



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Will Never Leave Thee – Part 2

Guest(s): Darlene Rose

Air Date: June 18, 2024

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- Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello, everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.
- Darlene Rose: I looked up at the door and written on the door in Indonesian with chalk was "[foreign language 00:00:27]. This person must die," and I knew I was in death row.
- Roger Marsh: From newlywed to prisoner of war to death row inmates in such a short time, today's guest struggled to hold onto her faith in the face of unimaginable hardship. I'm Roger Marsh and today on Family Talk, we'll hear even more of this amazing testimonial. Listen now as Dr. Dobson gets us started.
- Dr. James Dobson: Welcome, everyone, to today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I am the host of the program and I am James Dobson, and it's a pleasure to have you join us. We're going to hear part two today of an amazing recorded message that was given by Darlene Rose. She was a very well-known missionary and went on to serve the Lord for many years, but this message has touched me every time I've heard it and I've listened to it probably three or four times, and I don't think you'll ever forget it once you have heard it. Darlene told us that she was a young bride, she was only 19 at the time, and she went with her husband to the remote jungles of New Guinea to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with Natives, and she was highly committed to this missionary responsibility. But Pearl Harbor in Hawaii was bombed by the Japanese at that time, and that was the beginning of America's entry into World War II. The war was going on in Europe but it really became global at that time.
- Darlene was placed in a Japanese prison camp where she went through an unbelievable hardship that she's going to share with our listeners, but her young husband, you can imagine, just being married and going off to New Guinea like that, he was taken to the men's prison and she did not have a chance to be with him again, and shortly thereafter, he died. And Darlene told us on the portion of the recording that we heard yesterday that she felt a tremendous sense of abandonment by God, and yet, she had this tremendous faith in Him and commitment to her responsibility. And even in her intense grief and sorrow, she

remained dedicated to the Lord. We're going to let Darlene continue to tell her story of wartime experiences in New Guinea.

Darlene Rose:

It was in the fall in November of 1943 when Mrs. Yastra, who was the Dutch head under the Japanese camp commander, came over to the barracks this morning and she said, "Mrs. Diebler, I want to talk to you for a few minutes." She said, "Your husband up in the camp in Pari Pari," which was a hundred kilometers to the north of us, "has been very ill." And then she stopped and I saw the tears in her eyes, and I grabbed her shoulders. I said, "Mrs. Yastra, you don't mean he's gone." She said, "Yes, he died three months ago up in the camp in Pari Pari."

It was one of those moments when I thought my Lord had left me. I was like every young person. I was waiting for the day when the war would be over and I could go home to New Guinea, to my people. And I just turned around and I went to the only one I knew to go to and I said, "God." Immediately He answered me. He said, "Did I not say to you, my child, that when I'll pass us through the rivers, I would be with thee? And through the floods they not overflow thee, and neither should the fire kindle upon thee." And I turned away and I said, "Lord, all right."

I learned in those days that there's a peace that cometh after sorrow, of hope surrendered, not of hope fulfilled. A peace that looketh not upon tomorrow, but calmly on a tempest that is stilled. I ran up into the office and there was a table there in the center of the room, and all I could understand was when they were laughing and poking fun at me, it was, "America." And finally, one of them stopped and he put the paper out in front of me. He said, are you Darlene Diebler?" I said, "Yes sir, I am." And he said, "What do you know about Morse code?" And he began to tap out messages on the desk to me. I didn't know Morse code. I had never learned it. I said, "Sir, I don't know a thing about Morse code. I have never learned it." And he said, "You go over," and he said, "Get another dress and come back. We're going to take you somewhere else." And he said, "We'll see how much you know about Morse code."

So I ran back, I grabbed my Bible and another dress and came back, and I got into the car. It was taken out of the camp, taken down to the City of Makassar, which I knew well, having lived there and worked there before, and I saw that they were pulling up in front of what had formerly been our native insane asylum. As they pulled into this circular drive in front of it, I saw that they had made a prison out of it, and I could see Ms. Kemp, a woman who had weighed about 170 pounds, and she was just skin and bone in two weeks. And I could see her arms as she hung onto the bars and she was shaking her head at me like this, and her arms were just black and blue.

When we finally got her back to the camp and put her in the hospital, here she was, black and blue from her shoulders to her wrists and from her waist to her knees where they had beaten her trying to get her to sign a confession that I

had been doing spy work so they wouldn't have to try me. She said, I'd say to them, "I know she hasn't done it," and they would beat her again. And they said, "Well write it out." She has been. She said, "I can't do it. I know she hasn't been a spy. I know she has never had a radio. She's never been in the jungle contacting the allies." And again and again, they would beat her, trying to get her to sign the confession.

When I saw her condition after two weeks in that prison, my heart cried out. And very often, we will ask God why, and some people say you're not supposed to ask Him why, but never was my Lord more man than when on the cross, He said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was man bearing the sins of mankind, and He was God.

And I just cried out, "Lord, why must I go through this? Wasn't it enough that you took Russell?" And so sweetly, my Lord answered me. He said, "My child whom I love, I chasten." I said, "All right, Lord," and then I remembered the last words that Dr. Jaffrey had ever said to me when they took him away from the camp. He leaned down over the tailgate of the truck and he said, "Lassie, whatever you do, be a good soldier for Jesus Christ." And as I followed the guard up to the office, all that I could think of was, "God make me a good soldier." And I said, "Lord, if I ever come through this and anybody in America ever hears about these days, I don't want them to be ashamed of me as a fellow American."

They grabbed my Bible. The first thing they said, "You can't have that book. You'll be sitting in there reading that book and not thinking about your evil deeds against the Imperial Japanese army." And then the guard put his bayonet on his gun and he turned and put it into my back and he started running me through this first cell block. And when he stopped in front of one of the doors, I looked up at the door and written on the door in Indonesian with chalk was [foreign language 00:09:11], "This person must die," and I knew I was in death row.

I remember that day when the guard opened that door and he put his hand behind me and shoved me into that little cell and I hit the other side. And then I turned around and I came back and I knelt down in front of that door. I was watching the end of the key for I knew when it made a complete revolution, I was locked in death row. And when he pulled the key out and started to go away, I suddenly realized I was sitting there on the floor of that cell and I was singing. Do you know what I was singing? A song I learned as a little girl in Sunday school. I don't even remember memorizing it, but I was sitting there singing, "Fear not, little flock, whatever your lot. He enters all rooms the door is being shut. He never forsakes. He never is gone, so count on His presence from darkness till dawn."

They could lock me in that cell but they could not lock my Lord out. It became a veritable chapel, a sanctuary to me in a wilderness place. Many times when His

presence filled that cell until I've opened my eyes because I thought I must be in glory, and I would see the cell walls around me and realize that God was there with me. I went to those hearings. They said I had been an American spy, they said they had evidence. A Chinese fellow came in. He had confessed to them that he had seen me in the jungle with a radio having contact with the allies, that I had been reporting on plane movements, on troop movements.

And I said, "But I have never been in a jungle with a radio. I have never done those things." I didn't realize what a sensitive spot that was right there between your eyes, and he had such large fingers and he was very strong, and when he would flick me there until I felt like my head was going to burst, I caught a glimpse of myself one day walking by one of the windows and I saw I had two large, black eyes. They used judo chops on you and I thought my neck was broken many a time, but I never shed a tear before them. But I'll be honest with you tonight. When I got back to that cell and they locked that door, I wept buckets of tears. I'd just throw myself on the floor and I would just sob and sob, and I said, "God, I can't go through another one. I just can't."

And He'd always come and say, "But my child, my grace is sufficient for you." And I'd sit up as I felt the Lord's presence there with me, and then I would begin to sing and I knew then why God had laid it to my heart two weeks before I was brought down to this prison. In streams of the desert, there was a poem written by Annie Johnson Flint. The music was put to it by two of our missionaries, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Mitchell. Maybe some of you know it, but when the Lord would say, "My child, my grace is sufficient." Not it's going to be, it is right now sufficient for you, I would begin to sing, "His love knows no limit. His grace has no measure. His power has no boundary known unto men. For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again."

By this time, I was very, very thin. When I came into the cell, I had dysentery. I knew that, but I had not gone into the hospital because we had to have these younger people. We had to do the extra work that was there to do. And the first day, they threw in a plate, a tin-plate that had some rice on it with a little bit of sugar at the top, and I was so upset, I couldn't eat it. So he came and grabbed it again and he said, "Well, if you don't like sugar, you'll never get it again," and he didn't.

Then when they realized I had dysentery, they took me off of the whole rice and put me on rice porridge. Of course, I had no spoon. I learned to handle rice with my fingers and it's a nice way to eat it, but porridge, that was something else. And when they put that first plate of porridge in there and there was no sugar, no cream with it, no salt because I also had beriberi, which is a form of dropsy, and the fluid fills up in the tissues and it creeps up toward the heart.

I also had cerebral malaria, which is usually fatal, and when I saw that first plate of porridge come across the floor there to me, and of course, the only opening was a little transom above the door but I couldn't see it very well. And I looked

down at it and I thought... I saw all this white stuff on the top. And I said, "Oh, joy, somebody knows I love fresh grated coconut." And I picked it up and I got over to the door where I could see from the light coming in the trance, and it wasn't coconut. It was worms. It was just filled with worms.

And I remember thinking, "Oh boy, that's a new experience and I'm going to shove them all up on the side of the plate." And I was picking these worms out and I had them all around the plate, and of course with the dysentery, in came these big blue bottle flies and they just lit on that plate, and right there, and they were eating those worms. And I thought, "Now that's no good. If they can eat the worms, so can I."

And I had a dress with a rather large skirt on it and I would get the flies off of it and cover it with my skirt, and then I would get my hand in underneath it there and get a handful of that porridge and try to eat it, and finally, I just gave that up because that was a loss. And so I just pulled it up and made a funnel out of my hands and let it roll into my mouth, worms and all. And I could thank God, I honestly could thank him for that plate of rice porridge, worms and all, because I knew I could have been there without anything to eat.

And one day, I had climbed up because I was having an attack of malaria, and I got up to the transom above the door and I was hanging on there and I had one foot on the doorknob and the other foot over on the windowsill, and I was hanging there and I was trying to get air on my face because of the terrible fever from the malaria. And I saw, I could see the courtyard there. There was an overhang of the roof so nobody could see me, but I could see them. And I was so fascinated to see other women, and most of them were native women there just for minor misdemeanors and they were allowed to walk around that courtyard in the afternoon.

And I saw this one woman and she was edging off toward the fence that was at one end of the courtyard. It was covered with Honolulu creeper, and through that Honolulu creeper came a hand, and on that hand was a big bunch of bananas. And seeing those bananas, oh, I wanted anything to eat. I could smell those bananas. I could remember the taste of bananas. Oh, I wanted a banana. It was like a physical hurt within me. And I got right down off that door and I got on my knees and I said, "Lord, I'm not asking you for a whole bunch of bananas like she has. Could I have just one banana, Lord?"

And then I did what? Maybe some of you do it too. I think most of us do. I tried to figure out how God could get a banana into that prison for me. And I said, "Now, Lord. Now there's these two men that have been trying me and neither one of those men would ever bring me a banana, I know that. Then, Lord, there is this other guard and he wouldn't give me one. And there's this older man that's been coming here in the evenings to do guard duty. I think he might if he knew I wanted a banana, but I wouldn't ask him for a banana because if they ever caught him giving a banana to me, he might be shot." I said, "Lord, that's it.

There's nobody else around here." And I said, "Please, Lord, don't think that I am not grateful for this rice porridge. I really am. And I'm sorry if I ask for a banana and you can't get a banana in here to me." And I really didn't see how God could ever get a banana in there.

And the guard came and he got the door open and I stood up very rapidly, but there standing in the doorway was the camp commander, the Japanese camp commander from that other camp from which I had been brought down to this prison. And he was smiling, and it had been so long since I had seen a friendly face, since I'd seen anyone smile. I was so excited. I just clapped my hands. I said, "[foreign language 00:18:34] I said, "Mr. Yumaji. It's just like seeing an old friend." And the tears came in his eyes. He turned and he walked right out of the cell, never said a word to me.

For a long time, he talked to those other men who had been trying me. I don't really know what he said, but I think he was telling them about the day when I heard that Russell was dead. And he called me over in the afternoon hours and he said, "I just wanted to talk to you." And I said, "I just want to tell you about somebody I came to know when I was nine years of age back in Boone, Iowa, in America." I said, "His name is Jesus. He's the son of God, the Creator." I said, "Maybe you never heard of him, Mr. Yumaji, but I want to tell you about Him." And the Lord gave me the most beautiful opportunity to lay the plan of salvation before that Japanese officer, and he kept nodding to me and I said, "This is why, Mr. Yumaji, I don't hate you." I said, "I don't hate you because wherever the love of God fills our hearts, there's no room for hatred."

And I said, "I don't know, maybe God even brought me to this day, to this place and to this moment to tell you that He loves you and that His son, Jesus Christ, died for you." And as I laid the plan of salvation before him, his tears started down over his cheeks and he kept nodding to me. I knew from that moment on, that man was my friend.

And then I heard the guard coming and I knew he was coming for me, and I stood up and I said, "Lord, I need strength to walk to that hearing room." But when the door went open, the guard walked in and he just laid them all out on the floor. Do you know what they were? Bananas. I sat down and I counted them. There were 92 bananas. I don't know what you would've done, but I pushed those up in the corner just as far from me as I could get them, and that wasn't very far because I don't have much character. And I said, "Lord, I have no right to eat those bananas." I said, "Yesterday, I was telling you there was no way in the world you could even get one banana into me. "

And so sweetly, He came and He said, "Oh, that's what I delight to do, the exceeding abundant, above anything you ask or think." And the day I peeled the last banana and I said, "Lord, how could you ever get me out of this place?" And that day, they came. The guard said, "We're going to take you somewhere else." I got into that place, Ms. Kemp and Ms. Sealy were also brought along, and they

gave us the last meal. They said, "Now we want you to write out a statement that you are very grateful to the Imperial Japanese army because of their treatment of you," and this was to Ms. Kemp and Ms. Sealy. And Ms. Kemp said, "Darling, I can't write anything. Could you write it? Just write whatever he tells you to write."

So I sat down and I wrote it, and they put the ink out on their thumbs and they put it on there. And then the other man who was the brains of the team that had been trying me, he stood in front of me and he had the great sheaths of paper that he had written on. He always was just out of my line of vision so I could not watch the expressions on his face, but he could watch my face.

And he said, "You are worthy of death." And he drew his finger across his throat and he slapped the hilt of his sword, and he started to draw that out. And at that moment when that sword was coming out, I heard cars coming from all directions and the brakes would screech, and they start to yell before they jumped out of the Jeeps. And they were running inside of the office and there was ceramic tile on the floor and they were running in all directions, and they yelled for this man. And he went into the office and then he was in there quite a while. I could hear their voices in there and talking rapidly, and they were excited. I don't know what happened. I only know that somehow, in the providence of God, He spared this unworthy person.

He grabbed me and he took me out and he slammed me into a jeep and put two bottles of wine in my lap and said, "Those are from Mr. Yamaji." And that Jeep started down that road and we were going like we were being pursued. And I thought, how true? The wicked flee when no man pursueth. But somehow, God was there, and I have always believed that back here in America, there were people that day who were on their knees praying for me.

Roger Marsh:

I truly can't imagine the relief Darlene felt knowing that she would live to see another day. You've been listening to the conclusion of part two of Darlene Rose's three-part presentation here on Family Talk. We've been revisiting a presentation she gave about her times as a missionary and a prisoner of war during World War II. And by the way, if you'd like to learn more about Darlene, simply visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

We're just a couple of days past Father's Day, which was this past Sunday, and here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we want to highlight the role that fathers play. They're so crucial in the lives of their daughters and sons, especially when it comes to building resilience. That father-son bond is even more important now than ever before, and if you are looking for help to develop or strengthen your relationship with your son, we have just the resource for you.

It's a new devotional created by Mark Hancock, the CEO of Trail Life USA, and it's entitled *Trail Ready: 101 Devotions for Dads with Boys*. To get a copy of this

devotional for yourself or for a special father in your life, all you have to do is go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk and then click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page. We'll be happy to send you a copy of the book, Trail Ready. It's our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the JDFI today. So go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk and click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, encouraging you to join us again tomorrow for the conclusion of Darlene Rose's powerful three-part story. We've entitled it I Will Never Leave Thee, those powerful precious words from the Lord to us, regardless of the circumstances we're going through. Thanks so much for listening today to Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.