

Transcript

Dr. Randy Bennett Interview

17.03: "A Personal & Pastoral Perspective on Aging"

Andy Braams: Welcome to *Biblical Perspectives on Aging* today. And today, we have Dr. Randy Bennett joining us and Randy is going to talk about just some of the challenges that he's been through personally that have helped pastorally and vice versa, with a lot of death and challenges in his life over these past couple of years.

So, Randy, would you just like to introduce yourself and a little bit about where you serve at this time?

Randy Bennett: Yes, I serve in the Heartland of California where Californians are actually politically, socially, and every other way, very, very conservative, [They're] too hot to be otherwise. This is central California. I'm in Bakersfield.

This is actually where Southern Baptist work began in California; where the dust bowl and the Great Depression drove many, many Americans to come searching for work [00:01:00] in the 1920s and 1930s, and they came right here. And so, this ended up where Southern Baptist work began. And the first Southern Baptist churches were begun here.

And [the] first Southern Baptist association was begun here. And I believe I'm the fifth person to serve as a Director of Missions of the Baptist Association here. And I was called here to begin serving in 1995. And I've been here for 26, 27 years. And it's been a very interesting time of service. We have seen so many changes.

Andy Braams: I'm sure.

Randy Bennett: The way the churches operate, the way they function, and of course, with the rest of the world, we have been greatly impacted by the COVID shutdowns. The churches are so struggling to get back to what they once were, if they ever will. And I don't think they will. It's generally you have to start something new.

[00:02:00] And I don't think we know what that something new is yet. But prior to that, I was a pastor for 20 years. And then my hobby is, I'm an adjunct professor at three different seminaries. One of the differences between being a pastor and being a director missions is 20 hours a week. You think about that?

The 20 hours a week you spent studying to preach Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. Well, you have that 20 hours and that left such a gap in my life that I realized I can actually be an adjunct professor and, it will fill my life and make me a lot more personally fulfilled if I can invest in students both online and then on campus where I can, but I do a lot of my work online.

And I do work in the D.Min. program with Midwestern, going live when we can, but I did have my first experience last [00:03:00] year with the Zoom D.Min. seminar. That was quite the experience I practiced and practiced and practiced. I sort of had the feeling [that] a D.Min. experience online with Zoom should be a professional experience and it turned out to be so. And so, I've really grown to really enjoy the Zoom experience.

It can be really good if the technology cooperates; if you practice; you have to practice. And so, my wife and I live here in Bakersfield and our mother-in-law lives with us. She's here with us. She has severe dementia and memory loss, and she is now on hospice and all that is quite a story.

And so, that [will] be part of what we'll talk about today.

Andy Braams: Well, so having served 20 years as a pastor now, 25, 26 years as DOM, you have certainly [00:04:00] seen people age, your mother-in-law, even as a part of that, you've helped people. You've helped pastors with grieving. So can you share a couple of thoughts, a few thoughts, maybe on how you navigate these particular challenges, as pastor, as DOM, in whatever capacity you would wish to share that?

Randy Bennett: I think it's been helpful to have experience with deaths. I think the average person has not seen death. Very early in my ministry, I think I was 18- or 19-years-old when I was a youth pastor in Colton and my pastor, bless his heart, he scared me to death. I'll have to tell you.

He took me to the hospital to visit with him, with the person who was dying. And I got to be there with them when they died. And I had never seen that before. [00:05:00] I've not ever been with a relative when they died. And then, at my next church as a youth pastor, the pastor there did the same thing with me. And then the next, then the next, then the next.

And so, let's say by the time I was 22, 23, I had been with numerous people when they died. And I tell you that helps so much because I kind of learned the face of death. And I learned that death itself was not so ugly. It was not so frightening. And so, that really helped me a lot as pastor. And I think it helps me then as a family member; when I see my loved one's dead, I can kind of face it better.

And then last year, my own mom died. She died in June. And so, we were like the COVID families. We were able to have a very small graveside, but not a funeral. And that was difficult not having a funeral, but I was able to [00:06:00] kind of look death face on and not be freaked out by it. One of the things I learned early on, then, as a pastor, I learned from this woman in the church. She was a tall, thin woman and her husband had lung cancer.

And I don't know if it's possible, Andy, but I think I learned to spot lung cancer. You know, there's a certain look that particularly men have that have lung cancer and you can almost see it. And [it's] probably silly to think I can spot it. But I spotted it a number of times. And I look at some, I think they had lung cancer and you can almost spot it.

But she kept saying about her husband...she says, "You know what, Pastor? I'm ready. I'm really ready for my husband to go." She was so emphatic. I kind of believed her. And I took her at her word. Well, that was a big mistake. She was not ready. So her husband died [and] we went through the funeral and all the process.

[00:07:00] And when it was over and he had died and the funeral was over, she said to me, "Pastor, I wasn't ready. I don't know why I told you that. I wasn't ready." That was a great lesson for me as a pastor, as a caregiver, she wasn't ready because I think the conscience and the mind always believes there's one more day.

There's always one more day, but there wasn't. In fact, that was a TV movie of the week. And that was what the character was saying. He says, "All I want is one more full day with my wife." And I

don't think I would've understood what that character was trying to say, if it hadn't been for this woman, because in your mind, there's always one more day.

And so, that really helped me understand that you're never ready, whether it's your own spouse or whether it's your dad or your mom. My dad died in 1991. We weren't ready. [00:08:00] My mom died last June; we knew she was going to die. We weren't ready. Carol's dad died 10 years ago. We weren't ready. And we know Carol's mom is going to die sometime in the next year.

We're not ready for that because there's always one more day. And so that's helped me in providing counsel to people. That you're not ready.

The other thing I've learned is that the process of grief...there are stages of grief and I've had that training and I think it's helpful, but everybody grieves differently.

It takes a different shape. Some people cry; some people don't cry. I happen to be a crier. I don't know about you, Andy, but then I go [and] I just cry. I can't help it. And the older I get, I cry more. Because it does kind of bunch up...you know, you've got them in bunches. By December last year, we just had like multiple deaths [00:09:00] and I hate to sound silly here, but including our dog, our dog died the same day as people we really love died. And you put it all together; it was very difficult before Christmas to lose our dog and humans that we loved and it was all together. It was very difficult. It made Christmas extra hard. But I tell you this, I don't ever apologize for my tears. I'm grateful for my tears.

I learned that with my dad and my older brother, for example, he's got that stoicism. He's very stoic. I don't think for my dad...I don't think he cried for years. Whereas my brother and my mom, we cried together immediately and we kept crying and I think we got through it better. My older brother, I think he came to me like seven years later and he said, "How did you [00:10:00] guys get through it so quickly?"

And I think it's because we cried immediately. And then sometimes I even pray, "God, please let me, let me weep. Let me weep and get through this pain. Let the pain come out through my tears." So I don't ever apologize for your tears. Tears are cleansing.

I know in my dad's generation, he's that great generation that came through World War 2. It seems like there's two things those people couldn't do. They couldn't say to their children, "I love you." They just couldn't say it. And they couldn't cry. His parents died. He never shed a tear. I would ask him, "Dad, can't you cry?"

"Well, what good would it do?"

"Well, Dad, it would do a lot of good. It would take away the pain."

"Well, it wouldn't do any good to, I'm not going to cry."

"It would do a lot of good. Why don't you let it out?"

"No, it won't do any good."

"Yeah, well, yes it would."

But he would never cry. And my older brother's kind of like that. [00:11:00] But it's different, though. He was my mom's caregiver and he's crying all the time and I'm happy for him.

He's a little embarrassed. [I'm] saying, "No, no, this is the way it is. You should be crying. You cared for her for the last 10, 12 years. And yeah, you got a big hole in your heart. You should be crying. Cry, and don't apologize for it." So, if you cry with the loss of a loved one, go ahead. Even if your little cat or dog dies just go ahead and cry.

Andy Braams: Well, like you said, it's...you know, people do kind of handle these things differently, you know, and move forward differently, move forward at different paces. And you've already touched on this just a little bit, Randy, but how has that understanding for you, you know, going back to the nineties with your father, etc., how has that helped you to help others? [00:12:00]

Obviously you're a pastor, but you're also a person. And sometimes people forget that, we, as pastors, are actually people that deal with the emotions and things as well. So how have those experiences in your own life helped you to better care for people who are aging or dying, or the people who are left behind from others who have gone on and died?

Randy Bennett: I think...I guess a number of things...number one is, I'm a pretty good listener and people kind of...they're open to talk to me about where they're at.

Partly because I'm open to talk to them about where I'm at.

Andy Braams: Okay.

Randy Bennett: For example, I shared with you off camera that my mentor died early Monday morning. So, two days ago, at our pastors' Zoom meeting, [00:13:00] I shared with our pastors that my mentor died and I shared so with tears and the men were really listening.

And so, I got a number of comments back from them and texts. And there's a "Thank you for sharing your heart." And they said, "We were really listening." They were, because I opened my heart to them. What that means is, then, they'll open their hearts to me when they're hurting. And I think often when they're hurting, they just want someone that knows what they feel so that they can open their hearts to me when they're hurting. And part of what we do have, in our association, we have that kind of spirit with each other is that one person hurts. We share with them. We're not in competition with each other; to grow the biggest churches; we're not trying to out-baptize each other.

We're not trying to outgrow [00:14:00] churches so that one person could be better than the next; we're in this together. And we love each other and we support each other. And we have a lot of support for the things that each of us are going through. Not only the pastor, but so do the pastor's wives.

Andy Braams: Good.

Randy Bennett: My wife spends a lot of time with the other pastors and they are really good at supporting each other when there's loss, especially death.

Andy Braams: Okay.

Randy Bennett: One thing we notice...I'm in my late sixties...[is] that everybody in our age group is going through this right now. And they're taking care of a parent or two parents, or they've just lost a parent; some good friends of mine.

I've just finished losing the second parent of one of the couples very close to us. [00:15:00] The one parent died and the other parent now is now coming under their roof, just like we've done. And so, we're all commiserating this together and we all know we're going to be facing their deaths together.

And so, we share our stories. In fact, my wife has been going to a support group at one of the churches nearby. And one of the things I did...and this is...I think I broke the preacher rules...I went to a grief support group as a participant, not the leader, and almost felt like, "Oh, I shouldn't tell any of the preachers because we're supposed to have it all together."

But I was crying so much over my mother's dad. I wasn't handling it well, and I was praying about it and I kind of felt like the Lord said, "You encourage others to get help. Why don't you get help? So right then, I opened up Facebook and our church, Valley Baptist Church, was [00:16:00] offering a grief support group on Zoom.

And I thought, "Well, I'm going to sign up." So I just finished that a couple of weeks ago and it was 13 weeks and I really needed it. I needed to go through the process and it was great. It was really great. And I was the most emotional one there. And I don't think my loss was the greatest loss. There were three couples in there that had lost grown children, which I think has to be the worst loss there is. And so there, I lost my mother. I lost an older woman and one of the things I thought [was], "Wow, all those years as a pastor, did I really understand when a 60-year-old man lost his 90-year-old mother that it hurt just as much as thought [when] I was a young person?"

I don't think I did. I think I kind of thought, [00:17:00] "Well, she's an old, old woman. He's an old man. That's not a big deal." Wrong. No, to me, that's my mom, however old I am. And I have to...I almost wish I had to go back and ask forgiveness of some people for my lack of compassion and understanding, but I see it differently now.

I really do. But the grief share group was very, very helpful to me. And I'd encourage anybody to go through that, especially if you're having a hard time [getting] through it. And I think for me, part of the reason I was having extra time getting through it is because it was really the accumulation of multiple deaths in my life.

Andy Braams: Yeah.

Randy Bennett: They were taking place....It wasn't [just] mom and two or three others. It had happened at the same time. It just kept piling up on me.

Andy Braams: [00:18:00] And having completed that now with your mentor, dying earlier this week, you know, not that you need to return to the group, but you have different tools for processing it, I'm certain. Again, that can help you moving forward.

Randy Bennett: Yeah. If [there are] very many more people, I'm going to have to go through it again.

Andy Braams: Yeah. So Randy has, as someone who leads pastors, as someone who has been a pastor, what are some verses or even passages from Scripture that provide clarity for these

moments, that comfort you as you went through some of these issues? And, what, as you think back on that now, what portions of Scripture might help you today?

Randy Bennett: Well, I think there's quite a few. Proverbs, my great vacation Bible school texts. We used to make these out of plaster of paris [and] give them to my mom. [00:19:00] And since I had two brothers in VBS with me, she had them on every wall in the house, I think.

Proverbs 3.5-6 [says], Trust in the Lord with all thine, heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him; and He shall direct thy paths." I love that passage. I've known that one since I was a child. I love it because there are so many decisions to make, like, as we especially deal with Carol's mother-in-law [as] she goes through her different stages.

We have decisions to make. When do we bring her home? When do we put her on hospice? We have to trust the Lord that when a decision needs to be made, we'll know when to make it. And that's one thing I always tell Carol. [I] say, "Carol, when we need to make that decision, we'll know." And so, something [would] happen and I look at her and I'd say, "Well, [00:20:00] Carol, right now is the time." She looked at me and she [said], "Now is the time."

And so we'll make that decision. And that's kind of based on that passage. Because I believe he'll show us when the time is; he'll direct our paths. The 23rd Psalm is one that Carol loves a lot. The passage that basically talks about where we "...walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." And it's not that we're dying, instead [it's] our loved ones [who] are dying, but we're walking in the valley of the shadow of their death. We're doing the walking, they're doing the dying, we're walking in the shadow of that. And there's a lot of challenges in that valley of the shadow of death as we are their caregivers, as we are making decisions on their behalf all the time and when they're still alive and they're conscious of what's going on, it's sometimes rather difficult to make decisions for them because they can still talk.

[00:21:00] They [can] still think. They can still react. They can still talk back. Let's put it that way. They can cut you down with their words. Psalm 116.15. This is a psalm I memorized write right after I graduated from high school; verse fifteen says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his godly ones."

So that's a funny one to be thinking of, but I also think, you know, it's precious to God when one of his people dies. It's precious. It's like a gem or a jewel. It's not just a body; it's precious and important and wonderful and important; and it's a treasure. That person is a treasure to God and he's not a nuisance.

[00:22:00] It's not just a lump of a body. It's something that God treasures and that, that comforts me. And of course the one everybody quotes is, "...to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord..." (2 Corinthians 5.8) That is so good.

My best friend died [in] 2018.

I still cry about that almost every day.

That was a huge loss. When I think about him, he kinda like flew away. He was an old Pentecostal preacher, turned Baptist, and I think of brother Jim just flying away to heaven shouting, "Hallelujah!" He would love that. And he's absent from the body and he's present with the Lord. That's kind of like the [00:23:00] first of the losses that began to build for me, it started in 2018 and it just started building from there.

It just kept building and building and building. It's hard to lose a best friend. He was just a part of my ministry pretty much every day, but there's another verse. It's kind of an obedience verse. Why would you bring a mother-in-law into your home?

Exodus 20, "Honor thy father and thy mother." I often think, "Just put her in a home." No, I honor my father and my mother. I've always known we would do that if it was necessary. And it's not that I was wanting to do that. But for Carol, it's necessary for her heart, it's necessary, not [00:24:00] even financially necessary, it's necessary for the way she feels and the way she thinks.

And so we're doing that. And so those are kind of the verses that get me through.

Andy Braams: Yeah, that's really helpful. And, Randy, we've had a couple of interviews on recently of people who work with Baptist Homes and Healthcare Ministries that have wanted to take of family members and try to take care of family members in the house, a sister or whatever, and find themselves unable to...at some point, you know, it becomes too burdensome.

And so, you know, they've moved the care for their family into a care facility, so to speak. And so, like we said about death and in handling that situation, you know, people are going to respond to these things differently. And again, this is something that you've kind of touched on. Now that you as an older male, have [00:25:00] lost a much older mother, seemingly you know, this is just...it's the natural order of events, right?; and she was older and this is when people are supposed to die.

But you mentioned a few moments ago that, when you were younger, you didn't appreciate the fact that, "Well, that 60-year-old man lost a 90-year-old mother and he should be okay with it." So maybe there's a couple of other things that, as a pastor, you learned that have helped you personally, maybe there's some things that, you have now learned even in the last couple of years from your personal journey that are helping you to help pastors in your role as a DOM at this point.

Is there anything else that you'd like to share along those lines, Randy?

Randy Bennett: Well, you almost have to identify the things not to say. This has come up a lot. It came up a lot in grief share group. It's actually come up a lot with my mother-in-law. [00:26:00] I've learned, "Don't bring this up with her." The way she was raised, they didn't treat death with compassionate at all.

So, I find at the dinner table, I would be sharing my feelings of loss about my mother; and [there was] no compassion whatsoever. And I would find myself hurt and angry at her. So I try to keep that away from the dinner table conversation. [She'd say], "Well, she's in a better place. She's better off. It's better off that she's dead."

Andy Braams: Hmm.

Randy Bennett: [I'd say], "Oh, well, thank you for saying that."; and [there would be] a whole list of things she would say. So then in the grief share group, [I'm] beginning to find out people are saying a lot of things like that. And so, you almost have to find that list of things [of] what not to say. And actually in many [00:27:00] cases, the less you say the better.

And it is interesting, is it not, that across our culture, and I think it's like the last 7 to 10 years, the terminology has changed even in television shows and movies. Now the line is, "I am sorry for your loss." That's new. That's very new. I'd say 10 years or less. They used to say, "Well, they're in a

better place.” [Then the response is], “No, no, they’re not in a better place. The better place is with me.” That’s kind of the way we feel.

So the corporate terminology now is “I’m very sorry for your loss.” And that is really a pretty good way to say it. But you almost have to identify where like the five [things not to say]...and I’m sorry, I don’t have that on the top of my memory, but I did. I had written that down in my notes for the grief share group, but there’s a lot of things not to say. [00:28:00]

So just give my mother-in-law a call and ask her about death and she’ll give you all five things not to say. She’s going to say ‘em. Just those little things people say that they’re so hurtful. They’re not in a better place when they’re not with you. Yeah, all right, technically, they are. All right they’re with Jesus now; they’re not with you so they’re in a better place. But those little lines don’t help. They hurt. And so what I learned is...maybe let me just share the lesson I learned [since] I can’t remember the lines; the little phrases...your head processes it one way. So yes, they are in a better place to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

Yes, but the heart is a different thing. What I’m feeling and what I’m thinking are two completely different things. [00:29:00] And so, when somebody is grieving, you have to deal with the heart issues. You don’t deal with the head issues. You kind of deal with the head issues before anybody dies. You know, in your preaching and teaching ministry, you deal with the head issues.

But when they’re grieving, you deal with heart issues. And I would say that’s the biggest thing I learned is you deal with the heart when they’re grieving. You deal with the head when you’re doing teaching training and discipling. And that just became clearer and clearer through the grief share group.

And it becomes clear as I process my loss. I don’t want you to talk to me about head issues when I’m crying, when I’m hurting. Don’t go to the head issues. I can’t hear it. I don’t want to hear it. Go to my heart. “Oh, I see you’re really hurting. It’s hard to lose a mother, isn’t it?” [00:30:00] But see, I know a few, three, four years ago, I was at one of our churches and these 80-year-old women lost their 100-year-old mother.

I’m sorry. I was kind of scoffing it. God, forgive me for that. I was kind of scoffing it, like, “Come on ladies, you’re 80 and she’s a hundred. Get over it. You should all be dead.” You know, [that’s] bad thinking on my part; lack of compassion. Now I realize how wrong I was. That was just very unmerciful of me to be even having those thoughts.

So I repented those publicly that I was wrong to think or to feel that way. And God forbid if that ever came out in words or in sarcasm or [00:31:00] even in my favorite expressions; that would be completely wrong because I could be 80. I could be 90 and I lose my mom. It would be like I was a 5-year-old.

I still would feel the same thing.

Andy Braams: It’s still your mom.

Randy Bennett: Still your mom. It’s still your mom. So I know when my dad died, I was like 38 years old. I was such a better pastor after that. It was noticeable. My people commented on it. “Pastor, you [are] really different now.” And I came to them with a broken heart. And I understood something I never understood before. So sometimes we wonder, “Well, God, why do you have me suffer? Why do you put me through a hard church? Why do you put me through hard

circumstances?" Yeah. It's so you can actually be a pastor. [00:32:00] If you go to great places where you never have struggled, you will never be a pastor. You'll be a preacher. But you'll never be a pastor. [A] pastor has to have had struggle and hurt to be able to understand where his people are.

So if you only have good times, you're fairly useless.

Andy Braams: That's a good word. Even as you're talking about that, Randy, I'm thinking that, you know, within a care facility, like Baptist Homes has, There are certainly pastors, pastors wives, former pastors, whatever, but there are people who have experienced death personally, you know, through the loss of a spouse or a child or whatever that can use these words to help others; or caregivers within these facilities can use the information that you're saying to share.

And I guess I hadn't processed myself. I hadn't realized, [00:33:00] as you said, that the idea of loss, using that terminology, how recent that was to our vocabulary. I certainly say that often, but I just hadn't processed the timing of that; how that had become incorporated over time. So I really appreciate you sharing those things.

We're moving towards the end of the interview. Randy, is there anything else that you'd like to share with those who are watching and or listening; something I haven't asked that [is] on your heart to share today?

Randy Bennett: Yeah. Well, one last area is the difficulties and challenges of the caregiver.

When you're the caregiver taking care of someone that like my wife's and my situation...my wife is the caregiver of her mother...we give a lot of attention to the patient and I do praise God for hospice. [00:34:00] I'm just now really learning when hospice does. Hospice does do a really nice job; [a] very good job with the patient. But I'm beginning to realize that [it's] really not what, [but] who they're really helping. They're really helping the caregiver. Like we're with Hoffmann Hospice here in Kern County. And they're very good. But they really told us no, they're here for the caregiver and they have a facility in town that you can actually take the patient to for five days.

And for respite care, it's really designed in case they break a bone or something. And they have to have really advanced care for a certain period of time, but we can sign up and put our mother-in-law there for five days. And it gives us a break. What they're saying is much of what they do is to provide a break for the caregiver.

And so, I asked my wife last night just before we went to bed. [00:35:00] "Basically, tell me what you would like to say for the interview tomorrow." And she said, "It is extremely difficult being a caregiver," and this morning she said, "Don't forget to tell them about the isolation." She said, "For the caregiver, isolation is one of the huge issues."

Now, we are fortunate that our hospice does provide volunteers. And this is fantastic. They provide us core hours of time on Sunday mornings; volunteers coming from 10 to 2 o'clock on Sunday morning. So we can go to church and go to lunch, which is great. And which kind of fits my schedule as DOM.

We go to church somewhere and then we go to lunch. And so, we can...and that's kind of our pattern...so we can be together. That's always kind of our date. Our date is Sunday morning, go to church, have lunch together. [00:36:00] And then, also, we have a volunteer that comes for two hours on Thursday so Carol can go out and do whatever she needs to do; but isolation is one of her issues.

And so, therefore, loneliness is one of the issues of the caregiver. And so, for those that are living our situation where you have a caregiver that's watching over somebody that's on hospice living with them is, take care of the caregiver. And I can see that with Carol. I can see that she's going through stages of grief.

She's going through stages of fear. Like this week, I think we saw her mother decline maybe two more steps down. And I saw her go two more steps higher in fear. I could see the fear on her face [00:37:00] and I thought, "Oh my, she's going to need a little bit more help." And so, we have to consider the role of a caregiver.

And I don't know the statistics, but I know the caregiver can be greatly damaged through this process. And [it] depend on how long it takes for somebody to die and how they die. Is it a good death? Is it a bad death? Is it a short death? Is it a long death? But give attention to the caregiver.

Don't just give attention. And as one thing she said also last night, she said, "My mom was fine. She's getting everything she needs." She said, "But I'm not."

Andy Braams: Hmm.

Randy Bennett: So, I have a big responsibility to really keep my eyes open on my wife. Is my wife getting what she needs? [00:38:00] And so I think the final question is, how can you pray for me? And I think the answer to that is pray that I have wisdom to know how to take care of my wife. And I'm not sure I know exactly how to take care of her. So I have to have my eyes opened to know how to take of her.

Andy Braams: Randy. That is a great and a challenging word for us to consider, making sure that we're taking care of those who are taking care of others.

And so I appreciate your openness, as you said earlier, being open and listening to others, allows them to listen to you. So hopefully...you can't listen to others as a part of this...but hopefully people have heard your words and we'll take them to account and be able to process accordingly.

So I greatly appreciate you sharing your heart, your experiences, and again, even in the midst of losing your mentor earlier this [00:39:00] week, and as challenging as that has been in the freshness within that, you maintaining your willingness to do this interview and sharing your experiences accordingly. So thank you on behalf of Baptist Homes and Healthcare Ministries for that.

Randy Bennett: Well, you're welcome. And I'll be headed to Colorado in the morning, and we'll be joining the family and I'll be participating in the funeral, which will be Monday.

Andy Braams: Ok. Well, another opportunity to pray, I guess, by the time this airs next week, I believe it will air [when] that funeral will already be done, but, as people listen to this, continue to pray for, obviously for Randy and his wife, Carol, in their situation, but also for the family of his mentor. We won't share their names for privacy sake.

So, again, thank you very much, Randy.

You're welcome. Great to be with you guys today. God bless you.