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Week 41: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Naomi Zacharias #2

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are so glad to be able to spend this time with you.

We've introduced Ravi Zacharias for years. I don't even know if I can go back how far but it's been lots of years. There are not enough words to tell you how much we love Ravi. And to say that Ravi loved us, it means a lot to us because in fact he did. I think Ravi sometimes took me into the inner circle of his own deep longing and prayers and concern and was able to share his heart that sometimes I don't think he shared openly with everybody.

I can tell you this, he had a real concern for the future of freedom. He not only loved India, a billion people there that he'd like to get God's arms around, and all over the Middle East where he traveled, and the high academic communities of the world where he shook people to the core but he loved being here.

And he knew those of who you watch, and the people that we've had like he loved our pastor Robert Morris and Gateway Church so much, and our guests and the pastors that

just filled this studio that he ministered to, that was just an incredible relationship.

And to have his daughter Naomi sitting here with me is a tremendous blessing. Naomi, I want to tell you, we really love you. We felt like your dad loved us a lot. Am I right about that?

Naomi: He sure did. He did.

James: I want to tell people that you're here not only to talk about Ravi but to talk about this book, this children's book because that's -- it really kind of surprised me when you sent this to me. That she would do such a beautiful job, three princes she has, boys in her family and a girl. Are you going to write one for girls too?

Naomi: I would love to!

James: But it really blessed me. I want you to go online and get one for every person that has a child. And we will send you one if you'll help us do what we do. She works with Wellspring. She works with an outreach with Ravi's ministry, let's just say every kind of humanitarian love and care possible, which you know is what we do. You work in the sex trafficking area to get people out. We do that together. It's amazing.

I'm really interested and I want to talk to you some about dad for sure but why is it that you suddenly went from just talking to your little prince to wanting to put something down that is so beautifully illustrated? What went on inside of you?

Naomi: That's a good question. It started as a song that I was singing to him that I kind of made up in my head. His brothers and sister were singing it to him too. We still do. He knows it word for word. But there was something about being able to put it down in book form for him that felt like such a dream.

Any time you do a book project, honestly there is a lot anxiety that comes with it because you don't know how it is going to do. And are people going to like it or not? And I remember just really praying, Lord, this is a dream I have. I wanted to do it for Nico and it needed to be enough for me no matter how well I did to be able to give it to Nico, to present this to Nico. Because there is something about, I guess just that written word, right, and that tangible reminder of the words that you try to live out in your love for them every day. But to have that place where he would always be able to go to to remember those words written for him.

James: Well, it is just beautiful. I wish you could just see it all. My house is your museum, a showcase just for you.

Naomi: And mine really is. There are drawings all over the wall.

James: It is just... I see the love of God, I see the love of mom, I see the love of parents. I just pray that everybody that has a prince will want to get this and read it. Naomi, you and I prayed with dad, and for dad, and all the family all the way up to the time we knew he went to a place where the joys of heaven are indescribable forever. But what do you believe? Because Ravi shared with me in those last moments when he was still strong enough to make the point, his concern for the body of Christ, the family of God.

And you know what I found? And I know Ravi and I even talked about it. Sometimes you talk about knowing God as Father and the impression many people have of father, they can't even fathom what the real Father is like. And then sometimes you talk about a family and they don't even know what that is.

Ravi and I spent a lot of time in the last months, even years talking about the body of Christ, the church and about the uniquely designed members and their importance fitting together with honor for one another, submitted to the one head, Christ. And it was like we wanted to bring it together.

And Ravi watched in this studio, and in conferences, I mean Ravi was at our 50th anniversary conference. Ravi has been with us maybe for nearly every anniversary we've had. But we talked about bringing these leaders together who had been taught not to like each other. It was like we belong to a different tribe or camp, a different sectarian divide. And boy, were we divided! It made Congress look calm compared to the way these preachers were coming at one another. And we began to really pray for God to heal the body.

One of the strongest things your dad said to me in those moments of strength, he said, "James, if the church doesn't stop dividing over a disagreement, over a point or viewpoint, and making it an idol where they make that viewpoint an idol, that takes them out of the spirit of God and it divides, it's destroying us."

In other words, we're not talking about basic biblical doctrine or truth, we're talking about

a point of view, whether it is gifts or the fruit of the spirit, or the gifts of the spirit, we just argue and divide. And it was breaking his heart. He wanted to see the church come together to be the body of Christ that overwhelmed the gates of hell's intentions. I know he wanted that. Did you sense that in your family relationship time and communicating with Dad?

Naomi: Well, I think that was so true to who my dad was. And one of the things now that I think about every day is the gift that I had in the father I had who so pointed me to the character and the person of Christ himself.

In fact, one of the last things he said to me, he had grown so weak and I said to him, "Dad, you're the man who's always loved me." His weakened voice still found the strength to respond, "But there is one who loves you more, honey." And always pointing me to Him. I think I'll hang on to that for the rest of my life.

But those things were so true to his heart and so sincere in him. I think division in the church really has to be one of the devil's playgrounds, doesn't it? Because if he can accomplish that there is so much that we dismantle and that begins to self-destruct on its own if he can create just that, the beginnings of division and what ensues from that.

There is a movie, I think it is an Avengers movie but there is such a powerful quote in it that I remembered. The bad guy in the movie is trying to create division within the Avengers but he's doing it amongst themselves. So his partner says to him, "Wouldn't it just be easier to attack them from outside?"

He says, "No, something attacked from the outside will always rise again. But if you can destroy it from within it will be dead forever."

I think for the church right now we are in such a place where we can become so distracted by the opportunities for so much in-fighting and division between us, and forgetting what binds us, what holds us together. That we preach a gospel story of both redemption and restoration. And if we remembered that in our engagements with each other how different our interactions would be.

I think we just live in an environment and culture now where it is so much easier to attack the individual. Because if you can create distrust and dislike for the individual you can silence them forever. You actually don't even have to get to the argument or deal with the issue if you can destroy the person.

So for my father who believed, I think so much just in reconciliation amongst us as brothers and sisters in Christ and the importance of that, how are we going to preach a message and story of that out there if we can't figure out how to do it on the inside here?

James: Well, that is, I'm telling you, what has to happen. Betty, if the family of God, the body of Christ would come together healthy, loving and appreciating each uniquely designed member of the body, no small parts, no unimportant parts, uniquely designed; all of them diverse, different but important. If we could just have that appreciation.

And you and I have traveled the world and we've met Christians all over the world, we have met people of all stripes and here we have watched in the last years, we have

watched Christian leaders that were taught to stay apart come together. And I think we are witnessing a miracle of healing of the body of Christ to become healthy. Do you bear witness with that? I know it was what Ravi wanted so much.

Betty: Absolutely! And I think one of the most important things we're seeing is people are understanding that their part is what God has given them, and it is no less important than the other person's part. It is all the parts fitting together that make the beautiful, beautiful bouquet of God's love and his expression of what he wants to do for his children if we will just understand he didn't make us all alike. We don't all have the same color hair or the same color skin. We don't all have the same build, we don't all have the same families, we're different. And God did that for a purpose -- he loves difference. He loves that beauty in it.

And so if we could just realize God made you for something special and if you can find out what that special is, it's as important as you might see someone like James standing up before a crowd and preaching. But God made you as important as that. I've heard you say many times you use the illustration, you'll find out how important the small parts are, you just stump your toe that nobody sees, you don't think about it. It's small but you stump it and boy, it effects your whole body.

What if one small part of God's beautiful bouquet gets hurt or out of place? We need to go toward that person and understand, James, that that person needs to be brought back into the fold and into God's body so the picture can be complete again.

James: Yeah, we mustn't isolate or amputate a body part that's ill, hurt, suffering or

out-of-sync or doesn't seem to be functioning right. We need to get it back in place.

Naomi, if you think if dad was shouting from heaven, do you ever wonder what he wishes the church would hear? We are facing some very important decisions. We have a major decision that we definitely need God to help us know what to do. Then we need those who are chosen to perceive wisdom comes from above. What do you think your dad would wish we would hear right now?

Naomi: Oh boy, what a gift and a responsibility to try to be a mouthpiece for him. I think one of the things that I saw in my dad in those last days was, even as he was starting to lose consciousness, his eyes were closed but he was just speaking constantly about the gospel. We kept hearing him say "the importance of gospel, the importance of the Bible." Just saying it over and over that the critical nature of that just seemed to be so strong in him even as he was nearing the end of the days for him and where he himself was actually approaching heaven.

I think for my dad, one of the things I guess I would say is and then get to the larger point here is just the importance of living that out in our daily choices, in our daily life. My dad lived an extraordinary life and blessed millions of people, I think -- I think would be fair to say. And I'm so thankful for the legacy he gave.

I think as his daughter I look at that and I'm aware, I don't think I could ever be a shadow of what he was. My life is a much smaller life, and yet in his legacy, one of the things I've been reminded of, the people that have written, hundreds and hundreds of notes that have written, so many of them have commented on the seemingly little things or the things that

we think are little.

You talk about not leaving anyone behind or those who are wounded or those who are hurting, it's the person who wrote and said, "He remembered my name." Somebody said to me, "I was going through a really painful time in my life and had shared that story with him previously, and he was walking up on to the platform to speak somewhere and caught sight of me out of the corner of his eye and stopped and came over first and just put his arm around me and said, "We're still praying for you."

I think that reminder that he saw people and that's what they are remembering. The Lord did gift him with preaching and with that kind of voice but it is the individual interactions you can have with people on a daily basis that can change the way they see their purpose in the world in front of them.

What I think he would want to say is to just remind us of the truth and the power of the gospel story over and over again -- of the grace and redemption of Jesus Christ. That that is where our strength comes from, that's where our restoration comes from, it's where redemption is going to come from. We are all in need of that Savior. And that each one of our life choices can reflect that. And that in doing so, we can help to bring a taste of that kingdom to come to earth today.

James: You know while you were talking about it, I was thinking about how God said when Moses was here, this is not an idle word for you, this is your life. His word and the words that he speaks are truth and life, Jesus. That is what your dad kept talking about, the gospel, the good news, the transforming power of the gospel. That is what the world

needs so desperately now.

Naomi, we are doing something. I know it's big on your heart. We're trying to rescue people who are caught in sexual trafficking. How important is it for our viewers to understand that supporting that is not a feeble gesture, it works. We can set these people free?

Naomi: I think it is actually a beautiful gesture because I think in participating in something like that is being part of restoration, of being part of that restorative message that's in the gospel. It is answering the call that Jesus gave us to see those that are overlooked, those that are exploited, those that are wounded, those that are suffering. He gave us that particular call. He demonstrated that for us.

We're answering his call when we do that but it is also being part of this opportunity in somebody's life to be an example of that, to be able to bring them out from something that is so harmful and so devastating. They were made in the image of God himself and when we stand up and stand against something that is violating that we are standing up for the message of the gospel and for that individual themselves that they might find freedom.

James: I'm telling you, it works. When you share that message it's like a river of life. You're going to see. We talk about Rescue Life: Reach, rescue, restore. You're going to see that miracle right here. Listen to me. It is a miracle that only love, God's love through you makes possible. Oh yes! There are other members of Christ's body who are putting his arms out but you're the ones that put the oil in that lantern. You're the ones that give

them the ability, the wherewithal to even be there, and then to offer the restoration.

Watch! You're going to love this.

On the mission field

Open Captions:

>> My name is Nuan and I'm 30 years old. I grew up in a very poor family and we lived in a jungle. Growing up, we really had a good family and we really loved each other. But then, something happened when my mom passed away. My brother went to work in the city. My sister was sold into prostitution. And then my dad left me at a store.

I became one of the maids; like cleaning the house and cleaning the store. And then a lady came to the shop. And she was a woman who sells the kids to be a prostitute, which I didn't know back then. So, a lady came to the shop and the shop keeper said, "Do you want this girl? Because I don't want anything to do with her." She was about to take me out of the store. And then, amazingly, another lady came in and they were fighting over who should have me.

So in the end, the shop keeper said, "Well, let the girl pick her own." I believe that it was because of God's plan and God's goodness for my life I chose the second lady.

Announcer: The woman who rescued Nuan from the store was a Christian and eventually, Nuan made her way to the LIFE Center in Southeast Asia. Nuan shares what it was like to grow up safe from the threats of human trafficking.

Open Captions:

>> The thing that I have seen is that they are so loving, they're so kind and they embrace me. That kind of changed my life. Because I really needed someone to love me at that age.

Nuan graduated from school, got married and now works at the LIFE Center helping boys and girls just like her.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Doesn't that make you happy, Betty? Naomi, isn't that beautiful? That's the miracle of love. Just thank you -- all of you who have helped with Rescue Life. That's what we're doing right now. Because our viewers, who have seen not only the need but the effect of love, they said we'll match! And they put up a very large matching gift to match what you give. It takes an average of \$128 to reach, rescue, and begin the restoration process. But now then, if you give the \$128 you just helped rescue two. I asked our viewers, could you help us rescue ten? That's \$1280. There are many of you who can. Thank God you can! But now it will be not ten girls or ten children rescued but it will be doubled to 20.

Would you right now go and get a bankcard and would use it to make a gift just like it is a check? Go online or call the number that's always there as a prayer line but now it is going to be a lifeline, a help line and you put the gift that God gives you on your heart on that bankcard. If you want to write a check, do make it to *LIFE* but call the number and

tell us you're putting it in the mail.

We have some gifts to send you. I'm going to tell you right now we will send you because Naomi Zacharias, she not only wants to help her little prince and she's got three of them, and a little princess, but she wants to help all children. It is a fabulous book for children, grandchildren, great grandchildren. We'll send it to you. I'm hoping you'll go online and get copies for other families, and maybe even neighbors for their children. It's a wonderful gesture of love.

But we're going to send you *Natural Remedies*, ancient nutrition to build, literally, your resistance, your ability to withstand the diseases that come at us continually.

And then we're going to send you, "Don't worry about anything but pray about everything." This is an absolutely beautiful box. You set it down and you've got cards you can write your prayer requests on, a pen. And then take prayer seriously because God answers prayer. It's really the promise to heal our land. It is the only way the land is going to be healed.

So would you please right now just make the gift God led you to make? If you want to put it in the mail, make it to *LIFE*, send it here. And thank you for it. Again, we're going to send you Naomi's Zacharias's book. Naomi, we're going to be praying for you and all that you do, not only for children, your children and others. If people wanted to know more about what you're doing with Wellspring, can they go online and find an address?

Naomi: They can. WellspringInternational.org is the easiest way to learn about it.

James: I hope you'll pray for Naomi. I hope you support everything Ravi Zacharias' incredible ministry continues to do. Thank you. Remember, we're going to send you this too to say thank you for putting God's arms of love around some of the most needy people on the planet. Thank you.

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 help 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 *Natural Remedies*. This beautifully illustrated and essential book explores ancient nutrition and the health benefits found in God's creation, a valuable reference with biblical insight to help you live your best life.

With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive this beautiful prayer box inscribed with the words from Philippians 4:6. This wonderful keepsake includes pencil and paper to write down prayer requests you want to give to God.

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

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Well, Betty, I just thank God for the opportunity of showing you the effect of love in that incredible story. You see we've got missionaries positioned in places where they know girls are likely to be taken captive. And we become the safe point. It changes everything.

Naomi, I pray God blesses your *Little Prince*, blesses the book you wrote and all that you do. The prayers of our viewers are with you and your family forever. Thank you so much for being with us on *LIFE Today*.

Naomi: Thank you for having me.

James: Thank all of you for watching. Thank you for supporting the outreaches of *LIFE*.