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Week 11

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Andrew Farley & John Lynch

“God Is With You”

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

ANDREW FARLEY: I gotta stop trying to love God enough and start letting him love me and when I become a receiver instead of an achiever, it flips the whole Christian life upside down and it becomes what it was always intended to be.

JOHN LYNCH: And it allows me to achieve more than I ever could in any other manner.

ANNOUNCER: Do you need to start reclaiming the radical message of grace? Next.

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RANDY ROBINSON: Welcome to “Life Today.” I’m Randy Robinson.

Blynda Lane is with me again, and if you missed the other program with today’s guest, John Lynch and Andrew Farley, go to LIFEToday.org ’cause you’ll need to see all of this because we’re talking about some, oh, some deep things but–.

BLYNDA LANE: Good things.

RANDY: Some liberating things, and I really wanna talk—I wanna, I gotta hit this today.

The idea of works and law and how that squares with grace ’cause I know this is a kind of a tension that we live in. Anyway, welcome back to the program, gentlemen.

ANDREW: Thank you for having us.

RANDY: Great to have you here.

You’ve challenged us, made us think when we talk about law, we know we don’t live under the old covenant law even though we act like it sometimes, but the new covenant is not without rules, it’s not without instructions, it’s not without commandments.

How should I look at those things that feel like rules, I should do this, I have a responsibility to do this in this sort of grace frame?

ANDREW: Yeah, I think the biggest difference, Randy, is to ask, “What if I didn’t? What if I were disobedient? What if I fail? What if I mess up?”

Because see under the law in the Old Testament law, if you failed in those commands, I mean, you had some pretty serious, even lethal consequences from God.

But let's not forget the core message of the gospel is that Jesus took the punishment and there's no punishment left and there's no condemnation for us.

So what are these commands? You know, John says, "His commands are not burdensome." He writes that in his letter and he says, "These are his commands," thankfully he tells us what they are.

He says, "To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to love others even as he has loved us."

And we know that love kinda covers a multitude of sins like I can't love you and steal your belongings. I can't love you and then cheat against you. I can't love you and take your life. I can't love you and sin against you at the same time.

Love is the big motivator. And I'm not talking about some mushy sort of Disney brand of, you know, everything's happy happy all the time.

No, no, no, I'm talking about the powerful love of Christ motivating godliness from inside so it's really not about rules, it's about letting Christ rule in your heart by faith.

JOHN: In John 14:15, I can't even tell you what it was like when I was a new Christian, scared to death, "Am I gonna keep my salvation?"

And here's this verse that says, "If you love me, you'll keep my commandments."

And Jesus sounds like a pirate who's had too much coffee. It's like, "If you loved me, I don't much think she does, but if you loved me, you'd keep my commandments, you would."

And I don't know how many, how fast, how high, but the beauty of the language in that case helps so much.

It says this, first-class conditional, meaning only this, because you love me. Because you love me, you'll find yourself keeping my commandments.

They're not burdensome, and it's who you are now. If the most real you wants to obey from the heart, not to religiously comply, but the most real you with this new Christ in your heart wants to obey from the heart.

And so if I can, even with my kids, if I can appeal to that, this is who you are, this is who you are, this is what the most real you wants to do instead of, "Hey, when are you gonna do this? Why can't you do this? What's wrong with you?"

Which only appeals to the flesh. But if I wanna appeal to their new heart, I get to woo out their new heart by calling out who they really are.

ANDREW: It reminds me of that a British program which later became a program here in the United States, "What Not to Wear."

And what they would do, the hosts would raid your closet, they would find out what does not fit and what does not look good on you, and they would get rid of it and then they'd give you a budget and you'd go shopping and by the end of the program you look amazing like a whole new wardrobe.

Well, the Scripture says, "Put off bitterness, put off envy, put on love, put on Christ."

That's not legalism, that's what to wear, that's what fits because we're saints, that's what fits.

BLYNDA: So you talk about in the book, we're talking about "Gospel Zero: Reclaiming the Radical Message of Grace" and you talk about lifeless religion that living under the umbrella of religion makes it lifeless versus this radical umbrella of grace.

When we're talking about the dancing duo that you talk about law and grace, it does sound like by that term dancing duo that there is still an enmeshing somehow of understanding how law and grace go together.

ANDREW: Yeah, well, first let me say that dancing duo is not something we're prescribing, actually the Scripture is really clear.

It says, "We're dead to the law, not under the law. Christ is the end of the law for all those who believe."

And Paul even goes as far to say, "Those who are led by the Spirit are not under the law."

So we're saying it's not a mix. I mean, we're saying if you have 99% grace and 1% law you've ruined it.

And that's the whole point. So we're gonna have to trust Jesus.

I'm just bringing it back to that for everybody because, you know, I can't just trust him with heaven, I gotta trust him with the words that are coming out of my mouth, I gotta trust him with the decisions I'm making.

You know, Jesus rose from the dead and he lives in us so what if that, what if Jesus risen from the dead living in you is the only reason you behave? That is walking by the Spirit.

RANDY: Okay John, I gotta ask you, you haven't always believed this or lived like this, right? What has this done? How has this changed the way you see God or yourself or others?

JOHN: I came to him so radically at age 27. Within months I thought I must have disappointed him or something or did something wrong 'cause I didn't feel that feeling again.

And so I just went on a pursuit of I'm gonna be the best Christian who's ever lived, I'm gonna sell out so that I never don't have that feeling again.

All the way into the pastorate, all the way into me preaching.

And someone gave me a book by Brennan Manning and someone gave me some messages on grace and I think my wife Stacey would say, "You're kinder, you're more playful, you're more enjoyable being around, but most of all, you're not second guessing yourself all the time. You know who you are."

And for this old guy, that's a remarkable statement 'cause that was not always so.

So I get to see Jesus as there's nobody on this planet he loves more than me. And I get to rest in that.

Isn't that incredible? There's nobody on this planet that he loves more than me.

So I get to play and enjoy, and more than anything, instead of proving my love to him, I'm letting him love me.

And that's always been his endgame. Would you let me hang out and play and love you instead of trying to perform enough that you love me enough.

That's been wild in me, and so it's been passed on to my kids now, they believed it, they bought it.

Caleb's pastoring my old church because he believed it, and this trust that you talked about, that is the key, that is so key, is that we have to say, "I have no other way to live now. I can't go back. I've seen too much."

RANDY: Is there anyone God loves less than you? 'Cause you say, you know, God, you know, there's no, right? That's the other side of that.

ANDREW: Yeah, so for everyone watching right now, you might think, "Well, this gospel is great for those folks," or "Oh, he's a preacher" or that sort of thought might creep in.

We gotta remember, this is not about us and our resumes or what we've done.

This is about being inspired and motivated by the deep and high and long love of Christ, I mean that's what Paul says, right? Be filled with the Spirit.

We wonder what that is. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

Well, two chapters earlier in the same letter he says, "Get to know the ginormous love of Christ and you will be filled to the measure of the fullness of God. Now, that's pretty serious.

Like that tells me I gotta stop trying to love God enough and start letting him love me and be impressed with the size of his love and when I become a receiver instead of an achiever, it flips the whole Christian life upside down and it becomes what it was always intended to be.

JOHN: And it allows me to achieve more than I ever could in any other manner.

When Paul says, "I am what I am, but by grace." I am what I am.

And by his grace I worked harder than all the rest of them, not me, but his grace. Isn't that crazy good?

BLYNDA: So what it really makes me think about is in John 15:5 he says, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If I remain in you and you remain in me you will bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing."

It makes me think that this whole thing about grace is how close do we stay to the Father, how close do we stay to Jesus because that's really the only way that we will then be able to walk out this grace filled life. Is that right?

ANDREW: Yeah, so here's what I would say. I mean, what a pleasure, what an honor to be in Christ and we talk about closeness, but I think we're really talking about growing and learning.

We're not actually inching closer because we are one spirit with the Lord.

So we Christians, we use a lot of language out there and I grew up with it. In the Bible Belt there's a lot of things in the Bible Belt that aren't in the Bible and I had to learn that the hard way.

And one of those things is man if I just do enough quiet times, man if I just study the word enough, if I just go to church enough, I will get closer to God.

And what I learned is the very verses you're talking about. Wait a minute, I got a vine branches intimacy.

That word abide means live. I don't abide in Adam. I abide in Christ.

I'm not a branch that's gonna be burned. I'm a branch in the vine.

I live in Christ and now in him I'm gonna learn and I'm gonna grow, even as I'm perfectly one with him I'm still learning and growing.

But it's not like, "Oh my goodness he's just around the corner. If I could do enough I could get to him. And I gotta try to remain I gotta work hard to get close and stay."

It's him and me and me and him, the verse that I wrote in my son's yearbook that I want him to know for the rest of his life is 1 Corinthians chapter 6. It says "Anyone who has joined himself to the Lord is one spirit with him."

That is as close as you can get.

RANDY: Okay, I have a question. James says, "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." Doesn't that imply some distance, some separation?

ANDREW: So we forgot one word in there and I know you know that, but we forgot "Draw near you sinners, cleanse your hands, you sinners," and it was written, it says chapter 1 verse 1, "To the tribes of Israel scattered," and it's evangelistic.

And he's saying if you're not yet in Christ draw near to him you will find God in Messiah Jesus.

Come to Jesus you scattered tribes of Israel, we want you to be in Christ.

And so we are never referred to as sinners, now that we're in Christ we're saints.

We did draw near, we sought and we found, we knocked and the door was opened.

We were hungry and now we've been filled and Jesus says, "You will no longer hunger or thirst because you've been filled."

So sinner and saint, there's a difference and it's important when we read Scripture.

RANDY: Well, context, I mean, you're bringing context into it and we put a lot of sermons don't like that, you know, we nitpick, all right.

JOHN: I was thinking just as you were speaking before. What change would it make if we actually believed what it says in John 15:9.

"As my Father has loved me so also I love you, to the," this is Jesus talking, "to the exact extent that my Father loves me."

And that's some pretty significant love. So also I love you and you and you and you and you.

Question his taste, but don't question his character. He said that's true about me.

So how would I live if I knew that was true, that I am loved as much as his father loves him.

Oh my, I would stop performing. I would stop grinding. I would stop striving. I would stop making this faith so miserable.

I would get to just relax and trust that he is doing this work in me from the inside out.

BLYNDA: I think somebody watching right now, do you have some, I think they're hearing this and they're saying, "Okay, this is blowing my mind, but I need more."

Can you directly speak to the person who is needing to hear this message so clearly.

ANDREW: Yeah, I would say this that first of all you need to know you're not an obstacle to God, you are his instrument, you're his child.

He embraces you. He's not trying to replace you, he wants to embrace you and there is a difference.

He's not trying to get rid of you. He invited you in.

You get to be yourself and express Jesus at the exact same time.

That's what it means to have a new identity. It's not just about feeling good or having self esteem now, it's about recognizing you're a perfect fit with Christ.

That vine branches relationship is a gift. There is nothing special about us here on this program, we're not special Christians.

We're all in Christ. You're in Christ if you've received him.

Everybody has the honor and privilege of being that close, that oneness with Jesus is yours right now.

RANDY: John, what would you say to someone who may be hearing this and is having to rethink some of what they learned like you have.

JOHN: You've heard a lot today and in the last time you got to hear the show, and it's overwhelming because we've heard differently.

Some of you are watching and you feel this shame and you don't know how to escape it.

Guilt says you've done something wrong, shame says there is something uniquely and irrevocably and irreparably wrong with who you are in your very core of your being, and no matter what you do you'll never change it.

And what if you could hear Jesus saying, "I made you. I wanted you on this planet before the world began. I'm not disgusted. I'm not ashamed. I shed blood, purchased my ability to be able to love you with everything in me, and nothing, not even you can stop me."

So you can relax, rest, and walk out and do the good works of Jesus in the safety of knowing how loved you are.

RANDY: That's good. Why do you call this book "Gospel Zero?"

ANDREW: Getting back to ground zero, starting with the foundation, rebuilding.

You know my birthday is October 31 and that is also coincidentally the birthday of the Protestant Reformation.

When a gentleman many hundreds of years ago nailed 95 theses to a door and said, "Hey, we need to fix a whole lot of things around here."

And in this book "Gospel Zero" we're saying maybe there's a little more fixing to be done, you know, a little bit more change in how good we believe God is, how forgiving we believe we are, and what it means to really be new and to be a child of God, one with Jesus, like we've got a gospel, but it's a whole lot more powerful than we might imagine.

JOHN: I think as you read each chapter, you see that we go after the Pharisee and really just spare him nothing, spare her nothing, but for the one trying, as you said, this one scared to death but wanting to move forward, we're trying to give life and hope and possibility and see that it's doable and that such as us are living it.

BLYNDA: And it does that. It does that. May I never be found the Pharisee. May I never be.

RANDY: Yeah, I want people to get this.

BLYNDA: Yeah, it's so great.

RANDY: It is and it's something you're gonna have to work through, but this is how we'd like you to get it 'cause we would love to send "Gospel Zero" to you when you participate in an outreach that is expressing what God's given to us that unearned grace that love, that just pure love.

We do it through our mission outreaches. We want you to be a part of it because people are in desperate need.

So watch this and pray about how you can be involved.

ANNOUNCER: One hundred hours. On average, that's how long the human body can survive without water.

In the face of death by dehydration, water like this is the only choice for many.

Recently, while in East Africa, we spoke with Fatina, a mother personally impacted by this crisis.

FATINA: [speaking in foreign language]

ANNOUNCER: Unclean water is a common hardship throughout the world. And when something is common, it's easy to get used to.

But should losing a child ever be something we get used to?

Contaminated water has already taken Fatina's son. In Cambodia, Samnang lost his daughter to a waterborne illness.

Miriam Venegis from Central America stands by the grave of her five month old baby boy who died from drinking contaminated water.

It came from this river, the only source Miriam has available to her. His death still haunts Miriam to this day, knowing clean water could have prevented it.

For years, you've helped Life Outreach provide clean water in thousands of areas across the globe.

Right now, mothers like Fatina also need clean water in their villages before tragedy strikes again.

FATINA: [speaking in foreign language]

RANDY: I can't tell you how difficult it is to sit with a mother who has lost a child, to hear the wailing and the weeping, or to see a child who is wasting away because of some waterborne disease.

I couldn't do it if I didn't know that I had the ability to come back and talk to you and that you would do something that you would reach out in love and say, "We're gonna provide clean water for those people."

That's my heart. I believe it's the heart of God, and I believe it's the heart of so many of you watching right now.

And that's why I invite you in to save a life, to share the love of God with people. In word and in deed we do preach the gospel to them, but we demonstrate it as well.

So I'm asking you right now to join us in Water for Life, go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can.

What you do today will have ramifications far beyond what you can see, I think into eternity.

And so as we wrap up this campaign on the air, this is the last week we'll be talking about it during this campaign, we're gonna continue year round drilling.

I hope we surpass our goal of 350 water wells in the 20 nations where we work. We can only do it with your support.

Blynda, I love what we do. I hate the pain that people go through. But you know, this is our calling, this is what we can do.

BLYNDA: It's both sobering and yet exciting that we get to partner with the Lord and help save lives.

It's not something small that you're doing. When you decide to give a gift, you are saving a life. You are changing lives.

You saw that mom say, "I don't ever want any of my other children, I don't want them to die."

And you get to do that, you get to be a part of saving a family.

And I just, it's sobering because the need feels so big, but yet it's also precious that we know that every time we give, we are making a difference.

RANDY: Oh, absolutely. You know, proverbs says that when you are generous to the poor, you lend to the Lord.

Well if God doesn't need us to lend to him. Why is that language used?

It's because we enter into a contract that God says, "I wanna make with you. I wanna repay you for your good deed."

And that makes me very excited.

And so I want you right now if you can, pray first. Don't do anything out of guilt or out of just the emotion and the need.

It's very real. That's why we show it to you, but just do it out of obedience, do it out of love.

A gift right now \$48 will provide clean drinking water for ten people. \$144 will provide that for 30 people.

Maybe you can drill an entire well with a gift of \$4800. Whatever God puts on your heart, go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. You will be saving a life today.

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.

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

RANDY: You really can bless someone. You can save a life today.

Be a part of this beautiful mission outreach. It's urgent, it's needed, and it's a glorious thing 'cause we do it in the name of Jesus.

I appreciate you guys being here. Request "Gospel Zero" with your gift today. We'd love to send it to you and I wanna thank both of you guys for being here. It's so good.

JOHN: What a privilege.

RANDY: JohnLynchSpeaks.com. AndrewFarley.org as well as BibleQuestions.com. More resources. Appreciate you guys.

ANDREW: Thank you.

RANDY: You've been blessed.

BLYNDA: It's been awesome.

RANDY: t's been awesome.

BLYNDA: I'm gonna have to watch and rewatch this episode, so it's great, thank you.

RANDY: And come back again. We've got more to bless you here on Life Today.

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JORDAN RUBEN: Money doesn't grow on trees, but medicine does.

ANNOUNCER: Jordan Ruben turns ancient biblical wisdom into modern practical application for healing.

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