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Week 12: Rescue Life

Mission Special

Sheila Walsh

Sheila: Hello! My name is Sheila Walsh. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I remember when I was a student in London. One night I was walking the streets coming home from a Bible study and I obviously had taken a wrong turn and I ended up in an area probably known as the red light district. It was an area where there was girls that were obviously involved in prostitution. There were some clubs. I remember pausing there and just wondering what kind of path does your life take that would lead you to a place like that? I remember getting the train home and praying for those girls and for their safety. I had no idea that this work would become one of the things closest to my own heart and I would feel so passionate about it.

But one of the things we do here at *LIFE Today*, at *LIFE Outreach International* is that we are committed to helping girls who are caught up in the evil world of trafficking. I was not quite prepared for my first trip to Southeast Asia. What I was not prepared for was how young these girls are. I was not prepared for sitting down and hearing the story of the path that took them to that place and understanding how at every turn there was no one there to step in and say can I help you? So many of the girls that I met in Southeast Asia had longed for, had had prayed for someone to give them an option, to give them a way out.

So for all the years I've been here now at *LIFE Today* this has become a passion that is closest to my heart. Now, I know this can be uncomfortable. I know some of this can be difficult to think about and difficult to watch but I'm asking you, will you stay with me here for a while? I want to take you to the streets of Southeast Asia. I want to sit you down beside some of these young girls and let them tell you their story. I promise when you have looked into their eyes you will not be able to look away when you've heard their stories, their stories will be indelibly be written

on your heart.

I came back from my first trip changed and that has only continued. So I'm asking you to board a plane right now and come with me to Southeast Asia and let's listen to what's happening with these girls. Not only that, let's listen to what you and I can do to meet them on that path. Please watch this.

On the mission field:

Sheila: This is the hardest trip I've been on with *LIFE*. The situation in Southeast Asia is getting so much darker. We have been out in the streets at night and we have seen these little girls being forced into sex trafficking. And yet, to balance that I have seen real hope.

Announcer: Human trafficking is one of the darkest evils in this world. The depravity it takes to kidnap, to sell, and to rape a child is matched only by the virtue and strength needed to oppose it. Fighting such systemic evil requires a prayerful strategy.

Our teams on the ground work alongside local law enforcement to rescue girls who have been trafficked into the sex slave trade by conducting raids and arresting the criminals involved. Survivors of sex trafficking have often spent years in captivity and their minds and personalities have been altered.

To restore these girls we provide them with shelter and offer them the hope and healing only found in Christ's love. It's been said an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Sheila: As I watch these kids today, I thought this actually could be the most important day in their life. This could be the day to learn what human trafficking is all about. This is the day that they get equipped to know what to look out for, what to say no to.

Announcer: In another part of the world there is a girl in entirely unaware she's about to be

kidnapped and sold. But if we can reach her before the predators, we'll save her from a horrific future and completely shut the traffickers down.

Reach. Rescue. Restore. More than words, this is a fight against hell itself.

Sheila: God is moving in the darkness and saving lives one life at a time. Please keep helping us. It is changing the world.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: You would think the most important day in a young girl's life, a young woman's life is the day when she gets married. That's often what I was told when I was a teenager. But isn't it interesting that for so many of these girls the most important day in their life is the day when they are told that when someone comes to your village and they offer you candy, food, perhaps they offer you a job, maybe your family is struggling and so you think, I want to help my family so I can go to the city and I can get a job. What they don't realize is the minute they step into that vehicle, in all probability, their family will never see them again.

Some of the girls I talked to said, "Well, they took us to a place and they offered us a meal. It was amazing. We'd never had a meal like that."

What they did not know was that the meal, the food was drugged and so many of them wake up the following morning -- and think about this -- if you have a daughter, a sister, they're just little girls! You saw their faces. These are not hardened women, they are little girls who wake up naked and don't realize that perhaps six, seven times through that night they have been raped and they feel trapped but there is no way out.

That's why this three pronged part of the ministry is so important. *Reach:* Go to the villages. We send out teaching teams. I've been with the team. I've listened to how they prepare these girls and what they tell them, "Go out in twos. If somebody comes near you, scream as loud as you can

and run like the wind is behind you."

But for those girls who have been trafficked, then you saw them breaking down those doors, going in at midnight and literally carrying these little ones to a place of safety.

And then we begin *restore* where they're taken to a place where they're told, "You are not a number that was tattooed to your thigh. You have a name and God knows your name. Not only that, you have a future."

There is something about God, just the different aspects of his character that blow me away. I see God as this magnificent warrior who would go in there and rescue these girls. And then I see this tender shepherd who would want to pick them up and carry them close, and let them know that they are loved, that they have a future, they have a hope.

But this is what I'm asking you today. Will you help us? Normally it will take \$128 to reach, to rescue or to restore a child. We have some friends of our ministry here who care very much about this and so they've put up a matching gift. So if you're able to commit to \$64 that will be matched with another \$64 and you will have been part of reaching, of rescuing or restoring a girl.

This will be my life's work until my life is over. I've looked in their eyes, I have prayed with them, I have told them I will come back and I will tell your story. So please, will you help us reach, rescue, and restore?

Begin video clip

Giselle: My story really starts from the age of seven. I was left alone at home a lot and a lot of predators really came through the house; specifically, a very distant uncle. He would be there to take care of me but then he started to do things and they were things that I really didn't understand at all. My childhood was really cut short by really being abused and molested by this man. It really tormented me.

Announcer: A traumatic experience can profoundly shape one's worldview. For *LIFE's* missionary partner, Giselle Meza, childhood trauma has left her heartbroken for victims of sexual abuse and human trafficking in South Asia.

Giselle recently connected over the internet with our mission team to share the story of a child we'll call Devna.

Giselle: We had gone into this village and we had found this little girl, Devna on the side of the road in conditions that you could never imagine. She had been taken by her trafficker and then along the way he decided to rape her multiple times and leave her to die alongside of the road.

Devna's story is one where we rescued her from one of the worst situations and now that she's in our home, and has had four years with us now, she has blossomed into the most beautiful, precious, little girl that now has developed her personality. She's safe. She loves to dance. She loves to sing...

Announcer: Rescue efforts like these are the direct result of compassionate support by *LIFE Today* viewers. Shortly after we spoke with Giselle her team rescued another child from traffickers who was just four years old.

Human trafficking does not stop for global crises and with your help neither will our fight against it.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: Honestly, it makes my blood run cold. A four-year old child! I cannot even conceive of that kind of evil. And who could have left that precious little girl to die? That's why we're asking you to help us.

I want to read you a verse from Psalm 82. To me, the Bible is not just a book of good

suggestions, this is God's word to us. In Psalm 82 verse four, this is what it says: *Rescue the poor and the helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people.*

In the year 2020, a pandemic took over the world and shifted everything. And we actually got some reports of some brothels actually closing down. Initially I thought, well that's good news! But I was wrong. What has happened is that those trafficked victims are just being pushed further underground. They're being used for drug smuggling, for all sorts of evil. Trust me, evil is organized and we need to be organized too.

So many of those little girls, I remember talking to a 12-year old girl and asking her, "Where is your mom? Where is your dad?" Well, her dad was in prison for a gambling debt that he had run up and could not pay. And the mom had run off with a younger man. So at 12 years of age she was the head of the family with three younger siblings. How can you be the head of the family at 12?

And she had been captured because in some of these places in Southeast Asia the girls do not ever intend to end up in that kind of danger. Sometimes they'll go out at night to the clubs and gather up all the beer cans that have been thrown out because they can sell them and get a little bit of food. And so often in the darkness that is when they are taken and they cannot find their way home.

I believe with all my heart that as long as we, as the body of Christ, are on this planet and maybe you say, you know what? I'm not so sure I'm fully in with all this body of Christ stuff, but do you care? Do you have a heart of compassion? Do you see these children? Once you've seen them you cannot walk away. And maybe you have a daughter at home, maybe you have a younger sister, can you imagine if something this evil happened to your child? To your little sister? If you knew of that, if you knew that somebody living next door to you was being trafficked and held, you would be on it. You would call the police. You would knock that door down. You would do whatever you had to do to rescue that little one.

Well, we're bringing those children right into your home and saying they need help right now. I

cannot, honestly it gives me... I can't even imagine while even as this program has been going on, and thank you for staying with me, but during the taping of this program, during your time of watching it girls are being kidnapped, girls are being taken away from their villages. They're finding themselves in the worst situation on earth. And I want to say to you, will you join me and say, "Not on my watch! I'm going to do something."

So what I'm asking is normally, \$128 will help us to *reach*, go into the village, to *rescue*, literally from the gates of hell or *restore*, take them to a safe place for one child. But because we have this amazing matching gift from some people who care about this mission, they've put up \$250,000. So if you can do \$64 they will match it and a girl will be brought into a place of freedom.

Please, please join us. Will you go online, will you call that number on your screen and make the very best gift possible? Let's hear their cries and do something.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Human trafficking is one of the world's darkest sources of criminal activity and money. As a result, children and young people are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators into a never-ending nightmare.

Through Mission: Rescue Life you can reach out to warn children who are at the risk of being trafficked, rescue those already enslaved and restore young lives giving them a future. With a generous \$320,000 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 today, 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 the *Jesus My Refuge* journal and pen set filled with scriptures reminding you of God's covering in times of need. You'll also be reminded to pray for those seeking refuge from the horrors of human trafficking.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280, which will now help rescue 20 children! And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Divine Servant."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

On the mission field:

Open Captions:

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed.

Announcer: There is a violent plague impacting the world. It's called "sex trafficking" and like a disease, children are the most vulnerable. The number of children being held captive and abused by sex predators is beyond comprehension. It's reported to be in the millions. Sheila Walsh has talked to many young victims of sex trafficking and learned of the trauma and fear that has destroyed their childhood.

Sheila: I've seen things on this trip that are worse than anything I could imagine. I've tried to think of what I was doing when I was nine and I was still playing with Barbie dolls. And my greatest fear was would I be able to get a particular thing that I was hoping for, for Christmas.

I just spent time with a little girl who is now 11 and she's been forced to have sex with men, with strangers, sometimes four a night since she was nine years old. She is now 11, middle school, but she's already two years on the street. She is not hardened. She is just broken.

Announcer: The trail of tears and broken spirits of little ones like the young girl Sheila described has surely touched the heart of God. It has no doubt left an unforgettable mark on

Sheila.

Sheila: I prayed I'll never be the same again. And I pray that we're able to help you see that we're here for a reason. There are things that we can do. We are his hands and his feet. We're his heart. The scriptures say, "The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." I've seen what it looks like to be crushed in spirit. So this is our moment to be Christ in the flesh to those who are broken.

End of video

In the studio:

Sheila: In the midst of all that heartache and evil, I had this ridiculously normal moment with one of those little girls. I had some Oreo cookies and we sat down and ate these Oreo cookies. And she was so excited. I remember thinking, this should be your daily life, not something that happens when somebody flies across the world.

Because I wonder sometimes if they think, will you keep caring about me when you go home? Because I remember going back to the little hotel that we were staying in that first night and I was so overwhelmed by the age of some of these little ones. And I remember just lying face down in the carpet and just sobbing from a place so deep inside of me I thought I can't stand this!

But the interesting thing was I felt as if the Holy Spirit, I felt as if God said, "Sheila get up and dry your face and do something." So that changed me. It's not enough for me to shed tears for them, I needed to come home and tell you their story.

This is not... You see we get so used to watching things on television. This is not some made up TV show. This is happening right now in Southeast Asia all across. And I want you to work with me. I told you that we have a matching gift which means if you're able to give \$128 that will be matched and you will be part of reaching or rescuing or restoring two girls. Can you imagine that? I mean \$128 in our culture these days, it goes so quickly but this will literally change the

life.

I believe that behind trafficking is a demonic thing. It is *pure evil*! But when we can go in and literally, it is almost as if you can see some of these young girls who are about to be trafficked, and if we can reach them in their villages, it is as if you literally snatched them from the gates of hell and pulled them free and put them on a path and say, "You are worth it! You are worth saving. You have a future."

So please, will you help us? Some of you have a business, some of you, perhaps God has blessed you or you've sold something, for \$1280 that used to be... that would be what it would take to rescue ten girls. But now because of our matching gift, \$1280 will reach, rescue, or restore 20 girls!

In one trip I went from literally the worst of the worst into the hellhole where these girls live but then I went to the place where we bring them to be restored. And it was literally like walking out into the sunshine. And to listen to them laughing and running and playing because that's what they're supposed to be doing at this age. We can make it happen. And I'm not going to stop. We cannot stop. As long as this evil is on this earth we have to keep going.

Please call. Just make the best gift you can! And then I'll bring the stories back and I'll tell them to you.

Begin video clip:

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End of video

Begin video clip

Christine: I want to say thank you to *LIFE Outreach International* for your financial support. We are deeply grateful for your partnership in the fight to end human trafficking. Human trafficking is modern day slavery. It is destroying millions of lives, including young girls and boys who are forced into the sex trade.

As a result of A21s partnership with *LIFE Outreach International*, we are able to provide prevention programs within vulnerable communities so that trafficking is stopped before it actually starts. We can see victims set free. We can send traffickers to jail so they can't harm anyone else. And we're providing survivors with medical care, trauma counselling, life skills, and job training. I have been deeply encouraged to see survivors go from despair to restoration. I'm excited for all the people that will be set free in the future because of the support of *LIFE Outreach International*, and for us to work together to bring an end to human trafficking.

End of video**In the studio:**

Sheila: You stayed with me! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I love that. And it is so easy to flip the channels and go on to something that just makes us feel better. We're not put on this earth to feel better. We're put on this earth to make things better for other people.

So remember, if you tried to call and you couldn't get through, persevere. Be as determined -- trafficking is a billion dollar industry and we have to be as organized and more committed than they are because we understand that Christ died for every single one of these trafficked children. They just need to get to hear about it.

So thank you. Thank you. We have gifts that we'll send you. I'm not even going to tell you what they are because I know that's not why you do it. But it is just our way of saying thank you so much for literally changing the life of a child. So for James and Betty, for all of us here at *LIFE Today* I just want to say thank you.