Bob: Rosemary Trible was a TV talk show host. She was staying in town to tape some shows, staying at a hotel nearby the television station. She remembers clearly the night she met fear, face-to-face.

Rosemary: I felt very safe and since we lived an hour away from the station I would stay, just occasionally, over to a hotel right across from the station. That night I was working on my script and, finally, about 11 o’clock I went downstairs for coffee. When I came back into that room and I sat at my desk the curtains parted and a man who had been hiding there came and put his hand around my neck. I can still remember that steel cold of that gun in my temple as he just said, “Okay, cute talk show host, what do you do with a gun in your head?”

Bob: This is FamilyLife Today for Friday, July 2nd. Our host is the President of FamilyLife, Dennis Rainey, and I’m Bob Lepine. Today, Rosemary Trible shares with us how God met her in the midst of perhaps the darkest moment of her life.

And welcome to FamilyLife Today, thanks for joining us on the Friday edition. There are moments that come into our lives that we look back on as defining kinds of moments. They may be great moments of triumph or achievement, or they may be moments that left us scarred and wounded but God, in His sovereignty, is using to accomplish His purposes in our lives and through our lives.

Dennis: Bob, I’m thinking of Jerry Sittser, as you say that. He said it’s not that we experience loss of life that makes the difference in our lives it’s the decision we make in how we process that loss, and whether or not the loss defines us or whether we work through that loss and go on to grow through it. We have a guest today who has really experienced an unspeakable loss. Rosemary Trible joins us on FamilyLife Today. Rosemary, welcome to the broadcast.

Rosemary: Thank you so much. It’s really an honor to be here. I just admire so much all you do to care so much about our families across this country.

Dennis: Well, I appreciate that. Rosemary is a fellow Arkansan, Bob!

Rosemary: I am indeed!
Dennis: But she made the mistake of going across the Red River…

Bob: There you go you're going to punish her with this aren't you?

(laughter)

Dennis: I am! She became a Longhorn with those tea sippers…

Rosemary: I know! It’s almost a cardinal sin, especially when Texas and Arkansas were one and two in football!

Dennis: Oh yes, there you go! Well, I was at that game and you don’t have to remind me.

Rosemary: Forgive me!

(laughter)

Dennis: No doubt about it. She is married to Paul Trible since 1971. He went on to become a US Congressman from Virginia as well as a Senator…

Rosemary: That’s right.

Dennis: She has quite a story. I’m going to start all the way back on how you met Paul. Where did you guys first meet?

Rosemary: We actually met in Virginia. I started at Sweet Briar College and I had gone through the wonderful experience here in Little Rock of becoming America’s Junior Miss. I then had a scholarship to Sweet Briar and one of those days I should have been studying he came across the road and we had a blind date. It’s almost 40 years of a wonderful marriage together.

Dennis: So, it was love at first sight?

Rosemary: Well, we dated for that year, and I must confess, it was pretty hard for him when I decided to transfer to the University of Texas. I was very interested in the media and radio, television, and film was one of their strongest majors. I was the only woman at that time in that department.

Dennis: You went on to actually have your own show on television, but what happened? Did he see that you were about to leave and decide to switch campuses as well?

Rosemary: No, he graduated from law school from Washington and Lee the year I graduated from Texas. That October we tied the knot.
Dennis: And how did he propose to you?

Rosemary: Oh, he sent me yellow roses for a month before he came to Texas and asked for my hand in marriage. He’s a pretty romantic guy.

(chuckles)

Dennis: And you went on to have how many children?

Rosemary: We have two children. Our daughter, who’s 32, is about to make me a grandmother. She’s due in June, and her husband is a third year dental student. Then I have a son, 29, who just graduated this last year from Oxford Business School and starting his own business. So I’m very proud of my children.

Dennis: Did you grow up in a church as a little girl and find your faith in God early on or was it found later on in life for you?

Rosemary: No. I had a wonderful family. However, it was actually at a Billy Graham Crusade at nine years old that I asked to walk forward and that, for me, was my own personal commitment of faith.

Dennis: Well, the reason I asked that question, and Bob knows this as well, there was one of those defining moments for you…

Rosemary: Yes, there was.

Dennis: …that if you hadn’t had a really deep walk with God it could have defined your life and been a loss that you would have never recovered from.

Rosemary: I agree with you, absolutely. The strength to get through this transformational time in my life was friends and family, but for the most part it was my faith.

Dennis: You were hosting a television program, and was it in Richmond, Virginia? Is that right?

Rosemary: Yes. I had done press work for Senator McClellan for a couple of years while we lived in Washington, and then my husband ran for his first race. Now, I confess, when he asked me to marry him I told him, “I’ll marry you if you don’t go into politics.” And that very honest-looking young man said, “I’ll never run for dog catcher.” He has never run for dog catcher.

(laughter)

But we spent 14 years in the public eye, and in Congress and the House of Representatives and the Senate, but his first race was for Commonwealth Attorney of
Essex County Tappahannock. I thought, “How am I going to continue my interest in the media there?”

So I drove an hour to Richmond, Virginia and they had never had a morning talk show. It was probably one of the best jobs of my life for those two years that I hosted that show.

Dennis: You had no children at the time, so you were free to be able to give your creative energy there.

Rosemary: Absolutely. We had been married for four years and the name of the show was *Rosemary’s Guestbook*. Now, this is about as far as you can get from Oprah.

(laughter)

We would open up the guestbook every day and have calligraphied the names of the guests. Everybody wore rose for Rosemary. You think Oprah would do that today?

Bob: No, I don’t think so.

Dennis: Well, there weren’t any Oprah’s in that day.

Rosemary: No! No!

Dennis: There were no women who were hosting programs.

Rosemary: I was the first woman they had had live. Every day I started with a thought for the day because I was slipping in my faith wherever possible. They gave me total freedom to have whomever I wanted and I loved it.

We had politics and culture but once a week I tried to take a more serious topic. So this particular week I did a show on sexual assault. Actually we are a conservative market and I had to kind of convince them that this was something that women needed to be encouraged about and it was something that was out there.

Dennis: And the response to that program?

Rosemary: Well, it was just amazing! Afterwards, there was an incredible outpouring of pain. Hundreds of letters and calls! So many women that had never told this to anyone and, yet, sometimes shame, guilt and just affecting your self-esteem and do you know now the statistics are that one in six women will be sexually assaulted in their life?

Bob: Oh my.

Rosemary: And one in 33 men—which I think is a surprise. Half of those women will be 18 years old or younger and this is the thing that hurts the most, less than six
percent of the rapists ever spend one day in jail. So even not knowing those statistics there I was overwhelmed in 1975 at the amount of pain that had been hidden in so many hearts.

**Dennis:** You know, I’ve been thinking today, we can’t even begin to transport ourselves back over 35 years ago to really consider the cultural context…

**Rosemary:** Right.

**Dennis:** …but it wasn’t talked about publicly and a good bit of it really related to the Christian community of not being a safe place to be able to admit something like this.

**Rosemary:** And to be open about your pain.

**Dennis:** Exactly, and to find a community where there can be healing and hope. Part of why I wanted to talk with you today was because of those numbers that you just quoted. I mean, date rape is a big deal…

**Rosemary:** It is.

**Dennis** … on the college campus today.

**Rosemary:** Now my husband is president of the university for the last 14 years and it’s been one of my greatest joys to walk alongside women who have been hurt and wounded and broken. I can’t tell you the hundreds of women that I have walked through that night in the hospital or been there for them when they were struck with deep fear.

It’s interesting…it seems that a young woman, especially in the college years if they have been raped they go in one of two directions. Either they can’t be touched or sometimes they just become promiscuous because it’s like their self-esteem is so wounded. They just don’t know how to make it.

Yet I have seen those women come to healing and hope, and I think that’s what Jesus does for us. He takes that darkness and that pain and we are free indeed in Him and we can find that. And that’s partly my story—what was meant for evil in my life has been used for good.

**Bob:** Rosemary, when you got done with that program and over the next several days started to see this flood of response come in from people, was there ever even a thought in your mind that what you had talked about could touch you?

**Rosemary:** Absolutely not. I’ve always been a very trusting and loving person. I’d never dreamed that someone would be watching that show that then could be very violent with me. However, it was the week before Christmas December, 1975 I’ll never forget.
I wanted to go home for Christmas. My parents and my brother were coming. When it's a live show, it was \textit{live}, and Christmas comes, and you want that live show on. So I was going to do one live show and I was going to tape three shows in the can so that I can be home for Christmas.

I felt very safe and since we lived an hour away from the station I would stay, just occasionally, over at a hotel right across from the station. So that night I was working on my script and, in fact on an underwood typewriter. I don't know if any of our listeners even know what that is (chuckles), the old hunt-and-peck system!

\textbf{Dennis:} Yes.

\textbf{Rosemary:} No great computers of the day today. But finally, about 11 o'clock I went downstairs for coffee and when I came back into that room I sat at my desk. It was then that the curtains parted and a man who had been hiding there came and put his gloved hand around my neck. I can still remember that steel cold of that gun in my temple as he just said, “OK, cute talk show host, what do you do with a gun in your head?” And I went through a night of just complete horror.

\textbf{Dennis:} What was your first thought? I mean you’re sitting there at the table and all of us have been in a place where we’ve been startled by something and usually it’s nothing. But in this case, a man’s grabbing you around the neck…

\textbf{Rosemary:} Yes.

\textbf{Dennis:} He’s got a gun—the steel against the flesh of your face—what was your first conscious thought?

\textbf{Rosemary:} I was terrified! I was so shocked. Never in my whole life would I ever dream. I’ve been such a trusting person. As he stepped forward with what he was going to do I remember just thinking in my heart, “Oh my God! You know my life is in danger!”

I fought and I prayed, and I pled. I used every bit of logic but the more I tried to talk to him the more violent he became. I remember saying to him, “You don’t to do this. There’s a God that loves you.” Well, he hated that. And so, finally, what got me through that time is in my mind, I began saying over and over again the Lord’s Prayer, and just saying, “God, save me. Just save my life.”

Finally, it was quite some time before he left and that was the only floor in the hotel where you go right out the window and you were at the parking garage, and it goes down on both sides. Before he left he put that gun back in my head again and he said, “I know who you are. I know where you live, and I will kill you if you tell.” You know, a man that rapes you, they don’t want to destroy you for a day; they want to destroy you for a lifetime.
Whether it’s date rape or a father or grandfather or neighbor or whoever it is, they put some kind of dagger of fear into your heart. It’s one thing to have your body torn about but the fear of knowing that your life is in jeopardy or that you will be in shame and guilt the rest of your life if you tell that’s what he was doing to me.

**Bob:** You had to think, maybe not in the moment, but in the time that followed, “This person’s been stalking me.” I mean, for you to be staying late, putting these Christmas shows together…

**Rosemary:** Right.

**Bob:** …this had to be somebody who was aware of your patterns, knew what was going on…

**Rosemary:** Absolutely.

**Bob:** This was not a random event.

**Rosemary:** No, he was very much of a professional. His face was covered. His hands were gloved. He knew what he was doing. I immediately reported it downstairs as soon as he got out that window but he was gone into the night and he was never found. So, I immediately…

**Bob:** Wait, I got to stop you. He told you, “If you tell anybody, I’ll kill you,” and you went straight to the front desk and said, “I’ve been raped?”

**Rosemary:** I called immediately and told them without even a shadow of a doubt I wanted him to be caught, regardless of the fear that was in my heart. They immediately responded and yet, as I said, he was gone into the night. I called my husband who was two hours away. I said, “Sweetheart, I’ve been viciously raped! Please come and hold me!” I can’t imagine that two hour drive.

One wonderful thing that happened at three in the morning, I called the gynecologist. I’ve only been to him one time, but he met to go through that hospital. And I had been with hundreds of women that I now have walked through that kit and drawing up evidence which is so important if there’s going to be any chance of prosecuting someone that has violated you so viciously. But he came and so tenderly got me through that hospital time, and then to the police station. By then, finally, Paul came and held me.

But I awoke the next morning just petrified because of the reality that happened hit me, and I knew if I was not live on that television show even if he perhaps hadn’t known, he would know. So I did that show like a robot and I remember just falling into my husband’s arms as soon as I got off from that set. The station manager, John Shan,
said, “Look, you got three shows lined up. They’re coming in today. I’ll tape them. Go home and heal.”

As we went home I told my brother immediately when he came but I didn’t tell my parents. It’s hard for parents to understand and I know that’s why so many women have trouble sharing it. They don’t want to also share that guilt or shame or pain with them!

But, three days later, when I had to go back for that live show I just couldn’t do it. I ran upstairs and I literally passed out. I woke up in my brother’s arms. Fortunately, they had told my mom and dad and that was even a harder way probably for them to hear.

I got grace for one more day on the show, and then started going back but for two and a half months, I didn’t have a period and that compounded it. Paul and I had to talk about what that was going to mean. Thankfully, I wasn’t pregnant.

**Dennis:** You know, I’m thinking of a series of things. The courage that it took for you to first of all, tell people, secondly, continue to do the program and to show up and to go there, knowing of the public figure that you were *and* that he had threatened to your life; and in addition to all of that dealing with the scarring of the soul.

**Rosemary:** Exactly. That’s a beautiful way to put it because you are torn heart, body and soul. What I have said was that he didn’t just tear my body, but what he did is he stole my joy. It was that drive back and forth. People who have been abused any way it’s like an old tape recorder that you can’t find the off button. Back and forth I kept hearing the haunting sound of his voice even though I couldn’t see him. I’ll never forget that voice. “I know where you are. I’ll kill you.”

To be right across the street from the station doing the show it finally just devastated me. I love the show, but I finally told John, “I’ve got to find Rosemary. I’ve lost this loving and caring and confident person.” It steals your self-worth and your self-esteem. Even though I felt in many ways logically that I wasn’t responsible you still feel the guilt and the shame. You feel like you’ll never be pure again and that you’ll never be whole again.

I must confess, I was even a little angry at God asking “Where were you that night?!” You have to walk through so much when you go through that kind of pain. I knew I had to go back and that I had no place to turn other than my knees and to the Lord who had always been there for me.

**Dennis:** Rosemary, I’m not a woman, and obviously can’t even begin to fathom the violation and the evil nature of the act of rape. That a person could go through this and come out the other side with a restored joy…

**Rosemary:** Absolutely.
Dennis: There’s a passage in Psalm 34 that says, “The face of the Lord is against those who do evil to cut off the memory of them from the earth.” And there’s going to be more to this story that we hear. That would have been a Psalm you would have read and felt for years, but you moved beyond it, and the reason was the following verse, verse 17: “When the righteous cry for help the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”

Rosemary: Absolutely. I was that bruised reed. I was that crushed spirit. What is so amazing in my life is that I have come to say that I would not be the woman I am today; I would not have the compassion for so many broken women if I had not gone through that. I have come to say I am thankful for what was meant for evil has been used for good in my life.

Dennis: You know here’s the thing that is remarkable to me. A woman can go through this with a faith that ultimately emerges as yours has on the other side intact, having grown, and having experienced the grace of God in healing that He promises.

I just don’t have any idea how a woman can go through something like this and not know God, have a personal relationship with Him through Christ, and how she could hide that in her heart and just absorb that hurt and that brokenness and not find the hope that’s found in the Savior who’s alive from the dead.

Bob: But, you know, even in the case of somebody who has a relationship with Christ, there is still the reality of the damage that is done to your soul; the scars that are left there when something like this occurs. One of the things I appreciate about your book, Rosemary, is that you share the path that God took you on to bring you to a place where those scars were dealt with. In fact, next week we’re going to hear some of the rest of this story so I hope our listeners can join us for that. In the meantime, we do have copies of Rosemary’s book in our FamilyLife Today Resource Center. The book is called Fear to Freedom: What If You Didn’t Have to Be So Afraid?

You can get more information about the book online at FamilyLifeToday.com, or you can call toll-free at 1-800-FL-TODAY for more information. Again the website is FamilyLifeToday.com, or call us toll free at 1-800-358-6329. That’s 1-800 F as in “family” L as in “life” and then the word TODAY.

Now, I know in the summer folks’ regular routine of life gets adjusted a little bit. Maybe you’re not taking the kids to school the way that you do during the school year or you got vacation plans, whatever. We may have some folks tuned in listening to FamilyLife Today who don’t normally get a chance to tune in and listen. If that’s you, we’re glad you’re along, glad you’ve been able to stay with us for the program today, and hope you can find a way to make listening a regular part of your routine.

We’re here to provide practical, biblical help for your marriage and your family. That’s our goal on FamilyLife Today, and through our website, FamilyLifeToday.com. We’d love to have you stop by the website and get more information about the ministry. And
in fact, there’s a book we’d like to send to you just as a get-to-know-you gift as a way to introduce the ministry to you. It’s called *99 Ways to Stretch Your Home Budget*, and it’s designed to give you some practical help on how to steward your finances and get your bills paid and have a little money left over so that you can do some fun things with the family this summer.

If you’d like a copy of the book *99 Ways to Stretch Your Home Budget*, all you have to do is call and request it. The toll free number is 1-800-FL-TODAY. You just call and say, “I’d like that book I heard you talking about on the radio.”

We’ll send it out to you and we trust it will be a helpful for you and your family throughout the summer and throughout the rest of this year. Call 1-800-FL-TODAY and just ask for a copy of the book on *99 Ways to Stretch Your Home Budget*, and again, I hope your schedule allows you to continue to listen to *FamilyLife Today* in the weeks ahead.

I hope you have a great weekend! I hope you and your family are able to worship together this weekend, and I hope you can join us back on Monday because we’re going to hear the rest of Rosemary’s story. Rosemary Trible joins us back Monday, and we’ll hear about the path God took her on to bring her to a place of freedom from fear.

I want to thank our engineer today Keith Lynch and our entire broadcast production team on behalf of our host Dennis Rainey I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back Monday for another edition of *FamilyLife Today*.

*FamilyLife Today* is a production of FamilyLife of Little Rock, Arkansas. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

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