

7/8/21

Week 28: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Randy Robison

JAMES: Well, Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We have our son, Randy, with us, and there was a time where we could just talk about Randy and tell you some things about him. He has four children, and they're all married. And he has a grandson. Now we don't really have to tell you about him because he sits here with Sheila Walsh. And he does an interview every day, too online.

But he does have something new that just surprised us. Randy has always been able to read very fast. He's also able to write, and he likes it. I believe he has a great gift to do it. But he just wrote this book *Upgrade*. He calls it a devotional. You could call it that, but it's even more than a devotional. It's kind of a study guide. It takes Proverbs; now Randy told me this. He said, basically, Proverbs is all over the place. You go here, here, and here to find these different great points about particular topics or subjects or issues. But he said, "What I was able to do is kind of break it down into seven, pretty clear, distinct parts."

So I wanted to show people seven moves in seven weeks. I bet he probably wouldn't mind if you took the seven moves in seven days if you really want to get in and read. But what he is saying is, let me take you on a journey here. I have an idea you'll be going all over Proverbs, too, just kind of looking around and seeing what's around these other verses there that he's pulled from it to keep them in these topics. But he says, "To a better life." That would be a god-led life, in my opinion. Would I be right about that, Randy?

RANDY: It is. And you know the reality is, I was just reading through Proverbs one day as we grow up doing and we think we should do this. And frankly, it had been a while. I hit a verse,

and I went, oh, man! My kids need to know this. And then I hit another verse, and I went, I should have done more of this in my life. And I started seeing a pattern. It's like, okay, Proverbs we know is the book of wisdom. We read through it, and some things apply to us at the time we read it; some things don't. But as I started really sitting back and looking at it, I thought, wait a minute! I could have had a much better life in a lot of ways if I'd just done these simple things--very simple.

Then it started me thinking, this could be a book! I started going through it, and I'm like, I could have a better family if I do these things. I've done a lot of things in Proverbs that it says. You go, oh! It also applies to business. I could have a better work-life; that would be great. And then my words and my actions. I started really seeing how this is something that not only do I need to hear, but we all need to hear, whether you're a brand new Christian or whether you've been a Christian your whole life.

So I just started categorizing them. I was sitting in a coffee shop. This verse goes here. Oh, this verse goes under family. This one goes under work. This one goes under my actions and my words. And I really started getting excited again about the truth in Proverbs because if we apply it, everything gets better in life.

JAMES: Let me ask you this, if I take the words, the seven that basically, you call them categories; thoughts, words, and this is like what you say. It's all that, covering the power of words, their effect. Business: you talked about how you can be more successful if you knew what God had to say about things that matter in business. Friends: How to have the right kind of friends. How to avoid the kind of friends that might actually be dangerously detrimental, even enemies, on purpose. Family: Proverbs says a lot about how to have the right kind of family. Works: The work. Self: How about let's park there a minute. Self. Self-image.

RANDY: A better self. Well, you'll get there, I will say that. But here's the situation. In order to have any of these better things, upgrade them, take them to the next level, it all goes back to where I start, which is right here [points to mind]. This is where the great battle is. So the first three sections right out of the shoot talk about knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.

Let me give you a little picture because this has helped me understand why they're different and why they're important. Knowledge is facts. I don't have my cellphone on me because we're doing television, but we have more at our fingertips in the way of knowledge than ever before. All the wisest men, all the smartest men in the world, Isaac Newton didn't have as much knowledge as a fifth-grader these days if they have a smartphone and the internet. So knowledge abounds. And Proverbs says knowledge is good. A wise man seeks knowledge. What is knowledge? It is facts.

So here's the illustration. You go outside, and the wind is picking up, and it is cloudy, and you hear off in the distance thunder. Well, those are facts: Wind, clouds, thunder. Those are facts. That's great, that's good, that's a starting point. Unfortunately for many people, that's where they stop. But the Bible tells us that understanding is better. So I feel the wind, I hear the thunder, I see the clouds; I have an understanding that it is about to storm.

This is so simple that everybody should get it. All you've got to do is go online, social media, and read some comments, and you'll understand that we see the same facts, but there is not a lot of understanding in this world. But the Bible tells us that if we seek understanding, then we will benefit personally from it. We'll have a better family. We'll have a better self. We'll have a better work-life. We'll have better friends.

So this is foundational. Of course, that's the bronze and the silver in this race. The gold is wisdom.

JAMES: And that is understanding.

RANDY: It is the progression. I see it more as a progression. You gather the knowledge, develop the ability to have the understanding, but wisdom only comes from God.

JAMES: This is when you see things from his point of view.

RANDY: There's exactly right. You look around. I look at the media, and I see a bunch of knowledge. Not a lot of understanding.

JAMES: Sometimes it's a bunch of lies.

RANDY: Yeah, and that's how you interpret the facts if you don't have the right understanding. But then you look, especially in academia, and you see these really smart people. They have a lot of knowledge. They actually understand how things work, and yet they're fools. They don't have God's wisdom.

So this is the journey we should be on in our thought life because this is where it all starts. And to go back to my illustration, I hear the thunder, I feel the wind, I see the clouds, those are facts, that's knowledge. I have the understanding to know it is about to storm. Now here's the question. Do I have the sense to go inside? Or am I going to stand outside and get hit by lightning? And that's what people do when they don't have wisdom. We stand outside, we're the smartest person on the block, and we get hit by lightning.

So this is where it has to start. That's why the book starts there. When you get that, and you get it from God, knowledge, understanding, wisdom all come from God. Ultimately, he is our source. Then you can start to apply it down through your thought life, through your family, through all areas of your life, and you end with a better self.

BETTY: It sounds like, too, the book is full of, God, search my heart and know me that I might have that better life; that I might know, that I might have that knowledge and that understanding and that wisdom and that sensitivity that comes only from God.

RANDY: It does. It all starts there. And can I tell you another one of the points? I'll just give away the first chapter.

JAMES: Go! Go!

RANDY: I get excited about this because it is something we can do easily. It is not hard. It is just knowing; it is following a very simple map. We just have to follow it.

In the section on better thoughts, upgrading your thought life, there is a really important point that we just miss. And it goes against nature, I think, especially I think for guys, and that is the ability to accept what Proverbs, in many translations, calls "reproof." What is that? It is correction, yes, but it is also responsibility. It's against our nature. I think this goes all the way back to Adam. You know we're like, uh, God! It's her fault.

JAMES: It's your fault; you gave her to me.

RANDY: Or it is your fault! We don't like that. I get it because we think, okay, if I get called out in something that I've done, and I am wrong in an area, well, man, I'm going to be ashamed. I'm going to be disliked. We think that's the case. Proverbs tells us just the opposite. Here's what it says about somebody who cannot accept reproof, who can't take correction and responsibility for their words and actions. It says they're stupid, right? It says that they will be led astray. They're lost. They wander. It says they will live in shame and poverty.

Now, as we go through life, no matter how old you are or where you're at in life, if someone wants to say, hey, I believe you need to hear a word of correction, and need to take responsibility for this, we need to hear that. If our thoughts are in line with the Word of God, we need to hear that as you know what? I want you to not be stupid. I want you to not be lost. And I don't want you to live in shame and poverty. Because if I said that to you, you'd be like, I agree with you. But yet we want to kind of buck against that and say, no, it wasn't me. Not mine!

The flip side of that, Proverbs tells us, is that if you can accept reproof, take correction, take responsibility, learn from it, you will be on the path to life. You will be honored, the exact opposite of what you think will be happening if you admit you're wrong. The Bible says you will be honored, and it says you will dwell in wise counsel. You will be at home with the wise. You'll be kind of wise.

Once we understand that this is the choice, stupidity, being lost, shame and poverty versus path to life, honor, being counted as wise, that's the choice when one speaks that word of correction. We have to take responsibility for our words and actions. It is an easy choice at that point because we accept it. We're eager to hear from other people calling us out because it makes us better and puts us in a great position.

That's just some of the wisdom that I'm looking at going man, this is how I make my life better, and this is how anybody, you can make your life better. You can upgrade in every area when you start with the thoughts and truth in Proverbs.

BETTY: I thought it was really funny, in a way, that you started out thinking, looking into this started out thinking, well, I want my kids to know this. And then God, before you knew it, God had turned it around and said, "I want *you* to know this." And so that's usually the way when we go to God's word. We can read a scripture over and over and over again, but there is a time appointed by God when we go to that same scripture, it touches our hearts for that moment.

RANDY: That is so much what I see in Proverbs. And really, I wasn't looking for a verse for my kids. It is just that I read one of these Proverbs, and that's where one of my sons was at at the time, so I thought about him. But then I read another one, and it's like, oh, that's where I'm at. And that's why I think Proverbs is so treasured among those who truly love the Lord and love the scripture. Because you can go back and read it over and over, and something is going to speak to you right now, right where you're at.

JAMES: You know you used the term "stupid" when you look at... The Bible uses it, that's right. The Bible uses it, so it must be appropriate. When people don't take reproof, they don't accept responsibility, stupid, and then the consequences. When I look out today, because I kind of look out, It's like I see the fields white unto harvest. I see opportunity. I see sheep scattered that don't have a shepherd. I see people needing guidance, and they need shelter, and they need protection. They need boundaries and all these things. I see people casting all of that aside, so it is pure foolishness. It's the exact opposite of wisdom.

What do you think when you look at people today that are expecting somebody to take care of them? And now then become dependent upon some form, like in the Old Testament, they depended on Pharaoh rather than God. And then they'd depend upon a king or depend on somebody, some judge that might not have been worth a judge at all, just like a lot of judges we've had and maybe still have.

The point is if a person is not responsible, will not take reproof, they're going to prove to be stupid, they're not going to have a good life. And if people adjust to accepting their stupidity and their refusal to be accountable or responsible or reproofed, the whole society, the whole country, is pulled down by the weight of that foolishness, right? So what flips the cycle? What turns it?

In other words, I want to think somebody can look at this and go through it and begin to see that your children have got to be accountable and responsible. You don't just throw money at every habit or desire they have. You don't do that. And yet, we're expecting the most powerful force on the planet, economically and from a power point of view, and a point of view of doing good to protect and benefit the people, feeding the problem of foolishness and stupidity and no accountability and no responsibility.

Does Proverbs, and if people read this, can they see some of the things that your dad is concerned about as I look out with a broken heart at all the sheep scattered, wandering about? They don't have green pasture. They're looking for Pharaoh to take care of them. That bothers your dad, can you tell that?

RANDY: And I get it. And you know what? It is because you care.

JAMES: Absolutely. God wants the best for everybody. I've got his heart; I want the best for you. And that's what you're writing about. That's what Proverbs is about.

RANDY: It is. Think of it this way. One context that we hear the term "upgrade" is when you fly. Right? Have you ever, I know you have, have you ever flown on an airliner at the very back next to the toilet?

JAMES: Probably! But I try not to. I have wisdom.

RANDY: It is loud on certain, it depends on the jet, but on some of them, they're loud. We rode on one together...

JAMES: Sometimes, the engines are right there beside you. They're not on the wings.

RANDY: We did that together in Romania. It was a long time ago. We were on a really old plane.

JAMES: We marched into hell for a heavenly cause lots of times.

RANDY: We were in the back of that plane, and you had to yell at each other. And if you're riding next to the restroom in the back, and it tends to be bumpy, which I hate, you know this. I wrote a whole book about that. That's a different thing. If someone said to you, hey, you're in the back end of the plane, you want to go to first class? You'd be like, well, see ya, friends! We'll all get to the same place at the same time because we're all in this together. But there is a huge difference between riding in the back near the restroom and riding in first class where there is someone asking you every ten minutes...

JAMES: And you get off quicker.

RANDY: Yeah! This is what Proverbs does. We're all going through life one way or another. The question is, do you want to go through where it stinks, and it's rough, and it's loud? It's uncomfortable. Or do you want to go in style? That's what the scriptures do. You can go in style. You can have a great family. You can enjoy your work. You can be fruitful and profitable. You can even...

JAMES: You can go first class.

RANDY: You can go first class.

JAMES: Let's go ahead and cut to the chase. You can actually go better than first class. You can go in the shelter and shadow of the Almighty, the all-loving, all-giving, all-guiding source of wisdom. You can actually ride in his presence. That's the highest class you can go. And be directed by him. He wants to direct our steps, steps of righteousness. And that benefits us, it blesses us. It blesses everybody we care about. And when you love God, and you love your neighbor, it is amazing what will happen. That's what you're trying to help people move into, the steps up toward what God wants for you, which this Father wants the best and can deliver it.

RANDY: And this is very personal; it's very simple. Here are some simple truths you can implement in your life, and it will just be better.

JAMES: Well, Randy, you've been all over the world in Romania. Your mother saw us walk into what appeared to be the next revolution, and crying on the balcony, saying we're going to be gone. So you've gone all over the world. You've watched how God's people put God's arms around the most desperate, most forsaken, most overlooked people on the planet and totally change everything for them. Haven't you? Anything more exciting than giving water to people that have never had clean water?

RANDY: That's the reason I'm here. Yep, helping people the way we help people.

JAMES: All right, let's just look in right now and let God talk to you with what you see. And then do what he wants to do by allowing him to do it through you. Watch.

On the mission field:

ANNOUNCER: Village life might look primitive to the outside world, but to these villagers, the use of ox-drawn carts has been a way of life for centuries. Seeing content babies swing quietly in a cool breeze paints a picture of what one might call a calm and peaceful existence.

But there is an unsettling dimension to their lives that is dark and ominous. It's as if literally looking into the face of death. What is it they see? Water. It's what they don't see in this water that produces death. It's the unseen parasites and waterborne organisms that will attack the body. If left untreated, it will cause death in three to five days. The ravages of waterborne disease in a young child's vital organs are excruciating, as this grandmother knows all too well.

>> My seven-year-old grandchild got really sick. I took her to the doctor, and he said her kidneys were destroyed. He said she needed clean water, but we only have this water, so... I could not save her.

ANNOUNCER: Facing the reality of losing a child because a mother or grandmother does not have safe water to give them is unthinkable for most of us. Let's be the ones to make a difference for these precious mothers and help them see life, not death.

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: If we had been able to walk in with a perfect cure for the COVID virus, would that not have been welcomed? Would it not have been received all over the world with gratitude?

Well, Betty, we have the perfect cure. A cure for cancer could have cured our daughter. There is no viewer watching that if they knew they had it, wouldn't have brought it and offered it to us.

Well, we have the perfect cure, and what is it?

BETTY: It is clean water. It's the water wells. My heart really went out to that grandmother. Because even though she is a grandmother now, she still has the heart of a mother that would do anything for their precious little one to keep them alive. I believe she knew that water would hurt her little granddaughter, but she still had to have the water.

Doesn't your heart get touched when you hear a testimony like that of a brokenness that she could do nothing? Well, we have the cure for these precious little ones, and they shouldn't have to drink this dirty, contaminated water. We can help them, and I hope you will.

JAMES: Betty, I believe with all my heart you're going to. Let me just say to you right now, if you'd just go get a bank card and use it like a check. Or if you want to write a check, make the check to *LIFE*, but here's what I'm going to ask you to do. Dial that number or go online and take that card and say, I can drill a well. They're \$4800, and I'm going to take joy in doing it to be a miracle for a village and answer the prayers of a lot of parents, a lot of mothers, and grandmothers.

Please do it. Many of you say, James, I wish I could, I can't. Well, maybe give part of a well, \$1200, \$2400, pray another person joins you or two more joins you, we'll have a well. Most of the money comes from people who will give \$144 and give water for 30 people for the rest of their life; that's basically how it breaks out. \$48, boy, think about this, ten people water the rest of their life. Where could you make a better investment?

Get your bankcard, go online, call the number. If you're mailing a gift, tell us what you're putting in the mail. You're going to be greatly blessed by what Randy wrote, basically breaking down Proverbs in simple seven great steps. Here is *Living Amazed*, republished, with a full table of contents telling you what's in every chapter about the miracle encounters living amazed enabled me to experience and watch in others. It's going to inspire you. We want to bless you. You're going to become the miracle of all miracles for many, many people. Thank you for making that call. Thank you for making that gift.

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:

Randy: Many of these precious children behind me have lost siblings, playmates to waterborne illnesses. We can stop that cycle of death. It's as simple as giving them a cup of clean drinking water. Do you know each water well will serve about an average of 1,000 people? Look at all of these kids behind me. We can reach into areas – this area and so many more just like it and save thousands of lives just by giving them clean drinking water. I pray you'll do what you can right now. Go to the phone. Go online. Make the best gift you can. And when you do, know that you'll be saving precious lives all around the world with water for life!

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Betty and I not only pray for God to meet the needs that we talk about, but we thank him because we believe he is. Just thank you for loving the overlooked, the too often forgotten, the least of these.

We want to send you Randy's book. I'm thankful for the amazing gift. And we're sending you the book *Living Amazed*. We put a table of contents that talks about all the different individuals, people, and events you'll know. Watch how God just moved in and glory came down, and I have lived amazed. And Randy has lived amazed right along with us. And we praise God for him and Sheila hosting *LIFE Today*. Thank you for your kindness and encouragement to them. And we thank you so much for helping share life all over the world.

Randy, thanks for being with us today. Thanks for what you and Sheila do. You really are a tremendous blessing to a lot of people.

RANDY: Thank you for the opportunity.

JAMES: You're sure welcome. Thank you for what you do. You are a blessing. God bless you.