

3/27/25

Week 13: Rescue Life

James and Betty Robison

Mark Rutland #2

Studio discussion:

JAMES: So glad to have this time with you. I'm looking at these sweatshirts here. A friend of ours wrote this book. The sweatshirts say, "How to Die Young, As Old as Possible." *Keep On Keeping On*; this has a whole lot to do with the joy of the Lord that's good medicine. It's his joy over us and his joy in us that makes all the difference.

Mark Rutland is here. Mark, you always come up with something unique. You may want to tell us some of the funny stories I heard some of my staff read and say, "They have to hear this!" So they know what you share. But I want us to talk to all the folks who are watching about how we can give God the greatest gift. He gave the greatest gift for us, and I think the greatest gift we can give back to him is giving back to him his son living in resurrection power in us, and love him but also want to fulfill his dream, his desire. You know, the owner of a sports team has a goal. It's not just to win a few. He wants to win *the* game. And the Father, our Father, he's more than the coach. He has a dream for us. He wants us to win the world with the reality of his life and his love, his son, his gift, and the redemption that he offers freely. So, I think we can hopefully inspire people to realize that if we do that now, we will find joy in every area of our lives.

You may want to talk about some of the humorous things that have happened, but don't you agree now is the greatest time in the history of the world? To have the greatest spiritual awakening in the history of the world?

MARK: Absolutely. And those of us that are in our mature years can have the greatest impact. I really believe that. One cannot give God what one doesn't have. You have to give what you have. So, I look back on my life, maybe you can testify to this too, I wish I had given God more

of my youth, better. I can't go back and do that, but I can give him my older years. I can give him more and better of my senior years, more of my wealth, more of my ability. I know some stuff I didn't know. I'm wiser than I used to be. I want to invest that for kingdom good and kingdom unity in these years while I have it.

I learned a great deal from older people when I was a kid. Because of a series of young marriages in my family, I was as close to my great-grandfather as many people are to their grandfather. He was a great old guy, a blacksmith up here in East Texas. I just loved my great-grandfather. I learned from him. My childhood, I was surrounded by old people and I loved them and gained so much from them.

When I got into college, I encountered another kind of old people, and I realized, okay, I learned what I don't want to be. So, I took a job. My wife and I married right out of high school. We were poor and going to college, working our way through school. I took a part-time job as a chauffeur. I'd been working at this guy's factory, and his mother was a handful. He couldn't keep a chauffeur. So he asked me would I go drive her. She had a 1966 Silver Cloud -- Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud. I'd work, and then I'd go change into a suit and tie, and a hat, and go pick the old lady up. She was mean as a rattlesnake. I always tell everybody I drove Miss Daisy long before that movie. I think they knew my story. So, she'd come out with a cane. She'd get in the back seat and she'd poke me over the seat with her cane. My name is Mark, of course, but she said it, "Mack!" Poked me, "Mack! Slow down, Mack." I'd say, "Now, Miss Bolton, if I slow down anymore, they're going to give us a ticket. I can't go any slower." We'd go to the grocery store and she would push the cart and I would get the things off the grocery shelf. How she could discern one can of beans was better than another -- I'd reach for the beans. I'd reach up. "No! No! Over, over, over!" It was just awful all the time.

Finally, I'm a driver, a truck driver at the gas company got cut up in a knife fight on a Saturday night. Monday, she said, "Mack, bring the car!" She said, "I want to go see Roosevelt at the hospital." I said, "That's so nice of you. That's wonderful!" Drove her all the way down to Washington, DC to the hospital. We went in. I found out the room number. We went up. He's laying in there, tubes coming out. He's been chopped to pieces in a knife fight. We walk in and

this old lady says, "I hope you die!" She said, "You lied! You said you were sick. You couldn't come to work. Instead, you got drunk and got in a knife fight and this is what happens to you. I hope you die!" She turns to me, she said, "Mack, get the car." She goes out.

Well, I felt humiliated. I felt like I'd been a co-conspirator of a crime. I turned to Roosevelt and I said, "I'm sorry! I had no idea she was going to do that." He was real nice. He said, "Well, it's okay. I did lie to her." A nurse's aide was standing there and she said, "It's not okay. That's the worst thing I ever heard." I made the lame excuse everybody does. I said, "Well, she's really old." This nurse's aide said, "Old don't got to mean mean!" I treasured that in my heart. That's what I've said to myself. I can't stop getting old. We are who we are.

Do you ever go through a shopping mall and you see a reflection in the window and you think, whoo! And then you realize, oh, my God! That's me!

JAMES: I've done it a lot.

MARK: We are who we are but old don't gotta mean mean. I'm not going to let it mean mean in my life. It can mean resource: I can give, I can still go, I can love, I can forgive. I can be gracious to young people that are not gracious to me. That is a great access to young people's lives. They live in a hard world. These young people live in a hard world and when you come in with that broken phone and you have absolutely no clue what it is or how to fix it, they immediately bridle. They go, oh, here comes another mean old person. If I'm nice to them and sweet to them, I say, "Man, you look just like the kind of brilliant young person that can fix this phone for an old man," it takes the poison out of it right away. Then in the context of that, I can say, "You know, your life is a gift of God." And I can reach them getting my phone fixed in a way that I couldn't if I go in angry, "Fix my phone!" We have an obligation to do this ministry to the end -- to the end. As long as we have resources and our brains, we know where we are and that kind of thing. I'm going to use it for God. I'm going to use it for God.

BETTY: You know, I'm 81, but I don't feel like I've learned it all yet. I feel like God saved some things for me to learn in this stage of my life too. I've not been there, done all that. I feel

like God's just, I want to show you some things. I haven't figured it all out. I'm still growing, and I pray that I'll always have that kind of attitude.

MARK: That's wonderful! Absolutely! We learn about healing. There are things that I felt so strongly about when I was young and felt passionately about. I still do. I know right from wrong and other things, but I think there were times when I wounded people unnecessarily over opinions where I was right in the rapture, they're going to find out I was right. But I think early on, I was too quick with my dagger. You know in the garden when Jesus was arrested, Peter pulls out a sword and whacks off the guard's ear. Jesus, "Oy!" Jesus healed him. It's the only recorded regenerative miracle in the New Testament. Wouldn't it be a tragedy if Jesus has to come along behind a carnal church and heal the people we've whacked? I just don't want to spend my senior years whacking people's ears off. I want to spend my senior years healing people.

When I was 23, I met a man in his 90s. I want you to think I'm 77 now so it was 51 years ago, he was in his 90s. His father had fought in the Civil War. Now you think about that. His father, not his grandfather! They were in Ohio and he got a job offer to come to Georgia and work on the railroad and it was a chance for him to get away from the mills. His father had been a Union soldier who had been imprisoned at Andersonville, the notorious Confederate prison camp in South Georgia. He said, "I just couldn't turn that job down." His father disowned him; never spoke to him again. He said, "I don't think he ever spoke my name again as long as he lived." Then he looked at me and said, "Pastor, if we'll let them, wars end." I never forgot that. Sometimes, families, churches, ministries, they just won't let the wars end. They just won't reach their arm out wide enough to embrace. I can embrace people and love people and heal people in this stage of my life that I couldn't when I was a mere child in my 50s.

JAMES: You don't have to demand that people see it exactly like we see it. We can have broad enough arms, a big enough heart, a great enough, deep enough love that we can look beyond our differences and even serious disagreements. There's no way the church can ever be healthy if we have to agree on the way we see it, our group sees it. You're building little groups, you're

building little gangs rather than building the family of God, and they are not pretty, they're not attractive. You don't see the fruit of his spirit flowing through those disagreeable bunches.

I think you've watched me for more than 30 years, and wouldn't you agree that I've been able to bring together leaders of mainline denominations, denominational leaders, major church leaders where they would come and be with the person they wouldn't speak to down the street, or they would preach against them from the pulpit, you've watched me bring these people into a room, into a gathering, to find out that they could love God and love one another. It's been a beautiful thing to watch. Would you agree?

MARK: It has been! It really has been a driving passion of your life, maybe *the* driving passion of your life is the unity of the body of Christ. How much more important that is as we approach the end of things. Somebody asked me if I thought we were in the last days. I said, "Look, as God reckons time, we're in the last split seconds." I don't know what that means but I know we're a lot closer to it than we were. I want to be in this time with the joy and the suppleness. You have to get in touch with where your body is and your mind.

I finished speaking on a big thing the other day, a big mayor's prayer breakfast at this town in the South. Somebody came up to the platform wanting to speak to me, and the stage wasn't that high. I was just going to jump down and speak to him. And I thought, no. That looks like a broken hip to me! I walked over and went down the stairs. I said, that's not bad! That's wisdom. That's life. Okay, now I take the stairs. I used to jump down. What is that? That doesn't ruin my life or my effectiveness for God or steal my joy. I'm not going to be angry with everybody because I have to take the stairs.

I went to preach for one of my former students, a night service. We came out the back to go to his car. We started on the steps, his little wife reached over and put her hand on the back of my arm. Kind of made me feel funny at first. Then I realized she was helping the old guy down the stairs. [Laughing] I said this -- this is what I've come to now that the pastor's wife is -- I could've jerked my arm away and that kind of thing. Then I thought, you know, I'm not going to do that. She just wants to see the old guy not fall down the stairs. Great. Isn't that great? Old

don't got to mean mean. I'm not going to live that way. I want to live and forgive and let wars end, and be giving and generous.

I think one of the main things that suffers in our senior years is the spirit of generosity with people, with others; to see people as different, to let them be different from what we are and be okay with it. And generosity with things; to give more, not less. The only person in the whole Bible that Jesus praises for generosity was an elderly widow. Isn't that right? So in her age, she didn't give less, she gave more. That's what I want. I want to be a fount of generosity. I want to praise more. There are people longing for praise.

I was a president of a university in the Midwest. I came around the corner of a building and there was a boy standing there with a load of books in his arm this high. So I said, "Hey, handsome! How are you doing?" And he dropped them. I said, "Well, son, did I scare you?" He said, "Well, Mr. President, kind of you did." He said, "I'm 22 years old. Nobody has ever called me 'handsome.'" And I thought, where are your grandparents? Where's your mother? You know, everybody's longing for somebody to tell them how great they are, how handsome they are, and how smart they are. We can do that.

BETTY: Well, I think as parents, as grandparents, we're now great-grandparents, we have that opportunity with our family. I don't want my children to remember me as a grumpy old woman. I want them to be able to name the things that they enjoyed about me being around, the things that we laughed about, the things that brought pleasure to them.

MARK: Absolutely! Our son Travis said, "Dad, sometimes. I'm afraid you're spoiling the kids." I said, "Yes. Are you out to lunch? Yes. I'm spoiling them, I disciplined you, it didn't do much good. Let's try this."

JAMES: Oh, God, thank you for Mark! Thank you for this gift. Thank you for the friendship and relationship. Thank you that we together as individuals and as ministries have been able to put your arms around, truly, the least of these, the most overlooked people, in many ways, the most hurt and abused, those who've been trafficked. And we've done this all over the world.

Then we try to be an encourager to the whole church. Actually, we've been good friends together, brothers and we have seen your miracle-working power in the lives of people you thought would never change. And we want you to continue that and increase it and help every viewer today to find joy in pleasing you, in fulfilling your kingdom purpose, in building relationships and supernatural unity among the members of your family, in Jesus name we pray.

Mark, I want to thank you for writing another great book, *Keep On Keeping On*. Here it is. "How to die young as old as possible." Mark, I want to get everybody here to ask for this book. We're going to ask you to help us do what Mark and I did together in the early years of our relationship, and that was rescue girls from trafficking; also, rescue children that were about to be trafficked, or were about to be sold foolishly to a trafficker.

Mark went to China with us, went to Thailand with us, went to the mountains with us where people were being sold. They were selling their children for a radio, a portable radio for \$50, \$100. They would just take them off and tell them they were going to train them, get them a good job. Yeah, they gave them a job. They made sex items and objects out of them. God help us!

We've been working. We work in harmony all over the world together encouraging one another, pulling for one another, supporting one another. Would you right now help us add a building in Southeast Asia that we need? You know, you were renting houses, primarily, when we first met. Most of the people that we're helping, that's what they had to do. They didn't have a building. They didn't have people who would help them build a building. Now, please help us renovate this building. We can immediately put 50 new girls in there that don't have any place. We've set them free, but we've got no place to put them. It's going to take \$1.25 million. So if you can give a gift toward that, please do. Like Mark says, as we get older, we can think about giving away parts of our estate or our estate to do these great kingdom things.

Please, would you listen to this pastor and this mission overseer in our ministry? He's weeping over what Jesus gave his life to deal with but he has to express that resurrected life through us who will extend his hands to the overlooked, to the least of these, to the most terribly abused.

Please make the greatest gift you can. You will be giving the greatest gift too, the gift of life. Watch closely.

Transition roll-in:

JOHN: You look behind me and it sounds like a big party but all I see is brokenness and pain. It's sorrow, regret, and shame. I can tell you right now there's a thousand girls right behind me who did not wake up at seven years old and think I want to do this for the rest of my life. As a dad, I am just broken.

Beyond all the lights and everything you see, and as Americans, you think people choose this. I know no little girl woke up thinking they wanted to be a go-go dancer or a prostitute, or a massage bar worker. I'm a dad! Don't tell me that. I know better. Nobody chooses this life. It's chosen because there seems to be no other hope.

If I can wrap them all up in my arms, and say there's a better way. There is a hope. This is what I know, Jesus is a better way. It is not this. Here's some amazing mission partners that are giving their lives; sacrificed everything to help young girls, young boys find a better way.

I want to do, and I'm asking you to do everything you can to keep them here so that young people can have a better life. Thank you for helping us. God bless you. We love you. We need you. We need you more now than probably ever before. We need your help.

Studio appeal:

JAMES: In that area of Southeast Asia, we've been normally having to rent property. Now, there's no rent properties. You saw the beautiful Destiny House that we built. A beautiful outreach. You've seen many of the places we've built. We've got basically, a big building like a hotel we can renovate and move 50 girls into it; I have an idea it can go past that. But we're going to have to have over \$1 million. Would you give us a \$1.25 million we need to give precious girls a chance in life? In Jesus name. There's not a better place for somebody to invest

money in an outreach that's any more effective and does any more to set people free from literally living in hell than doing the kind of outreaches we're doing.

MARK: Absolutely! There are people that have the resources. They ask themselves all the wrong questions, how will I be able to handle this? How can I hold on to this? How can I keep this? And now is not the time to grip it. Now's the time to invest it in Kingdom work just like this.

JAMES: Absolutely. We want to ask you right now to go get your bank card and use it like a check. Please go get it. I know you want to do this. It takes \$128 average to reach, rescue, and begin to restore someone in this area. But we're going to need \$1.25 million, and we've got a building right now that's going to be perfect. It's a miracle and it's going to be a miracle life-changer for so many.

Would you please get that bank card? Would you dial the number that you see there and make the gift? Use that bank card like a check. If you write a check, make it to LIFE but call us and tell us you're mailing it. Please do it. You can go online and make the gift.

We'll gladly send you Mark Rutland's book. I think everything he's written is a blessing. Dr. David Jeremiah is one of the greatest blessings on the planet. You know he's over here. He is. This is daily devotionals. As a matter of fact, it's got a place where you can tap, or I forget what they call that app that you do.

BETTY: One of those things we were talking about.

JAMES: One of those things we were talking about that older people don't understand. But you can actually listen to the message. It's a devotional. You'll love this.

And then we want to give you "The Lion of Judah" with the cross. It is awesome. Please help us give life and freedom to these precious ones that have been trafficked for so long. Thank you so much for doing it. Get that card, make that call, go online and give life. Thank you!

Rescue Life Cause Spot:

ANNOUNCER: *Innocent children longing to be loved and cared for are being abducted and sold into the evil industry of human trafficking. Through Mission: Rescue Life, your gift today of only \$128 will help reach, rescue, or restore a child and change their destiny forever. Gifts of \$64 or \$32 will be combined with support from others to help rescue one more child from the shame and pain of sexual slavery. Currently, one of our Rescue Centers in Southeast Asia is at maximum capacity. With the need never greater, we need to secure and renovate a new Rescue home that will offer refuge and restoration for up to 50 trafficking survivors. Please consider an additional gift as we urgently need \$1.25 million above our normal budget to secure and renovate this place of hope. With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Sleep on This by Dr. David Jeremiah. This nightly devotional will help you let go of your anxieties and rest in peace as you reflect on inspiring promises from God's word.*

With a gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive the elegant mug set, "A Beautiful Morning." Both generously sized mugs are inscribed with encouraging scriptures to begin your new day. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will help save 10 children. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

DR. JEREMIAH: Hello! This is David Jeremiah and I'm excited to share a new resource with you. It's called, *Sleep on This*, and evening devotion I wrote to help you reflect on God's word just before you rest for the night. I hope you'll request a copy of *Sleep on This* today. Be assured that you will be helping advance the kingdom of God. God bless you!

Studio good-bye:

JAMES: Aren't these beautiful?

BETTY: I love them!

JAMES: Ceramic cups. We're sending this to those who will make a gift of \$128 or more to help us rescue these precious ones. Here is Dr. David Jeremiah's every day devotional book, "Evening reflections from God's Word." Fabulous! Sending it for any gift. And also, Mark Rutland's book. We do this together. We've been doing it together from the first time we really got to know each other. And we went around the world knowing each other.

MARK: Absolutely.

JAMES: We're trying to put God's arms around the world he loves so much. Would you help us? If you'd like to have Mark's book, ask for it. But please make a gift to help us rescue. Would you do it? Thank you so much.

Mark, it's been a joy to have you.

MARK: It's been a blessing always.

JAMES: And it's a joy to work with you. Thank you for sharing life with us.