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Week 27: WFL

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Lila Rose

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. Sheila Walsh is with me as always. I'm excited about today's program because we have a guest who does a work that is personal to me, it means a lot to me. She has a new book called *Fighting for Life*. Our guest is the founder of Live Action, Lila Rose. Lila, great to have you on *LIFE Today*.

LILA: Thanks for having me!

SHEILA: You're welcome.

LILA: It's great to be here.

RANDY: So this is an interesting book. Those of us who are familiar with you know your work, love your work; standing up to just bring awareness to abortion and fight it and uncover truth. But you get very personal in this book. Take us back maybe a few years to some things that we don't know so we can see what kind of formulated you.

LILA: Of course. So I wrote *Fighting for Life* because there is a lot of causes that need to be championed today and I see the fight for life for the preborn as the greatest human rights issue of our day. Almost 3,000 children killed legally each day just in the U.S. alone. The global death toll is over 100,000 children every day. It's being done in the name of women, which I think is really disrespectful to women to say that to take the life of a child is for us. So I wrote it to really provide a manual. What does it look like to stand up in the midst of controversy when there are obstacles, when society seems to be against you? And how important it is, especially for Christians to do that.

And for me, I share a lot of personal things like you mentioned, and struggles, because I think a lot of our internal wounds and struggles, our own experiences really influence how we show up in the world, even the causes we choose to take on and how we approach those causes. And so doing this sort of self-awareness work, throughout our faith, I think our faith helps us do that through God's eyes is part of the key.

So for me, I started Live Action as a teenager. I had this realization about abortion, moral clarity, which I'm really grateful for. I feel it was a gift from God at a young age. I just thought, okay, this is a fight. I've got to do something. But I talk about how I immediately was struck as a teen with my own issues. To this day, there is different issues we have but a lot of mental health issues run in our family. I struggle with depression. I had some co-occurring issues, an eating disorder, disordered eating, some self-harm tendencies. So I was really struggling inside even though I saw that my life had a purpose, I knew that intellectually, and I saw this cause that needed to be championed. I needed help.

And so I talk in the book about getting the help we need. And sometimes as Christians that can be hard to admit that because we're saved, we have God. So it's like everything should be great. Well, we need other people. He gives us mental health professionals, He gives us counselors, He gives us family to learn how to heal with. So it is a journey of personal healing as much as it is externally standing up and fighting a fight.

SHEILA: The thing I loved about your book and it's a great book! Is that as Randy said, you're very vulnerable. You share some of your own struggles, but you also have this pioneer woman spirit, and that came out at a really early age. You mentioned in the book that you picked up a book on your parent's bookshelf when you were young and it's the kind of book that might have turned a lot of young girls away from this issue. How did it hit you?

LILA: So there was a book in my parent's house, like you said, it was called *A Handbook on Abortion*. I had heard about abortion a little bit. My family is pro-life. I'm

one of eight kids so that's very pro-life. Beautiful family, grateful for that so much. But this book had an insert with images, and I saw for the first time the victim of abortion which most people don't talk about. Right? It's like abortion is about women, it is not about a child. And you see in the first trimester, when most abortions happen, this child, tiny arms, legs, this tiny face that has been suctioned apart by a first trimester abortion.

If any women listening who have been hurt by abortion, this is not to share this in condemnation. It's a path to a realization of what actually happened so that healing is possible. Because if we live in this sort of sense of just burying what happened and not getting the healing we need, we're not free. So when I saw that, I was heartbroken. And I think heartbreak, I think most kids, younger people who find out about abortion in this way really to see what it is, they're actually heartbroken, they're upset. I think that's natural and that's good.

Any time we stand up to a cause it should start with heartbreak. It should start with really, grief over who's being hurt over the injustice. I'm grateful for that moment of heartbreak because God would use that to inspire me to stand up and do something.

RANDY: And you have done some amazing things, especially at such an early age when you started. But there is an interesting thing that is in your book where you had a dream as a very young child. I don't mean just a desire to do something, literally a dream that I think was a seed planted by God into your heart. Tell us about that.

LILA: Yeah. So I think well, I had a vision as a young girl that it is possible to make our country and our world pro-life; that we don't have to live with abortion. You know there has been over 60 million abortions since Roe V Wade and we don't have to continue with this. People think it is inevitable. Oh abortions have always been done. Well, human rights abuses have always been done in history. We've had slavery for thousands of years and it's only recently that most of the west has eradicated it. Slavery still exists today, modern day slavery, but it is possible to eradicate injustice. We have to be willing to fight the fight.

But connected to that heartbreak I would also have nightmares, and even to this day, about the people being hurt. When people hear that they're like, "Oh you have nightmares? Oh I'm so sorry. That's rough." And it is hard but I'm also grateful in a sense because it reminds me. I think we have to allow ourselves to continue to be broken. In a way, my nightmares remind me there are people needing me, needing us, needing you, our voice, what we have to offer with all our wounds and imperfections because no one is standing up for them. It is not popular today.

Think about abortion, most people support it in the kind of leadership in our academia, in media, in politics, they needed advocates. Preborn children have no voice. They have no way to stand up for themselves. Women who are being pursued by the abortion industry saying you should have an abortion. It is the good thing for you. Where are their advocates. The women's rights movement is saying, "Go have an abortion! It is good for you." We need to be their advocate. So in that sense, those dreams and that vision, the nightmares and that vision give me fuel and I think we all need that fuel.

SHEILA: One of the things you talk about is in your interactions with Planned Parenthood you discovered that there is so much false information given to women as to what the preborn child actually looks like. What did you discover that was the most shocking to you?

LILA: Yes. So I spent, and I detail this in the book, and the strategies I used the last ten years exposing and investigating America's abortion industry that's led by Planned Parenthood. They're the biggest abortion chain. They get \$1.7 million daily in taxpayer dollars.

SHEILA: Daily?

LILA: Daily! \$1.7 million and they're killing over 900 children every day in America alone. They have international affiliates who also do abortions. So this is the greatest

scam I say. They used to say tobacco was healthy. The greatest scam today is that abortion is women's healthcare. And their whole operation is built around getting women in the door for abortions, building community relations. Their abortion numbers have gone up in the last ten years while their other services, most of the rest of their services have declined. We've documented my first time undercover in an abortion clinic because I saw when you're fighting injustice you have to expose the injustice, otherwise it's normalized. People get used to it. They think it is not a big deal.

So I went undercover, and I exposed in two abortion clinics sexual abuse cover-up. I posed as an abuse victim. This is one of the many injustices connected to the injustice of abortion where young girls are sex-trafficked victims are sent or taken by abusers to abortion clinics that won't ask questions for secret abortions. And even though they're required by law, Planned Parenthood is required by law to report, they don't. When they see a little girl, they don't see her as what's going on? Who is the "boyfriend"? They see her as an abortion client and they don't ask questions or they even tell her to lie about her age on paperwork, which is what they told me. They said, "Lie about your age. Say you're older than you are." Because I said I had a much older boyfriend, and I was pregnant. And they said they would get me in for a secret abortion.

So parents don't know, is this girl a runaway? Is she a sexually trafficked victim? They don't care. Over the years we've documented court cases where Planned Parenthood actually has been sued or named in lawsuits of young girls who have sued them for covering up their abuse. But no one's reporting on this. People just say, "Go Planned Parenthood!" That's the message in media.

RANDY: How do they get away with this? Seriously, you would think that we would wake up and go, okay look. Even if you're pro-abortion, pro-choice, we would say, okay, you at least have to play by the rules and not cover up sex trafficking. You would think that there would be at least some level of common sense but there seems to be none. What's going on?

LILA: You can't regulate concentration camps. It's like saying, think about Nazi Germany. Well, we've just got to regulate them and it's okay that they're killing off whole swaths of the population: Jewish people, ethnic groups. They're against political prisoners. But just do it this certain way. Have these certain regulations. The abortion industry doesn't want to be regulated so they operate outside of the law. They do what they want. And until we abolish abortion, until we see abortion for what it is, the violent taking of an innocent child's life, a violation of the woman, as it is the child, then we're going to continue to see these other abuses happening in abortion clinics.

SHEILA: I'm thinking of our viewers watching at home. Probably like me, horrified by the statistics, but maybe a little anesthetized by the problem and like well, what can I do? One of the best things you do in your book, Lila is you give us a game plan. Talk about that.

LILA: Yes, I'd love to. That's the hope that I have. This problem doesn't have to keep happening. I talk in the book about how we're each called to stand up. It doesn't matter your insecurities, your wounds, your past--it doesn't matter! God created you at this time in history for a particular reason.

Some of the things I share, first of all, is equipping our minds and our hearts. I talked about heartbreak and the importance of letting ourselves really be broken for those that are being hurt. I talk about heroes, the importance of having people that we look to that can inspire us; that show us how they blazed a trail when there wasn't one to stand up for what it is right. Corrie ten Boom is one of my heroes...

SHEILA: Oh yeah, mine too!

LILA: *The Hiding Place*, I talk about her as an example. But you know she risked her life, and her sister risked her life, and her father to house Jews during the holocaust. They were sent to a concentration camp. She was almost killed. Her sister died there. But she risked everything for others, people she didn't even know. If we have heroes like that,

and we're serious about those as our heroes, it puts it into perspective for us. What are we willing to do to fight for life?

And so then I share tactics and strategies. Like part two of the book is like getting into that. It can be as simple as calling up a pro-life organization locally and saying, how can I help? Calling up your pregnancy center, what can I do to volunteer?

Showing up at the abortion clinic for 30 minutes quietly, peacefully, to pray. We have done that, our youth, we work with a lot of young people, they do that. Women will just drive right by. They won't show up to their abortion appointment because they were praying on the way there to God, if there is a God, let there be a sign not to have this abortion today. And that person you, maybe by yourself praying quietly, might be the sign that someone's praying for. That's how God works.

So there is lots of practical things to do but I think the core of it is the mind-set of being willing to step into the fray. Being willing to be uncomfortable, being willing to break your pattern of your normal life. Because we all have our patterns, right? We pick the kids up from school, if you're a parent or you drop them off or you zoom school, I don't know. You go to work, you go to church, whatever. Break a pattern and say, this Saturday I'm going to go pray outside the clinic. This afternoon I'm going to go volunteer. Today I'm going to finally talk to my sister or my sister-in-law about abortion. Or I'm going to reckon with the abortion in my past or someone in my past. I'm going to get the healing I need. I'm going to talk to my pastor, we've got to do a full-time pro-life ministry. There are so many ways to get involved.

RANDY: One thing I find very interesting because people are watching you and listening to you and they're thinking, wow, she is amazing. And I agree.

SHEILA: Me too!

RANDY: But you mentioned it earlier in our conversation and you talk about it in the

book, there was, I think, some spiritual forces coming against you to thwart you in the work God had called you to do. I would gamble to say that you probably didn't feel like you were qualified or able or all these things. What was it that got you past that to step out and do it?

LILA: There is a whole chapter just about imposter syndrome, which it's this syndrome that actually happens where people who are trying to do something, even in career work or cause work, a calling, you're like I'm not qualified. Who am I? Who am I to do this stuff? I'll just cheer other people on, right? And there are certainly... To this day the more you fight, the bigger the obstacles. But the more you're willing to get up again the more inner strength you learn, you discover, and that's how God works. And that's what I... The lesson is God always gives you what you need for the day. Get up and try again. It doesn't matter how many times you fail, you get up and you try again.

And you get the help you need. Over the years, mentors, coaches, find heroes--we need people. We're not meant to do this alone. Sometimes we'll feel alone but having people to look to, to ask questions of, that is key. I think that has been my secret, along with obviously faith and God gives us people, to persevering.

SHEILA: Honestly, for me, one of the most significant things you've said that has convicted me most is if you look at social media now, even amongst us within the church, there is a lot of anger, not necessarily a lot of heartache. I think what you're saying about allowing our hearts to be broken is really key because when we come across as angry people who wants to listen to angry people?

LILA: Well, and what's the goal? Are we trying to persuade people or are we trying to win people? I think there is a role for anger. Anger can be healthy but if anger is just eating us up inside and turning us inward and making us hateful that's not of God. But if it's anger because we want to set injustice right and it's really driven by heartache. Jesus is always, throughout the gospels, he's weeping. He cries over the death of Lazarus. He cries in the garden, he weeps in the garden before the crucifixion. "Lord, let this pass."

He's feeling.

I think, back to imposter syndrome, it's another key. If we're driven by wanting so badly to help those in need, if we're letting ourselves feel for them, that will overcome, I think, a lot of our own insecurities. It is no longer about us and oh, I'm not good enough, keeping our eyes turned inward. It is now looking outward and saying, I'm imperfect but I'm going to show up. I'm going to do what I can.

RANDY: That's good. There are injustices in this world and yet we are called. Sheila, are we not called as believers, as followers of Christ to set those injustices right? Well, there are some things going on right now that you can do something about around the world and we have a great opportunity right now to set something right.

SHEILA: We do. And the thing I love about Lila's book, and we're going to tell you after this how you can get a hold of your own copy, is there might be some other issues that God has placed on your heart, this is a strategy for being able to move forward whatever God has placed in your life. It doesn't just have to be the pro-life movement. If God has placed a burden in your heart for anything that you see as unjust, this book will help you walk through. We're going to tell you how you can get your own copy but first, would you watch this?

On the mission field:

INTERPRETER: My name is Miriam Venegas. It was sudden. He was five months old. He had never been sick. I was carrying him in my arms and then I felt he had quit breathing. He couldn't breathe and he didn't want anything. Here is where I saw my son die.

ANNOUNCER: The doctor said it was the water that took him. For a grieving mother this somehow hurt more. Miriam had given everything as a mom. But giving her son Tyson water to drink wasn't optional. Unfortunately, neither was her water source: River

water, contaminated. Left with no choice, Miriam gave Tyson water that attacked his body like a poison.

INTERPRETER: That morning my son woke up feeling bad, vomiting, and wouldn't eat. I got scared and started to take him to the health clinic, but it would take three hours to walk there. He couldn't breathe. It was sudden.

It's hard because I always remember what happened there. I miss him so much.

ANNOUNCER: Tragedies like this should never happen to any mother. Together we can do something to stop the spread of waterborne disease by providing mothers like Miriam with fresh, clean, drinking water.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: That's a look that should be on a child's face, smiling, eyes bright. My heart absolutely breaks for Miriam to think that she would be in a place where literally she had to walk for three hours to try and get some help for a desperately sick child. By the time she gets there, her child is no longer here.

That should never happen! And it is not as if she was carrying a child who was sick with cancer or something that would be hard to treat in certain areas of the world. The only thing this child needed, the only thing this mother needed was clean water.

This is something that we're passionate about here. Maybe you think, you watch this show and you think, you know what? I want to be a world changer. Well, honestly, Lila Rose's book is going to help you do that. I want to send it to you but what I want to ask you is would you help us be the answer to the prayers of some mothers right now? We've made a commitment, Randy, to drill 350 water wells which seems overwhelming but

when we all do our part, this is very doable.

RANDY: Yeah. And can you imagine the look on a child's face, even on a mother's face, when they walk up and there is that clean water coming out of that well that's placed right there? Well, you can put a look of joy and gratefulness on thousands--thousands of children's faces. In fact, one well, which an average cost of \$4800 will typically service at least 1,000 people for a *lifetime*.

Now for many of you, I understand that's a lot. That's why we need you to come together with others. In fact, a gift of \$48 will help provide clean drinking water for ten people for a lifetime. When we come together, we pool our resources as the body of Christ, as those who just have compassion for our fellow man, we can reach that goal, Sheila, that you mentioned of reaching into 20 nations with 350 wells.

I've got to tell you, if will you exceed that, I know we can pass that goal. But that is the goal for now. I just want you to think about what you can do right now today by going online, going to the phone, making the best gift you can. Give \$48 which will provide an average of ten people with clean water for a lifetime. Give \$144 which will provide that water of life for 30 people for a lifetime. Or if you can drill an entire well by yourself, \$4800, do it! Just make the best gift you can and know that you will be saving lives. Let's do it. Do it now!

Begin video clip:

ANNOUNCER: Waterborne illness is a killer that strikes the most vulnerable. For many impoverished families, the death of a child is the tragic result of having no choice but to drink contaminated water. But with your help, they won't have to make this choice ever again. Mission: Water for LIFE provides clean, fresh drinking water for thousands of children and their families giving them a life free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift

of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten, \$72 will provide for 15, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift, we'll send you James Robison's book *Living Amazed* full of inspirational true stories. You'll learn how divine encounters can change your life. In addition you'll also receive Randy Robison's brand-new devotional, *Upgrade*: "Seven moves in seven weeks to a better life."

With your gift of \$100 or more please request the N.I.V. Thinline Bible with easy-to-read large print. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. 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

Betty: I'm standing here with these children and they're just a small example of children all over the world that deserve to be considered and loved and cared for. We have an opportunity to do that right now among these children and those around the world; to give them some clean water and give them a chance in life.

I ask you to help us do that. It's just a simple request but a very urgent and important one. Please join with us. You'll get such great joy out of it – I know you will! God bless you and thank you!

In the studio:

RANDY: I hope you are going online or going to the phone right now and making the

best gift you can. When you do, be sure to request Lila's book, *Fighting for Life*.

Lila, you know, you have saved so many lives. I'm just curious, what does it do for you when you realize you have literally saved the lives of children?

LILA: Well, it's celebration. I know what you're doing to raise money to drill wells, we should celebrate. I talked about heartbreak, we talked about letting ourselves be broken but also, we're made for celebration and worshipping God is the ultimate celebration because he is our savior. But part of celebration is celebrating the lives of others and the good works that are being done.

So I talk in the book, when we get messages, very regularly, we just got one yesterday from a mother saying, "I watched your video. I was going to have an abortion." A young girl, "Now I'm going to have my baby because I saw what happens during abortion. I can't do this anymore." It's just immediate celebration! We're made for that. We're made to look at the good that is possible.

That's really the end note, right? What are we fighting for? We're fighting for each other. We're fighting for that child. We're fighting for that mother. And that's such a beautiful thing, right?

SHEILA: How can people connect with you, Lila? People want to connect with you. How can they do that?

LILA: Well, LiveAction.org is Live Action's hub with all of our resources and information. *Fighting for Life* is anywhere you find books. And I'm Lila Rose on social media. I've got a podcast. We talk about causes and callings, The Lila Rose Show. So anywhere you listen to podcast, that's out there.

SHEILA: Yep! I've already subscribed. But remember, when you call today, ask for a copy of *Fighting for Life* and we'll be happy to send that to you. So from Randy, I'm Sheila saying good-bye, God bless you! Thanks for being with us.