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Week 10: WFL, Last week

Tammy Trent

Jennifer Rothschild #2

Studio Discussion:

TAMMY: Hello, everybody. Welcome to Life Today. I'm Tammy Trent, and it's great to be back with you. It's really great to have my friend Jennifer Rothschild back with me today. If you missed our previous show together, don't worry, you can catch it anytime at LifeToday.org, along with all of our past episodes. Trust me, you won't want to miss any of them.

Today, we're continuing our conversation about heaven because Jennifer has an incredible new Bible study out called, *Heaven: When Faith Becomes Sight*. And let me tell you, it is so, so good. So welcome back, my friend. It's good to have you. We touched on so many things on the last show, so I was like, stay, stay, because there's so much more we have to talk about. And I actually want to start by, you know, when I look at your Bible study, you have a beautiful cover -- a beautiful cover. I kind of wonder, what do the blue flowers mean? Do they have meaning?

JENNIFER: The blue flower was super important to me, Tammy. I'll tell you why. I didn't want any imagery that would be what one would expect with heaven. You know, like clouds or angels or harps. I wanted to do something that might capture our imagination. So I happen to be a C.S. Lewis junkie.

TAMMY: Yes, I know this.

JENNIFER: I love his work. And so a while back, I was reading -- well, listening. I listen to audiobooks because I'm blind. But I was listening to his book, *Surprised by Joy*, and at the very beginning, in the first chapter, he said that he was a votary of the blue flower. A votary is a devotee, somebody who is devoted to. So he said he was basically devoted to the blue flower. I was like, well, I'm devoted to C.S. Lewis so I need to know what in the world we are both

devoted to. The blue flower, originally in German Romantic literature, was used to represent longing and transcendence and beauty and like the ache for the eternal. So what C.S. Lewis was saying is, I just have this ache for the eternal. And I'm so devoted to this longing.

Tammy, the beautiful thing about longing for heaven is it's this ache that we feel. It's almost satisfying when it's unfulfilled still, you know, as we're walking by faith because we know there will come a day when faith becomes sight. So, literally, the blue flower to me represents this longing for heaven and the beauty of heaven.

TAMMY: Oh, I love that, Jen. And the longing is real. I feel it! I feel it, especially on the hard days. Oh, I just want to get out of here. Better life. But how do we keep that?

JENNIFER: Well, I think what's helped me is to be able to -- here's what I'm going to call it, since we're talking about flowers, "Smell the fragrance of heaven." So here's what I mean. When I was 15 years old, I lost most of my eyesight to a blinding disease called retinitis pigmentosa. So, within a couple of years, I literally could not see well enough to navigate. So I learned to walk with a white cane when I was 17. Well, I remember my very first lesson of learning to walk in the dark. My mobility instructor's name was Mike and he gave me this white cane, and he taught me how to hold it and how to move it, and where to tap and how to navigate the rough places. We literally walked all around my neighborhood in Miami, Florida. He taught me how to turn, and it was very stressful.

So, we get near my home and we're about to turn the corner, and I am sweating from the Miami heat but also because I was so stressed out. He pauses and he asks me, "Can you smell the flowers?" I paused and I breathed in my surroundings and I could! There was this blooming bush of lush hibiscus right there at the corner in my home in Miami. And I did! I smelled the flowers. I said, "Yes! I smell them." He said, "Well, when you smell the flowers, you'll know you're almost home." And it was true. My father's house was just around the corner.

So, if we want to keep the longing of heaven alive, we've got to just pause, and breathe in the fragrance of heaven because literally, it is wafting down the paths we walk. It is within all the

voices that we hear. It is within the beauty we behold. It's a reminder that our Father's house is not far away.

So, like in a very practical sense, like that's beautiful, right? But how do you do that when you've got dirty dishes and you've just lost your job and you're stuck somewhere? You know what I'm saying.

TAMMY: I do, and I'll tell you. I'm going to jump in and say I know exactly what to do now in that moment when the dirty dishes are there and I can't get the printer started. I'm going to fall on the ground in my kitchen and cry, and then let it all out. And then take a breath, and pause, and breathe in, and exhale. And say, I'm not that far. My Father's home is not that far. So this too shall pass. You'll get through this. You'll get through this. Take another deep breath and just be in the moment.

JENNIFER: Well, you know, I talk about you, in my Bible study, Tammy. I haven't even told you this because I think part of the way that we tune in to eternity, that we keep this longing of heaven alive, breathe in the fragrance is -- well, I'll give you three ways and you'll see where you come into this. One of the first ways is by beauty -- beholding beauty. Like if my eyes could still behold a blue flower. Oh, how I knew it would awaken. Because I remember being able to see a blue flower. The delicate, fragile petals of a blue hydrangea. Those beautiful bluish-green hues.

So I even remember before I lost my sight completely. I remember I was in Florida and I was with my then-boyfriend at the time, who I married. We stopped at a stoplight, leaving his home, and it was the most beautiful sunset. I still had just enough perception that I could detect those coral and salmon hues in the way that golden light was shafting through. I remember just studying it, almost taking a picture in my mind's eye. I still see that picture in my mind, even though I can't see it with my eyes. The beauty -- the beauty reminds me that what I behold now is beautiful. I'm going to be held by that beauty for eternity.

But then there's another way. Our emotions, the longings, the loss, and this is where I think about you because you lost your husband, Trent, when you were just so newly married, the first decade, I think.

TAMMY: Yep, yep!

JENNIFER: I remember one time when we were ministering together, you talked about how Trent is not just in your past, but Trent is in your future. I've thought about that so many times because as we have experiences in life that bring us deep emotions of sadness, they can at the same time awaken deep responses of joy. Because that loved one who's in our past, in Christ that loved one is also in our future.

TAMMY: Hallelujah!

JENNIFER: That's smelling the fragrance of heaven. Okay. One more. The experiences we have in life, the adventure. I remember dancing at my oldest son's wedding, and I loved that sense of freedom and beauty. That experience awakened in me a longing for that day when I'm going to dance before the throne. I remember one time I got to climb the Great Wall of China.

TAMMY: You did? What was that experience like?

JENNIFER: It was hard, And it was exhilarating. Of course, I was holding a cane and I was holding a human, and I was holding, holding, holding. But you know what? It awakened in me? This reminder that someday when my faith becomes sight, that I'm going to be trekking the new earth, all the glory of God's renewed and restored creation, even as it was intended to be.

So that's what I'm saying. Those are all ways to breathe in the fragrance of heaven. So don't just speed through your day. Pause. Smell the flowers. Know you're almost home.

TAMMY: Oh, my goodness. Okay. So then how do we live within the dash?

JENNIFER: I'm going to give you two ways. One, you speak sojourn. We were together on the last time we talked about heaven. I told you that phrase, "Earth is short, heaven is long." For me, that's a sojourn statement because you're living within the dashes. So, if you think about when you walk through a cemetery, you see a birth date on a tombstone, you see a dash and you see a death date. And all of our birth dates, all of our death dates are different but what we all have in common is that dash. That's how we live in the middle in this meaningful meantime.

So, in my *Heaven* Bible study, I literally have what I call "Dash Living Days." And we think about the fact that not just Jesus died to bring us to heaven, but to bring heaven to us now, in the dashes. So, I help us create what I call our dash values. What matters to me? Like I'm going to write down what I value in life, what matters because it helps us live intentionally. I have a place in the Bible study where I encourage us to, in the dashes, leave our blessings. You've done this Bible study and your niece opens it up and she goes, "Look what Aunt Tammy said to me. She left a blessing here for me." So even leaving those blessings helps you to live blessings and to live generously.

Another thing we do in the *Heaven* Bible studies, we record what I call "Our dash memories," things that are special to you. What it does is it leaves it as a legacy for those you love when you leave, but it also helps you to live gratefully now, to be mindful, to live everyday as fully intentional and grateful.

TAMMY: Yes. Can I ask you a personal question? So what is your hope for heaven personally? You know, as you were diving into this study and I wonder if Holy Spirit spoke to you at all, or if you've carried around anything with you where you're just like, this is really -- yes, you hope to spend time, and you will, with your dad. In blindness, I want to see, is there anything beyond that where you're just like, I've never really talked about this but this is a big hope that I have.

JENNIFER: Yeah. It might sound strange unless somebody has lived within my skin for the last many decades. One of the things that I am aware of with blindness is how many people have to serve me, and I'm so grateful for it. But, I literally have to hold someone's arm to walk somewhere. I have to be told where the food is on my plate. Often, it's cut for me. Someone is

always serving me. If I need more beverage in a restaurant, you know someone has to bring it and serve me, serve me, serve me my whole life. Serve me. And I'm super thankful for that but I also think of Jesus who said, "I came to serve and not to be served." I know it sounds strange, I really do, and I don't want it to sound weirdly like false humility because it's not. To me it's liberty. When I'm on the new Earth and I'm stepping fully into my glorious, unending, in my resurrected body that will know no corruption, I'm going to be able to serve. I'm going to be able to, if we have houses and they get dirty, I will be able to clean that house. If you've got a porkchop on your plate, I'm going to be like, no, Tammy! Do not touch it. I am going to cut that meat for you.

TAMMY: I love it.

JENNIFER: There is something about it that unless -- and I know there's someone watching who knows because they've been in a wheelchair their whole life and they know what I'm talking about, it is liberty to be able to serve others. In some ways, that's one of the joys of heaven for me.

TAMMY: Oh, my gosh, I could totally, I could feel -- I could feel you. I could see the tears in your eyes. And I think you're right. You hit it. There are a lot of people that watch *Life Today* that can't move out of their home, that are bedridden. We've even had guests on our shows that have said it was so hard for me to get here today because I can hardly move. But I watch your show every day because I want hope. I want to know the truth of God's Word. I want to hear from somebody else that's gone before me that feels what I feel, that can encourage me. So how could we really lean in together?

JENNIFER: Well, what I would say is that heaven is not just a someday when your last tear is wiped away kind of experience. Heaven can be today. We still live within the confines of earth, within the world weariness that comes from walking by faith. But because heaven is real, it can make a real difference today. And if you're struggling, if you're feeling confined, remember Earth is short and Heaven is long. But not only is Heaven going to last longer than your pain, but heaven is an equal opportunity invitation.

So, this is what I would say. You don't have to remain in your hopelessness or uncertainty. You can trust Jesus 100% with all your questions, with all your pain. You can trust him because he loved you to death. In other words, he died on the cross for you so that you would not remain in your hopelessness. And to literally transfer from that hopelessness of death to the beauty and certainty of life is to simply say, Jesus, come into my life. Forgive me for my sin. I trust you as my Savior. You be in charge of my life from this day forward and bring me to heaven someday when this life is over.

TAMMY: Oh, my gosh, that's so good. I think also at the same time, there is so much that God has for us still here if you have a pulse. Don't you agree? Like you have to keep living and living to the fullest this side of heaven.

JENNIFER: Well, all of the New Testament that's written to believers, a lot of the believers thought this is it. Like any day now this thing is over. So when Peter is writing to these people who are in the thick of persecution, everything is so hard, he's basically saying, love each other well. Keep expecting the return of Christ. In other words, if you've got a pulse, until it's over you live like it may not ever end. You live 100% loving like Jesus loved because everything you do now is an investment you make in that day. And yet, there will be rewards for your perseverance here. That's what James 1:12 says; "Blessed is the one who perseveres, for they will be given a crown of life." But you know what the real crown is? I mean, I hope I get that crown.

TAMMY: I want that crown.

JENNIFER: But do you know what I want it for? So I can lay it at the feet of Jesus and say, "Thank you, Lord!" So while we've got a pulse, we do the hard things. We love. We listen. We serve. We give. Because the point is not Jesus just bringing us to heaven. The point is Jesus bringing heaven to this earth now. So, as a redeemed child of God, everywhere we walk should stamp out a little bit of ignorance. Every word we speak should shed a lot more light of who

Christ is and make this world a better place. So yeah, if you got a pulse, you got a purpose. And someday, you've got a place called Heaven.

TAMMY: That's right. Live like you were made for eternity. Oh, it sets me on fire. Inside I get excited. Jen, I love this Bible study. It will bless so many people that have so many questions about heaven. But also, I love the video series. You've got seven videos in this Bible study, and they are so good. I don't know how you remember everything because you can't read it. You can't read it on a script, but it's just downloaded and it's good. The Lord gives you everything that you need and it's beautiful to watch.

And you know what? There are some people right now that are in great need. They're in great need. I visited these villages. I visited these families. I've often left there thinking I see the need, but how can I help? What can I do? I have an opportunity to come back here with you at this moment and show you the needs. And then to ask you if you would come alongside me and the rest of this ministry and a whole lot of other people that are coming together to bring life, to bring hope, to bring heaven, and to bring clean water to people that desperately need it right now. Watch this.

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:

TAMMY: Ooh! It's heartbreaking to see that much water surrounding a village, yet not a single drop of it can provide life. It's so deceiving because you look at it and you think, oh, this is perfect. This is all we need. But the tragedy is, when you drink water like that, contaminated, dirty, shared with animals and filled with disease, you're left wondering what your fate will be. Will you live? Will this water take your life today? Without it, there's no survival. But drinking it has brought so much death as well.

Now imagine holding a bottle of water, handing it to your grandchild and watching them drink. Then days later, you hear the devastating news that they've died because of it. The guilt someone must feel, that kind of pain, I'm sure it's totally unbearable. And yet, it's not their fault. There are no other options, so they take the chance and hope for the best.

But here's the thing. We can give them a hope that is truly for the best. The hope of clean water. The reality is we know how to make this happen. We've done it before, time and time again. In fact, we drilled over 8,000 water wells, and every single one of them represents hope restored and lives saved. It's a simple process, but one that brings profound change.

We start by assessing the land, just like here in South Sudan. Then, we get to work raising the funds to make it happen. Once the funds are secured, we make the call that says go! Go! And that's when it all begins. The team drives in a massive drilling truck into that village. They set everything up and drill, drill, drill until we hit fresh, clean water. When that water finally bursts forth, the entire village comes alive dancing in the water. I've danced in the water with them. We're praising God together and celebrating a brand-new day of hope.

But none of this, not any of it, is possible without you. That's why I'm asking for your help today. Here's what that looks like. Each well on average costs \$4,800 and lasts a period of 70 years. That's fresh, clean water for about a thousand people for the rest of their lives. Would you consider giving that? What an incredible gift that could be to those people right now! And for some of you, \$4,800, I know it's a lot, but would you consider giving them \$48, which will help provide water for ten people for the rest of their lives? Or \$144, which will help provide water for 30 people?

I know there are so many urgent needs around the world right now, and it can feel overwhelming to decide where to even give. But I can confidently tell you this: entire villages will thrive again and families will have a chance at a better, brighter future all because of something as simple as clean water. Something that simple that's so life-changing.

Listen, this is our last week of our *Water for Life* emphasis so would you go online? Would you make a call today and give whatever gift that you can give to this mission, *Water for Life*? When you do, we'd love to send you Jennifer's Bible study on *Heaven*. You're going to love it, I promise you that. So just let us know you'd like it and we'll send it to you right away. God bless you.

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.

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

Studio good-bye:

TAMMY: I hope you're going online and giving the best gift that you possibly could give today. You must know it truly will make an enormous impact. And for whatever gift that you're

able to give today, I want to send you Jennifer's new Bible study on *Heaven: When faith Becomes Sight*. I know you will love it. It is so, so, so good.

Remember, this is the last week we're doing *Water for Life*. So, if you can call today, it will make a big difference today right now. I also want to say one more thing. We've talked a lot about heaven. We've talked a lot about the invitation to heaven. We've talked a lot about maybe been suffering. So, I don't know where you're at right now. If you've watched this whole program, you've stuck around with us, our hope was to encourage you, to bring you hope and to bring you life.

But you might be sitting there or laying there, or just being in a place where you feel lost, you feel without. You feel like heaven seems too far away. Maybe you don't even feel like it's something that you deserve. But let me tell you, you do and heaven waits for you. And heaven has been made for you. If you want one of us to pray with you right now, please, please call that number that you see on your screen. We would be honored to pray over you for your life and to stand in the gap for you right now, even if you don't know what it is, but you just feel something. I'm telling you, please pick up and call. We want to pray with you and help you walk through whatever it is you might be sitting in right at this moment in your life. God is real. When we pray and come to him and we lay it before him, he wants to move mountains in your life.

Jennifer, I love you so much truly. You have been an incredible gift to me the way you share hope with me. The things you see through your eyes is absolutely incredible. Where can people find you?

JENNIFER: They can find me anywhere online, JenniferRothschild.com. If you want to go to JenniferRothschild.com/heaven, then you can get a lot of extra free resources with the Heaven Bible study.

TAMMY: Oh, it's so good. Thanks for being here. Please come back again. Thank you for watching and we'll see you next time right here on Life Today.

