

10/30/25

Week 44: Mission: Rescue Life, Last week

Randy Robison & Tammy Trent

Tim Timberlake

Studio discussion:

RANDY: Welcome to *Life Today*! I'm Randy Robison. How are you doing? I mean, really, how are you doing today? Well, my co-host, Tammy Trent is with me. How are you doing, Tammy?

TAMMY: I was hoping you would ask me. I'm doing fantastic today.

RANDY: Could you be better?

TAMMY: I can always be better.

RANDY: Can't we always be better? But, sometimes that road to better is a little bumpy. That is actually the title of a book that is out now called, *The Bumpy Road to Better*. It's written by Tim Timberlake, who is the pastor of Celebration Church down in Jacksonville, Florida. He joins us to tell us a little about his bumpy road and how he got to better. I think it's going to encourage you.

Welcome to the program! Man, good to have you.

TIM: What an honor and a privilege it is.

RANDY: How are you doing today?

TIM: I'm doing pretty good today. It is a beautiful day to be alive. It is!

RANDY: Jump into this wherever you want because I really want people to hear what God's done in your life. Because it's encouraging.

TIM: Yeah, I wrote this book in the middle of one of the greatest storms and bumps that I've encountered. I've been leading 21 years. I've never led without great pain. But God just had me to really steward this season of pain and hardship with the pen and pad beside my bed about three years ago. Just started to write down some things. The scriptures and the word and his presence began to bless me. What he began to unpack to me in that season, I really felt like it would bless others. So I just started to kind of journal and write and put together some thoughts. In seasons of pain, we have two options. We could try to avoid it, or we could try to look for Jesus in it. I've just made my mind up that I'm not going to allow pain to leave my life without teaching me and propelling me into the various seasons that God desires for me to walk into.

And so, that book was birthed out of that moment of pain. I would like to sit here and say, now, on the other side of that pain, I can, with joy and happiness share more about it. But I'm still in that season, even though in that season the grace of Jesus has been so sufficient, so evident, so sustaining. Honestly speaking, I believe that it connects all of us to the heart of the Father.

There's four things that I believe really connect us as humanity. The first one is sports. We're just talking about that. No matter what your team is, when the Olympics comes around, what country you're from, what country you represent, there's always some standout athletes that really raise the bar and really are illuminated and highlighted above country lines. People begin to celebrate that and cheer for them. It doesn't matter what language you speak, we can all come around good sporting events. Another one is food. It doesn't matter what language you speak, good food speaks to all of us. Right? And then there's music. Music just, you know, goes beyond those zip codes and country codes and language barriers. Then there's pain. Pain connects us as humanity. The right amount of pain will bring you to a place where you're searching for a solution and an answer.

So my prayer is that as people navigate this life, we find Jesus through it. Although this road is bumpy, it does lead us to better.

RANDY: What are some of the things that you do go into, just so people have an idea of the things you're dealing with?

TIM: So my father transitioned from this life to heaven the day after my 18th birthday. He had a very hard battle with cancer for five years. He was diagnosed when I was 12. They gave him two weeks to live. They offered him an experimental surgery where they cut him from the back of one ear, opened up his entire throat, and left an incision on the back of the other ear. Removed a tumor from his throat the size of a chipmunk. But when they did that, they had to remove a quarter of his tongue, because the cancer was wrapped around his tongue and his esophagus. So he was no longer able to eat, drink, or swallow, and was fed through a g-tube for the remainder of his life.

So at that point, I got very angry with God. My father was my hero, and I just never saw him do anything that was contrary to his faith in Jesus. Even in fighting, even in battling for his life, he remained hopeful, he remained faithful, and he would always remind me of the back end of Hebrews chapter 11. As a pastor, we always like to talk about the Hall of Faith, the front half of Hebrews chapter 11, now faith is the substance of things hoped for. But we don't often talk about the back end where it says they died in faith not seeing the things they believed on this side, but receiving those things on the other side. So he would always remind me of that. But it didn't stop me from being angry with God because I felt like man, God could do something. Surely, God could have done something. At that particular stage of life, my faith wasn't built from my belief, it was built off the backs of my parents. And so I ran from God. I was so angry with God, I wanted God to be angry with me. That road was bumpy. It was long. It was an uphill battle. No matter how far I tried to run, it was like God had a hook in my mouth and he kept reeling me back in, and reeling me back in.

I remember going off to college after my dad died, and I was sitting in my apartment and I fell asleep, thought that I had woke up. When I did I was standing on this stage, and it was a sea full of people. I looked down at my hands and there was blood smudged on my hands. It was the first time I heard the voice of God. The voice of God said, "The longer you run from the people

I've called you to influence, their blood will be held to your account.” I woke up scared out of my mind. I called my mom at 3:00 in the morning and explained to her what was going on, expecting some sympathy, expecting, Oh baby, I'm so sorry. What in the world? I explained to her the dream and she started to laugh hysterically, and it confused me. She laughed so hard she couldn't catch her breath. By the time she caught her breath, she said, “That's the exact dream your father had when God called him into ministry.”

I ended up leaving the university that I was at that week, transferred to Bible College in Detroit, Michigan, and finished up there. Moved back to North Carolina, started pastoring, and, yeah, that was 21 years ago. That was the beginning of a better road. But even yet, and still, it's still bumpy. Yeah.

TAMMY: Oh, my goodness! How do we stay grounded? How did you stay grounded in faith and in hope, especially in setbacks? How do people stay grounded in faith and hope in those times?

TIM: Yeah, I think one of the greatest misconceptions for those that follow Jesus and are disciples of Jesus is to believe one decision grounds us for the rest of our lives. It has to be a daily grounding. I think truth grounds us in hope. One of the things that I have to be very truthful with God is my daily struggles, my doubts, even yet and still. It's not that I doubt God's existence, it's not that I doubt God's goodness, sometimes I do doubt, God, can you do it for me? If things don't go the way I expected or anticipated, I often ask, okay, God, why did this happen to me? Instead of asking God why or instead of asking God, can you, I just have to trust that he is able.

So I take myself back to Ephesians chapter three, verse 20 on a daily basis: Now unto him that is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we could ask or think. Because there's things that God desires for us that we can't even think. There's things that God desires for us that we can't even fathom and process. So I have to relinquish and turn over my expectations to him so that he can exceed them. And, I learned very quickly, God does not live up to my

expectations, but he always lives up to his word. So when I remember that, it grounds me, it anchors my faith, and it reminds me that his plans for me are better than my plans.

RANDY: So you're expressing some doubt here, some questions as a pastor. I mean, I'm not sure I'm comfortable with that. My pastor's got to have it all together. But you talk about hard confessions in the book. And, we confess our sins to God for forgiveness, and he's faithful to forgive. But Scripture tells us to confess our sins to each other for a completely different reason. Why has God set this up so that I need some people that I don't always like being around, fallible people, I have to admit my own stuff. What's this community thing that you see?

TIM: Yeah, I think it's important for us to stay rooted and grounded in community. One of my favorite passages of Scripture teaches us that we overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the words of our testimony. That's encouraging to others. It's encouraging to me. It builds my faith to know, okay, if God can do it for you, if God can do it for you, then he can do it for me also. So I think that fellowship, that community, those testimonies really helps to encourage us to build our hope, to build our faith, to anchor that trust deeper in the hope of Jesus Christ, and really coming to the realization that if Jesus can't do it, then it won't get done. Sometimes, it takes us kind of going around the room, hearing each other's stories and testimonies to know, okay, God has brought them out of a difficult season. He's healed their heart, He's put those broken pieces back together again, He's given me a perspective of what a Heavenly Father is, because my earthly father is no longer here. If he can do those things for me, He can do it for other people as well.

RANDY: And hearing those stories, like our audience is hearing your story now, I mean, isn't there a freedom to say, you know what? I'm struggling in that area, too.

TIM: Absolutely. I think it's freeing. It's authentic. I was talking with a friend who created a social media platform, and he was telling me why his social media platform was so successful. he said something so profound to me It helped to shape my leadership seven years ago. He said, the first wave of platforms were beneficial and did so well because they created platforms for people who wanted to portray as influencers. So people wanted to follow who they thought

were influential. He said the second wave of social media platforms will be successful because it gives people an opportunity to see themselves through their authenticity.

As we go through the various stages of life, I think we do a disservice to the people around us, to the people that we lead, to the people that are on this journey with us when we're not authentic to who God has made us. But also, authentic to the various tests and trials that we are navigating with the help of Jesus Christ. So I don't believe that you should speak or process from a wound. I believe you should speak in process from a scar. If I can show you, this is what God has healed, then it becomes a testimony that what tried to kill me did not succeed.

TAMMY: Amen! What do you think your dad would think today if he looked on the other side of that veil, looked at your life. What do you think he would say to you right now, Son --

TIM: That's a great question. I was processing this last week with my son and coming to the understanding that a father to a son is probably the only male in that boy's life or daughter's life that wants him to do better than he does. You know? So, after my father died, it was a long time before I heard, "I'm proud of you" from a man. It was a long time before I heard, "Great job!" I think that if he were to tell me something or was here, I hope that it would be, "I'm proud of you."

TAMMY: I have no doubt, Pastor Tim. I've no doubt. Think about gratitude. Your life shows so much gratitude. I've taken time to get to know you on all the socials, on the on the Insta webs. I saw a sermon that you were preaching. I wrote it down because it set me on fire in my study. I thought about your dad and what he must have thought if Jesus ever gives him a moment to look over and go, wow, look at my boy! Look at what God did! It was powerful. I don't know if you'll remember this day, it was August 2025, so it wasn't that long ago, "We have to stop mixing things in our relationship with Jesus." Brother, you got a little bit feistier. And you said, "It is not Jesus and -- it is just Jesus. It is not Jesus but -- it is just Jesus. And if Jesus is not enough, you will never encounter enough. It is Jesus. He is the only way, the truth and the life. There is no way to the father except by Jesus."

You have, when you're preaching the Word of God, you come alive. I can only imagine that your father is just very proud of you. Beyond that saying, Well done, my son, well done! You stepped up in it. You took the call, you stepped in. So many of us even in the waiting, even in the bumpy roads, we're so afraid to just step out in faith and let our faith and our hope collide and just say, I'm in it, God, I'm surrendering all. Send me. I'm all in. You did that and I see it in your life time and time again as I've watched you online.

But there are some people that struggle with the gratitude because of the grief. And so, can you speak to that for me? I've gone through a tremendous amount of grief myself, but I have learned to find gratitude even in the grief. I think that's changed my perspective of some of the hard, bumpy roads I've had to travel.

TIM: Yeah, I think even in the grieving, and even in the honesty, if we try to hide it, then we don't step into the healing that Jesus desires for us. As you speak, I'm reminded of the father who had the son that was being tormented, and he took his son to the disciples. The disciples could not heal him, and then he finds Jesus. He takes his son to Jesus, and he asked Jesus to heal his son, who has been tormented by demon spirits. Jesus asked the father, "Do you believe that I'm able to do this?" And the father says something so pure, so true. I identify with it so much. He says, "I believe, but heal my unbelief." Right? I believe he said that because it was him who went in the fire to go after his son. So he's got burn marks on his arms. It was him who went in the water after his boy when the evil spirits was throwing his son into the water. So he's had to fight with the son out of the water to pull him out. So there's a portion of him that does believe, but there's also a portion of him that's like, okay, can you do it just for me?

So even in the grieving, even in the process of pain, I would say walk it out hand-in-hand with Jesus and understand that he's not intimidated by our pain. He's not intimidated by our honesty. He's not intimidated by our grieving. He welcomes those things because we belong to him. And in his hands, he can do more with it than we ever could. So, I love the fact that I don't have to sit with my pain alone. I love the fact that I don't have to grieve alone. He's right there with me, and every step of the way, he desires to exchange what I am carrying for what it is that he's carrying.

I had to come to the conclusion some years ago, I can either cast my cares or I can carry them, but I cannot do both. So I have to cast them every single day, no matter how heavy they are, and no matter how important I think they are, I'm not built to carry him. He is. And so I have to cast them.

TAMMY: Is better right now, Pastor Tim? Or is it in the distance? Or can we live in the better right now?

TIM: Yeah. I think better is both here and now, and later. I think this is a journey of discovering better every step of the way. Sometimes, we have what I call "destination addiction." It's the mentality, I'll be happy when I get there. I'll be happy when I have this, or when I get that, or when I get to this place. We really devalue where we are right here, right now. But the reality is, is I won't be happy there until I find joy here. When I find joy here, God gives me a greater perspective to walk out this pathway to better, and discover who he is every step of the way.

And so I believe better is both here right now, and better is now.

RANDY: That's all through scripture. We think if this will just happen, if I can just get this then I would be better. God's going, hang on, I want to make you better where you're at so that you're prepared for what's ahead. But a big part of that is talking to someone, is praying with someone, and maybe you're like, I don't have anybody to pray with. We've got somebody to pray with you right now. There's a telephone number right there. Those are people who will just listen. They will speak to God on your behalf and ask him to work in your life to make you better where you're at right now. It'll just be better if you got somebody there. So we want to provide that to you because we do care about you. We care about you. God cares about you. And we care about the mission that he has given to us.

Right now, there is an opportunity. We know that there are people who have experienced some trauma. There are people that have been walking a really bumpy road, and God has put us in a

position to make it better for them. But it only happens when you join us. Take a look at this, and then you'll understand how you can make things better for somebody today.

Transition roll-in: [Safe Room]

ANNOUNCER: *Children should be protected, nurtured, and be able to live in a safe environment. But there is a dark and evil presence that shatters that reality for literally millions of children. It's called "sex trafficking."*

DAVID: These are kids that are forced to work all sorts of hours of the night and day. These are kids that have been forced to have sex with people. They're being abused and they're being photographed and doing things that no child should ever have to do.

ANNOUNCER: *To combat this evil force, Life Outreach has partnered with ministries who are committed to reaching, rescuing, and restoring the lives of children and young girls who have been trafficked.*

Recently, Tammy Trent and John Yates visited our beautiful LIFE Center in Southeast Asia. It is a safe haven for children, many of whom have suffered at the hands of child predators. Our team had a chance to play with the children and to join them in their praise and worship. While at our LIFE Center, John and Tammy learned how the healing process begins for children who have suffered the horrors of being trafficked.

JOHN: So, as you can see over my shoulder, Tammy is in a room with a caregiver and a child. But this is not just any room. This is a very special room for children who have suffered the trauma of child sex trafficking. These children are brought into this safe place where they will be able to tell their stories to a therapist who has built trust over weeks of periods of time. Those children's stories will be able to be utilized to bring justice inside of a trauma that no child should ever have to face.

Because of your generosity, we've been able to build some of the most state-of-the-art facilities that are tools in the hands of missionaries to bring healing and hope, and restoration to the heart of a child who has suffered in a way that no human should ever have to suffer.

ANNOUNCER: *There are thousands of children who are suffering right now at the hands of sex predators, and we need your help to continue our work of reaching, rescuing, and restoring the lives of these precious ones.*

Studio discussion:

RANDY: It's an amazing outreach, an amazing work, and it's only possible because of viewers like you. But, Tammy, I want to ask you, what's it like to sit with a child that you know that has been so abused?

TAMMY: Gosh, Randy, when I watch these stories back, of course, we said it, it takes me right back there. I remember being in that room with that little girl. It is such an interesting emotional feeling that I get. It's almost sometimes of anger, to be honest with you, of just like, who did this to you? Who did this to you? And you see the innocence of this precious little girl you saw in that room where I just got to play with her for the longest time, and we had shells and sand in that box.

But to see her coming back to life again because of the atmosphere that she was in, of healing, safety, protection, it's a hard place for me to be because I cannot believe, and I'm so upset that they're even there. But I know how effective this ministry is, and I know that it is turning things around. So in that sense, I can sort of, I'm carrying tension with me so I can feel the hope and I know it's real.

RANDY: The reality is, we know who does this to children, ultimately, on a spiritual level. This is straight out of the pit of hell. My question is, who's going to restore them? We know the answer is Jesus Christ. But, it's interesting because God always sends his people to do his work on this earth. That's what this outreach is. For those that we can prevent them from ever being

in position, like that little girl is, we want to reach them. For those that are in that situation, we want to rescue them. And for those like this young girl, that have been horribly, horribly traumatized, we want to restore them. That is the work of Rescue Life. That work only takes place when you join us. A gift of \$128 right now will help start that process of reaching, rescuing, or restoring that child. Some of you can reach ten children, maybe even many more. All of you can be a part of completing this beautiful facility that we want to raise there in Southeast Asia to house more of these, mainly girls, but some boys too.

This is the last week we'll be on the air talking about this. So please, will you join with us right now to build something special? I'm a father. I'm now a grandfather of a little girl. I would do anything. Anything to get one of my children out of that situation, to restore them. Anything! And I'm just a human father. God's a good Father. He wants to restore them, but he wants you to be a part of it. So please, go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. We can rescue these children. We can show them the love of God. They can be restored. Do it today.

RL Cause Spot – 2025 Fall, Last week

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, our LIFE rescue centers in Southeast Asia are at maximum capacity. More space is urgently needed, and we must complete and renovate a new rescue home immediately. Please consider a very special extra gift as we urgently need \$1.25 million above our normal budget to complete and renovate this place of hope.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Power, Provision and Peace: Bringing together the life-changing truths of Acts, Romans, and First and Second Corinthians in the Passion Translation. These books come alive with fresh revelation and timeless power. With your gift of

\$128 or more, you'll receive the beautiful and soft "Perfect Peace Blanket," bearing the words of Isaiah 26:3 as a meaningful reminder that those who trust in the Lord are never alone. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,280, which will help save ten children, and you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online.

Studio goodbye:

RANDY: I do hope you're going online or going to the phone right now. We do need to hear from you. This is the last week we'll be talking about this on the broadcast show. So please let us know that you're joining with us to rescue those precious lives. We really can make things better. And we've got something for you today if you'd like it.

TAMMY: Yeah, for whatever gift you can give today to come alongside us, we want to make sure to get you Tim Timberlake's book, *The Bumpy Road to Better*. You will absolutely love it! And listen. Anchor yourself to Jesus, not something but to Jesus. And bumpy roads weren't meant to break you, they were meant to build something greater in you ahead, and even in this season now.

Pastor Tim, thank you so much for being here. We so appreciate you. You've been great. And thank you for watching. We'll see you next time on *Life Today*. Bye-bye.