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Week 32: SWFL

Tammy Trent & Blynda Lane

Margaret Feinberg #1

Studio discussion:

TAMMY: Hello, everybody. Welcome to *Life Today!* I'm Tammy Trent, and I'm so glad you're here today. It is going to be a super great show. We have with us again, guest co-host, Blynda Lane. I'm so glad you're here. I love having you here with me.

BLYNDA: Thank you, Tammy! I love being here with you. I had so much fun last time. We just decided to do it again. Of course, I just love James and Betty so much and their ministry, so it's an honor to be here.

TAMMY: Well, it's an honor to have you here. And it's an honor to have you here. Listen, have you ever wondered why the Holy Spirit sometimes feels like the most mysterious part of the Trinity? What if the Spirit's story didn't begin at Pentecost in Acts, but was already powerfully at work from the very beginning of Scripture? Bible teacher and bestselling author, Margaret Feinberg invites us to rediscover the Holy Spirit. Not as a New Testament surprise, but as the thread of God's presence moving all throughout the Old Testament. In her new book, *The God You Need to Know*: "Experience the Holy Spirit's power and presence today," she helps us to see the Spirit in places we may have missed.

Please welcome Margaret Feinberg. I'm so glad you're here.

MARGARET: What a joy to be with you two! What a delight!

TAMMY: It is so good to have you here. I told you on the ride over that I had never met you in person. So this is a special day for me, because I've heard so much about you. You have quickly

become, truly, Margaret, one of my favorite Bible teachers. I think the next half hour that we have together on the show is going to be a bit of a Bible study.

So I'm going to dive all the way in. I just want to say up at the top, like, as you were writing this book, and I want to tell you, it's such a good book on the Holy Spirit! And for a girl that was raised in the church my whole life, there is so much stuff I learned. Because I really thought for me, like the Holy Spirit was really in Acts two, kind of Holy Spirit, the Pentecost, and that's when he came. So I kind of missed a lot about the Old Testament. I think you really cover a lot of that.

So can we start there and kind of unfold there and what you experienced as you got into writing this book?

MARGARET: When I agreed to write a book on the Holy Spirit, I realized it was huge. It's kind of like writing a book on God. Like, where do you even begin? And like you, I mean, I grew up in a church when I would ask questions like, Who is Holy Spirit? How does Holy Spirit work? And people would tell me exactly what you're saying, Acts two, and the book of Acts. You'd see all of these stories and displays and they are awesome.

There's only one little problem. My everyday life does not look like that. There's no violent wind and tongues of fire and 3000 people rushing to know Jesus.

TAMMY: Well, there is for me. I don't know what's wrong with you girls.

MARGARET: Give me some of that.

TAMMY: I will. I will.

MARGARET: But what I realized is that that is just the culmination of the work of the spirit throughout the Old Testament. And to jump straight to Acts two would be like showing up on your wedding day and being like, Who is this? How do we court? How do we fall in love? And

yet, when we start to look for Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, all of a sudden, when we understand the rule throughout the history and the patriarchs and the prophets and the judges, and we finally get to Acts two, we start to think, oh, of course it would happen this way!

BLYNDA: In fact, I remember you even pointing out that Genesis 1:2 scripture and you reference the mayhem that there was some chaos. So here we are, instead of Acts, we're at the very beginning of the Word of God. So explain the mayhem that you talk about and how the Holy Spirit makes himself known.

MARGARET: It's always important in scripture, whenever someone is introduced to always pay attention to that introduction. For instance, Saul is hiding among the baggage and can't find his own donkey. It tells us something about the character of. And so we go to Genesis, where Genesis 1:1, 2, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. It was formless and void." A word in Hebrew, "Tohu wabohu." And that that represents the deep cosmic, and the chaotic abyss of the open sea. And yet, it was there that the Spirit was hovering, or in the Hebrew, "merahepet" over that.

So, we think about how is Holy Spirit introduced in Scripture? He's introduced as someone who is hovering and drawing near to the chaos, to the uncertainty, and to the unknown. What comfort for you and for I, that that is not just a cosmic reality of what the spirit of the living God is doing, but it's personal to each of us in those places and those spaces, for some of our viewers, who it feels scary and unknown, and uncertain that the Holy Spirit draws near. The stories of the ways that he does it, once we start talking among believers, are so personal and so powerful.

TAMMY: So why do people think, and I thought to, we're going to need some pushback. Because I think a lot of people think, well, back in the Old Testament, did the Holy Spirit dwell within everyone or was it just specific people or for specific tasks? How do we look at that? What did you learn?

MARGARET: It's interesting, and I have heard that so often. The Holy Spirit only showed up for certain people, certain times, certain places, and it's kind of like this box or restriction. There's a wonderful theologian, and he once said, "Never let the Bible get in the way of tidy theology." In other words, it's lovely to create those categories, but once you start looking for Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, you have all these moments where he is indwelling, bazella in the book of Numbers, or in different people who he's indwelling, he's filling, he's pouring out. We see him in the life of Daniel, Joseph, Ezekiel, and so many others. And we know the Holy Spirit comes and fills them, but the Scripture never notes that the Spirit left in so many of those cases.

So we start to raise questions and look a little bit closer and go, wait a second. Holy Spirit sure is filling a whole lot of people accomplishing a whole lot of God's purposes in surprising and delightful ways.

BLYNDA: I was really interested in tying into that, how often it was pointed out that really through dreams, even, the Holy Spirit made visitation. In the Old Testament, for sure, we have that. Joseph was even able to interpret the dreams. So how, even in that, as we take it from Old Testament and what you do so well in the book is taking it from Old Testament, but you do bring us to Pentecost because you're letting us, as the reader, see that it is from the beginning to the end. This is the triune, the part of the Triune God that is present throughout the whole Bible.

So, in the part about the dreams, how do you see that in the Old Testament? How did that start raising your understanding of the presence of the Holy Spirit?

MARGARET: Absolutely. We discovered that the Holy Spirit works the night hours.

TAMMY: I love that! It's when I need him the most is when I'm sleeping. Praying over me.

MARGARET: I think so many of us think that the Holy Spirit is working in the day not realizing no, no, no, no, no, no! He's not napping when we are. He is active and engaged.

We see that in the life of Joseph who was not only given dreams but also dream interpretation. It is interesting to note in the Bible that it never explicitly says that God gave Joseph those dreams, but I think from the context we know for sure that he did. We see that carried through the nighttime visitations, whether it's Jacob with the image of the ladders or throughout the book of Acts where people are having dreams and visions that are predicted, in the book of Joel.

So this is not a strange part of a believer's life. This is something the Holy Spirit still does today.

BLYNDA: But wouldn't you say for someone watching, that might sound foreign? We're talking about it here, but it might be something that they haven't thought about. First off, even the active role the Holy Spirit plays in their life, but that even there can be that active move in your dreams.

MARGARET: I think for some people who may say this Holy Spirit, it sounds strange or foreign. One of the practical challenges I would give is to buy a small journal, keep it next to your bed, and begin asking, Holy Spirit, would you speak to me through dreams? Now basic physiology, dreams are a gift created by God within us that often are used to clear out the toxins in our minds. They help us make sense and connections while we sleep. But every dream that we have can become a prayer prompt to God to say, Holy Spirit, what are you bringing to the surface here? Are you bringing anxieties? Are you bringing fears? Or are you bringing something that I need to bring to you in prayer? And when we approach with that humility and that openhandedness, we start to see where Holy Spirit can be bringing things, communicating things, and leading and guiding us closer to the heart of Christ.

TAMMY: For those that might not understand what the role of the Holy Spirit is, because we're saying bring it to him, write the journal. But some might go, but I don't know who him is. I've only referred to God, or I've only referred to Jesus, but the Holy Spirit is mysterious to me so I don't really address him. I've heard about him, and he's probably there someplace. So if we're talking about him, his role, for those that might not understand, to really fully understand the

role of the Holy Spirit. Because often I have thought, and I asked a friend the other day, if you have ever felt like you're disrespecting God because you've acknowledged the Holy Spirit or you're disrespecting Jesus because you've gone to the Holy Spirit.

So for those that don't -- what is his role? You've got God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

MARGARET: Absolutely. So a few things on that. First of all, if you notice this conversation, I have not been referring to the Holy Spirit.

TAMMY: Yes, that's right.

MARGARET: I've been referring to Holy Spirit because Holy Spirit is a person. I wouldn't say, I talked to "the Jesus" today, "the God."

TAMMY: I love it. My family does the same thing. They changed their language years ago and I love that. It's so true.

MARGARET: So it's that subtle reminder that we're talking to a person of the Godhead. it is Father, Son and Spirit. One of the words that's really helped me, it's a word called "perichoresis." It describes the internal relationship of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Spirit. It describes it, peri meaning around, and choresis as a kind of dance. So it's a choreography. So in scripture, what we see is that in certain parts of the Bible, one member of the Trinity will take the lead, but the others are always present. For instance, in creation, God takes the lead by speaking creation into existence. But in verse two, as we've acknowledged, Holy Spirit is there hovering over the chaos and the unknown. The use of "we" in the Genesis story implies that Christ is there, too. So in the life of Christ we say Christ, we see Christ taking the lead. But what do we see? We see the Holy Spirit descending like a dove at the baptism and the Father echoing down, "This is my son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him." So to refer to someone, oh, I'm only talking to God. I'm only talking to Jesus.

I thought about this, and this is a very -- it's a very imperfect comparison. But if somebody called you by your first or middle or last name to address you, it would just be great to be addressed. I think the Father heart and the Spirit and Jesus are just the same. I also think that sometimes, because of our creeds and our hymns, we often say Father, Son and Spirit. And it is not implied, but I know in my own mind I often wrestle with that idea that there's three in a list; the third may somehow be lesser than.

TAMMY: That's so interesting, Margaret. And yes, I could see that.

MARGARET: And it's not. The Trinity is equal. And just as you can have a relationship with God the Father, you can have a relationship with Jesus Christ, you can have a relationship with Holy Spirit. Jesus intended, at his departure he says, I am going to send the Paraclete, the advocate, the helper, the comforter to be with you. And so, man, we don't want to miss a single opportunity. It's like being given this incredible gift by Christ. Well, I'll just keep that in the garage. I'll keep that in the storage unit. It's like, no! No! This is the empowering presence that we would live the Christ-filled, spirit-filled life we're designed for.

BLYNDA: I know in John 14 it even refers to Holy Spirit as "the helper." Jesus is speaking and says, "My Father in my name will send a helper, the Holy Spirit, and he'll teach you. And he'll remind you of the things that I've said." Have you seen in your life stories where you have seen the Holy Spirit help you to know something or do something that you otherwise would not have known?

MARGARET: Absolutely! One recent. I've been praying. One of the things I encourage viewers, if you are watching and you're saying, well, I'm not sure how to access the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is already in you as a follower of Christ. It is stunning and it is spectacular. But my friend Drake suggested something that I've been doing for the last few months. He suggested getting a journal and writing one question for Holy Spirit each day. It can be any question. It can be a question of purpose, identity. Why am I here? What are you calling me to do? What's on your heart? What do you think about me? Directing spirit-centered. And then throughout the day, we turn to that single question as a prayer. And pay attention to what pops

up in your life, the conversations, the people, things that enter, and then write that down the next morning or that night. And then ask another question. It could be the same or different.

So I've been doing this for several months. We've got a lot going on in our life, and so I've just been asking Holy Spirit one question every day, Holy Spirit, will you order our steps? And so, a while back, there was a great sale at one of my favorite retailers. So I woke up at two in the morning, so I didn't miss –

BLYNDA: Oh! This is a serious sale!

MARGARET: We don't mess around here. And I'm shopping, and I saw this really cute, bright colored purse, and I immediately thought of my friend Janella. I said, I just need to buy it for her. I'm not a super purse person. I've never bought her a purse. I was like, I'm doing it. So I put it in the cart, sent it to her. About ten days later, she texts me and she goes, “Margaret, how did you know? Did you know about my Easter meltdown?” And I was like, “No. I didn't know.” And she begins to describe, and I had known this, that her mother had died last year. What I didn't know is that every Easter, her mom would buy her an Easter dress and Easter purse. This Easter came around, and she could financially justify buying the dress, but she couldn't buy the purse. So she opens up this box, and inside is not just an ordinary purse, but an Easter purse. She pulls it out, and the color of that purse perfectly matches the Easter dress that she had bought.

BLYNDA: How sweet is that?

MARGARET: And so we start to see these moments that you can't orchestrate. Like you can't make that up. The odds are so ridiculous. But when we start to have those little impulses, almost like a muscle that get stronger and stronger and that knower, and we start to act on them. We go, oh, look at what Holy Spirit did. That's exciting. That's fun! That's part of the purpose-filled life. I mean, I know it happens for you all the time!

TAMMY: We talked about that in the car, too, and the excitement that I feel. I think it's because it helps me to feel like I'm growing. I'm discerning the voice of God. I'm discerning the spirit of God. I'm in the middle of it. And I think that, for my faith, gives me excitement. It's always at the grocery store for me. Right?

So I saw someone the other day. She was sitting in her van. She had a wheelchair near her, but she was reaching into the cart and pulling out these heavy things and putting them in the van. I was walking out with a Starbucks, and I looked at her and I instantly was like, go help her. But then some people don't necessarily want help, so I don't want her to feel like you need help. But I walked over and I said, "Can I help you?" She said, "Oh no, no. I don't need help." I said, "I would love to help you, though. Let me help you." I started picking up these heavy things and handing them to her. I said, "See, look! It's going to go quicker if you let me help you." And I said, "And plus, some day I might need someone's help. And so I want to be able to take their help." I finished and I said, "God bless you so much. I just want you to know that God loves you and he knows exactly what you need at exactly the right moment, even if it was just sending me here to help you." She said, "You know what? I just started to go to church lately. Just recently, I started going." Right? I just kind of -- my whole spirit just went. She said, "So thank you so much for that."

I walked away, I got in my car and I was like, giddy, like giddy. I loved it because not just that God was stretching me, Holy Spirit was stretching me, but something happened for her at that moment. She might have been praying, I'm so sick of the condition I'm in. I can't help myself, but I can't ask for help. I'm just exhausted. And here somebody came. The Holy Spirit showed up. The Spirit of God, God showed up. Jesus, all three of the Trinity, and just let her know, you're not alone. I think so many people need to know that. But we also need to know, as we grow in our faith, how to discern Holy Spirit. How can we do that best?

MARGARET: Absolutely. I think there's some basic questions. Number one: does it line up with Scripture? Does it line up with the character of God? Does it increase my dependence on God? In other words, it will give me a sense of peace, but first, I'm probably going to have to feel unsettled because it's moving me outward, away from my own self-tendencies.

I think another one is, does it produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives? I think when we get those impulses to go, to do, to say, to apologize, to give, when we start doing that and stepping out and seeing the exact fruit that you're describing, and then we start talking about it with others, it creates this contagious hunger to know and experience Holy Spirit.

TAMMY: To look for the assignment, to look for the appointment, and to keep longing to grow in your relationship with Holy Spirit. I have loved this so much, and I just want to say that even as we continue to grow, days like this and learning about Holy Spirit, and discerning that and looking for a need, there are people right now around the world that are praying for God's mercy, for his grace, for his provision. They're asking in their prayers, would you send somebody, I need help? Would you send somebody?

I believe that today we might be that opportunity, we might be that answer to prayer. So take a moment. But before you do this, I just want to say, if the Lord is leaning on your heart to give to this incredible outreach for whatever gift that you can give today, I want to send you Margaret's new book. They're going to love it. It's incredible! We have to get this in the hands of as many people as we can. So if you can partner with us in this incredible outreach today, I'm going to send you *The God You Need to Know*. But first, take a look at this.

Transition roll-in: [A Mother Speaks Up]

RANDY: So is this where you get your drinking water?

TRANSLATOR: This is where they get their drinking water.

RANDY: How clean is it?

OPEN CAPTIONS: I don't know how clean it is. This is our only source for water so we just6 drink it.

RANDY: So it doesn't matter how clean it is, it is the only choice they've got. All right. Well, it looks like a pretty good well, hand dug. Does anyone in your village ever get sick from drinking this water?

OPEN CAPTIONS: Many people get sick because of the water from this well. It's mostly diarrhea and stomach pain.

RANDY: So if we drill a water well here, do you see it benefiting the community tremendously?

OPEN CAPTIONS: A drilled well that has a cover is best because the water is clean and safe.

RANDY: Yeah, that's very interesting. I mean, even the mothers here, they know the difference. The construction is significant because not only does it last longer, but as this mother knows, it keeps the contaminants out. And so, you know, our goal is that no child would ever die from contaminated water. That's why we need you. I think --

She's got something else she wants to say.

OPEN CAPTIONS: Another problem with an open well comes from the animals. They come around and drink from the same water and then the water is even more contaminated.

RANDY: What you're hearing is the passion of a mother who's desperate to care for her children and give them the best water they can. You can give this, mother, these mothers behind me, all the other mothers in this region, fresh, clean drinking water. And we do that in so many areas with your love and with your support.

Let's give them water for life.

Studio appeal:

TAMMY: “Let's give them water for life.” There is no better phrase to me when I'm on a mission field, seeing some of the hardest things I've ever seen than to say, let's bring or let's give them water for life.

Jesus is the very source of life. I know that right now they are probably praying, God, please come, make a way. The beautiful thing is that we've been given this incredible opportunity to come in and help them find a better way. This is the only option that they have, Blynda. I don't know if you've ever been on a trip like this before in your life, but it changes you. Sixteen years ago, I went on my first trip with *Life Outreach*, and my life has forever been changed since that first trip. I think just seeing the devastation of dirty water, contaminated water, water that kills, that doesn't bring life, it's so very real. So many times, we watch these shows and these stories and we think, that's so sad, so sad. But then we just kind of move on with life, and that's just life.

But it's more than sad when you're there and you see the death that it's bringing to especially, these little babies, these children that are getting so, so sick. It will change your whole life. So for me coming back here, there's never been a time when I've struggled to speak about it because I know that we have a solution and I know that it works.

BLYNDA: When you watch it, it's so touching and the gravity of even hearing him say, how clean is this water? And then you realize, well, that question doesn't even matter because it's all the water they have. They don't get to ask that question until *Life Today* comes. That's what's so beautiful is all of a sudden, it provides the covering that the mother needed. It provides the filtration system. All the questions that they have are eliminated because *Life Today* brings the answer. And to see that it's that simple -- a well can change lives. It saves lives!

TAMMY: For the rest of their lives. So we go in and we drill a well. It will last on an average of like 70 years. It will serve about a thousand people in the one village. So, can you imagine? For the rest of their lives, everything is about to change. They will begin to thrive.

Let me tell you what that will look like for you and for me and for Blynda, for all of us today. It is so simple. We can all get involved. We are wanting to drill 350 wells in 20 nations. So, for \$48 you can provide water for ten people for the rest of their lives. For \$144, you can help provide water for 30 people for the rest of their lives. And for \$4,800, it sounds like a lot, but yet in the scheme of things --

BLYNDA: We know people who can do it, though!

TAMMY: There is definitely somebody right now who can provide a well for a complete village for the rest of their lives, \$4,800. Go online, give us a call. Please, just whatever you do, just give the best gift you can today. I think we can all do a little bit. Some of us can do even more. But let's go in and let's change life and bring life to so many people today.

SWFL Cause 2025:

A: 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 Prayers for My Physical Health, a Bible-based collection of 52 prayers designed to bring strength, healing, and renewal to every area of your body. Covering a wide range of physical needs, this beautifully crafted book encourages intimate conversations with God.

With a gift of \$100 or more, you may request the “Armor of God” tumbler set. These two 20-ounce stainless steel tumblers, each inscribed with Ephesians 6:11, are a practical and meaningful way to carry a reminder of God's strength and protection throughout your day.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,200 to help provide water for 250 people, or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well and request our inspiring bronze sculpture, “Lion of Judah.”

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

Studio good-bye:

TAMMY: I hope you're going online and giving the best gift that you can. Whatever God's laid on your heart, I love these moments, if he's put something on your heart, just respond to him. For whatever gift you can give today, I'm going to send you this book, *The God You Need to Know*.

I love you. I'm so grateful to have had this time with you.

BLYNDA: It's been amazing! And I've learned so much. When you speak, you teach. You do!

TAMMY: Thank you for teaching. I hope you felt that in your heart today. Come back tomorrow. We'll have another great show for you tomorrow. Thank you so much for watching. We'll see you next time.