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Week 32: WFL

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Rebecca George

In the studio

TAMMY: Hello everybody! I'm Tammy Trent and this is Randy Robison. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Rebecca George wears a lot of hats. She is a podcaster, a speaker, a lead pastor's wife, a first-time author, congratulations, and a marathon runner. She is crazy. I don't know why she would want to run a marathon! All the things.

And I want to talk with her today about how did she do the thing. Rebecca, so great to have you here. You're a first-time author. How exciting for you!

REBECCA: Thank you! Thank you for having me.

TAMMY: Oh, my goodness! And that's really a part of doing the thing. Like how did all of these pieces of your life come together to step into a season of saying this is what I'm going to do. And I'm going to pour everything into this because I know I'm called to this. How did you even know you were called to it? How do you step into it? How do you navigate through doing the thing?

REBECCA: Yeah. I think probably ten years ago I would have told you I felt called to ministry in some way. I didn't know I would marry a pastor or write books, have a podcast, and that kind of thing, like the work we do today. But about ten years ago, my mom walked through a cancer journey that we're a decade on the other side to the glory of God; she is a cancer survivor.

After that journey, the Lord led me to start a ministry that I had for about five or six years where we donated handmade hats and handwritten letters of encouragement to cancer treatment centers all over America. We did work with St. Jude and M.D. Anderson, and some awesome organizations. And as I did that work, for the first time in my life, I would get invited to speak at church groups and maybe women's ministry gatherings and share what the Lord was doing. And so I would have these conversations with women where they would share, "I love how God is at work on the other side of what your mom went through and how he's blessed that. And coming out of such a horrible season. And I feel like I have my own version of that. I feel the Lord stirring my heart toward something in a particular way that I could use my gifts and talents to the glory of God."

And almost every time, Tammy, something would be holding them back. Sometimes it was fear, sometimes it was doubting if they were the girl for the job. Maybe it was insecurity. And so I would walk them through these moments of how do we get out of that and on to the other side. And how do we see that in a biblical way? I think as a girl who loves to encourage women, and that's kind of my thread that's marked my life, and if I were to ever write a book, I think this would be the first book I would want to write is pointing us to that gospel-centered perspective of how we're partnering with God and using our gifts for his glory.

TAMMY: Now, you talk about being an encourager, which I love, but was there ever a season in your life where you felt terribly discouraged? Like I'm unqualified. I'm not good enough. For you to be a great encourager I often, even for me, I often think I've had to go through something to be able to speak into somebody's life and to help be a cheerleader for them, to say no, you can do this. But did you ever go through a season where you just felt like, I'm not good enough, God? And I'm struggling right now to hear the voice of God and to know how to move forward.

REBECCA: Absolutely. I've been through many. But as you say that question, the one that comes to mind is I married my husband in 2019. We're about to celebrate our 4th anniversary. And along with that, I married a lead pastor. So I moved nine hours away

from everything I'd ever known about mid-2019. So if we do the math, it was about eight or nine months before the pandemic, and I left everything I'd ever known. I left my family, all my friends, and my comfortable Smokey Mountain home that I'd known my whole life and went into a season of ministry with my husband. It was such a gift, and we're so much stronger as a result of what we walked through in that season.

TAMMY: Was it a tough season? Like was it hard?

REBECCA: It was so hard, Tammy. It was so hard. In the midst of that, though, I think what the Lord showed me was, man, there are just moments where I'm going to strip some things away and it's going to be painful, discouraging. You're going to wonder if you have what it takes. And it is actually in those moments that I get to press into him all the more.

I think my marriage is different because of that season. I think my stepping into what we now hold in our hands probably wouldn't have happened had it not been for that transition. Because what it created was the capacity that I'd never had. I had dreamed of writing and speaking and podcasting for so many years and I finally found myself sitting at my home office with time that I'd never had before.

On the other side of that in hindsight, I can see that as a gift. It was very hard and I wondered if I was the girl for it and if God had equipped me and all the things that you named off. But I think it was also a beautiful opportunity to grow in him and allow him to transform me in that process.

RANDY: So you're doing some cool things. But when you say, "Do the thing," how does someone know what the thing is?

REBECCA: Yeah. I get asked this a lot and I love this question because I think many times we walk throughout our lives and we're doing good work and we're just maybe not having the intention behind connecting. Okay, this is where I feel really gifted. This is

where I feel like I'm contributing to God's kingdom. Like we know God doesn't need us. He chooses to use us in certain seasons and he lavishes these gifts on us that we get to use for his glory, and we get to partner with him.

And an exercise that I've actually walked through in my own life that I find to be helpful as we have this conversation is a Venn diagram exercise. So I remember doing these in middle school and comparing and contrasting different ideas, and seeing where they intercept in the middle. And this particular Venn diagram has three circles that intersect the first one that says what matters to you?

We all have things that we feel may be naturally gifted or wired for, and those are God-given and that's a beautiful thing. So there's maybe something that you think, I lose track of time when I'm doing that particular thing. Or I feel so much joy when I'm exercising that particular gift, and that's a gift from God. So we spend some time intentionally recognizing those things.

And then the second bubble is what matters to God. So it matters to you what matters to God. And we ask him and we search His Word for those things that matter to him that also matter to us and that we feel naturally wired for.

And then the third bubble which I think completes the equation well is what matters to other people within the community and the place and the people that God has planted your feet in today. Where do you see a need? Where do you see something that you're able to come in and use your gifts in a way that honors God and serves them really well?

So we can begin to see that intersection point of those three things as we kind of discover that. And it changes, and it shifts in different seasons. We don't talk about that enough. But it does look different as we shift from season to season. I'm sure if God blesses me and my husband with children one day, it will shift the way I exercise that gift.

RANDY: It will shift everything!

REBECCA: It will shift everything! It will flip everything upside down as I've heard. But that's a beautiful thing to continue to discover with the Lord as seasons shift.

TAMMY: Is there a difference between calling and a career? Because you know, because some people kind of think they have to be separate but could they be one and the same? Is there a difference?

REBECCA: Man, I think wherever God has planted our feet, I think that's our mission field. Wherever he has planted our feet and we have an opportunity to use our gifts every day and encourage others. We can do that in a classroom, we can do that as a stay-at-home momma, and we can do that in corporate America. So we get to exercise that wherever God plants our feet.

TAMMY: I love your book -- absolutely love your book! I love it because it's the best workbook I've ever had. Yours is so fun, Rebecca. I'm telling you, you're going to want to get this book, ladies, especially the ladies. There's going to be some guys too, that wonder about doing the thing, but I think if you're -- like where do I get started? How do I figure this out? What I love is it takes you through some stuff. There are some prayer prompts. There is some manifesto. There are a lot of things in this book to be interactive about, to think about, and to pray about. And I think there are some answers, there are some questions. It is filled with so much stuff.

Stories, one of my favorite stories that you talk about is when you ran a marathon, which I think you crazy girl! You are crazy! You ran a marathon.

REBECCA: A mile at a time.

TAMMY: Yeah, one mile at a time. But I love the story that you share in your book. Can you share that with us?

REBECCA: Absolutely. This was, I think, one of the most profound moments where the Lord has reminded me of such rich biblical truth that being raised in the church, I maybe memorized this truth from a very young age, but we have those moments where we get to live it out.

And so I trained for this marathon. I think it was my second one, and it was the St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital marathon in Memphis, Tennessee. I'd trained so hard, Tammy. I'd worked so hard and I had a really big goal in mind and I was running it with a friend. And so we start the race, and if listeners aren't familiar with the marathon distance it is 26.2 miles, and so we ran stride for stride with one another for about the first half. And we had that talk that you have with your running buddies before a race and you say, if you're having a better day than me, I'm not going to hold you back. And so she very slowly started easing away from me.

And it was also very uncharacteristically warm for a December day in Tennessee on this particular day. And so it was going to be in the lower 70s by the end of the race. Which for me, I don't run well in the heat. So I was already anticipating how horrible I was going to feel at the end of the meet. And so --

TAMMY: And thinking about giving up?

REBECCA: That's right! Yeah. And so I got to around mile 20 and I started getting those heat exhaustion symptoms and my arms were chilling and I was just so exhausted. And in hindsight, I probably should have quit but I didn't.

The moment was when I was running back into downtown Memphis. I can close my eyes and picture exactly where I was on the course and I was running underneath this bridge. I looked to my right and there are people cheering everywhere but I just sort of laser focused in on this one family and they are beginning to cheer my name; my name is kind of across my bib as I'm running by, and I see this little girl sitting in a wheelchair. And the closer I get to the family, I realize I think she is probably a patient at the hospital,

which they were kind of scattered along the course. And the closer I get to her I can see that she has a poster in her hands. And the closer I run to her I can begin to read the poster and it says, "The same power that raised Jesus from the grave is living inside of you. You can do this." "The same power that raised Jesus from the grave is living inside of you. You can do this."

And so for the remaining 10K that I had, step after step, I just continued to repeat that biblical truth to myself over and over again. I think that moment in that marathon feels a lot like our everyday Tuesday, where we're enduring in our calling and we have that moment where we get to choose, am I going to stay stuck in this rut of feeling like it's all on me or up to me? Or am I going to take God at His Word and remember that as a follower of Christ, I'm not alone in my struggle and I have the Holy Spirit residing in me as I walk forward with purpose?

And so man, I don't think I'll ever think about that truth the same ever again. And there's been so many moments in my calling after that marathon that I just came back to that truth. So I'm so thankful for it.

RANDY: Obviously, not all of us are called to marathons. But the interesting thing about that is that you felt called to do that thing. You wanted to do this thing. You felt like God had put it in your heart. So you use that scripture to strike that chord to give you encouragement.

What you say about where you're at being your mission field, I think, is very important for people to hear. Because there is no place that's greater, there is no place that is lesser. The place is where God has you. There is a quote in your book that's so simple. But I think we just have to understand it and believe it and do it. You say the outcome is his, but the obedience is ours.

REBECCA: Yeah. Yeah!

RANDY: I think a lot of times we lack the power to do the things because we're not in obedience. What we don't realize is that the power will come when we step out in obedience. How much of this outcome obedience dynamic have you experienced or continue to experience?

REBECCA: So much, Randy. I think for me, any personality test I've ever taken throughout the course of my life has always told me I'm an achiever. And so striving has been a huge challenge for me and a rub for me that I've continued to have to surrender to the Lord. I think the biggest thing he's done in my own heart is remind me that it is not all on me. It is not all up to me to accomplish his agenda. I get to partner with him and use my gifts on this side of Heaven, and that's a gift to me.

But the outcome, as it says, is his. But that obedient next step whether it is moving past fear, maybe it is me remembering who I am in Christ and coming out of that, that moment of feeling insecure for some reason. We have those moments every day where we have the opportunity to do that. And the core thing that the Lord keeps humbling me with in that is a quality of his, and it is the fact that he's infinite. And I'm so thankful for that. He is limitless in all of his ways. And we see that as we line that up against everything else we know to be true about him. He is sovereign, he is so wise, he is ever present in our lives and he is limitless in all of those ways. The problem is we're not. The problem is we're not. Right? And so the outcome is his. But the obedient next step is we're pressing into him is what we have to focus on, because it is not all on us. We're not the limitless one. That's him.

And we get to worship him for that truth but live in light of it which means that we have capacity, we have limits, and so there are boundaries and things that need to be in place to protect that so good we're able to run at a pace that is healthy and sustainable.

TAMMY: Wow! What is your hope for this book? What do you hope that readers take away and do the thing?

REBECCA: The thing that comes to mind, Tammy is just remembering -- in the subtitle it uses the phrase, "Go-getter girl."

TAMMY: Love it! I also love the word gumption.

REBECCA: Me too! It is my favorite word.

TAMMY: I love that you use that word. It is so good.

REBECCA: And I know that we don't all consider ourselves to be go-getter girls, I get that. I've known you long enough that I think you're probably that kind of gal, too. But I think as go-getter girls who are seeking to use our gifts and talents to the glory of God, I want us to see that rightly in light of scripture, and root ourselves in that biblical truth. And I think we see a lot of opposing narratives out in the world when it comes to pursuing our calling or living with purpose.

We also see this culture of you having to hustle and get up earlier and drink all the water and do all the things and read the self-development books. And there is nothing wrong with drinking water, getting up earlier, and having self-discipline but we see that a little bit to an extreme. But if we look in scripture, we see Paul say that he boasts all the more gladly in his weaknesses, and that God's grace is sufficient for us. And so we see that and we also see whatever you drink, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. So there is this call to living with self-discipline. And I see both in scripture and I think we can live that way if we root ourselves in biblical truth.

And so that's, if nothing else, that's my hope that women walk away feeling more equipped to think that way.

TAMMY: I love that so, so much. We are all about doing things for the glory of God; and all that we do, especially here at this ministry, I'm so grateful to be a part of it.

Look, if you are in a position today when you can partner with us, it would mean so much to us. And with any gift that you can give today, we want to send you this gift, to pour back into your life.

First, I want to show you something that is really, really special. Take a minute and watch this!

On the mission field

ISAK: I've just been talking to Monica and she's been explaining her story to me. The story of her life, the story of how water has impacted that life. She's got five children. But then she explained that she's lost two of those children. She lost them because of exactly where we're sitting today, where we found her, and what she's doing. She actually said this water, maybe it looks like it's clean to you, I've got to tell you it doesn't look clean to me at all. But she said, "Maybe it looks clean to you," she said, "but you don't know what's in there." And she explained how she lost two children because of waterborne disease.

The pain was so evident when she spoke about the fact that she had lost these children. That's why she cried out to God as she said angrily, "Why didn't I die first?" I can understand. I think you can understand. If we lost our children, I think we'd feel exactly the same way. Why could I not have died first?

But you know what else she said? She said that she dreams of having a water well here. Right now, what her immediate need is, is water. Monica's story broke my heart. I'm sure it's broken yours but don't leave it at that. You can't leave it there. Because then all we're left with is three broken hearts, yours, mine, and Monica's. And what Monica is left with is no future for the three children that remain. But if you'll act today, we'll make Monica's dreams could true. If you'll give that gift to Water for LIFE, you'll be giving life for Monica, life for her children, and life for the people of this area.

End of video

In the studio

TAMMY: No mother should ever have to bury her child, let alone two. When I sit here and listen to that story with Isak, I just -- I feel hopeless hearing the devastation. And yet, at the same time, I know there is a solution and it brings me hope to know that this doesn't have to be the rest of the story for Monica. We can go in there, we can drill a well for her family, for her children, for many other children in that village. We could change everything for them.

We could bring them Water for LIFE! I don't want to see her lose another child. I want to help lift that burden from her life. And it is so easy! Giving her a cup of clean water could change it all. Could bring her hope. I want to be a part of that. And Randy, that's what I love so much about this ministry. We don't just tell the sad stories, although, there are many of them -- so many of them and they're real. We also tell the stories of what the difference it makes when we partner together and we go in and we drill these wells all around these different countries, these different places, and we change everything for these families. And I love that!

RANDY: Yeah, that's the only hope I think we have in doing this. Because unfortunately, Monica's story is not just one, it is over and over and over. That's why we want to go into 20 different nations. We want to drill 350 wells this year. We can only do it when you support the Water for LIFE outreach.

We have a choice. They don't, oftentimes. It is why they drink that water, they have no choice. But we have the choice to say no to the death. No more small graves where children are buried. No more drinking water that is discolored or oily, and full of impurities. No more no choice. We say look, we have a choice. Here's clean water! Drink of it!

But that choice is only made possible when we come together and we say, okay, for \$48,

I'm going to give clean drinking water to ten people for life. That's the average when we look at the global outreach of the program and the overall cost and we break it down. \$48 will give clean drinking water to ten people for life!

A gift of \$144 today will give clean drinking water to 30 people. That's 30 lives that may potentially be spared, definitely improved, definitely changed not just by the physical water but by the love that we're extending to these people. People, strangers coming in, why do strangers love us, they wonder. And we tell them it is because of the love of Jesus Christ.

Some of you can give an entire well. \$4800 is the average cost of one well that lasts an average of 70 years. That's why we say Water for LIFE. Tammy and I and my parents, all of us, the missionaries in the field, Isak, and the staff here at *LIFE Outreach International*, we are inviting you to be a part of something great, something beautiful, something life-changing, something lifesaving.

Will you go to the phone or go online and make the best gift you can? When you do, know that you are a part of sharing God's love, not just in word, but in deed. And Tammy, when you see someone like Monica, and you know that they're praying for their own children, to be able to be an answer to that prayer, there is nothing like it.

TAMMY: That's why you see the smile on my face because I know, I know that we can change this. I know that if we come together, we partner together, like you said, so many of us, we're strangers. Some of us we've met, some of us we've never met. But it doesn't matter. The body of Christ, we come together and we say here's my \$48, here's my \$52, here's my \$144. Whatever it is that you can give, let's do it together. We partner together, and we do something for the kingdom of God that is eternal and that will change lives forever. Let's do it right now. Go to the phone or go online and give the best gift that you possibly can and let's do it together today.

Begin video clip

ANNOUNCER: *Every day thousands of lives are lost to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five. Through Mission: Water for LIFE you can give mothers hope and children a future as we provide clean, life-giving water for thousands of children and their families before it is too late.*

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. \$72 will provide for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the Life Prayer Journal complete with customized art, scripture verses, and inspirational quotes from Life Today hosts and co-hosts. You'll find plenty of room to write down prayer requests, answered prayers, and your own personal reflections as you spend time with God.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the Blessed cutting board, a beautiful addition to your kitchen and preparation area. This pine wood cutting board is custom engraved with the word Blessed as a reminder of the daily provision of God in your life.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our colorful bronze sculpture "Consider the Birds." Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video**In the studio**

RANDY: You really will impact someone with the love of God when you partner with us today in Water for LIFE. And when you do, Tammy, I want people to get a little

encouragement to do their thing that God is calling them to do.

TAMMY: Yes! Absolutely, Randy. I love the thought of getting this book in the hands of as many that call today and partner with us and request this book. And we will get it in your hands, especially if you're a girl, you're going to go get her girl. Do you know what I'm talking about?

Rebecca, you're awesome. Thank you so much for doing the thing with us today. What a pleasure it is to meet you and spend time with you. God bless you in all that God has for you. And thank you for watching. And God bless you in all that God has for you. And we'll see you next time on *Life Today*.