

4/9/24

**Week 15: Rescue LIFE, last week  
Randy Robison and Tammy Trent  
Kyle Winkler**

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. Tammy Trent is with me.

**TAMMY:** I am.

**RANDY:** We're on the same page on this one.

**TAMMY:** We are! Yes, we are. Your first question. We're on the same page.

**RANDY:** Here's the setup because at the end of the chapter the Sermon on the Mount, the classic Jesus sermon, like that's all you need to live by. It ends with this: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Like how do you read that and go, what, God?

**TAMMY:** I can't be. I cannot be.

**RANDY:** That's part of the foundation is we are not. So this book got my attention. Kyle Winkler is our guest. He has a book called *Permission to Be Imperfect*. How does this line up? How does this even work? Well, we're going to find out. Kyle, welcome back to *Life Today*.

**KYLE:** So good to be back with you both.

**TAMMY:** It's great.

**KYLE:** Tammy, great to meet you as well.

**RANDY:** So straighten me out, man because I don't know what to do with this sometimes.

**KYLE:** Yeah, that was a big one for me even wrestling with that, "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." As with most things in scripture, context is key. So you have to look at who Jesus is talking to there for the Sermon on the Mount. He's talking largely to a Jewish audience that had lived lifetimes of law, lifetimes of sacrificing, lifetimes of trying to please God through what they did. And so lifetimes of self-righteousness.

So he's confronting their sense of self-righteousness with that. He's saying, "Oh, you think that you're good? Well, let's up the ante a little bit. Here's what good really is, be perfect like God is perfect. That's what your standard is. If you're going to try and think that you can be good enough, that's what's your standard. But you can't even do that."

So he's confronting their sense of self-righteousness so that they'll walk away being like, oh, I'm not good enough. And therein is the purpose. So they realize their need for a savior. He's warming them up for their need for him.

**RANDY:** So like literally, the point is you can't be perfect.

**KYLE:** You can't be perfect. You can't do enough. Interestingly, he even says—he equates perfection with God's unconditional love. So if you want to even try, it would be in loving people. That would be the way that you could try. But you can't even do that perfectly. So as you said, the whole point is you can't do it enough. You need someone who did and that's Jesus.

**RANDY:** Well, that helps!

**TAMMY:** Honestly, you just gave me permission to be imperfect? Hallelujah! I feel relieved and free already. Honestly, reading your book, and I watched a podcast over the weekend as well, I honestly walked away feeling lighter. Mainly because I sobbed a few times. It was so good and such a revelation for me, Kyle. It was important. Your voice is so important for such a time as this. And you haven't always had *this* voice. I love how you have called yourself a "holy police" at times. Absolutely loved it.

But I'm so grateful for your knowledge of this. And bringing me back to living the best Christian life I could possibly live. What does that look like, Tammy? Is it constantly fighting for perfection in my life? I'm a bit of a perfectionist so I kind of can gauge it that way, and the disappointment that I must bring God at times. And disqualifying me sometimes in my life because of mishandling something or bad choices, whatever it is. But you have spoken into my life too and reminded me about God's love and the love of Christ and how much he loves me and drawing into that. And once I understand that even greater than I do now, it is going to cause me to want to walk in him even greater. Can you speak to that?

**KYLE:** Yeah, that's the whole point. That really is the story that I share. That's my story. Years ago, back to potty training, I just thought there was something just so wrong with me. I just always had that feeling. There is something—something wrong with me. I didn't like my personality. Years ago I was, really, still am, a natural introvert. But back as a kid, that caused me to be a loner and an outcast, and all the different things that kids will call you. So that just reinforced this feeling as a kid that there's a lot of fixing that I need.

So then at 16 years old, I hear about the power of God in a new way. I start to see the Bible in a real way for the first time. I'm thinking, okay, nothing else has worked before to fix me so maybe this faith thing will do it. So what I ended up doing is I took to the faith as if it was a self-improvement program, like a spiritual self-improvement program. The Bible then became this book of instructions to help fix me up, change me up, grow

me up so maybe I could be loved, maybe I could stay loved, maybe I could be pleasing, accepted, blessed, all of those things by God.

I tried. I tried so many things, so many spiritual disciplines to do it. I did every prayer strategy and fast strategy. I was serving in the church all the time. Monday night was a spiritual growth seminar. Tuesday was advanced Bible study. Wednesday, I was a youth group leader. Thursday, small group leader. Friday, intercessory prayer. Saturday and Sunday were service while working in the church. None of it worked. And so ten years—ten years of trying to fix and change and be better and do better and be this person, this perfect person that I thought God expected of me.

And I'm saying God, okay, I'm feeling more burdened than free, and more stressed than peaceful. What more do I have to do to live this Christian life victoriously? And that was—there was a number of encounters I had but it was not an overnight thing. It was a journey of God showing me his love. Of him showing me that I had the Christian life all backward. I was thinking the goal of the Christian life was about being better and striving for perfection. But it is not about being better, it is about being loved.

So that was so much of my story and understanding. The power and the healing that comes naturally just out of knowing you're loved and finally receiving that, there is more for you than you could ever do for yourself by trying.

**RANDY:** Here's the interesting thing. The Bible does lay down a way to behave, a way to think, a way to live because it produces good fruit in us. "Faith without works is dead," scripture tells us. And so what you're looking for is kind of there. But how do we get twisted so that it becomes like a New Testament legalism to the point where it is miserable when it should be giving us life?

**KYLE:** Certainly! The Bible does, just as you said, it outlines, there's lots of good advice. I've learned to separate good advice from the good news. Good advice has to do with our relationship with other people. It has to do with things that are going to help us,

eating healthy, exercising. There are a lot of things that are beneficial to us. But none of those prove anything to God. None of those make you any more accepted vertically with God. None of those bring you any more favor or any more blessings with God.

I think that's what, certainly for me, that's what I was confusing. I was looking at the various principles in scripture and I was thinking, okay, if I do these things then I'm going to prove myself to God. Then maybe he will keep loving me and maybe he will keep blessing me. Maybe that's going to be my strategy for victory in every area of my life. What it ended up doing more than anything is it ended up exhausting me. And it ended up burning me out. That's what happens when you take a principle and you use it as something to prove something; it becomes a law. What was the law meant to do? It was meant to show you can't do it. It was meant to show your need for a savior.

**TAMMY:** Many people, Kyle, I know, and I've been one of them many times, for sure, but I can guarantee you that there are so many people watching today that have felt like they are not good enough. That God is constantly disappointed in them, and that they will never measure up. And it is a lot of your testimony. Like you've done everything, you've done it all, and many people have. They will serve, serve, serve and it's just they feel like they're not enough and will never be enough. So how can we fight that lie?

**KYLE:** Yeah, for me as I mentioned, being a natural introvert for so long, I felt like that disqualified me from a lot of things. I felt it disqualified me and made me not good enough, even for ministry. So one thing that God said to me, finally, is when I'm trying to rebuke the spirit of introversion and everything is not changing.

**RANDY:** Sounded like you weren't loud enough and bold enough!

**KYLE:** Right! Right! So God settled me down and said, you have a personality, a style, and a story to reach people that others can't with theirs. Use the gift of you. I never thought of even the things I didn't like about myself, which many of them ended up being part of God's design for me, but I never thought about how those could be a gift that God

could use. And it turns out when I leaned into my most authentic self that that is what God has used to connect people. So I say that first off for people, who maybe there is something about you that you don't like. Use the gift of you. You have a personality, a style, and a story to reach people that others can't with theirs.

But the other thing is that Christ has made us enough. I think of Colossians. Paul is talking to the Christians at Colossae, and they're battling what a lot of us battle. They had religious leaders that were telling them that their faith in Jesus wasn't enough. There was more they had to do. More disciplines they had to do.

Paul is speaking to the Christians at the church at Colossae, and they were battling what a lot of us do which is this feeling and even religious leaders then were telling them that there was more than their faith in Jesus that they had to do to be enough, to please God. And Paul calls that "high-sounding nonsense." In Colossians 2:10 he reminds them of the truth. He says that you are complete through your union with Christ. You see, we're thankful for salvation, of course. And a lot of people think that salvation is just about forgiveness but that's not even the half of it. Salvation is about wholeness. It's about you being completed with the nature of Jesus so that you lack nothing.

So you have to know you are a gift, your personality, your style, your story, it's a gift. But you're also whole in Christ. You have the nature of Jesus. You're lacking nothing which means really, your true self, there is nothing you need to fix. You are good and you are good with God.

**TAMMY:** Oh, gosh! I love that. Randy, I watched this weekend, I think I said earlier, his podcast, *Permission to Be Imperfect*. At 20 minutes in, Kyle, you had me weeping just like I feel now. Because God has anointed you and he's appointed you but you have so much wisdom on your life. And you spoke to me in that room. I was weeping. But you turned to me in the camera and you said, Tammy, even though you didn't know my name, you spoke into my life. My hands went out and I just started receiving and receiving and receiving. Because I think so many people feel like we are a disappointment to God, that

we are not enough. That our past dictates our future and our present, even. That we disqualify ourselves from so many things. Kyle, what you did in that moment for me, just speaking into my life like all of these things the way God made me, the way God made you, the gifts that you have, let God use them and multiply them.

And something you said also—so I want to thank you for that. Go watch that podcast. At 20 minutes later, I'll tell you, grab some tissue, it's going to minister to you. But I'm going to read this quote from you, it meant so much to me. I believe that somebody else might need to hear it today too. It says, "Jesus didn't come to set the bar for how to live. He came to live up to the bar because he knew that we couldn't."

And that, honestly, for me, was the gospel. Like it was so—it was so good and it made sense. I resonated with that. It was like it's okay if I'm not perfect. God wants me to work on these things. I know it doesn't give me permission to say, this is just who I am and that's it.

**RANDY:** Can I interrupt? Because I have a question. Does God want us to work on it or does he want us to allow him to work on it?

**KYLE:** He wants our dependency on him. That's what faith is all about, for him to do the work in us. Because when we try, we end up getting into the flesh to do it. And what does flesh inevitably do? Jesus said it, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

**TAMMY:** And we're going to fail. We're going to fail every time. So then we keep going in that same circle that we're frustrated and upset because I'm never going to conquer this or even sin in my life. Sin is a big thing too. So I'm never going to conquer this thing so it is going to be impossible. Talk about that too because you have a great chapter on that in your book as well.

**KYLE:** It's called: "Ending your battle with sin." There are a few things of course, because this always comes up. So I have to say that sin is destructive, of course. It hurts

us. It hurts other people. There are natural consequences. It doesn't stop God from loving you. Nothing can separate you from the love of God. But it does hurt us and God doesn't want that.

So if I can use another word that has sin in it, I'm not insinuating that there is any encouragement to sin here. But the reality we have to understand about sin is that none of us are going to be able to completely stop sinning and that's the whole reason Jesus came. The whole 1500 years that Israel kept the law, they couldn't even keep the first, the Ten Commandments perfectly. Even in Christian history, we see people fasting themselves until they're skin and bones. There is a story of these people living in isolation on top of pillars to try to stay holy. Didn't work. People trying to flog and whip themselves to get into submission. None of it worked. There is no silver bullet to stop sin. But is it hopeless to get better? The issue is a lot of us are going about it all wrong. We're either trying to stop sinning by rule-keeping or commandment-keeping, or we're trying to do it by feeling guilty and thinking that feeling bad about ourselves is going to make us stop.

Well, Paul said in First Corinthians 15: 56, that law and power sin. So when you put rules on top of yourself, the pressure of those rules, and those rules just keep sin on your mind so you end up doing it. Just like when you say, don't eat that chocolate, don't eat that chocolate!

**TAMMY:** I'm going to eat that chocolate, Kyle!

**KYLE:** Or that cookie for me. You end up eating it. That's this principle at work. Then when you end up feeling about yourself, you're sin conscious. In Hebrews ten, the author talks about how Israel and their sin consciousness just led them to keep on sacrificing. And that sacrificing led them to be reminded of their sin. And the reminders of their sin led them to keep sacrificing. That's what we get into, isn't it? We feel guilty, then we feel I've got to make up for this guilt by doing something. And then we try to do something and then we inevitably fail in one way or another, you feel guilty again, and then we've got to do something. And round and round it goes.



So what works? I say that you naturally sin less when you think less about sin and more about your forgiveness. Peter said that we don't grow in godliness because we've forgotten our cleansing. So remember your cleansing. Remember who you are.

There is a lesson I learned when I was skiing, the first time I skied when the instructor finally let us go to the slopes. He said, "Don't focus on the trees or the light poles. Focus on the path in front of you." Somebody asked why. And he said, "Because you'll hit what you focus on." And I've learned that's true for pilots and anybody trying to make quick maneuvers. It would be a great lesson, I wish I had learned it early on in my Christian life. But when you focus on all the obstacles that you shouldn't do you end up hitting those obstacles. So instead focus on the path in front of you. And because of Jesus, that's a path of grace lined with unconditional love. You will be holier automatically than you ever will be on purpose when you stop trying so hard and just give yourself *Permission to Be Imperfect*.

**RANDY:** That principle is true. That's why people get hit on the side of the highways because somebody looks and sees the lights or whatever. It's called "object avoidance." We tell kids in soccer or hockey, don't look at the goalie if you've got a free kick. Look at where you want to put the ball. And I think in the church too many times we're like let's focus on that goalie here. That thing that is going to stop you from winning. What you're saying is no, let's focus on Christ because that is where the victory is.

**KYLE:** Keep your eyes on Jesus and keep your eyes on how much he loves you, and that's going to do more for you. The love of God, as Ephesians 3:17-19 says, if you can grasp how high and how deep and how wide it is, that's going to give you the strength and the power and the fullness that comes from God.

**RANDY:** I want everybody to know that, Tammy. I hope people request this book.

**TAMMY:** Whoo! Yes! You need to request this book, *Permission to be Imperfect*: "How

to strive less, stress less, and sinless." Kyle, what a great book. We want to make you to give you this book.

But first I want you to focus on something really important that you can be part of today. Watch this.

### **On the mission field**

>> The mere thought of innocent children being trapped in slavery, and robbed of their freedom and future was and still is beyond heartbreaking. Today millions of children around the world are still trapped in the horror of child trafficking.

They are voiceless, defenseless, and in desperate need of our help. I'll never forget the moment when I first learned about the devastating reality that changed my world—child trafficking.

### **Open captions**

>> Nearly 5 million women, girls, and boys are victims of sex trafficking.

>> Even after these children are found, the journey does not end there. These children need more than just rescue. They need love, support, and encouragement to heal from the trauma that they've endured. They need a safe haven, a place where they can rebuild their lives. I've seen firsthand the difference that a loving family can make in the lives of these children. Every step of this journey requires our unwavering commitment. It's a shared responsibility to rebuild what was stolen: Their childhood, their dreams, and their sense of self-worth.

Together, you and I can be a voice for the voiceless, a force for change, for justice, for healing. Together we can dismantle the chains of child trafficking and light a path toward freedom. We know it is a long road but we are making a difference one child at a time. Will you stand with us as we champion the rights and dignity of every child?

## **End of video**

### **In the studio**

**RANDY:** I love our mission partner there. Her name is Andrea Cross. The cross is that place where sin is defeated, the power of hell is broken, and hope is restored. That's what Rescue LIFE does. When we go into these places and we reach or we rescue, we restore a life, we are offering hope. And we always do it under the banner of the cross.

I'm asking you today to join us in this great outreach. I have good news. We have some people that have offered what they call a matching gift. So if you look at it as sort of a cost-per-average, it is easier to grasp that way, the average cost to reach, rescue, or restore a child is \$128. It is what we spend around the world in the various efforts. Through the matching gift that \$128 gift today will do that for two children—two precious children right now who could be living in hell on earth, can be brought out and given the hope of heaven. Some of you can do that for many more. In fact, a gift of \$1280 would do that for 20 children today.

Whatever you're able to do, I ask you to pause, take a moment, and say a quick prayer. If God responds in your heart and your soul to go online, to go to the phone, make the best gift you can, whatever God puts on your heart, it is about the act of responding, I believe, in obedience.

We know we have the authority. We know we have the power in Christ to go into the darkest situations and set the captives free. But I think God also has designed it so we are his agents, we are his hands and his feet.

And Tammy, I know you've been to these places, you've seen these children. It's heartbreaking! There is an urgency not just because of the magnitude of the evil and the sin in our world but there is an urgency because there are children right now today that can—I mean they will be restored, reached, and rescued because of the gift that someone

makes today.

**TAMMY:** Yes, Randy. And when you say, like today, right now that clock is ticking. The clock is ticking. I don't think we can wait another second. I don't think so. If God is laying it on your heart today, please don't wait. We're ready to go. We've got people all over the place, that are at those borders that are trained to spot a dangerous situation, to spot a little girl that needs rescuing, that needs to be reached and restored. We're ready to go. We just need you.

And remember, this is the last week. We want to reach these girls while they're alive. We want to help restore them. We want to give them wholeness and hope. We want to bring them life. Would you help us do that today?

### **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 rescue 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 the brand-new book from James Robison and Jay Richards, **Fight the Good Fight**. This book will open your eyes to what's at stake and the unwavering truth that God isn't finished with our nation. It's time to fight the good fight and return to unshakable biblical principles.*

*With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive the NIV large print Thinline Bible. This easy-to-carry, easy-to-read NIV Bible with comfort print allows you to take in more of God's word each time you open your Bible.*

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

*This is the last week. Please call, write, or make your gift online.*

### **End of video**

### **In the studio**

**TAMMY:** I hope you're going online and giving the best gift that you can. Remember this is the last week to be a part of this amazing mission that we all get to be a part of.

And for any amount that you're able to give to the mission, I want to make sure, we want to make sure to get you this book. It is so, so good. I know it will be an important book in your life, especially if you struggle with imperfections and trying to live a perfect life.

**RANDY:** Absolutely. Just request that when you make the gift today. Kyle, I appreciate this reminder, it is the truth. I just feel like it is not just permission to make mistakes, it's permission to let God perfect his will in us. Is that it?

**KYLE:** Yeah, because we're going to be imperfect while he does that. So let him be perfect through you.

**RANDY:** Wow! And then right back to the very beginning, "Be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect." Because when he does it, he perfects us. I love that.

**KYLE:** He will finish the work. He will finish it in you. We're his handiwork, we're not our handiwork.

**RANDY:** This is such good news. I hope you heard this today. I hope you'll share it with other people and request the book. Appreciate you guys being here. Are you coming back next time?

**TAMMY:** I'll be here, I promise!

**RANDY:** We'll be here. Hope to see you on *Life Today*.