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Week 15

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Benny Tate

"You Have Influence"

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

BENNY TATE: Let me tell you something, there's power in somebody believing in you, and if we would let one another know we're proud of each other, maybe we wouldn't struggle with pride the way we do.

Just having somebody to believe in you, somebody to say you can do it, somebody to give you that push, just give you that encouragement.

The Bible says but exhort one another daily, because we all need it.

ANNOUNCER: Benny Tate, next.

[music]

RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today," I'm Randy Robinson. This is Blynda Lane, and we are back with a wonderful guest. We know that you love him.

Benny Tate is with us, and if you missed the other program with Benny, after this is over, check out LifeToday.org and you can catch up on that.

Benny, welcome back.

BENNY: Hey, I'm so excited to be back. Always look forward to coming to "Life Today."

BLYNDA LANE: We're so happy to have you. We touched in the last program on your book, "Yes You Can," but we wanna dive a little bit more into it.

In the first program you spoke about a stepfather, and you were speaking really from the sense of how important words are and how we get no-s a lot of in our life, especially in our younger years, and you had a stepfather that really maybe spoke some harsher no-s to you, but that's not where the story ends, that's actually just more where it began.

Tell us about the journey to getting to the yes you can belief and what who influenced your life there?

BENNY: Well, after I became a Christian, after a little while I started preaching. Now I was, listen, I was just as raw as could be. I was preaching messages out of the book of Spasm. I didn't know it was Psalms.

One night a lady asked me who the who the epistles were. I said I think they were the apostles' wives. I mean, I was just as raw as could be, but I started preaching.

And Blynda, I started preaching on street corners. I started preaching in rescue missions, because God is not looking for ability, he's looking for availability. Somebody said I'm praying for God to use me. no, you just get usable, and God will wear you out, because God has no plan B. We are the plan, there is no plan B.

So, I just started preaching, and my mother became a Christian, and she started dating a man. Later she married him, he became my stepfather. His name was Don Mason, and I'd had a stepfather who literally told me that I was ignorant.

I remember a time in my life when my mother--I had a sister and a stepbrother and sister she took us all to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. She said we were going to get physicals, three of the four were going to get physicals. I was going to get a mental evaluation, because I couldn't learn, couldn't retain. Remember, I was told I was ignorant, I was told I was stupid, so I just couldn't learn.

So I got a new stepfather. I was almost grown, and he said, "What are you gonna do with your life?" And I said, "Well, I'm working as a janitor. I make \$3.35 an hour, and I'm preaching. I'm preaching at rescue missions."

He said, "I've heard you preach. You need to get in Bible college." I said, "No, no." I said, "I barely got through school, I wasn't smart." He said, "You're smart." He said, "You enroll in Bible college." He said, "Every degree that you complete, I'll pay for."

Only say this, Randy, to give God the honor and the glory. I went through an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, a master's, and a doctorate. And I've made nothing but straight A-s.

Let me tell you something, there's power in somebody believing in you. There's power in somebody believing in you, and we need to believe in people before they accomplish anything.

Did you ever think about this? God looked down from heaven, Jesus was getting baptized, and he looks down from heaven and he says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well-pleased."

Now, wait, he had never healed anybody, he had never walked on the water, he had never raised anybody from the dead, but he looked down, and I challenge fathers today, Blynda, I would challenge, Randy, one of the most powerful things that you can say to somebody, I'm proud of you.

And if we would let one another know we're proud of each other, maybe we wouldn't struggle with pride the way we do. Just having somebody to believe in you, somebody to say you can do it, somebody to give you that push, just give you that encouragement. The Bible says but exhort one another daily, because we all need it.

RANDY: Yeah, I like your your Southern use of the word pride, because what you mean is affirmation.

BENNY: It's exactly right.

RANDY: Acceptance, and you know, that's what God did with Jesus and that's what he does with us.

BENNY: It's exactly right.

BLYNDA: But it almost feels like what you're saying, I've never thought of it this way, that maybe why man becomes so prideful in their own mind is because nobody's ever told them.

RANDY: They're looking for it, that self-affirmation, too, yeah.

BENNY: That's exactly right. They desperately need it. Look here, I preach on Sunday morning, thousands of people will come out the door, but when my wife says to me, "Benny, you did good," just makes me wanna charge hell with a water pistol.

I mean, he just, you know, and so, hey, hey, everybody responds to praises and raises, and, we all need affirmation.

RANDY: Alright, how did that lead to the book, "Yes You Can"? Because that's affirmation in the title right there.

BENNY: Yes, it is. I was studying the book of Nehemiah, and I looked at Nehemiah, and I realized, I thought, you know, he wasn't a prophet, he wasn't a priest, he was a cupbearer. Actually what he would do, he would take the king's wine, if there was poison in the wine, he would die rather than the king.

You know what it said to me, Randy, it said that Nehemiah the cupbearer was expendable. He was expendable. He was expendable to everybody but God.

And then I looked at this man who wasn't a prophet, he wasn't a priest, and how in 52 days he did this great accomplishment. They rebuilt the walls around the city of Jerusalem, the

walls that are literally wide enough to drive an automobile on in 52 days. Fortune 500 companies today study the book of Nehemiah, because there's so many steps to success there.

But I found five levels of leadership, something I'd never seen before. First of all, when I looked at Nehemiah, I saw inward leadership. When Nehemiah's brother told him what was going on back home, Randy, in the city, the walls were down, for four months before he even addressed the Persian king, he prayed and fasted.

The word for inward leadership that I talk about in this book is discipline. Discipline is the gift that we give ourselves. What begins in your life, what begins by desire, has to be maintained by discipline.

Four months, he just prayed, and what I challenge people to do in the book, the most difficult person I've been leading now for 45 years, the most difficult person I've ever led is Benny Tate, the most difficult person. The person I've had the most trouble with is myself.

And I talk to people about inward leadership. I believe a leader stands out in a crowd, because the leader has learned how to be alone without the crowd. He's learned he's got inward leadership, right? He's developing, he's growing inward.

Sometimes a leader will say to me, I've got 30 years of experience, but I'll spend time with him, he doesn't have 30 years of experience, he's got 1 year of experience 30 times. So the first level of leadership I start with, I start with that inward leadership, getting right with yourself. Love thy neighbor as thyself. We gotta get right with ourselves.

BLYNDA: Because without it being right, you can't really move on to the other levels.

RANDY: Do I have you right? And when you say 4 months of prayer and then 52 days to accomplish, that's a better than 2 to 1 ratio of prayer time to go time.

BENNY: That's exactly right.

RANDY: Do you know anybody-- I got that backwards, you know? I mean, my prayer time to my due time, it's like I pray a little and work a lot to get something done, and I think maybe what I'm hearing from you is that I got that a little bit on the wrong side.

BENNY: Randy, before Pentecost, he told them to go to Jerusalem and wait for ten days, do nothing but pray, don't assimilate, no need of having strategic meetings, no need of having-- just go and pray. They went and they prayed for ten days. They preached for 10 minutes and saw 3,000 saved.

RANDY: Yeah, right?

BENNY: What we're doing, we're preaching for ten days and praying for ten minutes and not seeing many people saved. The average full-time Christian worker in America spends

four minutes a day in devotion time with God, four minutes a day. And if God's not doing something in us, certainly he can't do something through us.

RANDY: Well, that's a good place to start.

BENNY: It's a good place to start.

BLYNDA: So, okay, so thinking about more of the leadership qualities, because where I find a lot of interest is I'm married to a really strong leader, so I look at him, and I think about what leadership looks like. When I reflect on myself, I don't always see strong leader. I see somebody devoted to the Lord, somebody who wants to lead their family, their children, but what would you say to the person who hasn't identified themselves as a strong leader? Would you still say everyone is a leader?

BENNY: Yes, and I would take them to the second level of leadership. The second level of leadership is lateral leadership. You say, well, Pastor Benny, in the organizational chart, I'm not high, I'm low in the organizational chart. Or maybe we have a lateral positions, we're the same in the organization, what is the word there? The word there is serve.

What I would say to our listeners today, if you say I'm not this strong leader, but I wanna have influence, here's what I would challenge you to do. In your organization, you start serving. You just start serving, because always remember if serving is beneath you, leading will always be above you.

If you just start serving, before long, what's going to happen, people are gonna say you can depend on Blynda. Well, Blynda's there when the going gets hard. Boy, when there's a task to do, Blynda's there. When we're going through a difficult time, she shows up. And see, it's lateral leadership.

God showed me something in the upper room. I was in the upper room, and I started thinking about this is where Jesus came in, and he took a basin and towel and washed the disciples' feet, and then I realized all 12 of those walked past the basins and towels.

And it was like God said to me, yes, because the world today is into titles, but Jesus was into towels, and he said to me, Blynda and Randy, there's basins and towels in every relationship, you've just got to look for them. So, so how do you lead laterally? You lead laterally through serving other people.

Jesus said let the greatest among you be your servant, and Martin Luther King Jr. said any man or woman can be great, because any man or woman can serve.

RANDY: That's not where most of us start when we want to be leaders, but that's the biblical way. There's just no way around it. So what do you do?

I know a lot of good people who have done their best to be servant leaders, they've tried to cultivate, you know, the things in their lives that scripture tells us to cultivate, and then something comes along and life just hits 'em hard.

You know, we talked about in the last program, you wanted to have children, never were able to, you know, you expect that miracle. I have a license plate frame that says expect a miracle, because that was, you know, Oral Roberts University, expect a miracle, and I believe in that posture, but I've also lost a sister to cancer.

I've seen other disappointments, and I know people have been through hard times. What do you say to that person that's hitting that wall and life is just hard, and they're feeling a little bit discouraged?

What I would say to that person is God still has a plan for your life. God still has a purpose. I think many times we forget.

Paul becomes a Christian, and in Acts chapter 9 verses 14, the Bible says this, it says-- Jesus said this, he said Paul is a chosen vessel. He's a chosen vessel. What a high honor. He said he's a chosen vessel to bear my name unto the Gentiles, unto kings, unto the children of Israel. And then verse 15 says, "For I will show him the many things that he must suffer for my name's sake."

BENNY: This is what I've learned, Randy, about life. And Randy, I know what it is to walk through difficult times. I've had great pain. I can say to our listeners today, I want them to know I identify with great pain.

A.W. Tozer said, "I doubt that God can bless a man or woman greatly until he first hurts them deeply." And here's what I would say even to that preacher, that pastor, that Christian worker that's struggling, the greater the struggle, the greater the anointing.

John the Baptist, Jesus said there was not a greater than he. There's not a greater than he. But John got thrown in prison, and Blynda, he started saying, "Is he really the Christ? Or should we look for another?" And Jesus sent word to him, "John, blessed is he that's not offended in me." That you're just going to trust me. You're gonna trust me though things are hard. Though things are difficult, you're gonna trust me.

And so I would say to the listeners today, Randy, things don't come to stay, things come to pass. You know, Randy, I thought about those Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. You say, somebody says, well, why didn't God deliver them out of the fire? He delivered them in the fire.

Randy, I read that scripture that king looked down, and you know the story, they came out of the fire, their clothes are not even smelling like smoke. Well, you can't even go in the Waffle House and that happen, amen? They come out there, and the king looks down in the fire, and he said, "I thought we cast three men, I see a fourth one." I see a fourth one.

Now, you know, Randy, read the scripture close. It never says that the three Hebrews saw the fourth man. It never says, read it closely. It never says they saw the fourth man. But the fourth man was with them, and today there may be some people that feel like God's a million miles away, but I want them to know God's with you, because God's not a feeling, God's a fact.

Maybe we have to walk through difficult times. Maybe even today, Blynda, I'm walking through a very difficult time, because God wants to show somebody the fourth man, and how I respond really does make a difference.

RANDY: And how you go into it, you know? Because you know what they said, our God can deliver us, we believe he will, but even if he doesn't, it's whatever happens, I know where my faith is, because they knew that that wasn't the end.

You know, someone talked to me about why did Jesus have to suffer so brutally on a cross and then die? And I said, you know, there's a lot of great theological answers, but for me I go, you know what? I think Jesus was saying two things, I understand suffering, okay? I'm there, I'll walk through you with it, and then your greatest fear, which is death, watch me conquer it.

BENNY: Amen. **RANDY:** It's not the end.

BLYNDA: It's not the end. **BENNY:** Amen.

RANDY: Yeah, so I'm with you.

BLYNDA: But it's hard sometimes in that practical to walk out that trust. Do you have a final encouragement to the viewer about how to walk out that trust, that surrender when they really find themselves questioning how are they in this place when God feels so distant?

BENNY: What I would say to them, I would say to them God's word, I would say trust the promises of God. I would say to our listeners, Blynda, we don't live our lives based on explanations, we live our lives based on the promises of God.

So you cling to those promises, you cling to the promise that God is--we went through the fire, we went through the water, but the Lord brought us out. You just--many times, Blynda, I've gone to sleep at night holding my Bible. You say, Pastor, you're a nut. Well, I'm screwed on the right boat, amen?

I've gone to sleep at night holding my Bible, just leaning into the promises of God, because you can't always explain. Apologetics won't always give the answer, academics won't always give the answer, we have to trust God and God's sovereignty, that God's going to see us through.

RANDY: I've got a promise for people right now, because we're working on a project that's gonna need your involvement, and that promise, you've probably heard me say comes out of Proverbs, it's if you're generous to the poor, you lend to God, and he will repay you.

I'd like to be repaid by God, and I know that's probably not financial, it's probably ways that money can't even buy, but the point is this, God promises to honor your gift to those who are in need. He loves a cheerful giver. Where we've got an opportunity, we're gonna ask you to give. We're gonna ask you to join with us in sharing his life, his love, and his healing with people desperately in need. Watch this, and you'll see how you can be a part.

ANNOUNCER: For some children, life begins in the shadows with challenges most people will never have to face. Born with physical disabilities, their days are filled with pain, limitation, and silence, not because they lack courage, it's because their body stands in the way of their dreams. But suffering does not always have to be the end of their story.

Life Outreach's medical mission partners provide hope in the form of corrective surgeries. Skilled hands of surgeons reconstruct twisted limbs, allowing a child to walk normally for the first time in their life. A repaired cleft lip or cleft palate restores a smile that never existed. Prayer and a caring, Christ-centered staff is important to these children's well-being and their physical restoration.

MALE: So, let's pray.

[speaking foreign language]

ANNOUNCER: This is what it looks like when God uses willing hands to bring healing, restoration, and hope. And for the countless numbers of children still waiting for corrective surgery, it will take willing, compassionate people to support this medical mission. Be a part of restoring and renewing hope for precious children like these.

RANDY: Ah, look at that smile. Don't you love those smiles? You know, they go--

BLYNDA: The stories never get old. I know, you see an embarrassment in the deformity, if I can use that word, to a smile, you know.

BLYNDA: I know, it's amazing to--the transformational, the before/after that you see, the insecurity that turns into confidence, you know? The maybe despair that turns into joy and hope, it's just so beautiful to see, and these are people who have been affected by the generous giving of our--of the people watching, but also we're in such need. Like, the need is now greater than what we have.

RANDY: You know, there's an interesting thing in a lot of those cultures in Africa, a lot of them are very superstitious, they have different non-biblical beliefs, and one of them is that those children who have the bowed legs or maybe the cleft lip or whatever it is, that they are cursed.

And you know what we say, the before and after? We say, no, you are blessed, and that's only because of Christ, and we preach in a gentle and appropriate way to everyone who comes through there--we just love them in Jesus's name.

And you know what it costs them to have these surgeries that they can't afford? Costs them nothing, you know why? Because of people just like you. Right now we have the opportunity to have more before and after stories, to create more smiles, to have more children going from that limp to a run if you will participate.

It costs \$600,000 to renovate and to expand that facility right there, because there's a long, long waiting list. Children come from all over, not just Zimbabwe, but many countries around there, they need help. And our doctors are dedicated. They are doing as much as they can. Our mission partners on the ground are just the best.

They need us to come alongside them, not literally to go live in Zimbabwe, though, you know, if God's calling you, go. They just need us to support them by expanding the facilities, by offering more surgeries at no cost, and that's why we're coming to you today.

This is a what we call a one-time project. It's not like the ongoing things with Mission Feeding. This is a one-time thing. Can you jump in and give 126, 1,026, maybe 100,000, whatever God has enabled you to do, whatever he's put in your hands, are you willing to give that back and say yes, I wanna support those people in the field, I wanna share God's love and life with people who need to hear the gospel and to experience it?

I believe we can do it, but I know we can only do it with your help, so I would invite you into this wonderful work, this wonderful expression of God's love. Go online, go to the phone, I say make the best gift you can, but you know, the best gift is the one made out of a cheerful heart and out of obedience. If that's you, join us.

ANNOUNCER: Many children in Africa are born with severe deformities or suffer life-altering injuries, conditions like club feet, windswept legs, and untreated fractures force them to live in pain because help is out of reach. But you can offer healing today.

Our mission partner in Zimbabwe runs a children's hospital now at capacity and in urgent need of renovation and expansion. With a \$600,000 goal and only a short period of time to raise the necessary funds, your best gift today helps children receive the surgical care they need at no cost to the families. Together we can heal precious lives and reveal the love of Jesus.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you the "Global Impact of Life" Journal, featuring inspiring photos from Life's outreaches. This beautiful journal is a reminder that your prayers and partnership are making a global difference.

With your gift of \$126 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 \$1,026 to help with the expansion of operating rooms so children are no longer turned away and request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd. Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

RANDY: I do hope you're going online or go to the phone making the best gift you can. And by the way, if you would request "Yes You Can" by Benny Tate, we'd love to send it to you, because we know it will encourage you.

And Benny, I wanna thank you, because for years now, you've been a supporter of our outreaches. Why do you support those?

BENNY: Because I believe in what you're doing. John Wesley said the world is my parish. The world is my parish. You all are making a difference in the world. When you do it to the least of these you've done it unto me, and so I just wanna be a part.

I feel like I have been blessed because of our financial support of what "Life Today" is doing, and I'm gonna continue.

RANDY: As someone who's been there in the field and seen the difference that it makes, I wanna thank you personally. And I actually wanna thank everyone who has supported and continues to support, and for those of you who have not, I do hope you'll come on board.

Yes you can, Benny would say, and thank you for being here. I've been blessed, you've been blessed, Blynda?

BLYNDA: It's been a great, great time.

RANDY: If you missed the other program with Benny Tate, go to LifeToday.org and come back. We'll see you next time on "Life Today."

[music]

CHAD PRATHER: Whether it was the bottom of a bottle of alcohol or the bottom of a bag of drugs, wherever I could try to find that reality was where I was looking.

ANNOUNCER: Chad Prather, next week.

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