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Week 42: Rescue Life

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

David Holland

Sheila: Hi! Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh and I'm here with Randy Robison.

Let me ask you a question. If I say the word *pray* to you, what comes to your mind? Maybe you think, well, I get bored, I get distracted. Why bother if God already knows what he is going to do?

Well, our guest today is going to talk to us about that very issue and how you can revolutionize your prayer life.

And we're just excited to have you here, David. David Holland, welcome to the show!

David: Thank you so much. It's a pleasure to be here.

Sheila: Now your book is call *Praying Grace*: 55 meditations and declarations on the finished work of Christ. Tell me the Genesis of this. Where did this come from?

David: Well, I was born again, I grew up in church, was born again as a kid and lived most of my young adult Christian life sort of as a frustrated prayer. I was told all my life that we ought to pray so I knew prayer was in my mind an obligation. It was one of those boxes you needed to check off to make sure you were doing "all the things." But at the same time I was frustrated because often I'd been told and believed that prayer changes things. Heard it all the time, prayer changes things, "You should pray about that; prayer

changes things." And yet, too many times in my experience I would pray about something and nothing seemed to change.

So what that can cause in the human heart and the human soul is sort of this low level disappointment with God. A low level of frustration that causes us to either stop praying or pray as a religious obligation with no expectation that anything circumstantially is really going to come of it.

Randy: You experienced a low level. I felt a high level of disappointment. Honestly! When we don't get answers to our prayers, I think we go down the line of is God not listening? Does God not care?

David: Is he not good?

Randy: Yeah! That's a dangerous one and really at the core of a lot of people's real issues. Or am I praying for the wrong thing? Or is it a timing thing? Did I not pray the right way?

David: Exactly! Then in my journey in God I finally discovered there is really another way to approach prayer, another way to pray in a way that was actually effective, a way that was actually exciting, a way that removed all that sense of duty, all that sense of obligation and turned it into this partnering adventure with God. And getting to that place...

Sheila: Yeah! How did that happen in you?

David: Well, it was a process. It was a journey. Again, for a significant amount of my life I've likened it to being in front of a door that's locked with a big ring of keys, with hundreds of keys on it and you have to get through that door but you have no idea which key is the right key to open that door.

So I was taught there were all these different kinds of prayers. There is the prayer of consecration, the prayer of faith, the prayer with fasting, and the prayer with repentance, and the prayer of fasting and repentance. All these different kinds of prayers that I learned about in these prayer seminars. And so you're standing there jiggling the keys and trying to figure which key is going to open this door?

Then I discovered that I was harboring a few paradigms that were keeping me from receiving everything that God wanted to do in me and through me. One of the ones that was the most fundamental for a lot of people is about the goodness of God.

Sheila: That's huge! Yeah!

David: In order to really engage God in prayer and allow him to do in us and through us everything he wants to do you have to understand almost as your true North Star that God is good; that nothing else in the world may make sense but I'm not going to doubt that. I may doubt everything, including my own sanity but I'm not going to doubt the fact that God is good.

Randy: Can I ask you a question? I see that manifesting itself, if people are wondering if I'm dealing with that, it starts, it's not necessarily a definitive sign of it but it starts with why would God allow me to suffer or my loved one to suffer? Why would a good God allow anyone to suffer, is sort of one of the Cardinal ones. Why hasn't he answered my prayer? What do you see some of the signs of maybe that's what you're struggling with?

David: Well, that's a huge thing, Randy. And it is a huge thing for... we have a whole generation of people, we have several generations of people that were raised in the western world who are rejecting God over this "problem of evil" thing. They see a lot of this suffering and tragedy in the world, they see suffering and tragedy in their own life, and they've been told a view of God's sovereignty that basically says God gets his way exactly the way he wants it at all places, at all times, in all seconds on planet earth.

So if that is your paradigm, and that is sort of what I call the cartoon Hollywood caricature of God's sovereignty that he's always getting his way, that in everything that happens that God is somehow either causing it or allowing it because it's part of "his plan." If that is your paradigm, then you really do have a God-is-good problem. We have presented that problem to generations of people.

One of these paradigm shifts that we have to understand is that God is sovereign in the fact that he is moving history to the ends that he has predetermined. History and the flow of events will ultimately culminate just as God has ordained. But he is smart enough and brilliant enough to allow people to choose, to allow people free will. We're living in a broken world filled with broken people and if you go all the way back to the garden, what you find is God delegating dominion authority to this planet, to humans.

So what God is doing and has done is played within the rules, so to speak, of the system that he created when he delegated freedom of free will to Adam and Eve. So he is moving things to the ends that he has determined. But in-between the cracks of that are a lot of people choosing things that God would not have them choose, and a broken creation that has yet to be redeemed.

For example, right this moment, there is something and I don't mean to get overly heavy on us, but right now this very moment there is something unspeakable being done to a child somewhere as we sit here and that is not God's will. God is not in any part of that. He would not have that happen. What he wants to do because he decided to partner with Adam and Eve in his plan for the earth, which went awry because of their "freedom to choose," that God has been restoring through his son Jesus Christ, he's chosen to partner with us and that's the exciting thing about prayer. That not only solves the problem of evil because he is allowing us to choose and creation is broken but it also explains why not only should we pray, God needs us to pray. He has chosen to need us. He has chosen...

Sheila: Which is quite a paradigm shift.

David: It is! Because our Sunday School paradigm is that God does whatever he wants to do, he gets whatever he wants, and he doesn't need us to participate or not. But the fact of the matter is not only does he need us to partner with him in the doings of the earth, he needs us to speak what he wants spoken.

Sheila: What is the seeing and decreeing that you write about? What is that?

David: That is the thing that I'm getting at. There are many modes of prayer. Prayer is communion and fellowship with God. You've written beautifully and spoken beautifully about the aspect of prayer where you just are pouring your heart out to God in transparency and honesty and knowing that God accepts you and loves you just as you are, right where you are -- and that's an absolutely vital aspect of prayer.

But the kind of prayer I'm talking about is the prayer that alters circumstances, the prayer that changes things, the prayer that sets people free, gets people saved, gets bodies healed, gets trafficked women and girls delivered and freed from the chains of bondage. That kind of praying involves partnering with God by seeing what he wants done. And that seeing is often not with our own eyes but it's with the eyes of the Spirit. There is a reason why Paul encourages and prayed that the eyes of our heart and understanding would be opened. Because our eyes see, the eyes of the heart see, to see what God wants in a situation, to know what he wants in a situation and then to speak that, to declare it.

Sheila: What does that look like?

David: The Bible shows us actually. An interesting study you can do is to go through the gospels and look at Jesus and then go through the book of Acts and look at the miracles of the book of Acts. And in each situation, what you don't see is Jesus praying or Paul praying or Peter praying and saying, "Dear God, please do X, Y, Z. It never happens.

Sheila: Which is what we tend to do.

David: Which is what we tend to do. We're going to ask God to go do something. Here's a simple example. When Jesus was multiplying the fish and the loaves it says he blessed the food. The revelation of this has changed the way I pray over our meals. Don't get religious about this. But the fact of the matter is Jesus didn't say dear God, bless this food. He blessed the food.

Randy: Well, but he was God. So it is an easy out for us.

David: It is. And if it was only Jesus but if you look at the other times Jesus did a miracle, whether he was calming seas or raising a dead child or opening blind eyes, he didn't pray and ask God to do something, he spoke it done. He said, "Little girl, rise!" "Peace be still." "Waves calm."

So maybe that was just Jesus. Move to the book of Acts and in the book of Acts we see numerous examples of this. For example, Peter walks into a house where Tabitha has died, or Dorcas in some translations, and everybody is wailing and weeping and mourning her loss. He removes everyone from the room. Peter walks in, he kneels down for a little bit and prays, and then he stands up and he issues a command, "Daughter, rise."

What was he doing? He was seeing; he spent a little time in prayer. He calmed his soul. He quieted the room. He calmed his soul to see what God was up to. What do you want to do here, Father? And then he rose and made the proclamation. He made the decree: Seeing and decreeing. We can do precisely the same things in our lives.

Sheila: Well, what about... This might be a little complicated but I'm thinking of somebody watching right now and their wife has cancer and they've been praying. What happens if they declare and decree their wife to be healed and she's not healed?

David: It is a difficult thing. It is a hard thing and we've all experienced those hard things. First of all, we need to determine in a seeing and decreeing scenario, God, what's

your will? Well, where cancer is concerned, it is not hard to determine what God's will is. Jesus is a walking and talking example of a demonstration of the Father's heart. And Jesus said, "If you've seen me you've seen the Father. I only do those things that I see the Father doing."

So part of everything that Jesus did was essentially demonstrating what God's values were. And part of God's values was to see people who are broken and sick whole. But at the same time, we know that there are unseen things all around in every circumstance, and part of seeing and decreeing is before we just start praying out of our own desire and our surface knowledge and the things that our senses are telling us about the situation is to stop and say, God, is there something else about this situation you want to show me? Is there something here I'm missing? Is there a root? Is there a... Show me the reality of this situation that I can't see. And then often, in that situation, when we learn to pray this way, there will be a way to pray and a way to declare and a way to decree. But we still don't see it happen 100% of the time.

Randy: How important is it for us to say, "Lord, not my will but yours."

David: It is absolutely vital to say that, but it is particularly important because what we want is God's will. That is the partnering with God in prayer. It is at the essence of what Jesus said, "When you pray, pray your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It is about "the will of God." And so our partnering with him is about expressing and seeing his will done on the earth.

But the fact of the matter is, if God's will was always going to be done, Jesus would have never told us to pray that. He would have never told us to contend for God's will being done on earth if it was automatically going to happen no matter what we did.

Sheila: I want to ask, how will this book help men in their prayer life? Because sometimes it's seen as if that's a woman's strength, which it shouldn't be, but it is just how will this help men to pray?

David: Well, it is! Most of the prayer meetings in most of the churches in this country are filled with women and the prayer groups and prayer circles, it's women. Your great book on prayer and other great books on prayer will mostly be purchased by and read by women.

I asked the Lord about that a while back and I discovered something that was a game changer for me about prayer. It happened in a marriage seminar. It was in a marriage seminar and they were talking about the differences between men and women and the men have their top five needs and women have their top five needs. And one of the top needs of men is recreational companionship. Men like to do things together. One of the woman's top needs is communication. So wise husbands and wives know, wise husbands know, my wife needs communication even though that doesn't come natural to me. And wise wives know that my husband likes to do stuff together. And out of this marriage seminar came this phrase, "Women express friendship by talking together and men express friendship by doing things together."

Well, and that's generally true. Of course, there are exceptions. But the more I thought about that the more that I saw it was true. Well, what kind of paradigm have we presented Christians about prayer? About relationship with God, fellowship with God? The paradigm we have presented to them is it is a communication exercise. You need to talk to God. Well, if you tell me I'm going to have a relationship that's talking centered then every woman in the world is all in and every man in the world is going, "If you say so."

What I discovered is that this kind of prayer is an adventure of doing things. When I come to the Father now, I can stop and say as a man, I can say, oh by the way, men talk when they're doing the things. When they're underneath the hood of the car changing the spark plugs or they're out on the golf course or they're fishing or whatever the men are "doing together," they are talking, they're communicating, they just don't think they are. And so we can come to God as men and say, "Hey God, what do you want to do today?"

Randy: That's great! That's really great to motivate people.

David: Absolutely. And as a man, as I yield myself to God and say, "What are we doing today?" By the Spirit he can take me to Nepal or to the streets of Dallas/Fort Worth and we can intercede for and declare and contend for and fight for captives, and the lost, and the hurting. We can do things together. So for men, I talk to men about saying do stuff with God and do it in prayer.

Randy: Absolutely. You know what? There is something you can do right now that you can pray about and I would ask you to but you can do about and we want to show you that. And when you do that today, we want to send you David Holland's book, *Praying Grace*. So a little tradeoff here. We want to minister to you as we ask you to minister to others. Watch this.

On the mission field:

Randy: I'm here at a very remote part of Cambodia. There is nothing around here except for a few shacks. There is just not much here. And yet still, a human trafficker came through here many months ago and promised this young lady's sister a better life and some things -- lured her away. They haven't heard from her. She is, as far as they know gone. They have her picture and they have the prayer that she'll come back, the hope that they will see her again. She's very likely being forced to do things that no girl should be forced to do in places that are not fit for human living.

This is the reality here and in places all over the world. That's why Rescue Life is critical. We must first reach into places like this with education so that they'll know what to look out for when these predators come through. We must rescue the girls that we can and get them out of the sex trade. And we must restore them. We must give them a hope and a future.

We can do that. We can do it on a larger scale, but we have to have your help. I pray you'll help us as we try to help so many girls. We have to stop this abuse. It is not right.

You can do something. Join with us as we Rescue Life.

End of video

In the studio:

Randy: It seems like, it feels like that is everywhere around the world. But you know what? God is the only one who is everywhere around the world and he has placed people like you and me to be his hands and feet, to do on his behalf what he wants done. And Sheila, that's why I think it is vital, it is critical, and it is doable for us to come together and reach out and rescue and restore these children.

Sheila: It's interesting, the older I get the more I feel like God rewashes my eyes every day and I see things in ways I didn't see them before. I see people not as shapes but as people. I think it is probably because of my age I see myself to most people as a big sister or a mother. When I'm on the streets of Southeast Asia and I see these girls and there is no one championing them. So often they have lost their... Their father might be in prison, they've lost their mother. We work with young girls who are 12, 13, and 14 in Southeast Asia who are technically the head of the household. And they're just so vulnerable for someone to come along and to take them, bring them to a place and tell them, "Hey, we're going to give you a job." And they give them a meal and they don't realize the meal is drugged. And they wake up the next morning and they're naked and they realize that their very innocence has been stolen.

Honestly, as far as I'm concerned, as long as you and I as the body of Christ are on this planet this is on our watch and we need to say, "In Jesus' name, not on my watch!" We don't just flip the channel and move on to something else because even right now these girls are being taken, and they're being devastatingly abused. But you and I can make a difference and we've made it possible.

Some friends have partnered with us, Randy, so that we can double the impact of your gift right now.

Randy: You know what? As Christians, I think all of us have heard that scripture, "Don't be hearers of the word only but doers." I agree with that, but you know what? That does imply that we have to be hearers of the word. So here's what I would like to ask you to do. Take a second right now and just pray. Say, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" And then do whatever he tells you to do.

Just from our standpoint as we reach out and we put this into action, the financial end of it, it roughly costs about \$128 to reach and to rescue and to restore a child as we do this around the world. Right now we have the matching gift that Sheila talked about which means someone is going to come alongside you: \$64, per child, or your \$128 gift will rescue two. However you want to look at it. \$1280 can rescue 20 children. That is sort of the framework that we're working in.

But here's the framework that we need to live in: Stop, pray, Lord, what would you have me do? And then just do it in obedience. Joyfully -- be that joyful giver. Go to the phone, go online, and celebrate that you are playing your part in God's kingdom. You are being that light in the dark world, and you are joining with us to rescue lives.

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

On the mission field:

Christine Caine: I want to say thank you to *LIFE Outreach International* for your financial support.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: Thank you so much for helping us. And for any gift at all we will send you David's book, *Praying Grace*. I believe it will be such a blessing and a gift to your family.

Randy: Absolutely. David, we appreciate you sharing with us.

David: My pleasure. Thanks for having me.

Randy: We appreciate you guys hanging out and watching. So please do, make the best gift you can. Request the book, *Praying Grace* and do it! Thanks for being with us. Join us again next time on *LIFE Today*!