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Week 16: Rescue Life: Last week

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Margaret Feinberg #2

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. It's good to have you. Sheila is with me as always. We are having a great discussion here because Margaret Feinberg is back with us. She has a new book where she discusses some very serious things; some things that we easily fall into that can really derail us. They're called lies. So we're going to get into some of those and we're going to just do a little check with you today and see if there are some things that we can get right on track with God about.

Sheila, we've had one discussion, if you missed that, I encourage you to go online and check that out. It was really good.

SHEILA: Oh, yeah. Honestly, Margaret, this book is so practical. It is so helpful. It's so vulnerable. But one of the lies that I found myself, I bought into for so many years is this thought, and particularly as Christians that we are supposed to make everybody happy.

MARGARET: Oh! I have wrestled with that! I'm like put a big sign over my head that says "People Pleaser." I think if I were to give it a name, I feel like I have like a degenerative condition known as supposed-to-itis. Anybody ever supposed to do... fill in the blank. Supposed to show up early. Supposed to stay late. Supposed to take on the extra project. Supposed to make the 137 cupcakes for the classroom. What happens is that when we keep trying and feel like we're supposed-to, supposed-to, supposed-to, often we wake up one day feeling a little resentful, taken advantage of.

It's really because we didn't draw any boundaries in the process. I think that is really true of believers. Honestly, I've struggled with that. I mean if I don't do this, if I don't play this role the whole church is going to fall apart.

Okay, kids, Jesus is at the center of the church according to Revelation one. He is surrounded by the lampstands. He is the center of the church. It's not me and not you. I think there is a lot of freedom we can develop and just experience in that. I think one of the things that drives the supposed-tos is we wrestle with that sense of what we're supposed-to-do can often be mistaken for kindness. As believers we are called to be kind but that does not mean that you and I become the people-pleasing factory for the universe where we can't step back.

So I'm just having to learn as I've been studying this and just saying, "Okay, Lord, where am I stepping into roles that I should not be?" I've been discovering, you know what? I don't have to give an immediate response. I'm having to learn, growing up with my family, my mom and dad always taught me, whenever somebody asks you something that's important, big or small, just ask, "Can I have a night to sleep on it?"

SHEILA: Well, that's great advice!

MARGARET: And so not to feel like you have to respond in the moment. But carve for yourself, "You know what? Can I have some time to just think about that? Let me get back to you in the next few days." You get to go check your calendar. You can check with your family members, your kids.

The other thing I have had to learn the hard way in supposed-to-itis in this wrestling that I need to make everybody happy is that just because a spot is open on the calendar doesn't mean it's open.

[LAUGHTER]

And to carve out that open space. Because if we're just running on this treadmill, what the enemy

is doing is he just wants us to get tireder and tireder and tireder until we give up, stop investing, possibly even stop believing altogether. Because if you feel like the whole weight of the world is on your shoulders and you have to make everybody happy it's only a matter of time until you give up because you can't.

RANDY: Are you suggesting that there maybe a little wisdom in that little two letter word *no*?

[LAUGHTER]

MARGARET: What did you say, you shared with me.

SHEILA: I decided a long time ago that no is a complete sentence.

MARGARET: And what's amazing is that when we have healthy noes in our life, when we take that time to step back, check with our calendar, check with our family, pray, ask the Holy Spirit, then it makes room for all of these holy yeses. When the calendar is not so packed, all the sudden there is space for the spirit to move in our life and say, "Hey! You need to call this person. You need to write this note. Reach out. Be an encouragement." But all the sudden you're not being driven by somebody who is simply asks for a request, you're being motivated and led by the spirit. And that is such a more joyful place to be.

SHEILA: That's awesome. One of the things that you mention and gosh, I so related to this. You said you were on your first diet when you were nine? I mean I remember my pastor once saying to me, "Sheila, if you just carried all your diet books up and down the stairs a couple of times you would never need to be on another diet again."

But so many of us as women, we judge ourselves by standards of, with social media and the way people tidy up their photographs. How on earth at nine did you feel like you needed to be on a diet?

MARGARET: You know my mom is amazing. She is so lovely, but she's always been very

concerned about her weight and struggled. Genetics play a role, and we are not your skinny friends. We're like, I don't want the brownie, I want the whole pan. Let's just be honest about that.

But probably about nine, my parents and, I think, even some of the people where they lived in rural North Carolina said, "Margaret is getting a little chubby." So mom, who is constantly living on those diets started putting me on them. Back then there was like... They're probably still here today because diets don't go away, they just recycle with a new name: The grapefruit diet, the healthy cookie diet, the cabbage soup diet!

SHEILA: Oh that's the worst! I mean God did not intend us to live on cabbage soup. There is nowhere in scripture that says that.

MARGARET: It's true and yet we do it. I remember in college this developed eating disorders in me and just that pressure to be thin. It's something I've wrestled with my whole life. And yet, I have had to remember that when God looks at us, he says, "You are beautifully made. You are perfectly made."

So at times to actually stare at myself in the mirror, which sometimes it's hard. I don't know about you, there is parts of my body I'm like, "Oooh!" And to look at that mirror and say, "But you, Margaret, this part of you is wonderfully and beautifully made according to the Psalmist. This part of you is wonderfully and beautifully made." And to confess that over ourselves, to declare that over--I think one of the declarations in that *More Power to You* is "I am beautiful beyond measure." I can say that confidently now because I've been making that declaration. It's a biblical declaration. It is a true declaration. And it is one that each of us needs to make each day: I am beautiful beyond measure.

Do you realize how God sees you as perfect--perfect no matter what your age, your size, your height? You are so gorgeous and that's how God sees you. When you start to rehearse that and say that out loud, you start to believe it more and more about yourself.

SHEILA: Can I just give a little teaser, because you're going to want to get this book. It is so like, a lie: "That person is a problem." "No! I will show compassion." "I am ashamed." How many of us feel that? "No! I'm called to reach people far from God." "What I have to say doesn't matter." "My words have power." You have backed up every single thing that you've said in this book. You've countered every lie with a truth from the word of God and that is powerful.

How has that helped you in your own life when you suddenly have a dip again? Because we all do.

MARGARET: Yeah, we do. I developed this and this kind of became a thing when I was in a really dark season. And in that season, I was just struggling with negativity, downward spirals, struggling to get oxygen in my lungs, and crafted these lists of declarations that are just so deeply rooted in scripture. And as I did and I began to say them out loud to God, to myself, to the enemy, I began seeing more hope and more life.

And also began to filter my own thought life; starting to pay attention to what I'm paying attention to. And to set my eyes on Christ and his word. And we say that but there is not really an easy way to do that. We hope we hit the right passage for where we are one morning, but this is just the concrete spectrum in those 90 seconds of daily declarations that covers us from head to toe, from spirit to soul and aligns us in our thoughts with Christ's.

RANDY: I don't think anyone gets up in the morning and says, what lie can I implement into my daily routine today? How do you think most of us get to the point where we basically believe a lie? We may not even be aware of it.

MARGARET: That's a great question. I think a lot of them are cultural and so a lot of the false beliefs that enter are through social media, both spoken and unspoken. They're maybe from the parent who never really said anything negative to you but would give you that look. And suddenly, you knew something was wrong, there was something to be shameful for. And I think they subtly go from just entertaining thoughts that we go maybe that's not true or that's negative but as we kind of ingest it inside of ourselves pretty soon we become not just containers of it, we

become spewers of it. We become people who if we think getting old is the worst, we start saying that to each other until that becomes the common cultural... And I think that's the power of Christ awakening, and the spirit saying no! These things are not true. Be on alert for those thoughts that will take you astray.

RANDY: It's interesting, if you look at the book of James he walks through the process from temptation to sin and the picture there is of a fishing lure. And I think you're right. If you imagine that fish looking up seeing that glittering lure, we hear those things and then we start to look again and we think again. But as soon as we take hold of it, it takes hold of us and it takes that truth to free us again. What are some other ones that we need to hit?

SHEILA: Well, the reason I love this so much is that during the whole 2020 I was really struggling. I found myself spiraling again. I would see something on Instagram, maybe some of my friends were on a zoom call and I'm thinking, I wonder why they didn't ask me? And what has really been my salvation is doing what you're suggesting. I mean I actually go outside, and I read a couple of Psalms out loud because I want my ears to hear what my eyes are reading. But you've given us like a page of declarations, do you still do that at the beginning of every day?

MARGARET: I did it this morning.

[LAUGHTER]

I think I have one in my car. Again, multiple ones in my bathroom, throughout my house. When I get up and go swimming in the morning, I'm like, "Jesus is king of my life. I am who Christ says I am. I take every thought captive." And some of them end up, when you do this each day, some of them pop more than others on certain days and I think that's an attentiveness to the spirit.

So for instance, on the days, I may say you know what, I do not lean on my own understanding. In all my days I will acknowledge him, and he will direct my paths. Maybe I'm struggling over a decision or not what to do or the uncertainty that is coming. When I declare that truth of scripture

out loud there's something like oh yeah, I won't lean on my own understanding. I'm going to re orient.

What's amazing about this is it doesn't just work for adults, it also works for kids. One of my friends, her daughter was just in a really dark place in school. Junior high is a tough time. She'd been kind of isolated and put down. And she had started doing these declarations. And she saw the change in her own life and so she invited her daughter and said, "Hey! What if we did this together?"

And at first, she started out and she was like, "Jesus is king of my life. I am who Christ says I am. I take every thought captive." Just not into it. And two weeks later the mom said, "You should see the difference in my daughter. She rises up and she's making these declarations." Shame is not my master. God's power is perfected in my vulnerability. The Word of God guards my steps. The favor of God rests on me. I will look for the character and competence of God in every situation.

And you start saying these things, you start seeing the transformation in your kids and your own life. I know so many parents today and grandparents have seen the mental health struggles that have fallen on the youth and adolescence, as well as ourselves. And to have something that says hey, as a family, we're going to do this together. We're going to make these declarations. We're going to go through and look at maybe some false beliefs that have slipped into our lives. Not because they're like super scary dark but because they're just so common in our culture, we're not even stopping to think about it.

RANDY: What are one or more than one that you kind of struggled with coming to the realization that okay, this is a lie, and this is one that I've kind of unintentionally bought into. Is there any one in particular that you kind of struggle with in that area?

MARGARET: I think a good one was, this will not turn out well. Kind of that concept of, this isn't going to go well. Let's just be honest, we could open the newspaper today and be like, it is not going to go well--almost every day, unfortunately. And so again we're seeing this, and we

can start talking to our friends and they're struggling. All of the sudden you go this is not going to go well. And for that, the declaration, I will look for the character and competency of Christ in every situation.

Growing up in the church, I'll be honest, I've looked a lot of the character of God, many of us have. We look for these all-power, sovereign, in control, he loves, he is faithful, he is goodness, he is light, he is all those things. And so the character of God I can study in the scriptures and I can see, but I don't necessarily trust his competence.

So a lot of times I'm tempted to say, I need to speak up. I need to say this thing. I need to insert myself in this situation. I need to put this under my control because I can do it better. And to back up and say, no, I'm going to stop, and I will look for both the character, and trust in who he is, and the competence that he holds it together so much better than I ever could.

And there is a freedom and there is a grace and there is a little bit of almost a hands-off. I think as Christians we love to manhandle things. We say we don't, we cover it with prayer, but we do! We do! And to step back and say, no, no, no. You are competent, God and I will trust in your competency.

RANDY: That's a big one.

SHEILA: One of the ones I think is so important today with social media and everything is this lie, I always need to distract myself. And you counter that with "He leads me beside still waters." If you think of how much time we spend on our phones; I got a little notification that comes up now in the morning and it says: You spent five and a half hours on your phone. I'm like no! But it is like paying attention to things like that and making space for those still waters. We all need that.

MARGARET: We do. And more than ever. And recognizing that's countercultural, that's a Christ-ward moment and movement in our life. We choose to carve out that space. If you look at the journeys of Jesus, he spoke a lot for a quiet cause, but he took a lot of time alone. I think

that's where he received his holy super charge and I think that's where we do as well. And cutting off the distraction, having this face-to-face contact and conversation. And not having to be rushed by it but to fully be in that and to make space for the spirit to speak, for scriptures to come to mind, for that declaration to pop out loud as we're saying it in the morning to go, okay, Lord, what are you drawing my attention to here today? And opening ourselves up to the word.

RANDY: I think that's interesting because you have 52 devotionals, right? So there is one for each week if you want to start your week that way. But you're saying 90 seconds in the morning and that sounds like not enough. But when you're tuning your thoughts and your brain and training yourself through the repetition that 90 seconds isn't just 90 seconds gone, it's 90 seconds that set the framework for the whole day. So what should people expect when they start to set that 90 seconds aside to kind of set the framework for their day?

MARGARET: Yeah. I would suggest take a photo copy and there's downloads available of the declarations; put them around your house, make those available and then begin doing it. First, it may take you longer than 90 seconds. It may take two minutes but say them out loud, say them out loud to yourself, to God, and to the enemy and just see what kind of stirs in you as you do that. Which of these are you like I don't know if I want to make that declaration. Where's the hesitant points? Where's the places where you're like, I don't want to.

Or where's the one where like I need to say that again. And what I've also heard from so many readers is as I go through there's one that the spirit will highlight. And they will just camp out on that and that may become their devotion and their focus for the day. And they become more attentive through that.

The other thing is we need 90 seconds because we need what is accessible. Here's a five-hour discipline you get to do every day. And in our time-crunch world we need things that are quick and accessible, we can do with our families, we can do with our kids and so that's why I think that's so powerful and portable.

SHEILA: That's what's so great, the two aspects of this book. Because for each week there's a

lie and a devotion. But then as Margaret said at the beginning, in fact, I printed it off at home, these declarations which is like a separate thing. Like at the beginning of every day or halfway through the day, again at the end of the day, depending on if you make these declarations and then you have this one devotion. I mean, I honestly see this, Margaret as something that would make a huge impact on mothers' lives, dads' lives, I want to get a copy of this for my son who is 24 because I think there is so much garbage out there; that to be able to be reminded of what is true is life-changing.

MARGARET: And it is visible. There are days my sweet husband Leif will look at me and he will say, "Margaret, did you do your daily declarations today?" I'll be like, "No. No, I didn't."

[LAUGHTER]

But the last declaration is one that says: I am God's offensive team. That's the closer declaration because I think so often in the world we live in, we get pushed into playing defense. Whether it's by a busy schedule, by it's too much to do, by our negative thoughts, our toxic thinking, all of these things. And all of the sudden we're going to say no, no, no. I'm not playing defense anymore. I'm on God's offensive team. I'm here to bring in the kingdom of God. I'm here to proclaim life and healing. I'm here to pronounce the gospel and the good news to the poor, to set the captives free and to bring in the kingdom of heaven. That's who we are. That's what we do.

RANDY: And that's what we want to do. I want to tell you how to get that book. I want you to get it. Request it when you support Rescue Life. Because Sheila, we are setting those captives free.

SHEILA: Yeah, and we're going to tell you how you can get your own copy of this book. Maybe request two or three for your family members. But first of all, would you watch this?

On the mission field:

SHEILA: There is a little trick that's helped me through some of my darkest days in the field

with *LIFE Outreach International*. I smile. I smile not to trivialize the unimaginable despair of those who are suffering but to remind everyone, including myself that a little kindness can bring some light to a dark world. And it can be such a dark world!

The sexual abuse of children has been industrialized and brought to scale in what I believe to be one of the starkest examples of demonic activity on earth today.

I asked her, "Who do you have who is caring for you?" She has no one. She started out trying to sell cookies and she couldn't make enough to live on. So she ended up having to sell her own body.

Now I'm no stranger to the plight of a desperate soul but the young women I've spoken with, young children have left a mark on my life that will stay with me forever. This precious girl was begging for money on the streets when she was first abducted at the age of nine. Her captors raped her and forced her to sleep with up to four men a night.

Open Captions: I'm scared when I have to go out at night. I just want a good home with food to eat and a place to sleep.

SHEILA: It's horrific to think of the unspeakable torment that children face and I'm grateful when they survive it. But survival is a far cry from healing. God has given you and me the sacred power to help reach, rescue, and restore a precious life from the evils of human trafficking. Right now the choice of whether to exercise that power is ours to make.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: Almost unbelievable! Almost! Unless you've been there, unless you've talked to these little girls because that's what they are, they're just little girls. I remember going into my backpack and I had a pack of Oreo cookies and I gave them to these two little girls. And for just

a moment, they sat there as you would expect little girls to do, laughing and eating the cookies and talking to one another in their native language.

But when I got back to the hotel where I was staying that night in Southeast Asia, I found myself on the carpet just sobbing at the reality of a nine-year old child being trafficked and forced to sleep with men, many in their 40s, 50s, 60s. It is an absolute evil.

There are so many things that we care about at life: Water, clean water, food, shoes put on feet for the first time--those are things that are lacking. But this--this is demonic evil from the pit of hell. And it is very, very well funded by those who profit from it. Every time that we get on the plane and we fly home, my last words to our partners who are literally boots on the ground right now at this minute is, "We will go home, and we will tell your stories. We will get help and we will be back."

This is our last week of Rescue Life. So if you haven't done anything up until now, will you do something now? If you and I do something, Randy, we can change the lives of these little girls.

RANDY: Right now with the matching gift, normally it costs an average of \$128 to save one child but with the matching gift that \$128 will save two. And \$320,000 has been pledged basically to double your gift.

I know, Sheila, if that was my child, if that was my grandchild, I would spend every second of every day and every penny of every dollar to rescue my child or my grandchild. We don't have to spend everything when we come together, and we all support Rescue Life.

Just to give you an idea, it costs on average when we look at the expenses of going into these places, providing them a safe place, giving people the transportation to move girls to intercept them in many cases, it breaks down to about \$128 to rescue a child on average, just to give you an idea. But with the matching gift that means your gift of \$64 today right now will essentially rescue a child from this nightmare. It's so attainable when we come together as the body of Christ and we reach out to rescue, to restore.

Will you do it today? Will you join us in this beautiful effort to shine the light into the darkest places in the name of Jesus Christ? I'm asking you to go to the phone, go online, right now, in this final week on the air of Rescue Life and make the best gift you can. Thank you.

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."

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: Remember, this is our last week of Rescue Life. Let's not forget these little ones. Let's bring light into that darkness. Remember, with any gift at all you can request a copy of Margaret's wonderful book, 52 devotions, *More Power to You*.

RANDY: Yeah. And Margaret, thank you so much for sharing and just opening up because I know this was not always easy but it's going to help a lot of people. So thank you.

SHEILA: Thanks for being with us.

RANDY: Thank you for watching. Join us next time here on *LIFE Today*.