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Week 15: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Shaunti Feldhahn

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

James: And Shaunti Feldhahn is here and she has written lots of great books. I tease some of our guests. I say, "This is your television show." Tell Dr. Tony Evans and Priscilla Shirer, "Well, this is your television program. We just kind of try to pay the bills." And Shaunti is one of our favorites. She is really a blessing.

Now get this: *Thriving in Love & Money*. She talks about "Five game-changing insights about your relationship, your money and yourself." So I really think that Shaunti has got something that will be helpful to a lot of people. Would you welcome Shaunti Feldhahn back to *LIFE Today*? Good to see you!

Shaunti: It's always so good to be with you guys.

James: Are you doing good?

Shaunti: Yes! Although you know book coming out and...

James: Keep you busy. Are y'all still married and everything?

Shaunti: Yes! Believe it or not we managed to stay married while doing this research project. Yes.

James: Let me ask you this about the money situation. Do you think that is a big issue in marriages and relationships? That it is a real serious issue?

Shaunti: Actually, it is a huge issue in marriage. This is in every poll that's ever been done by churches, ministries, when they always say, "What else do you need help with in your marriage?" Money is always up there at the top. The easy thing is to think, well, if I had more of it we wouldn't be fighting about it. But it turns out that's not true.

James: Less and a lot seem to have equal consequences. They both lead to a lot of tension that I really believe the supernatural is essential. I think the supernatural is essential when there is less to learn how to manage a little less. I don't even know if I'm getting on any of your territory because this may be exactly where you're going. But I really believe it would take... You almost wonder sometimes it might not take more supernatural when you got a lot because the more blessed people are, and God even warned his people going into the Promised Land, you better be careful. You're going to think you did it. You're going to find many things that are not necessarily bad things but good things to worship and idolize. So boy, it is an issue.

Shaunti: It is an issue. Actually, it is interesting that you said that. I wasn't actually going to bring this up but I will because one of the things we found statistically in the survey is we do all these big nationally represented surveys to try to figure out how are people relating around money? I should explain by the way, the book really doesn't, it is not about budgeting. It is not about money management. There is literally nothing in there about getting out of debt.

James: This isn't another Dave Ramsey book? Okay.

Shaunti: No. It is entirely...

James: And those are good by the way.

Shaunti: Yes! But there are plenty of these great resources. What we felt God asking us to do was really dive in to what is it that creates a great relationship around money? And it turns out when you're having those money issues, it's actually not about the money, it is about how money makes us feel, and how it makes on us spouse feel.

It turns out that one of the key issues that we found is that yes, it matters for a relationship to have some cushion. It doesn't matter, apparently, I should say, it doesn't matter what the income level is, it matters that you live below the line so that's the cushion but the bigger issue that we found statistically is whether or not you can talk about it. We found, believe it or not, if you have plenty of cushion but can't talk about it, the relationship is worse than if you didn't have the cushion, but you could talk about it. So that's what we're trying to help couples do is actually be able to come together around money and be able to have those conversations.

James: Well, doing counseling and then just myself, Betty and I living now 76 years, you see a lot of things, you experience a lot of things, you talk to a lot of people and most people period and couples don't even communicate good period. That probably is not any single bigger issue than poor communication. That's really a problem nationally. We don't communicate. We don't come to the table of reason. We don't have a civil discussion much anymore.

Shaunti: Well, believe it or not, when it comes to money, all the stuff that you normally do well, even more goes out the window. We found that, believe it or not, only 23 percent of the people can talk about money. Like you guys. You all talk about money; right? You guys are very good.

Betty: Why do you think that is?

Shaunti: Well, it actually turns out that one of the main reasons underneath the surface is that you actually probably understand some things about each other and understand what some of the factors are that are going on in your heart and your spouse's heart and a

lot of us don't -- 77 percent of us.

I will tell you that when Jeff and I knew that God was asking us to study this topic we were like, no! Because we had studied all these issues over the years, and we'd studied marriage and parenting and sex and the workplace stuff and suddenly God asks us to do this on money? And this was the one area that Jeff and I were really not on the same page. So much so that I'm going to lose all credibility with you when I tell you this. But so much so that Jeff kept wanting to go to the Dave Ramsey course at our church and finally he went on his own because I wouldn't go with him.

James: Was this a good thing that he did?

Shaunti: Well, it was but it wasn't because we couldn't talk about it. We were like most people. We didn't fight about money, we avoided it and it turns out that for most people there are a few, five, we found five factors that are sort of running underneath the surface that we don't even know that are going on in our heart and our spouse's heart.

James: They're right here on page 17 and you wanted to touch on three of them. The first is we aren't valuing what our partner values. Second, we have fears our partner doesn't comprehend and are using money to try to relieve them which may be making our partner's fears worse. Three, subconsciously or consciously we're resisting being fully one in marriage. And the enemy is fighting oneness in the body of Christ, unity, and oneness in marriage and all relationships, especially just with family. And it is coming out in how we think about and handle money. You wanted to touch at least briefly on three.

Shaunti: I do. The first is one of the factors that is often causing the clash is that you're not valuing what your spouse values. They're not valuing what you value. And we don't really realize. We're different people we should know that we have different things that matter to us but for some reason we don't and we kind of think the other person's values are silly.

Like I'll give you an example of this. So whenever Jeff and I would go out to eat, we don't go out a ton, but we would. We would be having a very pleasant conversation and it would start to go off the rails when the server would come over and ask what we wanted. And Jeff would order water because he's thinking, I'm trying to pay off student loan debt. And I would order a diet coke, and sometimes even a refill. And in Jeff's mind he's thinking this is a ridiculous use of \$3 a pop; right? And we didn't realize, and he's got all these ideas, and he says later, he tells me, "I'm actually thinking that it is a character flaw on your part."

[Laughter]

And it comes to find out that I didn't realize what he is valuing is we have to quickly plow through our student loan debt. Like that was something that really mattered to him. Okay. I didn't really realize that.

He didn't know that for me I actually don't really like the taste of water all that much. I know it sounds funny but I actually just kind of want a drink with a meal and I won't enjoy, even if it is a great steak dinner, I just won't enjoy it as much if I don't have something to drink. I'd rather stay home and save the money. Which is totally fine if I can't have something to drink. That is a silly example, but it is those silly examples, those everyday moments...

James: That begins to build until it is really monumental.

Shaunti: And it turns out all of us have all these different ways that we value things and we don't realize it. Another example is do you value time or do you value money? Are you willing to pay for the movie tickets online in advance even though it is \$2 per ticket because you can like get a seat reserved? Or you say no, no, no. I'll go an hour ahead of time and stand in line. And each of you could literally say, oh my gosh, it is so clear that we need to buy the tickets ahead of time. \$2, yeah, that's fine! It's so clear that it is better

to save the money and stand in line for an hour.

James: Just listening to this, this sounds petty to me. It really does, it sounds petty and yet it becomes huge to the point of people not getting along.

Shaunti: To the point of divorce even.

James: It does. It's breaking my heart. If you can say some things to people where they'll quit doing that. I mean to just really understand that these are very minor differences and they're surely not worth going to the opposite end of the house or the separate corners or... Gosh, it just breaks my heart to think that we do that.

Shaunti: Well, and here's one of the things that's underneath that, is that honestly, as we're sort of, we don't really think it through in a logical way. We're all kind of reacting emotionally to things but we found on the survey that the vast majority of people sort of go, when I do think about it, like on the survey, I realize that at the time I'm thinking, you're just not thinking clearly. And if you were actually using logic and thinking clearly you would clearly agree with me.

And so we truly, like Jeff said, "I just thought you had a character flaw." And you know what? Once we actually recognize, you know what? God made my spouse different. Like we are all fearfully and wonderfully made. We have different things that matter to us, which is great, but it means that we have to suddenly go, you know, the way that God made my spouse is legitimate.

James: Do you get to where you could almost laugh about it?

Shaunti: Well, now we can.

[Laughter]

James: Yeah! I think you should. That's what I was asking.

Shaunti: And the key now is that we call it out and we're like oh my gosh! This is an example of you're valuing this I'm valuing that. Neither of us is wrong or right. Sometimes there are clear wrongs and rights but often it is just really a matter of judgment and value and opinion. So that's one.

The second one, it turns out, there are very few, when it comes to money, we're actually surprised to find there were very few gender differences between men and women and how they handle money. Like men and women are equally likely to be spenders or savers, for example. But it turns out there is something that was a very clear gender difference, with most, not all but most men and women, which is that we tend to have two different sets of fears and insecurities running underneath the surface about money and how we handle things. The easiest way of explaining it is that for men, most men are instinctively, subconsciously, always wondering, am I going to be able to provide for the family? How am I going to be able to provide? Like there's a fear that I may not be, I may not be enough for that. And so it is sort of like staying away from the edge of a cliff. Like you try to back away.

So a guy would try to work a lot of hours or take a lot of overtime; like anything to stay away from that edge. And not realizing that for women, it is a different set of primary kind of instinctive fears. Yeah, I might be thinking about money too but really what feels worse to me is oh my gosh, he's working so many hours and he is distant, and he is not seeing the kids' soccer games. And so that's my cliff, my feeling like are we okay as a family? Are the kids feeling loved? Are we okay in our marriage? And so to stay away from that cliff's edge we want to do things together. And we want to go to the movie, or we want to go out to eat, or we want to go do stuff. And hey, guess what? That often costs money which pulls him closer to the edge of his cliff.

So we don't realize that our efforts to sort of stay away from what's making us afraid often makes our partner's fears worse. And it makes so much difference if we'll just go,

"Wait! You mean really? Like Jeff, you really honestly wonder how you're going to be able to provide for the family and whether you're enough? Like that's a thing? For real?" And honoring that. And for him going, "Really? Just because we're having arguments over this or you're really worried about us and our relationship? Like that's a thing?"

So recognizing this is the insecurity, the doubt that's running under the surface and I can reassure my spouse in this area and recognize how I'm triggering it with how I'm handling the money.

James: The third one.

Shaunti: The third one; this one is really covering all of it because it turns out that we tend to resist being one in marriage period and it is coming out in how we handle money. And we don't think of it this way, we don't realize that's what we're doing but that's what we're doing. We kind of went our own way. I mean, if you think about it, you would think there is something called sin. And it turns out that it is coming out so often and I just kind of want to handle money the way I want to handle money.

So today it looks a lot like many people, about 45 percent of couples will often keep separate bank accounts. It's just easier. Your paycheck goes into yours, my paycheck goes into mine and we don't have to talk about it, we don't have to come together. And you don't realize you're institutionalizing a lack of the oneness that we're supposed to have in marriage.

I often will talk to people and they will say, "Well, I don't do that. I don't keep separate bank accounts. We have joint accounts." And I always say, yeah, maybe you don't. Maybe you are one but do you ever try to take the Amazon package off the front step before your spouse gets home? And it is the same desire to avoid oneness and transparency and accountability that causes some people to separate their accounts entirely.

James: I feel like the oneness in our communication is critical. Betty, you and I really do work at that. It is dedicated with as much understanding as we have of the importance of it, the enemy is still trying to keep us at odds. He'll try to get us hearing something wrong. My hearing is not good anymore and if I don't happen to have my hearing aids in, she talks louder and I think, why are you yelling at me?

She said, "Well, I said something three times. You didn't hear it the first three, so I thought I'd yell it the fourth." Really it is not quite like that but sometimes it's pretty tense. And then we'll really sit down and say, let's understand how we feel and try to hear each other's heart. I don't think we'd make it if we didn't.

Betty: No. Communication is so important with one another and being honest with one another about what is going on inside of you.

Shaunti: But you often don't even know what's going on inside. I could never have articulated some of these things until we started doing this research, which we were scared to do but I'm glad we did it.

James: And I think even with the little illustration I'm using here is the point I'm trying to make is, no matter how dedicated you are to it, you can still have tension but we're dedicated to it enough that we're going to sit down and get through it because that open, loving, honest, clear communication is critical.

Father, I pray that for every person that's listening. I know one of the things that I could just sense even when I'm praying for people that there is somebody very lonely right now. Their whole relationship was shattered. So I want to ask you to be a very personal comfort to them. Take all the shame or the guilt, and Lord, just say them in your arms and let them know how close you want to be to them.

And then Lord, those that are with the person that they are having some communication issues or money issues, would you bring them to the table of reason, in your presence?

And Lord, somehow encourage them to invite you into the situation, into the discussion and just heal the relationship, in Jesus' name.

Betty: Amen!

James: And whether there are money issues and there are, I think Shaunti has a wonderful gift, she and her husband to help. And she really is gifted to write and break it down where it is like sitting down with a counselor with wisdom. So I hope you'll get it.

Shaunti, our viewers love helping others. Right now we're rescuing people from sexual trafficking. Aren't you glad that our own nation and national leadership now is calling attention to the importance of dealing with this real crisis -- even law enforcement and everything else?

Let me show you what miracle of love does. I want you to just listen to God, I think, speak through Sheila's heart about what she is seeing, and the freedom that you offer people through your love, the miracle you become for them. Watch this closely. This is the last week now of Rescue Life. And boy, we really need you to just hear clearly what God is saying about it to you. Watch closely.

On the mission field:

Sheila: Sex trafficking is the worst kind of prison I've ever seen. I've been in maximum security prisons. I've talked to women on death row. There is a worse kind of prison than that and that's sex trafficking because it is pure evil.

Open captions:

>> I was blindfolded and locked inside a room. A guard at the door brought in many men every night.

>> The men make me take drugs. If I don't do what they want I will get beaten.

>> They said, "We have no problem in killing you. We have done it many times. We will kill you and throw you out of the window. There will be no help for you."

Sheila: We will rise up and we will change this, and we will do it because -- our whole thing here at *LIFE* is reach, rescue, restore. Reach her and let her know, hey! There is a better way for you to live your life. You don't have to do this. Rescue -- go into these horrible bars and clubs and brothels and rescue these girls. And then restore them; bring them to a place where they can learn their value in Christ. The value that God places on their life is not diminished by what they have to do every night. And because of that we get to tell them you're not a number. We will step in. We will say, "Let us be your spiritual mom and dad much let us be your big sister in Christ. Let us be the ones who come and fight for you because you are worth fighting for."

End of video

In the studio:

James: Wow! "Working girl." That breaks my heart.

Betty: It does mine too. You know like Sheila said, we must rise up. We must reach out with our hearts and with our support to get these precious little ones out of this cruel lifestyle. The way they treat them, the way they frighten them, telling them they will beat them, they'll kill them if they don't do what they say. These little ones, they're carried off to a place to where their lives are in danger from one moment to the next. Please let help keep them from having to go through these horrible, horrible situations. Let's join together and make the difference. Let's give hope to these precious little ones that can't see any hope right now. Thank you so much.

James: Betty, it is really not an exaggeration that we can reach them because of love. The people that are there, they can watch them even break into the room there. You can't

imagine all the courage and compassion that is enabled by the support because there are people that are filled with love, courage, compassion that are ready to break doors down to set people free.

We have the border security that protect the border to get the ones that are being trapped or targeted and they can see them and head them off. They can tell them what's coming up, what these people are trying to do, and rescue them before they ever get them into the trafficking.

And then once we reach them then we rescue them from it and put them in a secure compound or like that beautiful Destiny House that has just changed the lives of thousands and thousands; many are now teachers, even college professors that were rescued and went through that center and got trained, learned English too.

Love never fails. We just sometimes fail to release it or let it find free expression and you've done it so wonderfully. Betty, I don't know any people anywhere that more freely with focus and determination and love give more to rescue the perishing, to care for the dying, to feed the hungry, to give water to the thirsty than the viewers of *LIFE*.

Right now in this last week Rescue Life, some friends have said, "We'll match what you give. That's how much we believe in this need and this opportunity." So would you right now go online, take your bankcard, go online dial the phone number, use that card like a check. Make the gift God puts on your heart knowing its going to be doubled. It costs an average of \$128 to rescue one to start them into the restoration process. When we reach out to them, rescue them, restore them.

Did you know that now if you give \$128 it won't rescue one it will be two? Do you know when I asked for \$1280 to reach out and rescue 10 it will now reach and rescue 20? Whatever you do will be doubled. I'm praying every one of you watching right now will go get that card. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us what you're putting in the mail. We need to know. We need to tell the mission workers that help is on

the away. Love never fails! Thank you so much for making the gift. Thank you for caring.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Behind the bright lights there is 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 \$250,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to reach, rescue, or restore one child can be doubled to help *two* children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help save one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 mission rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.

With your gift we'll send you this beautiful "Freedom" bracelet handcrafted by survivors of human trafficking who want to say thank you for helping those still trapped. Wear it as a wonderful reminder to pray for the outreach.

With your gift of \$128 or more you'll receive the "Freedom" tote. This quality canvas tote bag is made by trafficked survivors who are now learning a new trade and includes spiritual life resources such as books, devotionals, CD's, or DVD's.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help rescue 20 children! And you may request our beautiful new bronze sculpture, "A Mother's Strength."

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

End of video

In the studio:

James: I do want to remind you this is the last week. We do need to hear from all of you who can help. We have the gifts that we're sending to say thank you. If you say, "James, you just talked about money, and the program has been about it, maybe Shaunti can help, she and her husband. They're being so honest. You and Betty have been honest about what can come up. Would you mind sending us that? We're trying to help rescue and restore those precious ones. But would you send us the book?" Yes, we will. You can get it online or you can get it in the bookstore. But if you help us help others, we'll be glad to send it to you.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Shaunti for sharing with us? Shaunti, bless you and your husband. Y'all stay warm. Okay? All of you be warm! Remember last week, thanks so much for your help. Thanks for watching.