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Week 31: SWFL

James & Betty Robison

Kyle Idleman

Studio discussion:

JAMES: Well, welcome to *Life Today*. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are so glad to share with you. I don't know how long you've watched us. Maybe this is the first time. Well, if it is, stay with us. As a matter of fact, if you start watching *Life Today*, you're going to find out you're going to experience life today in some way. And then, what's really fun is what we're doing right now. You can give *Life Today* and give life for the rest of people's life by a love expression. Like right now, we're drilling water wells where people have never had safe, fresh water, drinking water. Period! It's all contaminated. It's all disease-ridden. And their children begin to die very young. Most of the children die before they're five, and it is heartbreaking. We change all that.

So, you're going to find that *Life Today* is all about life today. We've got a guest who started coming here 15 years ago. He was under the leadership of Pastor Dave Stone at the Southeastern, was that what it's called? Christian Church.

KYLE: That's right.

JAMES: In Louisville, Kentucky. Well, this is our guest, Kyle Idleman. Now then, you've got a book, *Every Thought Captive*; "Calm the mental chains that keep you stuck, drain your hope, and hold you back." And boy, you know how much *Life Today* shares with people. That the sounds that fill this room, like all the different channels you could go to, there are two main channels that come through louder and clearer than any, and that is the channel of deception and defeat, and destruction, and the channel of truth and life and hope. Those two are there. You're going to be tuning into one of them.

One of the most powerful thoughts I ever heard was, Your thoughts are not your own. Milt Green said that to me. Many of, if not most of, your thoughts are not your own. In other words, you're getting thoughts from these two powerful channels: Deception or hope and truth. They're flowing like a river. And that's true. Most people do not take their thoughts captive. Their thoughts take them captive because they're hearing the wrong voices.

Okay, take us on a little journey about the importance of this book and what it could mean to people if they get it. We'll get it to you if you'll just help us give people a drink of water, help us drill a well in their village where they never had any water. We thank you for helping others.

Okay, Kyle, tell us about the book.

KYLE: Yeah, well, I'll jump off of what you just said. Your thoughts are not your own. Romans 12 talks about this in verse two, where it says, "Don't conform to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." It kind of identifies those two pathways that you just said. And the world is forming us. That word for conform is being molded or being squeezed. It's the idea of don't just fit in without thinking about it. Think about your thoughts; your life is shaped by your thoughts and your life and your thoughts are shaped by so much of what's happening in the world around you.

So, the book challenges people to understand the power of their thinking. Scripture teaches this, "As a man thinks, so is he." And then, to recognize how those thought patterns are affecting you spiritually, emotionally, and how it's affecting your relationships. One of the things I talk about in the book is just learning to understand that there's certain thought patterns that have -- to use a Bible word out of Second Corinthians -- been strongholds in your life. Unless you identify them and tear them down, they will dictate the direction you go. And so, some of the strongholds that we carry with us are things that were taught to us, maybe explicitly or maybe implicitly. We picked up on them from our parents. We've always thought them. We never remember not thinking them.

I talk in the book, for me, one of those examples would be my parents were both helpers.

Set a great example in helping people. But somewhere along the line, I had this thought that being a helper means you can't ask for help from people. And that thought of I can't ask people for help caused a lot of damage in my life. It caused me to miss out on wisdom. It caused me to miss out on counsel and help from the people around me. So, being able to identify, okay, here's a thought that I've had in my life, I can't ask for help. Now what does the Bible say? The Bible says that if we humble ourselves, that God lifts us up. The Bible tells us that there's wisdom in a multitude of counselors.

So, I need to identify a thought that's not in line with what God teaches, and then submit that thought to what the Bible teaches. So, learning to recognize these thought patterns that a lot of us don't even know we have. So, in the book, I talk about how to do that. Like if you're trying to take a thought captive, you don't just say, I'm going to stop thinking that way. If you just say, I have an anxious thought, I'm going to stop thinking anxious thoughts, it just makes you more anxious. Like you have to – “hold it captive” means that you interrogate it. Where did that come from? When did I start thinking that way? Who's modeled that for me? And then you need to replace it. Not just with, like, this positive thinking, but with what the Bible says. Let Scripture be the power that breaks you free from that thought that's been holding you captive.

So really, the book is a journey of recognizing how our thoughts have been impacted, what it looks like to take those thoughts captive, and then the scientific term for it is cognitive reappraisal. How do I replace these thoughts with what the Bible teaches?

JAMES: Okay. So, how do you go about that when you go in here? Do you go chapter by chapter dealing with various thoughts and various habits? What do you do?

KYLE: Well, it first begins by recognizing the power of what you're exposed to. So, whether we want it to be true or not, that's the law of mere exposure would say that whatever I'm reading, whatever I'm thinking is what I'm thinking about. Whatever I'm listening to, whatever I'm watching, like all of those things are like a diet for my thoughts. So to recognize that what you're exposed to is largely determining your thoughts. Right now, the people who are watching this, they're taking in something into their mind that will encourage them, challenge them,

connect them to God, and help them live meaningful, purposeful lives, right? If they want to think that way, then they need to expose their minds to programs like these.

But the same is also true in the opposite. So, to give you a practical example, if I wake up in the morning and the first thing I do is I get on my phone, I read the news, and I see everything that's gone wrong in the world while I was asleep, my mind is being set up to be anxious, to be reactive to what's happening around me. And that's going to set a neural pathway, a trajectory for my day. But if I wake up in the morning and my input is different, what I expose myself to is God's word, and I speak God's Word out loud, I read some scripture, I pray, and then that sets my mind for a different kind of thinking. I'm not going to be conformed to the pattern of this world. Instead, it sets my mind up for renewal.

One of the things that's so interesting to me, and one of the reasons I wrote this book, is it's fascinating to see how science and scripture agree. Now, that's not surprising, because it's the same God who gave us both, right? But for example, the Bible will teach us about seeking God in the morning; the example that Jesus set in Mark chapter one. Science now tells us that what we do with our first thoughts of the day activates different parts of our brain. Like we have, we're more receptive in the morning. The Bible tells us in the morning we seek God. Another example of that is when you speak something out loud, your brain receives that with more impact than if you just think that thought. So, the Bible tells us to speak out loud the Word of God. God had his people in the Old Testament constantly, not just think things. He didn't say just go think that to yourself quietly. You speak it. And so there's power in recognizing that what God's Word teaches us is also how God has made our brains. When we recognize how those two things support each other, that's how transformation takes place.

JAMES: When we repeat the Word, we're repeating God's thoughts. We're repeating God's truth. And whatever you get up and you see in the morning, you have a tendency to react to it. Your reactions can be disgust, it can be anger, can be disappointment, and it can even generate hostility and hatred. You can get to where you not only don't like what somebody is doing, but get to where we don't like the somebody, and you can get to where you hate them.

We've got a tremendous amount of hate that is prevailing in the world today; would you agree with that?

KYLE: Yeah.

JAMES: I mean it's hate -- it's deadly hate. It's just unbelievable. They can have the hate while they think they're defending something very meaningful. But you just absolutely cannot allow those thoughts to take you captive that are damaging. That's why God wants us to be directed by the kingdom of heaven reality that his will can be done on his earth. Thy kingdom come -- it has! The king has come. All right. If thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. But I'm telling you that I'm able to, right now, by losing my life in kingdom purpose -- here's where I am. I live to see the Father's dream fulfilled on earth. Do you know when I told him I want to fulfill your dream, he said, "How many boys ever ask their father what his dream is?" You hear all these people, athletes, talking about mom's dream. But how many ask about the father's dream? He said, you specifically said you want to lose your life to see my dream fulfilled. I haven't heard that very often but I know you mean it. Therefore, you're going to lose your life in my dream to see my will done on my earth. Which the will of God that Jesus commissioned us to fulfill, and that can only be fulfilled where there's an enemy to resist, who there's an enemy to overcome, there won't be any in the coming kingdom. So, if we're going to fulfill his kingdom purpose on Earth, we've got to lose our life to fulfill his dream now.

KYLE: Okay, now you're preaching.

JAMES: Because there's no enemy. There's nothing to resist in the next one. Is this kind of exciting to you? Can you see why people should be excited to lose their life to fulfill the Father's dream? Let me tell you something. You tell I'm excited? You know what he tells me? You don't know how excited I am! Because he said, I think you can get excited and excite people, to get excited about fulfilling my dream. Do you like that?

KYLE: I do. You can keep preaching. I like a good sermon, brother. That's good. Yeah! And you're right. But that requires submission which is the hard part of that is to say, okay, God, I am submitting my way of thinking to what your dream is for my life.

JAMES: To your kingdom purpose, in my life, through my life every day. Which takes the thoughts captive by him, by his word, by his truth, not by all the junk.

KYLE: Because what happens is when my dream comes into conflict with God's dream for me, then I have to surrender my dream to the Father. And that can be hard to do. The older you get, and the more you walk with Jesus, the more confidence you have in his ways. So, when my thinking doesn't line up with his, it's not easy in that it's not simple. But it's more obvious to me that what I need is to surrender my thinking. That my thinking is not right. I'm not defensive of my thoughts when they come into conflict with what God's dream is for me. But it still can be hard. It can be hard to let go of it.

One of the things that I talk about in that book are these different patterns of thinking that have squeezed us into the world's mold without us realizing it. One of them you touched on is getting offended easily, getting our feelings hurt, finding our identity in what people have done to us, and allowing that to become what shapes who we are. Like waking up in the morning and rehearsing what people have done to me and how unfair it is that these circumstances are surrounding me.

JAMES: To me, that is just sad language I'm hearing. I mean, in other words, I've been delivered so far from that by being offended or bothered by what people say. I mean, I'm captivated by what he says. And that what he is. So that's this transformation in the kingdom purpose and the kingdom life, isn't it?

KYLE: Yeah. It's recognizing, okay, the thoughts that turn myself into a victim or cause me to be easily offended, that's not what God says about me. I want my thoughts to be so aligned with him that when those things start to get thrown at me, I can recognize it. I can take those thoughts captive and submit them to what Scripture teaches.

BETTY: When you talk about taking our thoughts captive, that means we have a decision to make. Like, I can get up one morning – well, I did this morning and the enemy will come at me with fear. God delivered me of great fear many years ago, but that doesn't mean he doesn't keep coming back at you with it. So, I have a choice to make. Not over fear, anything in particular, but just fear in general. I thought, God, I am yours. The enemy cannot have my thoughts. He cannot twist them and turn them, and make me entertain those negative dark thoughts. I decide. I choose to follow you, and to believe you and your word.

KYLE: Yeah. And I love what you just did. I hope that's an example for the viewers. Is that you declared this was something that was hard for me. I felt this fear, I was aware of it, but then you declared God's truth. I think for a lot of people, they can't declare God's truth until they recognize a stronghold that's been holding them back. So, finding the path to say, okay. I have fear that's been established in my life and I need to break free from that. So, where did that come from? What does the Bible say? And then doing what you just did, where you declared the truth. You may not feel like it. And I love what you said. It doesn't -- it's not just this one time. When the Bible says “be transformed” it's ongoing.

BETTY: It's be on guard.

KYLE: Yeah! So it's every day saying, okay, I want that transformation to be true for me.

JAMES: There's three sections in this book. Section two is the five patterns that are the pattern of the world. I want you to listen to them. This guy can communicate, and he can really communicate it well in the written form, too. Not just talking it, not just being an easy guy to listen to and a guy you can tell he cares, but listen to this. Five patterns: The pattern of insecurity. Boy, do people have that! The pattern of distraction. How many people do you think are distracted from things they should not be attracted to at all? And they're distracted by unhealthy attractions. The patterns of distraction. The pattern of offense. How easily people are to offend and how many people are offending. How many things offend. The pattern of pleasure. Is that a problem? The pattern of despair.

You know, I had a pattern of being hooked on chocolate. Hooked on sugar. God told me I was going to get diabetes because of it and I did. I've lived with it under control because I've learned how to control sugar. I still like it. I still like chocolate. But it doesn't control me anymore. But that was a matter of God doing something to change me when I recognized it needed to be. To me, that's kingdom living. To me, that's fulfilling the Father's dream. And to me, that's exciting. Does that capture your heart a little bit?

KYLE: Yeah, it does. I actually like your chocolate analogy because you had to recognize it, and that took truth -- and it took some hard truth. Something that got your attention, woke you up, and then you had to do something different and recognize I can't just keep doing what I've been doing. And that's the first step.

JAMES: You have to overcome being under the control of something that's not good for you.

KYLE: And you have to recognize it.

JAMES: That's the freedom. That's taking thoughts captive rather than those thoughts taking us captive. Well, I guarantee you, like Pastor Stone said over and over, Kyle Idleman is great! Get the book. It's in the bookstores. You can get it online. And I'll tell you what. We'll give it to you if you'll just help us give people a drink of water. I want you to listen to John Yeatts as he's communicating with those in need in Africa right now. Listen to the need that the love of God through us, together, can meet, and they can see a miracle they never imagined possible and get life. We will not only give them Water for Life, we'll introduce them to the water of life, and it is amazing! Please watch closely, and please help us get water to these precious people.

Transition roll-in: (Please Help)

OPEN CAPTIONS: My name is Mathuc Mado. I am the Chief of this area.

ANNOUNCER: The only source for water in this village is this hand-dug well that causes sickness and disease among the villagers. Mado has witnessed the toll firsthand, having lost children in the community to waterborne illnesses.

OPEN CAPTIONS: There have been many deaths. So many that I cannot remember the exact number.

ANNOUNCER: Mado is a devoted father who has suffered unimaginable loss.

OPEN CAPTIONS: My youngest son's stomach was so swollen. He had diarrhea and began vomiting. And then immediately, he lost his life. And my oldest son wanted clean drinking water. So he began digging a well about 20 feet deep. I don't know what happened underground, but he was found dead. My wife is so worried. We fear giving the same water to the other children that are still alive. But she will always remain fearful.

ANNOUNCER: Despite the hardships his community faces, Mado holds on to hope for the future, saying one day, the life of my people will be better.

JOHN: We can help this brother have a way to provide for his family and for his village that will take away all the fear and all the pain and all the worry that this water that is filled with disease and death creates.

So, I'm coming to you, my friends, and I'm asking you, please help us bring living water through Water for LIFE to this village and many other villages in the surrounding area here in South Sudan. Please help.

Studio appeal:

JAMES: Betty, weren't those families beautiful to look at? And didn't you just want to meet their needs when you saw that water? We saw what the missionaries really depend upon. It gets contaminated. But the missionaries know there's water, subsurface. So, they make sure that our

mission overseers hear that. Because if you've got some water there, subsurface water, which is a key sign, and we test it to be sure we can go there, and get a good water well that will be deep enough, hundreds of feet deep, that we can protect it and give them a pump, a manual pump because they don't have electricity in most of those areas. But we are literally able to give every one of those villages their own water for life. And boy, it does give them life!

BETTY: It's a beautiful thing. It's a beautiful gift! It's a life-saving gift. And for you to join with us on that makes such a difference. We can do so much more if you continue to help us drill those water wells, James, and to offer them fresh water. I've seen those mothers where they would just walk for miles just to get the filthy, contaminated water. Why? Because that's all they have. They know what it might do to their babies, but they have to take that chance because they have to have some water to hydrate. If you can just see the difference it makes! The children, when we're there and we've dug a fresh water well for them, they just pour that water all over them. They splash it on them. It's like a party to them. Well, it's life to them is what it is. We're offering them life. So please help us do that.

JAMES: Well, it really is. It's really a perfect cure -- clean water. And you can give them a well that you protect. And you can give them the ability to move the water up so they can drink it and put it in their containers, and take it home.

Please remember, \$48 will give ten people water for the rest of their lives. \$144, 30 people. We're asking all of you right now to go online, get your bank card, and use it like a check. If you write a check, make it out to *LIFE*, but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail, because we really do need to know that you're going to help us.

Please, we have some beautiful gifts to send you. I'm really excited about *Prayers that Give You Health*. See, we care about your health just like we do those children. So, thank you so much for your response.

SWFL Cause 2025:

A: Every day, thousands of lives are lost to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five. Through Mission: Water for Life, you can give mothers hope and children a future as we provide clean, life-giving water for thousands of children and their families before it's too late.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Prayers for My Physical Health, a Bible-based collection of 52 prayers designed to bring strength, healing, and renewal to every area of your body. Covering a wide range of physical needs, this beautifully crafted book encourages intimate conversations with God.

With a gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "Armor of God" tumbler set. These two 20-ounce stainless steel tumblers, each inscribed with Ephesians 6:11, are a practical and meaningful way to carry a reminder of God's strength and protection throughout your day.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,200 to help provide water for 250 people, or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well and request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

Field appeal:

TAMMY: This is their water source. This is it. This is all they have every single day. This is the source that they come to. Now it can be a little bit deceiving because this water here seems clearer than the water that I've seen in other places. But don't be deceived by that.

I'm asking you to believe with me that together we can make a change. Together we can change the life of this amazing woman, her children, and her family. I'm asking you to partner with us

today. Go to your phones right now. There's a phone number there you can call. Go to the website and ask God. I mean, I feel like we've all been given an opportunity to bless somebody else's life. And I would ask you right now, like, don't hesitate. Don't believe that someone else is going to do it. We get an opportunity to do this together to change everything.

So go to your phones right now. Give whatever God is laying on your heart, and know and believe that it is going to go forth and it is going to change the lives of so many people starting today.

Studio good-bye:

JAMES: Well, I'm just believing all of you, every one of you watching are going to give. Please remember, \$48 will give ten people water the rest of their life. \$144, 30 people. Could you drill a well? Could you give toward a well and ask God to help others join you at whatever level you can come in. Many people tell me giving the \$4800 is one of the greatest joys of their entire life. Please do what you can.

We're going to send you this book, *Prayers for My Physical Health*. I'm telling you, I'm excited about it because I care about your physical health. *Every Thought Captive*, please, if you'd like to have it, just ask for it. We'll send it to you.

Kyle, thank you for blessing us for many years, blessing all the people there in Louisville, and really moving into other states. And all of you, thank you for helping us share *Life Today*, and actually every day. We really do praise God for your help. Thank you.