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Week 40: Mission: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Rick Rigsby

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: And just glad to sit here by you. When people are watching us, I'm 76. So I had another birthday. You don't ever want me to tell them when you'll have a birthday.

Betty: I'm a little bit younger than you.

James: Exactly! Believe me.

Betty: A few weeks.

James: Let me say this to you. You don't have any idea how much love God has put in our heart for you. I know you've watched us march into hell for a heavenly cause.

You're going to see one of our friends -- you know, we have 11 grandchildren, and early next year we'll have our seventh great grandchild. Thank you for praying for all of us. We have a daughter in heaven who is going to see her second grandbaby born. And you know, you really do come to appreciate the fact that we've got eternity forever in the presence of God. So many of our friends are there.

I want to tell you something. We're going to have Dr. David Jeremiah teaching on windows of heaven, to show what it's like. But God told us he wants us, think about this,

to pray that the Father's will will be done on earth because "his kingdom come" he said pray, and Jesus said, "It's come." It's in you. Not of the world.

But we're to make a kingdom impact so that the Father's will will be done on earth through us as it is in heaven. That means that if we really fulfill the Father's heart's desire, he's going to have a family through which he flows his love, his redemptive purpose, and his transforming truth; and the reliable standards upon which we can build, Jesus said, on an unshakeable rock.

We're seeing things coming apart because we've cast aside the foundation of truth. Well, we're going to return to that. Betty and I are getting a little bit older, you may be getting a little older. I'm telling you what, we're not wanting to give any more planet earth, God's garden, to the enemy, to the deceiver. We want to let God be God in the life of his family so people can behold his glory and be drawn to him.

Our guest, Rick Rigsby, became very famous delivering a speech, "Lessons I Learned from a Third Grade Dropout." He has a Ph.D. He not only graduated from Liberty, he got Ph.Ds., and I haven't even asked him where he got them from. I didn't care. Because I never even thought I could aspire to that. I don't even have a college degree. So I just appreciate the fact that Rick Rigsby will even sit here and talk to me.

But here's a man that really has God on him because of something he learned from a father that a lot of people don't -- I didn't have a father. I want you to listen to him. I want you to welcome him because I think he is going to help get God's arms of love around a hurting world. Would you welcome Dr. Rigsby?

Rick: Appreciate you so much! Thank you so much, James and Betty. So great to be here.

James: I've said to you that I don't believe we have to give our marriages, I don't believe we have to give our families, our subdivision, our community, we don't have to give our

city, our county, our state or our nation to the trespasser, the deceiver, the divider, the destroyer. I don't think we have to. This is God's garden. It can be a fruitful garden. And he told us we're to be overseers, and I'm not sure we've been the best overseers as his family.

So you understand something about it. You told me you are totally committed to seeing the garden of God begin to bring forth the kind of fruit that gives him glory. And you don't think it is too late for America. You don't think it is too late for the church here and around the world to begin to reveal Jesus to the world and the Father.

So I want to hear what God's put on your heart. You've had some pretty moving experiences in your life, even though you learned from a third-grade dropout, a father that told you the truth. I want you to take us on a journey that hopefully, will help inspire us to fulfill the Father's vision.

Rick: First of all, what a thrill to be with you both. I listen to you every chance I get, both of you. I love it when you start getting going; that inner black man comes out of you, James and you start preaching. You start preaching. Your skin actually starts turning darker. It's an amazing thing!

[Laughter]

James: I'm all right with it. I'm all right with it!

[Laughter]

Rick: Y'all are a blessing to the body of Christ. Thank you for having me here. You know what's interesting is that we live in a time that is just simply void of common sense because it is void of God. And it is not too late. Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God. The Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might -- and then do what? Teach it! Start in your home, then model it.

Harvard Business Review, September 2004, I believe, it talked about the worst kind of teaching method is lecturing. That if you want to get the intended message across, model it. I wonder who the greatest model was on the face of the earth.

I had a mother and father who modeled it. I had a third-grade dropout daddy quoting Michelangelo. I'm in the '60s. I'm going, "Come on!"

And he's saying, "Son."

"Yes, sir."

"I'm not going to have a problem, son if you aim high and miss. But I'm going to have a really issue if you aim low and hit."

My father was not interested, watch this, he wasn't interested in rearing "black" men. He was interested in rearing godly men who would impact the world. So there was a standard every single day. My dad was a simple cook. He wasn't college educated. He never made it past the third grade. Just because he left school though doesn't mean his education stopped. Mark Twain once said, "I've never allowed my schooling to get in the way of my education." He was filled with God's wisdom.

James: You've been through some experiences in your life, not only with a third grade dropout but you had a relationship and you actually came and shared with our son, Randy, and with Sheila Walsh, about a loss and about an experience that most people could have said okay, so catastrophic. But somehow something here that could have been to many destructive.

We need to hear that because I feel like there are so many people right now in some way being touched by something that just really rips their heart -- like us losing a daughter. You lose a child its heavy. A lot of our friends right now are losing spouses. Some of them are losing them to Alzheimer's so it is not the same person. There is a lot of weight

that comes with loss. You talked about that when you were here before. I'd really like you to share that incredible experience of what came of it.

Rick: Thanks for the opportunity. I'm 63. The first 40 years of my life I made life about me. I have nothing to show for it. And I was a Christian. Right? I had a charmed life. I wasn't just a reporter, I was an award-winning reporter. I was a graduate student after my years in television that was told by a high school counselor, I wouldn't make it to college and now I'm graduating with a Ph.D. with a 377. I didn't realize until I was in my 30s that I had a photographic memory.

Then I started going to different universities. My last employer was Texas A&M. I was teacher of the year a couple of years. But along the way, tragedy. Because I had made life all about me and my accomplishments.

Watch this. There are many people that are listening right now that want to serve God on their terms. And so what do we do? We reduce his word to little bite-size morsels or we ignore him all together. That was Rick Rigsby. And everything, rolled out his favor, everything!

I can remember him saying, "Will you trust me?"

Aah! Not really.

"Will you follow me?"

Only to the point that I can fit you in my day.

I fell in love with the most beautiful woman I'd ever met in my life in college. Back in my day, we would have called her a brick house. Do y'all know what I'm talking about? I mean -- you know what I'm saying to you?

James: I know what you're saying.

Rick: Eventually, I convinced her to fall in love with me as well. We get married. We have a couple of children, two little boys. We start our respective careers. Trina was a registered nurse, I was a television reporter. I get born again. I grew up Baptist, got born again serving God in a spirit-filled church in Chico, California but still living on my own terms. And God whispering to me over and over and over.

As the years go by, the accolades come, all of the sudden Trina finds a lump in her left breast -- breast cancer. Six years after that diagnosis in a little town called College Station, Texas, me and my two little boys walked up to mommy's casket and my life at age 41 was over. I went to that third-grade dropout and I said, "I have no hope."

He goes, "Son, you can't lose something God gave you. You can't lose something God gave you. You've lost perspective but you haven't lost hope."

It was at that casket that my life literally changed. My father, I'd never seen him cry before, strong Texan, like you, James. And my father was crying. Trina wasn't his daughter-in-law, that was his daughter. He turned to me and he wiped his tears and he put them big arms around me and he said three words. He said, "Son, just stand. Don't quit."

If he was on this show today, he'd be saying, "James and Betty, you go! You don't quit. And you get an army of volunteers around you and let's deal with this real issue that's in God's heart to reconcile families together." And he told me that.

But what I've never said publicly is what happened next. At the casket -- at the casket Jesus didn't say to me, I could hear his voice. He didn't say to me, I'm going to fix it. He didn't say to me, I'm going to answer your prayers the way you want them answered. He didn't say to me, I'm going to raise her up. He asked me a question, "Do you trust me?"

I remember saying, "I'm not really happy with you but I trust you."

In fact, can I give you a visual? I'm doing this with one hand and I'm holding on with everything I've got in this hand.

I get it, folks. I heard Jesus say, "If you'll trust me with your pain, I'll use it to display my glory all over the world." That was 24 years ago and I'm watching the Lord do the impossible.

I want to tell you the presence of a father at a casket, the presence of a dad at a casket is only second to the presence of the Father at the casket saying, "Trust me!"

Friend, you may feel stuck right now. You may feel no hope, no reason for which to hope but I want to ask you a question. Do you trust him? You still can trust him regardless of how you feel. Take it from a man who stood at the edge of his wife's grave clutching the hands of two little boys. You can trust him. His word is true regardless of whether he answers your prayers or not. I'm here to tell you, you can trust God.

So it becomes imperative that we start building up men that they may point to God Almighty. It is not just a James initiative, it is not just a Betty mandate. Think about that scripture that I shared a few minutes ago. We are charged by Almighty God to love him with all our heart and then to model it and then to teach it.

James: He wants so much to hold our broken heart. And you talked about those men there that held your hand when your heart was broken, as a manifestation of the love of God, that is what you as viewers of *LIFE Today* have done so effectively. You have literally helped us put loving arms around the most overlooked people on the planet. I want you to know right now God wants to get you in his arms.

I don't know what's going on in your life but while you were talking, Rick, I know there are a lot of folks who have said good-bye. You know, those of you who prayed with us and watched as over the years our daughter fought for her life, and then we said that

good-bye, you put your arms of love around us in prayer and it meant so much to us. I want you to know right now we want to not only pray for you, we want you to allow God to hold you so close to his heart that you can feel his love. As he is holding you, please try to hear what I know we've heard, I know Rick has, I know everyone that's ever experienced His grace in that time of indescribable grief and pain and loss, we want you to allow him to show you that you can actually help put his arms around broken hearts all over the community where you live and around the world.

Father, I want you to take the broken hearts right now for whatever reason, loneliness, depression, fear, anxiety, loss, loved ones gone, illness, disease -- whatever it is, I'm asking you to give a supernatural comfort. And hold everyone you comfort right now so close that as they experience your comfort they want to share that love and comfort with others. Enable us to do it. And I thank you.

Will you ask God not only to heal your heart, just let him hold you but then ask him to give you the grace and the strength and oftentimes the courage to just go out and share his love? Let others know not only you care, he cares.

I told a man today, if I want to get in under the load with him, as a matter of fact, I told two men, one lost a child, one lost a wife, I said, "I want to help you lift the load and carry it." If I feel that way, imagine how much more Jesus feels that way. And he is able to do above -- exceedingly above and beyond anything we ever hoped. The Lord wants to lift your load, and he uses us to represent him lifting the load of others.

Father, use us to brighten the days of people who felt like there was no sunrise, no tomorrow. Let them see you are light in glory, a bright and morning star; in Jesus' name.

Thank you for watching *LIFE Today*. I want you to watch one of our friends, I actually did the wedding of this precious woman, Kirie and her husband. It was an honor. I want you to watch this mom, this grandmother. She's gone all over the world. She held little children years ago that were so ill with us when we went to Chernobyl that she caught the

very deadly viral Hepatitis C, the worst strain. It nearly took her life. She's never stopped going. You're going to see her holding a woman, I want you to listen to her. This is our friend Kirie, who has marched into hell for a heavenly cause with us and missionaries all over the world, and this just happened. I want you to be there with her. Then I want you to be the answer to not only this heart cry, which you're going to see the miracle, I want you to be the miracle for many. Watch.

On the mission field:

Kirie: I can't think of anything worse to happen to a child.

[Translator]

Kirie: I'm so sorry a human did that to you. It's not your fault.

Open Captions:

>> One day, when I was seven years old, I was out working in the field. Two strangers lured me away with candy and took me across the border. I was given to a family and I had to work as their maid. I was forced to do these chores for about 18 months.

Then when I was eight or nine, they took me to another place. I saw all these men and they explained what I had to do. I was only nine years old. They said they would kill me if I didn't do what they said. Every day I wished that someone would get me out of there. But no one came to help for many, many years.

Kirie: Mara has taken the time to open up her heart and relive horrible, horrible experiences and wounds so you understand what's going on. Many of you have no idea and cannot even imagine that something this horrible could happen to a child -- but it happens every day. We can stop that.

So if you're watching us today and in your heart you feel like well, that really speaks to

me. I'm asking you to go beyond that thought and to take action. We can't get back her childhood, but we could keep others from experiencing this horrible way of living.

End of video

In the studio:

James: I just thank God for the love of God in Kirie. I started loving her husband when he was six years old. His dad was the first chairman of my board, our ministry, and that was gosh, nearly 60 years ago. He's the first businessman I ever saw that just loved Jesus with all his heart. That would be her father-in-law. They have become some of the greatest supporters we've ever had. I just love them so much, their whole family.

Betty, when you saw her holding that woman and realized that as a seven-year old they told her they would get her a job. She worked kind of like a housekeeper and then she became at nine a prostitute. If she didn't do what they said they'd kill her.

What goes on in your heart when you realize that there's several things there. She's a prisoner. But the men that will use those children for their own gratification are prisoners too. Do you realize how horrible a person has to be addicted or hooked and do you realize how much freedom they need to experience and only God can give them that freedom through Christ? We need to be praying for them. Do you realize how sick and how addicted and what a prisoner people are that would do that? But that's the extremes people are going to today. It's unbelievable. God can change that. And he will through us with love.

What goes on in your heart when you realize that we can head off because you've seen it happen. We've been all over the places where these little girls are offered something and promised a job and they're taken into that. So what's going on in your heart?

Betty: Well, if I didn't know we could make a difference and prevent this from happening in so many different situations you couldn't stand to watch it. I couldn't stand

to know that there was a little child like this woman was, she was abused, and she was probably tortured some. She was probably threatened all the time. She didn't see any hope anywhere. But now we know, we can offer that hope that can only be offered by Jesus. We can be the ones to express that love to her.

James: I want to show everybody while you're talking what happened. Now you need to see this. We have to block the faces of the little ones that she's helping. She's been set free. Here she is helping two young ones that we've set free, that had also been taken captive. Now then she is like the mother to them because your love enabled us to rescue her -- not only rescue her but train her now where she is a part of the rescue.

Because see, what we've learned to do is to find these children where the predators are going in to deceive their families and head them off. We get in ahead of the deception. We're able to get these children in true safety and true opportunity. And oftentimes, when they first get them we're able to -- we have even because of your love been able to get secure areas where they can't come and get them.

Now when things happen, we can no longer show the hundreds of children's faces where they are singing praises, they're learning English, they're learning to teach. Many of them grow up to be professors, teachers, and leaders in their community. This is happening all over the world -- this beautiful process. But the children when we're growing them and they're in the safe house or the House of Destiny, we can't show their faces anymore because if they're recognized and anybody sees them, they'll deliberately go and capture them again. So we are continually working. Many of the shots you see now are secret cameras to show you what's going on. But you are setting them free. The love of God through our viewers.

Here's what I want to ask you to do. Think about this. An average of \$128 we can set somebody free and give them a new start and a new future. We can literally find them, we rescue them, we reach and rescue them, and we begin to restore their life -- \$128. Now here's what's happening. Think about this. I always try, I tell you I want you to think

as big as possible. \$1280 and we're going to rescue ten. Think about that. But all of this is going to be doubled.

Now listen to what I'm saying. We have a \$320,000 matching gift. You say where did that come from? People who watched it like you and said, I've got to help stop that. I have got to. And they gave a matching gift together, a group of our friends to match what you give. Which means \$1280 will now rescue 20. It means \$128 will rescue two.

So would you please, would you go get your bankcard? Would you go online or dial that number that's there as a prayer line? Right now people are praying. Many, many people know somebody is loving them right now, holding their broken heart. Would you call that line and say it is a help line, here's my gift? Could you give \$1280? If you can, I believe you will. It will be doubled. Or \$128, it will rescue two. \$64, it will be doubled to reach one. Whatever you can do.

We have some gifts to send you that I promise you will bless you but you're giving the greatest gift, you're giving people freedom and a chance at life. Thank you so much for doing it. Thanks for making that gift.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Behind the bright lights there's a darkness where a world of innocence is lost, and abuse runs rampant scarring the souls of children with no one and nowhere to turn for help. With bodies broken and hopes crushed, these young victims are trapped in a never-ending nightmare.

Today you can shine the light of God's love in this dark world to reach, rescue, and restore these young ones to the life God designed for them to live. With a generous \$320,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to help rescue a child can be doubled to help two children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help rescue one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 Mission Rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.

And with your donation of any amount we'll send you the faith, hope, love tea towel set. These beautifully woven hand towels are a wonderful reminder to remain steadfast in faith, hope, and love each day.

With your gift of \$128 or more you'll receive the life-giving Proverbs journal bound in genuine leather. This journal is filled with wisdom and daily encouragement from Proverbs, featuring lined pages for your personal notes as you reflect on godly instruction to success in life.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,280 which will now help rescue 20 children! And you may request our beautiful bronze sculpture, "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Well, Betty and I, in behalf of literally tens of thousands you've set free and will set free, and the one you help today that now becomes two, thank you. We're sending you some gifts that will bless you and inspire you. You can't go wrong studying the book of Proverbs and reading the verses and having a place for thoughts and notes.

If you'd like to have Rick Rigsby's book, boy, wouldn't we all like to have his communication style and his fire? I love him -- love his wife. He's got a beautiful wife now. God gave him another wife, which had to be nothing short of a miracle! How you got two women -- two of them? Had to be God! Right?

Rick: Only God!

James: But if you'd like to have this incredible book just say thanks for helping others,

just ask us for it, we'll send it to you. Would you join us saying, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Rick Rigsby! Thank you Lord for share Rick with us!

Thank all of you for watching. Thank you for being here. Thanks for helping us share life every day all over the world. God bless you!