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Week 14: Rescue LIFE

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Jimmy Rollins

In the studio

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison; Tammy Trent is with me. We're excited that you are here because we've got a dynamic guest. When we look at the world and we look at all that is going on around us, we think, how do I love people like I should? There's just lots of lines and boundaries. It is a mess. And Jesus says you've got to love one another.

Well, today's guest has written a fine book that shows us how to *Love Outside the Lines*. What does that mean? You're going to find out today. We're excited to have Jimmy Rollins with us. Jimmy, great to see you.

JIMMY: Absolutely. It is great to be here.

RANDY: When we had a conversation online a bit ago, you just said some things that to me were foundationally important. It's like you know what? That's so true and it is truth.

What prompted you to write on this subject? Because there are some areas of this that are very sensitive in our culture.

JIMMY: Well, I appreciate, first of all, the invitation to be here. I'm excited to unpack this because I think it's hard conversations; like hard conversations of how we love beyond the boundaries of what our generations before us have deemed acceptable or not acceptable. How do we love beyond how we vote? How do we love beyond how we think? How do we love beyond certain ideologies or even certain theological truths that have become so dear to ourselves?

And so what prompted the book is that the Bible just speaks from Genesis to Revelation about this idea of spiritual family. When we get saved, when we give our lives to Christ it is supposed to unite us. I felt like growing up, there were just so many lines and boundaries that other people would just overlook or not notice that stuck out to me. If this gospel message is supposed to be the most authentic, amazing message why are we keeping it to certain groups and certain people? I've just always been someone that likes to take things apart. So I wanted to take this apart. Why do we have to accept that those people aren't acceptable? Or us versus them in their lines, their cultural lines, their ethnic lines, their generational lines, socioeconomic lines? So how do we love beyond those lines?

TAMMY: Exactly. And there's so many differences. We're so diverse. And a lot of times, I think we tend to stay away from people that are different from us, and we don't see the beauty in it. There is so much beauty to me in diversity, in the fact that you and I are different. We've lived different lives, but we serve the same God, and we are still brothers and sisters because of Christ. I think there is so much beauty in just the knowledge of that to me. I've always embraced that.

JIMMY: Well, I can tell just even meeting you earlier, you can just tell when people are welcoming, when people are inquisitive, when people approach you from a learning culture, if you will, rather than I've already decided about you. I've already had my assumptions about you. It is based off of what we've experienced in the past, or what news channel we watch, or what type of church we go to.

What I love is that the beauty, as you said earlier, Tammy, of diversity, it shouldn't hinder the great commission, it should help us fulfill it. That all of God's people are going after all of God's people. In order for that to happen, we have to love all of God's people.

RANDY: There are some things that you identify as having to happen in our own lives before we can properly love outside whatever boundaries are there. What are some of

those keys to getting there?

JIMMY: Wow, that is a great question. I'll say it like I say it first and then kind of unpack it. I think the body of Christ has to stop judging people because they sin differently than us.

RANDY: Sinned?

JIMMY: They sin differently than us. When we unpack division, when we look at racism, when we look at the things that are separating us, it all points back to the garden. It all points back—you know, scripture says that when Adam sinned, all of us sinned. What does sin do? It divides us and separates us from God. So if we're separated from God, why would we have any other expectation than to be separated from one another?

And when we start unpacking that and we look at racism, we look at prejudice or we look at hate, they're all symptoms of division. So let's go back first and understand internally, genetically if you will, or generationally, what we're up against. We're up against an enemy that works in division. And how I know this is Adam and Eve were the same color, yet they were divided. It got passed down. Cain and Abel, same color, divided. Jacob and Esau, twins, and they got divided over one who was hairier than the other.

So when we look at it, I think we're after symptoms and not after the real cause root issue, which is division. Because you can take race away and put this in marriage, it is the same thing. And so we have to first look internally and ask ourselves where are we divided from God? Because if we're divided in any way in our relationship from God, it is going to push us away from others.

TAMMY: And it's been said before that the church is the only hope that we have. Do you feel the same? For me, when we talk about division, even amongst believers, I haven't seen so much division in the church like I've seen now. And it feels like we've got—like you talk about getting to the foundation, the root of so much to me is also just

amongst believers—unifying us as believers, as the body of Christ, as the church. If we want to make a difference in the world, we better be healed, we better be restored, we better be repaired in order for us to go out and make a difference. Do you feel the same? And what do you think it will take to unify?

JIMMY: I do believe that the church is the hope of the world, especially the local church. However, what is the local church made up of? People. So we have to have this understanding that we don't go to church we are the church. And when the church comes together, we must come together in unity. We have denominations, we have styles of music, we have—if you clap on the one and the three or the two and the four, based off of what type of church or upbringing that you come from.

I think this idea that the church makes disciples of all people. Well, we first are going to have to love and accept all people. Like you said earlier, we're different. And the church needs to be unified. And Psalms 133 says what? How good and pleasant it is when brothers indwell together in uniformity. No, it doesn't say that. It says "unity." And unity, to be defined as unity it must accept difference. If not, then what's the need for the word? So when the church is unified, scripture says the anointing will be released and then we have the power to command blessing.

I believe this. That if we're going to be the hope of the world, our world has got to become larger than just our preferences, our styles, our ideologies, our race, our gender, our generation. And so there is immense hope that I have that the church is going to be unified. I'm just not sure if everyone is willing to go and take an internal investigation to ask themselves does my heart break for the things that break God's heart?

TAMMY: You clearly have passion, so much passion for that. Now, where did that come from? Have you always been this passionate about bringing people together, unifying people? I know you've got so many great stories in your book, and I loved reading so many of them. Do you have a favorite one that just kind of takes you back to when that was rooted?

JIMMY: I'll say this. And just everything I do is passion. I brush my teeth with passion. Like I'm just a passionate, expressive person. When I have a belief about something, I just believe in going after it with all I've got.

I think when you unpack and look at the book, one of my favorite stories is probably my least favorite incident and that was in Bible college. I am in a place that is preparing spiritual leaders to change the world, and it is probably the greatest instant in which I experienced something that should have driven me away from the church, something that should have pushed me away from the church, something that should have pushed me away from those who don't look like me. But it is amazing to me how God took this greatest misery moment and now it is like my passionate ministry to help others never do that.

RANDY: What happened?

JIMMY: Well, I was sitting in chapel. I was one of 15 African Americans of about 1,000 students, and in missions chapel. I'll never forget it. Now, this guy's supposed to be in missions. So if you're in missions, you're called to missions, you're supposed to love everybody. Right? So in his three points in a close, he thought that telling a racially insensitive joke was a good idea. And he used probably one of the most inappropriate words that you could use amongst his message, in his message, amongst his three points.

And I was sitting there and friends that were different from me automatically, we were separated because they were uncomfortable; I was uncomfortable. So the only thing that I knew to do was get up and walk out. I feel like this—we still have people getting up and walking out of conversations, getting up and walking out of relationships; but I want to change that. I want to be committed to staying and talking through things that are hard so that we can redefine what the enemy wants to define as division, and we can get a new destiny from that.

RANDY: So I admire that, and I think you're right. But I hope—I'd like to think that I would have gotten up and walked out with you. Because we have to be intolerant of the things that God is intolerant of. Right? How do we make that stand for what's right and even say, that's wrong, that's sin, and still maintain whatever unity can be found? Because that is a tough spot?

JIMMY: I think, number one that's a great question because what I don't want this book is to just be some surfacy thing that we all just have to pray more. Or we all have to ask God more. Well, practically, what do we have to do? And I think what you said, even as we did the interview online, what I love is you asked the—you kept going deeper. But this is really hard, and this is really tough.

One of the things, I think that we have to do, as I said earlier, is take that personal investigation. I have discovered in my life that if I'm going to reach people, I'm going to have to be delivered from their opinion. I think my friends who stayed and laughed, it wasn't that they hated me, it wasn't that they were racist, it wasn't that they were—it was that they were not comfortable enough to get up and walk out with the one because of the opinions of the many.

And so when you think about those moments, this cost you. Even being on the show, having me on this show with this book, there is a cost to that. Because there are so many that will say why are we still talking about this? There are so many that will say haven't we done better? I don't think anything less than equality is better. Anything less than pleasing God is better. So can we get delivered from the opinions of people so that we can reach more people? That's the hard part.

Even in our families. Like if granddad did it this way and dad did it this way and had these ideologies, are you really going to tell them they're wrong? Are you going to not laugh at the joke that's been culturally accepted in our families forever? Even though it is not hurting anybody, what it is doing is forming the brain of that great-grandchild in the high chair of what they're supposed to think or not think in who is acceptable or not

acceptable.

TAMMY: Honestly, I can't believe we're still talking about some of this stuff. At the same time, I think and do you think the same, Pastor Jimmy, that we'll probably be talking about it for many years to come? Do you think it is always going to be a conversation? Are we just constantly learning?

I love when you use the word *proximity*. To me, that was like getting closer and closer in relationship, people in my life to being a better listener. I felt like growing up, I had a lot of black friends, I do now, and I remember a few years ago when some of this came up, I pulled out my phone and I started texting all my friends during George Floyd going I love you, I see you. Have I done enough? Because I literally didn't even think about some of the things that they carry around every day. And I texted and called every one of them. I remember walking into the Y, the gym the next day, and the first black guy I saw I was like, I'm so sorry! My heart just ached at the thought of anybody aching. I don't care what color you are, I just think feeling less of or anybody making you feel less important or less unseen, it bothers me. I wonder if we'll always be in that kind of struggle or if we'll get over it somehow.

JIMMY: I'll never forget, I was in—I moved to West Palm Beach and my realtor, who happens to be white was taking me around and we went into this tile store because I wanted this specific kind of tile. We walked into the store—it's in the back, I think the last chapter of the book—and it was shocking to him that the lady behind the counter thought I was the help. It was shocking. And actually, he was helping me. And I just let it play out. Because what it did in that moment, is I didn't have to prove to him that what I face is real, he actually experienced it. And I didn't say a word.

And we got in the car afterward. I didn't judge the lady, I didn't respond. I didn't react if you will. And he said, "Wow! I didn't know that that was still a thing."

And I said to him, "It's not only still a thing, it's still a thing almost daily for me."

And he just said, "Do you think it will ever change?" Same question you just asked me.

And I said, "I'm not sure." But I'm going to be faithful to my assignment and I'm going to die trying.

I think on this side of eternity, sin is always going to be a thing. And if sin is always going to be a thing, hate is going to be a thing. Hate is going to be a thing, racism is going to be a thing. Now though, how could the church respond to it? How could the church not have to wait for a George Floyd or—incident in order to make this a conversation?

It is crazy to me that we teach and train pastors, hey make sure you do this kind of series every year, but we skip over treating people as God would treat them. And I think because it's not popular. It's because I'll never forget one of my friends asking me, can you come—after George Floyd, this is in Minnesota—and preach at our church, in his predominantly white church. I said are you sure? Because it is going to cost you. There are going to be people that are not happy that you're having me speak on this.

And God like amazed me that he invited me to speak and yes, people left his church but the people who were there were empowered. And I feel like those are the kind of steps that we need to take. So a long answer to a quick question.

RANDY: But an important one. Here's where I really to want end because we have to know that there is hope. We have to know that even if there is a cost it is worth it. So can, Jimmy Rollins, can the church make a difference? Can we lead in this area and go to a godly solution and not the world's solutions because most of which are doomed to fail, can we lead them in the right direction?

JIMMY: I'm going to say yes. And I'm going to say yes when we decide to not have a version of Jesus, and not only go to some places he visited. He visited Samaria in John chapter four.

RANDY: Intentionally.

JIMMY: And he told the church, the disciples, we have to go through Samaria. And he's talking to a woman at a well that he's not supposed to talk to, not only culturally, but gender, they're not supposed to be having a conversation. And they begin to start unpacking history. And as they begin to unpack history, Jesus empowers this woman to go change her city.

Imagine if this book empowered you to have a conversation that I can't have with the people of your city. And I think that's the hope that we have. That's what it means to be a disciple, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and have conversations for him. And I think yes, we're going to do this.

RANDY: You know, you give me hope. You give me hope in going into places that are hard to go into. That's why I want you to ask for *Love Outside the Lines*. Be empowered to speak into some places that maybe you think you're not qualified or able to speak into.

So we'll send you that book when you do another thing today which is to reach into an area that is dark when you join with us to reach out to those who are overlooked, who are marginalized, and you want to make a difference. Watch this and we'll tell you how you can do it today.

On the mission field

Open Captions

>> "Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him." Psalm 127:3

ANNOUNCER: It makes our hearts joyful to see children across this world being able to just be children. But the stark truth is millions of children right now are having their childhood ripped away as they're forced into the dark world of human trafficking.

Mayna was only 12 years old when a relative did the unimaginable and sold her to sex traffickers. Her life was forever changed.

>> I cried, telling them, "I do not want to be in this big city, and I do not want to do this kind of work." They would hit me so much that I would bleed from my nose and mouth. And they would hit me in my chest until I would cough up blood.

ANNOUNCER: This is why Rescue LIFE is so critical by reaching into villages around the world with education and intervention. The effort to save lives from this torment is what Rescue LIFE is all about. But it can only happen with your help in order to reach, rescue, and restore these precious lives.

Because of the help that Mayna received, she devotes much of her time reaching out to young women so they can escape the experience and the trauma she did.

>> I thank God every day for keeping me alive.

End of video

In the studio

RANDY: I know as a parent, that will break your heart. And I think sometimes with women, it is just heartrending. With men, someone like myself, there is a little bit of anger because if you do that to my children, it's—I would do anything to stop you. I would do anything to help save them. And I think there is a little bit of that in God. He does not like his children to be abused. He does not like suffering. He does not like sexual exploitation.

So what do we do about it? I think that's where we become his hands and his feet and we say, you know what? No more. We're going to put a stop to it. You may be sitting there thinking, I wish there was something I can do. I'm here to tell you there is something you

can do because we've been doing it for years. We have seen positive results. We have reached into some of the darkest places. We have rescued children from this hellish nightmare, and through the grace of God, we have restored them and their identity, given them skills, something they can do to provide for themselves.

This is a program that is not just earth-shattering for those that it impacts, I think it is heaven-shaking because it is Christians being Christians going and standing against the gates of hell which can't prevail when we take action.

That's why, Tammy, I'm excited that we have the ability to do something as much as I'm heartbroken at the awful things that are going out there. I know we can make a difference today.

TAMMY: Yes, it is hard for us to talk about these horrific situations that these young girls, especially, are going through. But to know that there is a solution, to know that we have a program in place that can bring new life, that can bring new hope, that can bring new dreams to these families, to these girls that have been lied to. The deception is deep. The evil is deep. They've been told so many awful, awful things. These stories are packaged in these pretty little bows; they say their life is going to be fantastic and changed. And they step into these things, and everything has been taken from them. Their very lives in some cases have been taken from them. Everything has been destroyed.

This ministry has a plan. We have a way to go in to reach, rescue, or restore. I don't know about you, but I want to be a part of something that will save a life and help them rebuild their lives again.

RANDY: You know, that's right. Right now we have a great opportunity because we have a \$320,000 matching gift. That means your gift today of \$128 would normally help reach, rescue, and restore one child will do that for two children. Many of you can make a gift of \$1280; that today will help reach, rescue, or restore 20 children! That's based on our history, our budget, and the number of lives impacted. It breaks down along those

lines.

But here's the important thing. Can we do something? Can we come together as the body of Christ and say, we're going to stop this? We're going to reach out. The world has lied to these people. The world has taken advantage of these girls and boys. We're going to shine the light of God's truth in there. We're going to show them what real love looks like. We're going to give them hope for a future.

You could do that right now. Go to the phone, go online, make the best gift you can, and let's reach out and Rescue LIFE.

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 "Believe This, Not That!" featuring the promise from heaven for every need on earth. This book is a resource every believer should have when facing discouragement, pain, fear, or the vast array of negative thoughts that attack all believers.

With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive "Experiencing Israel," by Tony Evans.

Discover the holy land like never before and view stunning scenes in spectacular full color photography. Also, find practical applications that bring the world of the Bible into your life today!

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

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio

RANDY: I hope you're going to the phone or going online right now. Make the best gift you can. It really will make a difference in someone's life. And we, together, can do amazing things.

Be sure to request Jimmy's book today, *Love Outside the Lines*. We'll gladly send it to you. It will bless you. I've just enjoyed this.

TAMMY: I loved it. And I have one quick question, Pastor Jimmy, can I get myself a purple T-shirt?

JIMMY: Absolutely.

TAMMY: So if you read the book, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about. We are family. It is so great to have you here. Thank you so much, honestly!

JIMMY: Thank you so much for having me. I look—y'all are family.

TAMMY: I feel it too. Thank you so much, also, for watching today. And we'll see you next time on *Life Today*.