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Week 8

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Alexandra Hoover

“The Trap Of Offense”

MALE ANNOUNCER: The following program is sponsored by friends of LIFE Outreach International.

ANNOUNCER: Have you ever felt offended when people trample your feelings?

Alexandra Hoover explains how you can let go.

ALEXANDRA HOOVER: The moment in my life, the point of inflection really with offense came through my biological dad.

He was the first person in my life where I can remember looking at him and saying like, “Man, you betrayed me. You betrayed my mom.”

And he made choices to wound us, but it is a choice of ours to heal from it.

And that's something the Lord had to teach me.

[music]

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RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to “Life Today.” I’m Randy Robison. Great to have you here. Blynda Lane is with me. How are you?

BLYNDA LANE: Happy to be here. Thanks, Randy.

RANDY: Excited about today’s guest.

BLYNDA: Awesome, she’s an awesome—I’ve gotten to be with her a few times, she’s amazing.

RANDY: Well, and we’re glad to have her back. Alexandra Hoover is with us. She has a new book called “You Can Let Go,” and Alexandra, it’s great to have you back on the show.

ALEXANDRA: Hi, friends, it’s so good to be with you. You guys are both my friends. I feel, like, at home. It’s great.

BLYNDA: Yes, I know, we’re so glad to have you. And the book is so good.

ALEXANDRA: Thank you.

BLYNDA: So many nuggets as I was reading it. It was really good.

RANDY: Yeah, well, let's dive into that. What are you letting go of?

ALEXANDRA: Yeah, what a question. What am I not letting go of, honestly?

I think that, you know, as I wrote the message of "You Can Let Go," there was a work that the Lord began to do in my life, and it was a work of showing me two things.

One, the trap that offense had become in my life.

And it wasn't just the trap of pain or hurt, it was the trap of unhealed wounds, years of unhealed wounds.

And I began the process of allowing the Lord to release me out of this snare, to help me come out of the snare that is offense.

And it changed my life.

BLYNDA: So how do you know, then, the difference between hurt or offended? Like, how do you—what's that balance between those two?

ALEXANDRA: That's such a good question, and I think a lot of us ask that question, right?

I would say this: Hurt is something that happens to us. Like, it's inevitable. We're going to be hurt.

All of us will experience a semblance of disappointment, betrayal, or letdown. So hurt happens, right?

Offense is something we pick up. Offense is something that we engage in. Offense is something that we allow to become a trap, a snare in our lives, and ultimately, offense is something that we choose to hold ourselves hostage to.

RANDY: Interesting. You know, the Bible says to Christians, "Don't give offense," you know, as long as possible, you know, and some people are offended by the gospel, so it does happen.

But it also says not to take offense.

And when I look at that, I see a give and a take.

Are you suggesting then that offense, when it happens, it's real, we're not denying it, but do we have a choice to take it?

ALEXANDRA: Absolutely, yeah.

I mean, if you look at the word offense, right, it's *skandalon*, and if you look a little bit deeper, the translation to that is a snare.

So if you've ever—I want you to imagine a physical snare, right?

That's a trap, and it's used to capture things.

And we have an option.

We have the choice to either walk in the trap, right into it, or identify the places in our lives that could potentially become a snare.

And I do, I think it's a choice, and it's a choice that the Lord wants to reveal to us, right, that we can not make.

Like, we don't have to walk into that trap, and we can heal from our pain without it becoming offense.

BLYNDA: So you talk about recognizing these places, though. So what does that mean?

Are there symptoms?

What kind of things can we look at to say, okay, I wanna keep my heart pure and not pick up offenses, but how do I know that I am?

ALEXANDRA: Yeah, what I think is really interesting about the human condition is that, and I talk a lot about this idea of the check engine light.

Like, we all have a check engine light, and it's the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will show us and reveal things to us and guide us, and I'll use my own self as an example.

I think that there are a few symptoms, as I like to call it, that will come up.

Being critical, having a critical spirit.

When you become more critical of yourself or others, it's a great moment to say like, "Man, I wonder what's underneath that."

Another one would be insecurity.

I think there's a correlation, a connection to how rooted we are in our identity in Christ, and our ability to take offense or not.

So I would say insecurity.

Another one would be jealousy.

You begin to covet and really compare yourself to others.

I think it's a question there to say, "Man, let's get curious about where that's coming from."

And a lot of the time we've either taken offense with others or offense with God.

RANDY: Now, where did this come from?

ALEXANDRA: Yeah.

You know, I just woke up one day and I said like, “Man, I cannot wait to write a book about offense.”

BLYNDA: “I need to tell the world about offense. I don’t have it, but I need to tell the world.”

ALEXANDRA: Sure, “I’ve never walked through anything, you know, similar.”

In my book, “You Can Let Go,” I talk about how all of us have this, like, a genesis to pain, and the first chapter is called “The Pain That Shapes Us.”

And for me, the moment in my life, the point of inflection really with offense came through my biological dad.

He was the first person in my life where I can remember looking at him and saying like, “Man, you betrayed me. You betrayed my mom.”

And unbeknown to me, right, when you’re a little girl and you’re experiencing that much pain and disappointment, you don’t realize the filter in which you really begin to live from.

And I began to carry this filter and lens of offense my whole life.

And it wasn’t just that I was easily wounded or offended by others.

No, there was a deep rooted sense of, not only is God not for me, but everybody is going to betray me and hurt me.

And until the Lord began to walk with me and and really go back to my past with me and say, “I want to heal you from these things that became a point of, you know, of a trap, that became a point of offense for you.

Until we deal with that, Alex, you’re not going to be free.”

So my dad, I mean the person that was supposed to really be there for me, the one that I’m like, “Man, the Lord really had this person in my life that that he gave me,” betrayed us, and it was painful.

RANDY: Yeah, and you do talk about it.

So it wasn’t just that, you know, your parents got divorced or something.

I mean, it was a harsh situation that you guys kind of stumbled into.

ALEXANDRA: Sure, absolutely.

I mean, yeah, stumble is such a great word for it.

Just kind of that—truly stumbled into it.

You know, I'm careful with my mom's story.

As much as I get to talk about mine, my mom's story is hers to tell and I protect it as much as I can.

But a lot of it is my story too, you know, and so in it I would say that my mom and my dad had a really complicated relationship and we did walk into it, truly.

I think my mom came into the relationship hoping for the best, like I think a lot of us do with anything in our lives.

And he made choices to wound us.

He's an alcoholic, and through that, I think, made several decisions that impacted my mom which then impacted our family.

And you're right, it was a stumbling which I think a lot of the time, if I'm being honest, I think for many of us, hurt happens to us.

Like, it happened to her and it became a, you know, a hurt for me too.

But it is a choice of ours to heal from it.

And that's something the Lord had to teach me.

BLYNDA: So the question for me that when I'm thinking about the story that I read of yours, and then any other time in my life that maybe I've had the choice to carry offense, what's really hard, where I get stuck sometimes, is the idea that it almost feels like they got away with it, or like, am I supposed to be able to let go of this offense?

Am I supposed to forgive when they seem to be just fine?

That's hard.

ALEXANDRA: It's incredibly difficult.

I talk a lot about this idea, and this is really one of the foundational kind of truths that the Lord had to teach me, which is this: in order for God to heal me, to heal us, we don't need closure in the way that we think we do.

And I think the closure we're looking for is closure that can only come from God.

But the closure that we think we need is closure that we are waiting for somebody to provide, right?

So if they don't apologize, if they don't circle back, if we don't see some sort of bow kind of tied up on the situation, it is difficult to grieve or difficult to heal, I should say, from it.

The Lord had to teach me that in order for me to actually heal, I had to stop looking for people to give me what only he can.

BLYNDA: So some of that comes back to then our belief about who God is in our life, right?

Like, how can we allow God to do that kind of work in our heart if we don't actually believe he's for us, and that he wasn't a part of causing the offense and the hurt?

ALEXANDRA: A hundred percent, you know, there's this undercurrent that is underneath this entire conversation which is, not only is God so compassionate and so comforting in the midst of our pain, but also he's the God of forgiveness.

He's the God of love and comfort, and endless love and comfort and forgiveness.

And so if I know that to be true about God, that he is a God who offers forgiveness and compassion and comfort, then because of that, I can trust him to not only deal with the people who have wounded me, but also deal with my pain in a way that I could never do on my own too.

And it is about trusting him.

Do I trust him with my pain enough to heal me?

RANDY: Yeah, well, and do you trust his justice over your own sense of justice?

ALEXANDRA: Come on, that's a good one.

RANDY: You said a word on accident just now, and you corrected yourself, but I'm wondering.

I'm wondering, because part of the reason I ask about your past is because I want people to understand that the offense, the root offense, was very real.

We're not here to say that it wasn't real or, oh, it's no big deal, or you just gotta let it go, right?

You said the word "grieve," and then you corrected yourself.

ALEXANDRA: I talk so much about grief in the book.

I should have actually kept it.

RANDY: Well, and I want to keep it because I think part of the process may be grieving the pain.

You know, you wanted a relationship with your dad.

You didn't want the disruption.

ALEXANDRA: I still do.

RANDY: Is it fair?

Is it right?

Is it healthy to grieve the loss and yet not be offended by it?

BLYNDA: That's so good.

ALEXANDRA: I think that not only is it fair, I think that a part of our process of letting go is grieving, not only the things that have happened to us, but also the things that we couldn't have.

The things that we couldn't have.

And I think for me, allowing God to heal me and release me from my offense that I carried with not just my dad, I mean, there were friendship betrayals and implosions, like, we all have these moments in our lives where offense becomes a part of who we are.

And I did, I had to grieve so much and trust God with my pain, and trust him enough to walk through the process of not only identifying the pain, which is really the most difficult part of this.

We don't want to say things hurt us.

I didn't want to say that the betrayal or the, you know, the trauma really impacted me as much as it did.

And yet you're right, there is such a grieving that has to happen.

And allowing the Lord to walk with us through it is foundational to this.

BLYNDA: But I love in the book when you say that forgiveness isn't just a command, but it's an invitation.

What does that mean, that forgiveness is actually an invitation, not just a command?

ALEXANDRA: I think for many of us, we think that forgiveness is for the other person.

And I do think there is an element, right, where we get to look at somebody and say, "Because I have experienced so much compassion and grace in my life, I want you to experience the same."

But it takes a lot to get there.

Let's be honest, it takes a lot longer to get there, then to say, "The Lord is inviting me to release the person that has wounded me because they know how to heal me better than they can."

And it is an invitation, I believe, to be able to say to God, "I trust you more than I do my pain," an invitation to really actually heal outside of looking for the closure we thought we needed from the things that happened to us.

And I do think that in the process of grieving, in the process of healing, I do think we get to the end of this road and say, "I want you to experience the grace I have."

We don't always start there, which is why I think it's an invitation to start the process with the God of forgiveness.

BLYNDA: And don't you also think it's an invitation, like for me when I think about it, it gives me the opportunity to self-reflect, and to know that I am in such need of God's forgiveness.

It's like the invitation for me to say, "God, of course I want to extend forgiveness where I can, because look what you've done for me.

I'm not deserving of all the forgiveness you've offered me," and I wanna be reminded of that.

Every time I have the option to forgive or not to forgive, I wanna be thinking of him and what he did for me.

ALEXANDRA: I think that's so key because for many, I mean, this message is impossible without us rehearsing back to ourselves every day just how much we've been forgiven.

And I think that sometimes we take that too lightly.

Like, we don't think enough about the cross and we don't think enough about the grace, right, the agape love that the Lord has covered us with.

I do think, because of the exact thing that you just said, I do think that unless we are rehearsing back to ourselves, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son."

Because of that access we have, I get to forgive others, and until we get there, until we recognize how much we are loved by God, it will be very difficult to live unoffended with the world.

RANDY: So for anybody who's watching out there, and this is resonating probably in a little bit of a painful way, where do they go?

How do they start this process that you've walked through?

ALEXANDRA: I would say to them, if we were sitting over a cup of coffee or a cup of tea, that today is the day where you surrender to God the things that you thought you could heal on your own.

And I do think that it has to be a choice to go from self awareness, because I don't think we're lacking self awareness.

I think we're aware of our pain.

I think what we—the choice is in releasing it to the Lord, is in saying, "God, I want you to help me.

I'm at the end of myself."

And I think a simple way to do that, a practical way, truly is to say to God, “Lord, I give you the pain that I can no longer carry.

Help me heal from this offense.”

And I do believe that the power of prayer, and even just the release of our words to God, begins to shift something in us and invites us in to walk with him in a place where we've been too closed off to do so.

RANDY: Obviously that's something that you do by yourself.

ALEXANDRA: All the time.

RANDY: But did you ever go to someone else and say, “Would you pray with me about this?”

ALEXANDRA: Oh my gosh, there's an element of not just community, I would say covenant community when it comes to walking through offense and forgiveness, where sometimes we're not going to want to pray for ourselves.

Absolutely, I've got a handful of people in my life, my husband included.

I've gone to Mario, I mean, I talk about it in the book where I've gone to him and said, “Hey, I need you to pray for me.

It feels impossible today to release this pain point or this person to God,” and let's be honest, let's be real, right?

Like, it is difficult to reconcile what people have done to you sometimes, because sometimes it is unfathomable, I mean, the pain that they have caused, right?

And you have to give it to God.

And so yeah, I think there's an element of saying, “I can't, will you help me?”

BLYNDA: It makes me wanna just tell the audience, remind the audience, that right now, if you are listening to Alexandra and your heart is like beating out of your chest because you know you've carried an offense for too long, you know that you want to live free from the chains of offense, there are people right now waiting to pray with you.

Do not neglect the supernatural thing that happens when we come together in prayer.

So right now there's the number on the bottom of your screen.

Call right now for prayer.

They're waiting to pray with you, to partner with you, to connect with you, to show compassion towards your situation.

Don't neglect doing it.

Don't hold off for another moment.

Right now, pick up the phone and call.

RANDY: That really is an invitation, and you know, your first step a lot of times to healing.

I wanna leave with some hope, because you talk about new beginnings and for people who have just years and years, the idea of a new beginning almost sounds too good to be true.

What do you experience?

ALEXANDRA: Oh, gosh, there's a story.

The Lord had given me—there was a moment we had gone to a friend's house.

One of our friend's daughters had gotten hit in the eye with a toy car, and she had to get stitches.

It was a whole thing, and I remember the Lord saying to me that day—she had come up to me, she said, "Hey Alex, my eye really hurts," and I was like, "Yeah, well, you just got hit in the eye with a car, it's gonna hurt," right?

And I looked at her stitches and she said, "Man, the stitches still sting."

And I looked at her and I said, "Right, that means that your body's healing."

And so maybe for those who are listening today or watching this and they're saying, "Alex, it still hurts," it's going to hurt.

But that does not mean that God's not healing.

And our new beginnings with God are always, always going to happen in the middle of what we think is the greatest mess of our lives.

And so if you are walking and it is painful, remember that God's tending to you, even in the midst of your pain.

And the pain that we are feeling is a process with God of releasing, of grieving, and trusting him to do what we can.

And what hope that is.

RANDY: You know what you probably haven't noticed in our conversation here?

And most people wouldn't.

I've got a scar right here, because I had stitches from an accident, right?

Are you okay with the scars?

ALEXANDRA: What a testimony to have them.

Like that, that in and of itself is a whole other episode that we can go back to and talk through.

I don't think that we would have the testimonies if we didn't have these tests.

And those scars in our lives are the proof that God has healed us, and that God has done exactly what he said he would do.

And so not only am I okay with the scars, but I do see them as a part of the process and that has also been such a framework shift for me of like, oh right, this is how God moves.

Not only does he come in and save us, but he then takes the things that we felt too far gone, redeems them, and then makes us wounded healers from it.

Crazy.

RANDY: Yeah, every time I look in the mirror I can go, "Oh, well, God brought me through that."

You know, he was there with me.

Because it was painful.

Oh yeah, most painful thing in my life.

And I've got that scar, but you know what, God's a good God.

He's with us, he brings us through.

There are a lot of people right now who have a situation where they need some healing.

The scars are very real, the situations are very tough.

And just as we've talked to you today, through Alexandra's testimony about God wanting to be there to bring us out of our pain, to heal us, we have an opportunity to bring some other people out of pain, literal pain.

Watch this and you'll see how.

[music]

JOHN YEATTS: All week long we've been here talking to mothers that have sick children, or mothers who've lost children to waterborne illness.

But the fact is you can see right over my shoulder, this is the water source.

This is the only water source for this entire village.

That water, what you wouldn't see is the death that it contains.

[speaking foreign language]

JOHN YEATTS: These water sources are repeated in all the places that we work.

And if you were on vacation you might say how beautiful it is, but if you had to live here and get your water from this river, you would understand that it is actually a cup of death.

Would you help us prevent moms from having to come here anymore to gather the water for their families to use?

So I'm asking you, please join us so that we can bring the Water for Life to villages just like this.

RANDY: You know it is a very tough situation, a very complex situation, but the solution is so simple.

And you know, Blynda, when I look at that I go, wow, the need is great, but the resources are here.

It's within our power.

BLYNDA: It's within our power.

And it really doesn't take that much per person.

If everybody does a little, all of those gifts add up.

And I watch that and I think about the mom who isn't just walking to get clean water.

That would be—that's hard enough in those villages, if you're walking to clean water.

But she's walking to go get dirty water for her children, and I think as a mom, I think I would do anything.

I would be desperate to do anything for my children to live.

But to know that I'm going two miles, three miles to get dirty water to then maybe make them sick, is so painful to think about.

And to think that we, at our fingertips, have the resources to change that for them.

RANDY: And that's so true, and you know, when you go to these places where I've been, you see the dedication of a lot of these mothers, and some fathers, to go to provide for their children.

They'll do whatever they can, and the rivers are contaminated, you know?

Sometimes there's plenty of water, but none of it's clean.

They'll try to strain it, sometimes boil it.

Most of them don't have much to boil with.

And in some cases it's a dry season.

There's just no water around.

I've seen people try to get water out of the side of a hill where it would sort of seep into a low place, or there's a hand-dug well where contaminants can blow in, and it's really not deep enough to draw the pure water.

But we can change that.

Together you and I can go in, and this year our goal is 350 wells in 20 different nations, because the need is great.

The average well will serve 1,000 people for about 70 years, and that's because we drill the wells right.

We go in deep enough, like I said, to get that pure drinking water.

We encase it, we put a hand pump on it.

This is water for life, but it's only possible when people just like you say, "I want to do something."

And the something is the important part, because a gift of \$48 right now will, on average, provide ten people with water for life.

A gift of \$144 would provide that for 30 people.

When we look at all of the wells that we drill in a year and all the difficult places we go into and all the hard work we put in to making these things last, the average cost is about \$4800, and some of you could do that.

I just believe it's important that we do something, and Blynda, I know the results are great when we do.

BLYNDA: And it is amazing how our money can just multiply when we just do the best gift we can.

And I just wanna encourage you, go make the best gift you can, and just remember that every time you do make that gift, you change a life.

ANNOUNCER: Every day, thousands of lives are lost to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five.

Through mission Water for Life, you can give mothers hope and children a future, as we provide clean, fresh drinking water, free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year.

Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children.

A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten.

And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you "Discovering the Joy of Reading God's Word."

Whether you've read the Bible for years or are just beginning, this book invites you to experience Scripture in a fresh, more intimate way.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request "A Life of Compassion" coffee table book, capturing LIFE Outreach's heart for the world.

Each page pairs timeless Bible verses with vivid mission field photography, making God's Word visible in action.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people, or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well.

And request Life's beautiful 2026 bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

RANDY: I do hope you're calling.

Make the best gift you can.

You can request "You Can Let Go" and we would love to send it with you as you support Water for Life, because Alexandra, it's been such an important and I think hopeful program for people.

What would you say to them to end?

ALEXANDRA: Yeah, friend, if you are watching this today and you are like, "Man, that resonates with me," I want you to hear me so clearly.

There is more ahead for you out of your pain and offense.

And freedom is possible from the things that you felt like were too far gone or maybe you were stuck in.

And so today, just know that God is healing and restoring.

He's piecing you back together, and the things that you felt like, "Man, God, I'm not sure what to do with this," he's already working out for your good and his glory.

And this is just the beginning for you.

BLYNDA: Beautiful.

Thank you so much for being with us today.

ALEXANDRA: I love you guys.

What a gift.

RANDY: And thank you guys for watching.

We'll see you again next time on "Life Today."

[music]

[music]

[music]

[music]

[music]

JANELLE BRULAND: And I was just sobbing uncontrollably and it wouldn't stop.

ANNOUNCER: Janelle Bruland suffered with undiagnosed PTSD.

ANNOUNCER: "Life Today" is made possible by the supporters of LIFE Outreach International.

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