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Week 52: Mall Mission Feeding last week

Randy Robison

Brady Boyd

Studio Discussion:

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting today's guest, Brady Boyd, I'm glad you're here because I know you're going to be blessed by him. I had him on my online program. Of course, we've known Brady around here for a long time. So again, you're in for a blessing.

He has a new book. It is called *Life-Minded*. The subtitle is: "Eight practices for belonging to God and each other."

Brady, great to have you here.

BRADY: Thank you, Randy. It is always a joy to be with you. We tend to laugh a lot when we're together.

RANDY: Yeah, they're good conversations. Okay, so eight practices for belonging to God. I love that. I love that. But what is this, "and each other" bit at the end of it.

BRADY: Well, those two things go together. Like if you are a lover of God, God knows you and you know God, his first directive is for you to know and be known by people. So, I think the whole plan of the scriptures is for God to find us and for God to put us into a family. We call that the church, we call that our family.

But I do believe we're in a season right now where we don't understand that we do belong to one another, that we're a part of a big messy family called the church. And it is imperfect, it is

messy, it is sometimes painful, but it is still the most powerful organism on the planet today, is the gathered church that worships Jesus. I still believe in that.

So, this book is an attempt to draw people back into that family, to draw people back into that sacred community. I think church should be sacred and safe. When church is sacred and when church is safe, it is attractional to right now to people. So, I wrote that book out of 35 years of leading the church, loving the church, belonging to the church, and also loving the lost.

Randy, I think the church has to get back to its sacred responsibility to go after those in the highways and the hedges that Jesus said; those that are out on the margins. So, I think the church has got to get back to that assignment and back to that mission.

RANDY: Yeah, I recently talked to a guy who literally walked around the world. Took him seven years. I'm going, how did you eat? Sleep? Where did you stay? He really started talking about, especially in poor -- poor countries, how people were hospitable. Someone would come out and say, "Why are you camping on my land?" And end up, well, come on in and have some tea or have a meal or maybe stay inside.

I realized how much our culture, where I get up in the morning at my house, I get in my car, I drive to work, and pass countless people in that drive and never see them, never connect with them. It is a little bit cultural. But we lack the connection that most of the world has and most of history has had.

So, my question is if it is important God, and it is, how do we reestablish that connection?

BRADY: Well, we have to get over our fear of one another. And right now, social media, every algorithm that is targeting you is trying to separate you into tribes. We're all being tribal. So, if you look at one social media thread it is telling you that the other group is evil, the other group is dangerous, and to avoid them. And it is telling you how perfect your group is.

So, you're talking about an algorithm that is targeting the individual to separate people that

believe differently than you, that think differently than you. So, we're being separated into tribes, and we're told your only chance of survival is to stay among your tribe, isolated among a group of people that are exactly like you. So that takes away all the mystery of the human connection. It takes away the evangelistic fervor that the church was built on.

The early church, think what the early church looked like. It was Greeks and Romans and Hebrews. It was people that Jewish people, Greek people, Roman people, pagan people were all in the ecclesia, the gathered church. And the outside world would look at the church and say how did that happen? How did this diverse group of people that are from all kinds of spectrums, from all kinds of socioeconomic backgrounds, how did they end up? They ended up because they were under one banner. The banner of Jesus.

I think that is the hope of the world right now. We have to come back under the banner of Jesus and gather together. This book, I tell people we've got to get back to our sense of curiosity about people. I think we've lost our sense of curiosity. We're not asking questions. We're not diving past the surface.

RANDY: Okay. I think that's actually a big one. Because I've been in situations where it may be in an entirely different country, different culture, or at least I know I'm the oddball Christian in the book. Yeah, you can be like okay, I don't want to offend anybody. Well, the easiest thing is to ask questions and listen. How simple, yet profound, is it to learn to just ask someone what do you think? And then you don't have to rebut, you don't have to correct, necessarily.

BRADY: Exactly. Well, I think -- listen, we have more shared humanity than we have divided humanity. I know right now everyone is focused on what is dividing us. But at the end of the day, I think the vast majority of people in our country and around the world, and I've traveled around the world to Europe, Africa, Asia, everywhere, and I think most of us want to have good friends, we want to love our spouse well, and we want our children to be flourishing.

Really, that's what we all want in our core. We may go about that in different ways but at the end of the day we have more things to celebrate and to share. I'm finding that. And I've traveled to

places that are radically different than what I've grown up in and what I believe in. But I'm just finding that the human soul, there is more that wants to come together than divide us. I think we've got to go out and find it.

RANDY: If you look at scripture you find out that Jesus sometimes hung out with people he wasn't supposed to hang out with, according to the religious people. Right? There is a tendency I think sometimes to walk into someone's world, whether literally or figuratively, and really start pointing out all the wrong. I'm not suggesting we compromise truth. Jesus never did. But how much is grace a key in getting into other people's worlds?

BRADY: Well, there are two stories, John chapter four where he's caught at the woman at the well. He finds himself alone in the middle of the afternoon with a woman at the well. He says to her, how many times have you been married? She says I've not been married. The truth is the man you're living with -- you know the whole story.

But he finds himself with a vulnerable woman who has been ostracized by her community. She is there in the middle of the afternoon because her community has neglected her, shamed her. What I love about that story is that Jesus doesn't shame her. Jesus doesn't shame! He doesn't use shame as a way to control behavior. I love that story.

Then she goes back to her village and tells everyone about Jesus because she had encountered the grace of Jesus, the kindness of Jesus. He wasn't shaming her. He didn't own her. He didn't belittle -- he didn't pile on. So, then you fast-forward to John chapter eight. He is in the temple courts and in comes a woman who has been caught in adultery. Same scenario -- a vulnerable woman who has no voice and the community is shaming her. And instead of piling on, instead of adding to her shame and her guilt and her embarrassment, he talks to her. He says, "Go and sin no more." But he sends her out with a new identity, with a second chance.

I think those two stories in the book of John really is what I'm talking about being *Life-Minded*. About looking at the human soul, looking at the person that's in front of you and not seeing death, don't see destruction, look for life! Find life, give them life. Give them the life that you've

been given.

I think that's critical in our culture right now, Randy. I think we need more of it. I'm looking for those men and women around me who are life givers. We're on *Life Today*. This is the name of your program. This is why this show was named *Life Today* is because you guys believe in the life of the spirit, you believe in the practical application of life by giving people clean water and clean living conditions. Life is the center. Life and love are the two words that identify the gospel -- life and love. The gospel is not for bad people to become good people. The gospel is for dead people to become alive. So, life and love are the two central words, the central power of the story, our story, the gospel story is built on life and love. I think we've got to get back to that.

Listen. I don't know how many more years I have on the planet but I'm not going to spend it being angry. I'm not going to spend it being divisive. I'm not going to spend it being a cynic. I'm looking for the best in the human soul. I'm going to draw the best out of people. I want the best to come out of me. Let's get to the end of our lives, let's just be two grumpy old men that are kind and life-giving as we get older.

RANDY: Think about offense. It is a two-part transaction. This world is offensive. It is offensive. But I don't have to pick up the offense and walk around with it. You lay offense at my feet I can be like, okay and go on my happy way. That, I think, Christians are too easily offended in that regard.

So, there is a term you use in the book that I'm really curious about because you talk about "beauty seekers versus beauty stealers." I think the offense obviously ties into that. What's the difference in those two perspectives?

BRADY: Well, I talk about it and that's the chapter I write about the awe of God, about looking for the things that are beautiful. Looking for things -- I live in Colorado so every morning, I know, people are going to hate me for saying this but every morning when I wake up, I open the window in my bathroom and there is Pikes Peak -- every single morning. I've lived there 17 years, and I can honestly say this, it looks different every day. The way the sun is hitting that

peak. How much snow is on that peak. The cloud cover over that peak. Whether or not it is cloudy or clear, all those things give it something new every day.

Now I've learned a long time ago that when I open that, I look for the beautiful. So I want to start my day looking for something that's beautiful because I know once I leave my house and I turn on social media or I turn on a podcast or I listen to the news, I'm going to be hit with the ugly all day long. And if I'm not careful, my soul starts reflecting on the information that I'm taking in.

So, if you're not taking in beautiful things, you're only taking in corrupt things, you're only listening to chaotic things, things that are ugly and broken, you're going to look up one day and your soul is going to reflect that. It is like the food that I eat. Like all the food that I put in my body is going to determine my health. So will all the information I take into my soul is going to determine the health of my soul. So if you're not taking in the presence of God, if you're not listening for the voice of God, if you're not reading the Word of God, if you're not around God's people, you're going to miss out on the beautiful things that can make your soul become beautiful.

So, I'm talking about the awe of God in that chapter, and I think I want to be surprised by something beautiful every single day. I want to bump into someone I can bless. I want to see God's creation with a new lens, a new set of eyes every day. I don't want to lose my sense of beauty and wonder. I'm living on a planet, a rock that's spinning around the sun and it is a beautiful thing. I don't want to be distracted all day long by the ugliness of the world and end up one day being an ugly person.

RANDY: Is there an exception in the Bible for jealousy? Because I see traffic every morning. But do you see the beauty simply in creation? I think people get that. Oh, yeah. Is there not beauty even in people?

BRADY: Absolutely! Yesterday, I had an uber driver take me to a place and he was joyful. He was so happy about his job. He was telling me about his career. He was telling me about his job. He spoke broken English. I think he is new to our country. But there was such a joy in what he

was doing. I think if I had been back on my phone doom scrolling Twitter, instead of talking to this guy, I would have missed out on a joyful surprise yesterday. I think that's what I'm talking about. It doesn't have to be the big epic thing that takes your breath away every day. It can be the subtle, the simple -- those are just as profound to me as the big thing that happens in your life.

RANDY: Yeah. That's something that everybody can do.

All right, there is another story in your book that I want to ask you about. "The Louisville riot that wasn't."

BRADY: What happened the first week in May, several years ago during Kentucky Derby week, which is a big deal in Louisville, as you know, horse racing, and every restaurant in downtown Louisville was packed with people going to the races, paying attention to the races. And there was a protest march that day. So, the black community was walking down the street in protest of a violent act that had happened to a young woman there in Louisville. It was a peaceful protest.

But they came into an outdoor restaurant space and one of the protesters got too close to a guy sitting at his table outside, and the guy felt threatened. So, a white man stood up, he is face to face with a strong black man. So, the two of them are facing down in this protest. Well, the white guy was armed. And so, he puts his hand on his weapon. The black guy now comes toward him even more aggressively. The white guy -- the whole thing could have blown up in a mess. And this video that I referenced in the book shows this woman stepping in-between them and putting her hands out and saying, not today. We're here peacefully protesting. This is not going to happen.

She becomes a peacemaker in that situation. Instead of a peacekeeper, she becomes a peacemaker. So, she calms down the situation. She de-escalates the situation. What I talk about in the book is we need more peacemakers. We need people who can walk into potentially chaotic, murderous, violent places and bring -- listen.

Who do we follow? We follow the Prince of Peace. He's called the Prince of Peace. That is our

savior. Our resurrected one is the Prince of Peace. So, if he is the Prince of Peace, and we follow the Prince of Peace, then everywhere we go, we should bring peace with ourselves. That doesn't mean that we can't argue and debate and confront and challenge evil. I'm not talking about being a doormat and I'm not talking about ignoring the problems of our culture. I'm saying that I can come into a difficult, potentially murderous, violent situation and I can bring something with me into those situations that calms things down so that really good conversations can happen.

In that setting, I think about that guy at the restaurant table needed to have a healthy dialogue with the protestor. They probably needed to sit down at that table and say, tell me why you're marching. Tell me why it upset you that I came close to your table. But someone has to bring peace so that conversation can happen. I find that that's the role of a church. That should be the role of a pastor, a church, where people can come into the church, it is a sacred and safe place, this is where we can have these dialogues and conversations that can actually heal our land and heal our country right now. I believe in it. I think I'm on to something.

RANDY: I think there is a very profound difference between a peace keeper, which is kind of a maintaining the status quo, which I'm all for keeping peace. But the peacemaker actually has to take that step of courage into a difficult situation to make a difference.

BRADY: They have to believe that peace is possible. And see, this is what I'm trying to tell people in the book. If we're people of the spirit -- I've got the book. I was sitting at my coffee table, my breakfast table in my room a few years ago, Romans chapter eight, "The mind governed by the spirit is life and peace." That's the scripture in Romans chapter eight. I thought to myself, what is governing my mind right now? What is really controlling me?

And I'm caught up in the anxieties of the day. I'm aware of what is happening. I'm very aware. Maybe too aware sometimes. I can find myself being anxious, afraid, aggravated, upset. But when I realized that my mind is controlled by the Holy Spirit, then suddenly, something else can govern me, something else can lead me to life and peace! So, if that's what's controlling my mind, my heart, my soul, then that's what I can bring into every conversation, every situation.

That's what I can bring into my marriage, into my adult children's lives. That's what I bring into my pulpit when I'm preaching, life and peace.

I think that's the two anecdotes for what is ailing our world right now. Because you see death and destruction that the enemy is bringing. Jesus brings something much better. He brings life and he brings peace.

RANDY: You know, that's interesting coming from a pastor who had an active shooter at his church.

BRADY: We had a violent gunman come on our campus 17 years ago. Opened fire with an AR-15 and killed two teenage girls in my parking lot. I cleaned up the blood the next day in my hallway where he died. I know what death and destruction looks like. But I also know the power of life and peace because two months later the parents of that gunman came onto my campus and held hands with the parents of the two girls. And in that hallway, inches away from where their son died, I saw the parents of the gunman and the parents of the two girls hold hands and bless each other, forgive each other, speak life over each other, and they are still friends today. Why? Because their minds were governed by the spirit, and life and peace came out of that situation. So, I've seen this happen -- I've seen this happen too many times for me not to believe in it.

RANDY: Yeah. Wow! Okay. You can be *Life-Minded* too. There are several ways. One topic in Brady's book that we didn't talk about today is the idea of service. That's a real key, especially when you want to connect with people, maybe people that you don't know.

We're going to jump down to one of our mission partners and he's going to show you a situation where we, as the body of Christ are serving others who are in desperate need. I tell you what, if you'll join us in that service today and request Brady's book, you can get more from him on how to be *Life-Minded*. But watch this and see what you can do right now.

Transition Roll-in:

ISAK: There's malnutrition clinics like this all over this area in Angola where mothers bring their children that are suffering from malnutrition. In these parts of Southern Africa, child mortality under the age of five is the worst anywhere in the world.

Many of these mothers bring their children and they watch and wait to see will we be able to save their lives? Mothers like Angelina here with little Jakim. Jakim is a child that is being ravaged by malnutrition. Literally, the silent killer that is stealing the life out of her. This child represents so many in these areas. Her mother now can only watch, wait, and pray. Pray that we'll be able to save her child's life.

My prayer today is that it is not too late for Jakim. The therapeutic food that we're providing this child in this clinic will be able to save her life. But my other prayer is for the mothers in the villages all over these areas, mothers whose children aren't yet here, who if we don't reach with critically needed resources, with the food they need, their children will end up in these clinics fighting this battle of life and death.

You can help Jakim and Angelina, and you can help the mothers in these villages. Today, you can be the answer to that prayer if you'll open your hearts and if you'll help us to bring the resources that are so critically needed, if you'll bring life in the form of food to these mothers in their villages, and insure that their children never end up in these clinics, and never end up like little Jakim fighting the battle of life and death.

Studio Appeal:

RANDY: It is a battle! But I can tell you right now that we can win. Those of you that have supported the malnutrition clinics, I want to say thank you. They are critical. It is a very difficult situation there, but we are able to save many lives.

But here's the better solution. Let's go into the villages where they are facing malnutrition,

starvation, and hunger and let's feed them, so they don't have to end up in a clinic. Because you understand, the clinic is sort of a last ditch effort to save the life of a child. But when we go in with the Mission Feeding outreach into the villages, we feed them oftentimes at schools, but we give them what they need to get to a point where they can be self-sufficient.

This works. We've been doing it in so many different areas for many years but only with your support. Let me break it down for you. By the way, this is the last week we'll be on the air with this outreach, but the need will continue. And as many of you plan your end-of-the-year giving, this is a wonderful place. I pray you will consider putting it right here because Mission Feeding works. Mission Feeding saves lives.

Let me break it down. Three children, how much do you think it would cost for us to feed three children for the next three months? Well, because we have the systems in place, because we have other agreements to get supplies and some of the basic materials to these places, it really, it only costs \$30. I know you think, how does that work? It's taken years to get here but it works. \$50 will feed five children for the next three months. \$100 will feed ten children. \$1,000, and many of you can give \$1,000, and feed 100 children for the next three months. If you can do more, again, I pray you will see that this is a tremendous opportunity to reach people not only with a desperate need but people that need a touch from God. Because we don't go anywhere that we don't tell people, this is a gift from people who love Jesus Christ. There are a lot of good works in this world, I applaud them all, but it is a God work when you go in in the name of Jesus to meet that need.

So, here's my question. Will you help us continue the emergency malnutrition clinics over the next several months? Will you help us reach into the villages where we can feed children before they get to the state of needing the clinic for the next several months? I pray that you will.

It is a privilege to be able to represent our Lord and Savior to people who might not otherwise hear it, and people who desperately need someone to reach out and be an answer to their prayer. I'm inviting you into that privilege. Let's be that answer to their prayer. Reach out with me today by picking up the phone or going online and making the best gift you can.

Last week Cause spot:

ANNOUNCER: Right now across the continent of Africa, children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition and even death. Extreme drought and famine putting at risk thousands of lives means we must replenish food supplies immediately to keep feeding the 350,000 children and help reach more people in desperate need.

Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need. Call now with your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send the Daily LIFE devotional calendar. This perpetual calendar has 365 days' worth of scriptures and inspirational thoughts to remind you of the rest you can find in God's loving arms.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "The Light of Life" desk lamp. Find comfort and encouragement from Jesus' words in John 8:12 displayed on this stand-alone acrylic gas lamp, perfect for home or office décor as a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "A Cup of Water."

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

End of video**Studio goodbye:**

RANDY: I do hope you're going online or going to the phone. Make the best gift you can. We can together save lives. And this is, at the end of the year, year-end giving, all those great things, I mean this is the time to do it.

Request *Life-Minded* if you would like to have the book. Brady, I understand there is more to this. There is a Bible study people can do together. What is your hope for people when they become more *Life-Minded*?

BRADY: I pray when they read the book and do the Bible study that when they close the book that they would call a broken friendship, a broken relationship, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I'm praying for relationships to be restored, friendships to be restored. That's been my prayer the whole time that I've been writing the book. That people would come back together that need to come back together.

RANDY: I love it. We can be more *Life-Minded* and you can do it again with us. Join us next time here on *Life Today*!