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Week 47: FMF

Randy Robison & Tammy Trent

Blair Linne

Studio discussion:

RANDY: Welcome to *Life Today*! I'm Randy Robison. Tammy is with me.

TAMMY: Hello!

RANDY: I'm very excited about today's guest.

TAMMY: Why?

RANDY: I like her.

TAMMY: I love her! So I understand why you're excited. I actually love her. And I saw you interviewed her already, and I thought, yes, yes, yes! We have to have her on the show.

RANDY: Yeah. And she's actually been on the broadcast show before. But she's back with us today. She has a new book. It's called *Made to Tremble*, and we're going to talk about anxiety, and really maybe reframe it, I think for you guys because we all deal with it. But the author is Blair Linne and she is with us. Blair, so good to see you again.

BLAIR: It's good to be seen, and it's good to be here with you guys.

RANDY: Welcome to Texas. You live here now.

BLAIR: I live here now. Thank you so much.

RANDY: The state just got a little better. But okay, let's jump into this topic because this is a big deal. I think part of our issue as Christians is when we look at the Bible saying, do not be anxious, be anxious for nothing, depending on the translation. We think, oh, but I am anxious. Therefore, I'm failing somehow. I don't necessarily think that's the case, but tell me about your relationship a little bit with anxiety.

BLAIR: So, I never would have considered myself to be an anxious person. That was not the way I would have defined myself. But actually, what happened was in 2015, our young family moved to Philadelphia. My husband was going to plant a church. We have three kids, three and under. My youngest was four weeks old, so I couldn't even help with the move. A couple of months into living there, we decided we're going to take a trip across the country to visit my family in Michigan. I'm behind the wheel driving, and before I knew it, a deer came and totaled our car. We were, initially, just so thankful that everyone was physically well, but little did I know, it spiraled me into a season of anxiety, of intense panic attacks.

I'll tell you kind of how it started. I was driving shortly after the accident, late at night, and all of a sudden I felt like I couldn't swallow, and I couldn't take a deep breath. So I rolled down the window. I tried to get some fresh air, and then it's like I just couldn't breathe in normally. So then I said, What's happening? My heart starts racing and pounding. I remember I called my husband and I just told him, I think it's a medical emergency. Something's wrong. I just said, I need to go to the E.R. I don't know what's going on. I went to the E.R., they did all the tests, and they said, You're fine! Everything looks great. But no one explained to me what was going on; that I had had a panic attack. So I had no idea. That's how I met anxiety. And again, I didn't think that Christians would deal with anxiety. So when I began to get spiraled into this season of panic attacks, feeling anxious all day, every day, I thought something must be wrong with my faith. Maybe I'm not trusting God enough. Maybe there's sin there that I don't know about. \

So I went on this hunt to try to figure out what is going on with me. The Lord really met me right in the midst of my battle with anxiety.

TAMMY: How did he meet you there? Because I think there's a lot of people that totally relate to your story. I think it's so interesting when you say, he met me there, and that's when I was also introduced to anxiety, which I find fascinating, that you never struggled with it until that triggered something in you, and now it's just chasing you down. I think people think like I got here, I don't know how, but now I've identified it, and I don't know how to get onto the other side of this. So how did you do that? How did he meet you?

BLAIR: Yeah, and I can't say that I felt like I was met immediately. Like this was a step-by-step moment. I mean, I literally had to learn to drive again because I was so terrified that another deer would come so I could only drive for ten minutes, then 30, then an hour, and no more. So it was a process. But it really was a few years in that one, I was able to see. I think it's so helpful. So there's a Puritan. This guy was born in the 1600s. So older guy, older friend, and he gives these three categories for fear, which I found to be very helpful. So he talks about natural fear, sinful fear, and religious fear. So being able to pass through the natural fear; that first of all, to feel fear, it's natural. We all feel it. And they're actually good things in it because it helps keep us alive. So, if a bear is coming towards us and we feel that fight or flight, like that's a good thing, it's a natural thing. The challenge is when there's no bear. Right? So then, because we're in this fallen world, we're in a fallen body, and now we're afraid of something that's not there, and it can begin to move into this sinful fear. So trusting God to pass through, where am I? What is going on? Are these physiological symptoms I'm dealing with? Is this me not trusting you, and I'm dwelling on things I shouldn't dwell on?

So what I realized was that with anxiety, it really exposes your weakness, and that is actually the best place to be. Because with sinful fear or anxiety, you really want control. You have these concerns, you have these cares, and you're trying to control your circumstances because you don't feel safe relying on yourself, and the things that come to your mind. And so in that moment, what I was able to see, well, if I'm weak, really, and my weakness is on full display because I can't fix these problems or these cares that I have, isn't that the best place to be? Because it's going to thrust me into the arms of the one who's not afraid, who is not weak, who is always strong, and actually able to do something about my fears and my concerns.

That's where I really met the Lord. I think I was like, Job. He says, "My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes see you." That was towards the end of his story. That weakness and that humanity that I think our circumstances often expose in us, set us up to rightly see God's divinity and his glory and his awesome power right in the thick of our suffering.

RANDY: I want to float something by you and get your take on it. When we look at fear and anxiety, which is sort of the anticipation of something that's not actually taking place, and we think of them as sinful because we're told, don't fear, be anxious for nothing, again. Is that in and of itself a sin or is that just a part of life? And is sort of the sin taking that into the wrong place, as opposed to the proper response to a very real thing, which is to take it to Jesus? So I'm bringing this up because I think it would be helpful if we position fear and anxiety, instead of as a sin in themselves as an invitation. Does that resonate?

BLAIR: Absolutely. That is what the book is about because, yeah, I was always on this hunt for sin because I only had those two categories of sinful fear and religious fear. So the thought was, well, if you're dealing with sinful fear, then you're not trusting God somehow. But when we look in the Scripture, I mean, all of the patriarchs, I mean, it's hard to find somebody who wasn't afraid. Do you know what I mean? We know what it's like to feel fear sometimes. It is a part of our humanity. Absolutely, I love the way that you put it, because what are we going to do when we do feel that feeling of fear? Because, it's the most often command in the Scripture, fear not. But often we don't take it in its context. Why do we not fear? For I am with you. I will strengthen you. I will help you. Even the passage, "Be anxious for nothing," we kind of stop there. We forget the context, "But in everything, with prayer and supplication." So he's teaching us, Paul's teaching us how do you cast your cares? Okay, you can pray to God, with supplication and thanksgiving, make your requests known to God, and the peace of God which it will cover or guard your heart and your mind in Christ. So seeing the Scripture in context, it encourages us. God knows we're going to be afraid. Some of us deal with some really scary things.

TAMMY: Do you feel like you're still battling anxiety now or have you found a way to tremble through it?

BLAIR: Amen. I have found a way to tremble through it.

RANDY: That's really it.

BLAIR: It is! The reality is, I don't know what is to come in my life. I think sometimes we look at it, yeah, if I feel the fear or the anxiety, then, Oh, no! I have this shame. I'm now isolated. I'm separated from the very person who actually has the resources to handle my fears. So my disposition is I'm just going to continue to run to the one who's in control and who's never afraid.

I remember telling the Lord, I said, Lord, even if I never feel afraid anymore, don't let me lose this dependance upon you. Because isn't that what our life is about as a Christian? It's really about us knowing who's with us. That Emmanuel is with us no matter what.

RANDY: I think that's how you justify them as a subtitle in the book, which is to say that anxiety and fear can actually turn into a good thing. I don't want to say it's a good thing in and of itself but it can push you to a place where you look back and then go, okay. Because of that - and because I responded by taking it to God, it turns into a blessing, which is what you're basically saying.

BLAIR: That's right. Because it's not that suffering is automatically going to mean that we're going to respond in the proper way. We still have to learn the tools. I remember I had to learn what does it look like to cast my cares? I've heard that my whole life growing up in church, cast your cares over to the Lord! I remember thinking, God, I don't know how. You have to teach me. You've got to walk me through this.

And learning how to pray. And not to pray in anxiety. What I mean to pray in my anxiety, but not to pray anxiously because I think sometimes we fight anxiety with anxiety. We do. Because it's like, I want to get rid of this. I don't want this in my life anymore. And so, let's just get it out.

So I'm almost praying, maybe there's a scrupulosity or a rumination and like, let me just pray ten times to get it out of my life. No! Because that's more anxiety. But we can rest in God, and we can trust that the Holy Spirit is working in us, that nothing will separate us from the love of God, not even a panic attack, and that God is with us in the midst of it. So when I'm casting my cares, I don't have to do it anxiously. I do it trusting God. You are able to deal with this situation. You can change the situation. I'm concerned about another deer coming when I drive.

TAMMY: Are you still?

BLAIR: I'm not anymore. But what I'm saying is, but in the thick of the battle I was. So I had to eventually say, well, you're in control of the deer, God. I mean, I'm not. So I could either not drive because that was the thought that came to my mind. Maybe I should never drive again. Or I could say my God is in control of the deer. Now, that doesn't mean I won't hit another deer, but it means that even if I do, he's with me. Even if the worst case scenario plays out, he's with me. Even if I die, he's with me. And seeing death from a biblical perspective that to die is gain, having to wrestle with that reality, like the worst case scenario is still gain for the Christian.

TAMMY: It's so good. I was talking to my mom the other day who has gone through cancer twice, breast cancer twice. She went in for a mammogram and they said, hey, we see something, we need you to come back. I remember her sending us a text, me and my sister. Just "Pray for mama. I've got to go back in." I called her and I was like, "How are you doing, Mom?" She's "I'm doing okay. I'm doing okay." She said, "I'm not afraid to die. I'm not afraid of dying. I just -- there's a lot going on in my life right now." I said, "I know, Mom. You're probably just feeling like nobody has time for this right now. You just don't have time." But I began to pray for her because I know that she can even fight anxiety. And sometimes, that whole report that you might get, and we start battling it even before we know what is to come. But it's what we speak, what we say, what we pray. And she is a deep woman of faith. And even my mom, who I've watched walk with Jesus her whole life, a deep walk, still can struggle with the lie, to me, sometimes the lie of the enemy that says whatever he wants to say, that all of a sudden anxiety sets in, and it takes hold and takes root. I know my mom knows how to fight her way out of that, but some people don't, Blair. Do you walk us through?

BLAIR: I do. Yeah, I absolutely do. For one, it's so important to know that not everything that comes to my mind is true. We often struggle with these what-ifs. If this happens or if this is happening. Or you know, I have this ache in my body, what if it's this? So learning to take those thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ. Learning how to pray. I also talk about the importance of community because, you know, anxiety can make you very isolated. You feel so much shame. So what does it look like to welcome your community into your anxiety? So I would, for example, have to wake my husband up when I would be woken up in the middle of the night because I'm dreaming about deer. I'm not trying to think about deer. My body --

TAMMY: I don't want to think about Rudolf!

BLAIR: Exactly! Like that's the last thing I want to think about. And I'm woken up into a panic attack. So there was a moment where I think, okay, Blair, you can handle this. You got this. It's like, no, I don't. Okay? I don't got this. I would wake up my husband and say, "Would you pray with me?"

RANDY: How did you pray? I'm curious. What would that prayer -- is it just like, God forgive me? Or is it God, help me. A little of all of it?

BLAIR: Right. It depended upon what was going on in the moment. So if I am, if it is a sinful fear where I'm thinking about something that I know this is not true, sometimes it's hard to differentiate between that, and we need God's help even with that, and community to help us with that. So it would be, God, please help me to repent of these sinful thoughts that I'm having and help me to hold on to what is true.

Then there are other times where it's like, God, my heart is racing. I'm just feeling these physiological symptoms. God, you are holding my body together. Lord, would you hold my mind together? You are in control of this entire universe, you're in control of me, and so, God, you know me, and I'm feeling afraid right now. Would you help me? It was just a constant. I

could be amongst friends, but I would be whispering those prayers. God, I'm feeling like I'm about to have a panic attack.

TAMMY: Blair, those prayers seem simple, but they are powerful. Because what you've done is what you said before, you've taken authority. You've been given all authority, and so you can speak to those panic attacks. What I mean by that is to say, no! I am not going to let you control my mind or my thoughts. I'm not going to believe this. I'm going to believe good things. And Father, you are in control of everything. You're controlling my life, my thoughts, everything. And I yield them, I surrender them, I give them to you in Jesus' name. And sometimes, it's just that simple to say, I'm surrendering this to you, God.

BLAIR: Yeah. I think a part of that is knowing, again, who is with you because Christ has conquered death. He's conquered sin. He is in control of all things. So because of our union with Christ, we're hidden in him. So even as I think about Ephesians six, which talks about those flaming arrows, because I talk about spiritual warfare as well in the book. When those flaming arrows come, we are to be clothed in Christ: The helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth. What that text is saying is clothe yourself in Christ because that's where the victory is. He has full authority, and if we're in him, he's conquered, and so now we're more than conquerors through Christ.

RANDY: All right. So we've talked about prayer. We've talked about Blair's book. If you want someone to pray with you right now, whatever that prayer needs to look like, whether it's the repentance or there's just the taking authority, speaking truth, you want someone to do that, call that number on the screen. We have people standing by who will just simply pray with you. I say "simply" because sometimes it seems too easy, but there's power in prayer. We want to be there for you.

Then if you would like Blair's book, you can get it where you get books, but we're going to give you an opportunity to be an answer to someone else's very legitimate fear and anxiety. If you request it, we'll send you *Made to Tremble* today. But watch this. I want you to see a need that I think sometimes when you step outside yourself, that's one of the keys to getting rid of anxiety

and fear. But more importantly, it's a key to expressing God's love to someone. So take a look at this, say a little prayer yourself, and see how you can be involved today.

Transition roll-in: [Save the Children]

ANNOUNCER: *When the silent killer, malnutrition sets in among the most vulnerable, it produces what you're seeing in these children: Thinning hair, thin and frail bodies. When young children reach these stages, chances of survival are very slim.*

ISAK: We're here with nurse Alice, who's the senior nurse in this malnutrition clinic care in southern Angola. She's just been assessing this little guy. His name is Ignacio. When she measured the arm, the fact the measurement is in red, Alice explained to us, shows that this child is in a critical condition, suffering from malnutrition. As she put it, that's the admitted criteria. This child has to be admitted to a malnutrition clinic. That is the reality for so many of the children in this area for so many mothers like Rosa, who are literally out there in villages. For every one child in these clinics, that represents tens or even hundreds of children out in the villages. Nurse Alice has told us how they've seen an incredible increase in the number of children coming into these malnutrition clinics. When asked why, one of the main reasons is because of the drought. That is what we're seeing at a village level. It's projected that over 114,000 children will suffer of acute malnutrition in the next few months.

But here's the reality. I gave you those statistics. But those are not just numbers. Those are real lives. Those are individual children. Those are mothers whose hearts will be broken because they can't do what they need to do to save their children's lives. They're doing everything, but they cannot save them. Not without you -- and not with us, and the mission workers here out in the field. That is why I need you to please be an answer to prayer today. I need you to open your heart. I need you to express God's heart and to extend his hands to the children like this, to the malnutrition clinics that so desperately need our assistance. But to the mothers out in the villages, that if they get those resources, can keep their children from ending up here and battling that battle of life and death.

Studio appeal:

RANDY: I know those images are hard to watch. It's hard to be there. Tammy, when I was at that clinic and the mothers there with all their children waiting to get some medical attention because they had reached a really dire situation, what you didn't see was just around the corner where there's another group of mothers with children. The mothers are coming and coming and coming.

Right now there's a very serious situation because the supplies are running low. It's due to a lot of situations around our country, even around the world. They can't always depend on the resources that they have depended on when they hit this emergency situation. That's why your response today is so critical. We have been there. We need to continue being there and we need to expand the outreach. Right now, we feed about 350,000 children every day in the various mission feeding programs, but there are more. And Tammy, it's hard to say, it hurts to say it but if we don't respond, if we don't maintain and in some places increase, those mothers will bury their children.

TAMMY: They will. A couple of things that sit with me real heavy on a day like today when I'm watching a piece like that is the suffering that they're going through. These precious little babies, Randy, it's the hardest thing for me being there, watching these children dying. Their mothers are hanging on to dear life for their children. So that's why we're coming to you. I will never not be moved by a story like this. I will never not be moved by the fact that that I can do something and I must do something. So I'm asking you, please, would you do something along with me, along with all of us here that are desperately trying to get food to these people right now that need it, or they will die?

It's so simple. For \$30 you will feed three children, for \$50 you will feed five children, for \$100, you will feed ten children, for \$1,000, you will come alongside us and help us feed a hundred children today, right now. So please, this is so serious, and I need you to please come alongside us right now. Go online or make a call right now. But even as Isak said, these are real

lives. These are real stories. These are real children that are dying right now because of the lack of food.

RANDY: But I also want to point out one thing, because there was one day in one of the clinics where a little boy didn't make it. His mother made it to the clinic, but it was too late, which is why we like to take the food out into the villages; that's a critical part of mission feeding. But they took the boy around outside the wall of that little compound into a field and buried him. I don't tell you that to manipulate you. I tell you that so you know how serious it is. But also, so that you know when we say \$30 will help feed three children for the next several months, that means something. Yes, if you can give a lot, please do. But if you can give a little, please do, because it all matters. Every life matters and you can do something.

So please go to the phone, go online right now. Make the best gift you can because these children are worth it. But just know that it's a matter of doing something and doing it today.

FMF Cause spot 2025:

ANNOUNCER: Right now, across the continent of Africa, children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition and even death. With food reserves critically depleted and many areas experiencing devastating famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000 children who are counting on us every single day.

Through Life's mission feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to a prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need. Call now with your lifesaving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for three, five or ten children for three full months. With your gift, we'll send you "Happy, Healthy and Free." A powerful 31-day journey to help you embrace God's promises for healing, wholeness, restoration, peace, and joy. Step into the abundant life God has prepared for you.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request 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, this is the last opportunity to request our 2025 majestic bronze sculpture, “Lion of Judah” with your gift of \$1,000 or more, which will help feed 100 children in desperate need. So please call, write, or make your gift online today.

Studio goodbye:

RANDY: I do hope you'll go online, go to the phone. Make the best gift you can. We need to hear from you today. The situation is very serious, but we have the answer. We would like to bless you with a gift. I mean, Blair's book is such a blessing.

TAMMY: It's so good. We love you. Thank you so much for being here. You have been a blessing to us. And listen, if you're feeling anxious right now or not, you have to remember that his presence is always your greatest peace. God bless you. Thanks for watching. We'll see you next time on *Life Today*.