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Week 8

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Dr. Robert Jeffress

“Spiritual Armor”

MALE ANNOUNCER: The following program is sponsored by Friends of Life Outreach International.

ANNOUNCER: Coming up.

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS: Our spirits hate a vacuum. Somebody's going to control our lives and the direction of our life.

Any part of that cup that wasn't filled with the water could be filled with the Diet Coke, and it's the same way in our life in a practical way.

ANNOUNCER: Dr. Robert Jeffress teaches us how to fight the invisible war that Satan wages against followers of Christ by using “The divine defense.”

RANDY ROBISON: Can Christians be possessed by the devil or by a demon?

[music]

RANDY: Welcome to “Life Today,” I’m Randy Robinson, Blynda Lane is with me.

BLYNDA LANE: Nice to be here today.

RANDY: We’re in the middle of a conversation.

BLYNDA: Ooh, a good one.

RANDY: It’s been a great one, and if you missed any of the programs, you can go to LifeToday.org, but we’re talking about “The Divine Defense” with Dr. Robert Jeffress.

This is spiritual warfare. Thank you for sticking around and doing another program with us.

DR. JEFFRESS: Thanks for letting me.

RANDY: Absolutely, and you know, we do this because this is important.

Now, there is a question that comes up, and I mean I kind of chuckle, but it could be a serious question for people. They ask can Christians be possessed by the devil or by a demon, what do you think?

DR. JEFFRESS: And the answer would be a clear no on that one. And that’s very, I think, clear in scripture.

Ephesians 1 talks about every true believer has been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God to mark us as God's own possession, and God doesn't like to share when it comes with his possessions. He's not about to share us with Satan.

So I would say no believer can be possessed by the devil. But believers can be influenced by the devil, and we talked about it on the last show about Peter, when Peter said the Lord, "Oh, you don't have to be crucified, you don't have to go to the cross."

And what did Jesus say? "Get thee behind me, Satan." He wasn't saying Peter was possessed by Satan, but Peter was allowing himself to be influenced by Satan's way of thinking.

And here's what I would say to our audience, any part of your life that is not under God's control is under Satan's control.

Our spirits hate a vacuum. Somebody's going to control our lives and the direction of our life.

You know, Paul wrote in Ephesians, "Be filled with the Holy Spirit of God." That word fill refers to the sail of a ship that is filled up with wind and is directed by that wind.

So, to be filled with the Spirit is to be directed by the Spirit of God. But if we don't allow the spirit to direct us, there's another force at work that will direct us.

And I illustrated that to my congregation a few weeks ago. I had two glasses on a table by the pulpit, and one glass was empty, and I poured water into it, and I poured it all the way to the top.

I said, "Is this cup full?" Everybody said yes.

I did it with a second cup but left a little bit of room in it, and I said, "Is this cup full?" And they said no.

And then I took out some demon juice, Diet Coke, and poured it into the remaining part of that cup.

Any part of that cup that wasn't filled with the water could be filled with the Diet Coke, and it's the same way in our life in a practical way.

RANDY: We're not just told to be filled but to overflow, right?

So, how do we know? How do I know, since I can't be possessed, how do I know if I'm being under the influence or oppressed in any way by Satan?

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, I think the clearest way is am I being asked to do anything that violates the clear teaching of God's Word?

And it's amazing how many Christians can say, well, I know the Bible says, but, and they have—they think they're the exception of the world to the situation.

I know the Bible says I shouldn't divorce, but I'm just not happy right now, and certainly God wants me to be happy and so forth and so forth.

So I think that's the clearest way. I think, secondly, our conscience is a test.

There may be some things that are right for other people to do, but we inherently know it's not okay for us, and when we violate that, I think we can know that influence is coming from other places than God.

RANDY: You say that if we're asked to do something that violates scripture, we have to know scripture.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, that's right.

RANDY: And I think that's a problem for a lot of people. I mean, that's what you talk about as the belt of truth, is it not?

DR. JEFFRESS: That's right, and it's the first piece of weaponry that Paul describes.

Remember where Paul was when he wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus, he was under house arrest, he was chained to a different Roman guard every 8 hours, and as Paul sat there and looked at that Roman guard, he said, you know, the same armor this Roman guard has to fight his battles, God has given us to fight our battles.

And the first thing he mentions is that belt of truth. We talked about it last time.

He's talking about the power of God's Word. It's a strategy. The belt of truth means recognize and replace wrong thoughts with God's thoughts, and the only way you know God's thoughts is to know Scripture.

And, you know, the Bible says, "Thy word have I hid hidden in my heart that I might not sin against God."

God's Word is so important in spiritual warfare that it's illustrated with the first piece of armor, the belt, and it's illustrated in the last piece of armor, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

God's Word is twice as effective than any other defense God has given us against spiritual warfare.

BLYNDA: And not only that, but he uses an offensive weapon to describe it.

Everything else is armor for us, but the sword is offensive weapon.

DR. JEFFRESS: It is offensive, and understand there are two different swords in the Bible.

There is the Roman broadsword, the one that the soldier would wear and come about flailing around and hopefully hitting somebody, but that's not the word that's used here.

It's the makhaira, it was a 6-inch dagger that was used in hand-to-hand combat.

And that means when the devil is up close and you're in a struggle with the devil, you need to know God's word well enough to use it skillfully to know exactly what verse to bring to mind, not for Satan's benefit.

As we said last time, Satan isn't afraid of the Word of God. He knows the Word of God better than most Christians.

The reason we call to mind scripture is for our resolve, to give us the strength we need to say no to the evil one.

BLYNDA: And it's almost too late if you're in the battle.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, Satan, would you hold off just a moment while I look through my Bible? I know there's a verse in here somewhere.

BLYNDA: Right, yeah, you also talk about there's six of them, of this armor, we talked about the belt and the sword, but there's a helmet of salvation, and there's the breastplate of righteousness and the foot—you call them the soul shoes.

Talk about that.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, well, people stumble over that passage when Paul says have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Why did he talk about your feet shod or horses, or what is he talking about? He's talking about the Roman boot.

Boots were instrumental for any soldier, because they kept him to the ground. They kept him with the traction he needed in hand-to-hand combat.

It allowed him to stand firm no matter what was assaulting him.

BLYNDA: Like there was a tread or something.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, there's tread that helped gain traction.

What is it that helps gain traction in our spiritual life? It's when we're involved in sharing the gospel.

Paul was quoting Isaiah, "How beautiful are the feet of those whose feet are shod with the gospel of peace."

Here's what Paul is saying, when you make God's business your business, when your primary aim in life is to win as many people to faith in Christ as possible, it gives you stability in times of uncertainty.

It keeps you from giving into temptation.

I mean, I think all the time, you know, if I'm tempted in a certain way, I think if I indulge in this and it became known, what would that do to the people I've influenced through the years for the gospel?

I mean, I think first of all, what would it do to my own wife, but then I think what would it do not just to my children and my grandchildren, but what effect would it have on the people I've witnessed to for Christ?

You know, I don't think most pastors or most lay people who fall into adultery wake up one day and say, you know, I think I'll destroy my marriage today or I'll destroy my ministry.

I don't think most people want to do that, but they end up doing that.

But when you make God's business your business, it gives you the strength to say no to the enemy.

BLYNDA: But it also goes to talk about that slow fade.

A believer can fall into Satan's trap without fully knowing it until they're a little too far away from the truth that they know.

How can you keep yourself from that slow fade? And how can you be aware of when the slow fade is happening?

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, I think part of it is putting on the breastplate of righteousness, which is one of the pieces of armor Paul talks about.

You know, a breastplate was that molded piece of metal that protected the vital organs, your heart, your lungs, and so forth.

He says we have a breastplate, it's called righteousness.

Righteousness in the Bible is not only referring to our right standing with God we receive when we trust in Christ as our savior, that's a judicial righteousness, but he's talking about the ethical righteousness, righteous living, and this is a great strategy for deterring the evil one.

I call it the strategy of obey what you know to be true.

If you will obey what you know to be true, then it will keep you from being deceived.

You know, obedience protects you against the consequences of sin.

It'll protect you from the discipline of God. I don't know about you all, but I've been through times of discipline by God, it's not pleasant.

It's something you say I'll never do again if I get a chance, but obedience to God protects you from that, and obedience protects you from the loss of your heavenly rewards.

I don't think you can lose your salvation, but I think you can lose the rewards from your salvation that Paul promises to those who obey Christ.

So, I think this habit of obeying God can keep you from going down that road of disobedience.

Like C.S. Lewis said, the road to hell is a gradual one. Just the slight dip, not the sudden turning and so forth.

RANDY: Yeah, yeah, I mean, you know, you talk about the rewards, when Paul talks about our future judgment, it's not the same as sort of the Old Testament judgment to destruction, but it talks about the, you know, the silver and the gold versus the wood and the dross and stuff and how it'll be purged, which part of that's a blessing.

I'd like to get rid of the things that, you know, the mistakes I've made. But it says there will be loss.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes.

RANDY: Yeah, so there is this loss.

The good news is all that's left is the silver, gold, what's the other one, precious stones or something, right?

That's what I want left, but how much will there be?

That's why I lay up treasure in heaven.

DR. JEFFRESS: We're getting to the heart of spiritual warfare.

Why do I wanna succeed in this? Not only to please my savior, but how we live out here on earth determines the kind of heaven we're going to experience.

Rewards in heaven are real, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one of us may be rewarded for what we've done.

RANDY: That's it.

DR. JEFFRESS: And you said in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul says if we don't survive that judgment, we'll be saved, but our lives will be rendered as non-consequential, and they'll be lost.

And people challenge me on that. They say, Pastor, how can we be in heaven rejoicing if we feel loss?

And I use this illustration.

I say just imagine your insurance agent tries to get you to increase your home insurance and you say no, then one night you awaken, you smell smoke, you gather up your mate, you get your children, you crash down the door and get outside, you turn around, and you see your home being destroyed by fire.

What emotion do you feel at that moment?

Certainly joy that you escaped the flames, the fire, but a loss as you realize that everything you've had is being burned up.

And I think there'll be that mixture of joy and a sense of loss in heaven for some people, joy that we're in the presence of Christ, that we've escaped the flames of hell, but a loss as we see what could have been ours if we've been more obedient and faithful to Christ.

RANDY: And fought this good fight that we're talking about.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah.

BLYNDA: In the last episode, we talked about the role that in the garden doubt played, because Satan came and tempted even, and it was that first question that you said was even asked.

How does the shield of faith help us in our own doubts that we have about God or that we have just in life?

I mean, I know there's viewers that are watching that have been hit with some really tough things, and it shakes their whole understanding of who God is or what they thought their life was gonna be like.

How do they put that shield of faith on so that the enemy can't come and torment their mind?

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, the strategy behind the shield of faith is moving forward in spite of your doubts, moving forward in what you know God wants us to do.

You know, that's what faith is, it's—faith is believing that God will do what he has promised to do.

And a lot of people today misconstrue that.

They think faith is just kind of a positive thinking.

If I claim something, and I really want it, and I believe hard enough and long enough that God will do it, he has to do it.

It's like "The Little Engine That Could."

Have you ever read that to your children?

You know, that little engine going up the hill? I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.

They think that's what faith and praying is.

Oh, I think God will, I think God will.

If you can just conjure up that positive thinking, then God will do it.

That's not faith, that's presumption.

Faith is not the assurance God will do what we want him to do, it's the assurance that he will do what he's promised to do and acting accordingly.

God said to Noah, "I'm gonna send a flood."

Noah built an ark, and you find that in Scripture where people responding to what God has promised to do.

So, I would say, you know, real faith, believing that God will do what he's promised to do means moving forward in spite of the doubts you may have.

BLYNDA: I love that, because faith always requires action.

DR. JEFFRESS: Always requires action.

RANDY: Yeah, and you know faith that's just a hope in something unseen is not real.

Scripture says there's substance and evidence to the faith, which I think a lot of it is the action and the fighting of the fight.

And you also talk about the helmet of salvation, which we talked about, and the sword of the spirit which we've hit on.

I have a question, though, for you, because you know, we can hear the sermon, and you've delivered a great series of sermons on this very recently.

Of course, we got the book "The Divine Defense," but if I don't fight, do I just automatically lose, or do I just not win?

Like, if I sit on the sidelines in this whole spiritual battle, what do you think's gonna happen?

DR. JEFFRESS: I don't think there are any sidelines.

I think we are fooling ourselves if we think, you know, I mean, I'm a lover, not a fighter, and so forth.

I think, as I said, you become spiritual roadkill.

You know, God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our life.

The bad news is Satan hates us and has a horrible plan for our life.

RANDY: Okay, so I decide I'm gonna fight.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes.

RANDY: Is there any guarantee that I'll win?

DR. JEFFRESS: I think there is a short-term win and a long-term win.

I love this story Neil Anderson tells about when he was growing up on a farm.

He used to go and visit his neighbor's farm, he was a little kid, and there was this little dog that would chase him around, and everybody else would enjoy watching Neil being chased by this little dog.

And he said finally he realized one day when he found himself jumping up on a pickup to escape this little mutt, he said, you know, this dog has no influence over me, you know?

I stand—I run, and everybody else stands firm. Guess who the dog runs after.

And so one day he took a rock, slung it at the dog, he stood his ground, the dog ran off, and that was the end of it.

And he said it's the same way with Satan.

The way you win against Satan is not out-yelling him or out-muscling him, you out-truth him.

You act according to the truth.

And just as that mutt had no more control over Neil than Neil allowed him to have, the truth is Satan has no more power over your life than you choose to allow him to have.

You don't have to wait till you get to heaven to have spiritual victory.

If there is any truth in Romans 6:7 and 8, it's this truth, sin has no more power over us than we choose to allow us to have.

The Holy Spirit, the life-giving spirit of God that raised Jesus from the dead is present in your life right now if you're a believer to give you the power you need to say no to the evil one and yes to God.

RANDY: Yeah, and having done all.

DR. JEFFRESS: Stand firm.

RANDY: There you go, I knew you'd know that one.

All right, well, if you want a little help standing firm, you can get "The Divine Defense" today if you will stand with us in a beautiful outreach of hope.

Watch this, and you'll see how.

ANNOUNCER: Each day, women in this region of South Asia walk for miles, spending hours to provide water for their families.

Amariti, a single mom, travels in this boat to collect water from the middle of the lake.

She says the water here is cleaner and does not smell as bad as the water close to the shore.

But the reality is, the distance is no guarantee the water is safe.

[speaking foreign language]

ANNOUNCER: This is Varju, a grandmother several times over.

She will make four to five trips each day, walking these steep, rocky hills for more than two miles to collect her water from this open pit.

The daily trip not only takes a toll on her physically, but the water makes her and her grandchildren sick.

[speaking foreign language]

ANNOUNCER: For Janku to meet her family's needs for just one day, she must go morning, noon, and evening to this stream to collect her water.

She pours it through this cloth in an effort to strain out the impurities, but even with her best efforts, this water often turns deadly.

[speaking foreign language]

ANNOUNCER: Thousands of women like Amariti, Varju, and Janku have spent their entire lives striving to collect the cleanest water they can.

The reality is, they are bringing diseased water to their families because they have no other choice.

But the good news is we can give them a choice, by drilling water wells in their villages.

Once the fresh, clean water is tapped with a hand pump, people can be freed from the hardships of spending hours collecting water.

And more importantly, waterborne illnesses and disease will be a thing of the past.

RANDY: Yes, we give them a choice, but that we involves you.

You give them that choice, the choice of whatever water supply is available, which may or may not make you sick, and for the young especially, may or may not kill you.

You give them that choice.

You could give them clean drinking water.

An average well costs about \$4800, and that's because we go in some very difficult places and we drill very deep, and we encase that thing so that it's gonna last for a lifetime.

We do it right.

We give them water for life.

You may not be able to drill an entire well by yourself, I understand.

Your gift of \$48 would actually provide clean drinking water for life for ten people on average.

A gift of \$144 would provide that for 30 people.

So when you think about those faces you just saw, and the other faces around the world where people are suffering, people are hurting, where they've lost loved ones or they're facing sickness as a child, know that you can give them the gift of life.

You know, Blynda, we've been doing this for many years now.

I think the numbers are around like 9500 wells throughout the history, and yet there is still such great need.

And you know, the Bible talks about not growing weary of doing good, and that's where I draw excitement and energy and go, "You know what? We can do good."

And not just a good work but a God work, because we always go with the gospel.

It's a privilege.

BLYNDA: It is a privilege, and you know, I think about the mom who—as a mom, I make so many decisions every day to keep my kids safe, to keep my kids healthy.

What can I do?

And I watch a mom who rows her boat to the middle of a lake or a pond so she can possibly make the safest choice for her child, and I just want to encourage you, today you have the choice that you can help link arms with us to help those moms who are trying to make the best decision, the decision can be made for them.

That mom can now go to the safe place to get safe water, and that can be because of you and because of what we do together to give clean water to them for life.

No amount is too small.

Every gift means so much to them.

RANDY: Yeah, and you know, it's really a matter, I think, of obedience, where God is giving us this opportunity, and if he's speaking to you right now, do it as an act of obedience, and do what he says.

And you'll be blessed and you will have joy, and you will bless someone else and bring them joy.

You can put a smile on the face of someone today.

So we ask that you join us in Water for Life.

Go online, go to the phone, make the best gift that you can.

ANNOUNCER: Every day thousands of lives are lost to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five.

Through mission Water for Life, you can give mothers hope and children a future, as we provide clean, fresh drinking water, free from the fear of death.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year.

Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children.

A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten.

And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With a gift of any amount, we'll send you "Discovering the Joy of Reading God's Word."

Whether you've read the Bible for years or are just beginning, this book invites you to experience Scripture in a fresh, more intimate way.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request "A Life of Compassion" coffee table book, capturing LIFE Outreach's heart for the world.

Each page pairs timeless Bible verses with vivid mission field photography, making God's Word visible in action.

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 request Life's beautiful 2026 bronze sculpture, The Good Shepherd.

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

RANDY: You can give life today.

Join us with Water for Life.

Go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can.

Request "The Divine Defense."

This will help you in every spiritual battle.

And I don't know, Dr. Jeffress—by the way, thank you for being here.

DR. JEFFRESS: Thanks for having me.

RANDY: But if there's like just one thing I need to know to win a spiritual battle, what's the most important thing?

DR. JEFFRESS: Without doubt, the most important thing you can do today to destroy Satan's plan to destroy your life is to receive Jesus Christ as your savior.

When you become a Christian, that drives a stake through the heart of Satan's plan for your life to take you to be his captive, not only in this world but in eternity to come.

So I would say to anyone watching today, if you don't know Christ as savior, trust in him.

Confess your sins to God, admit that you need his forgiveness, and then believe with all of your heart that Jesus died for you, that he took the punishment you and I deserve for our sins.

Remember, the scripture says whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

BLYNDA: Amen, thank you for being with us.

And anyone watching, if you feel that tug on your heart to make that call, you want to pray with someone for that prayer of salvation, the number on your screen, call that number right now.

The most important decision of your life could happen right at this moment.

Dr. Jeffress, thank you for being with us.

DR. JEFFRESS: Great to be with you.

Thanks for having me.

RANDY: Absolutely, and thank all of you for being here.

If you missed the other program, again, LifeToday.org, we'll see you again next time.

[music]

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