

3/27/23

**Week 14: Rescue LIFE**

**James and Betty Robison**

**Raul Garcia**

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** You know I meet a lot of people that excite me. And by the way, I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *Life Today*. And they excite me because I see genuine love. I see an excitement about life, real life—not an existence, life. And I met Raul Garcia. Raul was not a Christian and he actually, he's going to tell you, he's studied every religion in the world. Raul, we welcome you to *Life Today*. You've got a whole lot of friends out here that help you help the poor, literally get them off the streets and feed people that are starving and are you going to tell them how you saved a lot of people's lives recently? Because our viewers helped you be able to save their lives from freezing to death.

Now you started though in your teens, not believing, and then you started studying world religion. Tell us about that.

**RAUL:** Yeah, so the journey begins, a lot of it, is cultivated through my upbringing. I was raised a cultural Catholic. I'm originally from Columbia. So you get that basic foundation of dos and don'ts and what you should and shouldn't do. My mom introduced me to the Catholic church, and my family did so. So I kind of stepped through those footsteps of communion and confirmation and what all that means. I asked questions. They couldn't give me a lot of information. I'm a very mentally engaged person so I got kind of frustrated. I'm like well, you're giving me rules but there is nothing else attached to it. And I now say a lot of rules without relationship just breed rebellion, and that's really what happened with me.

So as years compounded with each other, a lot of family trauma, a lot of things that the Lord has

restored now with my dad and my mom, and praise be to God that they get to be here now, it led me to be very angry, frustrated, impatient with a world that testified for goodness and faithfulness to a God named Jesus. And so by the time I was in my late teens, I pronounced myself Agnostic, atheistic. If you said there was a God, I had a case to tell you why there wasn't one.

And so, I was more fascinated by most of the ones that were willing to die for. So I looked at Muslims and I was like, well, they're at least willing to give their lives for it. The only thing I see in the church is inconsistency and hypocrisy. So I looked at all these worldviews and a lot of what I saw in Christianity did not interest me.

And so, through my trauma and anger and frustration, I was successful in the world's eyes at an early age. I had a scholarship to eventually go to Wharton and to go to Wall Street and do business. And that was my passion. But it was really driven by getting away from my family.

There was a lot of negativity and a lot of stuff that I wanted to leave and flee from and I thought money was going to be the thing that was going to get me there. Well, what I didn't realize is I was going to land in Texas to start a company, and the Lord instead was going to pivot me to expand his kingdom and not my own.

And so that was a journey. And the shortest I can put it is, he started revealing himself what I call experientially. Lee Strobel, I'm sure you've heard of him, *A Case For Christ*, his wife had an experiential journey. The Lord was revealing himself to her through people and encounters and prayers and supernatural ways. And he was having his own but he wanted to make a case for why she was losing her mind. What the Lord was doing was renewing his mind and he didn't even know it.

Well, I had a culmination of the two. About four or five, I can't say I know the timeframe, I was being pruned and weeded and tenderized by the goodness of God by people and customers when I was serving tables, and the trauma of all this stuff that I had found myself in leading to Texas and the business not taking off like I thought it was going to. All of the sudden, now I'm in this

place where I have nothing to give. My family is kind of plummeting with me in the process. And the Lord is trying to reveal himself to me.

So about five months in, all these encounters are in front of me. I'm interested in this girl that works at the restaurant. I ask her out and she says, "Well, you can come to this thing with me." I didn't know it was a Gateway Young Adult Service. And I know you know a thing or two about Gateway, James. And I showed up and she didn't show up. It was fascinating.

I asked her later and she actually said, "I think you need to get saved, and that's why I told you to go. I just didn't show up."

What I didn't realize is that the message that night was going to be how many more times do I need to reveal myself to you?

Now, it is interesting because everybody would kind of be—did you give your life to Christ that night? And that's not what happened. But what did happen is the biggest seed was planted, which is that message was told, and all of a sudden, I found myself thinking, there's got to be something to all of this stuff that's been going on in my life: the prayer, the checks that covered our rent, my mom getting a job with—it's just the list goes on. And so I was like you know what? Maybe there is a God.

But I'm in Texas. It is like the belt buckle of the Bible belt. Like there is a church on every corner. Jesus is, of course, going to be the one you're going to be pitched on. But if I was in Iraq, I'd probably be addressing Allah right now. If it was another country, maybe I'd be addressing one of the Hindu gods. So, Jesus, I'm just not sold on this but maybe there is a God.

So now I found myself thinking, maybe there is something but it is not Jesus yet. So that's when I started doing this study and I started looking at what I thought were the convicting religions, the people that were walking it out. And so I looked at Islam and the Quran, which is the history and the commandments within Islam, and then Sharia law, which is kind of the mosaic components of Christianity, the "thy shalls," and then the Hadith which is the tradition of Islam.

Unfortunately, there's pillars within every religion. Well, the pillars within Islam were built on a house of cards, as anything else I've ever seen. So as I kind of went through it, I found myself finding more of Jesus in the Islamic worldview because there is a whole gospel of him in there than I even realized.

So I kept avoiding Christianity, kept avoiding Christianity as I was looking at every religion. What I didn't realize is I was falling in love in the process. Didn't realize that I was fascinated with this guy. Maybe not God, but I know he walked this earth, I did come to that conclusion at some point. When I finally looked at Christianity, I realized with the evidence that I was looking at, the resurrection, I tried to debunk that, it debunked me. He didn't walk this earth. Yeah, he did. There is more evidence for him than for George Washington.

Then I looked at every element of what I was looking and I couldn't find anything but just the man that was pursuing me relentlessly, and patiently waiting for me. And I found myself recognizing that as I was trying to debunk his design. I thought, you know, all of it is true. You are who you say you are, but if I can debunk maybe marriage is just outdated. There was a lot of trauma in my family. And if I could debunk some of these things then maybe I could debunk me living the life I want to live but you're still God. I'm just kind of living my life.

I realized that no-fault divorce, the law that allowed people to get divorced, like flipping a switch, everything, there was a crosshair of the moment that the Christian church started to see divorce go this way was when all these laws that churches weren't standing up for. I realized my issue isn't with you and your design, my issue is with the body of Christ not standing up for what matters most.

And I realized, it sounds like you need a soldier. I didn't know there was a whole thing on it in Second Timothy and First Timothy, and Paul calls us to arm up and put our armor of God up. And there is more. He calls us sons, but he gives us more elements of identity in regards to the war that's going to be at the other side of the decision that you make after that confession of faith. So I realized wow! Actually, I'm all in. Let's go. And so, I look for the deep deepest side of the pool, whatever that looked like and at that time it was Africa and prisons. I was just about to

turn 20, and so wherever they let me go and wherever he let me in, I was all for it. I wasn't wondering if I'm going to die or not. I figured you know what? I was basically dead already. Technically, I am dead in his eyes, and he just resurrected me.

Saying yes to him wasn't that complicated. The beautiful was the prophetic word that I had been given from the beginning of the journey was that if I kneeled and let the pride down like a domino effect it was going to ripple forward. And the first one was going to be my family. So I got the honor and the privilege to lead my parents to Christ. And it's been a journey.

**JAMES:** Your business is going well. The name of it, it is in Walmart and Costco and other places. What's the name of this business?

**RAUL:** Best Bodies for Life. And so that all came from the Lord telling me one day because our business was about to go bankrupt. I thought, well, you brought me here for this, meaning the ministry, you didn't bring me for business. Yes, I'm good at it, but clearly not. So maybe this is what you're calling me. You are good at it but if you give it to me, I can do something with it. So all the sudden he gave me the name and the significance of the name "best" is wired to Christ giving his best. "Bodies" because First Corinthians 6:19 says that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. And "for life" is because every decision we make has an eternal implication attached to it. So therefore, even in nutrition, what we eat, how we eat, etc., how we speak, has an eternal ripple.

So he's like this is the name and this is why I've given it to you. But how you're going to expand my kingdom and not your own, I was actually in the middle of a brothel in Africa, which actually some of that is here, and this little girl clung on to my hand and I found out that these girls are very privy to trafficking and other things. And the Lord, very quickly, because this story is long, just told me, this company is going to become a bridge for you to actually grab those kids and actually exemplify the ripple effect of my glory through it.

**JAMES:** And that's what you're doing, that's what we're doing right now with Rescue LIFE, that's what you've been doing. All right. You started going to the poor here.

**RAUL:** Yeah, the Genesis of it really starts, the ministry is called Deep Love Ministries.

**JAMES:** Deep Love Ministries—and boy, is it ever!

**RAUL:** It actually started because a group of friends at Gateway and friends I had in the church had a heart to go into the cracks and crevices of the world. We started going to Deep Ellum, which is part of Dallas. And so we started going Deep Love—Deep Ellum. So that's the Genesis of it.

**JAMES:** A very hard-hit place where there is just a lot of sadness.

**RAUL:** Exactly. However, in the crux of 2020, which I'm sure no matter, whenever anybody watches this they'll know that 2020 is a year everyone will always remember. The churches in some capacity was shutting down or being told that it needed to shut down. And a friend of mine, who is part of Deep Love calls me and said, "So what are you going to do?" Because he knows how I'm wired.

I said, "Well, I ain't shutting down. I can't do prisons though, I can't go to Africa. So I'll probably just go to the streets. They can't kick me out of there. We still live in a Constitutional Republic so I can still exercise that route."

And so he tells me, "What does that look like?"

I said, "Well, I typically go with some bars and some protein and hand some bottles of water and share the gospel and just talk to people."

It's really not complicated. People overcomplicate the gospel. If you just build a relationship with somebody, you can literally introduce them to Jesus without even using your words.

And so that was the introduction to him. And he said, "Well, let's just go do it."

So we grabbed my minivan, we call it the Evangie-van. And we took out a table, we put some Bibles that Mark Jobe actually gave us from Gateway. And we grabbed some bottles of water and some protein bars, and we just started talking to people.

What I didn't realize is that 12 months later, I was going to have a Godsend of a gift, which is a girl named Ashley spearheads this whole thing that was going help me with clothing and shoes and belts. We were basically going to take over her house and turn it into our warehouse. In the outreach capacity, we were going to have chiropractors out there, and we were going to have nurses who couldn't go overseas anymore and said, "Well, I can't go to Africa and do medical missions so why don't we go out there with you and do blood pressure checks and blood sugar tests?"

Because people don't realize the intricacies of people that are living on the streets, they have to maybe get to J.P.S. Or a hospital but they don't have access. They can't walk 15 miles and then walk back to make it to shelter. So they just keep letting their body deprecate. And now we see them as these unclean, untouched, unwanted, unaddressed groups of people. God is actually the ones that he actually spent the most time with in scripture.

**JAMES:** You ended up in Tarrant county, Fort Worth area, helping the hungry and the poor. You were doing so much that you came and asked us to help you have a bus so you could get people somewhere. All right. We have a couple of minutes is all we have. What happened with that bus when a serious freeze came? So serious that you had to peel people off walls, off sidewalks, frozen. What happened?

**RAUL:** It was intense. So we shared division with you in regards to me thinking that we needed a bus because people in wheelchairs and such couldn't get from the shelter to just the church service that we partner with to get them every Sunday. And then now, we've been doing this but the Lord wakes me up in the middle of a freeze, February 3rd, I believe it was, and says, are you warm? How do you feel?

I'm like well, what kind of question is that? My mom's complaining about the pipes maybe freezing.

And then all of the sudden, he brings me this revelation of there are people that don't have those problems and they wish they could have those problems. So the reality of the fact that people were out there became really real.

I called up a buddy of mine who is actually here as well, John, and I said, "Hey, are you ready?"

He's like, "Ready for what?"

I said, "Well, that bus that we have. We're going to put it to good use because the city is shutting down, but the shelters are giving people bus passes."

So it's really funny how people on the streets are looking to the body of Christ for help and they're nowhere to be found. So they're looking for government agencies to give them a bus pass but the government agency that provides transportation shuts down the bus lines. So it's really funny.

So I said, "What a perfect time for the body of Christ to move right now."

And so we got the bus and we just started driving on what everybody thought was an unwise territory. What we didn't realize is we were going to find people underneath dumpsters, people frozen against mattresses near gas stations. And women that didn't even want to come with us because they were frozen in their sleeping bags, but they only saw two men. What if we would have had women with us and they wouldn't have seen two men asking me to get in a bus? I'm okay. So they stayed out there. Or the fact that there were hundreds of places we couldn't hit because our bus only fits 14. Yet some of the ministries, I'm going to leave names out, have six, seven buses and they were just collecting snow.

My heart just broke because everybody was applauding me. I'm like I don't need applause, I need

attendance, I need yeses. And that's really what deep love is. It is a group of people who have chosen to not just say yes once but keep saying yes, and the kindness of God is what leads people to repentance.

**JAMES:** With the bus that this ministry helped you get, and that night, how many people did you end up with, because others did help you, ultimately, the fire department people helped you, how many people did you save?

**RAUL:** In a four-day period we got over 350 people. The fire department stepped up one day and they were able to rescue about 500. And then I believe we got some records of about 1,000 people for that week in light of the people we work with to get emergency shelters going.

**JAMES:** And many of them, it saved their lives.

**RAUL:** They were saved, that's a fact.

**JAMES:** Would you say to our audience watching, that when they help *LIFE* share life, they're saving lives and pointing people to Jesus and their love does not fail?

**RAUL:** That's the depth, that's deep love. Deep love is us recognizing that there are people out there, not homeless people out there, and they are needing to see the kindness of God. Because when they do, repentance comes. And the last time I checked, a group of people repenting is revival.

**JAMES:** Let me just say this to you, if somebody wanted to find you, do you have an online site they can go to?

**RAUL:** Yes, [DeepLoveMinistries.org](http://DeepLoveMinistries.org).

**JAMES:** And they can join you in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

**RAUL:** We'll be there every third Sunday of every month. We've been there.

**JAMES:** Out helping the poor in a major outreach.

**RAUL:** Absolutely.

**JAMES:** All right, check him out. Send him some support. And I just to want say this to you. Betty, we're doing this, isn't this a beautiful story?

**BETTY:** It really is just awesome.

**JAMES:** Thank you, God! And thank you—I can't thank you enough. See you're just going to see all these trafficked precious girls being used as slaves and we're going to set them free. We can! A \$128 gift will help us reach, rescue, and restore someone who is being trafficked. But look at all the ministries like this you're helping. This is so amazing. You're such amazing people. You are reaching out to the least of these and putting God's arms around them.

Please listen to this testimony. Listen to this reality and what love can do. I'm asking you right now with all your heart, support reaching and rescuing precious lives that are being trafficked and destroyed. We can give them life. We can give them freedom.

### **On the mission field**

#### **Open Captions**

>> I was really scared and afraid.

I was so young, and I did not know anything. The men forced me to do bad things and I could not find any help.

>> Girls? How old do you want?

>> Young.

>> How old?

>> What's the youngest?

>> Huh?

>> The youngest.

**ANNOUNCER:** Sex trafficking of young women and children is one of the darkest and most depraved activities of humankind on the planet today. There are nearly five million victims who have been forced into prostitution, and the majority of those are women and children.

**DAVID:** These are kids that have been forced to have sex with people; and they're being abused, and they're being photographed, and they're doing things that no child should ever have to do.

### **Open Captions**

>> They blindfolded me and put me into a van. When we arrived, I was put in a room with two sets of locks.

**ANNOUNCER:** Mission: Rescue Life was born over a decade ago to do our part in helping shine the light of God's love into these dark and depraved areas. We are partnering with missionaries around the world who are rescuing those bound in slavery. Even former trafficking victims like Bella are helping those in need.

### **Open Captions**

>> 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.

**DAVID:** So when we look at these big numbers of statistics that are just demotivating, what we choose to do is we just choose to focus on the one. We work alongside law enforcement and so we rescue one today, we rescue one tomorrow, we rescue one next week because every single child matters to God. And so then they have to matter to us.

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** We have been doing this now for, we're moving toward 20 years of outreach, even in this area. It's just amazing, Betty, that we actually find missionaries and people with a broken heart who take us to these settings. I remember when we went to the sex capital of the world, which we built one of the largest rescue centers on the planet there.

By the way, when we built that Destiny House and that center, and when we, I'm talking about you, we used to be able to go in and show you all the children singing and all of them praising Jesus. We'd show their little faces and show how they're speaking English and they're learning a trade and they grow up. We can't show their faces anymore because of the internet. The sex traffickers, which you saw some of our group breaking in, working with the police to rescue them, we reach, we rescue, and we restore. And you support that.

Well, Betty, we are still setting them free whether we get to show their faces or not. But see, if they recognize them, then they would try to retake them if they were out in public or hurt them even later in their life. But you can't stop the love of God from setting them free. But who is it that makes that possible for us to have those mission partners, for us to have those centers, those places of hope and help and head those children off before someone sees them and takes them away?

Our friends have put up a \$320,000 matching gift for this, they believe in it so much. That means it takes an average of \$128 to get one. Now if you give \$128, we rescue two. You know how I always ask people to give the \$1280 and rescue ten? Now, they'll rescue 20.

Betty, what do you want our viewers to hear about the importance of how they respond to children like that when we just saw to rescue them? What do you want them to hear and feel in their heart?

**BETTY:** Well, I hope your heart is as touched and broken as mine was as I was watching those precious innocent little ones. They're being trapped, they're being traded, they're being beaten, they're being under control, James, to where they have no choices. They lock them up in a room, and then they send these men in there to abuse them in so, so many ways. We wouldn't even want to put it on the air.

But thank you, thank you if you've contributed to helping these children come from darkness into light, to know that they have a future. So many of them think they will die in these places if someone doesn't come and reach out to them. Let's continue to do that. There are so many—so many that God loves so much. But he wants to use us to make the difference in their lives. So please join with us.

**JAMES:** And he is, in fact, using us and it is the big us. Betty and I remain among the most faithful givers to LIFE, and we have been ever since the ministry started 60 years ago. Why do we do that? Because that's unconditional love. It's redemptive love.

Think about this. What you give today will be doubled. The average to rescue one, \$128, you give that we rescue two. \$1280 will rescue ten. Thank God, many of you do that. Now it will rescue 20. We have some gifts to send you to bless you. And we always to want to bless you because we love you as much as those we're trying to help. We want to build you up in the faith so that you express that faith and that unconditional love.

Would you go get your bank card? Would you use it like a check please, right now? Dial that number or go online and make the gift of life. Make the gift God puts on your heart, please. Please 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 warn children who are at risk for sex trafficking, rescue those already enslaved, and restore young lives and give 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 "Believe This, Not That!" featuring the promise from heaven for every need on earth. This book is a resource every believer should have when facing discouragement, pain, fear, or the vast array of negative thoughts that attack all believers.*

*With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive "Experiencing Israel," by Tony Evans. Discover the holy land like never before and view stunning scenes in spectacular full color photography. Also, find practical applications that bring the world of the Bible into your life today!*

*Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help save 20 children. And you may receive our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds."*

*Please call, write, or make your gift online.*

**End of video****In the studio**

**JAMES:** You know, it's just amazing what love does. I pray with all my heart you'll help us rescue these that have been trafficked, and know that continuously just like when we see Jesus in

Raul and I've watched his journey, it is just a joy to be a part of it, to be his friend. And people sitting over here, some of them are his family, their people that have helped him. They go out there on the streets and they're here right now praying for him. You make this possible.

Betty and I, from the depth of our hearts, say thank you. Your love, God's love through people like you has helped us rescue lives and reach people for Jesus for more than 60 years of ministry. Thank you for the miracles you've made happen. Thank you so much!