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Week three: WFL

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Sheila Walsh #1

Studio Discussion:

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Randy Robison. This is my co-host, Tammy Trent.

TAMMY: Hello!

RANDY: But before there was Tammy...

TOGETHER: There was Sheila!

RANDY: And she's back with us today. Sheila Walsh is here. We're very excited. She has a new book called *The Hope of Heaven*. We're going to talk to her. We're glad you're here, Sheila. Welcome back!

SHEILA: Well, it feels like old home week. It is so lovely to be back. Let me just say, Tammy, you're doing a brilliant job. I watch you guys and you're doing a brilliant job. You really are.

TAMMY: That means a lot coming from you Sheila because you are the best. How could anybody step into your shoes? You don't. You don't look at that. You just say, what can I do? What are my gifts and how can I grow in them? But you are amazing.

SHEILA: That's what I love about you. You don't try to be anything other than the incredible person God has made you and you're a great team.

RANDY: Thank you. Well, welcome back. Let's talk about heaven, which we try to, we try to bring here on the set and to the viewers. Why this topic for you?

SHEILA: Honestly, Randy, I've written over 50 books. I've never written anything that has impacted and changed my own life more. It started in a place of despair. Of thinking, I'm so fed up with this earth. I'm fed up with all the suffering. I'm fed up with the heartache. A dear friend was just diagnosed for the third time with cancer. And then I had my little kind of freak accident where I thought I had broken my neck. When I discovered I hadn't, I had just torn ligaments, but I found myself asking the Lord, what is wrong with me? What is this huge ache that I feel inside that nothing seems to shift it? I can have a good day or something goes well or I see a friend but I still feel this ache?

So, that's why I began to dive into it because I opened my Bible to Hebrews chapter 12, verse two, and read these words that I've known for years. But have you ever read something that just suddenly jumps off the page? It said, "Keep your eyes on Jesus who both began and finished this race. Study how he did it because he never lost sight of where he was headed, that glorious finish in and with God so he could put up with anything along the way."

I thought that's it, Lord! That's what I'm actually homesick for; what I'm feeling sick for is heaven. Because we were made for Jesus and we were made for heaven and nothing else is going to do.

RANDY: Do you think our age has a little more to do with it? Because I think the older you get the more, you lose, it is one thing when you lose your grandparents when you're young because you think of them as old. And then it's your parents, and then it's your turn.

SHEILA: Yeah, I get that but I honestly don't think so. Because if you think about it, I don't know a time in my life when there's been more anxiety and loneliness among young people. I'm talking about my son's age. And yet, when I begin to share with them -- if I was just summing up heaven, when you understand truly how phenomenal it is going to be, it gives peace for right now and hope for tomorrow.

So, it is not just like get us out of here, Lord. When you understand what's ahead, the peace that

it gives for right now, I don't try to get rid of that feeling anymore. I embrace it as a sacred space because it was a place that was made and I'm not home yet. I'm just not home yet.

TAMMY: Why do you think we've lost the hope for heaven? Do you think it comes from a place of disappointment this side of heaven? I don't understand heaven so I don't even think it is going to be fun. So why do I really care? I've lost the hope of heaven and even thinking about what waits for me.

SHEILA: I think that's true because when I was a teenager, obviously, I wanted to go to heaven because it beats the alternative. But I thought it would be a bit boring. For how many years can you sing, "He'll be coming around the mountain when he comes?" But, even when I was a teenager, I said to my mom, "If I have an unexpected accident and I die before you, bury me with some books." Because I thought I need at least something to do.

But I read this quote. I have it here because I don't want to get it wrong. But this is Randy Alcorn. This is brilliant. It says: "I believe that nothing is more often misdiagnosed than our homesickness for heaven. We think that what we want is sex, drugs, alcohol, a new job, a raise, a doctorate, a spouse, a large-screen television, a new car, a cabin in the woods, and a condo in Hawaii. What we want is the person we were made for, Jesus. And the place we were made for, heaven. Nothing else can satisfy us."

When I read that, when I was doing -- because I researched for a year. I wanted to know everything that scripture said about heaven. And then what the saints, current saints, and those who have gone long before us had to say and it is been life-changing for me.

TAMMY: Am I going to have a job in heaven? That's what I want to know. Do I get I bunch of rewards? Do I get some jobs? What's it going to be like? When I picked up your book I was thinking, did Sheila find all the answers to heaven? Are they in this book? All the questions I've ever had. Will I have a dog? Will my cat be there?

SHEILA: Your dog will be there. Not the cat. [Laughter]

TAMMY: But I did, I found so many incredible answers in your book, Sheila. I thought as a believer, why have I not been taught this enough? Like heaven is the destination. I should be wanting to live for that every single day but I didn't feel like I'd been taught this enough. I think that's what your book gave to me, it felt like the best Bible study on heaven I had ever read. It is so, so good.

SHEILA: If you think about it, it is the whole point. We live these years, however many years, thinking we have to squeeze every ounce of happiness out of this and achieve certain things. But the whole point of why Jesus came was so we could spend eternity with him in heaven.

And yes, you will have a job. But do you know that the choices you make now impact how you will live eternally? Because I used to think, well, we'll all basically be doing the same. No, scripture is very clear, that is not so. Every single believer will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Now that's not about punishment, it's about rewards. No believer will ever stand before the great white throne judgment. That's for everyone whose name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

But you, Randy, you, Tammy, me, and you, we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. But it is what is called in Corinthians, the Bema Seat. But when Paul was writing to the church in Corinth, Corinth then was like Vegas is today. It is like what happens in Corinth stays in Corinth. I read this thing from a sailor years and years ago, a ship's captain who said, "Not all men should go to Corinth because there are so many temptations." 6,000 temple prostitutes. It was a den of iniquity.

But it was also the place of the Olympic games. So all the stuff that Paul saw when he talks about running your race, and then he talks about the Bema Seat, which is where the athletes go to get their reward. Because sometimes people think, well, I just have to get through this life and then I'll get home. No! The more I study about heaven the more I want every single day on earth to count.

It is like Matthew 25. If you haven't read that in a while, it is brilliant! Whenever anybody dies we tend to write, well, now they're here and well done good and faithful servant. So I thought, where does Jesus say that? Matthew 25. He gives this story. A guy goes away, a master goes away and he gives gifts. He gives Randy ten bags of silver, he gives you five bags of silver, and he gives me one bag of silver. When he comes back Randy says, "Look what I've done. I've now got ten bags!" And you say, "Look, I've got four bags." I'm like, "Well, you're very unfair. I don't think you're a just God, I just buried it."

Here's what's interesting. Jesus will say the same to Randy as he said to you. To Randy he says, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Come on! Let's celebrate!" He says to you, he doesn't say, "Well, you've got four. That's not quite as great as ten but you still got four." He says exactly the same thing, "Well done, Tammy! Yay! You did it. Come on. Let's celebrate."

So that's where the ground in front of Calvary is level. Because you look at giftedness in this world. I was recently with Andrea Bocelli and he's singing "Amazing Grace" and we're in Times Square. It is like Times Square is nuts. But suddenly there is this hush as this voice.

God gives some extravagant gifts to some people, and sometimes we think, well, you didn't give me as much as you gave them so I'm just going to bury it. No. Whatever God has placed in your hands, do every you can with it because then the reward will be, well done, good and faithful servant. Well done, Randy. Well done, Tammy.

RANDY: So heaven, I get that. I try to remember that this is not the novel, this life we live, this is the prologue. Heaven is the main thing. Yet there is a lot we don't know about heaven. I think the reason is if we knew more we would be ready to get there immediately. But what do we know?

SHEILA: It is really interesting because you remember when Paul wrote the church in Corinth? He said to them, listen. Fourteen years ago I was taken to paradise and I saw things I'm not allowed to talk about. I can't talk about. I'm sure there were no words to be able to get -- and the word they used there for "paradise" is like a king's garden. It is like if you were to go to the

palace and he is showing you around his favorite place. This is where I go to walk every day.

Paul was taken there and can't talk about but it impacts everything he says. And that's why he's able to say, "These light and momentary troubles." Because the people he's writing to, they're going through terrible things. Some of the viewers right now, you're going through terrible things. But the reason he could say, "These are light and momentary troubles" is because he is saying, guys, hang in there.

TAMMY: I've seen. I've seen!

SHEILA: If you only knew what's ahead for us, this would seem like light and momentary troubles.

RANDY: So, hang on to what we do know, don't worry about what we don't know?

SHEILA: Yeah. I think there are things that we don't have the capacity to even begin to understand. There are certain things, like is your dog going to be in heaven? Well, of course. We're talking about God here.

I remember a little girl said to Billy Graham once, "Will my dog be in heaven?" Billy Graham said, "Would that make you happy?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Well, then I'm pretty sure."

If you think about the way God created in the beginning, for a start, Adam and Eve were not born as babies. They were born in what presumedly was the prime of life, which is what many scholars believe the age we will be in heaven. If a baby was premature, in heaven the baby will probably be 30 years old, those who die when they're 90 will probably be about 30.

We don't know that for sure. That's just a guess, but based on a lot of things.

All the animals will be there. Isaiah talks about the fact that there are no carnivorous animals anymore in the new heaven and the new earth. It says that lions will eat hay as the oxen do. And the lion will lay down with the lamb. So the shedding of blood is done with. By the time we're

home, there is not one more drop of blood going to be shed because Jesus shed it all.

RANDY: That's interesting. I know we can speculate about things all day long but I think the more important thing is really what Jesus talked about, which is the kingdom of heaven, which is the rule and reign of heaven on this earth. How do we connect the eternal, wherever it is, up there, out there, I don't know, with right now, right here?

SHEILA: That's a great question, Randy. Honestly, that is the question. For me, the reality of heaven and the closeness of Jesus to me is -- I'm more aware of that now than anything else. Our neighbor, we live next door to this really sweet woman, her name is Stephanie. She said to me the other day, she said, "I was watching you out the window." Because I walk my little dog around the lake. She said, "You looked like you were about to bump into a tree." I said, "What?" She said, "Well, you were looking up and grinning."

From the minute I get up I have this thing where I'm just like, "Good morning, Lord. Hello!" My daily prayer is, "Holy Spirit, what do you want me to do today? What do you want me to see today? What do you want me to hear today? What person am I going to bump into?"

Because you're right, Randy, the reality of the kingdom, thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. So you and I, we're just like God's boots on the ground. We're God's secret agents. I think we should get a patch or something that says we're secret agents. There is something we carry --

It is like Sammy Rodriguez said, "Every time you walk into a room the atmosphere should shift because of who lives in you." And I love that because I think, we've come through -- last year was a political year and that's always so much fun for everyone. [Laughing] But we get so caught up in what we think matters for the moment that we forget that no matter who occupies that house in Washington, God is on the throne. God is in control. God is good. God is for us. And when you get that, you have peace for today and you have hope for tomorrow.

TAMMY: Hallelujah! You are one of the best storytellers in the world. And you have so many

stories. When I read your books I'm like, how does she remember all these stories?

SHEILA: I have a husband with a good memory.

TAMMY: That helps you. But you are so good. You are truly one of my favorites. But as I read your book, I want you to share this story because I loved it. Tell us the significance of the story of Pastor John Harper. Loved this.

SHEILA: Oh gosh! It's so amazing. He was this incredible Scottish minister and he had been invited to come to America and preach in Chicago at Moody Bible Church, which was a huge honor back then. He was very excited. But he is on the Titanic. As the ship begins to sink and all the women and children are in the lifeboats, some men, but he's not, he has a lifejacket and he's in the water. He knows he's going to die. He knows no help is coming. So anybody he passes in the water he will say to them, "Do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior?" And this one man says, "No, I don't." So what John Harper does is he takes off his lifejacket and he gives it to this man and he says, "You're going to need this more than me. You need a wee bit more time than I do." And minutes later, John Harper disappears under the water.

Four years later, all of those who survived the Titanic are meeting together and that man stood up and said, "I was John Harper's last convert. Because that night in the water, having been thrown that lifejacket he said what I got was he didn't need it because he knew where he was going. I needed it because I had no clue."

TAMMY: It gave me hope, even like this is the way I should live every day. I should live every day like this. Like looking for an assignment, looking for an appointment, looking for an opportunity. Like if you had the cure for cancer you would want to tell somebody. We have the cure to life. Life after this life and freedom in paradise, and all that God has for us. Such a fulfilled life. There is so much more than this and this moment that we're facing right now. I think it set my heart on fire. It gave me a new vision for heaven, a new vision for my relationship with Jesus, and wanting to tell others about him. I want to take off my lifejacket. I'd love that to be the last thing somebody said about my life. Like I was her last. That's what she did right

before she fell into the arms of Jesus.

You give me so much hope, *The Hope of Heaven* is your book but you give me so much hope about heaven. I read this, Sheila, I told you thinking about Trent. How much would I think about my husband who has gone to heaven? I thought more about myself, actually, which was surprising. Like all the things that await me. And every once in a while, when you touch on loss and grief, I would go to Trent quick and think, what is he doing? I can only imagine. You helped me imagine even more what that might look like.

And the truth of God's Word. Not just okay, we can speculate this, and yes, there are some things we don't know but there was so much in your book that was beyond speculation, that was solid Word of God teaching. And that's what I can base my hope on today.

SHEILA: Absolutely. It's so interesting. When our son Christian who is about to turn 28, was in high school he read *Mere Christianity*, which is one of my favorite books. So I reread it while I was preparing for this. And C.S. Lewis talks about that thing I talked about, that ache. There is something wrong with everything. He said there are three ways we deal with it. We deal with the external where we think, if I just got that job, if I could just marry that person, if I could just have a baby, or we deal with it internally, we resign ourselves to this is as good as it is going to get. It is not terrible, but it is as good as it is going to get. Or we live with it eternally, where we think, no, that's why I feel this way. I'm just not home yet.

That to me was huge. It makes sense. You don't try and crush that place, you embrace it as sacred space.

RANDY: Can we talk about this some more? I want you to join us in that but right now I need to ask you a question. It is a very important one. Maybe the most important one you've ever heard. Will you be in heaven? If you don't know the answer to that question we have a telephone number where you can talk to someone. Just pick up the phone. Someone will pray with you, talk with you. Yes, you can read your Bible, and you can go talk to a pastor of a good, solid, Bible-believing church. Do something. Talk to a friend that you know is a Christian.

You need to understand what it means to be born again because you must be born again. Then you will have *The Hope of Heaven*.

There are many other people right now who need a little touch of heaven themselves. Life in other countries, poor countries, especially, can be a little like hell, unfortunately, and death reigns. We have the power to share heaven with them and we invite you to do that.

Watch this and when you decide to join us in this beautiful outreach of heaven, you can request Sheila's book, *The Hope of Heaven*. We'll gladly send it to you. But most of all, you get a chance to express God's love to other people right now.

Transition Roll-in:

ISAK: We spent time in this village here today and we've spoken to various different mothers. We've been understanding their story; the challenge, the plight that they face, the suffering that this village is going through because of the lack of clean water.

Not a lack of water, there is a lot of water as you can see behind me. But there is no clean water in this village. They don't have a well here. This is their only source of water that they come and collect. It is dirty, it is disease-filled, contaminated water that they have to carry back to their families.

Mothers have two options. One option is they could not give their children water at all. They know the outcome of that. It is pretty rapid and it steals their children's lives. The other option is to give their children this dirty, contaminated water. So that is the option they go for. And yet, they have told us how they have lost children.

We spoke to a grandmother, heartbroken as she explained that she was the caregiver of the child. The child lost its life because of this waterborne disease. You could tell that she just felt so bad, so broken for what she had done in her mind. But the truth is she could do nothing else because

she had no option. She told us, as many others have, that they know what the solution is. The solution is a water well in their village because that will give them fresh clean water and save those lives.

We know the need. The one missing component is you. I'm asking you to help us to bring Mission: Water for LIFE, to drill a well and provide fresh life-giving water to the people who are suffering so desperately. Please do it before another child's life is gone. This is a crisis! It is an emergency! And if we don't meet their needs now, we are going to lose more children.

Please, give the gift of water. Give the gift of life before it is too late.

Studio Appeal:

RANDY: You have seen a need, will you respond? I believe as followers of Christ, it is not just our duty to respond when something is within our power to do good, we do it. I believe that it is an honor to be able to go into those villages and say, we come in the name of Jesus Christ and we give you life in the form of clean drinking water.

What more beautiful expression of heaven as we've been talking about is there than to give life to people who don't know us? We don't owe them anything. Why do we go? We go because we have been given the water of life eternally, which is Jesus Christ. And out of that, we want to share life with others.

Tammy, it is hard, hard to go to these places, to hear these stories, to see the graves, the death but we have to go.

TAMMY: Yes, we do. We're called; at least I've felt that calling on my life for a really long time. To not just feel sad but to take action and to try to help where I can.

When you go into these villages and you see these little tiny graves knowing that little babies are dying, children are dying because of a lack of clean water? When you're there, it is honestly

something really hard to wrap your heart around because you think, I've never struggled for water. I've never struggled with the need for clean water.

But these people are suffering every single day and they don't have an option. They don't have an option. This is all that they have. They will walk for miles and miles and miles until they get to this, usually a mud hole, and they know -- they know that that's killing them. They don't have anything option.

Just as Randy said, the greatest part of this story to me and why I feel called and why I want to be a part of it is that I know that we can go in and make a difference. I know that we can change this for them. There is a way we can bring them hope, we can bring them life, we can relieve the stress, the pain that they feel, the suffering that they feel, and give them a better way just by giving them a cup -- many cups of clean water.

We can do it today. Let's not wait. Let's not hesitate. These people are waiting to live and to choose life. So, let's do it together right now. Our goal is 350 wells in 20 nations. And what that looks like, so that anybody can get involved, is that for \$48 you can provide water for ten people. For \$144, you can provide water for 30 people. And if you are in a position where you can help us drill an entire well for an entire village for the rest of their lives, you know what that looks like? Just \$4800. Now I know that's a lot. But in some ways when I think about it and what it will bring to these people and these villages, Randy, \$4800 is not that much to bring them life.

RANDY: You can't put a price tag on life. And you can't put a price tag on the gospel that we share with them in word and deed.

So, just pause, and say, Lord, what would you have me do? We'd love to send you Sheila's book with any gift today. But more importantly, we would love for you to be a part of this beautiful expression and urgently needed outreach, Water for LIFE.

2025 WFL Cause spot:

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's 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. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Dr. Don Colbert's new book Spiritual Health Zone. Discover the key to living in divine health as you find a roadmap to adding joy, peace, and years to your life.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "He Restores My Soul" candle set. This decorative candle and match set will inspire you to remember the restoring presence of Jesus, the true light of the world.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well, and request our new bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah" inspired by Revelation 5:5.

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

Studio goodbye:

RANDY: Please do go online or go to the phone. Make the best gift you can. Let's share heaven with people who need to feel that touch from God that comes through you. Bless you for doing that.

We're going to come back and we're going to talk more heaven with Sheila Walsh.

SHEILA: I'd love it! I'd love it!

RANDY: Do you have more stories?

SHEILA: I have more stories.

RANDY: I want to hear more stories.

TAMMY: They're good! They're my favorite. Thank you so much for giving me a clearer vision of heaven and such a hope, a renewed hope. I hope, I pray that that's what it's done for you today. You need to get this book. And with any gift that you're able to give today to come alongside us in ministry, we want to sow this into your life. So just request it when you call and we'll get it right out to you.

Thank you for watching. We love you. We appreciate you. We'll see you next time on *Life Today!*