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Week 28: Summer WFL

James and Betty Robison

Cavanaugh James

James: Thank you all! Thank you. And Randy, thank you for taking Mom's place.

Randy: Glad to be here.

James: Our son Randy is filling in for Mom who's fighting a little worse than a hacking cough; it's like a non-stop cough. She has slept in a chair a couple of nights, which really, she didn't sleep much because she couldn't breathe laying down. We don't need to make too big of a deal out of something that she's fighting, and she is tough. But the fact is that she's not able to be here and bring it under control. We're praying and she is getting better by the day.

Randy: She'll be back.

James: I appreciate Randy filling in for her. He and Sheila do a great job.

I'm excited about this book and I'm excited about our guest. By the way, I'm James Robison and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. *Higher Power has a Name*; it's not only well laid out, it's an amazing title. It's written by a millennial, he says, "By Cavanaugh James, a Millennial."

I tell you that this is an amazing piece of work. It's far bigger than the author, Cavanaugh. I'm curious about this title, *Higher Power has a Name*. When I saw that, it's laid out nicely but when I saw it, I thought there is some significance about that. We're going to

find out. And then you're going to be listening to Cavanaugh.

I think this is a book that every millennial on the planet ought to read. I think that every pastor and church ought to say, "You know what? I'm going get the millennials in my church to read this and then we'll talk about it."

So, would you welcome the author of *Higher Power has a Name*, Cavanaugh James.
Glad to see you.

I'm amazed. I wrote a book called *Living Amazed*. I live amazed. You're part of me *Living Amazed*. Watching what God has done in your life is amazing. It is not like my amazing life had much to do with it. It didn't. You went on a journey, probably sometimes you thought you were very much alone, and something happened that was amazing, and you wrote this. So, let me just say you're welcome but tell us why this title? Where did it come from and why?

Cavanaugh: First of all, thank you so much for having me here. This feels a little bit like kismet and just the Lord coming together. I'm really grateful to be here.

But the title came because I was living in L.A. at the time and I was at an improv school called "The Groundlings." I was kind of throwing myself into the entertainment industry as much as I could. The more that I got to know people the more I started entering into relationship and friendship with people that were very different than friends I had while growing up in the Bible belt, and very different walks of life -- and just upbringing in general.

There was a lot of talk whenever faith would be brought up that kind of pushed God into a title that was just "a higher power." So what I kind of started to learn was that there are so many people that have come out of the church that have been so hurt just by humans in it and people being people that they have then started to take God for what they have seen represented in unhealth. So, it almost seems as if to not submit to God they say, "higher

power," whenever you're asking them about faith.

So after just talking to people I realized that people are willing to say they believe in a higher power but they're not willing to put a name on it. Because the second you put a name on a higher power then you're responsible and submitted to that name.

So, it's just a way that people have been running. I can say for my own life that I went through that myself in trying to figure out okay, who is God and how and does he exist in the context of what I knew growing up, and who is really?

So, my book is really my journey with the Lord to walk that through and hopefully something that I can take other millennials and older generations that are confused about our generation through.

James: What do you want to share? You share more openly than I could ever imagine anyone sharing. It had to be supernatural. It's amazing how you laid out the book. You write a note at the end of every chapter that's handwritten. I could write handwritten notes; nobody would be able to read it unless they can translate like tongues with pen. It's worse than a doctor's prescription. But you wrote it and we can read it. You have beautiful pull-out statements but you also highlight.

Once we start valuing a person based off of what they bring to the table then we start to see relationships as transactions. Whoa! See those little highlighted sentences actually are a paragraph oftentimes. Some of those highlighted sentences comprise substance for an entire chapter. Here's one where you highlighted quite a few sentences.

I found myself saying this is amazing. Not only is the whole copy amazing but that Cavanaugh would say, "I think I need to highlight that" because it wasn't highlighted by some editor or some publisher, it was highlighted by him wanting to say something that would be weighty, you need to notice it is weighty for a reason. So, the whole book is amazing.

Why were you willing to talk about the challenges in your journey because the challenges in your journey are some that have come to the forefront today with people that it seems the church is asked to dismiss now and accept, even though they might seem to contradict what the name of this power says or the Word of God, the Bible says. It would just scrap them, change it in order to justify a particular lifestyle, tendency, practice or compulsion or behavior or whatever.

You went through all of this and came through not trying to change the name or the person or what that person who has a name stood for or says is best in your behalf, you seem to see that adjustments need to be made here without us trying to change the very truth that can have such a positive transforming effect on all of us. Not a mean religious effect but a transformingly positive effect. Right? Why were you willing to share openly like that?

Cavanaugh: Because my own journey with the Lord was really trying to find an excuse not to submit to him. You can live your life trying to make sense. You're referencing kind of an identity struggle that I had for most of my life, which was sexually not knowing who I was, and really believing lies about myself.

Well, if I take that into the forefront of culture today, they're going to tell me and put me in this one box. If I tell the church though, the church then puts you into a box of struggling with this. There's almost a kind of now sit in the back seat while the adults sort this out and while you figure out your own life.

The truth is that I found in relationship with Christ that if I moved him or if I tried to move him to make what he said to be what I want to be truth --

James: To accommodate what you thought or what you found struggling with that you didn't know if you were going to be able to overcome so you move him.

Cavanaugh: Right. You move him. You can go throughout the Bible and create all sorts of whack theology if you want to, but if you take the Bible at its entirety as a whole narrative and you choose to submit to it then I can't be in the role of moving God because now I've taken on the role of playing God.

So, I found in my submission to the Lord and in the day-to-day, like honestly, where I would get up and be like, "Okay, Lord. How are we going to get through today?" Because I had to be so surrendered to him that that mattered more to me than what I was giving up. Now I'm on the other side of this to where the last two lines of the book are, "Jesus is better. Jesus is best." That's the heart.

I know what people walk through in the day in and day out that the church may not be comfortable talking about, but I know a God who is really comfortable talking about it. And I know he is not bothered by what I'm dealing with. I know that he is not threatened by it. And in fact, all of --

James: He doesn't love you less because of what you struggle with or even defeated by or oftentimes controlled by, wherein you're trying to justify it, and you would have the tendency to change what he says into something other than actually the truth in order to justify where you were.

You found out that really didn't give comfort. It didn't really make something true that wasn't true. You kept realizing what? That you had to move toward truth? You couldn't move truth your way and cause it to be something else. And did you find out that you weren't actually losing something, but you were actually discovering something that was so marvelous you just wished people could see it and hear it? And it is too often distracted by religion because religion is so much unlike Jesus, the author of the only perfect faith in relationship. Too much religion is unlike Jesus; right?

Cavanaugh: Correct.

James: And you really expose that without being mean. You're not mad at church folks.

Cavanaugh: No. Not at all.

James: But you show us where we miss it and you show us amazingly well. Do you find that you look like... when you look, my goodness, this is a whole lot bigger than me, what I just wrote. This is something I can't even believe I just wrote down because I know it's true.

Cavanaugh: I did have a real sense of conviction in writing it and almost a -- I knew my conversation with the Lord was I'll write this if you promise it won't kill me. Because I felt like it was going to kill me.

The truth is that Jesus is just really, really good. What he has done and what I'm seeing him doing is just taking a simple act of worship, which was really all this is intended to be was my act of worship to the Lord, to offer up my story back to him, to offer up every kind of hurtful memory that I had had in my life and to allow the Lord to come in and say, "No. Now I'm going to give that a new name. I'm going to change what that looks like." Because he's healed it.

It's become bigger than that because God is on it. It has nothing to do with me. I would never... that's just... the Lord wants to get a hold of people's hearts and he wants to be relational and he wants to be our friend and he wants to talk to us and hear us. So, I'm hoping this book is an extension of his heart that way.

James: I want everybody to read the book. I don't say that about every author I have on. And my goodness, it's your first book. It took you two years to write it. You're kind of slow.

[Laughter]

Cavanaugh: Listen! You've got to go through it to get it.

James: It's absolutely amazing. It won't take you two years to read it because you can't hardly put it down. I want everybody to read it.

Okay, Cavanaugh, what do you want to happen? One of the most, I think, powerful things you say is you want people to realize that real love doesn't have an agenda. What do you mean by that?

Cavanaugh: I mean that so often we rob ourselves of knowing true intimacy in relationship because we come at it with something to gain. So you know, you find people that you want in your life, whether they're entertaining or funny or influential or talented or whatever kind of attractive quality you can put on them, and you realize that your motivation for entering into that relationship and everything you say is almost filtered through an agenda. It might be a slight one but it's still an agenda.

What I find is that when Jesus comes to us and when he pursues relationship with us, although it is for the intent of winning our hearts, his love is never conditional based off our response. He's never loving us for the sake of manipulating us into a response. It's no difference than you meet someone, and you really, really enjoy them and you just want to pick up the phone and call and ask to go to coffee next week. That's what I found with Jesus. I know that that's what he's called me to live out relationally with other people and what I think the church at large is called in this season to live, which is to live an agenda-less love and to walk relationally with people.

James: Boy, when you can live outside yourself. We have, legitimately from the Lord's point of view, he wouldn't have told us to love our neighbor as ourselves if it is improper to love yourself. If there is not a proper way to love yourself, to really look at what is really actually best, we should care, and we should actually want that for others.

That relationship is what you see coming from Jesus. He's poured it on you. That

relationship changed you. All the struggles, all the identity crisis, all the confusion, all the sexual hang-ups or whatever confusion, wondering, you found peace in a settledness in that without becoming vindictive and unkind and critical. You realize that it was the power of his presence, as well as the power of his transforming truth that made the difference. It wasn't some religious club or some standard of man and the demands of people.

Cavanaugh: And it wasn't anyone coming up next to me and saying, "Hey get this in order in your life." That never brought me closer.

James: That wouldn't move you; did it? It almost caused you to brace up and push back.

Cavanaugh: No. Which is I don't think I don't mean to speak for my whole generation, but I do think millennials at large almost feel a little bit as if the church has been wanting us to correct things without dealing with the heart first. And so, there is a level of being able to talk and have relationship with someone before you're able to move forward and to grow and challenge and sharpen; and all those things we're supposed to do in community.

James: Well, I'm a 75-year old. Have I fit just outside the millennial bracket?

Cavanaugh: Just on the tail end.

James: Here's what I need to know. Do you think, you've known me a long time, pretty much your whole life; right? Do you think I have anything to offer millennials?

Cavanaugh: I know you do.

James: Do you think they would actually listen if we sat down and talked?

Cavanaugh: I actually do.

James: Do you think I would show them respect and an attempt to really understand and perhaps even learn from them?

Cavanaugh: That is a huge key. And yes. If you were to sit down with anyone and say, "Hey, I want to know what you think about this. Let me get your perspective on this." When you ask for someone's perspective it is not a threatening question and it is inviting them to share their experience into actually impart what they've grown up with.

So I think that our generation wants to be invited to the table. So, to be invited to this table by you for me is just huge! And it is such an honor that our generation I think at large within the church has kind of felt excused from because there's been --

James: I don't want to do that.

Cavanaugh: Well, and I know that you don't. I know that it is not your heart and you have one of the most tender hearts of anyone I've ever met. We can read that and sense that. We're a generation that's driven by authenticity and by vulnerability, and if there are any two things that you are it is authentic and vulnerable.

So no, absolutely we would want to be hearing from you. And all of you who are older and have wisdom to impart, we need to hear from you. We want to hear from you. Don't be scared off by our flaws and by what we're working through because God has real purpose for us.

James: Do you all appreciate the wisdom you hear coming from this young man and the conversation we've had?

Randy, do you want to ask or say or make a comment right quick? I know our time is going fast.

Randy: Yeah. We don't have a lot of time. There is a lot of great questions but there is a lot of great answers right there that the book truly is...

James: I think it is a gift for this moment.

Randy: It is eye-opening in a lot of ways, in a lot of positive ways, and not just in the areas where you struggled. But there is some depth of truth in there that will help anybody.

James: If they wanted to go to your website or they wanted to say, Cavanaugh, would you ever come talk to our group or our church?

Cavanaugh: I'd love to!

James: Okay, what website?

Cavanaugh: So just CavanaughJames.com. That's exactly where you go. It's C-a-v-a-n-a-u-g-h.

James: We've got it up on the screen so they can see it. Cavanaugh, you do have to have a little help spelling it. It probably took you a while to learn this. It's quite a mouthful. Anybody can write that can write a book. No doubt!

[Laughter]

Here's the deal. This is a gift from God for us in this moment. I don't know that I've ever watched anybody that I'm more amazed, shocked in the most positive way, stunned by what I call supernatural brilliance coming out that's very applicable in areas where it seems people so long for real substantive help and it is here. So, you can go on online and get it. Go to that website and visit. But again, would you join us in just saying to thanks to Cavanaugh James? And thanks to God!

Cavanaugh: Thank you for having me here.

James: I know all of you and by the way, you help us give a cup of water to some child or family that doesn't have clean water and we have some beautiful gifts to bless you with. You're going to be giving the gift of life. If you say, "Would you send me that book too if I help give somebody water?" You better believe it!

I want you to watch very closely and listen. See if you don't hear God talking to you about how you can change everything for someone. You become the miracle they never thought was possible. You become the source of that miracle. Watch prayerfully.

On the mission field:

Ralph: I'm kneeling here next to a little grave. The little boy's name was Pana. He barely made it past his second birthday, I believe. Pana died just simply from drinking contaminated water here in his village. The water that should have given life literally killed him.

Open Captions:

>> You have seen how bad my water is. I have to use this water near my house. Every time my kids drink it, they get sick.

Announcer: Millions of families around the world continue day after day trekking great distances to collect water from contaminated sources because it is their only option for survival. Approximately one in ten people on earth live without clean water resulting in over 400,000 deaths a year from drinking water that is unsafe.

Open Captions:

>> All my kids are always sick. Last year my two-year old son Pana and my seven-year old got very sick with fever, bloating and typhoid. They operated on my seven-year old's

intestines but my Pana never got better because of our bad water, and then he died.

Ralph: But this story doesn't just happen in Cambodia. You can let this story be symbolic of people all over the world who drink contaminated water every day. That's why at *LIFE Outreach* we drill wells all over the world, globally, all year every year. Because people like Pana, little children, mothers, fathers, they're believing, they're hoping it will give them life, but it actually takes their life.

So please give that gift today so that we can tell families the water you're drinking is not there to take your life, it's there to give you life.

End of video

In the studio:

James: That's a very significant picture right there that -- that grave. That's a precious life that's gone. We have the perfect cure for it. It's not just a cup of water but a well of water. You've helped -- people like you drilled 6,000 and we're seeking to complete drilling another 400. We just need the help of all of our viewers if they could realize that people watching us right now are the miracle that stops that death cycle.

Randy: Recently, a relative of yours handed me a check for water. I don't normally open those. I send them to the right department and let them handle it appropriately. But he texted me later and said, "Did you see it?"

I said, "No. I don't normally do that."

He said, "Well, open it!"

I said, "All right."

So, I opened it up. It was enough for a well. So, there's one. We need 399 more.

But he was excited to do it which I loved the enthusiasm. But I texted him back and I said, "Man, you're just going to have to take my word for it, I wish you could see it. But that well will change everything for a lot of people for a long time -- a lifetime for many of them. It will change everything!"

That's what I wish you could see. I've been there. I've seen it. I've been where there is not a well, there needs to be a well. I've knelt by the graves of too many children. But I've seen what putting that source of life right there where they live every day does for them. It changes everything! I wish everybody could feel the excitement that my cousin felt in providing that well.

James: And that's what people tell us. They say, "We don't have a greater joy than giving a well or even part of a well."

It's amazing that the wells are \$4800, and that check was for \$5,000 because you texted me and told me. I texted him to say...

Randy: I got excited! I get excited every time we're able to drill another well.

James: And really, he's a young man. For him it's a big step. But people tell us what it means. And yet people also say, "I'm able to help you drill a well." And most of the support comes from \$48 chunks which gives ten people water.

Don't ever look and say because the well is \$4800, "If I could do it." A lot of people say, "I make it a prayer, goal every year to do it." And they're able to do it! They found God miraculously letting them do it.

But the \$4800 or the \$144 that gives 30 people water the rest of their life, there is a level at which you can become the miracle in someone's life. And we not only give them Water for LIFE, we tell them about the water of life, Jesus. And when they've seen love and

they've experienced the effect of love giving them life, they're ready to hear about the source of that love and that life that's eternal.

Thank you for what you're doing. Would you right now go online please? The website, or dial that number that's a prayer line and right now you've just turned it into a lifeline, a miracle life line. Take your bankcard, go get it, use it like a check. If you think you're going to forget that number write it down but call it and make the best gift you can right now. If you can give a well or part of a well, do it!

We have some gifts to send you that I promise you will bless you. Beautiful "Fruit of the Spirit" bowls, one of the most beautiful gifts. I can just see so many women and so many homemakers excited, boy! This is going to be incredible. It is. Because a lot of people are going to see the "Fruit of the Spirit," not just in what you serve but your spirit and you can say, "I gave Water for LIFE." It becomes a conversation piece.

We want to bless you but you're giving people life because of the life in Christ. Thank you right now for making that call. Thank you for making the gift.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Today, a mother living in extreme poverty will do the unthinkable, give her children dirty, diseased-filled water that she knows could kill them. With no other choice what else can she do?

With your help, clean water is on the way. Mission: Water for LIFE provides a way for parents to save the lives of their children to offer them a bright future free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 400 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. \$72 will provided for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people

for a lifetime!

With your gift, we'll send you the "New Mercies Each Day" desk calendar. This 17-month calendar will not only help you keep track of important dates but also remind you of the Father's love and goodness with scripture quotes and encouragement from all the hosts on *LIFE Today*.

With your gift of \$100 or more, request the "Fruit of the Spirit" bowl. This beautiful and decorative ceramic bowl features scripture revealing the "Fruit of the Spirit," a lovely addition to your table or home.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms" bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Well, Randy and I say in behalf of so many mothers and families and precious children, thank you for giving a cup of water, for giving a well of water, giving the too often overlooked a chance.

This is an incredible book. A very special book -- a very special time, and amazing what I'm watching happening in a young man named Cavanaugh. If you want the book just say, James, we're going to help with the water. We'd really like to have that book.

And remember this, I really think it ought to be placed in the hands of millennials in every church. I wish everyone would just get it and read it. Go ahead! Take a chance. Because *Higher Power has a Name*; it's not a name to be afraid of. It is the most

magnetic attractive name and force in human history. And it is not mere religion; it's the most meaningful relationship possible. So, I hope you get it.

Would you join Randy and me in saying thanks to Cavanaugh and thanks to God for what he is doing? I'm glad to know that name and that person.

Thank all of you for watching. Thanks for helping us share life.