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Week 50: FMF

Randy Robison & Tammy Trent

Sheila Walsh

Studio discussion:

TAMMY: Hello, everybody. I'm Tammy Trent. Welcome to Life Today. I'm here with Randy Robison, and another one of my favorites. I love spending time with this guest today.

RANDY: Sheila's back!

TAMMY: Hey! You gave it away.

RANDY: I couldn't help it. I just got too excited!

TAMMY: You sure did. Oh, I do! I love spending time with you. You have such a beautiful way always, Sheila. No matter where you're at or what the topic is, but you have such a beautiful way of reminding us all that God's grace meets us right in the middle of it all, no matter what we're going through. You could be writing a book on hope, on our emotions, on healing, on it's okay not to Be okay, or a Christmas book. But even in the Christmas book that you have just written now, which I love, *The Little Drummer Girl: An Unexpected Christmas Story*. There is a story in here for even me. There's a moment in here for even me; even about disappointment to joy.

So I'm going to dive right in and ask you, when you are writing all of your books, is there something about that moment when you sit down and get to write a Christmas book that is more special or just different? What's that like for you? And how did you get to this place of writing this book?

SHEILA: That's a great question because I think through everything that I've written, to me, there has to be a scarlet thread. There has to be, because the whole point, the older I get, the more convinced I am that we get caught up in all the stuff that doesn't matter and we forget what really matters. Like if every single one of us began to really understand how outrageously we are loved by God right now, not next Tuesday if we remember to do something. Right now, as we are, we're outrageously loved by God; what his grace is like. It's changing me. I started doing this thing now where we have a wee dog called Maggie. She's a Yorkie. When I take her out in the morning, I have what I call my morning walk with the Lord. So I'll get out front and I'll be like, Morning, Lord! And just think Adam and Eve got to do that. They got to walk and talk with the Lord. And so that's become such a huge thing for me.

I pray that every encounter I have, whether it's writing or speaking or hanging in a coffee shop, that there'll be something of the glory of heaven that would touch it.

TAMMY: Does He reveal something to you every time you take that walk?

SHEILA: Most of the time it's just about -- I used to think I wanted answers. I'd be praying for something, and I'll think I need an answer. I now get it; I don't need an answer. What I need is His presence because His presence changes everything. But 2025 has been a hard year for my husband and I. We've gone through all sorts of things that were just like, wow, I didn't see that coming. I didn't see that coming. But it's the presence of God that changes everything rather than understanding everything.

TAMMY: So good. I honestly think what you just said could be transformative for a lot of people, because we pray as a transaction. I'm praying to get answers. I'm praying because I need this. I'm going to give you this prayer, and I'm going to expect this. And this is actually what I need and how it needs to come, and what it needs to look like. When that doesn't happen, we instantly think that now God has abandoned, which in the abandonment we feel -- we don't feel His presence. And so everything you just said is the flip of that. So why don't we pray to know the presence of God like we've never known before? So when you take that walk in the morning, it's not just about what I need, and needing all of these things, but it's God, I want to

know your presence more than anything. That you draw near. That's the greatest answer. The miracle that maybe some of us didn't know we needed today.

SHEILA: It's so great to be loved by God. It doesn't have to be that everything's working, because some things at the moment, we still don't have answers to. There are some things that Barry and I are asking God questions about, and I have no idea what the answer is. But I'm so enjoying his presence.

RANDY: I think we're all like that. Well, life is that way, but the beauty of the Christmas message is Emmanuel, God with us, which is just the wildest thing, I think. Tell us a little bit about the book, because I'm a grandfather now, like three times now.

SHEILA: You are? Oh, my gosh!

RANDY: A lot's happened! A lot's happened. So I am looking for, you know, Christmas gifts, something to put in front of my grandkids that will not just entertain them because it's got great pictures and a nice story, but we'll put something -- I'm looking to deposit a little bit of heaven in the lives of these little children. I want everybody to get this, by the way. We're going to tell you how you can get this book as a gift or for yourself, whatever.

But tell us a little bit about the story because I'm interested. Not the little drummer boy, *The Little Drummer Girl*.

SHEILA: The kind of idea started for me with thinking -- I grew up all my life thinking, if I do this and this and this, then God will love me and approve of me. It's kind of a deeper message than just the children's story. It's this idea of what is relationship about? So in the story, she thinks if she could just be the guardian angel or the angel that makes the announcement because A, it's a speaking part, you know, which has got to be better than nothing. And B, you've got wings. Then she discovers she doesn't get the part. But what she discovers is that when you find yourself at the feet of Jesus, you've found the perfect place to be.

But I wrote that almost for myself as well. It's like, we can think if I get that promotion or if I marry that guy, or if this happens or if that happens, then that's a sign that God is pleased with me. I am no longer looking for signs that God is pleased with me. I want to find ways to communicate with God how much I just enjoy being with him.

TAMMY: I know in the book, her father plays such a pivotal role in helping her to see the meaning of her gift. And I think about you, Sheila. I think about your dad. I think about a five-year-old little girl and I wonder, when I was reading this, and you were writing that, because I wondered if you found yourself in the story and how that might have made you feel, living most of your life without your dad and thinking about the day that you'll see him again. What kind of role he played, even in that short five years of your life. And if that's the thing you hold on to, and how your dad helped you, maybe that parallel finding meaning in your gift.

SHEILA: It's interesting, Tammy. It's been a journey because I think anytime there's trauma in your childhood, it deals with you until you're ready to deal with it. I remember somebody saying to me, "When the pain of remaining the same is greater than the pain of change, then you're ready to change." I came to a place where I thought, you know what? Dealing with all the stuff I've buried in the cellar of my soul is going to be really hard. But it won't be worse than what I'm feeling right now.

And so, for me, that's been one of the greatest adventures of just thinking that, I purposely made her dad the hero of the story in some ways because I think, dad, that's what you wanted to be for me. You know, before his massive brain injury, he was the one, I looked on him as the yes in my life. Like I was a tomboy. I mean, I saw Mary Poppins and jumped out of the bedroom window in the second floor with an umbrella convinced I was going to float down. But my mother's roses lived to testify that did not happen. But he was always the one that said, "Yes, you can." My mom would be like, "Oh, be careful." And he was like, "No, go for it!" So I think that's probably how he is in heaven now with Jesus, just living his full life. I'm grateful at this stage in my life that I get to have some of that back. And putting it into her story, if my dad had been here, he would have been the one that made sure you had a drum. Not just a drum, a pink drum. Not just a pink drum, a drum with pink ribbons.

TAMMY: I love it so much.

RANDY: It's wild because I grew up listening to you singing.

SHEILA: Isn't that wild? Yeah! Back in 1812.

RANDY: It was the '80s. And then, through the years, the ministry, Women of Faith, co-hosting here, getting to know you personally, you've spent your life ministering and kind of being ministered to in a lot of ways, as we all should. What do you reflect? What do you look back and see when you look back on the footprints in the sand, and you see Jesus carrying you at times, what do you see when you look at life?

SHEILA: That's an interesting question, Randy, because one of the things that I've been struggling with this year is self-doubt. Of thinking, you know what? Maybe I'm done doing all of this. Maybe somebody else should do this. It makes Barry nuts, my husband, because he's so kind and he's so supportive, and I'll be like, I don't know if I should be doing this anymore. The last two or three weeks I have been out speaking in places, and I think the Lord has allowed women to come up and say, I heard you at such and such thing, or I read this and it made an impact. I felt the Father saying, Come on, girl! We're not done yet. That actually has been really helpful for me.

RANDY: Can I reiterate that? You're still blessing people. You're still drawing people to Christ.

SHEILA: Thank you.

RANDY: You're still proclaiming his goodness; that he's a good Father.

TAMMY: To me, it's also beyond the platform for Sheila. So many just see you on the platform, but to me, knowing you off of a platform, I mean, in the way you live your life, the way you've lived your life, that speaks volumes. You have been steadfast through it all. It

doesn't mean life has been perfect. You've done everything right. Maybe you have. I don't know for sure. But you are steadfast, Sheila. I have never seen you waver, ever. And for me, a young girl growing up in the faith with all that I've walked through, too, when we shared time with Women of Faith, you meant everything to me. Your voice has meant everything to me. And I cannot imagine this world without your voice, without your life, without your insight, without your walk with Jesus.

So please, Barry, keep telling her, do not, do not give up! Because you touch the lives of people in ways that many of us can't. You do things that many of us cannot do through the gifts that God has given you. Just like this book with Isabella, she's been given very specific gifts in this book. And yes, sometimes there comes disappointments even in that gift and finding where we're supposed to finally land in life. But God is intentional, and he will always, always get us to our final destination, even in the disappointment.

What's amazing about that is when you finally land there, even your story, my story. You can find joy. You can find stability. You can find the hope of Christ. You can see the intentional hand of God that it took to get you from here to there. So I think even the story is not just about a little drummer girl for a bunch of little kids, which that's the beauty of a story like this around Christmas, the fireplace. But for me, I got something out of it too. I thought even in my disappointments in life, I can still see the hand of God and find joy.

SHEILA: Do you know what a good job you're doing? No, I'm serious, Tammy. I remember when you first came, watching your first few shows and thinking, yeah, you've got the heart for this. You're the right person. But the heart has expanded, but also all the giftedness. You're doing such a phenomenal job. And your passion and joy. I mean, I remember, we used to take Tammy on World Vision trips to Africa, and it's like she's a nut – she's an absolute nut! All the Women of Faith speakers were like, who were all so much older than Tammy and it was like, is Tammy coming? If she's not coming, we're not going.

But I love to see the way the Lord has just grown you and expanded you. It makes me proud.

TAMMY: Thank you! It means a lot coming from you. You are like a big sister to me, whether you know it or not. I claimed you as my own. But you are. You've spoken into my life for a long, long time. And not just me, but so many people. We need you and I truly love you so, so much. What's the next question?

RANDY: I have a question. I have a question, and it ties directly into just what we're seeing here. This little drummer girl, I'm going to stay off my soapbox, but I do believe that in the church there is a bit of a history of men not lifting women up to the place that God has called women to be. Can I put it that way?

SHEILA: Sure.

RANDY: Is there significance in the girl, or is it just because it's kind of your story?

SHEILA: This is such a really insightful question, and I don't think there is. And I'll tell you why. I've been aware for years that some parts of the Christian evangelical community is a bit like an old boys club. But when I would talk to the Lord about that, I felt like every time, like when I first went to the 700 Club and Pat Robertson said to me, Okay, we've got cubicles over here and you can have one of these cubicles. But after a year, if you really still feel that God has called you here, then we'll give you an office on what they called Mahogany Row. So at the end, I was like, cool! The end of the year, I went back to Pat and said, "Well, I definitely feel this is where God's called me, so can I move into an office?" And he said, "Well, some of the guys are not really comfortable with that because we've never had a woman on Mahogany Row." So I said to him, "You know what? Let me tell you this. I love you and I bless you, but I'm going to have to leave." And he said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Because I trust you. You're a good man and I trust you, and you told me this." And so, by the next week I was in my office on Mahogany Row. And the girl who came after me, Terry Meeuwsen, who is just a saint, immediately went to an office. But the Lord has always told me, Don't don't fight for things, Sheila. You're a servant.

RANDY: It's not your fight. He had something better for you and that wasn't the fight. Because let it be mine, okay? Let me just say, men don't hold women back in Christ. There's no male and female. He's called all of us. And if you're a woman watching, I want you to look at these two women right here and see God's call on their lives in the effectiveness that they have had in ministry. And if God's calling you to minister, don't let people who look like me, guys, hold you back because God's doing an amazing thing. It's interesting, you mentioned before we even started, children's books are kind of like the hardest subject for the television to do, and that's true. But it's not about the book. I think it's about your life, your life, the life of the viewer, the person watching, and reminding them, when God is with you, and he is, don't let anything stop you. Hear the call. Obey the call. Ignore the rest. The numbers, the fame, the naysayers, and obey God because that -- it hasn't been perfect, Sheila, but I do see you as someone who has pursued God and tried to pursue him as faithfully as he has pursued you.

SHEILA: Thank you, Randy. You know, it's interesting. I remember talking to Chuck Swindoll one day. He showed up at something we were doing, and we were due to go speak at some big thing that I'd never done before. And I was kind of a little like, wow, this is out of my comfort zone. I said, "What do you think is the key to ministry, if you had, from all your years of experience?" And he said two words, "Show up. Show up. Show up in confidence that God goes before you, that he goes with you."

So now, I have this thing that I do. I did it before I came on here today. I do it before I go on any shows on TBN, I do it before I speak. I have this thing where like in Mark's gospel, Mark five, where you have the story of the feeding of 5000. So you've got like 5000 men. So you've got like, what, 9,000-10,000 people? The disciples are like, Send them all home. They're now hungry. They're an angry mob. Jesus said, "You feed them." They're like, hello? Hello? But then it is the question that Jesus asks. He says, "What do you have?" They're like, "Well, we've got this little boy's lunchable. That's it!" Now you've got all these women on the hillside. Trust me, you've got women, you've got snacks, people. But he's the only one that offers his. So what I think is Jesus never asks us to do everything. He just says, "What do you have?" So every time before I come out anywhere, I'll go under-catered one more time, Lord. Then that's the beauty because he takes our not-enough and blesses it and breaks it and makes it more than enough.

TAMMY: Gosh! I think there's so much fulfillment in that. There's so much fulfillment in that for me, because what it does is it removes the expectation, also, from man, from myself, from all of it. It takes the agenda out, takes the expectation out, and then you just sit and you say, Here I am. I'm showing up and I'm going to give my best. And giving my best for me, even in this seat is being prepared, studying, doing everything I can because God expects for me, I believe, a woman of excellence; be a woman of excellence, Tammy. So do everything you need to do to prepare for this women's event, for the show, whatever it is. And then after that, when you show up, let me take care of the rest.

SHEILA: Show up and trust Jesus.

RANDY: All right. This is so good. I'm going to ask you right now to show up for something. And by the way, if you'll show up today and you want *The Little Drummer Girl*, we'd love to send it to you. But there's a situation right now that the three of us and my parents as well, care deeply about. These people need some help. They need someone like you and me to show up for them. So watch this and just ask the Lord, how can I show up for these people?

Transition roll-in: [Others will Die]

ANNOUNCER: *Failed crops brought on by an over 40-year drought in parts of Angola have sent villages into a food crisis. Mothers and their children are forced to forage for anything they can find to eat. The result is a silent killer called malnutrition that creeps in sending children into a death spiral if they do not receive help in time. Isak sits at the bed of a little one suffering because of the lack of food.*

ISAK: You're looking at a child that is suffering; suffering because of malnutrition and the related diseases that come with it, like TB and others that literally steal these children's lives. I've got to tell you that I'm tired of the situation. I'm tired of watching children die in clinics like this. Child after child, mother after mother whose heart is broken because of something so simple -- the fact that children don't have enough food. It's an injustice. The fact that in the

world we live in today, with the abundance that we have, that we're not able to ensure that children like this don't suffer and die from malnutrition -- the painful death of starvation.

Please! You've got to change that. You and I have to actually take our responsibility.

We've got to do what we can do because we're able. You're able and I'm able. And together, we need to act. We can't be silent anymore. We've got to take that action. We've got to save their lives because we can. Because if we remain silent, the silent killer, malnutrition will win the battle again and again and again.

Studio appeal:

RANDY: We are able. You and I are able. I have been in a malnutrition clinic there in Angola, likely the same one that Isaac was just in, and seen a little girl who was extremely malnourished. Prayed for that little girl, and she died that night. It was too late for her. There was nothing we could do. We weren't able. But there are many more right now who need our help. Your help! You are able. My question for you is are you willing? Are we willing to sacrifice a little bit? Are we willing to take action? Are we willing to inconvenience ourselves, to even consider, to think about the horror that is going on right now? Are we willing to face that and then step up and say, I want to do something about it. I hope you are, because Tammy, we know the consequences if we aren't willing to do what we're called here to do on this earth, which is to reach out to help the poor. It's all in the Gospels.

TAMMY: When I watch something like that, the thing that sticks with me, Randy, is hearing the cries of the mom, the mothers. I've been in those clinics, and I have been around those mothers crying. I know the ache of loss. I recognize the cry when you can't change something. I stood on the edge of the water when I lost the love of my life and I couldn't change it. So I recognize that. My heart can align with these mothers that are crying.

And yet, the difference is that we could change this for them. Not one more mother has to be crying out in pain at a clinic because her little baby has just died because of the lack of food. This can be changed. And I'm telling you, when I'm in those places and I see that change is possible, there's a fire that rises up in me. There's a hope that rises up in me to come back here

and to tell you, I've seen it year after year after year, 16 years I have traveled with LIFE Outreach around the world, and I have seen the change. I've seen the impact of what mission feeding can do and how it can save not one, but another and another -- 350,000 that we're feeding every day, to millions of children that need food every day so that they don't die, and to bring hope to these moms.

So what does that look like for you and for me right now to get involved so that we won't be silent anymore? I know you have needs. I have needs, but I'm telling you that it's nothing compared to what these mothers are crying out for right now. Just a little bit of help from us right now. So for \$30, you will help feed three children right now. For \$50 you'll help feed five children. \$100, you will help feed ten children right now. For those of you that can, \$1000 will help feed 100 children right now to stop the cycle of death that has plagued these villages all around the world. We together can bring hope and we need to step in.

Let's not be silent anymore, Randy. It makes a difference when we come together. When we become that army, it takes a village to heal a village. So let's be that today.

RANDY: Yeah. And you know what? If it was my child, my grandchild, I would do anything. Why? Because of love! And that's what you do today. When you join with us in mission feeding, you express God's love to people who desperately need it. So I pray that you'll make the best gift you can. If this is your year-end gift, make it a good one. I can promise you it will save lives. We always do it in love and in the name of Jesus Christ. So go online, go to the phone. 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: Please do go online, go to the phone. Make the best gift you can! We can make a difference. You can make a difference, and I hope you'll do it today. If you want Sheila's book, Tammy, I'd love to send it to as many people as possible.

TAMMY: Yes! *A Little Drummer Girl*. Look, if you actually scan through this book to maybe page 21, you'll find a picture of what my hair looks like every morning. It's so good. You need to get this book. I love when you write a book, but I love when you write a great children's Christmas book. It's so good. Thank you for doing this. Thank you for being here. I love being with you.

SHEILA: I love being with both of you so much. Thank you.

TAMMY: That's so good. We love you and we appreciate you. Thank you for watching. We'll see you next time on Life Today.

