

**12/08/25**

**Week 50: FMF**

**Randy Robison & Tammy Trent**

**Justin Gambino**

**Studio discussion:**

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

**TAMMY:** Hello!

**RANDY:** We have such a great guest. Our guest today, I've heard him on the radio. You've probably heard him on the radio, too. He's won awards and wonderful songs. Got a new song you'll hear in a few minutes. But he's got a story that I'm really excited for you to hear. I know, Tammy, you've gotten to hear a little bit of his story. It's kind of crazy!

**TAMMY:** It is crazy, but it's really, really good.

**RANDY:** It is. Let's welcome Justin Gambino. Welcome to the show.

**JUSTIN:** Thank you for having me.

**RANDY:** I appreciate you being here. Again, I'm excited to hear your new song with the new album and everything. But I really want our audience to hear what God has done to get you where you're at. Tell us a little bit of the background.

**JUSTIN:** I'm one of six siblings. We were all homeschooled. And if there was something going on at the church, we were there. You better believe it. My mom was pulling us out of bed Sunday mornings, and it didn't matter what was going on at the church, the Gambino kids were there. At the age of five is whenever I remember seeing the pastor playing the guitar and I was

just like, man! Just so infatuated with the guitar. But I think it's funny how my mom saw me so interested in the guitar, and then puts me in piano lessons.

**TAMMY:** Yeah, always happens.

**JUSTIN:** I think that's because, she was a little biased, right? She plays the piano and so I started doing the piano lesson thing, and did not like it. But the crazy thing was the piano teacher saw that I was a musician right from the get-go. He said, This kid's a musician. Whenever he finds his instrument, nurture it. It was about six years after that whenever my best friend got a guitar. I see that guitar and I'm like, oh, I want that! My parents got me my first guitar whenever I was 15 years old. But, whenever I was 15 is whenever I got my first job as well. I think that's kind of interesting looking back, because it was at my first job, is whenever I got introduced to a completely different crowd than what I was raised around. And so now I'm trying to fit into a different crowd that I wasn't raised around. You know, church kids, and I was part of the youth group and worship and all that. And now I'm just starting to derail a little bit. It only took a couple of years of that before I found myself in a completely different -- Now that I'm thinking about it, it was my first time ever to put on my church clothes, but I wasn't going to church, I was going to court. I was going to see a judge.

**TAMMY:** Really? What age?

**JUSTIN:** I had just turned 18 at this point.

**TAMMY:** Wow! Justin, what happened that put you in front of a judge?

**JUSTIN:** Well, I committed theft.

**TAMMY:** What kind?

**JUSTIN:** It was stealing money. Yeah, it was just breaking and entering, stealing money. Yeah, yeah. But my mom taught me how to love the Lord, but she didn't teach me how to be a good

criminal. So first time I broke the law, I thought -- Praise God I didn't have a mom like that! But yeah, first time I broke the law, I got caught. Got caught red-handed, and before I knew it, I was standing before a judge.

**RANDY:** So this is a little bit of the Christian parent's nightmare. We raise our kids in church, we teach them all the right things, and then they do things that I mean, it's heartbreaking for a parent. I know there are people watching now who have a child or a grandchild, and they're not in a good place. Two questions: What was it that made you do all the things you knew you weren't supposed to do, first of all?

**JUSTIN:** I would say I was just wanting to fit in with that group of kids that I was hanging out with. Yeah, it was peer pressure.

**RANDY:** And then the question that someone who's in that position wants to know is what, what brought you back?

**JUSTIN:** My mom and dad just never gave up on praying for me. I mean, just about five years ago, I remember my mom coming up to me and she said, "I've been praying for this moment for you to come home to the father's house, and you're home now." If I could put into words what it's felt like – (Emotional) Sharing this testimony whenever I thought I was too far gone. I can see the Lord and what's behind Him is this beautiful garden. He's got his hand out and he's like we're going to walk through this garden; we're going to walk through it together. I'm going to point out things that need to be uprooted, I'm going to point out things that need to be pruned, watered. It's not going to be easy but we're going to go through it together. Never give up praying.

**RANDY:** I think that's so important. In fact, what would you say maybe to a parent who's got a child in your position?

**JUSTIN:** It's to not stop praying for them -- to not stop praying for them. That's so important! I remember my mom -- she came to the jail after they arrested me. And I've been cooperative. They let me ride shotgun, which normally they don't do that. Right? Let me ride shotgun. And then, she sees me sitting on the bench in the jail, and she was like, why isn't he handcuffed? Put that boy in handcuffs! Like he needs to learn this lesson. I'm praying for him and I love him, but he needs to learn a lesson. But yeah, that's one thing that I noticed about my parents. They just never gave up on praying for me.

**TAMMY:** I love that you say that, and I think many parents are like that. I will never give up on my child. Doesn't matter what they do, I will always love them. But I wonder, okay, so you came back to Jesus, which is great. But there was probably many years in between where you were like, I don't care. And I think that life took you in another direction, down another path. What was that path like? Because I think that has everything to do with why and how you eventually came back to the Lord.

**JUSTIN:** Yeah. The judge looking at me that day in the courtroom, doing what you guys are doing now, asking questions. He's like, how many kids are in your family? Like, who brings in the income? He just looked at me. He's like, You're a good kid that just took a wrong turn. So here's what I'm willing to do. I'm willing to make this -- because it was going to be a felony. It was going to be a felony. You're going to go to jail for at least two years. He said, But I think you just need a second chance. I'll make this into a misdemeanor if you agree to join the military. And so I joined the Navy.

**TAMMY:** Was that a quick, I'll do it.

**JUSTIN:** It was a quick decision. But once I sign on the dotted line, I'm thinking what have I gotten myself into?

**TAMMY:** What was that like?

**JUSTIN:** It was maybe like the first two years into my enlistment where I'm now deployed to Iraq and I'm fighting for the very freedom that I took for granted. But it was in the desert when God put the guitar back in my hands, because there was an opportunity for me to lead worship on base in Iraq. I'm thinking, there's no way -- there's no way that God has brought me all this way just to put the guitar back in my hands. But he did! I remember calling home. I mean, to think about the feelings of my earthly father, hearing the voice of his prodigal son calling home. So, Dad, can you send me my guitar? Remember that guitar you got me at the age of 15? Can we put that in a box -- and dust it off and put it in a box and send it to Iraq? And he did. He did it in a heartbeat.

**TAMMY:** Do you remember what it was like that first time you picked up that guitar in Iraq, and you stood in front of a bunch of people, and probably I would have thought, This is my life. I'm here because of decisions and choices I made, but now I'm standing here in front of redemption.

**JUSTIN:** Well, if I can be honest, it didn't like -- the feeling of redemption didn't start then. Yeah. Even though I was leading worship, that was something that I knew because I grew up doing it. That was kind of like second nature. It felt great, and I loved that, but I was still dealing with all of the regret and the guilt of like, okay, but I'm still in this place where I don't want to be. Like, I have the guitar back in my hands, but it still feels like there's this disconnect. And if I can be honest, I was the furthest from God that I've ever been whenever I was in Iraq.

**TAMMY:** That's crazy! And while you were leading worship?

**JUSTIN:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. It was just like checking the boxes, and going through the motions. Whenever I went back home, I thought, okay, this is my reset button. Then, they try to prepare you for returning home from a war zone, and try to prepare you for what you're going to feel in your mind, your emotions and anger issues. Things are going to make you mad, and I just thought, I just want to go home. I'm just ready to go home. Everything just hit me blindsided. I went back to drinking. Right whenever I got back home, I could not end a day without a drink because just like all the anger issues and the PTSD that came with coming from

that war zone. That was some pretty rough waters. Then again, this is how good God is because he never stopped pursuing me. He never stopped pursuing me because he presented another opportunity for me to lead worship. It was a friend and a mentor of mine. He said, Hey, I lead this Friday night Bible study. He knew I had just come back from Iraq. He said, I lead this Friday night Bible study and I need someone to help me lead worship. Can you help? I was like, sure. That's whenever I stopped drinking. I remember coming back from a Friday night Bible study and I thought, all right, I'm going to dump all this down the drain, and I'm done with it. I'm done with it. That is whenever -- that was around 2010 - 2011. That's whenever, I really started surrendering to the Lord. Quit drinking. I just had a couple of years left in my Navy enlistment. That's when I started writing music for the Lord. Yeah, that's when it all started.

**TAMMY:** Is that a turning point for you, kind of what brought healing? What began that healing, ultimate healing, and moving forward in your life?

**JUSTIN:** Yeah, writing music for the Lord really started bringing a lot of healing. But it wasn't until quite a few years later. But at the end of 2020, the Lord said, Justin, I want you to lead a night of worship. I want you to lead a night of revival in your hometown. I was like thinking, okay. Lord, I'm all game. Where do you want me to do this? Let's do it. I feel like you have my attention. Where do you want me to do this night of revival? He said, I want you to do it at the courthouse. I said, You can forget it.

**RANDY:** The one where you had been?

**JUSTIN:** Yeah. And I said, Lord --

**TAMMY:** You can forget it! Really?

**JUSTIN:** Yeah. I said, you can forget it. You're going to have to find a different venue or a different servant, because I'm not willing. I don't want to go back to the same place I got bad memories. I lost that argument with the Lord. He just kept telling me -- and whenever I thought

I had all the excuses, right? I had all the excuses, I had all the reasons of why this wouldn't work. But everyone, the mayor, the city manager, the judge who remembered me, they all said, Yes. I remember showing up on that stage and I had my band with me. And I'm still selfishly thinking, the Lord has brought me here, the Lord has brought Justin here to bring revival to his hometown. And the Lord ever so kindly, just with his still small voice, said, Justin, and I didn't bring you here for them. I brought you here for you and I. He said, I brought you here to remind you that the same plan that I had for Justin, 18-year-old Justin, walking up these courthouse steps, feeling like he was at the end of his rope -- and I was! He said, I want to remind you that the same plan that I had for you then is the same plan that I have for you now. The only difference is that I have your undivided attention.

**RANDY:** What about your parents because they prayed for you for so long? And to see you have this intimate relationship with Christ that they've always wanted for you, and for years wondered if you would ever have?

**JUSTIN:** Yeah, well, remember whenever I said my mom, just a few years ago, said, "This is what I've been praying for?" It was on the night when we did that revival at the courthouse. She came up to me and she was like, "I've been praying for you to come back to the Father's house for so long. It's been a long journey out in the wilderness, but you're finally home." That's whenever I just knew that I had been checking the boxes for too long.

**TAMMY:** Everything you were just saying, you checked the boxes. So many of us check the boxes in life and I love that something changed in your life.

So what is your main hope when you sing now? When you stand before people and lead them in the presence of God, what is your main hope that they take away?

**JUSTIN:** My main hope is that when people hear me share my testimony, they see me on stage or they see me on screen, that they don't see me and hear me, that they see Christ in me, that they hear the words that he wants to speak through me. This December is our sixth annual

revival on the grounds of the very same courthouse where I was judged. We've been doing it every year since.

**RANDY:** So what does “*Just Like Jesus*” mean? Tell us about the song.

**JUSTIN:** Yeah. “Just like Jesus.” If I could wrap up my testimony in just three minutes, it would be this song. It's just a song about a father that runs after that prodigal; that throws a party for the prodigal son. That's what the song's about.

**RANDY:** I'd love to hear it.

**JUSTIN:** Do you want to hear it?

**RANDY:** I want to hear it.

**JUSTIN:** Come on.

**RANDY:** Have you heard this one yet? I have not heard this one.

**TAMMY:** Not live. Not in the setting like this, which is always the best.

*Justin Gambino: “Just Like Jesus”*

I still bear the scars  
of every selfish choice I've made  
Can't believe the years I wasted  
carrying that weight  
But then one day my life was changed  
When Jesus called me by my name  
my testimony



This is my testimony  
Ain't it just like Jesus to leave the 99 for the one?  
Ain't it just like Jesus to throw a party for this prodigal son?  
If I'm gonna love when the world says hate  
If I'm gonna learn how to walk by faith  
Gotta pray, Make me just like Jesus

Have you ever wondered  
if I'm too far gone?  
Well, let me tell you about the one  
who's gonna carry you home  
If you let Jesus change your life  
You walk from darkness to the light  
My testimony  
could be your testimony  
Ain't it just like Jesus to leave the 99 for the one?  
Ain't it just like Jesus to throw a party for a prodigal son?  
If I'm gonna love when the world says hate  
If I'm gonna learn how to walk by faith  
Gotta pray, Make me just like Jesus

Now this is my favorite part right here, okay?

Can I get a witness?  
Anybody want to testify?  
Somebody shout Amen!  
If the Savior saved your life  
Can I get a witness?  
Anybody want to testify?  
Somebody shout Amen! Hallelujah!  
If the Savior saved your life

Ain't it just like Jesus to leave the 99 for the one?  
Ain't it just like Jesus to throw a party for a prodigal son?  
Ain't it just like Jesus to leave the 99 for the one?  
Ain't it just like Jesus to throw a party for a prodigal son?  
If I'm gonna love when the world says hate  
If I'm gonna learn how to walk by faith  
Gotta pray, Make me just like Jesus  
Gotta pray, Make me just like Jesus  
Just like Jesus.

**Studio discussion:**

**TAMMY:** Yes! I love it so much!

**RANDY:** What does it do for you to be singing that from your heart?

**JUSTIN:** Oh, it's like just, you know, the last five years since the first revival, it's been like an overflowing from this cup. So it just feels like an overflowing. Like every time I share it, I see people like you responding to it, like, can I get a witness? It's like, Yes! It almost feels like I'm pouring from this cup into others. That's what it feels like.

**RANDY:** You are. You are! You're doing it. There are some people out there watching, and you want for your loved what God's done in Justin's life. If you want someone to pray with you, I just want to invite you to call that number on the screen right now. We've got someone who will pray with you because prayer is an amazing thing. It doesn't always work on the timeline when we want it to, but it works. So I hope you've listened to Justin's testimony. Listen to where he's singing out of his heart now his desire to be just like Jesus. And be encouraged today for your loved one. If you're that one who's wandering, come back! Come back. God set a table for you and it's a beautiful thing.

As we share these stories with you, we have other stories where you're going to see an opportunity to reach out and express God's love, what God's done in your life, and the lives of others, to some people who desperately need to hear it, to see it, to feel it, to taste it. Watch this and you'll see how.

**Transition roll-in: [The Time is Critical]**

**ANNOUNCER:** What you see here is the powerful difference between children thriving where our feeding programs exist, and children struggling because of critically depleted food sources. Our teams travel to remote villages in Africa to reach children who are at risk of suffering the effects of severe malnutrition. The hope is we can intervene before another child dies.

**ISAK:** You see how many mothers are here with children being screened for malnutrition, and we're nowhere near the hungriest of the hungry season. Well, the truth is, if these mothers don't get assistance from now to when harvest comes, the reality is that not only will we end up with far more mothers here with children that are suffering from malnutrition, but we're also going to end up with some mothers who aren't here because their children have died as a result of what that malnutrition is doing to them. Many of these kids, we've seen some of that. They're falling off the cliff now.

**JOHN:** I'm so grateful that we are here, and that the teams will continue to be here as long as you help us. We've said it to you many times, we have nothing to give without you. We want to be able to continue to minister and continue to fund mission feeding in all these communities, and to have these teams that come out into the remotest areas. But just as Isak said, without this supply line, without that lifeline, we have nothing to give them. So I'm asking you, whatever way you can help us, would you please do that? It is so important. This is an example of what we have come here to show you; how desperate these families are, but yet, how easily we can help them if we join together.

**Studio appeal:**

**TAMMY:** There's something that Isak said that has stuck with me ever since I heard it. He said, "They're falling off the cliff now." Which basically means that children are past the point of hunger. They're starving. They are dying. They're falling off the cliff. I think that if I were there right now in that village, and I saw those little babies walking toward that cliff, ready to die of hunger, I would step in. I would do everything I could to throw them a lifeline, to stop them from doing that.

The truth is, there is a way that together, we can throw them a lifeline. We can stop this. We can go in there with our feeding programs. We can set it up. Just as you saw, hundreds of children are blessed every single day with this bowl of life-saving food and nutrition. But just as it is saving hundreds of thousands every day, without it, they're dying. They need this bowl. Together, we can bring this to them. That could change everything for them. That could stop them from falling off the cliff again today. It's that simple, really, Randy, when you think about it.

**RANDY:** It is. And, Tammy, you and I, we've both been to the areas where there is mission feeding. We're privileged to be facilitators of mission feeding. But we can only give what you put in our hands. Alone, you would see images of those children starving and dying over there, and you'd be like, there's nothing I can do about it, right? But God has put into place the whole pipeline, really, where you can do something about it. When you join with us today, you enable us to continue feeding 350,000 children every single day, and it makes a huge difference.

Your gift today of \$30 will help feed three children for the next few months. Many of you can give \$50 to help feed five children, \$100 to help feed ten children. Some of you could give \$1,000, which would actually help feed 100 children for several months. I know there's some of you that could do more.

We are in a position so that those children don't fall off that cliff, euphemistically speaking. They won't die. There's been a disruption in global food supplies and relief. That's why our presence is so much more critical, and that's why your participation right now is even that much more critical. So as we wrap up the end of the year, I pray if you make some big year-end gifts,

that you would consider mission feeding the place to put it. But if you can just do whatever God places on your heart, he will multiply it. He will bless it. You can be a part of saving lives today. I pray that you'll go to the phone or go online and make the best gift you can.

**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're going online, going to the phone. Make the best gift you can. God can do amazing things when we are obedient and just surrender to him. We've seen it today, Tammy!

**TAMMY:** I've seen it. I've been in the middle of it, and I've loved it. Thank you so much, Justin, for being here, for pouring your life out through music and through song. I pray that God continues to bring favor and blessing in your life first as it overflows into our lives. Thank you so much. Thanks for being here.

Thank you for being here. We'll see you next time on *Life Today*. Bye-bye.