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Week 42: Mission: Rescue Life

James & Betty Robison

Lee Strobel #1

Studio discussion:

JAMES: Welcome to *Life Today*, James Robison; Betty, here. Our guest today is Lee Strobel. And Lee, I'm really excited to talk to you. I want to just say this to you because, you know, we've kind of – by the way, back to where you were, an atheist in *The Case for Christ*. You know, that goes way back almost to '80 -- a long way back. But we've been encouraging you and praying for you and thanking God for you. I'm excited to talk to you about what you've shared in this book that's right now available to everybody, *Seeing the Supernatural*.

Let me just mention this to you. This is something that I would like for you to know. Here I am in my 80s, and Betty says, well, you don't have to tell everybody I am, too. I know she doesn't look it. But here's the thing. I have literally lost my life fully in wanting to fulfill the Father's dream. What is his dream? What was his desire for his family? His family -- the Father's family? What does he want to happen through his Son's body, the body of Christ, the church? He wants the whole world to see Jesus in the church.

I'm telling you, Lee, I'm so excited about encouraging the family to look like the Father, and the church to look like Jesus. Won't that be a magnificent day?

LEE: Absolutely. The unfortunate thing I think about the American church sometimes is, there's a lot of Christians who are embarrassed by the supernatural. You know? It is! We want to be respectable. It's okay if my neighbor knows I go to church, and I believe in God and so forth, but don't get me talking about miracles or angels or demons or anything weird like that. So there's a lot of Christians who I think impoverish themselves by not really exploring the supernatural realm.

JAMES: This is the very thing Jesus talked about continuously. It's the very commission he left on his disciples to fulfill. Living in the power of the supernatural.

LEE: That's right. And if you believe in Jesus, he was an exorcist. He believed in demons. He believed in angels.

JAMES: And he commanded us to cast them out. We act like we're afraid to even think about them or mention them, and we're watching them take over the world. These people who are doing all these crazy things, and you're seeing demonic manifestations coming through their lips and in their actions, it's dangerous because he's the father not only of lies, but he's a murderer. And he takes over, you've got trouble.

Okay. Yeah. This book, *Seeing the Supernatural*, I get the impression you're excited about it. By the way, you divided it into two parts. We're going to take part one today. Lee's going to be with us basically this week, and you're not going to get bored. But the two parts: The Supernatural Among Us and The Supernatural that Awaits Us.

I want you to take off. Was there something that grabbed you to deal with this?

LEE: Yes. I think in my own life, I found that I was not as knowledgeable about the supernatural realm as I should be. And so I spent a couple of years investigating by interviewing scholars, experts, and so forth, pastors, to investigate the supernatural. I'll give you a couple of examples of the categories of evidence I looked at. Because my background is in journalism and law. So I'm looking for corroboration, I'm looking for evidence, I'm looking for proof, I'm looking for data. I'm not just looking for stories that you hear. I want stuff that's confirmed.

So, for instance, I looked at miracles. Is God really still in the miracle business today? And so I'll give you one example of a case published in a peer-reviewed medical journal that is independently investigated by multiple medical researchers. A woman who was blind for a dozen years with an incurable condition, she went to a school for the blind, she learned to read

Braille, she walked with a white cane, and she married a Baptist pastor. Well, there's there is something funny about that part. But one night, they're getting ready to go to bed, and she's in bed. He comes over, he puts his hand on her shoulder, and begins to pray, and begins to cry. Says, God, I know you can heal blindness. I know you can do it and I pray you do it tonight. And with that, she opened her eyes to perfect eyesight. She said, "I was blind when my husband prayed for me, I opened my eyes, I could see perfectly." It was a miracle.

Now this case was investigated by multiple medical researchers. Her eyesight remained -- well, now it's 50 years so it's been a long time. And published in a peer-reviewed medical journal. So it's a documented case. I believe we can believe that God is still doing miracles when we have multiple medical records of the case, when we have multiple eyewitnesses who have no motive to deceive, if there's no natural explanation for this, nobody had ever been cured of this condition before, and if it takes place in the context of prayer. So I document in my book numerous cases that meet that stringent criteria that tell us, yes, God still is intervening supernaturally in our world by performing the miraculous.

And, you know, miracles are not evenly distributed around planet Earth. They tend to cluster in places where the gospel is just breaking in. And so some scholars say that the growth of the church in China is due to the fact that up to half of the people who come to faith in China, either themselves or they know someone who's had a supernatural healing. So God is doing something. So that's one category.

Another category is direct experiences of God, where God, for whatever reason in his sovereignty, chooses to intervene in a life in a dramatic way. So, example, a guy named Robert, a narcissist, business guy, very successful multi-millionaire, had a woman in every town, was a drunk, womanizer. Once beat up a business associate with a baseball bat, went to prison in his limousine and took his limousine home. I mean, this guy was full of himself. God was irrelevant to him. He's on the beach in Florida, and God speaks to him. He said, "Not through my ears, inside of me, I heard the voice of God saying, 'Robert, I've rescued you more times than you'll ever know. Now you need to come to me through my son Jesus.'" "

So he's rocked by this. He said, I don't know who Jesus is. He calls the only Christian he knows, Frank Gifford. Remember the sportscaster? He calls Frank. Said, "Frank, you're a Christian. I just had this experience with God. Who's Jesus?" And Frank said, "Get that book *The Case for Christ*. It will explain it." He got my book and read it. Robert had a radical born-again experience, 180 degree turn in his life. When he was baptized, he shared his story. The pastor ripped up his sermon and said, "Y'all have heard the gospel. Anybody want to get –" This is a church that had never had an altar call. Said, "Anybody wants to come up right now, receive Christ, and be baptized on the spot, come on up." 700 people came forward in two services.

He died about a year and a half later, and at his request, on his tombstone it just says, "Believe in Jesus Christ." Thousands of people came to his funeral. You know why? Because you didn't know him by his name, Robert. You know him by his nickname, Evel. Oh, wow. Evel Knievel. The world-famous motorcycle daredevil who was radically born again. Why? Because God did something supernatural. He spoke to him on the inside. And we see examples of this, how God does this. It's just absolutely amazing.

BETTY: Well, every time someone gets saved, it's supernatural. I felt like it was in my life. I was the church girl, you know? And God spoke to me through this young man, and I got saved. That's a miracle!

LEE: Absolutely. Absolutely. You know, I'm a journalist with law training and so forth, so for me, it was the evidence that God used in a supernatural way to open my eyes to the truth of the gospel and bring me to faith in Christ. So you're right. Every conversion is a supernatural event. But sometimes when he chooses to say something verbally inside, it's like, oh my goodness! Unbelievable!

One other area that I find fascinating are supernatural dreams that are occurring in the Muslim world, where people are coming to faith. It's been estimated up to a third of Muslims who have come to faith in the last couple of decades have had a supernatural dream of Jesus before they come to faith. But here's the key, because again, I'm looking for evidence. How do I know this

isn't just in their minds? Because there's corroboration. People in the Middle East are not going to sleep as a Muslim, having a dream about Jesus and waking up as a Christian. The dream points them towards something else that leads them to faith. So that's confirmation it's not just coming from their mind.

So I'll give you a story, true story. A woman named Noor, mother of eight children, Muslim, lives in Cairo. She has a dream about Jesus. She's overwhelmed by the love she feels. She says, "Why are you coming to me? I'm just a poor Muslim woman of eight." And Jesus says, "Because I love you, Noor. I gave everything for you. I died for you." And he said, "My friend will tell you more about me tomorrow." She said, "Who's your friend?" And he gestured to a man she didn't even notice was walking with them along a lakeshore because she was so mesmerized by Jesus. He said, "My friend will tell you tomorrow." She wakes up from her dream.

Next day, she goes to a crowded marketplace in Cairo. She sees that man from her dream. She goes up to him. "You're the one!" He said, "What are you talking about?" Same glasses, same face, same clothes. "You're the one!" He said, "Did you have a dream about Jesus last night?" She said, "Yes!" Turned out he was an underground church planter. He didn't want to go to the crowded marketplace in Cairo on Friday afternoon. It was chaotic. He felt like God had an assignment for him. He went. But here's the corroboration. What does he do? He pulls Noor aside, he opens the Bible, and spends three hours sharing the story of Jesus. That's the corroboration. This is more than just coming from somebody's mind.

JAMES: That is so beautiful. I'm looking at some of the chapter titles: Mystical Dreams and Visions, Encouraging Truth about Angels. Boy, I've heard some amazing stories about encounters with angels.

LEE: You know, there are so many, and if you look in Hebrews, it says that some people who are providing hospitality to strangers, unbeknownst to them, are providing hospitality to angels. So that tells me some people will encounter an angel in this lifetime. One of my favorite cases we document is John G. Paton. John was from Scotland. He was a missionary with his wife.

They went to a remote island in the South Pacific to share Jesus. They lived in a little cottage. Well, the tribespeople didn't like the message of Jesus. So one night they came to burn down their cottage and kill them. So John and his wife were, what do you do? You pray. God help us! God rescue us! God save us. This mob is forming outside. They prayed all night long. And by dawn, the mob dissipated. Everybody went home. A year later, he led the head of that mob to faith in Christ. And he had a conversation. He said, "Do you remember that night when you all came to burn down our house and kill us?" The guy said, "Oh, yeah, I remember that night." "Why didn't you do it?" He said, "Well, we couldn't. Who were those men you had there?" John said, "We didn't have any men there. It was just my wife and I." "No, no, no! Your house was surrounded by these muscular men, all in white with drawn swords. There is no way we could have hurt you that night. We just went home and went to bed." Those are angels that God sent to protect them. And it happens.

BETTY: Should we be looking for miracles? Because I feel like miracles happen every day and we don't recognize them.

LEE: I think sometimes we're afraid to recognize them because it's something we don't control. You know? It's something outside of our control. God does something in our midst. He does a miracle, and you go, Whoa! I mean, I didn't expect that. I can't control that. That's beyond what I ever anticipated. So I think yeah, I think we need to keep our eyes open for that.

And for angels, I mean, I had -- I never used to -- talk about being embarrassed by the supernatural. When I was 12 years old, I had an encounter with an angel. This was before I became an atheist. I'm in the kitchen of my house and an angel appeared to me. And he's extolling heaven. He's talking about heaven, how wonderful it is, the presence of God. I offhandedly said, "Well, I'm going there someday." He looked at me and said, "How do you know?" "What do you mean how do I know? I'm a good kid, I get good grades in school, I pretty much obey my parents." I'm stammering to try to justify my goodness to get into heaven. And he looked me and said, "That doesn't matter." And a chill went down my spine. Well, how can that not matter? All my efforts to be a good kid you're telling me --. And he said, "Some day you'll understand." I woke up. The only dream I remember from my childhood, and I wrote

it off, that was a bad pizza. That was from my imagination. 16 years later, I'd become an atheist then, my wife became a Christian. She dragged me to a church and I'm sitting in the church and the message that day was basic Christianity. And I heard the gospel. For the first time I understood it. It is not by your good deeds that opens the doors of heaven. It is a free gift of God's grace that we receive in repentance and faith. And I hear this and my mind flashed back to that dream 16 years earlier. I thought, wait a minute. There's two forms of corroboration that that dream was true. Number one, the angel told me something that day that I didn't know, that salvation is by grace, not by works. And secondly, he made a prophecy that some day I would understand. And sure enough, 16 years later, I understood. I was so embarrassed by this I never used to tell people until my ordination. I was ordained as a pastor in 1990. I thought, I got all these theologians going to question me about my theology, make sure I'm okay. And I thought, do I tell them about this supernatural dream? I guess I should. Maybe they'll think I'm nuts. Maybe they'll disqualify me. I got to be honest. So I told them about it. And you know what their reaction was? Yeah, we've heard that before, that kind of thing. No problem.

So I don't want to be embarrassed by the supernatural anymore. I want to explore it. I think our faith takes on a more robust nature when we do.

JAMES: One of the things you talk about in this “Supernatural Among Us,” the sobering reality of Satan and demons. People don't realize that demonic voices are communicating in the invisible realm continually. You can tune into a particular demonic, let's say, impulse or communication coming your way. What the enemy does, and this helped me so much when I saw that demons are not something to be avoided. In other words, not talked about or not acknowledged because Jesus said, “Cast them out. They're real, deal with them.” And they can possess you. They can take over. They take over many people.

One of the things I think people need to realize is demons sow thoughts; all of our thoughts are not our own. Many of them are his suggestions telling us, you know you could do this.

LEE: Satan is very wily. He's able to -- he tempts, he manipulates. I'll tell you a story that blew my mind. There's a guy named Richard Gallagher. He is a highly credentialed, highly respected

psychiatrist. So he's a medical doctor, trained in psychiatry, Ivy League school. I have a quote from the president of the American Psychiatric Association saying this is a man of great integrity, credentials, highest in his profession. He had two cats and they got along great. They loved each other. They slept together. They played together until one night the cats attacked each other trying to kill each other. They're snarling. They're biting their clawing. He'd never seen anything like it. They're ripping each other apart. He separates them and put them into separate rooms. And he thought, what is that all about? 9 a.m. the next day, the doorbell rings. Prearranged appointment. A Catholic priest was bringing by a woman to be psychiatrically examined by Dr. Gallagher. She claimed to be the high priestess of a satanic cult.

Doorbell rings. He answers the door. This woman, who claimed to be the high priestess of a satanic cult, looks up at Dr. Gallagher and sneers and said, "How'd you like those cats last night?" Dr. Gallagher has spent over 20 years casting out demons, being involved in exorcisms and so forth. He has documented cases. One case with multiple eyewitnesses where a possession victim levitated off a bed for 30 minutes. One case where a very petite woman who was possessed by demons picked up a 217-pound Lutheran deacon and threw him across a room. People speaking in languages they don't know, Latin. People who have marks, bruises, that are spontaneously coming on their body. This is a real realm. The mistake we make is exactly what you said, which is ignoring it and pretending it doesn't exist.

JAMES: Let me tell you, once I realized that all my thoughts are not my own, they're actually suggestions, that was one of the most transforming realities that ever hit my brain. The enemy is manipulating us with his suggestions, and many people are tuned in to that channel. Demonic deception and possession can come from that distraction and that deception.

This is a tremendous book. We'll send it to you. Here's what we're asking our viewers to do. We ask our viewers to help us help the helpless. We help the least of these. Our ministry is known for noticing the unnoticed, the overlooked, truly the least of these. And our viewers say, We can meet those needs. Right now, we're asking God to enable us to transform the lives of so many people who are held captive sexually in prison, and need to be set free. We are setting them free. We have found a new place that we could get that would open the doors for us to put

people in, girls who have been trafficked, who never had a place to stay. You can help us become the miracle people desperately need, and some are seeking.

Please watch this prayerfully and know that you really are a miracle that God uses to change everything for many people.

Transition roll-in: [Hart to Heart]

ANNOUNCER: *Child sex trafficking is a devastating crime that affects millions of children worldwide, stealing their innocence and subjecting them to unimaginable pain.*

CAROL: A little missionary came to our church from Southeast Asia, and she said that you can get a little boy and a little girl menu on the street corner. And you can rent them out for the night for sex, for whatever you want to do with them.

Do you know a child who's trafficked at age 12, before they're even old enough to get their driver's license, they've been raped at least 5000 times?

ANNOUNCER: *Life Outreach International is partnering with missionaries around the world like Carol Hart and her husband, Michael. They have dedicated their lives to rescuing children from the evils of sex trafficking. Working in cooperation with local authorities, their teams participate in raids to help free victims of sex trafficking. Rescuing children is only the beginning. What comes next changes lives forever.*

CAROL: The Child Rescue Center that Life Outreach built, all the kids start there first. Right after their rescue, they go to the LIFE center there. If they don't have a safe place to go home, then the child will move to the long-term housing that LIFE Outreach built. They'll grow there; they don't age out. When they're ready for independent living and they're safe, they can go out on their own, then we will help them transition.

ANNOUNCER: *Literally, hundreds of precious children have been rescued and restored because of the dedication of mission partners like Carol and Michael Hart. But the work is not finished.*

CAROL: I'm not sure you know what it means, what you've done in the lives of children. Every day, we find ourselves in the throne room of God praying for those kids who are waiting for rescue. Please, let's not grow weary in doing good. There's still so much work to be done. Let's do it together.

Studio appeal:

JAMES: You know that lady, Carol and her husband have helped us rescue thousands of children and people who were trapped. It's been the most amazing thing. The Destiny House, perhaps one of the largest outreaches to the trafficked in the world. And they didn't build it. We found them, sent from Hollywood by God to rescue the trafficked. They sold everything they rented houses. We found them. They had watched us and loved us on television. Said we were part of them being inspired to go to the mission field. And they left Hollywood. There we started helping them rent property. Then we helped them buy property and helped them build Destiny House, and many other places.

Right now in Asia, we have got a building that can house 50 girls in wonderful quarters if we can just complete it. We needed \$1.5 million. We got half of it when we first asked for it. Now we need to complete it. We have so many right now that are just pleading for a place to go. And we have so many mission workers saying, "Please, James, ask your viewers, ask the people that love you and what you do and what we all do to please help us."

Would you right now, when Rescue Life, it takes \$128 to rescue one person. That's the average cost. \$1,280, you can rescue ten people. There's a level at which you can participate. We're asking every one of you watching to ask God right now, what do you want me to do, and what will you enable me to do? And then you go get your checkbook, get your bank card, call that number, go online, and make the greatest gift possible, and know that you're giving the absolute

greatest gift, you're giving the gift of life. Not only life now and freedom, but life eternal through Jesus Christ.

Father, help everyone watching to simply do what they can to help us put your arms around the least of these and the overlooked; in Jesus' name.

Would you please do it right now? Just do what God leads you to do. He'll enable you to do it. And if you can help us complete that beautiful center, we need another half-million-dollar miracle. Father, grant that through your faithful friends of LIFE; in Jesus' name.

Thank you so much for responding to God.

RL Cause Spot – 2025 Fall

ANNOUNCER: *Innocent children, longing to be loved and cared for, are being abducted and sold into the evil industry of human trafficking. Through Mission: Rescue Life, your gift today of only \$128 will help reach, rescue, or restore a child and change their destiny forever. Gifts of \$64 or \$32 will be combined with support from others to help rescue one more child from the shame and pain of sexual slavery.*

Currently, our LIFE rescue centers in Southeast Asia are at maximum capacity. More space is urgently needed, and we must complete and renovate a new rescue home immediately. Please consider a very special extra gift as we urgently need \$1.25 million above our normal budget to complete and renovate this place of hope.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you Power, Provision and Peace: Bringing together the life-changing truths of Acts, Romans, and First and Second Corinthians in the Passion Translation. These books come alive with fresh revelation and timeless power. With your gift of \$128 or more, you'll receive the beautiful and soft "Perfect Peace Blanket," bearing the words of Isaiah 26:3 as a meaningful reminder that those who trust in the Lord are never alone.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,280, which will help save ten children, and you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

Studio goodbye:

JAMES: Well, for any gift, we're going to send you Power, Provision, and Peace. But also, if you'd like to have Lee Strobel's book, *Seeing the Supernatural*, and, you just make a gift to help us help others, we'll send it to you. Betty said, "Would you like to tell them why I'm holding this?" Because this is the most beautiful throw I have ever seen in my life. I can promise you -- I know Betty will have one, but I'm going to have one, too. Because it's not only beautiful, it's simply the most comfortable. We're sending it to those of you who will make the gift of \$128, which rescues one. Thank you for doing that. You're going to be blessed.

Lee, we're going to talk more about seeing the supernatural in the next program.

LEE: Looking forward to that.

JAMES: We sure enjoy having you on.

LEE: I love hanging out with you all.

JAMES: Thank you for being a blessing to so many, the overlooked, the least of these. Thank you.