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'Duck Dynasty's' Missy Robertson talks to Naperville women about Christian faith



A large screen shows a projection of Missy Robertson, one of the stars of the television show "Duck Dynasty," as she gives the keynote address Saturday at the Tenacious Faith Women's Conference at Calvary Church in Naperville. (Alex Keown, Naperville Sun)

By **Alex Keown**
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Having one of the top reality television programs provides a large platform for the Robertson family of Louisiana to speak about their religious faith, which "Duck Dynasty" star Missy Robertson did Saturday when addressing more than 700 women gathered at Calvary Church in Naperville for the Tenacious Faith Women's Conference.

Robertson, the conference's keynote speaker, talked about her background in music and how some experiences on her television show have yielded unexpected opportunities, including one that led to the recording of an album. During an episode of "Duck Dynasty," which airs on the A&E network, Robertson and her family performed a rendition of "Silent Night," which led to the recording of a family Christmas album, "Duck the Halls."

Throughout the entire album of carols and hymns, Robertson said the one unifying theme is the gift of Jesus Christ.

"Without Him none of this is possible. It's pointless and meaningless," Robertson said, to a response of "amen" from many in the audience.

Robertson said the show has given her family a way to share their beliefs with people and, on some occasions, help people to find their faith.

"We've been able to attract people who never thought about following Jesus. That's what we feel like is our greatest accomplishment," Robertson said.

While many women's conference speakers spoke about the power of women, Robertson chose to focus on the feeling of inadequacy many women feel. She highlighted this with the story of Jacob and Leah from the book of Genesis. Jacob was tricked into marrying Leah instead of her sister Rachel, the one he initially wooed by working for her father for seven years. Although Leah bore him multiple children, his affections were saved for Rachel, whom he married after working an additional seven years for her father.

"Leah wasn't chosen and she knew it," Robertson said.

Robertson said not being chosen can lead to a miserable life, but she said there is hope through faith in God. That story of Leah lead Robertson to talk about some of the women she employs for her jewelry line, Laminin Jewelry. Many of the 21 women she employs have sordid histories, including one who was forced into prostitution at the age of 10 by her parents for drug money. After years of working in the illegal sex trade, Robertson said the woman found assistance she needed and was able to straighten out her life and find faith – something she is now teaching to her own daughter.

Robertson said her employees have been able to find stability and a purpose because of "love, acceptance and mercy," from God and from the people at Laminin.

Missy's daughter, Mia, 13, briefly shared her experiences going through two surgeries to repair the cleft palate with which she was born. Although the surgeries were painful, Mia told the women at the conference that she did not want people to think about how she was a girl with a cleft palate, but a "kid who God has plans for."

"God made me who he wanted me to be," she said.

Topics of conversation at the conference covered issues facing women in the church today, including divorce. Tammy Daughtry, a founder of the Tenacious Faith conference and chief executive officer of Co-Parenting International, offered words of encouragement to women going through divorce and reminded them to "do the work" they need to do to provide a stable and Godly home for their children. She also reminded the women that despite going through a divorce, they were still loved by God.

Kim Burrell and Tarryn Caragol, both members of Calvary Church, said they enjoyed the fellowship and teaching that conferences like Tenacious Women offer.

"It's a good opportunity to come together with other women," Burrell said.

Alex Keown is a freelance reporter for the Naperville Sun.

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