

**6/8/2026**

*Week 24*

*Randy Robison & Blynda Lane*

*Courtney Pray Duke*

*"Shattered By Loss"*

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

**COURTNEY PRAY DUKE:** And I got a phone call that Andrew had been in an accident and shortly after that discovered that he didn't make it.

And so the love of my life had passed away and I was 29 years old with 3 kids, now widowed, and just living a life that was completely shattered.

**ANNOUNCER:** How God met Courtney Pray Duke in the midst of unimaginable pain.

Next on "Life Today."



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**RANDY ROBISON:** Welcome to "Life Today." I'm Randy Robinson. Blynda Lane, how are you?

**BLYNDA LANE:** I'm good. I am really good. It's really good to be here.

**RANDY:** It's good to be here. And you know, this is gonna be one of those programs where you're gonna hear a story that's kind of gonna break your heart a little bit. But there's a point to it.

And so, I don't know, what did you think when we booked this?

**BLYNDA:** So this is--I love that you said that because when I first heard her story, because I'm married and I have kids, I thought literally this is my worst nightmare. Like this is--and then you keep reading and you find out how much hope there is, how much goodness has come out of it.

And it does not distract or take away about the pain. And it's just such a great story of what God can do. So I'm excited that she's here.

**RANDY:** And me too. And you know the title of our guest book is "And She Got Up." And we're gonna tell you where that came from, but our guest is Courtney Pray Duke.

Courtney, welcome to Life Today.

**BLYNDA:** Thank you for joining us, Courtney.

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

**RANDY:** So this is tough, and you know, I know you've told it many times, sort of your story. But if you wouldn't mind going back and just so our audience, those who have not heard your story can hear it?

I think it'll set the stage for what Blynda and I are referring to.

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, well, I married my childhood sweetheart. And we ended up going into the ministry together. He was a worship pastor. We had three beautiful babies, and we had been married over a decade.

And I got a phone call after Andrew had been out on a bike ride. He was an avid cyclist on the side and we were just getting ready for the holidays. It was the day before Thanksgiving, a beautiful blue sky day.

And I got a phone call that Andrew had been in an accident and shortly after that discovered that he didn't make it. And so the love of my life had passed away and I was 29 years old with 3 kids, now widowed, and just living a life that was completely shattered. Looked nothing like, you know, those childhood dreams that we have as little girls, it looked nothing like the life that I signed up for. But it was in that, the shattering, that the Lord was so faithful to meet us in those darkest moments.

**RANDY:** So back up just a little bit because you grew up in the church, is that right?

**COURTNEY:** I did.

**RANDY:** And when did you and Andrew first meet? Do you remember?

**COURTNEY:** I was in the third grade. He was in the fourth grade.

**BLYNDA:** Third?

**COURTNEY:** Third grade.

**BLYNDA:** Oh my goodness, truly love of your life. It's all you knew.

**COURTNEY:** It's all I knew, and we were just best friends and spent, you know, over half of our lives together. And yep, we grew up in the church, we grew up leading worship together.

**RANDY:** And and see, and that's another thing where you guys weren't like the rebellious wild kids or--you're, like, you were model church kids in a sense, right?

**COURTNEY:** I mean, yes and no. I feel like we just--the call of God was on our lives at an early age. And now looking back I see, you know, I see why we were kind of just stepping into this.

We knew early on we were supposed to get married. We knew early on we were supposed to walk out this calling and this mission together. And I can't say, you know, that that that's true for all of us. However, we just said yes to God, and we wanted to follow him no matter what.

**BLYNDA:** But I think one thing that you're making me think by your question, Randy, is it's one of the great mysteries of the Christian walk that you could do everything right. Your heart was to follow the Lord. You were both in ministry. You were serving him. You were raising kids in a godly home.

That isn't a formula normally in our human minds that equals having to go through such suffering and tragedy. So how did you reconcile walking through something so tragic with God being good and faithful and that maybe the feeling that you didn't deserve this story?

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, I think many of us have found ourselves in life in that place of a wrestle. And there was, when I got that phone call, I mean, there's a temptation to go, God, where are you? This isn't what we signed up for.

You know, I gave you my whole life, you know, but out of his kindness and his mercy, you know, I really do feel like he prepared me. And I write about it a little bit in the book how three months before Andrew died I felt there was this call, this encounter I had with the Lord where I would just sit in my bed every morning with my hands in the air and say, God, I surrender. I don't know what it is you're doing, but I surrender.

And again you can read more about it. So when I got that phone call, I put the pieces together to the very exact day three months later. And I remember just being like, God, really? You picked the wrong girl. You picked the wrong girl. And he's like, "I've got you." And I really got to taste and see that the Lord is good. And so it really was the fire where my faith grew legs.

And so, you know, growing up in the church and loving Jesus for all of my life, really, was it something that I ever thought I would walk through? No, but was it something that I encountered the character of God? And the most real version of everything I had ever read about in the Bible, everything I had ever sung about, prayed about, given my life to, it now became something that was as real as this chair I'm sitting on.

You know, versus like a theory of who God is, it's like I got to experience that in the very depths of my heartache, and he became just so real in his presence, palpable in our home.

**RANDY:** So we ask God, "Where are you?" And what you found out is he was right there every step of the way?

**COURTNEY:** Yes, there is nothing that we walk through in life where God is not thrown off. He's not thrown off by our pain. He's not thrown off by our circumstance. He's not thrown off by the brokenness and shatteredness of our lives. In fact, you know, everything is ordained by him.

And he says that "I will never leave you and never forsake you." You know, another promise in scripture is that he's near to the brokenhearted and that he saves those who are crushed in spirit. And so being able to be on the front lines of the faithfulness of God holding on to me in the darkest night and in the hottest fire and in the deepest flood. He wasn't put off by my pain or my baby's pain. He was right there in the middle and truly walked me through that dark, dark valley.

**RANDY:** Can I ask you this, because, I mean, I've been there, right, not with my wife, but, you know, I've lost a sister, a younger sister to cancer and other things where you do kind of go, God, I know, I know up here, you know, that you're here but I'm just not feeling it right now.

And what comes up usually are these questions of why. I mean, you talk about what God has done for us as we've walked through tragedies, but you kind of go, what about Andrew? What about my sister Robin? And was it fair to them to not get to see their kids grow up? That's a hard one, you know, to not get to be there.

One of the toughest time was my nephew's wedding, you know, and so, you know, you've got a first child about to be married, and Andrew won't be there, and that, that's gonna--there's a missing--there's a gap. What I'm saying is that there's a lot of kind of unknowns even through the reassurances. But what I hear you talking about are the things that Scripture tells us. How did not fixating on the unknowns, the whys, those kinds of things and fixating on the knowns in scripture and believing them, how did they help get you through?

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, well, God's Word became my life. It became sustenance. It became a feast for my starving soul. And when I really got--when you get to that place of being at the end, you know, when desperation is all that you have and you say, God, I need you, I'm desperate for you because I can't do this without you.

And it's really--that's when I remember opening up the Word of God and reading it through a whole new lens. It's as if it came to life and the Word of God is living and breathing. And it is life for all of us. It is a guidebook to life when you're in that place of dark, just the dark pit. It is like an anchor. And I can remember wanting, just craving his Word.

Like the more I would read it, the more I would just sit there and go, oh. I mean, it just came to life, and that's the beauty of God's Word and getting into it every day. When we don't

know what to do and we don't know where to go and we don't even know what God's doing but to know that he's an ever-present God, he's a sovereign God, he loves every one of us so much and he isn't knocked off his throne when something bad happens in our lives.

In fact, you know, he not only promises to be right there, but this is his--I had to trust that this was God's plan A for my life the whole time. There was no plan B, God didn't mess up, but he had already ordered and established, you know, a plan and a purpose for my life even before I could see it. So I tethered onto Jeremiah 29:11 that his plans were good for me and plans to prosper me and not to harm me.

And that's really the hope for all of us is that just because we walk through a tragedy or we lose someone we love or we walk through devastation and hopelessness, just because we go through these things, we can know that God is--he's got such a beautiful plan. And his plans are good because he's a good God even when life is not good.

**BLYNDA:** And I've heard it said that the one form of worship that we have on earth that we don't have in heaven is the worship to God in our suffering because there won't be suffering in heaven. So the one way that we get to worship him on earth that we can't do in heaven is worshiping him through suffering.

And so it's in some way a gift, you know, when you can say, God, I've been through the fire, I've been through the pain, I've been through the darkest moments and I still call you faithful. I still call you good.

In those dark moments though, you have something in the book that you call declarations in the dark. And those were just truth declarations that you found in the Word. How did that help you and what were some of those truth declarations?

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, well, I write about this right after I'd buried my husband. And I can remember it was so--it was not only a dark season of the soul. It was dark at--late at night. I couldn't sleep.

And earlier that day I'd had several people hand me cards and things from the funeral. And I was starting to open them up and I can remember thinking before I turned out my lamp, like, Lord, there's this lie on repeat right now that, you know, you're not gonna make it and life is over. And it just it threatens really to just steal all of our joy, right, because the enemy comes to kill, steal, and destroy.

But I can remember the Lord saying, "You're gonna have to put another song on repeat." So as I was opening up these cards, I was reading scriptures, and it was the Lord is near to the brokenhearted. He saves those who are crushed in spirit, that God had good plans and a purpose, you know. And so as I was reading these, "I will never leave you and forsake you."

And I can remember thinking, okay, Lord, you say you're never gonna leave me, now show me that you're never gonna leave me, show me that you have life beyond this pain. And

God was so faithful in that moment to meet me with his kindness and to say, "This is the song now I want you to trade, to put on repeat, to make these declarations in the dark, to put it into the darkest places to light up the night."

And that is just what the Word of God did. And that's what it can do for every single one of us, no matter what we walked through, no matter the circumstance that we're in, the Word of God has enough light to light up the darkest night.

**BLYNDA:** Amen, so talking about light now we're going to fast forward a little bit because it's now been over a decade.

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, it's 13 years.

**BLYNDA:** Thirteen years since then. And so a lot in your life has changed and the Lord has done some amazing things. Can you bring the audience up to speed on how you came out of that dark night into living into really pain into purpose? You're now living with a lot of purpose from what God did in that time.

**COURTNEY:** Yes, it was through those darkest moments where I can remember taking steps of trust, and just before I could see it or before I could-- especially before I could feel it or my life was lining up to what I hoped it could be one day, I just remember taking steps of trust and saying out loud, "God, I trust you."

And that is another declaration we can make in the dark of, God, I don't know what you're doing, but I trust you. And so it was days and months and years that went by of anchoring my life into the Word of God and taking him at his Word and trusting him and walking with him. And day by day by day God just begin to restore so many areas of my life.

You know, the Word of God says that, he says, "I will restore what the locusts have eaten." And what a promise. I'm still standing in that and living in that today. You know, and those of you that have lost a person, God doesn't--you can't replace a person, but God can restore a loss. And so that's one of the beautiful things that I've walked through.

And I've seen God do the unimaginable in my life. The immeasurably more is something that I had written on a chalkboard in these messy middle years of--again, it's in Ephesians of, "I will do immeasurably more than you can ask, think, or imagine." And I can remember that was another part of scripture that I said, okay, God, if you're the God of immeasurably more, then I'm gonna just keep following you, keep trusting you. Because his ways are better than ours every single time.

And I've seen God just take a hold of every one of my kids and just bring so much beauty back into our home. Several years into widowhood I remarried an incredible man that loves me so well and loves our family. We've just seen God restore in that way. We had a baby boy named Asher together who's growing up. And just a tangible, he's a tangible proof of we serve a restoring God.

**RANDY:** Well, explain the title to me real quick, "And She Got Up."

**COURTNEY:** "And She Got Up." These words came to me. And over a decade had gone by. And I was just, I was on a walk in my neighborhood and I said, God, will you show me a place in your Word that describes really what you've done in my life? And it was wild.

I went home and I opened up to Matthew 9, and it's a story that a lot of us are familiar with. It's the story of Jesus was walking through the town and there was a woman with the issue of blood who approached him. And she thought if I could just get close enough to Jesus I can be healed. And she touched the edge of the hem of his garment and she was healed.

Well, while Jesus was doing one miracle, you know, another miracle was in motion. And there was the synagogue leader Jairus. He was there and came in desperation to Jesus and said, "My daughter is dying. If you'll just come and put your hand on her, then she will live."

And so scripture says that, in Matthew 9:25 that as Jesus was walking up to the house after the crowds had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. And as I read that, I mean, these words are straight from scripture. And it just, it was like, I just had this moment of, God, you didn't just do this for her 2,000 years ago, you did this for me.

I'm the she, you're the she, you're the he. All throughout scripture and Jesus's time on earth, everything he touches comes to life. It says, "And he got up, and she got up." And so that right there when I knew I was supposed to write this book, and really, it was out of my obedience to God. I knew that this was the title because this essentially is who Jesus is and what he does.

And there is nothing and no one too far gone that he cannot touch and redeem and restore. And he has brought me up on my feet now into a life of purpose and victory. And this is available for every single one of us.

**RANDY:** That's beautiful.

**BLYNDA:** It's beautiful.

**RANDY:** And you know the book is available now wherever you get books. We'd love to send it to you actually today, the book, "And She Got Up." If you would like to participate-- and you know it's interesting.

I'm think I'm thinking of another scripture that describes us believers as God's hands and feet. And when I think about hands and feet, I think, well, feet are what take me places and hands are how we reach out and touch people, right? And so yes, Jesus reached out and touched that little girl and she got up.

And I think God is the same yesterday and today and he reaches out through his believers to touch other people who are in pain, who are near death or dying, and they can get up.

And actually I think that's a very good picture of what happens through our Mission Feeding program.

Here's the thing, you're his hands as well, and we're inviting you to join with us to reach out to somebody who needs to get up. We wanna show them God's love both in Word and in deed. So watch this and pray about being a hand of Christ today.

**ANNOUNCER:** This is a clinic for mothers whose children are suffering from the effects of malnutrition. Kiera Pretorius, daughter of Isak Pretorius, is seeing for the first time Angolan children struggling to survive the consequences of not having enough food to keep them alive.

**ISAK PRETORIUS:** So you can see the signs. I mean, you can see how his ribs are just sticking out. You see how, I mean, look how little his arms are. I mean, his arms are like the size of my thumb, you know.

**KIERA PRETORIUS:** And it's just skin, by itself.

**ISAK:** No, it's just skin and bone really, because that's the state at which it's nutrition is at. It's so weak and so malnourished that literally the body starts to shut down.

**KIERA:** Do you think he'll recover?

**ISAK:** Chances are that he will survive, that we will be able to save his life, but there are so many children in this state that don't leave clinics like this. You just did. It's normal to cry. It's okay.

**KIERA:** I've grown up knowing many of these stories and seeing the photos and hearing, you know, the heart-wrenching stories of young mothers with their young children that want to do the best for them, but genuinely just don't have the resources.

Every time I see or hear these stories and being here today, it affects me and it deeply hurts my heart. So I'm asking you to not let it become normal to you. Don't let it. Don't let it become something you become immune to.

**ISAK:** I ask you to hear that appeal from a 19-year-old girl who knows what happens if you look away. who knows what happens when this starts to become normal, when we shut our hearts down, when we try to think through this with our heads instead of just listening to our hearts, and so I'm asking you today to listen to your heart, listen to the heart of Kiera, listen to my heart, listen to your heart.

Because our heart's cry is the same as this mother's, and I believe yours is too. And that is to do everything that we can do to save this little boy. Everything that we can do to give this mother what she needs for her child.

**RANDY:** You know, Blynda, it is an interesting thing about that story because it's tender. But when I was with Kiera out in the field and with Isak, you know, Kiera grew up seeing Isak travel and go to these countries. But when she saw for herself with her own eyes the children, the mothers, it's different when you're there because you really do, you get it.

**BLYNDA:** You could see it in her eyes.

**RANDY:** You could see it. You could see.

**BLYNDA:** The pain, she really felt, the pain of it. I'm one of those people that sometimes maybe would look away because it's so painful to look. And maybe if I didn't really sit in it, maybe it wasn't really happening.

And I just wanna encourage someone out there who maybe even had the feeling to turn the channel because it's painful to see. And I wanna encourage you, sit in it for a minute. Sit in it and really think and pray and look at what's happening with these children and with these families and in these villages because it's real, it's happening right this minute as we're watching, it's happening right now.

And instead of turning away or or making it feel like it's not really existing or even making it become normal, that would be even worse. Sit in it and ask the Lord, how can I help?

**RANDY:** Yeah, yeah, and I've had people say to me, look, I don't know how you do that. I don't know how you go to those places where literally we have buried children the day of working in a clinic or in some of these villages. I've seen children's funerals, and it's hard, it's horrible, it's terrible, it's tragic. To me it feels unjust.

We are the solution. And when I say we, I don't mean just those of us on television and those of us in the field like Isak and Kiera. I mean you and I. This only happens, it only started because viewers like you responded to my parents decades ago.

Will you go online? Go to the phone, make the best gift you can. We can do this. It's the last week you'll see this on the air during this campaign. Thirty dollars will help feed the three children for the next several months, and I'm telling you, I've been there, I've seen it, it works. It helps pull them out of death, out of poverty, out of that cycle. People see and feel God's love and lives are saved. Will you go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can? We can do this.

**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 life saving gift of \$30, \$50 or \$100 to help feed and care for 3, 5, or 10 children for 3 full months. With your gift, we'll

send you the "Father's Heart" devotional. Drawing from scripture and his past, James Robison takes you on a 90-day journey to help you experience a deeper, more personal relationship with God as your loving Father.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you will receive the "Father's Heart Bundle." This stationary set paired with the devotional is a thoughtfully designed collection created to help you share encouragement, prayer, and the love of our Heavenly Father with those you care about. Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more, which will help feed 100 children in desperate need, request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd. This is the last week. Please call, write, or make your gift online.

**RANDY:** Please do go online or go to the phone, make the best gift you can. This is the last week we'll be talking about this on the air, but the need is ongoing. So we need you to be a part of blessing people. Please do it today.

And again, if you request Courtney Pray Duke's book, "And She Got Up," we would love to send it to you, and there's so much we didn't even get to Blynda.

**BLYNDA:** There's so much in this book, so many sweet details, little things that you've added in that God has done just. Amazing. So yes, everybody should get the book. If they wanted to find more about you though, where could they find you?

**COURTNEY:** Yeah, courtneyprayduke.com or on Instagram @CourtneyPrayDuke.

**BLYNDA:** They'll be blessed when they hear you.

**RANDY:** They will be, and you'll be blessed when you come back, hopefully next time, we'd love to have you back here on "Life Today." We'll see you again.

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♪♪♪

♪You can't hear me cry. ♪

♪See my dreams all die. ♪

♪From where you're standing. ♪

♪On your own. ♪

♪It's so quiet here. ♪

♪And I feel so cold. ♪

♪This house no longer feels like home. ♪♪

**MALE:** My wife and I went through two miscarriages back to back. I said, "God's got a perfect time and we'll figure this out," you know, and I'm full of questions.

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**ANNOUNCER:** Life Today is made possible by the supporters of Life Outreach International. Your gift will be used exclusively for the exempt purposes of life. The ministry features specific outreaches as examples of the programs it supports and conducts. Gifts are considered to be without restriction as to use unless explicitly stipulated by the donor. The ministry is a member of the ECFA.