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Week 18

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Toure' Roberts

"End The Uncertainty"

MALE ANNOUNCER: The following program is sponsored by friends of Life Outreach International.

TOURÉ ROBERTS: There were moments of my journey where, if I would have just defined my life and what was possible in that moment, I wouldn't be here today.

And if we do not give up before we grow up, we will be blown away at how the potter can shape what was a mess into a masterpiece.

ANNOUNCER: Finding certainty in an uncertain world, next.

[music]

RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today." I'm Randy Robison. Blynda Lane is with me.

BLYNDA LANE: I'm back, I'm with you.

RANDY: Are you sure? Are you certain? You wanna be here? Are you certain you wanna be here?

BLYNDA: I know. I know that I wanna be here.

RANDY: Are you supposed to be here? We're joking, but you know, I feel like that a lot in my life. I'm like, "I thought this was," you know, just uncertainty, and it can be a little crazy at times.

BLYNDA: It can be. So that's why I'm so excited about who we have today, because Touré Roberts has written a book called "Knowing" and what I love is the subtitle "The Journey to Certainty in an Uncertain World."

RANDY: That's it.

BLYNDA: Touré, thank you so much for being with us today and for helping us, because we all live in an uncertain world. We want to hear your perspective on, what was the reason behind writing a book called "Knowing?"

TOURÉ: Thank you. Well, first of all, it's an honor to be here. I love "Life Today." I love you both. I love your family. This is just a blessing. So thank you for having me.

But I was concerned because the world is getting more and more uncertain. There is unrest and instability, from economic instability to, you know, divide in America and abroad. All over the world we're seeing tensions.

And I, you know, we are believers, and as believers, we go through things that everybody else goes through, but God expects us to go through them differently. It's kind of like what it talks about in Thessalonians, how we sorrow, but we don't sorrow as those who have no hope. And I felt that this moment of uncertainty, this moment of chaos, in a lot of--with respect to a lot of things, is actually an opportunity to show the world how we can be stable even when things are unstable.

I used to be shaken in shaky times, until I discovered some things, until I realized that in the midst of it all, God's got a plan, and to align with that plan and have peace while we're walking it out. And so, I'm excited about the book. I think it's gonna help a lot of people.

RANDY: It's interesting, you know, I'm one of those guys that, you know, stuff can be going on, chaos, and people can be worried, and I'm usually pretty chill. I'm usually like I'm good, right?

But when the uncertainty really hits home, family member or personal finances, that's when I start, "Aah, I don't know what to do." And my tendency is a little bit of, you know, what you call a paralysis of uncertainty. Is that you, or is that just people you know? You've seen that one?

TOURÉ: No, I've seen it, I've lived it, I've been that character in the story that you just illustrated.

And the issue is, if we just take a moment and look back, if we take a moment and really check the track record and the consistency of God meeting us, not in moments where we knew what the outcome was gonna be, but moments when we didn't know. It's like, you know, we'll have all this history with God, you know, he brought us over this and brought us through that, and then all of a sudden this new experience comes up, and now, all of a sudden, we forget that God is--

BLYNDA: Is he gonna be faithful?

TOURÉ: Right, and I'm like, wait, we should have more faith in God being consistent than him being inconsistent by not seeing us through.

And so what it produces, it should produce, is a knowing. And that knowing settles you. We're not--I think you have to go beyond being a believer. I think that we have to move from being a believer to knowers.

I think one of the greatest tricks of the enemy is to force us to make it our business to ensure that we're okay, you know?

BLYNDA: Like, take control.

TOURÉ: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Like it's our job to figure it out or to work it out, because if he can get us to expend all of our time, attention, and effort trying to make it through, when first of all, that's God's job. That's God's business.

Then he can distract us from purpose, from advancing the Kingdom, from preaching the gospel, from stretching ourselves and stretching our hands out to others, because we are preoccupied with taking care of ourselves.

BLYNDA: Okay, so you talk about that you felt a little bit like an impostor because you were guiding others to a deeper sense of knowing, but you had your own unraveling happening. So how did just your own personal kind of spiritual crisis help give you the solid foundation that you walk in today?

Because you and your wife, you're co-pastoring the Potter's House in Dallas, so here you are today, you know, leading others. But that wasn't always the story.

TOURÉ: Oh yeah, well, when I sat down to write this book that I was extremely passionate about, and I get real vulnerable in the first chapter, I didn't feel certain in the midst of uncertainty. There was a lot going on in my life.

You know, writing a book is never easy, and, you know, I was getting ready to assume the leadership of a congregation led by, arguably, one of the most prolific preachers in the world. And all of a sudden here, Mr. Knowing, Mr. Encourage the World with a Book About Being Certain, felt very uncertain.

And so in that chapter in particular, where I talk about that, I talk about the cocoon and I talk about how life is a cocoon, you know? And if a cocoon could talk, the cocoon would say, one, this is temporary, you know. Don't--this is not going to be--you're in a process. But let me tell you something, when you're going through something, it doesn't feel like a process, it just feels like pain. It feels like--

BLYNDA: It's gonna be around forever.

TOURÉ: Yes, you know? And so you gotta remember, "No, wait. Wait, hold on. This is a cocoon." So it's temporary, one, you're actually safe there. You never see a caterpillar, if we might borrow that metaphor, you never see a caterpillar that's unsafe. They're uncomfortable, but they're not unsafe, right? They're in a process, you know.

And so just knowing those things, "This is temporary, I'm safe." And then, "It'll be worth it." You know, this is my hope. You know, when it gets--when life hits me hard, and life does, you know. None of us are exempt. None of us get to escape life's rod, if you would.

When life gets hard, I remember that if it's this hard, who am I gonna be when I come out of this, you know? I think that the journey that God has us on, the journey of transformation, we go from glory to glory and strength to strength. The challenge is commensurate with the outcome. So I could either sit there and say, "Man, this is hard," and sometimes, maybe I do. But when I get to my proper thinking, I say, "Oh, it's gonna be good," and the version of me that will emerge is equipped for the life that God has for me.

RANDY: Yeah, it sounds like that Scripture that says, "Count it all joy when you face these various trials, knowing that it will produce endurance." You go, "Okay, I'm going through it right now."

So, okay, so here's my question, because there's probably somebody watching right now, you know who you are, and you're like, "Man, I'm like the most uncertain person in the world," or "I'm going through this time of uncertainty and I feel like I'm a failure," or "I don't know what to do," or "God has abandoned me." But you're saying, no, this is a time of transformation.

TOURÉ: Oh, yeah.

RANDY: What would you say directly to that person who is feeling all of those uncertain feelings?

TOURÉ: Oh yeah, first of all, I'd say, I get it. You know, life can--you know, sometimes life can flat out hurt, and I really mean that, you know, and so I don't want to be insensitive to what they're going through. I get it. What's better is the Lord gets it.

Scripture says it, you know, that we do not experience anything that the Lord can't identify with in all those same ways. James said, "Count it all joy when you go through various temptations." Joy and happiness are not the same thing. Joy is a little bit more deep-rooted, but guess what joy is based on? It says "knowing this," knowing. Back to knowing. That's the--knowing is the equalizer.

Knowing is the lens, the film through which we look. I know something. I know that this is working. I feel it. It's heavy, it's laborious, it's dark, but there's something at work. Know again, "for we know that all things work together for good." So we have to trust God's heart when we can't see his hand.

BLYNDA: You say in the book that the essence of knowing is walking with God. And when I think about the person watching today and here, they're so encouraged by what you're saying. What does that look like though to walk out with God, every day, this knowing?

TOURÉ: I think it is to--to first of all, begin with believing in God. There's a passage in Hebrews that says that, "He who comes to God must believe that he is," and then it says that, secondarily, "And he's a rewarder to those who diligently seek him." God is, you know. We have to start there.

And listen, God knows, if you hang out with me long enough, you're gonna say like David, in the process of time, "I've been young, but now I'm old, and never have I seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

So I think that walking with God is about trusting God, is about, you know, baby steps, if you must. But it's worth it, and he will never leave you, he will never forsake you, and it's just a wonderful--I can't imagine doing life without God. I can't even imagine it.

RANDY: So for the people that think, you know, man, these people on TV are up here, you know, they got it all figured out. All these things that we go, no, God just wants you to bring what little you've got, and he illustrated that by feeding thousands of people with just very little brought by a boy, you know?

And you go, okay, so wherever you're at right now, just bring it to God, and then you will start to go, "I know," because you'll start to see it in your own life. That's the only way you're really gonna know.

And by the way, if you wanna pray with somebody, you can call that number right now and somebody will just pray with you. They'll just walk alongside you a little bit. But the idea here is that you get to that point that Touré is talking about where you really know some things, and you're gonna have to do it by actually experiencing them.

Now, I gotta ask you this, Touré. I mean, you--obviously, you grew up in the church and walking with Jesus and all these things, right?

BLYNDA: Never made a mistake.

RANDY: Your background's a little rough at times.

TOURÉ: Yeah, it's quite colorful in certain places. As I look back over my life, I realize that God knew some things about me that I did not know. And so there was an unfolding. There were moments on my journey where, if I would have just defined my life and what was possible in that moment, I wouldn't be here today.

If I would have just stopped right there, you know, and--but my life was unfolding, and I think that that's important for people to understand. If you're breathing right now, if you're taking in air, that means that your life is still unfolding.

And God is a master, he is an absolute master, at taking something that looks like nothing, or looks like little, or looks irredeemable, and turning it into not just something that's okay, but a masterpiece, I believe that in God's plan, and what God knew about us before he put

us in our mother's womb, I believe in that plan is a masterpiece. And if we do not give up before we grow up, if we do not give up before the unfolding takes place, we will be blown away at how the potter can shape what was a mess into a masterpiece.

RANDY: So true.

BLYNDA: It's so amazing to think about sometimes, when our life falls to pieces, when everything is torn down, it's actually the greatest opportunity for God to build it back up into something better than we could have ever imagined.

But I think some of us get--I mean, thinking about living that way feels like such freedom, but a lot of us, when we have caused our own crumbling, in a way, we get stuck there thinking, you know, "I can't forgive myself, how can God forgive me? How can I ever?" So what would you say to the person who feels like where they are today is maybe of their own doing, they're in a tough place. Where's the hope there for them?

TOURÉ: Well, a couple of things. One is it may be of their doing, but God knew it. So whatever you did, you're unraveling your self-destructive behavior or decisions, yes, that was you, but God knew before he put you in your mother's womb that you would make those mistakes and yet still has a plan. He specializes in the mess.

So in life, sometimes we end up in pieces, but God knows how to take those pieces. And there's that Japanese art form, the name escapes me, where it's just these beautiful bowls that are made from the broken pieces. I can't think of the name of it. Somebody knows what it is. But it's--and what makes this thing valuable is that they took those broken pieces and put them back together again. So you can see the cracks, but they're lined in gold. And that's what makes it valuable.

So there's some people right now, and listen, I can testify personally, where life was really chaotic, but God has a way to do it. And I will say this about not being able to forgive yourself. Believe it or not, it is pride to believe that you are more righteous than God.

BLYNDA: Because he's the one that has forgiven you.

TOURÉ: Come on, he's saying, "I've forgiven you." So are you more righteous than God to hold on to yourself?

And then the last thing I'll say about that is, you know, when you think about like regret, and I understand remorse, because that leads to repentance. But regret is something different, because regret is charging a former version of you, or rather, it's charging the current you, regret is charging the current you, with what a former version of you--that's not fair to you.

And so, you gotta let it go, and you've gotta trust God. And don't think that you're more righteous than God by holding yourself in a prison, when God said, "Hey, you're free to me."

RANDY: Yeah, if he can forgive us then maybe I ought to as well.

TOURÉ: I think it might be smart.

RANDY: Last thing quickly I do wanna ask you about, because this, I think it's a powerful thing. You talk about knowing, seeing, and saying. And I understand that just saying words is not necessarily--it's not like some incantation or weird thing like that.

But when we understand, when we go through that process of knowing what God says and who we are in him, and then seeing it playing out in our lives, there is something special about speaking it. I mean, even salvation, it talks about the confession of our mouths. What do you see as the power of the tongue?

TOURÉ: Oh, it's everything. And to your earlier point, you know, when God creates, he creates the words, you know? "And God said, and then there was." You know, Hebrews 11 talks about how the world--the worlds were framed by the Word of God.

And so when you--when God has spoken something to you and you have a knowing, and even if the knowing contradicts current situations and circumstances. And so sometimes, you're looking at your situation and you're saying, "My circumstances are irredeemable, yeah, but God can create new circumstances," and that's the power of the tongue.

And so, saying proves that you really believe, because it's one thing to think it and inside you know it, but when you have to formulate the words--

BLYNDA: And be held accountable to those words.

TOURÉ: There you go, and be held--through community, through your friends, "Hey, I'm--" A lot of people don't wanna say something because if it doesn't happen, then they feel like a failure, whereas first of all, again, that's not your job. Your job is not to bring it to pass.

It's to believe what God said, and be so convinced, to have such a knowing about it, that you speak it, and then God allows you to participate with what He has already preordained.

RANDY: That's it. And you know what, it's gotta be--it's gotta be his words for our words to really have meaning, because I can say some dumb things, but when I--let me give you a good example, I'll give you a great example right now, for you guys that are watching, and I wanna invite you into this.

It says in Scripture, God says, "When you're generous to the poor, you lend to God, and he will repay you." So, Blynda, we have an opportunity right now to be very generous to the poor through our mission outreaches, through Mission Feeding, and that's an interesting dynamic because you kind of enter into a contract that God's offering out of grace to you, by the way, he doesn't owe anybody anything.

But he's saying, "I'm gonna repay you." And once you know that--I know this, I've seen it, time and time again. And so I can, with the confidence of Touré's book "Knowing," I can tell

you right now, if you will just step outside of yourself and just, out of obedience, be generous to some people in desperate need, God will find a way to bless you.

And it probably won't be monetarily, but he can do anything he wants. I can tell you one thing. We'll send you Touré Roberts's book, if you request it today. But take a look, really, at this, and see, is there a way that I can express God's love through generosity right now? I would invite you into this. Watch this, and you'll understand.

[speaking foreign language]

[music]

RANDY: If we will remember all those children who are on the edge of death, they're malnourished, they're hungry, and we will do something about it, we won't have to put another white cross into the sand. Let's not forget those for whom we were too late, but more importantly, let's not forget those who are within our reach. We can save lives. We can stop the cycle of death here, through Mission Feeding. Please do it today.

RANDY: You know, Blynda, those graves that you saw, here's the wild thing about that, and really sad. Those are pre-dug graves. In other words, it's not like someone died and so they dug a grave. They dig them knowing that they will be filled.

And did you notice how short they were? They dig some larger ones for adults, but they dig many children's graves. They pre-dig them, because they're planning on death. And they're not wrong.

BLYNDA: I think of the mom who was just saying, "I don't even want my kids to go to sleep because I don't know that they're going to wake up." As a mother, I have never had to fear that when my child goes to sleep at night, they may not wake up because of malnutrition, ever.

RANDY: Yeah, and the malnutrition is behind so many things. And actually, Blynda was just asking me, you know, earlier today, what does that mean?

And the reality is, if there is something else like malaria or like some waterborne disease, that a child gets when they're malnourished, the chances are slim to none that they can survive that kind of thing. That's why the medical clinics that you'll see in many of our roll-ins, in our footage, they're critical, but the point of Mission Feeding is that they never actually have to go to one of those clinics. I'm glad they're there, but they're a last resort.

When we take the food to them, as Mission Feeding does, you'd never get to that desperate point of the clinic.

BLYNDA: We kind of kick malnutrition at the knees. I mean, I'm looking at this bowl here and just thinking, this is what we provide when they come. These children can bring this bowl and can fill this up.

RANDY: So the bowls came about because viewers like you saw the Mission Feeding outreach where they're bringing plastic bags or sometimes rusty cans like this which immediately gets way too hot. Trust me, I've felt it. And they were like, "You need to give them some--" so yeah, we started bringing the bowls in.

And now they're all over. We'll go back to places we hadn't been in years, and you'll see those bowls everywhere, because they're heat-resistant. And yes, so sometimes that's the only meal that a child will get, but it's so nutrition-enriched that it gets them through the emergency times. Other places they might get a couple meals. Usually it's in a school, because they're getting some instruction, they're getting a hope and a future.

I mean, this, I could go on and on, by the way, I could go on forever about the Mission Feeding program because it is such a beautiful work, and it is such a work of God. It's very close to my heart. We are making a difference, but you need to know that we only make the difference, those of us at Life Outreach and those of us who are partners in the field, we only make that difference with your support. It's viewers like you that make this possible.

You need not go there. You just need to give whatever God puts on your heart. We've got people there. They're waiting. The need, you can see, is huge. But we can fill that need. We can fill it with a bowl of food, and we can fill it with the love of God, and we do both.

I'm asking you to join us, to fill a bowl, to share God's love, \$30, \$50, \$100, \$1,000 if you can do it. It'll help feed 3, 5, 10, 100 children. Do what you can, go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can.

And I can tell you, I've been there, I've seen it with my own eyes. Mission Feeding saves lives. Will you do it? I hope you'll do it right now.

ANNOUNCER: Right now across the continent of Africa, children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition and even death. With food reserves critically depleted and many areas experiencing devastating famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000 children who are counting on us every single day.

Through Life's mission feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to a prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need. Call now with your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for 3, 5, or 10 children for 3 full months.

With your gift we'll send you "The Father's Heart" devotional. Drawing from Scripture and his past, James Robison takes you on a 90-day journey to help you experience a deeper, more personal relationship with God as your loving Father.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you will receive The Father's Heart bundle. This stationary set, paired with the devotional, is a thoughtfully-designed collection created to help you share encouragement, prayer, and the love of our Heavenly Father with those you care about.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, which will help feed 100 children in desperate need, request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd. This is the last week. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

RANDY: I think you understand the opportunity, and I would just invite you into it. It's such a wonderful thing to bless people with life, and you can do it. So please pick up the phone, go online, make the best gift you can.

And again, today, if you request Touré Roberts's book, "Knowing," we'd love to send it to you.

BLYNDA: It's really an awesome book, and I just have really enjoyed the interview, because I can tell that this is something you live. It's not just words you tried to write on a paper to get a book sold. You've lived this. And it really is just such a joy to get to talk about it today. Thank you for joining us.

TOURÉ: Thank you. Love this, love this. Love being here.

RANDY: Appreciate all you guys out there watching too. If you miss any of our programs, go to lifetoday.org. We've got a lot of great things for you. We'll see you again next time.

♪ This house no longer feels like home. ♪

[music]

SHANNON BREAM: If you are struggling, I get it. I've been in very, very dark places. And all I can tell you is that God is working.

ANNOUNCER: Shannon Bream, next week.

ANNOUNCER: "Life Today" is made possible by the supporters of Life Outreach International. Your gift will be used exclusively for the exempt purposes of Life. The ministry features specific outreaches as examples of the programs it supports and conducts. Gifts are considered to be without restriction as to use unless explicitly stipulated by the donor. The ministry is a member of the ECFA.