

## Transcript

### Episode 29 Introduction (Dr. Andy Braams)

Today's episode is going to be a little bit different for us. I'm excited to bring a speech from Dr. David Sundeen which was recently recorded at a gathering of all of our leadership at Baptist Homes and Healthcare Ministries that included our executive team [and] included our campus administrators.

It included the supervisors or directors, as we reference them throughout our organization, about 60 people coming together in Jefferson City to talk about many things that can help Baptist Homes and Healthcare Ministries to improve not only what we do, but who we are.

And so, a part of that is the change in responsibilities [and] the change of roles for Dr. David Sundeen. You may recall a previous episode where he talked about hospice, and that is still an ambition that we have, an ideal that we have for the future, but that is being put on hold as we are looking to address some different things now related to our organizational culture.

And so, this week I want to bring to you this speech that Dr. Sundeen provided for us to talk about how God directs us in, and through, problems and to bring that speech to you in its entirety. Then in next month's episode, we're going to break down some of what we talked about with the entire team. And then what we talked about as we further narrowed down our focus with just the executive team and the administrators, and even when, on day three, it was just the executive team.

And so, we'll bring some of those insights and some of the initiatives that we are now looking to move forward into for the remainder of 2022, and into 2023 and beyond, in next month's episode as well. So, sit back, listen to this, [and] get a little bit of a sense as Dr. David Sundeen our new vice president for organizational culture and care takes the mic and provides some inspiration to us; all that God is there to direct us and to guide us through any problems that we might have, that we can become the people and the organization that he wants us to be.

## Transcript

### Dr. David Sundeen, V.P. of Organizational Culture & Care "Workshop Speech on Problems"

**Rodney Harrison:** It is my great privilege to recognize and invite Dr. David Sundeen to share our plenary session. Dr. Sundeen.

**David Sundeen:** Wow. What have I gotten myself into, right? I wanted to get...do a couple things today. The first thing I handed out was...I'm not going to go over this. I mean, how many times have you guys talked about HIPAA, all right? But I thought this might be something just as a reminder of some of the top 10 HIPAA violations.

Might be fun, maybe not, but it might be good to look over them again, just to remind yourself [that] we've got to be careful. We have to be very careful and we have training for

HIPAA and different things, but I found this...you'll find on the bottom of the first page, there's the website, okay?. I didn't develop this myself. I'm good at finding things. So, I modified from this website. I put this together, but we just need to make sure that our people are being careful. We [were] being careful when I was at KU Med. I noticed as we want to help people, the nurses are there.

The chaplains are there; I'm in talking with different people and different things. And for me, man, if someone asks a question, I want to just help them understand. I've got to be careful as a chaplain. I know certain things and you guys understand this. There is information there that I just cannot be sharing; we have to guard our information.

I remember one time I walked out of the sleep room. I didn't get the door closed and I left my computer on. That's a no, no, all right? Now, no one went in except another chaplain and they saw it and they said, "Hey, David. Uh no, no, no. Log out." So just different things; just encourage people with that.

So I just put that there so you could have something there to fall asleep with; but do remind yourself of some of this. And another thing that I found out...how many of you have done the training, the HIPAA training, on SNF clinic? How many?

Alright, there is some of that that it's just like, "Whoa, I'm getting bored. I'm about to fall asleep." It's like talking budgets right after lunch. It's just okay.

But then, other times, you get to actually see examples and different things; so help your people understand what HIPAA means, what they should and should not do. That could be a little help there. Now the one thing that I am so excited...well, there's a lot of things I'm excited about this job.

But man, I get to work with the campus pastors. I am really excited about that. I love pastors, right? And I love nurses and I love doctors, but I mean, all you have to do is work in the hospital and you fall in love with nurses, right? But pastors? I get to work with your pastors.

I get to work with them because what you want to do in your building, you want to take care of people. You're not interested in taking care of them just physically, but it takes so much of your resources and so much of your time just to take care of the physical thing. But at Baptist Homes, we also are interested in their spiritual well-being; in their soul care.

And that's where we have our campus pastors and I get to work with them. I get to help resource them. I get to brainstorm with them. I get to encourage them. They get to encourage me. We get to get together and we get to brainstorm on what we're doing here, what we can do and all in order to help you in your situation [to] better take care of your people.

We concentrate on holistic ministry. [We've] got to take care of them, body, mind, and spirit. And so, we've got that at Baptist Homes and I get to work with the pastors to do that.

But here's another thing that I'm really looking forward to...you directors, I'll just talk to you for a second.

You know, the administrators, that's your building. When you're walking, when you're in the grocery store, and you happen to overhear someone talking about your building, your nursing home, you know, you don't want to hear bad stuff. You want to hear, "Oh, my mom is doing so good. She's at...{X campus}..., and they're taking such good care of her."

You know what that does for your pride inside? You're just like, "Yes. Thank you, God. Thank you, God." That's what you want, all right? But you guys know what we've gone through these past couple of years, okay? You know how hard it is, all right? It's hard to do staffing. It's hard to do scheduling. There's so many different things that you have to do, but what you want to do in your building is you want to have people who are coming to you and saying, "I have heard such good things about you."

I want to work for you. You want to have people who, once they get in to your facility, who, no matter what their job is, whether it's outside, taking care of things inside, taking care of things, whatever it is, taking care of the numbers, doing all that, that when they come to you, that when someone else gives them another offer, they're going, "Thanks, but no, thanks. I love it here."

That's what you want. And that's about culture, all right. Now some of you are going to say, "Yeah, that's what I want. I know we're not yet in all of these ways." But that's what you want. And that is what I'm excited about trying to help you get. So, I am looking forward to working with you guys to brainstorm on how we can help the culture of your particular place so that your people, when they come, when they get up in the morning, instead of looking over to their spouse and saying, "Ah, I have to go to work." Wouldn't you rather them wake up and go, "I get to go to work."?

Now, that may be asking a lot, I know, all right? But [being] excited about the ministry that they have at this place, when they get there, they know that they're going to be working with people who are like-minded, who love them, who care for them, who are going to be watching out for them. These are the things that we want to have at Baptist Homes.

And there are a lot of things that would cause problems and cause us not to be able to do what we want. And I have the privilege of coming alongside of you guys to try to help in that; to remind our people of what our vision is, what our values are, those core values that drive us, that help us to get excited about what we do and excited about the people that we do it with.

All right. And I want to work with you in the continuing education and the onboarding and these different things. And so, I'm asking you guys, when I give you a call and want to meet with you, I want you to be thinking about, "Okay, what do we need here? What could we do here to make this a better place to work, where people are happy and they're satisfied and they're being fulfilled?"

And Rod talked about someone coming in on the front end and then working their way up and us helping them become something that they want to be. And so that's what we want in the culture. And so that's what I get to do to help. Am I a miracle worker? No, I'm not, but I'm going to help you.

I want to help any way that we can. Now, one of the common things that happens is that no matter what, every day you go to work, you encounter problems, all right? You get up and you're going, "Okay, what problems am I going to encounter today?" Right? And probably you don't have a smile on your face when you're looking at the problems; but I want to remind you that if there were no problems, you wouldn't have a job, right?

I mean, if there's no problems, they don't need us, all right. And so, by the very nature of what we do is, we take care of problems. Now I would like to encourage you with this. Look on your sheet here with where it says dealing with problems. Now this is a tall order, I know, but we need to embrace problems as opportunities rather than reject them as defeaters.

Problems are always coming and a lot of times when we see a problem coming, we see it as something that is trying to destroy and defeat us. But if we can start seeing problems as God's way of giving us opportunities to hear his voice, to know what we need to do in order to serve people, it puts a whole new spin on problems. Now I'd like to take you...

One of the things we get is...a joy to work for Baptist Homes. We get to look at the Bible, all right? And now I don't know if you have your Bibles with you; you probably don't. You might have it electronically, but I want to remind you of three little stories in the book of Matthew, right at the front end.

Now, when Matthew was writing his...I'm sounding like a preacher, right? I am. Okay, when Matthew was writing his gospel, remember that he was out to prove to people that Jesus was the Messiah, okay? Mark was showing that Jesus was the Son of God. John was showing that Jesus was God Himself in Flesh. Luke was showing that Jesus is the Savior of the world. But Matthew was focusing in Jesus [as] the promised Messiah; he was writing to a group of people who were under some persecution.

They were having some problems, all right? They were dealing with family members. And I mean, just think if one of your family members came to you and said, "Oh, I found this great group of people," and they tell you who it is.

And you know, it's a cult. Don't you want to then start, "Hey, wait a second time out. No, no, no." And you'll come up with your arguments. Well, that's what was happening to these people. Wow. And so, Matthew is writing to them to show them that Jesus really is the Messiah, but he's also couching it because they're being persecuted.

They're having problems. And look, living the Christian life is not problem-free. As a matter of fact, living the Christian life oftentimes brings more problems; and he wants to give an example that even Jesus and even Jesus' family had these problems. And so, I'm going to tell you a little Christmas story.

Okay, so this is Matthew 1.18. Starting in verse 18, says, <sup>18</sup> “This is how Jesus, the Messiah was born. <sup>19</sup> His mother Mary was engaged to be married to Joseph, but before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and he did not want to disgrace her publicly. So he decided to break the engagement quietly.”

Whoa. Talk about a problem, all right. So, you and I, we’ve grown up in church, right? Okay. We’ve heard about the virgin birth all along. Okay. We know it. Joseph? Uh-uh. No. All right. Here’s this woman that he loves...you want to talk about a problem. He loves this woman. He’s now engaged to her and all of a sudden, she comes to him and says, “Joseph.” He knows he didn’t do it. And what’s worse. She’s blaming it on God. {laughter}

This boy’s got a problem, all right. So, I don’t know if Joseph would’ve found it that funny, but Joseph now has a problem.

What did God do for Joseph [in] verse 20? <sup>20</sup> “As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. ‘Joseph son of David,’ the angel said, ‘do not be afraid to take Mary is your wife for the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a Son and you are to give him the name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins.’”

A problem came up. What did God do? God gave direction or God gave instructions. And so, this is important for us to remember. We are a Christian organization. We believe that God still speaks to his people.

Now, I’m not going to pull that God card on you and say, “God told me to tell you...” No, I’m not doing that. But in the scriptures, we’re seeing that when a problem arises, God reveals truth to us. Now here’s the fun thing. God knows how to get through to you. God knew how to get through to Joseph but he also knows how to get through to you.

And so, as these problems come up and you’re starting to...you can look at them as, “Oh, this is a defeater. Oh no, what are we going to do?” Rather, you can look at it as an opportunity to listen to what God is saying. Now, sometimes that comes through His Word. Sometimes it comes through wise counsel. I mean, it can come in so many different ways; but as you start looking at the problem and you’re saying, “Lord, we need your help. We need you to tell us what to do.” God reveals to us what we need to do.

Now we have a choice. Joseph had a choice. The scripture said <sup>24</sup> “He got up and he took Mary home to be his wife. <sup>25</sup> And he had no union with her until after Jesus was born.” Now that is a patient man, all right. But he did what God told him to do.

And in this passage, it also has this wonderful thing where it says in verse 22, <sup>22</sup> “All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet. <sup>23</sup> Look, the virgin will conceive a child. She will give birth to a son. They will call him Emmanuel, which means God is with us.”

God had revealed way before what his plan was and Joseph is falling right into the plan. So, at the top of your page, there, when a problem arises, God gives instructions. When we are

obedient to those instructions, God's will is fulfilled. At Baptist Homes, we want God's will to be fulfilled.

You want one of those Rodney? Didn't get one. Is there another? Yeah, they're not going to bring it up to you there. Okay, okay. We got it now. All right.

And so, I want you to be thinking about this. If we're going to embrace these problems as opportunities, we need to realize that problems are going to arise. God's going to show us what we need to do. When we are obedient to what God says, we are in his will; God's will is fulfilled.

Let me give you one more here in chapter two; we see the very same things. Let's go down to the escape to Egypt, all right?. Verse 13, chapter two, <sup>13</sup> "After the wise men had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up, flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,' the angel said. 'Stay there until I tell you to return because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him that night.' <sup>14</sup> Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother. And they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet, 'I called my son out of Egypt.'"

All right. And so, here, we see a problem has arisen. Joseph doesn't even know about this problem yet, all right?

But Herod is going to try to kill Jesus. God reveals what he's supposed to do. Joseph was immediately obedient to it. And we see that God's will is fulfilled: <sup>14</sup> "Out of Egypt, I called my child." Because later on, Jesus came back. We have another one. Well, let's just say on the return to Nazareth. Oh, okay. I'll read it.

Verse 19. We'll see this pattern again. <sup>19</sup> "When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. <sup>20</sup> 'Get up,' the angel said, 'Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead.'"

Well, that doesn't sound like a problem to me. That sounds pretty good.

But wait. <sup>21</sup> "So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. <sup>22</sup> But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod's son Archelaus"...by the way, Archelaus was almost as bad as his father..."so when he learned that his son Archelaus [was reigning over Judea], he was afraid to go there. Then after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth, thus fulfilled what the prophets had said, 'He will be called a Nazarene.'"

And again, we see a pattern; a problem arises. Jesus is not where he needs [to be]. He's where he is in Egypt, where he was told where Joseph is told to go, but he's not supposed to grow up in Egypt.

He's got to grow up in Nazareth and God's got to get him back. And so, now we've got this problem, you know, coming back. He goes to the wrong place. He finds out Archelaus is

reigning there. God warns him again in a dream. And he goes then to Nazareth and thus is fulfilled what was said through the prophet, "He will be called a Nazarene."

And so, what I'm trying to show you here is that Matthew, as he is talking to Christians who are going through problems, he's basically saying, "You are going to experience problems." I'm sorry, Kate, but when you get back, there's probably going to be three or four problems sitting on your desk, just waiting for you.

Sorry to pick on you. And that's not a prophecy. I hope there's none, okay? But we are going to have problems. Instead of soaking down and being defeated by it, we need to just lift up our eyes and say, "Lord, what do you want us to do?" And then as God starts revealing what he wants to do, we are obedient to that.

And when we are obedient to what God's called us to do, we have this assurance in our heart that we are in the very center of God's will. And so, this is just a different way of looking at problems. So, let's remind ourselves of some these some things. I've got a little acrostic here for you.

You can see it's problems, right? Right. Some of these may be a little strained. You know how sometimes sermons, when they try to put those all together, they get a little strained? But I think you'll see [it] here. First of all, for the P, they are providential. Problems are providential. They're evidential; they're known by God and they are used by God.

I don't care if the problem is with you personally, with your family, with your job, with the country; God knows these problems. And he uses these problems to lead us. And so at work, we're going to have problems. One of the ways that God will lead you...all of you in here are leaders in your facilities...there are things that you do in that facility that nobody else does, okay?

You are in charge of your area and you have other people that work with you. You know what? They have problems too. And [when] a problem comes up and they're coming and they're down, one of the things that you can do as a leader; you may be just as down as they are, but you can rise up and you can be an encourager [and] say, "Hey, yes, it's a problem, but you don't have to let...we're going to get this fixed. We're going to take this to...we're going to let people know about it. It may take a while, but we're going to get this fixed."

But hey, you have been called by God to be here to minister to these people. Don't let this problem steal your joy. You can be the encourager because you're in those positions to be an encourager and you can let them know that this isn't something that surprised God. God knew about this.

And God's got an answer and we're going to find it. They're providential. Well, they're also...the R is reminders. They keep us constantly improving our service to others. They are reminders that we need to constantly improve because if God is taking those problems and he's revealing truth to us through those problems. When we don't have a problem, we're not thinking about much; it's just great.

You know, all of a sudden, a problem comes up and it's like, "Okay, God, all right, I'm listening. What do we need to do?" There are reminders to us, especially in our industry, that we are there to serve people. We're there to take care of people. We've got our whole staff and our team each doing their job to take care of these precious people and problems are reminders that we can always be better.

The O [is] opportunity. They provide a choice to be obedient to God's leading. It's an opportunity for us to hear God's voice and be obedient to his leading. Oh man, if you have a problem, though, and you know what God wants you to do and you decide not to do it, it's no longer a blessing. Oh, I jumped to the next one.

B is for blessing. If you are not obedient, it's not a blessing. It becomes a curse. And so, we have an opportunity when these problems arise to do what God has called us to do. And thus, they become blessings to us. They keep us in the very center of God's will. So they're providential, they're reminders, they're opportunities and they're blessings, but they're also lessons for us. L [is] lessons.

They teach us to trust God. Look, in this business, you can trust yourself. You can trust others and you can stop there. And you can probably do [a] pretty fair job. But if you want to do an excellent job, you need to get the third part of that triangle in there. You need to be trusting God. And that's what we do at Baptist Homes.

So, there are lessons to teach us to trust God. Well, the E...hmmm...they're everywhere. Problems are everywhere. There's no place on earth that has none. If you're tempted to go work somewhere else, because you think they don't have problems, you know better. Everybody has problems. Everybody has problems, but you know, what's fun?

Isn't it fun to think back like five years and say, "Boy, I remember when this problem came, but God taught me and I learned what to do now." When that very same problem comes now, [you can say], "Hey, I got this covered. I have grown in my obedience. I've grown in my faith and trust. I have grown in my leadership. I know what to do with this." But problems are everywhere.

Then problems are also messages. They are signals to help us get what we need. God knows more what you need and what your people need and what your facility needs than you do. That's kind of the advantage of being an omniscient being; he knows everything. All right. He knows more than you do about your own facility.

And he knows more about you personally than you do. And he is constantly working to get your attention to help you become more and more, every day, like Jesus. And so, there are messages to help us get what we need. And then, finally, they are solvable. They are solvable. They always have a godly solution. A lot of problems people try to solve, they don't do it God's way. They're not a godly solution. We want to have godly solutions at Baptist Homes.

I hope this has been somewhat helpful to you. I know that almost everything I said, you guys already know, but sometimes we just need a reminder, just like your facility and the people who work with you.

They sometimes just need a reminder that God is still on the throne. God is good. God loves you. God has a plan for you. And if you will submit to him, and if you will believe him, and if you will be obedient there, you will find yourself in the very center of what God has called you to do and what he's called you to be.

So, if you can't tell, I am excited about working with you guys. Amen. You know, I really don't know what the job's going to totally look like. I really don't, but I do know this, that when I get with you, and we start brainstorming, we are going to move forward and God's going to lead us and he's going to show us what we need to do so that your facility becomes the best that it can be.

And that's what I am committed to helping you guys with. Let me pray for you.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for those who are in this room, Father, because they represent you. They're your instruments, Father. They belong to you. You use them, Father, you guide them, you protect them, you lead them, Father.

And Father, we know that you allow problems and we know that you use those problems to show us what you want. Father, help us to be obedient to you, help us, Father, to keep a positive attitude. Father, help us to get to the point where we are helping other people as they're going through their problems. And Father, we pray you would show us what you want us to do; help us to be obedient.

And then, Father, give us that peace inside that knows that we are doing; what you've called us to do. Father, for everyone in every facility here, father, I pray that their facility would be the talk of the town because of the quality and the blessings that they bring to the community, Father. That's what we want. Help us to accomplish it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **Transcript**

### **Episode 29 Concluding Remarks (Dr. Andy Braams)**

I hope the opportunity to hear that message, again that was directed to some 60 leaders within Baptist Homes; I hope hearing that gives you a sense of our recognition that we are not where we need to be; that there is growth that we need to have as individuals, as departments, as campuses, and as an organization; that we recognize that there are problems; and that we realize that our solution is not just our mental capacities, the strategies, [and] the initiatives that we put into place, but ultimately a dependence upon God.

In next month's episode, we are going to talk about those initiatives. You will hear a few clips of some of the topics that were covered of some of the things that were said by Dr. Rodney Harrison, our president, and by some others who were guests and came to speak [to

us], encourage us, and challenge us in the ways that we can grow and in the things that we can do in the year to come.

And you will hear some of the challenges that our own staff as the executive team, the vulnerability that we said. Please tell us where we can improve. And they shared openly, honestly, and we're taking those to heart and then directing those ideas into new strategic initiatives to guide us forward, that will be part of next month's episode on *Biblical Perspectives on Aging*.

So, tune back in next month to hear kind of a part two. It won't be a continuation of what Dr. Sundeen said, [but] it will be a more of an overall representation of what took place at that workshop in the first part of June of 2022. So, I hope you'll tune back in next [month] to listen to the rest of that here on *Biblical Perspectives on Aging*.