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Week 43: Rescue LIFE

Randy Robison/Tammy Trent

Ben Fuller

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. This is Tammy Trent. You know, you listen to Christian radio a little bit. I mean, you've been on Christian radio. Have you heard that song, "Who I Am" by Ben Fuller?

**TAMMY:** Can I be honest? I didn't put Ben's name with that song. I heard it but I've never met Ben. I didn't know much about him at all until we started sort of researching this show. Like I was at home looking at a bunch of YouTubes and listening to his music. And what I love so much about this guy is that he's come to faith later in life. I was raised in a Christian church.

**RANDY:** That's great!

**TAMMY:** In a Christian church.

[Laughter]

**RANDY:** Good for you. Because non-Christian churches we don't recommend.

**TAMMY:** But I was raised in the church. And so my faith, I've had it my whole life. But I find it so inspiring when you meet somebody that's come to faith later in life. And like their relationship with Jesus is just so different—it is contagious and fresh and new. And I mean that's who Ben is to me.

**RANDY:** Yeah, you get to see the contrast, I think of a life without Christ and a life with one. And that's what we love to showcase here is the power of the Christ in our lives. So with that, Ben Fuller, great to have you.

**BEN:** Praise God!

**RANDY:** See! There you go, right there. We kind of touched on this a little bit but tell us your story in your own words.

**BEN:** Well, I was born and raised—born in New Hampshire, raised in Vermont. So I was raised on a dairy farm, only son. And my dad leaned on me heavy for a lot of work. And his dad kind of taught him and his dad taught him. And anyway, so they passed down this thing that men are tough and men are strong and we can't show emotion. I just wanted to hear I love you. And that was just something that we just didn't really—I feel like you to want to say it but he didn't know how. So I don't blame him for that because that's just what he knew.

At 16 years old, I came close to pulling the trigger. I thought nobody loved me. I had it altogether on the outside but on the inside—I was captain of the football team, I was all these things, bubbly and friendly. But on the inside, I would go home and I was just empty. At 18 years old, I believe God spared me. Now that I look back, I know that God knocked the gun from my hands. At 18 years old, I got introduced to cocaine and alcohol and sex, and all the things to try to fill all the voids for 14 and a half years.

I lost my best friend Ryan in 2017 to a heroin overdose. It really shook me. I needed to start—I didn't know how to get it out, my feelings, my emotions, and stuff so I started writing. That's really when I started writing. And I had picked up a guitar in college, and country music was always my thing. So I started writing and using my guitar as this outlet for my music.

And so soon after I played a lot of bars and restaurants in Vermont. And then all of the

sudden, out of nowhere, people were like you've got to go to Nashville, Tennessee! You've got to go to Music City. You could make it. I'm like, make what? I was working on a landscape crew. I was a stone mason. I had a great job, I had a house. But again, I had this feeling inside, like is this it? Like why was I so empty still?

So 2018 in the Fall, I finally heard enough. I almost went in spite of everybody. Like I'd finally heard enough, hey, Ben, go to Nashville. So I was like, you know what? I'm going! So I put my house up for sale. I packed up what I could fit in my truck and I drove to Tennessee. My house sold in one day. And the woman who bought it was from Nashville. And so like I didn't realize all these God winks that were starting. So I went, I got a job at Tootsies, started playing Tootsies famous Orchid Lounge. Right? They hired me on the spot. I would play there for the next year.

But nobody saw the drinks that I was having behind the scenes and I lived in Cool Springs; 26 minutes—I would leave Tootsies and I was pretty drunk most days. So a whole year of that went by and all of a sudden, and I'm asking myself the whole time, is this it? Like is this my life now? Is this—have I made it? And mind you, I'd sent a photo of me in front of Tootsies to my dad and I remember he said, "I'm so proud of you." It was like one of the first times I remember my dad being like, "I'm so proud of you. You made it, son! Like you made it."

But I didn't feel like I made it. On the outside, again, it looked good; but on the inside, no one knew my struggle. But God did and he had other plans for my life.

In 2019, in the Fall of September, I got a phone call. I was driving home, I got a phone call, I'll remember it forever. It was from the Davenport family and they were from Vermont, and God had moved them to Nashville a year and a half before I got there. They called me and said, "Ben, do you want to come over for a meal?"

And I said, "Duh! I don't turn down food!"

So I was just like you know what? I'm going to go over for a home-cooked meal. This is amazing. And they're Vermonters! Right? Like we're few and far between. So I went and we had this amazing meal. I had no idea how biblical this was.

At the end of the meal they asked me, "Would you come to church with us tomorrow morning?"

It was a Saturday night. Sunday morning shows up, I'm like potatoes. I'm like, "Can you pass the rolls?" And I'm like eating the roll. And I said, "Sure! I'll go with you. What else have you got? Is that cake?" I'm like, "Sure, I'll go!"

But I was raised with respect and if somebody did something nice for you, you do something nice back. They fed me, I'll feed them.

And so 9:30 in the morning, I showed up at their house and we drove to the service at the Church of the City in Franklin, Tennessee. And I'll never forget, it was the music. And it was the music that drew me in. I remember looking back. I'm getting emotional but I look back at the family and I'm like I got to go. I hear—I could hear the booming, I could hear the bass. I had no idea what it was and I ran into the auditorium. And I stood there and I could hear and feel, and I saw everybody's hands were up in the air. And I was like what is this? Like what is going on?

And I felt the Lord and he said, "I gave you your voice and now you're going to sing for me."

And I laid it all out right there and I said, "Take my language, take the drugs, take the alcohol, the sex, the things, take it all. I'm done with it."

Two months—within two months, I was drinking 19 beers a night, went down to ten to eight, to six to two to where I don't even like the taste anymore. I pulled all these things for me.

So yeah, I'm sitting with you guys, ten days shy of four years clean and sober and celibate because of Jesus Christ and what he's done for me.

**RANDY:** So when you heard the music and you were drawn, was there a drawing of the emptiness inside you as well?

**BEN:** Oh, I can't even explain. I don't even know. I tell people if someone were to stand behind me in that moment and take my photo, my feet would have been off the ground. Because as a drug addict, as a secret drug addict, I'd never been higher my entire life. I had no idea. The crazy thing was, I did nothing for it. And went, what is this high that I've never felt before? It was higher than any drug that I'd ever done.

**TAMMY:** Has your walk with Jesus been since that day, since that experience, has it been easy for you or do you still struggle? Or is it something that you have to wake up every day and say like I surrender this God. I give this to you. What's life like for you now four years later?

**BEN:** I feel like—it was funny when I got baptized on November 10th, 2019. They need to give people like a care package, like a warning package that's like, you just made a decision for Heaven and eternal life, which is insanely amazing! However, there is going to be some opposition in your life like maybe you've never experienced before. So all of a sudden these hardships started coming at me, started getting thrown at me. And it started with the group of friends that I had, people that I was surrounded with. It was like, all a sudden I'm different now and I don't want to participate in the things that I was doing before.

So honestly, when I gave my life to Christ, it was the loneliest that I had ever been in a really, really long time. It was extremely lonely. I felt such peace but I also felt who do I even talk to and who do I turn to? Like I had the Davenport family, which was amazing. They kind of ministered to me.

**TAMMY:** Well, how did you work through the loneliness then? If you felt lonely, what did you do to come on the other side of that? What kind of choices did you feel you had to make?

**BEN:** The Bible, honestly, I just started opening the word, and literally, not understanding much, I'm just getting little bits of pieces and he's speaking to me here and there. But that's really what I had. I just dove in head first and was like, well, I guess it is just me and you God and we're going to try to figure this out.

**RANDY:** Did you eventually get some community around you?

**BEN:** Yeah. Oh my gosh! And you know what's amazing about it though? That kind of weirdness and quietness and loneliness lasted for about two weeks. All of a sudden, the Lord just started—like I started meeting people. Just started sending me people. All of a sudden, I'd look at my past, my best friend Paul, who I built stone walls and landscaped, was a full believer, like loved the Lord and had secretly prayed for me my whole life. All of the sudden all these people started popping up. So it was like my eyes weren't open to it.

**RANDY:** It sounds like, you talk about the alcohol going away, the drugs going away, the language going away, but it sounds like it's not just a loss of these things but good things was going in.

**BEN:** Yeah. He pulled one thing out and put two things in.

**RANDY:** And they're good things.

**BEN:** Oh, amazing things! Oh no. The friend group—I'm so surrounded and prayed for and so blessed. So there is always something, there's always someone who comes and pops at the exact moment I need it the most. Because this thing has been hard. This thing

has been hard.

**TAMMY:** How was your songwriting changed? Obviously, you're writing differently, I'm sure. Your lyrics are probably totally different. Is your approach to writing totally different now that you have come to Christ?

**BEN:** Yeah, it starts with a prayer. It starts with Hey God, what do you want to say? Forget about what I want to say. And what do you want to say? So we start every song with a prayer. But the first couple of nights after I got baptized, I had woken up in the middle of the night and just started writing light and love and Jesus and just power and the gospel. And just things, like these words just kind of fell out of me. And I was like: what is going on? And it just really sparked this songwriting. I wrote 117 songs in seven months.

**RANDY:** Your self-titled debut album is out this week, "Who I Am" is on the radio. There is a song that the radio's a little jittery about, which is your testimony. I'd love for our audience to hear that.

**BEN:** Are you serious?

**TAMMY:** Yeah. Let's do it here.

**BEN:** You want me to play that song?

**RANDY:** I want to hear it!

**BEN:** You would allow that? Praise God!

Well, I found empty in a bottle  
Trying to fill the hole  
I dug myself five feet deep

Had one more foot to go  
I looked for peace inside a powder  
Till they put me on the floor  
I got so close to overdosing  
I knocked on heaven's door

I knew I was searching for something but I didn't know what. I spent so much time just trying to figure out exactly what it was.

But I didn't find my own way back home all alone  
I didn't change my mind overnight on my own  
It wasn't my plan or my hands  
That would finally set me free  
I didn't find God  
Oh, I didn't find God  
He found me

I don't know how I didn't see Him coming  
Like headlights in the dark  
With the force of a thousand horses  
Headed straight toward my heart  
Never thought that I'd believe  
Until he was right in front of me.  
He was right there all along and now I see  
I didn't find my way back home all alone  
I didn't change my mind overnight on my own  
It wasn't my plan or my hands  
That would finally set me free  
I didn't find God  
Oh, I didn't find God  
He found me



Whoa, he found me  
Yeah, he found me  
In the lonely, in the hopeless, in the broken  
He found me at my lowest, not unnoticed and I know he found me  
In the lonely, in the hopeless, in the broken  
He found me  
At my lowest, not unnoticed  
And I know I didn't find my way back home all along  
I didn't change my mind overnight on my own  
It wasn't my plan or my hands  
That would finally set me free  
I didn't find God  
No, I didn't find God  
He found me

Whoa, he found me  
He found me in the lonely,  
In the hopeless, in the broken  
He found me  
At my lowest, not unnoticed, and I know that he found me.

### **In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Whoo! It hits me so hard. I'm so grateful for your life, Ben. I'm grateful that you showed up at church. I'm grateful that you surrendered. That God found you right where you were at. You didn't have to fix anything, you didn't have to make it look all great and put a bow on it, you just showed up. And that's where God met you.

There are so many people today, I have no doubt, Randy, that can totally relate to that. I feel just really lost and want to stop looking for God and just want to give up. And wonder, wonder if there's more? Is there more? Yes, there is. I promise you, the story,

your testimony, Ben, it alone changes life. But then your music on top of that, it just accelerates and pushes us forward. I love you, my brother in Christ. So grateful for your life and your testimony and your music. It's changing lives. It touched my life today. And I pray that it has touched your life today, too. Randy, I know it has you too because you love music.

**RANDY:** We're sitting here, the power in his voice—

**TAMMY:** I know! It blew my hair back.

**RANDY:** It's great, but you needed the power of God in your life.

**BEN:** Thank you. I don't know what to say.

**RANDY:** How do you feel when you feel God's power in your music?

**BEN:** It's not my own, that's for sure. Paul said I'm still really learning the Bible. And Paul said, "It is a mystery of God." And he was talking about this thing that has apprehended me; this love that's apprehended me. I feel like that. I want to explain it and I want to get my hands on it and I want to write it down and I want to sing it out. And I want to wear it on a T-shirt. I want to run around town and scream it at the top of my lungs. It is just so hard to explain. But the Bible says if you just ask and believe with your whole heart, and you just declare that Jesus is your Lord and Savior, that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, that's all I've done, that's all I said. I said, "Jesus, I believe you. And I believe you died for me and I believe you're my Savior. And I love you. Will you please help me because I need help?" It came from an honest place of like I've tried everything else, that's why John 6:6a has become my life verse, "Lord, to whom else shall we go?" I have nowhere else to go. I've run, I've tried everything. Literally, I've tried everything and it was that Peter moment of looking up and being, Lord, to whom else shall I go? I've got nobody.

**RANDY:** So there is somebody watching right now online, on television, and they're right there where you're at. If that's you, I want you to call that telephone number right there and just talk to somebody. They're just going to pray with you, they're going to love on you, they're going to listen to you. But if you need to surrender your life to Christ right now, don't waste another second. Ben can tell you. It is the answer, it is the thing you're looking for. It's the power you need. It's the filling for that void. So Ben, thank you.

**BEN:** Thank you for the opportunity. But this is what God has done. I never would have envisioned even sitting here with you two. Like never! And the name of Jesus, that was a swear in my mouth my whole life, and now all of a sudden, he's become my Lord and Savior. Only God can do that! Only God. All I had to do was ask him and it was free. All the time that I've wasted, all the stuff that I'd been through but to realize that it was all for his good, that it was all for a purpose, that it was all so that I could talk to that person right now that's on the other end, that's like I'm ready to kill myself. I've been meeting them every day. I've seen the scars. I've seen the cut marks. I've heard the stories. They're everywhere. So that's what I'm out to do. So thank you for allowing me to just talk about it and be myself.

**RANDY:** Oh I love it! I love it. Is that song on the new album by the way?

**BEN:** That song is there.

**RANDY:** Okay, the song is there. So you can catch that on Ben's album. It's out now. But I love the thought that you found me, because there are so many people that feel like they're lost, and feel like they're hopeless, that need a rescue. And God is the rescue of the one more—one more!

I want you to see some who need to be found and some that we found that you can help. You can help reach that one more. Watch this and then you'll understand.

### **Begin video clip**

**Announcer:** The fact that children and young women are being kidnapped and held captive is intolerable. But what happens next to these innocent victims is unthinkable.

>> I would scream and cry and say I didn't want to do that work. But the lady would beat me with a big stick. I still have the scars on my arm from her beatings.

One girl that was in there with me had her throat slit; another had her breasts cut off. After seeing all that torture, I was terrified I would get murdered too. So I did the work they forced me to do.

**Announcer:** Anjolie's story ended well because she was rescued from her captors and she has started the healing process. But there are thousands of other victims and children at risk who are not so fortunate. They are still waiting to be rescued.

>> I prayed that before more girls die in there, we can get them out so they can have hope and a new life like me.

### **End of clip**

### **In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Whoo! New hope and life like me. Man, there is something that rises inside of me that just wants to shout, like do you see why this is so urgent that we get to them now? There was one that was reached, there was one that was rescued, and she was restored. One! But there is another one today right now someplace that we've got to reach, rescue, and restore. We've got to start that process today. It is urgent.

And I hope that you feel the same that I feel rises within me—every 30 seconds? Is there something that we can do, Randy, to stop this? I believe that there is. If we all do our part, we all come together. We can make an impact.

**RANDY:** We know we can because we are. You are. So many of you have reached out and said, we want to help, we want to reach, we want to rescue, we want to restore. I have to say this, Tammy, because right now we're seeing an awareness. We've been seeing this, it is not just around the world, it is in our own country, it is right here. But unless we give them the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we're not doing them the service we think we are. And so I am all for reaching into wherever a young person, usually women, but sometimes boys are, she called it in the roll-in "work," it is hell—it is hell on earth. Wherever that is taking place, I want to rescue that person. And we've done it with your help but we need to do more.

I want to reach into places where the enemy is trying to steal lives and say no. And we've done that but we need to do more. Most of all, I want to restore as many lives as we can. We serve a God who redeems all things.

We're asking you to right now to reach out with some other partners who have said hey, we've got a matching gift. We'll match every gift made today. That means the average cost is normally around \$128 to reach, rescue, or restore one but with your gift today of \$64 we can do that. If you can make the gift of \$128 it will actually help two lives. Many of you can reach out and reach, rescue, and restore 20 with a gift of \$1280.

Listen, it is not about the money. It's about the redemption. It is about Christ entering into someone's hell and giving them heaven. And he's asked us to partner with him. We're asking you to partner with us today. Please, go to the phone, and go online. Make the best gift you can. The best gift you can is the one God puts on your heart. We obey, the results are up to him. Let's obey today. Let's be his hands and feet around the world. Do it now.

**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**

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** You really can help reach, rescue, or restore a child. I hope you will do the best you can today. And if you want prayer, do use that prayer line. It's always available 24/7. Tammy, I was just so blessed by Ben.

**TAMMY:** Totally! Totally! Thank you so much. My goodness, my brother in Christ. I love you. Yes!

**BEN:** Love you too. Thank you!

**RANDY:** Thank you for watching. We'll see you again next time on *Life Today*.