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Week 28

Randy Robison

Billy Hollowell

"Angels And Demons"

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

BILLY HALLOWELL: The real battle is a spiritual one. If you wonder how we got to the place we're in in this country, we got here because there's a spiritual battle, and a lot of us have stepped back from our responsibility of engaging in that battle by living as Christians.

ANNOUNCER: Journalist Billy Hollowell reveals the spiritual forces at work in our everyday lives.

BILLY: We don't need to be afraid of evil, but we need to understand the role that it plays and that we are in the midst of a battle, whether we want to be or not, because you cannot win a battle you don't know you're in.

[music]

RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today." I'm Randy Robinson. We have got a topic for you today.

My guest is someone I've enjoyed seeing many times over the years and talking to. His name is Billy Hollowell. He's a CBN investigative journalist, and he's got a great series of documentaries that are available, more coming out in the future.

They are called "Investigating the Supernatural," and the current one is on angels and demons. So this will be a fun conversation. Billy, man, good to see you in person. How you doing?

BILLY: Good to see you. Thanks for having me.

RANDY: Did you have fun on this topic?

BILLY: You know, that's an interesting question because I did--I mean, I did. Learning more about the spiritual realm in Ephesians 6 and what that really looks like, you know, that--I

used to be afraid of it, and then as you understand the authority you have as a Christian, it becomes important and essential.

So it was fun but it was also, for me, a reminder of how essential it is to really understand what's happening in the world around us and the spiritual world around us as well.

RANDY: Yeah, no doubt. Okay, so I want people to get a little glimpse of this. There's some great stories. Man, the stories that drive this thing is fascinating. Can we take a look at that?

BILLY: Absolutely.

RANDY: All right, watch this and we'll come back with Billy.

BILLY: Is there a spiritual war going on around us? Are angels and demons real? Let's investigate.

MALE: In all ancient cultures, people believe in a spiritual wrong.

MALE: And I was struck that all throughout history, the vast majority of cultures not only believed in evil spirits, but believed in possessions.

FEMALE: And every major religion believes in angels.

FEMALE: For most of the world, the question isn't is there a spiritual world? The question is which spirit is the most powerful?

MALE: But to say you believe in angels, demons, is oftentimes to expose you to ridicule. Like, you sound like somebody from the Middle Ages.

MALE: Many scientists just write it all off saying, "This is just people's imaginations. They're hallucinating. They're having dreams. None of this is real."

FEMALE: I kept hearing...

[male whispering]

"Stop, don't go there."

FEMALE: And within a matter of minutes, a bomb went off.

MALE: All of a sudden we hear this guttural-sounding voice come out of her in the back.

DEMONIC VOICE: Your mumbo-jumbo prayers will fail. Just like they always do.

MALE: And the one from the driver's side reached over and put his hands right in the middle of the flat spot, and the one from the passenger side did the same thing. My heart started supernaturally, no CPR, no medicine.

BILLY: What I uncovered changes everything.

[music]

RANDY: Wow--oh, that--part of me, I'm like, "What in the world?" I've always had this fascination, too, right? But man, I mean, I don't know. How did this impact you, walking through this?

BILLY: I mean, that is a loaded question because I'll tell you, going into this series, you know, the first one we did was on miracles, this one's on angels and demons. I thought I really understood what it meant to be a Christian. I really did.

And if you had asked me, you know, "What does it mean to hear the voice of God?" I would have said, "Oh, I understand that." And all that was sort of flipped on its head, because when you're diving into all of this, you start to ask yourself, "What am I missing? What am I not engaging in when it comes to God? What am I not doing?"

And so it really sort of forced me personally into a place of reassessing my faith, and walking away with a much stronger faith and a much stronger connection to God, which was not something that I expected, because when you're working on projects, you know, you assume, well, we're putting this out for other people, which we are. But for me, it ministered a lot to me, and it forced me, especially with Charlie Kirk's death, right, and these other horrible events that we've watched happen. When you see something that's so evil and you say to yourself, "That was evil," and I think even atheists feel that, right? There are people who don't believe who they see it and they know, okay, something's wrong. It makes you start to question, well, what's going on behind that? And as Christians, we know there's a spiritual realm, but we don't often think about the ramifications of that. So it's got me rethinking all of that in my life, and then in our politics and in our culture as well.

RANDY: It's a lot more real to you now, spiritually?

BILLY: A lot more real, a lot more real. I mean, I think--and God was always real, right? But this idea of being able to go to him and pray and--like, I started doing prayer walks last September, in the middle of all this.

And actually, you know, right before--or right after Charlie died I started doing these prayer walks, and just--I don't like silence, unfortunately, so I always fill it with noise. And so I said, well, you need silence sometimes to hear God. You need that time with him.

And so on those prayer walks I just go out for 20 minutes, 30 minutes, and I'll pray, and that was a new thing and it's really shifted my connection to God and just, you know, all of that. So it's become much more real, and I'm looking at things differently now.

RANDY: Yeah, I think you do. And you know, well, okay, I wanna talk about the stories before some of the other things, but why'd you go with that angle?

Because you could have just done sort of a theological, you know, survey, what do people think, what are attitudes, what does the Bible say, how do we interpret that properly? But you went with stories. Why the stories?

BILLY: Yeah, I think it's really interesting. There's a debate, obviously, in the church about whether the gifts continue or not, whether God is still moving in certain ways or not, and you know, we really felt like people's stories, if this stuff is still happening today, right, which I believe that angels and demons are still active today, then do we have evidence of that? And the best place to look are at people's stories.

And we didn't just, you know, we had to vet these stories. So before we even went out and told the stories, we already had a good idea that there was something there. But I approach everything kind of skeptically, even though I'm a Christian. So if you tell me you've engaged with demons or angels, I want you to prove it to me. And so we felt it was really important, and I'll tell you this.

I didn't think about this until we got into these documentaries, but apologetics, obviously incredibly important, being able to use logic, pull people into faith with it. I never saw the supernatural as an apologetic. I always saw it as this other thing in the corner that's there and it sort of proves our faith, but it's not logical necessarily. And what I found was that when you start to find evidence for the supernatural and you can present that evidence of things happening today, it actually starts to sway people. It becomes an apologetics tool. And I think we're seeing this with a lot of young people who are looking for the truth, and if I can prove that a miracle happened, right, or at least get people to say, "Well, I can't come up with any other explanation," then the next logical question is where did that miracle come from? Or, where did that angel or that demon encounter come from? Well, there's a Creator, and you start to work your way back. And so that became very powerful and important for us to be able to do in telling current stories as well.

RANDY: Yeah, and they're really good. My struggle has always been a sort of chicken and egg thing, especially on the demonic side, right? You see or hear, you know, a manifestation or a story about it, and I'm always like, you know, maybe, maybe not, you know?

Yes, I believe it, because it's in Scripture. But you go, okay, is that just something wrong psychologically, physiologically, that can, you know, have somebody manifest in a way that is damaging to themselves or bizarre things like that, or is it demonic? And I'm like--

BILLY: Or is it both?

RANDY: Is it both, right? So I'm like, oh, okay, did the demonic cause the physiology, because we know even our thoughts can impact our bodies. Or did something

physiological, and I think drug abuse, it can very much open the door to demonic activity. Do you have any--what did you see?

BILLY: Yeah, no, that's really interesting. You know, I've looked a lot at this topic even before this. I wrote a book called "Playing with Fire" in 2020 on this topic.

And when I asked people who were dealing with this, you know, people who were deliverance ministers and other people in the space, what they would see as the cause, obviously you have Ouija boards and psychics and the things that are obvious door-openers, but you also have trauma. You have things that are not your fault, you know? If things have been done to you, abuse, those sorts of things can often--because what does evil do? Evil attaches itself to those sorts of things. It finds a weak point. The enemy always looks for a weak point that we have and tries to exploit it. Drug abuse, as you were mentioning, substance abuse, those sorts of things can open the door.

And you know, I've asked, in certain suicide cases I've asked people, you know, there was one pastor's wife I interviewed. The pastor had committed suicide and I said, you know, "Did you think this was mental or spiritual?" And she said, "You know, I really thought it was a mixture of both." And so I think it's complicated, and we really wanna be careful. And this was something in "Investigating the Supernatural: Angels and Demons" that we did. You know, we went to psychologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, people who are encountering these things and seeing them, and you will often find that those people--and we tell Dr. Richard Gallagher's story, he quickly became a believer. He was a skeptic and he quickly became a believer--that they're encountering things they can't explain. So we have to be careful, because we don't want to treat a problem with the wrong treatment. We wanna make sure we're--and so this requires careful consideration in these cases.

RANDY: So here's the big question that everybody seems to want to know. Can a Christian be possessed by a demon? What did you find?

BILLY: So what we have found is most experts would say no, that a Christian cannot be possessed, but a Christian can be oppressed. And I think there's not a real good understanding among a lot of Christians, because a lot of churches do not talk about these topics which we can address. This is actually a major issue that I've found to be a burden for me, and just finding a lot of churches that don't wanna deal with it, a lot of pastors who don't wanna talk about it.

But when it comes to oppression, oppression is when evil is sort of outside of you, it's pushing in on you. It's creating issues in your life. It's, you know, it's not in you, you're not being controlled by it, but it can create--it's spiritual warfare, right? And we are not immune to that as Christians.

I think it's actually dangerous to tell people they are immune to it, because you don't really know how to address it when it comes at you, right? And Ephesians 6 talks a lot about all of this, and we can break some of that down. But when it comes to possession, possession

appears to be very rare, but we do see it a lot in the New Testament. We see Jesus and others healing people who are possessed, and you lose control over yourself. And you know, I don't believe that a Christian can be possessed because you have the Holy Spirit, but you can be dealing with demons. And there's some debate among deliverance pastors and ministers among what that actually looks like, right? What does oppression look like? How deep can that go? Because it does seem like it can go pretty deep for some believers.

RANDY: Yeah, well, I mean, in Scripture, in Paul, he is addressing believers when he talks about the ways of the devil, the lies, the fiery darts, you know, so I mean, obviously something's going on.

Here's where I think we can also get into a little bit of a problem, you know, which is to focus too much, and you know, I've been kind of been on both sides of this, where we didn't talk about it, you know, or we didn't really--we know it's in the Bible, but we don't really believe, you know. And then, like, there's demons everywhere.

BILLY: There's a demon under every rock.

RANDY: Right. How do we keep a--what's your view on the proper balance there?

BILLY: The truth is in the middle, that we need to be in the middle on this, meaning, you know, there's not a demon under every single rock. Sometimes you just made a stupid decision. You know, you used your free will to do something terrible.

Other times, you know, when you have the other side, not talking about it at all, you know, I used to be more concerned with the demon under every rock, and I think it is concerning and you have to be careful with it. I've become more concerned nowadays with the "let's not talk about it at all" because, you know, look, let's say you're dealing with a demonic, you know, oppression, and you're struggling, and you're going to people for help and nobody's willing to help you. I mean, you're actually leaving people distressed when they could find freedom. You're leaving people in a dangerous place or a difficult place when they could be, you know, not dealing with that particular issue, you could find freedom from it.

So I think it's important that we find a middle ground approach to this, and I think that's what Paul's talking about when he talks about taking up the shield of faith, right? You know, we assume that we are in a battle between flesh and blood. It's Democrats versus Republicans, it's me versus you. Those debates are fine to have politically, right? But that's not what the real battle is. The real battle is a spiritual one. If you wonder how we got to the place we're in in this country, we got here because there's a spiritual battle, and a lot of us have stepped back from our responsibility of engaging in that battle by living as Christians. That's what that means. Take up the shield of faith, pray, read the Bible, you know? We don't need to be afraid of evil, but we need to understand the role that it plays and that we are in the midst of a battle, whether we want to be or not, because you cannot win a battle you don't know you're in. And so that's actually a scary thought.

RANDY: Yeah, I just--I see the enemy's tool as deception. That's the strongest tool he's got. You know, the good news is if you're in Christ, you know, the victory is there, but you're right, you do have to fight. And that's why Paul tells us to. Okay, the angels.

Man, I--we don't have time to go through it, and people are just gonna have to watch the documentary, but that last story. And I'll tell you what I love about it, because I don't know if you know this, I actually worked in news a little bit. Journalism minor in school, worked for a city newspaper off and on. But the approach on the last guy, you--

BILLY: Bruce Van Natta.

RANDY: Oh, is that his name? Okay.

BILLY: He's phenomenal.

RANDY: Phenomenal encounter, but you also have the paramedic who showed up telling her side of it, so it's a corroborating evidence kind of thing, right? What did you see when you looked at the angelic stories encounters, and is there a common thread or an overall thing?

BILLY: Yeah, and this struck me. There's a common thread among angels, but there's also a differentiation between angels and demons that's very interesting. Angels show up, they minister, they deliver a message, and they leave. They are not there to provide any glory to themselves.

And we see this in Scripture. When people go to bow down to them, they're like, "Stop, don't do that."

RANDY: That's true.

BILLY: So it's very, very interesting the nature of angels. They're there to serve us, right? We're not to pray to them. In the New Age people pray to angels. We shouldn't do that. We don't communicate with angels. We can pray to God to send angels for protection. We can ask God to do that.

But the point is, they show up, they deliver a message, they leave. Demons show up and stay. And it makes it very easy to find demonic stories that you can corroborate, and a lot harder to find angel stories to corroborate, which I found really interesting as we were doing the research.

And our director, Jarrod Anderson, who was really the brains behind this entire operation, brilliant, you know. He noticed that, and I noticed that as we were looking at all this, and I thought, it makes sense when you look at Scripture that that's how they operate, but angels, you know, they will do simple things for us, and they will do big things. And sometimes you don't even know. Maybe we've been protected or saved or helped in some way in a situation, and it was an angel and we have no idea. We may entertain angels and

have no idea. The Bible tells us that, which tells us they take on the form of humans sometimes, which is very interesting.

RANDY: And there's different types in Scripture, which I think is interesting too. At the same time, I think to your point, they're messengers of God, and the message is Christ. Do we need to be careful that we don't focus too much on this, because if all you're doing is looking for angels, are you gonna miss God in a sense?

BILLY: Absolutely. I mean, this is what the New Age movement does. They have angel cards, which are basically tarot cards to communicate with angels. I mean, this is a--you have to be very careful, you know. You have to put Jesus first always, and all these other elements are part of the understanding of his creation and the world that we're living in and what is happening around us, but we don't wanna hyperfixate on demons or angels.

And I think people have a tendency to do both of those things, you know, again, or not talk about it at all. And so we want that healthy middle ground approach. But I really would encourage people with this film, and they can go to cbn.com/supernatural to watch it, that this will encourage you with evidence.

If you have people in your life who are Christians or not, this provides evidence that helps you believe. And I think for me, walking away from this very confident, I mean, I wanted to prove these stories wrong. I wanted to be like, "Look, there's some other explanation," and I was not able to find any other explanation in these stories, and so that built my faith up.

RANDY: Interesting. All right, and one more thing, and I've just got a minute to ask you, but I have to ask you. I've always had a--I'm a big sci-fi fan. I've always had a fascination with, you know, UFOs and aliens and all, and I always--I don't actually believe any of them exist.

But do you think any of the "UFO encounters," you know, the ones that aren't military or some natural phenomenon, do you think they could be angelic or demonic encounters?

BILLY: Yes, I think that when you look at what is happening, there are many reasons for this, but absolutely. I think most of them have a natural explanation, most of the things people think they're seeing, but for the people claiming they've interacted with aliens or been abducted, I mean, there's some wild stories out there.

I think that there are times that people are actually encountering demons, and that this is demonic. It is not--and especially those encounters with aliens, they mirror possession stories actually, when you look at a lot of the encounters. They're terrifying, people have higher suicide rates after they encounter them.

So there's a whole--and there needs to be more research into this, but I think it's a deception, and it's masquerading as something other than what it actually is.

RANDY: I have suspected that. So it's very interesting, and the expert that you talked to in this I thought was really interesting.

BILLY: Astrophysicist.

RANDY: Is that what he is?

BILLY: Yeah, he's fascinating.

RANDY: Yeah, okay, wow. All right, you guys, if you wanna watch this, again, cbn.com/supernatural. You can check it out. I think it's free, there's no requirement or anything.

BILLY: It's a donation of any amount.

RANDY: You make a donation. Well, it's well worth it. And what's your next one?

BILLY: So it's "Investigating the Supernatural: Heaven and Hell." Near-death experiences.

RANDY: Oh, boy.

RANDY: All right, well, we're gonna have to talk about that, and we'll hopefully, you know, get to bring you Billy again next time on that one. But go check out this latest "Investigating the Supernatural." The film, it's very interesting, and again, look, I love talking about this type of thing. I hope you do too.

Obviously you're sticking around watching this. Let's keep the the main thing the main thing, and that's Christ. And wherever you come from, whatever you think, just remember Christ is central, Christ is King, he has all the authority, we need not fear. And in him--you can look at these things, but you don't worship them and you don't worry about them.

I would like you to look at one more thing today, and that is a situation that is very real, there's no debate about it. There are people who are in desperate need, and I believe, as a part of our mission of spreading God's kingdom here on this earth, of representing him, of being messengers, in a sense, of the gospel, is to do that in word and in deed. This is one of the deeds, and I'd like to invite you into it. Watch this.

JOHN YEATTS: I know right now that you may be standing in your kitchen, preparing a meal for your family, washing dishes at your sink, using water out of the refrigerator that's filtered. You never stop to even think for a moment that that water could kill your children. I'm asking you to help me make sure that this mother never has that fear again.

Ree's story really captures me. Her daughter, for ten years, was able to run and play and do all the things that normal children do. Well, for the last three years she has suffered because of this water sickness, and the doctors have made it very clear that it's because of the water that she is now suffering, not only in her health but in her mind.

And this is a little girl that should have been able to grow up, and marry, and have children of her own, have an education, have a dream. But now she lays on her bed crying, and has

no ability to communicate or be with people anymore. And it's all because of something that was so preventable. We can bring a well to this village. It is a clean well, it's gonna be mechanically drilled. It'll be lined all the way to the water source. It will be set up in a way that it will never be contaminated, and they'll never have to fear again. Join James and Betty. They've given their whole lives to this. They have done everything they can do to put the arms of God around the world, and they've asked us to be a part of it. We can make a difference, friends. Through Water for Life we can drill a well in this village. You can extend God's perfect love in this moment, and cast away the fear that this village lives with.

RANDY: You know, for many years, Life Outreach International, really, viewers like you, have made it possible to solve that problem of clean drinking water, but the need is still great. They tell us that over 2 billion people globally lack access to clean drinking water. So we continue. We continue to share God's love with people just like those that John has visited there.

I gotta tell you, several years ago I was in Cambodia. I knelt down next to a grave where a grandfather had lost several grandchildren. Now I am a grandfather. I would do anything to make sure my grandchildren didn't suffer that fate. And when you're talking about children, typically under the age of five, and the waterborne disease, it's a killer, it's a bad combination. And yet, as John showed you there, the solution is so simple.

Some places there is no water to drink. Other places there's plenty of water. Yeah, you can drink it, you'll see them drinking it, but the ramifications can be sickness, death. It's tragic. You and I have the solution, because you and I are the solution. Together, we can drill over 350 wells this year in 20 nations. That's our goal. I'd love to surpass that. We could do that with your support. We drill a water well. It costs an average, around the world, it varies, average of \$4800. That's to do what John said, which is to drill down, way down, to where the clean water is and to case that thing all the way up, to cover it at the top, put the pump on it. It lasts for an average of 70 years. That's why we call it Water for Life. We do this right, because we want people to have clean drinking water the rest of their lives. When we come together, your gift of \$48 would basically serve 10 people for life, give them clean drinking water for life. A gift of \$144 would give that water to 30 people. Some of you can drill a well. We've had many of you drill multiple wells. And I gotta tell you from the bottom of my heart, thank you. But right now, the situation is so urgent in many places. They cannot wait. A child who is sick cannot wait a month or two or three for clean drinking water. That child needs clean drinking water right now. That's why we're asking you to do something and to do it today, whatever you can. Whatever God puts on your heart, will you join us? You can make a difference. We really need to hear from you.

ANNOUNCER: Every day, far too many lives are lost to waterborne disease, and tragically, children under the age of five are the most vulnerable.

Through Mission Water for Life, you can give desperate mothers hope and precious children a future by helping provide clean, life-giving water before it's too late. Our goal this year is to drill 350 water wells in areas where the need is greatest, but it won't be possible

without you. Today, your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for 5 children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10, and \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

In thanks for your gift of any amount, we'll send you "Prayers for My Spiritual Health." This beautifully-crafted prayer book will meet you in the places where anxiety, grief, and spiritual weariness run deep, guiding you through prayers for inner peace, emotional healing, and intimacy with God. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "Your Life of Prayer" bundle. This collection includes "Prayers for My Spiritual Health," along with "Prayers for My Physical Health" and the "Life Prayer" journal, three companions to help strengthen your walk with Christ. 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 our inspiring bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd." Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

ISAK PRETORIUS: The truth is, the only thing we need more than oxygen to stay alive is water. The reality is that this water, which has to be used by Monica, her family, her village, is the very thing that's killing them. But we can change that.

She described how it gets changed. She said, "Bring a borehole," what we would call a well, "to my village. Bring clean water so that we don't have to use this water anymore."

Well, you can make that possible. We can make Monica's dreams come true. We can actually activate the hope that she has, hope that fresh, clean water will come. So you dial that number on your screen or you get online and you give that gift today, because your gift today will literally be a gift of life. It will be an answer to Monica's prayer.

RANDY: I do hope you're going online or going to the phone, make the best gift you can. You can make a difference. We are saving lives, but we're only doing it because of your support.

Billy, man, thanks for coming. Thanks for hanging around. Appreciate you being here.

BILLY: Thanks for having me. Appreciate it.

RANDY: One more time, where can they watch the film?

BILLY: cbn.com/supernatural.

RANDY: Great, I appreciate your work and all that you do, and spending a little time with us today. I appreciate you guys spending a few minutes with us. Hope to see you again next time here on "Life Today."

[music]

MARK MOORE: Moms, you have an incredible influence over your children, as well as over your husband, over the churches where you serve at.

ANNOUNCER: "Life Today" is made possible by the supporters of Life Outreach International. Your gift will be used exclusively for the exempt purposes of Life.

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