

4/6/20

Week 15: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Shane Idleman

James: Thank you. We do welcome you. I'm James Robison and this is Betty. And something has happened since you last saw us and that is we've had our 57th wedding anniversary. That's kind of a miracle; isn't it? Its 57 years. Not a miracle that we've been together that long, but it's just a long time.

Betty: Well, sometimes it feels like it.

James: Yeah, just the age. I know she doesn't look that old. You don't have to write in all the notes. I understand. She is precious.

We're so glad you're here. Shane Idleman is with us. This is a pastor. I'm going to read the name of it. It is Westside Christian Fellowship. It's in southern California; it's actually north of Los Angeles. But it's an amazing journey that he's on. He has five beautiful children, a beautiful wife. His is just an amazing story! I'm going to tell you a little bit about him then you're going to hear a whole lot about him from... you're going to hear a whole lot about him from him. Would you welcome Shane Idleman to *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

Shane, we've been learning a lot of the messages that you've been writing. I'm sure sometimes you've preached them and then you've written what was on your heart and shared it on the *Stream*. If you don't go to the *Stream*, I wish you would. I wish you'd go there every day to: Stream.org. Let me show you some of the articles that he's written

that are on there. I know they've been messages. Let me just kind of put them up and let you see them. That's the *Stream*. Now just kind of scroll up if you will and look at the different headings. And I can't read them all here but just scroll up.

I know one of them you wrote about and all of these are a little bit in the areas of what people would say, I can't even believe you'd talk about that because you're actually dealing with national issues. You're dealing with issues of something we just call "political." You asked one question, if Christians support Trump in any way, basically, is what you're actually implying, are they hypocrites? Because he hasn't done things through his life that Christians or any of us would approve in any way. And then sometimes he still expresses himself in ways we don't prefer. But you pointed out that it is like miraculous answers to prayer are coming and that he is being used.

Why do you take these things on, Shane, out in California that are certainly not popular to do?

Shane: A long, long story short, I started to just have a love for our nation that I believe God gave me. I don't believe in American pride but I think we should be proud of what God has done in our nation in securing those liberties. So I started to read the founding fathers; and I started to read about the conception of our nation, how far we've drifted from the truth. I believe it's a calling that God has given me to remind the nation of how far we've drifted. It is just a season I'm at right now because 2020 I believe is probably just as important as 2016. So I'm just using that platform. The pulpits used to be that voice of truth in our nation for many years. That's where people would find out what does God's word say about political issues?

So I think we're in the predicament we're in because pulpits have been silent. I want people to know how you can support a president even though you don't necessarily agree with the Tweets or the character or the bravado; he is not pastor-in-chief, he is the commander-in-chief. Their main reason for government is to protect those who don't break the law from those who do, to administer justice. So I think it's good for the pulpits

to be that voice of truth but also love. Hopefully I'm finding that balance, but it is stirring a lot of the hornets' nest as well.

James: Well, I want people to go to read those articles on the *Stream*. Just go find Shane Idleman and just start looking at the titles and read some of them because I really believe God is talking to us through this, I consider young man out in California to us. Everybody is young now to us, but he is a young man, with a beautiful family but he is really speaking truth.

And then you do some things on the web and YouTube posts and so forth. So if people want to find out where you've got books, we're going to be talking about *Help! I'm Addicted*, a book you've written and an experience you've had and the things you deal with. But if they wanted to find out what's going on with you and they wanted to hear messages that you've shared and read what you've shared or what you have available in the way of books, where would they go?

Shane: The best place is ShaneIdleman.com. So it has the articles and the YouTube clips. But I agree with the *Stream* too to point people to... There are some great articles there. But everything is at ShaneIdleman.com to find that.

James: All right, let's talk about *Help! I'm Addicted*. You're a pastor of a church now. You've got a beautiful family -- just amazing! The picture of your family, I've said the glory of God is on everybody in the picture including the dog!

[Laughter]

I really do believe that. God loves us and gives us these little precious pets. But just the glory of God is on your family.

All right, what's the deal here now? *Help! I'm Addicted* because you're not just talking about people who say *Help! I'm Addicted*, you were addicted. Take us on the journey you

want us to hear that will be helpful to our viewers.

Shane: Well, I wanted -- my hope is to reach two people, number one the people who are addicted, and number two, to those family members who are watching the devastation of addiction to give them hope. So a 50-year story in five minutes or under. I was raised in a... My dad came from the farms of Oklahoma, so it was kind of a hard environment in that sense. Loved him, he loved us but turned to alcohol at 12; began to experiment a little bit. And then the pain of growing up, which many people turn to addictive substances often because of pain, so learning disability, I was struggling with dyslexia.

James: This is you you're talking about now.

Shane: This is me. I began to just turn to alcohol at 16, really. And then 16, 17, 18, got involved in steroids, became a body builder. And just my life was really out of control. I conceded to my girlfriend's request to abort a child in my 20s. So just so much pain and you use the substances to numb that pain for a few hours but then there is hell to pay the next day, of course. So coming out of an addiction from alcohol and seeing it devastate so many lives. The opioid crisis right now in our nation has reached epidemic levels, the suicide rate. A lot of this is tied to addiction. So it's for anybody who is addicted to anything from food -- I used to be overweight too and struggle with my weight. So food, alcohol, opioids, pornography because behind every addiction is a stronghold. Something has gained a stronghold on your life.

So how do you break that stronghold? I want to give people hope and let them know, I don't care if you're on your fifth recovery home or your third marriage, there is hope. There is hope. And sometimes there is a battle. One of the biggest lies I found in working with so many people is they're kind of mad at God sometimes because Lord, why don't you take this away? And sometimes he does. Sometimes he just takes an addiction away -- praise God for that! But the majority of us have to fight. We have to fight for freedom, we have to apply spiritual disciplines. There is a spiritual battle.

So that's really where the book came from. It is number nine and God just put on my heart, it was actually was five years in the making. The longest I've ever, just sitting on a manuscript because you have to be transparent, you have to open up. And I have an addictive personality. I don't want just little piece of chocolate, I want the whole bar. So it's a struggle that's real. And I know there are a lot of parents out there, I did a memorial service for a suicide at our church six months ago and there is just so much addiction, especially in Los Angeles County, in my area. And I just want to help people. Let them know there is hope but you have to have biblical steps to freedom.

You can't just go, "Okay, God, take away this gambling habit" as you head to Vegas. "Help me with drinking" while you're at the bar. You've got to cooperate with the work of the Holy Spirit in your life. And so the points of the book really focus on biblical principles, how do you overcome a stronghold in your life? Food is a biggie right now with obesity rate. And did you know Type 2 diabetes is all diet related? The crisis we're seeing in our nation with the health care system, you can't keep throwing more money at it; that's not the problem. The problem is we're not stewarding this gift of health that God has given us. So I tackle that as well.

That's really where it came from. Just wanting to offer hope and healing but also give people, I'm sure many people watching have family members struggling, their kids are hooked to opioids or now that marijuana is legal in California, oh my goodness, the addiction has just skyrocketed. So there is hope for them. God hears the prayers of his people. You've got to pray, you've got to intercede. We've got to get back to the prayer closet, back to you know what? Lord, I'm fasting. I'm turning off the TV today. I'm going to skip a meal or two for my children. I'm going to contend, I'm going to intercede. We need to get back to that.

Remember when the church travailed in prayer? That's what prayer is. Real prayer is travailing and groaning and petitioning and seeking God. And if parents get back to that and family members, I think we can see a lot of healing.

James: Are you seeing, and when people got your book, which we will make it available to you if you'd like to have it, we'll be glad to send it. You can find it, of course, on his website. And when I look at the titles in here that you're saying that addiction, you're offering hope for the hurting. You're talking about changing from the inside out.

By the way, that's the way the country has to change from the bottom up. We may have some good leadership as an answer to prayer. And I really believe that's what it is, in an amazing way, if we really pray God raises up people to do what seems to almost be the impossible and even the amazing, and you are resisting temptation. The impossible is possible with God's help. You talk about yielding your life, surrendering to God, you talk about the cost of the addiction, and you talk about the power of a renewed mind.

And this is not some lengthy, big, wordy treatise. This is just like somebody in the room with you that's really trying to help you. So have you been encouraged by what you've seen happen when God gave you these messages and like this book because you watched miracles occur that you actually can be a witness to?

Shane: And many times, we actually hand it out as a track because it talks about that relationship with Jesus Christ and having a genuine relationship and giving it to people who aren't yet Christians and understanding that that has to be the foundation. But yes, if anybody applies biblical principles, they're going to see success. And you just made a great point. In our nation we have to remember that you plus God is a majority. So God's call is not to Washington, it is not to Hollywood, "If my people -- if my people," those listening, if we humble ourselves, seek his face, pray and turn from our wicked ways God will hear from heaven and I believe will begin to heal our land.

Sin doesn't stay static. It doesn't just... It either grows or withers depending on whether you feed or starve it. So you have to starve the stronghold of addiction. It takes work. There is perseverance. A lot of the self-help books are just like, "Just let go and let God." Which is good, technically, but you also have a responsibility to say no to resist temptation.

You know the famous verse, God will not give you more than you can handle every temptation that is common to us, but he also goes on to say that you may be able to bear it. There is a bearing, there is a load, there is something, there's a responsibility on our part. That's why Paul said, "I discipline my body. I bring my body into subjection. I tell it what to do. It doesn't tell me what to do."

So with addiction and strongholds it actually, flesh is controlling us. Back to overeating it tells us where to stop. I want donuts, I want coffee, I want Starbucks, I want this food and we're just allowing the flesh to lead us. Whereas a Christian, I believe we're called to discipline our body and say no and we can with God's help and God's strength.

So you have to have that combination. You have to have the power of the spirit, but you also have to fight. We are in a fight for the soul of our nation even right now and all these areas.

Betty: It is not a quick fix, it is a walk.

Shane: Absolutely. That's a good point. Now there are people who are delivered -- [snaps fingers]. Recently, "I've never... I don't have a desire for alcohol again. I don't have a desire..." Praise God! That's not the case for...

James: That's almost like the exception --

Shane: It is.

James: And we wish that all deliverance... I've experienced deliverance that was so amazing and then I would say, "How come I don't have it over chocolate?" I just can't make chocolate look ugly.

Let me ask you about this. I'll just throw this into your own circle of prayer and study. As

I was asking God about how people break this cycle because what I found is I've talked to people, even in my own journey, it almost is a love/hate relationship. You want to hate it, but you love it and you just wish you didn't like it. You wish you didn't actually love it. And you actually begin to fall in love with something. And you take sexual distraction or attraction or whatever, there is a beauty there that God made that he knew you would recognize. You could actually fall in love with that. You could be captivated by it and held captive by it.

The Lord began to show me something. I asked him this. Remember, that David said when the Lord said you do this and he said, "No, but I'm not going to make a gift that doesn't cost me something." Think about how God told all of the farmers and the shepherds, "I want you to bring the best of your crop, the first fruit. But I also want you to bring the choice lamb. I want you to bring..." You remember how he scolded them? I believe it was Hosea that said, "Why do you bring the blind and the -- and the crippled? Why don't you bring me what I said, 'the perfect.'"

And you know if you've ever been raising something. I watch little kids win the grand champion with their steer and they'll be crying. They've got their money, they got the college, but they're go to say good-bye to that steer. You can say what you want to but nobody has ever said good-bye to a puppy or dog that didn't really just -- they love that lamb. And as I was praying about helping people break a cycle, the Lord said, sometimes you do love something, but you take that that you do love and say I'll love you more. And I'm going to give you my best. There is something that happens when we give him that which is dear or precious to us, that's what he gave to redeem us. He gave the most precious. And he also said when we make sacrifices, "Bring me that which is precious and special. Do bring me the first fruits."

I'm telling you, I think... does that make sense, pastor? Is there something there that might be important and helpful?

Shane: Yeah. Because I think it was John Owen wrote, one of the Puritans, I like to read

the Puritan authors as well, too. Had a great book on holiness. He said, "Sometimes our sins are so dear to us as our children and we hold on to them and we cradle them." But he said, "Crucifixion must come. You must deny the self and remove that sin." So there is a love -- most people fall back into addiction because there is a temptation, there is an enticement to it.

Here's why addiction is so hard to break. When somebody is doing good, something triggers them, they blow it. Now they're caught in shame and depression and they go back to the addiction because of that. And it is an endless cycle of hope, failure, defeat. There is some hope, failure, defeat. So breaking that and letting people know...

James: They get disheartened and they get shamed and they use that for an escape route rather than the one escape route which is not to put shame on you but to lift the shame and lay it on Jesus. He said, "You can lay it all on me." And he'll take it away as far as the east is from the west.

Father, we pray that for every person right now that's struggling in any area. And Lord, would you just overflow them with your love right now? And not that you're putting them down, that you understand -- more than any power in the universe, you understand their battle. And you alone are able to lighten the load and get in the yoke and make it so light they can be an overcomer. I pray that some things have been said that has just opened the door and the way to what they just open up to you, deliver me from darkness, deliver me from defeat, deliver me from this addiction, deliver me from this unhealthy attraction. Break the cycle, Lord, in Jesus' name.

If you'd like to have Shane's book, we'd be happy to send to you. Do you want someone to pray with you? There is always a prayer number there paid for by love, it's an 800-number and you feel free to call knowing that somebody is going to care and love you very deeply and help you find what you're looking for.

Shane, our viewers are the most amazing people. I really believe that because we have

been able, Betty, for years to share with our viewers an opportunity to be the miracle in somebody's life, to break a cycle. Think about this. Precious children sold into sexual slavery -- little children! And you, because of God's love, listen to me, can set them free totally. And a miracle has happened. People like you have said, "We'll match what you give to set these who are trafficked free."

I want you to see some very amazing, very brave people right now supported by your support rescuing people. It's amazing! You make it possible -- God's love through you. Watch! I think you're going to want to be a big part of what God's doing.

On the mission field:

Announcer: They wage war in plain sight. Not with weapons of steel but of heart and mind. Always watching, seeing what was meant to be hidden. Fearlessly, they confront the danger, skillfully unraveling the strategy of the enemy. Reclaiming that which was stolen and leaving the thief empty-handed. These are heroes and their brand of rescue is not pulling girls out of hell but sparing them from it altogether.

We call them "border monitors." But to the thousands of women and children they have saved they're known as "guardian angels." Their mission is simple: Prevention through interception. With well-trained eyes they scan the steady flow of humanity pouring through these borders identifying anything that even hints at a potential trafficking in progress.

With unbelievable courage and wisdom they intervene refusing to let evil have its way. They know what to ask to uncover the truth and won't hesitate to right what is wrong. They literally stand in the gap between freedom and slavery.

Today, our mission partners in Nepal have teams in place at three of the country's largest

entry points rescuing an average of 90 women and children every single month. Their success is astonishing. But our hearts are still troubled by the remaining unmonitored areas being used to traffic victims throughout Asia and beyond. Imagine how many more lives could be saved if we were able to expand our efforts. Our ability to empower more of these heroes here is dependent upon the support of our Rescue Life heroes back home. Heroes like you.

End of video

In the studio:

James: I don't understand how anybody can look and see that love and that courage and not be encouraged to support it. Betty, those people, with those yellow coats are risking their lives to save lives. They really are! To say they're courageous and fearless is not an overstatement of the truth, it is just who they are. But Betty, they're able to be there because of viewers who watch and people who are supporting them.

But then you saw all the ones that are already trafficked and caught and we're able to get them out of those situations, miraculously -- and that takes courage. You, the viewers have actually built some compounds that are secure compounds that nobody can access and get in to ever get them out again while we're taking them through what we call the restoration process. We reach them, we rescue them, and then we restore them.

As a matter of fact, you have on a bracelet right here that we're teaching these girls when they've been set free, how to create things. We have some crafts. We have a tote bag that we've put some *LIFE Outreach* items in as inspiration to just share with you.

Here's what we're asking you to do. Help us support this. This is the last week and we really need a miracle outpouring of support. The average to rescue one, to start this process, is \$128. Now we had a group of friends step up and say, "We will match that."

That's an amazing thing. Why did they do it? Because, Betty, they believe it is so important and they're willing to step up to match what you do. Well understand this, \$128 rescues one but now it's two. And I always press and always will, I ask you to think big and thank God you do. Most of our viewers will really step up and do something bigger than they've ever done. Some drill an entire water well, not just part of one but a whole well. But \$1280 rescues ten. No, now it is 20! Because it will be doubled. There is a level at which you can come in. Some people say, "James, I couldn't even give \$128." Well, if you can give \$64 now it will be doubled, and we've got another, and we have the \$128.

God is amazingly making it possible for us to do the impossible and it is because of his love, and his love through people just like you. So would you right now during this last week of Rescue Life, would you go to the phone, dial that number? Take your bankcard with you, or go online; take that bankcard, many of our friends now are going online to make the gift. Use the bankcard like it's a check. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*, that's what you're giving. But call the number and tell us you're putting it in the mail or make the gift there on the phone. If you make it online of course we know immediately that you've done that.

Would you do just what God is leading you to do? The bracelet that I mentioned is for any gift. We'll send it to you. The tote bag for the gift of \$128; and we've got the beautiful "Mother's Strength" bronze for those of you who will make the \$1280 gift or maybe even more. Whatever you can do, we're going to bless you. But know this, you're setting captives free. You're becoming the miracle someone longed for and many prayed for. You're becoming an answer to some parents' prayers for their children that were taken and held in sexual trafficking. Thank you for being a miracle. Thank you for sharing the love of God.

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 really believe that here during this last week that every one of you who, some of you have already helped, you'll help again. Betty and I, back when we were drilling the wells, we gave a well. And we got down to the end of the program, I said, "Betty, do you

think we could give at least give a whole lot toward another one?" And of course, she was ready. That's kind of the way our viewers are too. Thank you! If you want the book that Shane talked about, and he is gifted. I think he is not only a gifted preacher, he is a gifted writer and a gifted communicator online and you check him out. But you say, "James, I sent a gift to help. Would you send me the book? I know somebody or I need help in a certain area, but I know somebody who does." So just ask for it.

Would you join Betty and me in saying thanks to Shane Idleman for blessing us?

Shane: Thank you.

James: We're going to stay close, Bro. God bless all of you for watching. Thanks for being with us. Tell your friends to watch *LIFE Today*. Remember, last week now to help Rescue Life. Thank you!