

**10/02/23**

**Week 41: Rescue LIFE**

**Randy Robison and Tammy Trent**

**Rachelle Starr**

**In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Hello everybody. I'm Tammy Trent and this is Randy Robison. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Randy, I'm so happy to be back. We have another awesome girl on the show today that has an incredible story. She is the author of a great book called *Outrageous Obedience*. I kind of want to know if that's a little bit different than traditional obedience in my life.

**RANDY:** We'll see.

**TAMMY:** Let's ask her about this. Rachelle, it's so great to have you here. We got a chance to talk in the car a little bit. So we kind of had a little bit of a connection there. I absolutely loved it. But can you tell me about the ministry that God has you involved in? Because I think it is absolutely spectacular.

**RACHELLE:** Yeah. I think it is spectacular too!

**TAMMY:** It is! It is!

**RACHELLE:** It's the Lord's ministry and all glory to him. But yeah, it is a ministry that I started in 2007 when the Lord called me to minister and bring hope and the gospel to women in the adult entertainment industry. Louisville, Kentucky is where it started. Now it's a little bit all over.

**TAMMY:** What made you, first of all, of all the ministries you could have gotten involved in like he called you to the adult entertainment industry, and how did you know that you knew that you knew that it was God calling you there?

**RACHELLE:** So I just, all my life, I have known by—I don't know, this weird intuition that the Lord was going to call me to something one day. He saved me and healed me at nine years old from a horrible disease that I talked about in the book. But from that point on I feel like God set me apart for something.

So when I was around 21 years old, I started praying and asking the Lord to give me a people and a purpose. And I started asking the Lord where he was going to send me. I was willing to go anywhere but my husband and I began praying and fasting regularly. And one day when I was 23, I was driving into work and I had passed a Theater X many, many, many times before. And I'd never noticed the place, honestly. I didn't even know what the sex industry was. I didn't know what human trafficking was. I don't think many Christians did in 2007.

But I'd passed it one day in May of 2007 and I heard the Holy Spirit put on my heart, I'm sending you to that place to share my hope and my love because I'd never heard about it. I'd never heard a sermon or anyone talk on it. I'd driven past there a hundred times. At that moment in time in 2007, I knew that the Lord was calling me and giving me those people. So here we are today.

**RANDY:** Can you help me with some definitions here? Was that a strip club? Is that what we'd call that?

**RACHELLE:** Well, the original place that the Lord called me or that I would drive past when I'd go into work was a sex shop and a truck stop. So it wasn't a strip club in the beginning. But ultimately, where God would lead me would be to strip clubs and that's where I started serving home-cooked meals in 2008.

**RANDY:** Okay. I want to hear more about that because you'll just jump into that. And frankly, especially for men, you don't just go, oh, God's told me I'm supposed to go in there. This is an area that a lot of people, a lot of viewers right now, are very uncomfortable with. But yet, you're suggesting that God walked you in these doors. Two questions, what did that look like? And how did you know it was God?

**RACHELLE:** Great questions. So for 18 months after the Lord called me and I knew, like I called my husband at that moment and I said, "Honey, the Lord just called me. I know exactly who I'm supposed to go to with the gospel."

He said, "Who?"

I said, "Women in the sex industry."

And he said—his first response was a little bit taken aback. And then it was, "That's exactly what Jesus would do."

We both grew up as pastors' kids so we knew that our life was going to be spent sharing the gospel together somewhere.

But to be honest, how I knew, was for 18 months we prayed and fasted outside of clubs. And we would go, Louisville was the fifth largest sex industry per capita in America when I started the ministry. And so we would just go and we would pray and ask God to open doors, and ask God to show us where he wanted us to go. And then it was time to go. So we went.

The great commission is something that came alive for me and has always and continued to be where Jesus calls us to go to people. And so I heard this gentle whisper, again by the Holy Spirit in '08, "It's time to go." So where were we going to go? The clubs we were praying outside of. And so we went in for the first time there and the Lord showed

up.

**TAMMY:** Do you know what I love, that I read, is that thought right there. Not just being kind to people, not just loving them but stepping into their lives. And that's exactly what you did. You didn't just love from afar but you stepped into their lives right where they were: made sure that they knew they were seen—that they were loved—that God loved them at all costs. So how can I come in here and see you because there is value to your life. And that is what you did, and that's what ministers so much to me. Because sometimes we think, man, there isn't much I can do or give. Or how do I serve people? How do I love? And God opened up a tremendous, enormous door for you that I'd probably never be called into. I probably wouldn't do a great job. But you have! And I love that calling.

And I know you have so many stories, Rachelle, I've read so many in your book. And one that ministers so much to me, if you wouldn't mind, I know you've got probably favorites, I don't know if this is one of yours but in starting your ministry, *Scarlet Hope*, there is a story in this book, I couldn't stop crying because I saw how God transformed a life because of your obedience, your *Outrageous Obedience* to do something crazy and you did it. But can you tell us that story about Scarlet?

**RACHELLE:** Yeah! So this will answer your question too. So I'd been serving in the clubs for about six months. I didn't initially like my plan was not to start a nonprofit, or an organization, it was simply to show up and go into these places and share the love of Christ. So about six months in, my church, the ministry was growing whether I wanted it to or not, and my church had come and said you need to start a nonprofit. People are donating money to our church to help you but this isn't like what we...

**RANDY:** You needed the structure.

**RACHELLE:** Yeah! You need the structure. So I was praying and asking the Lord for a name for the ministry. And so it was on a Sunday night, I was reading through the

scriptures, and in Matthew, which is my favorite book of the Bible, I read that Jesus was beaten and they mocked him and put a scarlet robe on him. Well, at that time, when I read that scripture which I had read many times before, I had already seen women be beaten. Not physically but they would come into the clubs and they had been beaten. I had seen women mocked, spit on. I'd seen women who were broken to the soul, and just spirits crushed.

So when I read that I was like Jesus's blood that this scarlet robe represents is what will give them hope, what will cover them, covers their sin, my sin. And it gives them hope. So I called my husband and I said, "The name is Scarlet Hope."

He said, "Well, let's pray about that."

Well, this is when the Lord was so gracious to affirm the ministry. So that next Thursday night, we went into the club and this is the story that's in the book. We went into the club and we set up a huge buffet essentially, and it's in the middle of the club. Yes, the club is still operating, they're going, and the music is very loud and everything. And I saw a woman off in the distance and she had a blue sweater on. It was kind of draping off her shoulder with a bag. So I didn't know if she was a dancer or I didn't know if she was—I didn't know who she was. I walked over to her and said, "Hey, would you like something to eat?"

And she immediately looked at me and said, "How much does it cost?"

I said, "It's free!"

She said, "It's free?"

She just began automatically crying. She said, "I have five kids at home that haven't eaten. This is my first day to show up here so that I can make some money and feed them."

And I mean my heart was so broken at that moment. She said, "I showed up here and they told me I had to take off all my clothes but I'd never done that before. And in order to feed my kids, I had to go get drunk to do that." So she went and got drunk. She comes back into the club and intersects our paths. And so I invited her to come over to eat. And we're getting her food and she is very hungry.

And I often said to people, "Have you ever been so hungry that you'd be so desperate you'd do anything to feed yourself and your family?" I haven't experienced that. But this woman had.

And so we were in the strip club, I'm feeding her, I'm getting her food, and she takes the mac and cheese spoon and starts shoveling it into her mouth, she is that hungry. So we take—I'll let you read all the details in the book because there is some—there is some stuff! But we take the pan and set it over to the side and she asks me, she doesn't even know who I am and she says, "Will you pray with me?"

We do not wear Jesus' shirts. We don't go in Bible-thumping. We do not say we're Christians at first. We simply show up with the love of Christ and offer a meal. And then when they ask, we tell them why we're there. And so she said, "Will you pray with me?"

And so immediately we grabbed hands and she was looking at me. And she dropped to her knees and cried out to God and she said, "I need help. I need help!" And so she was crying out to the Lord.

And at this time, as you can imagine in the club, the lights came up, the music stopped and everyone was staring at us. And I'm thinking in my head, we're about to get kicked out of here. And she stands up and she is sober-minded and she says, "I met Jesus here tonight."

And I'm like: This is exactly why we come. This is exactly why God called us here. And

in the middle of that strip club, this woman turns her life over to the Lord, I still don't know her name at this moment, she says, "I have so much hope. I'm leaving."

So we pack up our food to send her off. She gets into the cab and I look at her and said, "I didn't even get your name. What's your name?"

And she said, "My name is Scarlet."

I stood out in front of that strip club and I knew, not only was that God affirming our ministry to these women that he was calling us to, but he was there. That his presence was there, and she smiled at me and drove off. And I've never seen her again.

So I wish I could say that was a success story. That she went on to have a successful life but that moment in time was God saying, I'm here and I want you here.

**TAMMY:** Absolutely. And the thing is, Rachele, that she found God. That's the beauty of that. So who knows where her life is today. But she found God. So he is within her every day of her life wherever she is through the good and the bad because of your *Outrageous Obedience* to show up there. And you didn't even, in the book, you didn't like oh, what a mess I am. Look at me and this has gone wrong. You're like everything is going right because you stepped in obedience to God and looked around. And it might not look all pretty, life is messy, but you found God in that moment for you and for her. What a great story! I love it.

**RANDY:** I have a question and this is going to reveal some things about me that are not healthy. I'm curious though, before you went into the clubs, what did you think when you thought of a stripper? Because if you ask me, what do you think? I'm like, probably some girl with low morals who is just selling herself. But what you just described was not the image I had of the typical woman in a strip club. Did you have...

**RACHELLE:** I wish I could tell you that I had this image of that person myself but I

didn't. I would say this, I didn't know anything about those people. I didn't think about those people, which is also equally wrong too. My life, and in the book, I share a story about Tony Campolo who has a birthday party for a prostitute at a waffle house. It's one of my childhood bedtime stories my dad read me. So if you were to ask me what I thought of those people, it was all that. They were all prostitutes, they were all doing bad stuff, all addicts, and all of that. But what I've learned and what I get to share with the world is that they're created in the image of God with desires, skills, dreams, and the enemy has come to rob them of who God created them to be. And I've watched women step into who God has created them to be after a life of darkness and a life of trauma and pain. And God's restored it all and it is beautiful.

**RANDY:** You're saying a lot of them had dreams and hopes and things like that. They just need someone to come in. What do you say to them?

**RACHELLE:** Yeah, I get to know them. I'm friends with them. I walk alongside them. One of the biggest things that I would say is helpful when ministering to people in this industry is I'm not there to change them. I'm there to introduce them to the changer. And I fully believe and have seen and know that if they come to know Jesus their life will change. Their habits will change, their behaviors will change. And so that's all I'm there to do. Is love them with Jesus' love.

**TAMMY:** Yes. You love well. You know we've never seen shame change a life. It won't change a life.

**RANDY:** It might change a behavior. But it doesn't change the heart necessarily.

**TAMMY:** When I think about *Outrageous Obedience* what are some steps that I could take or somebody watching today going well, I am obedient but how can I be outrageously obedient? What does that even look like for a practical person that's watching on the other side that might not ever go minister in a strip club but wants to do something more, wants to be even more obedient, wants to listen to the voice of God,



wants to step in and get into the middle of a mess, maybe, someplace? What can they do?

**RACHELLE:** Yeah, that's a great question. And we were talking a little bit earlier it was like this day and age, *Outrageous Obedience* is pretty much doing ordinary obedient things. That you're listening to the Holy Spirit and you're being obedient to whatever that is. So in my book, I talk and give practical ways to be able to be obedient in what God calls you to.

But also, before the Lord gave me these people, my people now, I would say that he would give me something, an assignment and I would show up, and I would obey. And then I would be like, yeah, that was great. And God was like, I'm sure he was looking down like thank you for being obedient. I'm prepping you for what I'm about to call you to.

And so in small ways is it the Holy Spirit prompting you to speak to somebody at your local grocery store? Is it fostering? Is it showing up for a single mom who has chosen life over abortion? What is it that the Lord has called you to or placed on your heart that all you have to do is take that one simple step and God will show up. And it really will—he is faithful. That's just the word I can say is when you show up and are obedient, he is faithful.

**RANDY:** One of our guests recently said that obedience is our part, the results are God's part. Okay, so that resonates with you. Is that kind of how you've gotten to where you've gotten are the little obediences; just leaning to the bigger obediences because they're all big in God's eyes.

**RACHELLE:** So now Scarlet Hope is serving women in 13 cities and we serve thousands of women every year. Every single woman is an act of obedience, who God puts in our path, how we reach them, how we go to them, how we find them. And it is listening to the Holy Spirit and also being willing to take a risk. It is being willing to show up at the next club that we haven't been in and say, hey, we're here. They all call us

"the church ladies." "Hey, the church ladies are here!" We go to strip clubs and share the love of Jesus. Can we come in and share the love of Christ with people? And the result is the Lord's. If he wants us in that club or in that brothel or in that massage parlor, he opens the door. It's being willing to show up and do that.

And I just think, yeah, we're all afraid of the result, and we're all afraid of the rejection but if we just show up God really will show up too. He's already there.

**RANDY:** It's so good. I love the simplicity of obedience. And that's how we've gotten to work worldwide to fight sex trafficking is through obedience. And that's why I'm excited that we have the opportunity now to say hey, is God speaking to you? And if so, would you be obedient? Because what we're seeing, the results, are beautiful. Take a look at this and you'll see how.

### **On the mission field**

**ANNOUNCER:** *When we began bringing you the stories of girls trapped in human trafficking over a decade ago, you responded in a big way. Through the work of Rescue LIFE, we began to shine God's light in the very darkest places on earth. And when that light appeared, the evil ones scattered like cockroaches back into the crevices and corners that they came from. But they never stopped their terrible crimes. There is too much money involved. Instead, they have continued underground. Their progress has been slowed but our work is more critical than ever. Because the traffickers have been chased out of committing their crimes in the open, there is fresh fear among the girls to speak with us. Many don't want their faces shown because they're scared for their families if someone finds out that they're helping end this industry.*

*But we want you to know that these girls, even the ones we can't show, they're real. Their pain is real. Our tears have fallen together on the same floor as they've told us over and over that they want freedom but they don't know how. Well, we know how.*

*Our partners all over the world are reaching these girls, in many cases, preventing trafficking altogether through education and border intervention. We're rescuing them through investigations and SWAT raids. And we're restoring them through safe houses and skills training so they can have a life and an income when they leave our care.*

*It is ironic that our success has made our work more difficult, but we won't be stopped—not until the last girl is freed. We need your help today more than ever. We need you to speak up for these precious ones who cannot speak for themselves. They're waiting and hoping for rescue. We can't let them hope in vain.*

**End of video**

### **In the studio**

**TAMMY:** And I won't stop talking about them until the last one is freed. I just got to take a trip recently to Central America and I remember going into one of our safe houses. I saw a table and a bunch of little girls sitting around it living life and laughing and eating. They looked healthy. They looked well. And I recognized that because of the environment they were in, they were safe. They were okay. They were on their way to being restored.

And I went upstairs into their bedroom and I saw the little bunk beds in that room and before we left, I remember walking—[Emotional]—I remember walking over to the beds just saying a prayer of blessing of new life and future on those bunk beds. And hope and freedom, because I think that's what we all want for these children, to be free as much as they want to be free.

These stories are real. The lives are real. The restoration and freedom are real and it is possible. We have a ministry here, *LIFE Outreach*, we know how to help them. We know how to reach them. We know how to go to the borders and stop it, to pull them out of there. And we know how to begin to restore their lives back, bringing them hope, telling

them who they are in Christ. We've done this for many years and we're not going to stop. We will keep fighting. But we have a goal, we have a vision, and we want to help bring freedom to as many as we can.

**RANDY:** Absolutely. And what was that line from *The Sound of Freedom*? "God's children are not for sale."

**TAMMY:** No, they're not!

**RANDY:** Phew! Man, that one hit me. The interesting thing, when you look at the global problem, and it is a global problem, it's also a domestic problem, and we are doing some things here in the United States to shut down networks, especially ones using online methods, and we're supporting homes to give women some training, a safe place to go, some training for a future. But there are a lot more support systems here in the United States—a lot more! And when you get into some of these underdeveloped countries that we're going to, there is no support at all. We are it. Well, you are it. And that's why we do focus a lot of our energies overseas because there is nothing else.

The way it breaks down is that the average cost, when we look at the overall budget of the program, we go how many do we reach? How much did it cost? It breaks down to about \$128 per child that is reached, rescued, and restored.

Well, Tammy, I'm excited because through a matching grant right now that cuts that in half. That means your gift of \$128 today will go towards reaching, rescuing, or restoring two children. But many of you can do more than that. Many of you could help 20 children right now, a gift of \$1280. But whatever—whatever it is God puts on our heart, we're asking you to join us to say to these children, God sees you, we see you and we're going to take action on your behalf.

So will you take action on their behalf today? Go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. Let's rescue as many lives as we can.

**Begin video clip**

**ANNOUNCER:** *Innocent children and young people longing to be loved and cared for are being abducted and sold at the hands of violent predators, forced into the evil industry of human trafficking.*

*Through Mission: Rescue Life you can reach out to warn children who are at risk for sex trafficking, rescue those already enslaved, and restore young lives and give them a future. With a generous \$320,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to help reach, rescue, or restore one child can be doubled to help two children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help save one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 mission rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.*

*With your gift today, we'll send you "Declare." This beautifully designed 31-day devotional reveals 31 names of God from scripture and gives insight into the character, grace, and the depth of God's love for you.*

*With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive The Gospels book set. This special edition collection of the four gospels in the classic King James version includes journaling space opposite each page of scripture so you can reflect as you read. The perfect companion for your daily time with God.*

*Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help save 20 children. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds."*

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

**End of video****On the mission field**

>> I just got through speaking to two of the paramilitary officers that work here on this border. They are so grateful for our mission partners that are here working with them, helping to identify those children and young people that are being trafficked.

And friends, I can promise you, right across that border is the pit that young people never come home from. The fact is, without your help, we can't keep those workers here. So we need you and we need you right now. Your gift right now is the difference between someone who is rescued, someone who is prevented from being trafficked, or someone who is stepping off the cliff of no return.

So I'm asking you from the bottom of my heart, go right now and make your best gift. Help us, please.

### **In the studio**

**RANDY:** I think you see and understand how you can really have a significant impact in someone's life today. Will you join us in Rescue LIFE? Just go to the phone, go online, make the best gift you can, whatever God puts on your heart. I know that he will bless it, just like he has blessed you, Rachelle. Thank you for sharing your stories. If someone were to follow up but they want to get the book or check into your ministry, maybe have a question for you, what's the best place for them to reach you?

**RACHELLE:** Yeah, they should visit [ScarletHope.org](http://ScarletHope.org) and all the information is there, links to the book. But you can find the book anywhere major retail books are sold.

**TAMMY:** So fun. We appreciate you so much. Gosh, I love your outrageous life! Everything you've done has been big for God. Don't be afraid to go where God calls you to go, where he asks you to go because our faithful God will be with you every step of the way. Live big right now today. God bless you. Thanks for watching *Life Today*. We'll see you next time.