

has said, "I'm gay" or "I'm pregnant out of wedlock." What are you going to do? What is a Christian supposed -- we can pretend like all of us have beautiful plastic Camelot homes but the truth is Camelot doesn't exist. And every home, sooner or later, every family is going to go through something that shakes you to the core and you're going to have to do what Jesus did when he was hanging on that cross and he looked down with nails in his hands and he said, "Father, I'm going to love them like I've never been hurt. Father forgive them, they know not what they do."

So to make a long story short, God began to do a work in me and in my wife because it is amazing what you have in you that doesn't surface until the pressure is on you. And words, we would say things out of hurt to one another, and our family was just fractured; it had an echo effect throughout our home. It became a war zone it felt like -- it was awful. I really wrestled with should we really tell this stuff because people will lose confidence in us. But really --

James: Did you even question, what business do I have being a preacher? I just need to disappear.

Jentezen: Absolutely. I felt like God spoke to me. He did through an elderly gentleman. He came to me in the middle of this, a pastor, a preacher and he said, "Jentezen."

I was weeping one day, I just broke. I said, "I'm just going to quit. I'm just going to resign. I can't take it. I can't get up and preach. How can I tell others and it is not working for me?"

Well, it was working for me but sometimes God has to put you through a process. "Don't get weary in well doing. You will reap if you faint not."

He said -- I'll never forget what he said to me. He said, "Jentezen, God had two children named Adam and Eve and he raised them in a perfect environment. He was not a bad father. He had quality time with them. He walked in the cool of the day every day with those children." And he said, "They messed up but he didn't resign from being God." He said, "You're not going to resign from being a pastor and a preacher. You're more called now than you've ever been. You're a broken vessel and God is going to use you greater than you've ever been used before."

James: Isn't that good counsel?

Jentezen: And that's exactly what God did.

Betty: Well, more than likely in our lifetime our dreams are going to take a turn that we didn't choose, didn't want, never would have thought we would have had. But the secret is our relationship with God and now God, what do you want to do with this? Here we are.

Jentezen: Yeah, exactly! And even with God, even our relationship with God, don't you have to learn, when you walk through -- you've walked through and others have walked through seasons where there is the unexplainable absence of God. Where are you? Why don't you do something? You could heal this child. You could turn this thing. Where are you? If you love me, why don't you -- this is my baby, this is my child! Do something. And in those moments you have to learn to love God like you've never been hurt because we talk about --

James: Well, you don't understand some actions or the apparent lack of action which with our daughter, you referred to our daughter fighting cancer, your daughter was fighting a battle with the enemy sitting on her, she's got a disease sitting on her, nobody had more faith. We walked through all that. And I said when Robin died, "If I didn't know God so well, I wouldn't like him." But see, I knew him and I knew he wouldn't hurt me. He knew that if I was hurt he would love me through the hurt which is what he did for you. It is a miracle!

I've got to ask you, how is she?

Jentezen: Amazing! God has completely touched, restored, renewed. She is in full time ministry. She works in Atlanta at a great church. She is a media director, has a whole department. She knows everything about these cameras and crews. And she is amazing. And her husband is full time in ministry with her which we never -- we had such bitterness in that situation, this is my daughter. And you have to begin -- I want to say this. It is not like it is a magic one thing; the first meal that we ate together with them when we reached out and said, "I want to eat with you, I want to talk to you again, I want to have my family at the table again." That's the most beautiful thing when families start hugging and crying and kissing and loving and taking pictures.

James: How long has she been right now?

Jentezen: Oh it's been nine years. She's right, her husband's right, she's given us a beautiful granddaughter. God has done a miracle. But it's a process. We like forgiveness to come instantly.

James: Even the thinnest result of forgiveness and all the healing that goes with it, it doesn't always come instantly. I like instant deliverance but I found that some of it is progressing. I keep saying, "I like instant better, Lord." But the walking out sometimes develops things in us that's really important.

Jentezen: Absolutely. One of the things that I think we have to learn to do is let God begin to move us forward. In Somalia when our trips went in to arrest that drug lord back in 1993, you probably saw the movie, *Black Hawk Down*, one of the scenes in that movie really spoke to me

and I preached a message on it and I put some of it in the book. There's this commander and the bullets are flying everywhere; they're being attacked and shot up. He turns to one of his soldiers and he says, "We've got to get out of here or we're going to die." He says, "Get in the Humvee and drive."

The guy looks back at him and he's all bloody. Half his hand is blown off and he said, "But, colonel, I'm wounded. I'm shot."

And the answer that the colonel gives back is a classic. He says, "We're all shot. Shut up, get in the truck and drive."

[Laughter]

I preached a message on that that you're not the only one that's been betrayed, hurt, broken, disappointed, lied on, deceived. Sometimes you've just have to say to yourself, "Shut up, get in the truck and drive. It is time to move forward."

If you sit there and rehash and rehash and rehash all that's gone wrong, you're going to die there. You've got to get in the truck and go home and drive out of there and let God take you to a new place.

James: And God is ready to give you the grace to do it. To me, that's what you're writing here in trying to inspire people that couldn't believe that a guy that was leading a good church, a great church has got all this going on. And then for you to go through it, come out on the other side and be able to really say it with experience that when you are hurt and you're hurt deeply, you've got to learn to love like you've never been hurt. That's a good illustration from that leader to that commander.

Would you say thanks to Jentezen Franklin for sharing his story? For being able and willing to open up your heart and your life. I just praise God for you that you're willing to do it.

This is a great book. You can get it online right now, *Love like You've Never Been Hurt*, Jentezen Franklin. You can watch him on television. I want to tell you something else. We're going to have him back and we're going to talk a little bit more about this but we're also going to touch on something that was probably one of the first New York Times bestseller he wrote. It had to do with something that's just not at all popular to most of us, and that is fasting; like giving up something, especially food. Oh maybe I'll fast broccoli.

[Laughter]

Give that up for Lent or whatever it is.

Look, let Jentezen help us, all of us because that's what he is done right here today. Don't you think, Betty, what he shared? And I just want you to know we'll be glad to send you the book. Here's what we're asking you to do. Jentezen, this is the most fabulous thing that we can do. We can set people free that are hurt every day because they've been taken captive and they've been trafficked sexually. You're going to see right now in a moment one of the most beautiful little girls you've ever seen. She would be the dream if somebody says, "I'd like a model." Well, she is being exploited and trafficked and sold sexually in bondage and destroyed by that horrible desire for self gratification or greed in using somebody.

I want you to look at her and I want you to see the person that God wants to make her to be and only love -- listen to me, I'm not exaggerating -- you're going to see love expressed in the words of Sheila Walsh but the love that heals little girls like this has to come from you. Yes, it does. You're the healing factor here. You are the answer. You are the solution and you won't be alone. Watch carefully and very prayerfully.

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: That beautiful little girl represents thousands of girls like her. They have been promised something by deceptive people who intend to use them for their own selfish gain and then people exploit them for an attempt at gratification, total selfishness.

But love is the hope and you can see that being expressed by Sheila. You don't fly like Betty and I did for 20 years all over the world and plant yourself in the midst of misery if you're not sent by God. I mean you know you're sent. She was sent. And she says of all the things she's done all over the world in ministry, the most powerful and gratifying thing she's ever done is go and put arms of love around people like that.

But the reason she is able to -- this is Sheila -- she knows in her heart she is not alone. That little girl is not going to be left there alone and all those missionaries and relief workers are not going to be left literally helpless in their ability to meet the need because of you. Sheila has seen what love does through you, the viewers of *LIFE Today* and she's been overwhelmed by it.

So what I'm asking today is for the greatest outpouring of love possible that every single person watching us right now would say, "I'm going to rescue that girl. I'm going to rescue one like her."

You know what Jentezen Franklin our guest this week said? He said, "I'll match the first \$5,000 myself. I want to do that. I'm just seeing this. I want to do it."

Okay, listen. That's the love of God. So what you give today -- this is beautiful, because we've had a group of our friends step up and say they're going to match over \$300,000 of what you give. Well, we've just got something added to that, in other words, as an encouragement. So what you do will be doubled. \$128 is what it takes to reach, rescue and begin the restoration process for a year -- \$128.

You give that right now, and I pray you will, I hope you'll go get your bankcard or get your check, make it to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving, call the phone number there and say, "I'm putting it in the mail" or take your bankcard, call the number or go online, use that card and say, "Here's my gift." Use it just like a check. When you give \$128 it's doubled, you've just rescued two.

I ask and I ask unapologetically because I don't think you need help guarding your money. I think you may need to use it more wisely sometimes but I don't know if you could use it any

more wisely than setting somebody free. When Jesus came to set captives free and said, "As the Father sent me, even so send I you" I would say we can get on with the program and this is the way we set captives free. So I say, "Would you set ten free?" And I ask this every time I have a chance, do it while you can: \$1280, 10 -- no, now it is 20, it doubles.

We have some gifts to send you. You give that \$1280 gift that will be doubled we'll send you the beautiful "Bridge of Faith" canvas by Thomas Kinkade. It is beautiful.

But right now by going online or going to the phone making that gift you're becoming the answer to somebody's prayer, the missionary, the parent of those children, the person themselves as they are in captivity. The person that needs to be headed off, you're the answer to their prayer. Would you go right now? Thank you so much for making that gift. Thank you.

[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 and 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]

In the studio

James: Well, I'm excited about the fact that I think if you can help, you have any ability at all you're going to do it knowing it is doubled. Today, if you say, "James, I really would like to have Jentezen's book; I need to understand what he is talking about." He is a great preacher. I think he is a great writer. He is going to be back to talk about it more on another program and we're actually going to talk about another bestselling book that he wrote.

But I hope you'll join me and Betty not only in expressing thanks for Jentezen but committing to pray for him and his family, his church, and all the campuses, everywhere they're reaching out, and all of his ministry on television, you can watch him. I hope that you will. I hope you support him in prayers and financially.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks? Jentezen, thank you, buddy! We'll see you on the next program. Thank y'all so much. You are a blessing. You bless because of your love.