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Week 42

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Jennifer Rothschild

"When Life Makes No Sense"

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

ANNOUNCER: Is God just not fair, or just, not fair? Jennifer Rothschild answers that question.

JENNIFER ROTHSCHILD: As I am crying out to the Lord, I heard my phrase, and the Lord reminded me of where to pause. "God is just, not fair." And it was like I got to look at the face of blindness, look at the face of healing, and see God in both, see that he is just, even if his ways don't feel fair to me.

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RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today", I'm Randy Robison, Blynda Lane.

BLYNDA LANE: Happy to be here with you today, Randy.

RANDY: It's always fun with you here.

BLYNDA LANE: It's always fun, but it's even more fun when we have a really fun guest.

RANDY: And we do today.

BLYNDA: And we do today.

RANDY: Yes, we do, and you know, it's interesting because our guest is Jennifer Rothschild, and we're kind of centered around a book that is an older book, but the truth of it is, it's absolutely true today. It's one of those struggles, I think we--.

BLYNDA: Complete timeless topic because it's something every believer struggles with.

RANDY: It is, and it's kind of a question we ask. And so, how would you say the title to this book, Blynda?

BLYNDA: Okay, so the title is "God Is Just Not Fair", or is it "God Is Just, Not Fair". God is just not fair, how do you say it?

RANDY: I think we should just ask the person who put that on the cover of the book. Jennifer, how are you doing?

BLYNDA: We're so, so happy you're here with us today.

JENNIFER: Well, I am happy to be with both of you, and I love to hear you discuss that title because do you know, when I first published it, my pastor said, and I always listen to my pastor, he said, "Jennifer, you're missing a comma," ooh. Okay, but see, the truth applies no matter how you read it, okay, because we often feel like God is just not fair. You know, when something bad happens in our life or when someone who prayed the same prayer as we did gets the answer we wanted and we didn't, we can feel, "Oh, God is just not fair."

But the reason there could be a comma on that cover is because the reality is God is just, not fair. In other words, he is perfect, as Psalm 32 says, he is perfect in all his ways. Now, his ways may not feel fair to us, but we can trust that God is just.

BLYNDA: Well, I wanna ask about that. What would you say to the person that has that emotion of, "But it feels he's not fair, my feelings reign," like, they reign supreme, because if it feels not fair, it probably isn't fair. But the truth about God is that he is fair, because he's loving and he's just and he knows more about the story than we do.

JENNIFER: Oh, he does, but I'm glad you brought out the point that feelings are powerful, and because feelings are powerful and they matter, we should always acknowledge them and kind of let them lead us to truth. But not every feeling necessarily needs to be taken with the same weightiness as the ultimate truth. So we weigh our feelings, but we let them lead us to truth, and for me, I have felt the reality of-- that God is just not fair, and God is just, not fair.

And it happened in a theater. I was at a movie theater with a friend of mine. This was many years ago when our children were very little, and I became blind when I was 15 years old.

So until 15, I could see perfectly fine. So now here I am in my mid-twenties with our first child, and it's the summer, and I'll be honest, I had been blind for about ten years or so, and I felt all the struggle of blindness. I couldn't drive a car, I couldn't see what my children looked like.

I had no independence, I couldn't read a book. I mean, the loss was immense. And so, here I am in this theater.

We had been the last two Wednesdays. It was a children's movie series, and I was bored with the cartoons, so I actually, this day before we left, I pulled out a cassette. This will tell you how long ago this was.

And I put it in a little Walkman and I stuck it in the diaper bag. Once the movie started, I put an earbud in and I listened to this tape. Now, I had had this cassette tape for years.

Someone had given it to me, and I had intentionally not listened to it because I didn't wanna hear it, I just did not wanna hear it, because I knew the story I was about to hear. It was of a woman named Marilyn Ford who had a similar eye disease to mine, who had become blind just like me, and she talked about in her story how she longed for healing, like I did. She had children, didn't know how she'd raise her children.

She talked about the frustration of not being able to drive. She talked about over and over praying for healing. I'd related to everything.

And so as I'm listening to this, I'm getting to the part of the story that I knew this is why I was avoiding listening, because she described how one night she got down on her knees with her husband and they prayed for healing. And when she opened her eyes, she could see.

RANDY: Oh, wow.

JENNIFER: And it was a miracle. She talked about how the next day she went to the eye doctor and the eye doctor was astounded because she didn't have enough retina to justify how well she could see. Well, so here I am in this dark theater, and I'm hearing this and my eyes are beginning to just well up and stream down my cheeks, because all I could think was, "God, you're just not fair."

I prayed for healing and you didn't heal me. Marilyn prayed for healing, and you've healed her. God, it's just not fair."

Well, literally, y'all, as I am just being sincere, crying out to the Lord, I heard my phrase, and the Lord reminded me of where to pause. "God is just, not fair."

And it was like I got to look at the face of blindness, look at the face of healing, and see God in both, see that he is just, even if his ways don't feel fair to me. He is good and he is just, and I can trust him with what doesn't feel fair.

RANDY: Do you think it's okay to bring those questions to God and kind of question like, "Well, God, why would you heal her and not me"?

JENNIFER: Yeah, I do think so, but I think our motive for coming with the question needs to be clear, not because we demand an answer from God, but because we know intuitively, deep down, that asking the question engages God in conversation, so it's gonna deepen relationship. Because I've learned that as I pray and ask those hard questions to God, if God has shown me such unconditional kindness through his grace, even if it manifests in suffering, then I wanna show him the same respect and love of showing him unconditional acceptance. And I will say, that's where--it's not easy, it's hard-won, but that's where my freedom has come, accepting what I can't understand, embracing what God allows, and then I'm able to really settle into his mysterious ways.

BLYNDA: And don't you think in some ways, I think we think about if we had all of these big questions in life answered, if we had all of the things that we think in life would satisfy or bring that fulfillment of joy and hope, it makes me wonder, if we got that thing we would realize, nothing's ever going to really satisfy until we just are satisfied with him. And so, would you say that even if, you know, every question you ever had got answered, would that actually even satisfy?

JENNIFER: Well, answers are never satisfying, I think that's one of the myths that keeps us discontent, is that we think, "If I can figure this out, I'll be okay," that answers will satisfy. But truly it's only the relationship with God, maybe that comes because of the questions, that will deeply satisfy. And I know for me early on, I went through a season when I was really praying for healing a lot, but then the Lord really began to shift my focus, and here's why.

Because I realized my biggest problem wasn't blindness. My biggest problem was deeper, it was discontent. And as the Lord began to reveal that to me, I shifted my prayers toward, "Lord, help me to be content within the hardship.

Help me to be able to trust you more than I think I trust the outcome of this situation turning out like I want," and what it showed me is, let's say God does choose to heal me, right, of blindness here on earth. Well, if I never received the deeper gift of contentment, dude, I would be a grumpy sighted woman, you know what I mean?

An ugly sighted woman, because my spirit was contaminated with discontent. And so I think that's the other thing the Lord has shown me by asking in these questions is, he will reveal to me maybe what questions I actually need to be asking for my own sense of wellness.

RANDY: I have a question that's gonna step on some toes in the audience, I apologize in advance. Is it your lack of faith that has not allowed you to be healed?

JENNIFER: Well, I've been asked that question, I've been confronted with that question, and I don't disregard it, because I want to believe the best of all of us that we really are just trying to see what the Word says and trust what the Word says, okay? And so I do ask God for his perfect will to be done. But if his sovereignty were dependent on my faith, then he's not sovereign.

And so I don't want to regard myself so highly that I think, "Well, if I could just do this and if I could just do that, then God would do such-and-such." No, God is God and he acts according to his merciful sovereignty no matter what. He could heal me right now with me displaying absolutely no faith, because it would be for his glory and he is sovereign.

But does he honor our faith? Absolutely. Should we trust him completely and ask him those questions?

Yes, but my healing or lack thereof will never be a reflection on my spirituality. It will always be a reflection on his sovereignty and his mercy.

RANDY: And I think that's where we get trapped up because, see, what I see in you is real faith, a real relationship with God, and some of the questions have driven you there, as opposed to a formula that we just want, and God says, I think, "Look, the faith is what I'm here to build," not just to live by a formula that, you know, that would please us.

JENNIFER: Right, and we'd feel so good about ourselves, wouldn't we, if we could figure it out?

RANDY: That is a danger, that is a danger.

BLYNDA: Spiritual blindness is way worse than physical blindness.

JENNIFER: Yeah, you're right, you're right.

RANDY: Yes, but when you're physically blind, it's probably really hard to hear, you know? Because, I mean, when we lose a loved one, we hear, "Well, but they're living forever in eternity," and it's true, but it's hard to hear.

BLYNDA: But where I was saying that though is that the person who is saying, "Well, she must not have had enough faith," it's the depth that Jennifer has with the Lord. There's so much spiritual sight there, that someone that would say that is missing.

RANDY: I would, and you know, I'll also point to the fact that how much faith do we have to have to move a mountain? A mustard seed, it doesn't-- because we're not the ones that move the mountains, God moves the mountains.

JENNIFER: And why is it that we only apply big faith to big outcomes? Why can't it be an expression of our faith to receive suffering with humility? Doesn't that take just as much faith?

BLYNDA: That's so good.

RANDY: A deeper faith.

JENNIFER: Right, than to just to trust him for the, you know, party on the other side, yeah. I think it takes just as much faith to receive suffering that he chooses to allow us to receive.

BLYNDA: I was reading your biography and you said something to the effect of, "My circumstance may not always be well with me, but it is deeply well with my soul." How did you get to a place where you said, "It is well with my soul, though I maybe wouldn't have chosen the circumstance, and that might not change, but it is deeply well with my soul"?

JENNIFER: You know, that was a gift of grace. So I was 15 years old and we came home from the eye hospital. And no one spoke on the way home.

It was about a 40-minute drive. And when we got home, I immediately sat down at our old piano we had had in the living room since I was in the third grade, and by this time I'm about 15 years old. And I played this piano for several years, off and on, not a great pianist, but I couldn't see to read any sheet music any longer, I couldn't read out of my little hymnal that I used to read from.

But the silence from that hospital ride was broken that day as I began to play by ear for the very first time. I knew what I was doing on that keyboard in a way I had never experienced before, and the song that I played was "It Is Well with My Soul". I'd never played it before, and I believe the kindness of God just enveloped me that day because I didn't really understand it, but God truly was teaching me even then that it could be well with my soul even if it weren't well with my circumstances.

So, fast forward, I just turned 62 years old, and here's what I got for my birthday. It is a tattoo.

BLYNDA: It says, "It is well".

JENNIFER: That says, "It is well," and why did I do that? Because it's been the truth of my life, it's been the truth that I wanna characterize my life until the day it's written on my tombstone.

RANDY: Wow.

BLYNDA: So powerful.

RANDY: That is so good, do you still play?

JENNIFER: I do play, yes, I do. I love playing, I love playing the old hymns.

RANDY: And you know, that hymn was born out of heartache, I mean, deep loss, and so we know, historically and scripturally, that God is in the pain and can do marvelous things, but I think there are a series of questions that people commonly ask, and I get it, I've asked them, and I think it's okay to ask. And, you know, one of them would be, "Well, did God make a mistake?" Did you ever wonder if, maybe, you know, just something went wrong and he tried but didn't quite get it right, and that resulted in your situation?

JENNIFER: Yeah, I think we all ask that question, especially when we see other people's situations, looks like God didn't make a mistake. So it's this idea of, "Well, God, are you really perfect?" I mean, I just mentioned Psalm 32 earlier, that he is perfect in all his ways.

Well, perfect for me and perfect for Blynda might look two different ways, so we don't judge God's perfection and his character based on our situation, is the first thing. And there's just times we have to trust what the Bible says about God and recognize that he really is without error. And you know, the thing that reminds us of that is the Bible says that he doesn't change.

A perfect God cannot change, because if he changed, what would happen, he'd become more perfect or less perfect? No, because he is, there is no shadow of turning with him, because he is perfect in all his ways. We can trust.

You know, I fly a lot and so--I'm not a pilot, obviously, I sit in the back of the plane with everyone else, and the reason that I can be comfortable flying in a plane as a passenger is because I have certain knowledge that that pilot knows what he's doing, okay? I may not have perfect knowledge, like, I don't understand aerodynamics. So I can have certain knowledge though I don't have perfect knowledge.

I think we can apply that to the character of God. He is perfect, we believe that by faith, and therefore, even though we can't really wrap our finite minds around it, we can have certain

knowledge that he is perfect in all his ways, and that certainty has translated in affirmation in my life. I have seen it, he is perfect.

RANDY: Yeah, your trust in pilots is greater than mine. I am relying on the fact that they don't want to die just as much as I don't want to die, so they're gonna land the plane safely. But in the same way, I do have to go, "Okay, God's will for my life is greater than any will for my life that I might have," and so you do have to trust.

And you talk about--you mentioned the word "mystery", and that's a word that somebody like me just--I want the answers. How do we get to a place where the mystery, the whys don't necessarily get answered, but we turn that into ministry, which is basically what you've done?

JENNIFER: Well, I think it's okay to ask why and hope that the mystery might be solved, but I think we do it in context of Scripture. Deuteronomy 29:29 says, "The secret things belong to the Lord," in other words, there will be some mystery. But then also I think, when we ask why, we need to direct the why to the right question.

So I remember one day I was dealing with some emails from people who'd written from the ministry, and my computer talks to me, so I'm listening to this. First email I hear is from a young woman who had been pregnant at this conference where I had just been, and we had talked about her baby. And she texted me or emailed me to say her baby was stillborn, and she was devastated, and so was I, right?

Then I opened the next email, it's from this young man named Greg who had been emailing me for a couple of years and he had had a brain tumor, he was in remission, and he wrote to say, "My cancer's back, and I'm afraid." And I remember sitting at that keyboard trying to email back, not knowing what to say. I went up to my piano instead and just kind of played and was thinking through and feeling the feelings, and I literally was asking the Lord, "Why?

When that baby could have born here on earth, why did you let that baby be stillborn in heaven," right? Or Greg's cancer, you healed him once, why did you let it come back? And as I'm just contemplating all this, it was like I saw the cross.

And my question shifted from, "Why cancer? Why stillborn?" to, "Why grace?" "Why forgiveness?"

We don't deserve any of that, and God gave it to us. Yet when there's these things that happen in life and we're like, "Why blindness, Lord?" I've just learned that there's gonna be some mystery, so I'm gonna ask better questions.

Why grace? Why do you allow your kindness to show up in this very difficult circumstance, why?

He's so good, he's so kind. And even if it is in the classroom of suffering that we learn these deeper lessons that literally set us free, well, that's where our gratefulness lies.

BLYNDA: That makes me think, for somebody watching right now, you might be in that classroom of suffering that Jennifer's talking about, and we have a prayer line, and if you are saying, "I relate, it is not well with my soul and I want it to be," would you please call the number on that screen? We have people waiting to pray with you, to help you.

Whenever you're questioning, whenever you have doubts, they want to come alongside you and pray with you. I love that classroom of suffering, that's such an interesting way to say that, because we sit there and we have to learn how to suffer well sometimes, because the suffering isn't necessarily going to depart, but Jesus's full peace and joy can be part of that suffering.

RANDY: Absolutely, he's in the fire with us, to allude to an Old Testament story. And so yeah, so again, that number for those of you that wanna call, just to have someone pray. And Jennifer does talk about in her book, "God Is Just Not Fair", that God does hear our prayers, and so he invites us to bring our pain to him.

He will be with you in the pain, that I can promise. Where it will go, that is a mystery and it's in God's hands. At the same time, there are some other people that are suffering right now, and in fact many of you in 2025 came alongside us to relieve that suffering.

And I think part of the ministry that comes out of the mystery of why we suffer can be seen when, out of our circumstances, we give of ourselves to help those who are in pain. So I want to just take a step back for a second and let you see something, a beautiful outcome from a tragic situation, because we're continuing in this work. We call it Rescue Life, and we want to show that to you because there is great joy in being God's hands and feet to those who are suffering, watch this.

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TAMMY TRENT: It's so good for me to be back in Southeast Asia, to be in our Life Center. Look, the first time I came, there was so much work that needed to be done. That's why it's so fun to come back here and to see exactly what has taken place.

It's been incredible change, it's amazing. I've walked into even some rooms and I just-- I'm overwhelmed to see the change that has taken place and to know exactly what God is doing in this place. I can feel the presence of God.

But let me also tell you, it could all be gone like that, why? Because they need our ongoing help to help continue moving things forward for them. So I'm just gonna simply ask this: Would you consider today coming alongside us to be a part of this beautiful Life Center here in Southeast Asia that is changing life after life after life?

We need your help today, it's urgent. Would you give that gift today so that these lives can be restored back to life again?

RANDY: You heard Tammy say the word "today" repeatedly. Why today? Because today so many people are hurting, so many people are in need.

Today, evil is reigning in the lives of many, but we have the solution, and when I say "we", I don't mean just Life Outreach International, Tammy, our mission partners, I mean you. You are a part of the solution. You can reach, rescue or restore a child today, simply with a gift.

Your financial support is every bit as important as the work in the field. \$128 will do that for a child. Many of you could reach, rescue, or restore 10 children with a gift of \$1280.

And as you can see, your gift means something. We do what we say we're going to do, we've been doing it for many years. We know how to change a situation for a child.

And Blynda, you know, I couldn't even watch some of the images that we see, or consider this topic, because it's so awful. I couldn't do it if I didn't know that we have people who will reach out and say, "I want to be a part of the solution," and we see that life change.

BLYNDA: We see the life change, but what I think really struck me is, it would be tempting to see this beautiful renovated building and think, "Okay, fold the hands, the work is done, look what we did," and yes, it is true, that is something to celebrate, it's something to just be, "Thank you, Jesus," so celebratory about. But it would be like saying in a way, "Well, I ate yesterday, so I don't ever have to eat again," you know? It's like, no, I need to eat every day because the need for my, you know, needs to be met is every day.

The same thing for--this atrocity is happening to young girls every single day, and it is not stopping. And we may not be able to save every young girl, but we can save some.

RANDY: Yes, we can, and that's the way we approach it, one life at a time. We'd like you to approach it that way. One, five, ten, whatever you can do, it will make a life-changing difference.

And so I would just invite you to pick up the phone or go online and make the best gift you can. Know that when you do, you will help reach, rescue, or restore a life today.

FEMALE ANNOUNCER: Every day, innocent children are being trapped in the wicked web of human trafficking. Instead of dreaming about a future, they are sold into a nightmare of sexual slavery. But you can join the fight against this evil.

Through Mission Rescue Life, you can reach at-risk children before traffickers do, rescue those already enslaved, and restore young lives with hope for the future. A gift today of \$128 will reach, rescue, or restore a precious child and change their life forever. Gifts of \$64 or \$32 will be combined with support from others to help deliver one more child from the shame and pain of sex trafficking.

With a gift of any amount, we will send you James Robison's final book, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", as a thank-you for your support. Discover James's personal journey from bondage to freedom, share in his calling to bind up the brokenhearted, and learn how to experience your personal freedom so that you can bring healing to the hurting world around you. With your gift of \$128 or more, you will receive the "Life Proclaiming Freedom" bundle, which includes James's book, a special edition collection of the Gospels, and the beautiful Life planner.

Finally, your gift of \$1280 can help save 10 children from the horrors of human trafficking. With this special gift, you may request the inspiring bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd". Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

RANDY: What an opportunity. You can reach, you can rescue, or you can restore a child today, so I pray that you'll do it.

We appreciate Jennifer being here. Jennifer, it's great seeing you.

JENNIFER: It was great being with you guys.

RANDY: And I love this book, still out there, available, "God Is Just Not Fair", available wherever you get books, thank you for being with us.

BLYNDA: Where else can they find you?

JENNIFER: They can find me on my website, jenniferrothschild.com, and of course I'm on all the socials.

RANDY: Love seeing you here, and we love seeing you here. We'll see you again next time here on "Life Today".

BLYNDA: See you soon.

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MARK BATTERSON: We want things to happen at the speed of light, but they happen at the speed of a seed.

MALE ANNOUNCER: Growing gradually, then suddenly, tomorrow.

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