

1/23/25

Week four: WFL

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Ann Voskamp #2

**Studio Discussion:**

**RANDY:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Randy Robison. This is Tammy Trent. We're so excited. Ann Voskamp is back with us today. We're going to talk about a different book. We're going to talk about this book *Sacred Prayer*. In the other program, we talked about *Gifts and Gratitudes*. If you missed that program, I want to let you know you can go to LifeToday.org and watch all of the programs. I promise, you will be blessed. Tammy, it has been such a blessing talking to Ann.

**TAMMY:** I love her! I love her!

**RANDY:** We always do. This is just good.

**TAMMY:** She's been through a lot, too, Randy, a lot of stuff. I don't know if people know that. I don't think I knew it until I started diving into her story. But it is what makes her books more powerful to me when you can lean into somebody who has walked through the fire, who has suffered, who has had every reason to walk away from God but hasn't. Well, then I want to listen to that. I want to find out why.

Ann, I'm glad you're back again today. It is so great to have you. You've got two sort of --

**ANN:** Two journals because I believe that when we're facing stressful circumstances, when we're facing all kinds of obstacles in the way, we need a way through. The way through is how do we have a way of life that keeps us in the way. That begins with prayer, prayerfulness and thankfulness, *Gifts and Gratitudes*.

So you can have two journals. You could start the day with prayerfulness and end the day with thankfulness. Or you can start with both of them. But I think we need to have a rhythm of life, a way of life that keeps us in close company with Jesus who is the way himself.

So what is keeping you close to the heart of God? The way. So you're not just looking for the way through, but I'm in the way, the person of Jesus himself.

**TAMMY:** Why do you write?

**ANN:** Why do I write? That's a great question. I think all of us, because we live in a world made by the word, we are made up of more than atoms, we are made up of stories, our own stories. When each of us can slow down; picking up a pen and a piece of paper, opening up fresh pages of a journal, and starting to write things down slows us down enough to start to go, what is happening in my soul? Reorienting myself to where I am in relation to God. We say we have a relationship with Jesus. Well, where is my soul in relation to him? They say in real estate all the time, it is about location, location, location. So where is my soul in location to him? And a pen, picking up a journal and starting to write those, oh, I'm seeing this is where I'm really at, and this is where God is. Where do I need to turn? What's happening in my soul? It does this excavation within me.

So, writing for me is a way of slowing down, seeing my interior world, and then seeing the word himself, and what needs to change in my life so I'm in a closer relationship with him.

**RANDY:** The title of this one, *Sacred Prayer*, is that redundant? Or is there a kind of prayer that's maybe not so sacred?

**ANN:** Sacred is actually an acronym in this particular case. So the acronym SACRED is giving you, not steps but a movement, to move deeper up and higher into the heart of God himself. So that sacred, S is for stillness. A is for attentiveness. C is for cruciformity, to be shaped like the cross. R is for revelation, do I have a fresh revelation from His Word? E is examine, to examine my heart and say, what am I afraid of? Because so much of our lives is either

motivated by love or motivated by fear. That's why we've got like 360 plus times through scripture, "Do not be afraid." What are you afraid of? We need to slow down enough to examine, what am I really afraid of here that's making me run and hustle and race. And the D, again of SACRED is doxology. What am I grateful for?

So SACRED, the acronym, is sort of this movement through prayer. So picking up a pen and going, okay, how can I be still? How can I pay attention? What looks like cruciform?

Having a fresh revelation I think sometimes, we open up scripture at the beginning of the day, we read. How do we move out into the -- like I have seen the face of God. I have a fresh revelation of who he is. Then we write that down so we carry that with us through the day. We say we want to see a way through. We can't see a way through until we've had a fresh revelation that God has revealed more of himself to us because he is the way.

So really, *Sacred Prayer* is giving you a way of life, a rule of life, a cadence or a rhythm of life that keeps you in the way himself.

**RANDY:** So it is interesting that you picked up on that because we have six places we could go. I'm thinking, I want to talk about the revelation thing because you know, when people hear that word it can mean something new outside of the Bible. But you said a revelation from His Word.

**ANN:** Yes.

**RANDY:** Personally, I have read the same passages dozens of times and seen different things in them because of where I'm at, of the journey that I'm on. It's like God meets me through His Word even if it seems to be repetitious. There is so much depth in scripture. You're never going to get to the bottom of the depth of scripture.

So what has that been for you to go back to the same word in a sense, the same Bible but it is fresh?

**ANN:** Well, I think when we realize that His Word is very personal to us. He is writing a love letter to us through the story; I mean he is love himself come down. So he has come in the flesh to incarnate love to us. So when we open up His Word and sit with it, it is the person of God, the Logos, the logic of the universe is speaking to us. So we don't come to it thinking I've got to check something off or this is a duty. I'm coming into the presence of a person who is love himself. When we're in love with someone, we don't like oh, this is a burden or something I have to do. It is this joy. I want to know more of you. I want to know more of your heart.

So getting to pick up a pen, and feeling, oh, the Lord is speaking to me today really personally through this particular scripture. So for me, that means reading through scripture chronologically, reading slowly enough, reading to allow -- it is a living book. The spirit is speaking to us. So slow down everything and go, where is the Lord speaking to me personally? This intersection which might look hard and difficult in my life, he has a personal word for me.

Really, in Hebrew, the word for *wilderness* is the word that means, *dabar*, word, he speaks to us in the wilderness. So when you feel like you're in a wilderness, when you feel like you've been abandoned, that's a place where everything else can fall away and I can listen to God's heartbeat, His Word for me.

I think every day, can you just open up His Word, pick a book, read through it chronologically, and say, Lord, I'm not leaving here today until you've spoken to me through your word. Write that word down and carry it with you throughout the day.

**RANDY:** So you touched on a scripture that I love here. You said "Logos." Much more depth and meaning in the original language than just "word" which is a little shallow in our language. The logic --

**ANN:** The logic, the logos.

**RANDY:** The order, the meaning. Okay, so the most philosophical statement, possibly, in scripture, John 1:1, "In the beginning --"

**ANN:** Was the Logos, the logic. The meaning of everything. Everything!

**RANDY:** And it was with God and was God.

**ANN:** The logic, he himself is the logic.

**RANDY:** All of it. So when our life lacks order, lacks meaning, lacks logic, we go to the *word*. That's our connection to --

**ANN:** And if you want to understand meaning or the way through or have a meaningful life or understand the next step, you have to come back to the logic, the Logos, and write that down because that is going to be your compass through, not just the word on the page but the Logos, the person, the word himself with you every step of the way.

**RANDY:** Do you need a soul compass? [Laughing]

**ANN:** SACRED for me has been my soul compass. SACRED for me, that rhythm of stillness, attentiveness, cruciformity, revelation, examination, doxology, it reorients me back to the way himself, the person of God himself.

So I think we need this SACRED rhythm of prayer that slows us down enough to actually be attentive to His Word and a revelation of him.

**TAMMY:** First of all, both of y'all just took me to Bible college. I was sitting here going, it is like I'm playing tennis. I'm listening and going, somebody give me a pen and let me start journaling. I do. I feel like sitting in this chair so often is such a privilege because I lean in. I lean in and I learn so much.

That's the point -- that's the point of why we're here is that you on the other side, even if this is new to you or you're hearing something new for the first time, that it would be a moment of

revelation for you that goes off. You're going, I get that now! I hope that that's how your spirit feels too every day when you watch *Life Today*, is that it comes alive with knowledge and truth. That's what I'm feeling today as I'm going back and forth.

**RANDY:** Are you attentive? That's key!

**TAMMY:** I'm attentive and I'm still in my stillness, I'm attentive and I'm gaining a ton of revelation.

**ANN:** I think what's so powerful about A of sacred, attentiveness, is sometimes in prayer we go to God with questions or things, expectations we have of God. But in scripture, God has questions for us. The A of SACRED is to be attentive to God's questions of us. The question of who do you say that I am? Every day when you get up, you can't move forward until you know actually who do I say that God is?

Actually, the end of the book lays out all of the things God names himself. I'm the consuming fire. I'm the creator. I'm the deliverer. When you name who God is, you begin to have an identity of who you are in his story. So who do I say that I am? The question that he asked Hagar in Genesis 16 is, where are you coming from? And where are you going to?

If you want to move into your day, first of all, you need to reorient yourself. What baggage am I carrying that I want to lay before the Lord? Where am I headed today? Am I turned towards the cross or am I headed off into the Hinterlands? So actually slowing down enough to answer that question.

And then, amazingly enough, Jesus asked his disciples in Mark, "What do you want?" Jesus is attentive to our wants. He wants to hear the longings of our hearts. Can we slow down and lay that before the Lord? So attentiveness is really about, Lord, I think we step more into the answers we're looking for when we're attentive to the questions that God himself is asking us.

**RANDY:** You know, that's where the revelation comes from Peter when he says, "Who you do

you say I am?" And Peter said, "You're the Christ, the son of the living God." He was like, "Flesh and blood have not revealed this." It is tied together.

**ANN:** Yes! And when you know who he is, the Logos, everything starts to make sense. So that's where you start.

**TAMMY:** Okay, so when I think about *Sacred Prayers*: "90 days of deeper intimacy with God" who did you write this book for? This journal, I should say?

**ANN:** Me!

**TAMMY:** See, that's where it starts. It has to.

**ANN:** Not knowing the way through. I want to start with -- be still and know that I am God. So having a way of life, a rule of life, wait! I don't know where to go, I don't know what to do! Okay, I know where I start. I start with stillness first. Then I start with who do I say you are? I want to be attentive to your question. It moves from being just a page in a journal to starting to be a way that you think.

So I shared this actually in my previous book, *Waymaker*. So *Waymaker* kind of gives the overall story. *Sacred Prayer* is the practical. A retired Christian psychiatrist read *Waymaker* and she was doing the *Sacred Prayer*, writing it out. And she wrote me a letter last year and she said, "In my decades of practice trying to help people through healing, I have never experienced a practice of journaling that has been more profound for me and transformational than *Sacred Prayer*. Could you go ahead and create a journal out of this?"

Oh! Let's go ahead and actually -- it has six chapters that break down to help you understand, what does stillness look like? What does attentiveness -- it breaks it down so you have a better understanding. And then it gives you 90 days to practice *Sacred Prayer*. We practice our faith by having practices. Things that we intentionally do every day, not based on my feelings but based on who he is and how close he's called me to be in relationship with him.

So picking up a pen and saying every day, I'm going to start with stillness. I'm not going to start with my to-do list. I'm going to start to be still and know who God is. And then start to be attentive to his questions. Pick up a pen and write it down. I had a woman email me this past week and say, "Oh, my goodness! *Sacred Prayer* has been like therapy for me that I haven't experienced in any of my counseling to this point." So it's picking up a pen and putting you in relationship with the word himself.

**TAMMY:** So what I think I hear you saying is that it's good for your mental health.

**ANN:** Honestly, for me, profoundly transformational. And in examine is examining what am I afraid of? Psychiatrists say you have to name it to tame it. So I'm going to name my fears, I'm going to write them down. And then I'll think, oh, my goodness, here are all my fears. What is the D right after the E? Doxology. So you're going to write down what you're grateful for. Your brain is wired, the part of your brain that feels fear activates the hippocampus and the amygdala, which can spike that stress hormone, cortisol. But when you give thanks that also activates the amygdala and the hippocampus, which regulates cortisol and lessens the anxiety and the stress you're feeling.

So for your mental health, when you write down the things you're afraid of, you're laying them at the foot of the cross in prayer and you're immediately writing down what you're grateful for. It is impossible in your brain to simultaneously feel fear and gratitude at the same time. That's why he asks us to be a people of thanksgiving because giving thanks crushes fearfulness.

**RANDY:** I love that you're touching on a fairly recent science. And you get into neuroplasticity, recreating neural pathways in your brain, new ways to think. And then you go, in the Bible it says to renew my mind daily. So the washing of the word. And don't be anxious but instead --

**ANN:** With prayer and petitions with thanksgiving in your heart.

**RANDY:** God knew this.



**ANN:** Exactly! Joy is always praying continuously, and giving thanks in all circumstances. There is a reason why he asks us to do this. It is to give him glory, but it is also for our own shalom, our healing and wholeness.

So for me, sacred has been a profound transformation in terms of yes, my intimacy with the Lord, but in terms of my spiritual and mental health.

**TAMMY:** This is so good. I can't even wrap my head around some of it, it is so good.

**ANN:** Concerning neuroplasticity, research has shown us through MRIs now, that if you can pray for 12 minutes a day, you are reshaping and rewiring your brain. So -- you say, 12 minutes, I don't know if I can do it. For twelve minutes, pick up a pen, here are the prompts that are going to lead you all the way through. So not only do you have deeper intimacy with the Lord he gives you a new mind, the mind of Christ.

**RANDY:** It only took science 2,000 years to catch up with scripture.

**ANN:** And back with what the Lord says.

**RANDY:** So we're good! We're good! I want people to get this.

**TAMMY:** Yes! We need this. I need this! I'm keeping this one. This is good.

**RANDY:** All right. We've got an opportunity for you to do something really, really good today. When you join us on this beautiful outreach, this beautiful mission, you can request Ann's book, *Sacred Prayer*. We'd love to give it to you. But I want you to see a need today because I think a part of the journey that we're on as believers is reaching out and demonstrating the gospel in both word and in deed. When Jesus comes and says he is the water of life, we have to have water to survive spiritually and physically.

So, my question is will you join us on this sacred mission, I would say, to help others? When you do, you can get that journal when you request it. Watch this and you'll see how.

**Transition Roll-in:**

>> When I experienced what we have seen this week, my heart was broken.

Open Captions: Nearly 90% of Liberia's population has limited access to safe drinking water.

>> The major cause of death is -- been the issue of water.

Open Captions: One Liberian mother, Hawa, discusses the effects the water crisis has on her health.

>> What is happening to me right now is I have pain in my stomach just from drinking this water. I have diarrhea and not able to move.

**JOHN:** Hawa, do you know personally of someone who has lost their life to this water?

>> Just recently, two children who were just here with us, died from diarrhea. Just because they drank from this water.

**JOHN:** I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry for the loss of your children because I know that in most cases it's like we're all losing our children here. The village children are all of our children.

So, you've been watching us as we're sitting here next to this water source that you can obviously see as just absolutely tainted and deadly. It is a tragic problem. But we know the solution.

With your help, we can make a difference. With your help with Water for LIFE, we can assure this village will not have to worry about waterborne illness. They can have fresh clean water, the Water for LIFE.

**Studio Appeal:**

**TAMMY:** Just as John said, I feel the same every time I go into a village that is suffering, that is struggling, where there has been death because of their water source. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

And then I realize before I leave that I have to be more than sorry, I have to do something, especially if it's been presented to me and now I know the problem. As a child of God, I feel like he shows me, he gives me pictures, and he gives me glimpses of needs all around me. This is one today. That is the first time I've seen that along with you. So I've seen it and I have to be more than sorry. I have to do something.

Here's the beauty of the hope that I feel. I've also been there when we have been able to do something. Just as you saw with me right there, we can do something today right now for more than one village. We can do many villages. Do you know there are more than 800 million people without access to clean drinking water? That seems like a humanitarian crisis.

**RANDY:** It is. It doesn't matter where we've gone over decades now, we've been out there in different countries, and we hear these stories, the same thing over and over. And the solution is so simple!

So many of you have joined us over the years in providing that well where we go in. We drill deep down to the clean water, the water that will give them life instead of taking their lives. We put in a well that is going to last typically, a lifetime, about seven years on average. And we've seen it. We've been there with the children when they dance, when they celebrate, and what a beautiful celebration it is!

You make that possible. But as you've just seen, and as Tammy has seen, as all of us have seen, there is still a crisis. There is still a need. But guess what? You are still the answer. It's very simple. Let me break it down for you. A gift of \$48 right now will provide ten people with clean drinking water for a lifetime. That's based on the average cost of a complete well being about

\$4800. When we look around the various nations, 350 wells are the goal for this year. By the way, I'd love to exceed that. But we're looking at 350 wells, an average \$4800 cost. Some of you can drill a whole well, by the way, if you can do that, I would highly encourage it. You will change a whole village for a lifetime. You won't be hearing the stories like you heard today out of those places. But maybe with a gift of \$144, you'll provide water for 30 people.

Whatever you can do, join us in giving life to others through Water for LIFE. Your gift today right now will make a difference. It will go a long way to saving lives. So please pick up the phone, go online, and make the best gift you can.

**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 for 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!*

**Field appeal:**

**TAMMY:** This is one of the tiniest water sources I've ever seen, just very little water. The water that they're getting from this, you guys, it's shocking. It is filled with waterborne illness. I mean it is literally killing people.

I got to sit down and talk with a mother yesterday who has lost two children in the same week because of this very water right here. That's what breaks my heart. They have no other option, nowhere else to go. They will dig and dig and dig to try to find fresh clean water and they just can't get there. It is underneath their feet but they need help.

We can come in here and we can drill a well that will change everything for these children, these mothers. Please go to your phones right now. Call that number, go to the website, do whatever you can do, and let's change this village for them for the rest of their lives.

**Studio goodbye:**

**RANDY:** I hope you are able to go online or go to the phone. Make the best gift you can. You can make such a difference. Let me tell you, those people who receive the blessings, the gifts that you give, they are grateful. We can cultivate gratitude in so many people. You can cultivate it in your heart today when you request Ann Voskamp's book with your gift. You can be such a blessing today. It is our calling to be that blessing.

Ann, thank you for being here. Thank you for sharing with us. I have a question for you. As you practice *Sacred Prayer*, what do you have that other people can experience?

**ANN:** Ultimately, deep peace in God; that he is walking every step of the way with us. Sacred

means ultimately to be set apart. So the waters part and I am set apart to be in deep intimacy with him. And then, when you experience that, you will go to great lengths to share that same peace and joy that you find in Christ with other people who are walking really hard roads.

**TAMMY:** I love it. I'm going to start my journey of journaling. I'm going to do it.

**ANN:** I think journeys get so much better and richer when we're journaling.

**TAMMY:** I'm going to do it. And you need to do it today too. Start journaling and put your thoughts down and let God transform your life. We love you. We appreciate you. Thanks for watching. We'll see you next time on *Life Today!*