

4/23/20

Week 17: Spring Mission Feeding

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Steve Arterburn

Randy: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Randy Robison. Sheila Walsh, as always. Good to have you.

Sheila: Nice to be here.

Randy: We've got a great topic today because we're going to talk about healing. And Sheila, we all need a little healing at some point in our lives somewhere down the line.

Sheila: I think, probably at most points in our life. I'm kind of grateful that the person who has written *100 Days of Healing* as a daily devotional is actually a really good friend of mine. Please welcome Steve Arterburn!

Randy: Good to have you back!

Steve: Good to be here. Thank you!

Randy: I cheated a bit. I actually talked to Steve on the Live Cast that we do, noon Monday through Friday. And so we just had this conversation. So I know how good this conversation is going to be.

Sheila: We had our preproduction meeting, we always sit and talk about our guests, and I'm going through the book and I'm saying, "Well, there is quite a lot in here about

healing."

They said, "Read the cover."

[Laughter]

Oh! *A 100 Days of Healing*.

[Laughter]

You tell a story though, and I don't know if it was something you talked to Randy about but of an atheist who got healed who wasn't particularly thrilled.

Steve: No! It's one of my favorite stories because a lot of people think that God doesn't love them because they haven't been healed. Or they hear, "Have more faith." Well, this atheist that I met was in a hospice with brain tumors, Stage 4 cancer. They took him for one final M.R.I. or CAT scan just to see how things were and the doctor comes out and says, "I don't know! You have no cancer. You are healed." Well, this was an angry atheist. He only had access to anger. He threw one of these expensive pieces of equipment around the room. They sedated him. They had to restrain him. And a year later he comes to Jesus.

Sheila: Oh my gosh! I didn't know that bit.

Steve: And he's been serving Christ for I guess 15 years now, a very committed Christian. But I love that story because that was God's plan for him. Now you take someone like Joni Eareckson Tada, great faith, not the plan for physical healing, and chronic pain and all that.

But what I've tried to do here is take you on a 100-day journey using Bible promises for healing because we can't necessarily have a physical healing but many times when we do

some of the things the Bible tells us to do to heal, it's pretty powerful.

For instance, James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for each other that you might be healed." Well, how many people are waiting for God to heal them and yet they are so secretive? They've never told anybody about anything they've ever done. So if we would just do some of the things that the Bible tells us to do.

You know Dean Ornish is this health food guy that got people eating food that tastes like hay.

[Laughter]

And he says the most forgiving thing you could ever do is to forgive somebody that you're bitter against. He said that's far more healing of your body than any of the food that I have. We just know that to be true.

So I really believe that if we stop waiting for God to do what maybe God is waiting for us to do and we get on this 100-day journey you might be pretty surprised at how much spiritual and emotional healing that sometimes even results in physical healing.

Randy: One of the questions that I thought was very interesting from our conversation was this issue of confessing your sins to someone but what if that confession does damage to another loved one, another person? In other words, I'm going to confess my sins and, in the process, hurt someone else, and now they need healing. How do we navigate those difficult waters?

Steve: Well, it's interesting. We have to use discretion. In recovery programs we talk about making amends unless it would hurt somebody else. We don't want to use that as an excuse. But you know if you've been a sexual predator or had been a person using pornography or unfaithful, when you confess that to your spouse that is going to hurt them, but they are entitled to know that that's the truth. And so we always encourage people to

do that with a third party.

But we need to confess to somebody else first before we go confess to the person. We need to be open with somebody else that can help us through that and then we can do a little bit of work and maybe that confession to the other person will be a more healing, less destructive experience.

Sheila: One of the things that I thought was really interesting is the way that you link grieving to the whole forgiveness process. Because sometimes people kind of want you to rush to healing and rush to forgiveness. What do you see as the part of grieving?

Steve: Well, a lot of people want to instantly forgive. And there is a concept of saying, okay, I forgive them but there is work to be done beyond that. I think in the Christian community there is so many ungrieved losses. Let's don't just jump over here and say, I don't have any grieving to do because God wants me to forgive. I've lost something, I'm angry, I'm sad.

I was in a marriage for 20 years and there was unfaithfulness. When I found out about it and confronted her, she divorced me. I didn't forgive her instantly. I wanted to kill her. Really, I didn't even know I had that in me. And then as I grieved, I was healing. And then I didn't want to kill her, I just wanted her to die. And I thought I was making progress here.

Sheila: What a beautiful testimony!

[Laughter]

Steve: Yeah, and then just some illness -- that would be okay. But really, eventually, because I was honest about it, I found myself praying for good things for her because she was the mother of my daughter. But I had people that helped me. Like on Sunday, these couples that I ran around with before, they had this meeting called "Couples and Steve."

And it was just so I could have a place to be me. They would say, "Are you going to 'Couples and Steve?'"

[Laughter]

But it was so great to have people not abandon me and to help me to heal.

Randy: But let me ask you, what's the proper way to grieve before we forgive as opposed to wishing someone would die?

Steve: Well, I think, to be honest how you feel first of all. Okay, this is how I feel. I am angry. I have lost so much, and my dreams. And one of the things I had to deal with was just how much fear I had because I felt like I'll never have a ministry anymore, and all of this.

So it is just first being honest about it, and then to be open. Some people, it is easier to be angry than sad. And others, it is easier to be sad than angry. But the grief process, when we deal with that and express that, then I don't have to feel five years later like it just happened yesterday. And we all know people who have had losses and you talk to them and it feels like man, that is so fresh -- 30 years ago. So they've got some grieving to do.

But if I just tell you that here are problems, ungrieved losses or lack of forgiveness or people dealing with lust, if I just tell you about the problem, all I do is add to your shame and your distance. But what I've tried to do here is say, hey, there is a path. And one of my favorite scriptures is Jeremiah 6:16. And Jeremiah said, "Stop at the crossroads and look around. Find the old godly path, walk in those steps and you'll find perfect peace and lasting peace."

We need to stop and look around. And that's what I've tried to help somebody do to find the areas of your life that need healing. Because a lot of people have a lot of stuff from childhood they've never fully healed from. And we want to say, "Oh well, we're

Christians. We just want to move on." Well, okay, but as you're moving on and you're dragging that with you then you need to deal with that.

Sheila: The way it's laid out here though, I love this! I'm going to start using this for the next 100 days. I guess you thought it was your copy. No!

Randy: I've got my own, actually.

Sheila: But there is a scripture, there is a great devotion and then you've got great quotes from like Henri Nouwen and Rick Warren, all sorts of people. And then for further reflection, this has got meat in it to me.

Steve: And it is really easy to use. And there is scripture to go deeper. But the other thing I like to tell people is there is work to be done. And my wife and I, after we got married, we discovered we had a little difference in communication style. It just didn't seem to come up while we were dating.

[Laughter]

If I was a super hero I would be Bullet Point Man. Just tell me the facts.

Sheila: Women love that! Yeah!

Steve: She would be more Wonder Word Woman. And when she communicates, she kind of starts over here with a prelude and it kind of builds up and there is a climactic moment, and then diminuendo and postlude. I'm over here with attention deficit disorder trying to hold on.

[Laughter]

Randy: I can't relate at all.

Sheila: No, no!

Steve: So one day I wanted to talk to her about that. And I said, "If there is anything you ever want me to work on, I'd be happy to. But there is something that's kind of bothering me."

Randy: Just give me the three bullet points, right?

Steve: And she said, "Okay, I've got something."

I said, "What?"

She said, "Something you can work on."

I said, "Well, what?"

She said, "You've got to work on me not needing to work on anything."

And so I said, "Okay. Well, I'll do that right now."

But we started working on our connection. I'm going to tell you. Rather than just say, "This is the way I was brought up" or "This is the way we are" humble down, that's her term, humble down and come together as you are. All I've got to tell you is we're having just the best days -- the best days of my life ever together and being in tune. We say it is like bluetoothing up here; that's my son's little phrase for what we do. We can be attuned to somebody, not just connected.

And so often we hear about horrible divorce rates, and I hate the figure of how many Christians are married and miserable. You don't have to be that. You can work through that. That's part of the healing process too.

Randy: Yeah, you and your wife weren't always bluetoothing it. You guys had some rough patches.

Steve: We did! And in fact, we were with a marriage counselor. And "How do you feel about Steve?" She said, "I don't feel anything."

And she said to me, "How do you feel about her?" I said, "I don't feel anything either."

And this really smart marriage counselor goes, "Okay, well, we've got something in common that we can work on."

[Laughter]

I might have a few too many shoes in my closet. And one day I came home from a trip and I told her, "I didn't buy these shoes, they were too much money." And then Thanksgiving I was going to preach, and I said, "You know, I can't get those shoes out of my head. Do you think maybe that could be an early Christmas present?"

She walked over to the closet, she had already ordered those shoes. She had them there for me. And that's the kind of person she is. I've got to tell you, there were times she would have thrown the shoes at me, but she would have never ordered them and given them to me as a gift.

So I just say, maybe you don't have a good time with your spouse. We hated each other. That's where we were, and we are having the best days ever. So don't give up hope and be willing to do some things that maybe you never thought you'd need to do.

Sheila: I really think this book will help you. But one of the things, we'll tell you how to get it in a minute, but I wanted to ask you, you are now a teaching pastor in a church. What's the church?

Steve: It's called Northview Church in Carmel, Indiana; thirteen campuses, third fastest growing church in America. Three of our campuses are in Indiana prisons. I have to tell you, I did a series called, "Take Your Life Back" and everybody in the church, we passed out over 3,000 copies of "Take Your Life Back."

And I met a guy there and I said, "How did you end up here?" It was a sex offender prison. He said, he was 26, "I became a Christian and the next morning I walked down to the police station, I turned myself in. I had been having sex with a 12-year old girl. I was raping a 12-year old girl."

I said, "I do not know of any other Christian man that would be that brave."

He was serving at least 15 years of a 30-year sentence. Well, *Every Man's Battle* just came out in the 20th anniversary edition.

Sheila: Fantastic book!

Steve: That young man, he wanted to make a contribution. He took this book and he translated it into braille and sent it to the Library of Congress. And his edition is in the Library of Congress, the braille edition of *Every Man's Battle*. It's just stories of what God can do.

I preached a few weeks ago. In our church, after I preached that Sunday, 144 people came to Christ, 20 of them were in that sex offender prison.

[Applause]

Sheila: That's what living is all about.

Steve: It is! It's the greatest -- you know Women of Faith, we had 5 million women

come.

Sheila: Steve is the founder of Women of Faith. That God would use you is amazing to touch the lives...

Steve: And we picked you.

[Laughter]

Sheila: Oh, I didn't mean there was...

[Laughter]

Steve: But here's the point. The number that a lot of people...

Randy: We knew what you meant.

Steve: We had over a half million women come to Christ through Women of Faith and that's really good.

Randy: Now, I know that with the reboot of Ken Harrison's Promise Keepers, he just called you and asked you to be one of what seven speakers?

Steve: Seven speakers and I'm getting to do the one on integrity. I'm so thrilled. We're going to be in Dallas July 31st, August the 1st, the big stadium here.

Sheila: Cowboy's stadium. Whoa!

Randy: What's your message that day?

Steve: Well, I'm going to talk about two things: Abortion and pornography. They really

go together. Because I was exposed to pornography at four and pornography causes us to objectify women. And when you objectify a woman, when she is pregnant it is just another object there. They've asked me to bring men to repentance over being part of an abortion, and then secondly, help them to make God's standard, the standard of purity their standard for their thought life. And really, I'm so looking forward to that day because every time I give men a chance, not just to feel bad about themselves, but here's the path to redemption, we get to see a lot of men change course.

Randy: Can I ask you about that? Because when we deal with some of these issues, especially like pornography, we get very legalistic about it a lot times and it almost in a weird way becomes more of a problem because we are focused on the problem all the time and don't do this, don't do this, don't do this -- and now that's all you're thinking about. What's the path to healing to where that is not even an issue on your mind, in your life, and you're really healed from pornography or the pain of abortion?

Steve: You go from wanting to see things that stir up lust as it says in Second Timothy 2:22 to you want to protect yourself, your marriage, your relationship with God. And so you start to ask a question, is it pure? And the standard that Job set for us is not to have a hint of sexual immorality in your life.

When you finally get your life cleaned up and you've confessed your sins and you're starting to put good things in your mind, not the other, then you're in a preservation process. It's just the opposite. You're saying, "No! I don't want to look at that because I don't want to mess this up. I want to honor my wife or my future wife or just honor me being a single."

And you know my wife facilitates a group for women who struggle with pornography and lust and other things and it is the same battle. It doesn't matter what your sex or gender is. But God has called us to put a foundation of truth, not feelings, and then the standard of purity. If it's pure it's going to increase our relationship in depth with each other and with God. If it's not, it's going to erode it little by little.

Sheila: It just seems like it is time to shine the brightest light into the darkest corners of the church. We should be the people who are able to talk about anything.

Steve: I was at a pastor's appreciation conference and I was speaking. And I said to the guy that started, "What's the problem?" "Oh they don't want to offend anybody, their churches." I said, "We're the third fastest growing church and because of our pastor Steve Poe, we address the tough issues of abortion, divorce head on. That's how we grow so much.

And so I just want to encourage people to don't cover up, don't hide. If you're -- well, first of all, if you're in a church, make it a church where people feel God's rich in mercy. Make sure your church is rich in mercy and do something healing, like take some guys to Promise Keepers. Or we do *Every Man's Battle* workshop. Come, get your act together. Don't just sit there and be mediocre. They'll put on your tombstone, "Almost!" Or something like that. You don't want that. You want to live the life that God's called you.

Randy: I think that is a strong point. And I want to ask you personally, you have helped other men in their battles, you have helped people find healing, how much is helping others been a part of your healing?

Steve: Oh my goodness. Everything that I have been through, whether it was paying for an abortion or a divorce or something, when I was in seminary in Fort Worth, I felt like God was calling me to be a revealer. I didn't really know what that meant but I've always been open about it. Then when someone else has come to me and said, "Because you talked about that, I was able to deal with it" my healing continues. I will never stop being amazed at what God can do with brokenness. I'm so grateful that he has. He's a great redeemer and a great healer.

Sheila: Yes, he is! And this book, *100 Days of Healing*, I'm serious, I love this book. It is really going to help you. We'll tell you how you can get your own copy. But first of all,

we want to take you to a place where Randy and I have both been and show you where there is some real needs for some real healing in different ways. Please watch this.

On the mission field:

Announcer: In South Sudan, at this very moment, families' lives have been devastated by floods, followed by drought and civil conflict. The end result is food supplies have been depleted. These mothers have gathered this day so our medical teams can assess the severity of the malnutrition that's impacting their children.

Isak: It is quite amazing as you walk in here and you're just looking at mother after mother after mother, child after child, you see how so many of these kids just kind of, there is a blankness in their eyes. There is a lethargic-ness. There is a quietness about them. There is a stillness about them. They look at you in your eyes and as they make eye contact you see that they are just lethargic.

That's because they don't have food. We've spoken to these mothers. Mother after mother tell us, their biggest single challenge here is that they have no food. That is why what is going on here is a crisis of epic proportion. And when we find this, we need you to react in an epic way. We need you to do something out of your heart that is as big as what this crisis is. Because without that, we're unable to meet these families' needs. We're unable to help these precious little children. And if we don't help them, they die. Yet another statistic, yet, another child that dies because of malnutrition or starvation.

To many of us, not a name, not a child we know, but to this mother and all the other mothers here, their child dies as a child with a name. Their precious little baby! Their little life that they would do anything for, just as you would do anything for your child.

So please, I'm asking you today from the bottom of my heart, help us. Help us to help

these mothers. We're here but we can't do it without you.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: You know the situation in South Sudan is absolutely desperate at the moment. These mothers and their children, they have been chased from their home. They have nowhere to go. And no matter where they go, they then discover that there's militia on the way and they are not safe.

You might be surprised looking at that, that some of these children don't look as malnourished as some of the children that we show you. When we were in Angola in the malnutrition clinics and those little ones are desperate.

But what you need to understand is these little ones that you just saw in South Sudan, they're about four or 5 weeks away from that. Because if they have nothing, if they have no food... one of the things that we noticed with all the mothers, that they were running away with everything they could carry, they had no food. When these children have nothing to eat day after day and try to sleep at night with an empty belly, it's not a long walk between what you saw there and what we see when we go to the malnutrition clinics. That's why we want to intervene now and do something now, Randy.

Randy: Yeah, Sheila, for years we have been on the forefront, wherever the need is, whether it is in South Sudan or other countries where there's drought or famine. *LIFE Outreach International* has said you know what? We're not just going to proclaim the love of God, we're going to demonstrate the love of God.

We can only do that with your help and that's why we like to come to you during this time of year and say, you know what? \$30 will help feed three children for three months -- \$100 will help feed ten children for three months! \$1,000 -- that's 100

children. You can do the math, it's very simple. But the important thing is that we come together, and we do something.

We reach out and we say, you know what? We are, Lord, your hands. We are your feet. We go to where the difficulty is. We extend that hand. And there is something in that hand. In this case, it is a bowl of food.

Right now we have a lot of empty bowls. We need you to join with us to fill those bowls so that we can fill the stomachs of those children, so we can prevent the malnutrition from setting in in some cases or so we can turn it around in many cases and save lives. When you join with us today, go online, go to phones, do what you can, there is no gift that's too large, there is no gift that's too small because it all puts food into the stomachs of children who will go hungry and likely starve.

And I know, Sheila, you've seen it. I've been there. I've watched them die. I have watched children die in Africa. I don't ever want to do that again. So I will boldly come to you and say, do the best that you can. Let's save lives through mission feeding.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Mission feeding began with a promise to be there in times of crisis for thousands of hurting and hungry children in their time of need. Now more than ever we need your help to save lives by feeding and caring for children across the continent of Africa.

With food reserves gone and many areas experiencing severe famine, we urgently need to replenish our supplies to reach the 350,000 children who are counting on us.

Your gift of love can be the miracle answer to a desperate mother's prayer. Call now with

your life saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 that will help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. With your gift we'll send you the *Global Impact of Life Journal*. This softcover journal includes pictures from the mission field and inspiring scriptures as a reminder of your impact in giving to bless lives around the world.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the *Global Impact Bible*. This English Standard Version presents a fascinating guide to the impact of the bestselling book of all time filled with quotes from well-known figures, photographs and reproductions of fine art. It highlights the many surprising ways scripture has shaped civilization.

Finally with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children be sure to request our commemorative bronze sculpture, "A Mother's Strength."

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video

In the studio:

Randy: You know like Steve said, I think a lot of times our healing begins when we reach out and help others. Sheila, that's what we're doing with mission feeding and I think we can help them with this book.

Sheila: For any gift at all, we will send you *100 Days of Healing* daily devotional. Also, 1-800 New Life, that's where you can get in touch with Steve or NewLife.com. Anybody that I meet on the road who is struggling, I send them to 1-800 New Life. Will you help me thank Steve Arterburn?

Randy: Thanks Steve!

Steve: Great to be here. You guys keep it up.

Sheila: Thank you! We love you. We'll see you next time!