

11/13/23 from 9/14/23
Week 38: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*
Randy Robison and Tammy Trent
Benny Tate

In the studio

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. Tammy Trent is with me. And Tammy, I'm excited because Pastor Benny Tate is back with us. For those of you who don't know, he is the pastor of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia. And if you're going to Milner, you're going there on purpose. He has one of those churches that well, you have more people in your church on a weekend or at least watching the service than live in your town; is that right?

BENNY: Well, that's exactly right. I think the population is somewhere around 800 people. I often said that our zip code is E-i-E-i-O. We're literally out there, Randy and Tammy. But thousands of people, I think, I don't know, but thousands of people show up on a Sunday.

RANDY: Which is amazing. And really goes to the message in your book that we're talking about today *Unlimited*. The subtitle says "Experiencing the fullness of God's power in your life." This is something that you have lived and you are living. Give us a little bit of a taste of what God has done in your life when you have said, Holy Spirit, you take over. I'll follow.

BENNY: Randy, there are just so many stories. Oswald Chambers said this. He said, "The Holy Spirit is the first practical power that we experience." But he said, "It is the last power we come to understand." And I think there is power when we realize Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

There is supernatural power that's available to Christians. And to be honest with you, my wife probably taught me this early on. Barbara and I were very young when we started dating. Tammy, we'd just had a few dates and we were in love. Somebody said that's puppy love but it is real to the dogs, isn't it? I mean we were just in love. After just a few dates I said, "Barbara, I want to marry you. I want to get married."

We were both from rural Tennessee and she said, "You've got to talk to my dad. You've literally got to go to my father and ask for my hand in marriage."

I said, "I'm willing to do anything."

So I went to her father and I simply said, "I want to get married."

He said, "I don't recommend it."

TAMMY: He did?

BENNY: Tammy, he said, "I don't recommend it." He said, "You don't understand what you're getting into." He said, "My daughter is a very sick girl." He said, "My girl has eight or ten seizures a day. My daughter will have a seizure and she will lose five pounds. She will gush up blood." He said, "Look at you, you're in health." He said, "Are you wanting to commit to this?"

I said, "All I know is I love her." By the way, almost 40 years later, I still love her.

He said, "Are you sure?"

I said, "I am."

So we got married, Randy and Tammy. We were so young we didn't know whether to go on a honeymoon or summer camp. I mean we were just kids. And sure enough, he was correct about some things. We would go to church and Barbara would have a seizure. We would go shopping

and Barbara would have a seizure. And we would be in various places and she would have a seizure. Randy, our finances got so bad that when she would have a seizure I would say, "Please don't call—please don't call an ambulance. I have more bills right now than I can pay. Please don't call an ambulance."

Finally, the people in the community said something has got to be done. They started raising money and I sent Barbara to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. And the Mayo Clinic in Rochester said, "Barbara has got a scar on her brain. We don't know if her mother maybe had a—in the pregnancy, we don't know if Barbara has taken a hit to the head. We just don't know. But there's a scar on the brain and it is too delicate to touch. Just keep taking the Dilantin, keep taking the phenobarbital, and keep taking the medication. It will help. But it will never stop."

And so I was hiring people to stay with Barbara. I was working as a machinist in a machine shop. A few years passed and Barbara said to me, "You know, Benny, God has touched me of those seizures. I believe that God has healed me."

And I said, "Barbara, I don't know about that."

She said, "Benny, I don't think I need to take all this medicine." I think she was taking 14 pills a day. She said, "I don't believe I need to be taking all of this medicine."

I said, "Barbara," just me being a man of faith, I said, "You just keep taking the medicine."

And that went on for a while. One day I was at work working, and I told the Lord, "God, I'm going to make a deal with Barbara." I said, "I know how to cuff my hand over her nose and mouth and get her out of those seizures faster than anybody." I'd become pretty good because I had so much experience. I said, "God, I've got to work during the week but what about on the weekend? What about on the weekend she doesn't have to take the medicine?" Because I said, "I could be there with her." Randy, just a young man, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart. I said, "I could be there with her."

The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart, Tammy, and he said, "Son, what could you do that I can't do?"

I got into a '79 Ford Fairmont. I left work. I walked into my house. I looked at that little ol' wife in the face and I said, "Barbara, I believe the Holy Spirit has spoken to me. You don't ever have to take the medicine anymore."

Randy and Tammy, that's been 30 years ago and the girl went from eight to ten seizures a day to totally healed. I'm learning that he is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above according to the power that worketh in us. I just want people to know that the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is the great equalizer. The Holy Spirit, he is so wonderful.

RANDY: You talk about three attitudes we tend to have towards the Holy Spirit in your book *Unlimited* and that would be ignorance, indifference, and indulgence. When that happened and your wife was saying I think maybe I could go off these meds and you were struggling with that, and I understand it completely, what was your attitude or your view of the Holy Spirit at that point?

BENNY: My idea of the Holy Spirit was I don't know—I don't know if this is for us. I almost thought, Randy, this is for the indulgent people.

RANDY: The kind of crazy people.

BENNY: Yes! Because I think churches can have a—I think they can swing. I think a church can swing to a cemetery or some of them can swing to insane asylum. Do you know what I'm trying to say?

RANDY: I've been in both of them.

BENNY: I think I have too. So that was my attitude. That this would be an indulgence. Barbara, we need to be practical. In all getting, get wisdom. But what I didn't realize at that time is God

was building something in my life because here I was just a young preacher. And God was showing me that he could do exploits. The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And God was showing me that he could do exploits in my life and he could do exploits in my ministry. Just a person who had—just a common run-of-the-mill guy that God can do great things.

RANDY: But at the same time, in the Bible, when they ran after him for the miracles, the exploits, whatever, he shut them down.

BENNY: That's exactly right.

RANDY: So how do you see the role of the Holy Spirit in miracles and what's the goal of all that?

BENNY: I think the goal, Randy, is seeking him. You know, I think I used to travel and I'd preach a lot. Even sometimes today, I'll say to my wife, "Honey, I think I'm traveling too much."

And she'll say, "Why do you say that?"

I said, "The other day I pulled up to the mailbox and ordered a Big Mac and an order of fries and circled the house." Do you know what I'm saying?

I used to travel a lot and I've got a daughter, Savanna Abigail and when she was really small, when I'd get home, here I am with you all at *Life Today*, but when she was small if I got home, I wouldn't be home no time because she would say, "Dad, did you get me something?" She was looking for that—

RANDY: I have a grandson like that.

BENNY: You know all about that. She was looking for that gift. But you know, I learned as she grew up, it seemed like as I got home, Savanna just wanted to see her daddy. She just said, "Dad,

I miss you." And I think the secret is when we are seeking him when we're seeking a relationship with him.

Somebody said, "What's going to be the motivation for prayer?" Somebody said, "Well, needs has got to be your motivation for prayer." Well, I disagree because if needs are your motivation for prayer, when you don't have needs you're not going to pray much. Your motivation for prayer has to be to know him. It has to be for a relationship. It has to be intimacy with him.

So I would say to that person seek that—seek that. And it's amazing what God will do through our lives when he seek him.

John R. Rice was praying on one occasion, he prayed to God the Father, and he prayed to God the Son, and he prayed to the Holy Spirit. And somebody approached him and said, "John, you prayed God the Father, God the Son, the Holy Spirit, you pray to all three of them?"

He said, "Yes. I've lived long enough to get to know all of them. I've lived long enough to get to know all of them." I would challenge people to get to know all of them.

TAMMY: Yeah. I love that you said that pastor because I was going to say so many of us talk about God the Father, God the Son, but we're not always talking about the Holy Spirit. And like we said a moment ago, sometimes I think people think it is too spooky.

Why is it—first of all, for people that might not know, practically, who is the Holy Spirit? And why do we need him in our lives daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Why is it important?

BENNY: Here's what I would say. First of all, Jesus said this, Tammy. He said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is necessary for you that I go away. It is necessary for you that I go away. For if I go not away the Helper will not come."

See, when Jesus was here, if he was in Jerusalem, he wasn't five miles away in Bethlehem. He was just in Jerusalem. But he said, "When I go away, the comforter, the helper will come."

Here's what he actually said. He said it is more important that the invisible Holy Spirit is here than the visible Jesus is here. Because the invisible Holy Spirit could be everywhere. He could be everywhere. He could be in all places. That's why Jesus said, "He that believeth on me and the works I do," he said he'll do the works I do and greater works.

Well, certainly, Tammy, our listeners, and myself, we don't have more faith than Jesus. So it is not on the basis of faith. He said, "You'll do greater works." It is on the basis that the Holy Spirit could be everywhere. The Holy Spirit could be everywhere.

RANDY: It is interesting that sometimes, I know I've spent time in some pretty traditional denominations and they can kind of back off from these things. But when you look at the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they are very practical. And they are very much geared towards expressing God, giving him the glory, not us the glory. How do you see the role of spiritual gifts playing out properly when the Holy Spirit is in the lives of believers?

BENNY: You know, when a person receives Christ, they receive the Holy Spirit. And whether we realized it or not, God, the Bible says as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another. God, every person listening to me today is a gifted child. God takes those unique gifts and he uses them to build his body. He uses them to enhance other people.

And you know, what I challenge people is you know, stay in your gift zone. God has gifted you. Well, pastor, I don't know what my gift is. Here's what I would say. Your gift is what you do best with the least amount of effort. And God's gifted all of us. And God wants us to use those gifts. I would say to the listener today, God wants you to stay in your gift zone but certainly, he'll take you out of your comfort zone.

RANDY: Yeah. And he can give gifts freely any time he wants.

BENNY: Yes, he has! I've seen it throughout my ministry.

RANDY: So how do we get there? Is it just surrender in obedience? Is that kind of the

prompting? You know you talk about unlimited presence of the Holy Spirit, unlimited power, unlimited purpose. I guess, I'm just trying to put a physical—see how it physically looks.

BENNY: Here's the way I would simplify. Randy and Tammy, in the book of Ephesians, the great Apostle Paul said to the church in Ephesus, "Be not drunk with wine but be filled with the spirit." Now what was interesting is who is speaking to? Not to a bunch of pagan Greeks. He is speaking to the saints at Ephesus according to Ephesians 1:1. So here's what he said. He said to us believers be ye filled with the spirit. And I can just tell you my life. I'm constantly saying, God, fill me with your spirit. I need your spirit. I need your presence in my life.

See, Randy, in Ephesians 5:18 he tells us to be filled. Well, in Ephesians 5:21 he talks about husbands and wives submitting yourselves one to another. In verse 22 of Ephesians five, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as to the Lord." And then in Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands love your wives even as Christ loved the church." Well, how do we do those things? By being filled with the Holy Spirit. By being filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 6:1, "Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right." How do you do it? By being filled with the Holy Spirit. Masters, be good to your employees. How do you do it? Through being filled with the Holy Spirit. Employees, how are you good to your boss? Through being filled.

D.L. Moody—it is a neat story. Somebody asked D.L. Moody, they said, "Every time before you preach, Brother Moody, you say 'God fill me. God fill me.'" And they said, "Why? Why do you do that, Brother Moody?"

He said, "Because I leak."

[Laughter]

Randy, listen, we're here, Tammy, with the world, flesh, and the devil, and whether we like it or not we leak. And we have access to the Holy Spirit's power. Randy, he told the early church and I know I'm on a roll, but he told the early church, he said, now listen, you go to Jerusalem. For ten days, don't you do anything. Don't you preach, don't you teach, don't you do anything. You

just wait until you be endued with power from on high.

Randy, how can we do anything outside of the Holy Spirit? How can we have success and significance in any teaching, preaching, or ministry, using our gifts that you spoke of? How can we do any of it outside of the power of the Holy Spirit?

RANDY: Well, scripture says without him we can do nothing.

BENNY: That's exactly right.

RANDY: But with him, all things are possible! Unlimited possibilities. I love it. I want you to get *Unlimited* by Benny Tate. It will bless you. It will stretch you. It will encourage you. We will send it to you today when you request it when you support a really special outreach, an expression of the Holy Spirit and God's love to other people. Watch this and we'll tell you how you can bless others and get Benny's book.

On the mission field

Isak: We're here in a malnutrition clinic in Pibor, South Sudan. And you're going to see as we walk through just how many mothers there are here.

ANNOUNCER: In Sub-Saharan Africa the death rate for children under five is the highest in the world. And the majority of those deaths are due to the complications of malnutrition.

ISAK: The children are all suffering from malnutrition. They brought them here to be screened. But what you're going to see as we keep walking is that from here, it just keeps going. The mothers literally are overflowing out of here and they're going all the way down. They're going around the corner. We've had to use another room to be able to actually put mothers in. And when we consulted with these mothers what the condition of their children is, have they lost children, more than 25% of the mothers here said that they had lost at least one child to malnutrition or a lack of food.

ANNOUNCER: In South Sudan, malnourishment clinics are overcrowded because of the fact villages have no food.

ISAK: See, this is what Mission Feeding is all about. Mission Feeding is about bringing highly nutritious and life-saving food to mothers and children like this to be able to ensure that these mothers don't bury their children anymore; that these children don't lose their lives. That we are able to truly express God's heart by extending his hands and giving these children the life-giving food that they so desperately need. We have to continue these programs. We have to even increase what we're doing here. We need that lifeline, that pipeline of food. We need Mission Feeding to continue to save lives here each and every day.

End of video

In the studio

RANDY: Every month, with your love, we reach conservatively 350,000 children through Mission Feeding. These are children who probably wouldn't have anything to eat if it were not for viewers like you. But I've got to tell you, as impressive as that number is, it really means the most to that one—that one child that will be spared today.

I have knelt in a graveyard where they were digging graves, short graves with the expectation that they would soon be filled. Unfortunately, they're not wrong. But through your love we have been able to put a stop in many places to this. And most importantly, we've been able to reach out and say, God sees you. We come in the name of Jesus Christ. We give them the food that they need today and we tell them about the food that will feed them eternally.

I'm asking you to join us in Mission Feeding today by making a simple gift. It is this simple, a gift of \$30 will feed three children for three months. A gift of \$50 will help feed five children for three months. A gift of \$100 will help feed ten. Some of you could feed 100 children for the next three months with your gift of \$1,000. Some of you can do even more.

Whatever it is God puts on your heart, I'm praying you will reach out and say yes, I see that one in need. I will be an answer to that mother's prayer. I will put a stop to the pain of malnutrition.

And Tammy, when we do this, I know we do it in obedience to express God's love but I've got to tell you, it feels good. It's a wonderful thing to say to a hungry child, here's a bowl of food.

TAMMY: It feels very good. I think of my own life. I have everything I need, Randy, to survive today—but they don't. They don't! And some of these children are literally starving to death. You'll never hear me use the phrase "I'm starving to death" because I know the reality of that. I never speak like that. These children are starving to death. And we can make a difference in their lives right now today. No mother should ever have to bury her child—never! And if we can be a part of that coming together as the body of Christ, as the family of Christ, doing what he's asked us to do, step up, be a blessing, if we can do that and change a life of one and then another and another, then I want to be a part of that.

And that's why I'm coming to you today, Randy is coming to you today to tell you about this great need. Pray about it. Go online, make that call, give the best gift you possibly can today, and let's make a difference to bring life to these children and families today.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Across the continent of Africa children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition, and even death. With food reserves gone, and many areas experiencing severe famine, we urgently need to replenish supplies to keep feeding the 350,000 children who are counting on us.

Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach your gift of love can be an answer to 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 three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the brand-new *LIFE* planner. Bound in soft-touch

leather, this planner will help you with your daily walk, with space for you to record your appointments, goals, inspirational notes, and prayers.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "God's Promise" serving bowl. This beautiful and versatile ceramic bowl is decorated with Second Corinthians 9:8 and will make a lovely addition to your table or home.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds." Inspired by Jesus' words in Matthew 6:26.

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

End of video

In the studio

RANDY: I hope you are going online or going to the phone making the best gift you can. Let's put shoes on children in need. Let's put smiles on their faces. You will bless them just as Benny Tate has blessed us here today. I've just been so blessed. This is so good.

TAMMY: It means so much to me. And I wrote something down that I'm going to have on a sticky note. I want to read this every day but I want to read it to you because it is so important. "When we allow the Holy Spirit to fill and direct our lives, everything will change, relationships will be healed, self-esteem will be lifted, purpose will be revealed, direction will become clear, hope will overflow, peace will reign in our hearts, and God's goodness and faithfulness in their lives will be undeniable." What a word from God. Thank you so much, Pastor Benny.

BENNY: No, thank you.

TAMMY: May it be undeniable in my life and may it be undeniable in your life. Let the Holy Spirit overflow in your life today. Thanks for watching. We'll see you next time.