

8/14/19

Week 33: Summer WFL

Sheila Walsh

“For Such a Time as This”

Sheila: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh. I'm so glad that you've taken time to join us today. Thank you too for the number of you who will leave little comments on our Facebook page here at LIFE or on Instagram. We appreciate it. We love to hear from you.

One of the things I wanted to say is if there is ever something you think, Sheila, I wish you would talk about this, let me know. You can follow me on Facebook at Sheila Walsh connects. But if there is something that you think, I'm struggling with this question, I don't understand this, then let me know and I'll be glad to do a little research and study, and we can look at that together.

In one of the recent shows I talked about the fact that just as physical storms throw out debris out on the shoreline, emotional and spiritual storms do too. They throw up all sorts of debris on the shoreline of our hearts. One of the issues that many of us as women struggle with is insecurity, feeling like you're not enough. Feeling like I'm going to vote myself off of the island before you vote me off the island.

The thing is emotions are not logical. One of my friends, Marilyn Meberg says, "Emotions do not have brains." Because sometimes people will say, "Why would you be insecure? You look fine and everything is great." But it is not a logical thing. So take the emotions we feel and then add in the fact that we have an enemy about whom we know two things. We know that he is a liar and we know that he is an accuser. If we don't know what to do when a storm hits, we're getting pulled under.

One of my friends said something that is profoundly true for me and I'm not going to quote it exactly, but this is what Beth Moore said, "Jesus saved my life but the Word of God saved my mind." I so get that!

When I find myself struggle with chronic depression, the one thing that absolutely saved me was being able to read the Word of God. The only way to trade the chaos of what we're feeling for the truth of who we actually are is to know who we are in Christ. We basically have to replace every accusation from the enemy with a declaration from the power of the Word of God.

Recently I've been studying the book of Esther. And most of us know that very famous verse, it's probably the only thing we can quote from Esther, "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Have you ever asked the Lord what that really means for you? Not just for Esther way back then but for you at this time in your life? The book of Esther gives us a crystal-clear picture of what it looks like to move from a position of victim to victor in Christ.

Even though Esther is only one of two books of the Bible where God's name is never mentioned, have you ever noticed that? Not at all in Esther or in Song of Solomon. But his fingerprints, the fingerprints of God are everywhere.

Now if you don't know the story let me give you kind of brief overview. Esther is a young Jewess whose parents are dead, and she's been raised by her older cousin, Mordecai in Persia, which we know as modern day Iran. Basically what's happening is that the king wants to find a new wife so they gather all these girls together, these young teenage girls. It is kind of like the first episode of *The Bachelor*, and unfortunately, Esther got the only rose.

And up until that point in her story, it's really tempting to see Esther as a victim. She had no choice about being rounded up like cattle and dragged off to the palace. She was married now to the king but they lived very separate lives. She was married to the most powerful man on the planet but in many ways her life felt insignificant. At that point, the king's reign was over 127

provinces from India all the way to Ethiopia. And for Esther, she is just a little girl far, far away from home.

The king's second in command is a very evil man and he hates God's people. He basically demands worship. He sees himself as a mini God. So his thing is, "If I'm walking and I walk past you, you bow down and worship."

Well, Esther's guardian, Mordecai refuses to bow to him and Haman is furious. He comes up with a plot to have every Jew under the king's authority executed -- not just Mordecai, he is asking for every Jew to be executed. Do you realize what that would mean? Every Jew alive. This would exterminate the line that Christ would come from. That's why I say that that it's more than evil, it was an absolutely demonic plan.

So when Mordecai hears of what's about to happen, he sends Esther a message to the palace basically saying you need to go and see the king and talk on our behalf. Tell him what the plot is. Tell him what's going to happen. And she's terrified. She says, "I can't! It's against the law to go to the king without being summoned. What you're asking is just too hard."

Have you ever been there? Have you ever been in a place not where you're being asked to go to a palace and confront a king but just when you're in a place where you feel like what God is asking of you is just too difficult? I have. My father's brain injury always felt like I was living on stolen time.

When we don't know what to do with our pain we hide. Mine was ministry. I really believed that if your own father could seem to hate you there has to be something really wrong with you. And when you feel like there is something wrong with you, you try to find a place to hide. Some people would use drugs or alcohol. Mine was much more difficult to detect. I hid in ministry. It looked good on the outside but God's the only one who knows whether we're serving out of passion or pain.

When I eventually fell apart, I remember standing by the ocean knowing that I would drive that

night to a psychiatric hospital, and even though I thought that so many people who had watched me in the days and weeks previous thought that I was fine, that I was just kind of waving and carrying on. And I wanted to say, "I'm not waving, I'm drowning."

So let's go back to Esther. What happened in her life to transform her from a victim to a victor? Well, Mordecai who is such a godly man and he loves her, but he made it clear to Esther that if she would not speak up for her people, God would find someone else. And then we have that well-loved verse Esther 4:14, "Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

There's a writer called Major Ian Thomas and he wrote this marvelous little book on Esther. This is how he put it and I love this! You stand upon the threshold of that destiny for which you have been chosen and prepared, and if you choose right then then this can be your greatest hour. On the other hand if you choose wrong, throwing it all back into God's face... To preserve your own life, you will lose it. But if you are prepared to lose your life for God's sake you will find it. This is your hour of destiny -- choose wisely."

Wow! So Esther sent a message back to Mordecai and this is what she said, "Go and gather all the Jews to be found in Suza, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days and three nights. My young women and I will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

So what had happened in Esther's life to shift her? I think it is interesting that she fasted for three days and nights. Does that sound familiar? That Christ on the cross, three days and nights? Esther learned the profound lesson that the one who seeks to save their own life will lose it. But the one who loses their life for the kingdom of God will find it.

Here's what I think is significant. Esther died to herself before she ever went to see the king. Until you and I are willing to leave all the consequences to God we might celebrate the resurrection, but we are not living in its power. There is outrageous freedom in obedience. There are no more issues to face. Only instructions to be obeyed. I can almost picture her going in there

that day, "If I perish, I perish." It's really hard to scare a dead woman. That was kind of what had happened in Esther's life; is total surrender to the will of God.

In Revelation 12, verse 11 we read this, "The accuser has been thrown down and they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and the by the power of their testimony. For they loved not their lives even unto death."

So here's what I believe. I believe that God is raising up an army of rag tag believers like me and you who are tired of listening to the devil's "no" and are absolutely committed to listening to God's "yes."

I love this verse from Deuteronomy; Deuteronomy 31:6, "Be strong and courageous; don't be terrified or afraid of them. For it is the Lord who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."

So we tuck God's word deep in our hearts. We teach our children the Word of God. When you find yourself in a really tough place and you have a huge decision to make, fast and pray -- follow Esther's example. Jesus said when the disciples tried to heal someone and they couldn't do it and they went to Jesus and said, "We don't know what we did wrong, but it didn't work."

He said, "Some of these things only come out by fasting."

Because here's what I want to ask you. I want you to think about this. Who knows that but you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

One of the things I believe God is doing in our nation and around the world, I have the privilege of traveling to the U.K., to South Africa, to Australia, all sorts of different places and speaking in different churches. And as much as I enjoy speaking, I enjoy just taking everything in, watching God move through people. And so often we get to know a few names of the people who are on the platform, but I love to get to hang with the people who are quietly serving God.

Who are giving their lives away whether anybody notices or not. Insecurity is such an interesting thing because it came out of the very first lie ever spoken on planet earth when Satan said to Adam and Eve, "Did God really say you would die if you ate this fruit?" Because they chose to believe the lie, because basically what he was saying to them was, "You know what? God knows that if you eat from this tree of the knowledge of good and evil then you'll be like him." What he was saying is, "God's holding out on you. If you want to be like him then why don't you take that fruit?" See that was the first lie. We fell for it. And we've been falling for his lies ever since.

But here's what I want to remind you of. A couple of things that the enemy is not. He is not omnipresent. I love the fact that I'm sitting here in this studio in Texas and you might be watching from anywhere, but God is with both of us at this moment. God, by his Holy Spirit is with his church. He is with those who are in prison in China. He is with people who are struggling in Africa. He is with all of us because God can be with all of us. Satan cannot. He is only one fallen angel. Now he does have his forces but he can't be with, he can only be in one place at a time.

But here's the part I love so much more. He is not omniscient. Now God is. To be omniscient means that you know all things. Psalmist David talked about that in Psalm 139. He said, "Lord, before a thought is even in my mind you know it."

But the enemy does not. So what he will do is he will throw a lie at us and wait to see if we believe it. Imagine yourself, if you will, like say you're standing at the top of stairs going down into a cellar. I'll give you an example for my own life. A few months ago a friend had asked me to come out and speak at one of her events in California. And I'd had pneumonia and I was getting over it. I felt better and I thought well, I've made a commitment, I want to go.

So I flew out and woke up the following morning and I really didn't feel good at all. So I'm standing looking at myself in a hotel bathroom mirror which is always a huge mistake. But here comes the first lie. "You've got nothing to give to these people today." Now if I buy into that I'm one step further down into the cellar.

Then comes next thing. "You know, Sheila, you're just going to make yourself sicker and sicker just by being here. You made a bad mistake." I buy into that I'm one step further down. And the lies keep coming and we keep believing them. Then before you know it we're right at the bottom in the cellar. But what I love to do is to counter the lies of the enemy with the truth of the Word of God. So on that morning as I looked at my sorry self in the mirror, and first comes this lie, "You've got nothing to give these people. You can't do this." I planted my feet down on that bathroom floor and I said, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." The antidote to insecurity is the presence of Christ.

So often we live in a world of comparison. If you're flipping through social media and you see this one perfect moment in somebody's life where they've managed to get all their children to sit down and be quiet and you think, I'm a terrible mother. My children never sit like that.

Probably their children don't either. They probably superglued their hineys to the sofa. The thing is it's all smoke and mirrors. We look at what we think is a perfect life, but the truth is every single one of us struggle. We all have issues.

But here's what I'm discovering at this stage. I was 11 when I gave my life to Christ. This year I will turn 63. I can't believe that! If I lived in Scotland, in two years I would get a bus pass. But the thing I've learned over all these years is if I want to find myself, I find myself in the presence of Christ. Now you might be 16 watching this or you might be 96 but if you still have a pulse, there is not a white chalk mark around your body, it's not too late to discover who you really are in Christ.

When Esther was just a little girl, dragged out of her lovely uncle's home and taken into a palace, thrown into a world she knew nothing about, did God want that for a young girl? No! But the thing is when bad things happen can God bring good from them? Does God ever want a woman to have breast cancer? No. Does God ever want a marriage to fall apart? No. Does God ever want you to go through bankruptcy and wonder whether you're ever going to make a future? No. But can God bring something from that? Absolutely. If you find yourself in a

tough spot, I pray just as Esther did, you will pray your way through it and find your destiny is in Christ.

Now I want to share with you something that is very, very close to my heart. I want to introduce you to a grandma and then I want to tell you how you and I can actually kind of sit down beside her and make a difference in her life. Would you watch this?

On the mission field

Announcer: Recorded history tells us one of the critical factors in determining where people decided to settle was access to water. That criteria is still used today. Unfortunately, for hundreds of thousands of people around the globe, this decision can have deadly consequences.

Open Captions:

>> My grandchildren died of cholera because of bloated tummy and vomiting. It's very heartbreaking to lose my grandchildren.

Announcer: Each day as Antoinette returns to a small stream to collect water, it serves as a reminder of the deaths of her grandchildren. She told our team that one grandchild died at a clinic where she had taken him. And by the time she returned home, her other grandchild had died as well.

Open Captions:

>> I can't find words to describe, to say what I miss about my grandchildren. But what I know is that I will never forget them. They are still in my heart.

Announcer: The pain of losing her grandchildren once brought her thoughts of suicide but somehow Antoinette is still able to hope for a better life.

Open Captions:

>> If we could get clean water, this would bring real change in our village and in my family. My

children and everyone would no longer suffer from those diseases due to unclean water.

Announcer: We can turn Antoinette's plea of *if* she can get clean water into *when* by drilling a well that provides her and her village the gift of life: Fresh, clean, drinking water.

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: I can't imagine as a grandmother the pain that that must be. Let me ask you something. What if she lived right next door to you and you discovered that her children had no water? Don't you think you would be over there? Absolutely! Immediately providing for her. Saying, "Hey look! We've got this. You don't have to worry."

Well now through the wonder of television and everything, we can actually sit down with her and say, "You know what? We can be an answer to your prayer. For her, it is almost like a dream too big to imagine that there would actually be clean drinking water, but we can do it.

I love this! This is a problem we can fix. There are some problems in the world that are so overwhelming we think, God only you would know what to do. But this is something you and I can do.

So it's our commitment here at *LIFE* to put in 400 wells this year. Now this is our last week to make sure we get -- we've told our partners on the ground we will come back, we will share the stories, and we will come back to you with great news. So they're waiting to hear from us.

So here's how we can do this. If you could commit \$48 do you know that that would actually provide clean drinking water for ten people? \$144 will provide clean drinking water for 30 people for life. Now if you're able to say, "You know what? I actually would like to put a well in myself," you can do that for \$4800. That's not really much when you think that will give... like if there is thousand people in a village that will give them clean water for their life!

So please, please let's do this. We've told our friends there, that are God's boots on the ground, "We'll come back and we'll share the need and we'll share the story." I know if you're something who has responded in the past, thank you so much but let's do it again. Let's all do it again.

So would you go to your phone? Will you dial that number on your screen? Would you give the very best gift possible? It will be lovely if you could do it together as a family, maybe ask your children, "Hey! Do you all want to chip in a little bit from your allowance?" What a beautiful thing to be able to think that we have answered the prayer of a grandmother on the other side of the world praying that she will not lose any more grandchildren or that her village will not lose any more children.

This is something you and I can do and this is our last week! So please, go to your phone. Make the very best gift possible. Let's be an answer to the prayers of those who have so little but all they're asking for is clean water. You and I can do that. Please go to your phone. Make the best gift you can. Thank you.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Today, a mother living in extreme poverty will do the unthinkable, give her children dirty, diseased-filled water that she knows could kill them. With no other choice what else can she do?

With your help, clean water is on the way. Mission: Water for LIFE provides a way for parents to save the lives of their children to offer them a bright future free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 400 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. \$72 will provided for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift, we'll send you the "New Mercies Each Day" desk calendar. This 17-month calendar will not only help you keep track of important dates but also remind you of the Father's love and goodness with scripture quotes and encouragement from all the hosts on *LIFE Today*.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "Fruit of the Spirit" bowl. This beautiful and decorative ceramic bowl features scripture revealing the "Fruit of the Spirit," a lovely addition to your table or home.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provided water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms" bronze sculpture.

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

End of video

On the mission field

Sheila: I put my hand in this water; and a couple of inches it disappears. This water is absolutely filthy! That's why there's such – this is not something that we can wait for another week, another month. This is all they have today. This is all this mom and these two girls and all these villagers and hundreds of villages around Africa are like.

They need clean water! And one well, one water well will last a whole lifetime and it will change their life. So many of these children die because of waterborne diseases. You just have to look at it. I wouldn't let my dogs drink out of this. This is horrible! But we can make a difference. Would you go to your phone right now and just do whatever you can?

Can you imagine if you couldn't – if this was all you had to give to your children? I can't imagine that. So go to your phone. Call that number on your screen, go online, give the best gift – just whatever you have. If you've got a lot, give a lot. If you've got a little, give what you can. But whatever you give will bring water for life for these families.

In the studio

Sheila: Thank you so much! If the phone lines are busy please write down the number. Please keep calling. Let's determine that this week we're going to finish this mission of putting 400 water wells in villages in 15 nations. And for any gift at all we have this beautiful little desk calendar called "New Mercies Each Day" and it's got beautiful scriptures and motivational things, inspirational quotes. And for a gift of \$100 or more we'll send you this beautiful bowl, fruit bowl with the "Fruit of the Spirit" around it. A daily reminder that when we love the Lord that the fruit that is produced in our lives makes us want to reach out and touch other people too.

I know you don't do it for the gifts but it is our way, it is just from James and Betty, from their hearts, just their way of saying, thank you so much for caring.

And I want to thank you for being with us. I'm Sheila Walsh and I'll see you next time on *LIFE Today*.