

6/30/21

Week 27: WFL

Sheila Walsh

Ginger Stache

SHEILA: Hi! I'm Sheila Walsh. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Have you ever read a book and you think, there's no way. There's no way this person could have done all of that in her short lifetime! Well, I just read one this week. I was so fascinated by it that I invited the author to be my guest. Her name is Ginger Stache, and the book is called *Chasing Wonder*: "Small steps toward a life of big adventures." Welcome!

GINGER: Thank you, Sheila. It's great to be here.

SHEILA: I have to tell you, some of the stories you tell in this book are phenomenal! But obviously, this was in you from an early age because you tell a story when you're little of literally going too far out on a limb. Tell us about that.

GINGER: That is true. It's been one of those natural things in me that, you don't realize of course, but I do tend to go a little bit further than I should at times. So I was in the Smokey Mountains with my parents, and I was probably eight, nine years old and I saw a tree, because I wasn't tall, I was eight years old, so I saw this tree that I thought, okay, I can climb that tree. Very Zacchaeus, right? I can climb that tree and get a better view. So I ran ahead of my parents, which of course they had told me not to do that. I started climbing the tree and I went out on a branch, and it was great. It was really pretty. And then I looked down and all I saw was no ground. It was hanging over the edge of the mountain. Then I kind of heard cracking, I'll never forget it. And all of the sudden you grab on for dear life because you don't know how to get back. It is much easier to climb up and get someplace but when the fear sets in you don't know how to get back. So my parents of course caught up very quickly and were coaxing me back. The branch wasn't

big enough for them to come out and get me so I was all on my own. As my father coaxed me back, and as soon as I got close enough, inch by inch, he grabbed me in his arms, and I was safe.

I realized after that that my husbandly Father is there to protect us. Now he doesn't want us to do stupid things. He doesn't want us to go too far out on a limb. There are consequences. So I learned that too.

SHEILA: But the thing, as I read that in your book, I'm thinking if that was me I would stay home for the rest of my life. That didn't impact you that way.

GINGER: I doubt that you would, Sheila.

SHEILA: No, probably not, actually. You talk about the fact that so often we miss *Chasing Wonder* because we've been told something is impossible or "You can't do that." You have this fascinating story of goats up a tree.

GINGER: Yeah. It's something I had no idea was possible. Of course, you see goats grazing around and you even see them on the mountainside. But we were traveling, this was with my family in Morocco, around the Atlas Mountains. It is just beautiful in that area. And the trees were absolutely full, clear up in the branches all the way to the top, of goats. So these 20, 30 foot trees would be full of ten, half a dozen goats. So I learned so much about these little goats. I'm a journalist so I'm a question asker. I just started thinking, goats don't do this.

SHEILA: How do they get up a tree?

GINGER: Exactly! They have the flat hooves. They don't have tails to grab on. How did they even do that? What was the first goat that decided, hey, I'm going to go up there and get the good stuff? Right? Seeing it, it was very much like a photoshopped image, and realizing that so often we think that things are impossible but where we see

impossibility God sees opportunities.

Chasing Wonder really means making the decision to get out on a limb a little bit further to soak in all of the goodness and the beauty and the wonder that God has in the world for us. Because otherwise we get so blinded by the routine and the monotony and the pain and the responsibility of life. It wears us down and we miss so much that God has for us. So that's really what this is all about is just inspiring us to seek all that he has for us.

SHEILA: That's kind of the thread that I saw going all the way through the book. Some of your adventures are amazing and I'm thinking of the mom right now who is at home folding her third load of laundry for the day. Is it possible for every one of us to chase wonder?

GINGER: It absolutely is. I've been that mom at home folding the laundry with the kids and I completely understand it. I really want to see that mom to be able to see that laundry and that day a little bit differently as well. Because we have so much joy in our everyday experiences that we miss also because our outlook, it can get very myopic. We can get very focused on the wrong things. And if we begin to ask God to show us the adventures that he has for us in our own house, with our own kids, even as simple as taking the time with your children to sit down and read a book and laugh together, to play a game and enjoy one another. We used to take off our shoes and skate around. We'd have skating contests on the wood floor in our house with the kids when they were little. There are so many wonders. And the smile of a child is probably one of the greatest wonders in the world.

SHEILA: One of the things I do every night, when my husband, Barry, and I take our two naughty wee dogs for a walk is at some point I just stop and look up, and sometimes it is the clouds that I see, sometimes it is a bird. Sometimes it is just stopping in our life and paying attention that makes a difference.

But you talk about a time when you had to have wear one of those awful boots because

you broke a bone in your foot. And I did that two months ago and those boots are so horrible. They match nothing!

GINGER: You're so right!

SHEILA: The thing you point out is what's holding a lot of us back is more internal wounds. How do we even begin to deal with that?

GINGER: I'm a shoe lover--big time shoe lover. So when I had that big boot on my leg it was hurtful in so many ways.

SHEILA: Oh yeah! I feel your pain.

GINGER: But also, like you were talking about, that boot began to represent my wound. That boot began as I looked at myself all I saw was that boot and I began to ask big questions that I would never normally ask, are my hiking days, my tennis days, are those things over? Are my adventures over because I have this wound? And so whatever it is that someone's walking boot is in their life, the big wound that is just soaking up your focus, maybe it is a broken heart, maybe it is a lost loved one, maybe it is something that is a lost dream, something that you were really holding on to, that can become the one thing that so takes our focus.

So if we can take our focus off that wound that we all have, we all have those wounds and I've had it in so many different areas of my life, and begin to ask God to change my mind, shift my focus, help me to think on the truth of your Word instead of these questions that are coming up in my mind. And for me, this boot that I'm looking at all the time, help me to see the ability that you have to do whatever you need to do in my life right now. Even if things are always different. Even if this boot never comes off, God has great wonder for me. And he still has great wonder for every person no matter what their wound is, he not only can heal but he can also take us to new places that we never imagined with limitations. So God is not limited but we see limitations in that way.

So I think it is beginning with our thoughts, right? My friend Joyce Meyer talks about it all the time and has taught us all so much, but God's word says very clearly that it all begins with our thoughts. So changing that into really focusing on God's Word and his good for our lives makes a big difference.

SHEILA: I found myself wondering when I was reading through and it is so well written, you can tell you're a journalist. You have a natural ability to see things that others would miss and to write about them in a way that draws us in. But I wondered how the whole COVID-19 hit you? Because suddenly, all our international travel quit. How did you chase wonder in the midst of what was unfamiliar?

GINGER: I learned so much through this time because as you said, when the travel stopped it did change a lot of things. At first it was like I don't know what to do with myself. What I learned was that there is so much wonder and God's hand moving even through this pandemic.

We have all had a lot taken away from us. We've all been isolated and kind of held in place. God doesn't work that way. God doesn't see the pandemic the same way that we have all seen it. We see things being taken away and God is wanting to feed new things into our life even through that. So even while I had more time at home, God was teaching me new things in his Word. He was showing me new things about spending time with my husband. He was showing me new things about just taking walks around our neighborhood and connecting with our neighbors. We have such a hard time connecting with people. And this has been a time that we've all felt very disconnected. And so if we make the effort and we use this time to take advantage of those things that God wants to do in our life, there are still so many good things.

So I think a lot of people throughout this time have given up hope on so many things. They've stopped believing. They've stopped looking for the good in the world and the good that God has for them. I think now is when God really wants to open our eyes to

those things more than ever.

SHEILA: You talk about even while you're writing this book, which I'm sure anybody who writes understands that you've been through some really hard things in your own life. But you used this really interesting illustration of glass slippers, of being aware of comparing your life to other people. Talk about that, would you?

GINGER: Comparison is one of the most detrimental things that we can do and we all do it. We all do it. Cinderella had those beautiful glass slippers and of course, she was a princess, she was Cinderella. We all want to squeeze our foot into somebody else's slippers. I've thought a lot about that, and you think about glass slippers. They're going to be stinky and steamy in there. They're going to give you blisters. They're going to fog up. And they're going to break when I trip because I trip all the time on things.

SHEILA: Me too. Right there with you.

GINGER: So glass slippers are not right for me. So what we have to do is force our self, it is a conscious effort. I'm comparing myself here, I need to stop doing that and find the right shoes that fit us because when we are in the right place God will use us in amazing ways.

You talk about comparison, so I work for Joyce Meyer ministries. Joyce is such a wonderful friend and mentor but I'm not Joyce and I will never be Joyce. And it is really easy to start comparing, or my mom or my grandma who is amazing, all these other women, my friends who are so accomplished. If you begin comparing yourself to all these other people you get smaller and smaller and smaller. God wants to make our world bigger because he is a big God, not because we're so fantastic, but because he has so much for us. So comparison, it is time to forget about those glass slippers and find the loafers or the kicks or the hiking boots that are right for you.

SHEILA: It's so true. Because I remember the very first Women of Faith Conference

that I ever spoke at and Patsy Clairmont had spoken first, maybe Luci Swindoll, and I was up after the break. I went to the restroom, and I threw up. I remember sitting there thinking I can't do this because I'm not that funny and I'm not that whatever the other one was.

GINGER: No, I get it. Yeah!

SHEILA: I felt the Lord say to me, "Run in your own lane. Run in your own lane." I think a lot of our own unhappiness comes from thinking her husband treats her better than mine. Her children behave better in church. Rather than stopping and maybe somehow chasing the wonder in your own heart and chasing the wonder in your own home.

GINGER: Absolutely. It is so much about the joy in our lives. God wants to bubble up everything that he's put in us, all the fruit of his spirit: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness. So often I think, oh I don't even know where those things went. I know God put them here but I'm not feeling them right now. They're really shoved down. And he wants us to stir those things up.

So not comparing ourselves helps in that area so many other ways. Working against pride. Pride is one of those really big things. Talk about traveling a lot. For whatever reason, bugs and snakes and spiders, they've just never bothered me, and it kind of became a point of, doesn't bother me. I don't know what the big deal is. A point of pride which is ridiculous. So it was like one day God decided to teach me a really huge lesson and get the pride out of my life and he did it in a really big way. We were staying in a hut on the Zambezi River. It was this really cool thing. I was very excited about it because I love this stuff. But as night fell so did all the bugs, right, in the hut? And it was a crazy experience. Started with a few spiders, then it was more spiders and bigger spiders and then it was bees and wasps.

SHEILA: Oh Jesus, take the wheel!

GINGER: It was horrendous! It was horrendous. I'm like okay, I can do this. I can handle this. And then I moved a pillow to find the biggest spider I have ever seen in my life. And it was like at that point, all pride is gone. I'm running out of this hut asking for help from anybody who will do it for me. And I will never forget that night with the bugs where God taught me, pride is not going to get it. It's me and you, it's about humility with everybody that you deal with. I'll tell you, I did not like it at all but it opened my eyes to a lot of really important lessons and a lot of the wonder that God wanted to show me.

SHEILA: I loved your chapter where you talk about gratitude and the importance of, I think gratitude is life-changing. You have this beautiful story of sharing a meal with a family in a refugee camp.

GINGER: Yeah. One of the things that I have the greatest privilege through Joyce Meyer Ministries, and I know here how much you care about people and love to help them all around the world, and that's our heart as well. So we were at a time where we were helping refugee families. And this one family in particular had been just ripped from their home with nothing but the clothes on their back, lost their careers, everything. We were in a tent camp. These camps are desperate places. It was just the most wonderful, sweetest family and they asked me to share a meal with them. At first I said, "No, thank you so much but no." Because I did not want to take...

SHEILA: The little they had.

GINGER: Exactly! And you begin to see in people how much they need to give as well. And that taught me so much about gratitude because we all sat down on pillows and cots and they passed around one mostly eaten can of some sort of meat. I'm not sure exactly what it was. They passed around this can and a single plastic fork. And everybody took one bite and that was the meal that we all had together. My heart was just so touched with the gratitude that this family who had so little would share everything that they had with me. And I was a stranger before just a few hours ago.

It really taught me so much about hospitality and love and being grateful for what God has given us and sharing that with others. Really understanding those lessons of how, it doesn't matter how much we have there is always something to give.

SHEILA: It's interesting how a tent in a refugee camp can become sacred space. Now you might think all these adventures are way out there, but trust me, you are in here and you're going to learn a lot. I'm going to tell you how you can get a hold of this book, *Chasing Wonder*.

But first of all, I want to ask you to help us with something. There are some people around the world, millions of them who the only thing they're trying to chase is a single cup of clean water and it's very difficult, but you and I can change that. Would you watch this?

On the mission field:

SHEILA: Waterborne illness is a killer that knows no boundaries. The death of a child is the tragic result of having no choice but to drink contaminated water.

Miriam lives in a shack in Central America. She had to watch her son die in her arms because the only water source she has is a contaminated river.

In South Asia, the journey these women make each day to collect water is filled with potential danger; danger not from the rough terrain but from their water source that causes sickness, and all too often the death of a child.

Pitch is a young mother from a small village in Cambodia. She knows the water she collects is filled with contaminants, but she has no other option. One of her children has already died and the other one is sick.

Thousands of miles away in drought-stricken Angola, the rural clinics cannot keep up with the number of children dying from waterborne diseases.

JAMES: I am by a water source that is so typical of water sources all over the world. The water is contaminated. We know for a fact in this area disease is killing entire families and many children. Would you be an answer to the need of so many people right here and respond by giving them clean water? Thank you so much for doing it.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: It still seems so surreal to me that I can show up at DFW airport, get on a plane and in a few hours I'm in that world. And the contrast is so stark between going into a store here and getting a bottle of water and then landing there and walking with these mothers, sometimes for miles where their only source of water is a hand-dug well, they go down about six feet, and they're not clean. The water is filthy. There is also a limit to how much there is.

But can you imagine that kind of *Sophie's Choice* as a mother? I give my child this water which could potentially kill them, or I give them no water which will certainly kill them. I'll never forget my first trip. When one of the children picked up this kind of broken piece of plastic that was a kind of semi cup and drank the water, and I saw what was inside, it took everything in me not to go and knock it out of her hand. And then realized the hypocrisy of that because that was all she had at that point.

I remember going back to our hotel that night and laying on the carpet and literally sobbing, thinking, Lord, this is overwhelming, and it is so wrong. And I really felt the Holy Spirit say to me, "Sheila get up and dry your eyes and let's do something about it."

That's why we care so much about these projects here at *LIFE*. Our commitment for this

year is to drill 350 new wells in over 20 nations. Now that can seem overwhelming, but it is doable if you do your part and I do my part. The day after I lay down on my carpet we actually drove to a place and stopped at a place where there was a *LIFE Outreach International* well. I literally was dancing around in the water because to see children being able to pump up crystal-clear water and be able to drink that. And it seemed like they're not asking for a new iPhone. They just want clean water.

And so I want to ask you if you'll help. Do you know that for \$48 that will give ten people clean water for a lifetime? The lifetime of these wells is about 70 years. So if you can give \$144 that will give clean water to 30 people for a lifetime! And if you're able to drill a whole well, and some of you have done that, and I thank you, and I ask you would you do it again? For \$4800 you can drill a well and that will give 1,000 people water for their life.

Now what I would love you to do is with any gift at all, say I would like Ginger's book, *Chasing Wonder*. It is never too late to begin to see the wonder of God in every single moment. So please, go to your phone. Let's give the best gift you can. Let's bring Water for LIFE in Jesus' name.

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

In the studio:

SHEILA: Thank you. It will make a difference, I promise you. Ginger, I know that your ministry, you with Joyce Meyer Ministries, you are very involved in making a difference in children around the world. You see God show up in unusual places, don't you?

GINGER: Oh my! Sharing your story, I so understand what you were saying because I've seen as you have so many desperate situations, whether it is a mother whose starving child is dying in her arms or a refugee family who has lost everything. And God has taught me so much in these situations, much like he told you. He said, "Look up and see me. I'm right here."

And when we work together like you're talking about, God is there in the midst of it. And the answers that he brings through these fresh water wells and the families whose lives that he changes. We're talking about *Chasing Wonder*, and we all do it in different ways because God made us all very differently. Some of us are there doing the work and

others of us are just making it possible through our finances, through our prayers. And it is all part of the adventure together. So yes, I'm very excited about it.

SHEILA: Thank you so much! Remember, when you call in with any gift at all, say, "I want Ginger's book, *Chasing Wonder*." Thank you so much for being with us and we'll see you next time on *LIFE Today*!