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Week 42: Rescue LIFE

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Lisa Osteen Comes

SHEILA: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Sheila Walsh here with Randy Robison. We have a lovely guest with us here today. I actually received her book in the mail and was just very touched by that. And then I started to read this and thought, this is a message that our people need to hear. So welcome Lisa Osteen Comes.

LISA: Thank you so much, Sheila and Randy. It's so good to be here. I love the Robison family, and I love this show and enjoy it myself. So thank you.

RANDY: We're thrilled to have you back. We've talked before, and your whole attitude, the encouragement that you bring is always needed. But man, with what so many people have been through, we appreciate it. But, Sheila, there was something you wanted to say really quick.

SHEILA: Well, I love the subtitle. "Don't give up on your dreams and prayers." I just wondered, Lisa, you're a very busy woman. I've watched your Bible studies, you're really good; what motivated you in writing this book at this time?

LISA: Well, I had been studying the book of Daniel, and in chapter ten, there is this amazing story about how Daniel found a promise about his people, the Jewish nation, and he began to pray and intercede and fast over it. As he was doing that, it was a 21-day fast, and then God sent an angel and a vision to appear to him. I love what he said to him. It's something that God is saying to us today and that God is doing for us today. He said, "Daniel, from the day you prayed, your prayers were heard." And he said, "From that

day, I dispatched the answer." He said this, "But on the way," he said, "there was a fight in the spiritual world, and I had to get backup from Michael. And we fought off the evil forces of darkness, and I arrived."

He said something very interesting too. He said, "The dream, the vision that you read about, it is for an appointed time." Anyway, there is so much in that. But the thing I saw was that when you pray, you trust God because you know that he's fighting our battles for us. He's sort of pulled back the veil of the spirit realm and allowed us to see what's happening in the background. So when we think, God, nothing is happening. You don't hear me. We can now begin to think, I can't always see in the spirit realm, and my answer is on the way. God has heard me, it may be for an appointed time, and that's why I can't give up. Our timing is not God's timing, so we must wait on his timing.

RANDY: That's the tough part. I appreciate that look into what is going on in the spirit world because we don't always see it. And the waiting, that phrase, "wait on the Lord to renew your strength," it feels like sometimes doing nothing, but that's not the case, is it?

LISA: It's not the case. I mean, I went through an unwanted divorce in my early 20s. I went through eight years of infertility. I opened a mail bomb, and it exploded on my lap, and God delivered me from that. And so when I talk about this, it's something I've lived. It's not always overnight. Sometimes -- most of the time, I should say, you have to wait on the promise. You have to walk through the process. God was so faithful to walk me through that process of healing after the divorce. But you know what? He had something better on the way. I've been married to Kevin for almost 31 years now, but he brought healing and restoration. I could have given up right then and said, God, why did this happen to me? I've served you all my life. But you know I trusted God's faithfulness.

I think that's what we need to realize. There is so much we can do in the meantime. The Bible says, "Having done all stand." What do you do when you're standing? When you don't know what to do, you do what you know to do. And that is to keep going to church and keep having a grateful heart. When you lay down at night, and you feel like another

day's happened and nothing -- another day's gone by and nothing's happened, you just say no, I trust the faithfulness of God. I know the dream will come to pass. I know the promise is on the way. That's how I've seen it in my life. I've seen the faithfulness of God over and over.

SHEILA: It's interesting when you talk about this story of Daniel, and I love that passage where we're given a sneak peek into what's going on. But I think too, in Joseph's life. There is a part in Acts where it says, "And God was with him." But it took like 12 years. So how do we, I'm thinking of our viewers who are struggling, maybe this year, these last two years have been really hard; how do we wait well and not lose hope?

LISA: Well, that's such a good question, and I do talk about that. That's what the whole book is about; what do you do? I have a chapter, "You Have to Press Through until You Break Through." But there are so many things you can do. Number one is don't obsess over the circumstances. Don't obsess over the problem. You've got to really keep your focus on Jesus and just keep being thankful for what you do have and what you don't have.

The other thing that has helped me is to learn to encourage myself. I call it "The Art of Encouraging Yourself" because we learn that from David. When everything was against him, and even his men wanted to stone him, what did he do? He prayed to God, and "He encouraged himself in the Lord," the Bible says. I think the way that we encourage ourselves in the Lord is number one, look to God. Don't look at the haters. Don't look at all the negative circumstances and what's going on but look to God.

David said this, he said, "God should I pursue?" And God answered him. So in that time when it is such a desperate need, say, God, what should I do? God will speak to you -- He will speak to you. And then encourage yourself in the Lord. I do that by praising God, putting on worship music, dancing around my house a little bit; that's how I like to do it.

But also getting into the Psalms and seeing that I'm not alone. I love where David said,

"Why am I so down? Why am I so downcast?" Then he said he made this quick U-turn, and he said, "I'm not going to stay here." He said, "I will put my hope and trust in God." Those are ways to encourage yourself and just make those U-turns when you feel like you're going down.

Another thing is to recognize when you start going down that path. Because if you learn, hey, I'm going down. And instead of getting in bed, not getting out of my house, I'm going to stop now. I'm going to call somebody; I'm going to get out of the house. I'm not going to spiral down; I think that helps also.

RANDY: I like that on a lot of levels. So many times, we feel like I need somebody else to do this for me. Or, in the church, I'm just waiting on God to do that for me. But the idea that you can encourage yourself through the Word of God, that's pretty, that's life-changing for a lot of people.

LISA: It is. I'm surrounded; I had my daddy, my mama -- thank you. I have four siblings; I'm surrounded by people who would encourage me at any moment. But there are times when it is only you and God, and nobody understands your hurt, even your joy, sometimes. It's just you and God, and you have to learn that he loves you enough to speak to you at that moment and encourage you. And that you can draw on him, and you can draw on his strength. We've got to learn to do that instead of running around in a panic, always looking for someone.

And you know we need each other, I don't mean it in a negative way, but we've got to grow up in God and become mature, and say, hey, God can listen to me. God will listen to me. God will hear me. And I'm going to sit still long enough to encourage myself in the Lord.

SHEILA: I love that. When you talk about that, getting to know from Daniel's story that God answered immediately, but there was a battle going on. I'm thinking of people right now who feel like they're under spiritual attack. What advice would you give them as to

how to fight those battles?

LISA: Sheila, I went through something that was sort of strange; it was a few years ago. It was a spiritual attack because every time I would get up at Lakewood to either preach or do the offering or encouragement, whatever I did, I felt opposition. Now I would stumble over my words. Sometimes, I felt like the words wouldn't come to me. So I would ask people, did you notice that I was struggling? They would say, "No, I didn't."

So this was going on so long, and I kept praying about it. I even had the thought, maybe I should quit preaching. Maybe my time is over. And then I thought, oh no, that's the enemy. So I just prayed, and I resisted the enemy.

I was sitting in church worshipping, and as I was worshipping, God just dropped this in my spirit, Lisa, if you will keep pressing through, you will break through this. I knew exactly what he meant. I could not quit. That I was going to have to preach whether it felt good or not. I was going to have to get up on the stage whether I felt opposition or not. I was going to have to keep reading my Bible, coming to church, declaring the Word of God, and doing everything I could. Do you know as I did that, it didn't happen overnight, but one day when I was preaching, that thing broke over me, and then, I walked in this freedom that I had never walked before.

And so that was a real spiritual attack. You know what? We have an enemy; he wants to stop us. We can resist him in the name of Jesus, but the Bible says he will return. But that's why the Bible says to resist him steadfastly. You do it with the name of Jesus, you do it with the Word of God, and you will win because he is a defeated enemy.

RANDY: Well, yeah! And the scripture says --

LISA: We can preach on that.

[Laughter]

SHEILA: That will take us all day.

RANDY: We have the guarantee, the promise in scripture that if we resist, he will flee. He doesn't have the choice. So yeah.

Here's one thing that I struggle with, and I'm probably not alone in this. When we pray for something, like Daniel, and we believe God has done it at that moment, but maybe like Daniel, there is some time. Sometimes, it can be years for people until we see the fulfillment or the answer to that. So why do you think God wants us to pray through that whole process instead of one and done. Like I gave it to God, I'm done with it, I'm moving on. But a lot of times, we're called to repeat, to march around seven times. Why the repetition, do you think?

LISA: I think a lot of it is for us. It is not God. He's not worried.

RANDY: Right! Right! He heard us. He knows. He's got his plans. I think you're right. It is for us.

LISA: But we do feel the discouragement. We wonder why. Why did it take me seven years to get married again, to be single again? Why did it take me eight years to finally have children? But then I ask why but now I see why. And I see that he was preparing me. When I went through that divorce, I began to help people who had gone through the same thing as I did, and that was so fulfilling to me. That's where I learned to preach. So in my worst hour, God called me into the ministry. And there's so much God is doing in the meantime.

Sheila, you brought up Joseph. He would not have been ready to reign had he not gone through the pit, Potiphar's house, and prison. Everywhere he landed, God blessed him, used him, and he put his skills to use. And God trained him and prepared him for such a time as that. So I think that's what we're learning in the meantime. I don't think we can

ever look at God as withholding it. I think there is a right time.

Habakkuk says there is an appointed time. In due season we will reap. We have to realize that we want everything fast, but God knows what is best for us. His timing is impeccable. So I think the waiting is us training and God preparing us and us trusting God. It is a test of our faith, and are we going to keep our trust in God? Because I see a lot of people just walk away from God, blame God, but he is the one who can help you and bring you to victory.

RANDY: I think -- I think, feel free to write letters and send emails if I'm wrong, but I think a lot of times that, sometimes, God is waiting or allowing time for other people to make right the decision. And so, if we're praying for someone else or a circumstance and there are multiple people involved, we all need to get on the same page. God's patient with them to let them grow and to let them learn, and sometimes to let them make the mistakes they need to come back. And so there are a lot of moving parts. But, like you said, when we come back to him, it is for our own sake.

LISA: Yes, yes! It is so good.

SHEILA: One of the strongest things, honestly, I took from this book, and it's called *It's On the Way*: "Don't Give Up on Your Dreams and Prayers," is that we live in such a quick-fix society; we want it, and we want it now. But I know in my own life, it's been a process of pressing through and pressing through that the change has been in me. That God is sometimes more interested in who we are becoming than what we're doing. But I love you talk about getting your fight back. Talk to us about that.

LISA: Well, I'll tell you if we're not careful, we'll just become complacent. Or we'll just play the victim role; everything bad happens to me. Why me? I did that for a time; God, why? I've served Jesus since I was three years old! Why did I go through this?

But you know, God spoke to me during that time, and he told me, just in my spirit, Lisa,

quit asking why and realize that you have an enemy and he's out to destroy you right now. Fight the real enemy. When he said that, it put a fight in me.

And I realized, you know what? God is not withholding from me -- the enemy is after me. He's after my voice; he's after me having children; he's just after us. He is a defeated enemy, but he roars like a lion, and we have to learn to recognize him. And at the appropriate time, you don't rebuke everything, but you do rebuke the enemy. There are storms in our lives that we can rebuke like Jesus did.

I think we have to keep that fire in our spirit, and not -- I give several characteristics of the victor mentality versus the victim mentality, which is very different. Readers can identify which side are you on?

SHEILA: I found that section very helpful. What do you hope that readers take away when they finally close the book and they've read it all? What is your prayer for them?

LISA: That they will never give up on their dreams and their prayers no matter how long it's taken. That they will be greatly encouraged and equipped. That they will feel equipped with the tools from the Word of God to keep going. And know that God will sustain you. It's just sometimes it gets old, and we think I can't take another day. But it's on those days, sometimes, I just say, God, I want to give up, but I'm not going to give up. And then I just eat some chocolate and go to bed. [Laughing] Because that makes me feel so much better.

SHEILA: That works wonders, people. Trust me! [Laughing]

LISA: Yes! But anyway, I think it is taking it a day at a time. You have -- you have the tools from the Word of God to make it through. Victory belongs to you. God holds victory in store for you. So I want you to take away the fact that you're going to win, that God is on your side, and that you're going to make it.

RANDY: I love it. I'd like to ask a little personal question here at the end. Your whole family, the Osteens, that name is synonymous with hope and encouragement and overcoming. That's a very fascinating calling that I think God is definitely placed on all of your lives. Why do you think God chose you guys to be the ones that said, you know what? You're going to speak this message because people need to hear it.

LISA: Thank you, first of all, thank you for saying that. I think it's maybe because we've been through a lot. We've faced a lot of things. My parents were denominational ministers when I was born with a disease, a crippling disease. That's when my dad just decided to read the Bible for himself, and he found out that Jesus is a healer. So they prayed for me, and God did a miracle in my life. And so he, all of a sudden, saw that God is a good God. God is a healing God. My mother went through cancer. They said she had a few weeks to live. And it didn't happen overnight, but God healed her.

You know we've been through a lot, and we've seen the goodness of God, and we know that no matter what it is, loss, divorce, financial ruin, whatever it is, it's not that we don't go through things, it's that we go through them with God. And you just hang on to Jesus. When you hang on to Jesus, you're going to come out better on the other end. So I guess that's why he's done it.

SHEILA: You're going to love this book. *It's on the Way: "Don't Give Up on Your Dreams and Prayers."* I'm going to tell you how you can get a hold of your own copy. But first of all, I want you to meet somebody, a really special woman and God has done something special in her life, but she is asking us to join her. Would you watch this?

On the mission field:

Producer: So, first, can you introduce yourself and tell us your name and what you do?

>> My name is Bella. And I work as a social worker in Siem Reap.

Producer: And what does it mean to be a social worker in Siem Reap?

>> It means that I go to KTV to find the girl and help them find a new job.

SHEILA: There is a popular form of recreation in Asia called karaoke television or KTV. These KTVs are advertised as places to sing with friends. But as I've seen with my own eyes, in many areas, the KTV is a front for human trafficking.

>> And a guy goes to sing. And then, if they want to have sex, they ask the girl, will they go with them? And they go. I know this feeling, you know.

Producer: How do you know that feeling?

>> Because I've been through... I used to... I used to do that too. So, I really know it, and clearly, it's not what they want.

SHEILA: Although she was trafficked herself at the age of 12, Bella was rescued and has since chosen to put her faith in Christ. Today, Bella fights to reach, rescue, and restore girls from sexual slavery.

>> You know, sometimes I tell them about my story. I said, "Before, I used to do that, too, and I know how it feels." I think if I'm without God, I'm nothing. So every day, I always thank God for this life.

SHEILA: Tonight, there is a girl about to endure another round of exhausting torment. Bella's life was changed when somebody chose to help her. That same opportunity is yours right now.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: I love Bella! And I love her story! What we now know, Bella is now married, and she has children. She has this beautiful life that God has put back together. And the reason that it's been put back together is because of people like you. You have stood with us in these campaigns for years. Honestly, it's been one of the most harrowing campaigns to be part of.

I remember my first trip to Southeast Asia when I saw the age of these girls. I mean, they're just little girls. They're like your daughter, like your granddaughter, like your little sister. They put all sorts of makeup on them and dress them up as if they're older, but I saw them during the day when they had no makeup on, and they're just -- they're just little babies who should be loved.

But because of the partners at *LIFE Outreach*, we've been able to go into places like that, and Bella works with us and tells the girls there is hope. Remember those nights you lay in the dark, crying out, if there is a God, send someone to help me. Well, God heard that prayer, but now we need to do it even more. The evil is getting even darker as the days get darker. But we are the body of Christ on the planet at this time, and we're coming as a mighty force, in Jesus' name. And Randy, we can all do something.

RANDY: Absolutely! I don't know if you know this, but recently we received a report from one of our mission partners in the field where we had rescued a couple of girls. It's heartbreaking, Sheila, because they were five and seven. So that's what we're up against. But you know what? We don't stop. We reach into these areas with the sole purpose of rescuing these children and restoring them.

It's interesting because Bella got to see the goodness of God, and we've talked about showing people the goodness of God. How do we do that? Well, we do that with you. Normally, it costs, on average, \$128 to reach into one of these areas and rescue one of these children or put them through a program that would restore them.

But we have a matching gift right now. We have people who have already stepped up

into this campaign and said we will match up to \$320,000. What is that? To me, that means, Sheila, here we go. I get excited. I'm like, we're going to really blow the -- we're going to storm the gates of hell on this one, right? But we need you. We want you to make up the rest of that. That means to reach one child, instead of \$128, it is \$64. It doubles your impact. It is just the math on it. But here's the bottom line. We together are going to storm the gates of hell, is the way I think of it.

I don't want to see any more children, much less the youngest, the most innocent, robbed. I want to show them the goodness of God. And I'm asking you to do that today. Join us in Rescue LIFE. Let's reach out to these. Let's show them God is good. There is hope. He has a plan for you; He has a future. He has it for you, and he has it for these, and it's tied together. So will you go online? Will you go to the phones and give the best gift you can? You can help us rescue lives today. Do it now!

Begin video clip:

ANNOUNCER: Innocent children and young people, longing to be loved and cared for, are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators, forced into the evil industry of human trafficking.

Through Mission: Rescue *LIFE*, you can reach out to educate children at 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 Sheila Walsh's brand-new book, *Holding on When You Want to Let Go*; "A lifeline of hope for those who feel their life is falling apart."

With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive the *Beauty Out of Ashes* puzzle set featuring an image taken by our team while on a trip to the mission field. This 500-piece puzzle forms a beautiful portrait of hope in the midst of despair. Included is a 24-piece puzzle for your children and grandchildren.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280, which will now help rescue 20 children. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Divine Servant." Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

On the mission field:

RANDY: This is the educational portion of Rescue LIFE where we explain to the villagers what to look for, who to watch out for, the danger signs, if you will, of those who are trying to lure them into sex trafficking. Education is obviously a critical part of Rescue LIFE. I hope that you will go to the phone or go online. Do whatever you can to support Rescue LIFE, as we seek to reach into areas like this, rescue the girls who have been taken and restore the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Do what you can. Help us as we help rescue lives all over the world.

End of video

In the studio:

RANDY: I pray you will do the best you can today. And know that when you do, we will do what we say we're going to do and rescue these children, reach into these dark areas, restore lives. And we want to share some hope with you. Sheila, I'm so encouraged by today's program. I really hope people will request this book today when they support Rescue LIFE.

SHEILA: For any gift at all, just say I want Lisa's book, *It's On the Way*: "Don't Give

Up on Your Dreams and Prayers."

Lisa, thank you so much for being with us.

LISA: Thank you! I so appreciate it.

SHEILA: And we will see you next time on *LIFE Today*. God bless you!