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Week 41

Randy Robison & Betty Robison

Dr. Robert Jeffress

"Miracles Are Real"

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

ANNOUNCER: Next, how we can know we've experienced a miracle.

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS: I think you can look at a miracle as a divine intervention or invasion in our life. It's something supernatural above the natural. Sometimes it can be a supernatural event that occurs.

Sometimes it can be a natural event at just the right timing. Again, miracles, I think, fall into four categories, and I think the Bible supports them, and I know I've experienced them.

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BETTY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today", thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty Robinson, this is my son Randy. Randy, it's good to have you today.

RANDY ROBISON: It's always good to be here, especially today.

BETTY: Oh, I know, we have a longtime friend to James and I, that's Dr. Robert Jeffress. He's back with us, we always enjoy having him. You're gonna be blessed today, thank you for coming.

DR. JEFFRESS: Thanks for having me, it's great to be with you all.

RANDY: Yeah, and you know, we're talking about a topic I know our audience is gonna love. The new book is called "Divine Invasions", and I'm gonna ask you about the use of "invasion". But, you know, this is an interesting topic for anyone, but Christians, because you know, we look at miracles and you've got these different camps that say these different things about miracles, and I'm an ORU grad so I expect a miracle.

It's, you know, it's on my license plate. Expect it, you know, but I don't always see it, and that's another question. Where are you going in this book and with this idea?

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, this came out of my own experience. I grew up in a tradition, attended a seminary that basically said, the age of miracles is over. There were miracles in biblical times, but it was to authenticate an apostle's message, but today we use the Bible to authenticate the message, so there's no need for miracles.

We call them cessationists, they think the age of miracles is over. And then you've got the other extreme that see a miracle every hour, you know. There's an open spot in front of Dunkin' Donuts, that's a miracle, you know, and so forth.

And so this book really, "Divine Invasions" is a balance. I think God does work miracles today.

I talk very personally about miracles of healing, miracles of provision, miracles of protection that I've experienced, but I also think there's a balance there to understand that sometimes God says yes, sometimes God says no, but he remains the same and remains faithful. So this is a book that I think biblically teaches what the Bible really says and doesn't say about miracles.

BETTY: But a lot of times we do go to the extreme the other way, we don't notice what is a miracle in our lives, you know. They're more apt to be there than they're not, in our lives, just day by--daily.

DR. JEFFRESS: I mean, the fact that we're able to get up and function, that our heart keeps beating, I mean, that is a miracle, yeah. It comes from God, but I think there are special categories of miracles we talk about in the book. Miracles of power, miracles of provision, miracles of protection, and yes, miracles of healing, which is a topic all in itself.

RANDY: Uh oh, we're gonna get into it, all right. Let me just--actually, let's go a little more foundational than that, because like she says, and you've referenced, the fact that I woke up this morning, the sun came up, you know. How do you actually define a miracle?

DR. JEFFRESS: You know, when people ask that question, I'm reminded about the Supreme Court, when Justice, I think it was Potter, was asked, "How do you define pornography?" And he said, "I don't know how to define it, but I know it when I see it." And I think the same thing is true with miracles.

I think you can look at a miracle as a divine intervention or invasion in our life. It's something supernatural above the natural.

Sometimes it can be a supernatural event that occurs. Sometimes it can be a natural event at just the right timing.

RANDY: Yeah, yeah, that's a good point.

DR. JEFFRESS: So, but again, miracles, I think, fall into four categories, and I think the Bible supports them and I know I've experienced them.

RANDY: Oh, you have?

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes.

RANDY: Uh oh, even as a Baptist?

DR. JEFFRESS: Even as a Baptist. God still blesses Baptists occasionally.

RANDY: Well, and you know, I've peeked into the book and I know one of those that came very early in your life when you were going on a mission trip. Tell us about what happened to you.

DR. JEFFRESS: I was 16 years old and I was preparing to go to Puerto Rico on a mission trip, and about two weeks before the trip I lost the feeling in my right arm, and so my parents took me to a neurologist and they couldn't find anything, but it still remained numb. And so I went on that trip, and one night I was trying to go to sleep and I just prayed to God, I said, "God, please restore the feeling in my arm," and when I awakened the next morning, it was there. So I called my family back in Dallas and my dad answered the phone and I told him what was happening, and I said, "Could I talk to Mom?" and he said, "Well, your mother's in the hospital."

She had a minor surgery, but she was there. "But she'll want to talk to you," so I called her and told her what had happened, and she said, "What time did that happen last night?" And she told me, we made the time difference calculation, I told her what time it was, and she said, "At the very time you were praying, our pastor, Dr. Criswell, came by the hospital to see me, and I said, 'Pastor, please pray for Robert,' and we were praying for you at that time," so I think that's a miracle.

RANDY: I mean, that's that kind of intervention that can only be divine. Why do you think God arranged that so you wouldn't have that experience?

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, because let's face it, I mean, all healing is temporary, at least in this life. We're all gonna get sick, we're all gonna die from something at some point. And so any miracle is a temporary miracle, but I think God sends these miracles into our life to remind us that he's there, that he's watching, that he cares for us, and we need to know that.

RANDY: Let's get to some of the ones, you mentioned power, provision, protection. By the way, one of our top requests on our prayer line, which is available if anyone wants to--needs a miracle and you wanna call, and someone will pray with you and we'll put it in God's hands, obviously, but we always ask.

Protection is a big one, a really big one, so I do wanna hit that one. Healing is obviously one that--another top request, but walk through these categories that you have in the book so people kind of understand what that may look like.

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, when we talk about protection, I mean, the Bible says Satan is a thief, he's a murderer from the beginning, Jesus said, and I really believe Satan wants to try to take our lives prematurely. I think he did that with Jesus. You know, there were times that people tried to kill Jesus and Jesus would walk right through the crowd because his time had not come yet.

And I believe the Bible teaches in Psalm 139, the date of our birth and the date of our death are written in God's book, they're written in indelible ink, and there's not one thing we're going to do to change it. And yet on the other hand, there's a reason we don't go out and stand in the middle of the highway. I think about J. Vernon McGee, he said a young guy came up to him and he said, "Dr. McGee, I so believe in the sovereignty of God that I believe that if I stood out in the middle of the freeway, and my time had not come, God would miraculously protect me."

He said, "Son, if you go stand in the middle of the freeway, the day of your death will have come, and your hour will have come." And so I think we have to act responsibly, but I think Satan does want to try to take our life prematurely, and I believe that God sends his angels to have charge over us, to protect us. I remember, and I talk about it in the book, one afternoon I went home early.

I was on the way to the barbershop to get my hair cut from church, and I left a few minutes early from church, and I was going through an intersection, and no sooner had I gone through the intersection that I heard this crash behind me, and the car behind me had been broadsided by a car that ran a red light. I went back to the car, the guy was dead.

They pronounced him dead, and I thought, you know, if I had left work just a few seconds later, if my weight on the accelerator had been just a little bit different, I would have been the one in that accident. Now, it's not that God loved me more than he loved the person who got killed, but my hour had not yet come, and I believe we would be astounded if we knew all of the invisible forces that were at work to keep us protected from premature harm.

RANDY: Yeah, you know, there's an interesting passage, I believe it's in Acts, but Paul was going to go minister in some part of Asia, and he references, like, he wasn't able to, he was blocked from going there.

DR. JEFFRESS: Troas, yeah, right.

RANDY: So I always remember going, "Wait a minute, Paul was ordained by God, called to preach the gospel to people who hadn't heard it. Why would God keep him out of that?" And I think it probably goes to protection.

Sometimes we don't know the other answer of it, the other side, rather, of the answer of our prayers in that regard, but I think protection especially is not just, "God, protect me while I go stand in the middle of the street," but it's, "God, protect me, talk to me, tell me

where to go, where not to go." So there I think that requires--sometimes to get our "miracle", if you will, it requires hearing God, sensitivity, obedience.

DR. JEFFRESS: Right, and protection from temptation is certainly, you know, Jesus taught us to pray that way, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

RANDY: Submission to his will, yeah. No doubt, that's a big one, okay. The other one's power, what is power, because there's another word that means different things to different people?

DR. JEFFRESS: Right, well, some miracles are miracles that are given to remind us of the power of God, and you find five different times in the Bible, in history, when miracles are clustered together, it seems to be a special age of miracles. Every age experienced miracles, but there were five times in the Bible. Four have passed, and one is yet to come.

There was the time around Moses and Joshua, you saw a cluster of miracles, the parting of the Red Sea and so forth. It's always when God is doing something new, it seems he surrounds that new thing with miracles. You had Moses and Joshua, you have Elijah and Elisha, the miracles surrounding them, Daniel and his friends when they were living in exile in Babylon, the protection from the lion and the fiery furnace.

Then Jesus and the apostles, there were miracles around that time. One reason, I think, is to authenticate the messengers of God. Remember, the apostles basically had a message that said, you know, "For two thousand years we've been telling you the way you are saved is by keeping the law, but God has a different plan now."

Well, how do you know that they were telling the truth? What was the sign that the apostles were speaking from God? It was their ability to perform miracles, and so that was an authenticator that we don't use today.

We don't judge a prophet by his ability to perform miracles. We judge a prophet's authenticity by his faithfulness to God's will. It's not that God doesn't perform miracles, he just doesn't need an intermediary.

Dr. Criswell, our pastor, used to say, "I believe in faith healing, I just don't believe in faith healers, and there's a difference." But there's one period of miracles yet to come, and that's the final seven years of Earth's history during the Great Tribulation, and there's going to be such a thing as counterfeit miracles. We're gonna see those yet to come.

There are counterfeit miracles today. I believe Satan has the ability to work some miracles in order to deceive people. I've experienced that one time, but back in college, a friend and I, one of my roommates, we went to California, and we went to see "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson" at the old NBC studios, and that night Johnny Carson was gone and Orson Welles was the guest host.

He was a man who had a great connection to the occult. He dressed in black, and he decided he was going to do some levitation. And so he had somebody come out, and he was able to raise him off the ground.

And you know, people at home might have thought, "Well, it's an optical effect or there're invisible wires." We were there, there were no wires, there was nothing going on. It was an actual levitation.

And my roommate looked at me and I looked at him, and I said, "Let's get out of here as quickly as possible." There was something demonic going on in that room, Satan does that. People say, "Why would God allow Satan to perform miracles that are inauthentic?"

And the reason, 2 Thessalonians says, in order to deceive those who have refused to believe, God allows Satan to sin, diluting lies and miracles into people's lives to keep them from coming to the truth. I don't understand that, but what I do understand is there's a point at which you can say no to God once too often. You can so harden your heart that you can't believe any longer, and part of God's judgment is sending lies that will lead you astray.

RANDY: So how do you know the difference between the real and the counterfeit?

DR. JEFFRESS: Yeah, it's hard to distinguish, but I tell you, the bottom line is, does the miracle exalt Jesus Christ, or does it exalt Satan or somebody else? Any miracle that is used by a faith healer to exalt themselves, or for greed or to lead to immorality, you can know that is a false miracle.

BETTY: And that's why we need the great discernment of God too in our lives, and putting on his full armor so that we're aware and we're prepared.

DR. JEFFRESS: That's right, it's the Spirit of God using the Word of God, leads us into all truth.

RANDY: So we do a lot of mission outreaches here, right, I've been overseas, and you always hear these stories, especially when the missionary comes through and speaks on Sunday night or Wednesdays, as we used to always relegate those guys to. You're laughing because you know it's true.

But they would always tell these stories, "Oh, I was over here in Africa or Asia and this great miracle happened," and there's this power kind of thing, and I've always sat back, in my First Baptist Euless, and went, "Why did God do that here?" Do you have any theories-- I have some theories, I don't know how right they are.

DR. JEFFRESS: You know, I used to discount all of that. I just used to discount it, and I would say, "We've got the Bible now, and the Bible is the means by which we discern whether something's legitimate or not, and the power's in the message." And I still believe that, but guess what?

Not everybody has the Bible. Not everybody has access to the Bible, so I have become more flexible in that.

I don't try to put God in a box and say what God can and can't do. If God wants to do something like that, if he wants to raise people from the dead, if he wants to appear, as many Muslim converts are saying Jesus appeared to them, I'm not gonna say what God can and can't do.

BETTY: God's unlimited.

DR. JEFFRESS: He can do whatever he wants.

RANDY: And you know what, back to your test, it always points back to Christ.

DR. JEFFRESS: Right, that's the test.

RANDY: That's the measure. All right, do you think God wants to do a miracle in our lives?

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes, I think we have not because we ask not, many times. And just because--and I know we're gonna get into this in the next program, but just because God doesn't always say yes doesn't mean we shouldn't be asking. Miracles delayed do not mean miracles denied, and we need to keep asking.

I use the ASK principle, A-S-K, keep on asking, keep on knocking, and keep on seeking. That's what Jesus said, don't just knock once and then go away, keep on knocking.

RANDY: You know what, you do that, you might actually meet the one who does the miracles, not just get the miracle. And I think that's the ultimate goal.

DR. JEFFRESS: That's right, you know, think about it. I mean, what situation is there in your life right now, to our viewers, what situation in your life is there that God couldn't change in an instant if he wanted to? I mean, the fact is he can do anything he wants to, but the fact that he sometimes says no doesn't mean we shouldn't keep asking.

RANDY: Yeah, ask, and I think it's okay to ask when you don't get the miracle and go, "God, what are you doing here," because we find out that sometimes these trials that we're going through, they're creating things in us that God really wants. Endurance would be one from Scripture that I see.

DR. JEFFRESS: God is much more interested in what happens in us than what happens to us. Again, he can change our circumstances at any point. It's what's happening in us that concerns God.

RANDY: This is good, all right, I have more questions, so you can come back and we can talk about this again on another program.

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes, and let's talk about what happens when your miracles don't come, because I think a lot of our viewers can identify with that.

RANDY: I can relate to that, I mean, we've related to it this year in a hard way. So "Divine Invasions" the book, by Dr. Robert Jeffress, it's available now wherever you get books, but you know what, we'd love to send it to you if you will--and I view this as a miracle in other people's lives, because there are some people right now that are in such deep darkness, and through your love, your faithfulness, your support, we have been able to send people into these areas of darkness and share the light, the love of Christ, both in word and in deed, and we're doing it again, we don't stop, but we're gonna talk about it. Take a look at this and see how maybe you can be a miracle in someone's life today.

JAMES ROBISON: Wait a minute, wait a minute! Wait a minute, wait a minute!

JAMES: It's a shame that people, you know, live around this, and yet you can see children out here trying to have fun.

ANNOUNCER: For decades, Life Outreach has been locating children at risk of starving to death because of food insecurity or dying from drinking diseased water. In our reaching out to the overlooked, we made a discovery: children at risk not from starvation or waterborne diseases, but of something straight from the pit of hell. Children at risk of falling prey to sex traffickers.

JAMES: But they are so abused by these horrific people who lie to them, they actually take them in and put them in a setting where they're totally imprisoned and they abuse them terribly, they hurt them terribly. They don't care what they have to tell them to use them, and their lives are destroyed, they're totally wasted.

ANNOUNCER: Once we had seen the tragic toll it had taken on its young victims, there was no turning back on our entering the war against human trafficking. Life Outreach now has mission partners on six continents who are actively engaged in one or more programs of rescuing and restoring survivors who fell prey to sex traffickers. Another of our programs is using preventative programs in schools and rural villages to reach out and educate the most vulnerable who are at risk of being trafficked.

Once the children are rescued, our mission partners lovingly care for them through Christ-centered restoration programs. This is a war fighting the evils of sex trafficking, and it is far from over, with many battles ahead. Our continued fight depends on the support of those who will stand with our partners and us, so those at risk will never have to endure the horrors of becoming a victim of sex trafficking.

RANDY: I know that's hard to watch. It is dark, but that's why we must be the light into that situation. That's why we're asking you today to come alongside of us as we rescue lives.

We reach, we rescue, we restore those who are in that hell on earth. Let's bring them heaven. Will you go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can, and just to give you an idea, when you do, the average cost for the programs around the world to reach, rescue, or restore one child comes out to about \$128.

That means a gift today of \$1280 would actually help us reach, rescue, or restore 10 children, and what does that mean? To reach is to actually prevent it from ever happening. It's awareness, it's telling young children the dangers.

The rescue is when someone is already being trafficked and we get them out by whatever means necessary. But the restore is very much the gospel. It's giving a hope, it's giving support through the trauma.

Sometimes it's giving a life skill to a young girl so she can support herself. It's a comprehensive program, but it relies on your support, so that's what we're asking, Mom, is people to come alongside us and do what we've been doing, but to reach those who are in desperate need right now.

BETTY: Absolutely, and I know you want to be a blessing like this, to rescue these precious little ones. I'm about to have my 24th great-grandchild. I can't even imagine someone taking one of those precious children and taking them away from the love and the home that they have, and being treated like these children are treated.

They're locked up, they're mistreated, they're beaten if they don't obey. Please, help us do this, help us rescue these little ones, and as you do, we want to bless you. We have a book, your dad's last book that he wrote, it's called "A Life Proclaiming Freedom".

It's basically his life story, walking the journey that James and I walked, and it was quite a journey, never a dull moment, but so full and rich of God's love. Let us bless you this way, we want to send this to you.

RANDY: Yes, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", and that's what we do when you join with us, we proclaim that freedom, we put it into action, but we can only do it with your help. We'd love to hear from you today.

ANNOUNCER: Every day, innocent children are being trapped in the wicked web of human trafficking. Instead of dreaming about a future, they are sold into a nightmare of sexual slavery. But you can join the fight against this evil.

Through Mission Rescue Life, you can reach at-risk children before traffickers do, rescue those already enslaved, and restore young lives with hope for the future. A gift today of \$128 will reach, rescue, or restore a precious child and change their life forever. Gifts of \$64 or \$32 will be combined with support from others to help deliver one more child from the shame and pain of sex trafficking.

With a gift of any amount, we will send you James Robison's final book, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", as a thank-you for your support. Discover James's personal journey from bondage to freedom, share in his calling to bind up the brokenhearted, and learn how to experience your personal freedom so that you can bring healing to the hurting world around you. With your gift of \$128 or more, you will receive the "Life Proclaiming Freedom" bundle, which includes James's book, a special edition collection of the Gospels, and the beautiful Life planner.

Finally, your gift of \$1280 can help save 10 children from the horrors of human trafficking. With this special gift, you may request the inspiring bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd". Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

JOHN YEATTS: Behind me is the facade of evil, all the lights, loud music, people that are smiling, but you step in behind these doors, and these little girls aren't smiling anymore. There's horrors that go on in these streets that are unimaginable, but we have an opportunity to be able to change, to bring a real change to the lives of individuals that are caught in human trafficking. Boy, we need your help, whatever you can do right now, I'm asking you, give the very best gift you can, whether you go online or by phone, please call us, let us know it's coming, but we need your help to bring hope and healing to the girls' lives that are caught behind the doors of all these bright lights.

RANDY: I'd love to hear from you today. You can be that miracle in someone's life, and they desperately need it. So please go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can, and come back.

By the way, if you request "Divine invasions", we'll send it to you but also, we've got more. Well, we're gonna do another program, Dr. Jeffress, you'll talk a little bit more about this?

DR. JEFFRESS: I'm here.

RANDY: This is so good, and Mom, I know that people have questions about miracles, and so I really feel like this is something that can provide a lot of instruction, insight, and peace for people.

BETTY: Absolutely, so please come back, and let's listen to-- we're gonna talk about healing, being healed, and maybe not necessarily getting the healing that you want.

RANDY: That'll be good, come back. We'll see you again next time here on "Life Today".

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FEMALE ANNOUNCER: At Life Outreach, we believe in making a lasting impact on your life and the lives of others. Through Life Planning Services, we offer estate planning and giving

solutions that provide tax advantages, income, and the satisfaction of supporting a cause close to your heart.

With options like bequests, charitable gift annuities, and IRA rollovers, you can chart a purposeful path, creating a legacy of love and hope for future generations. Call or visit Life Planning Services today.

MALE ANNOUNCER: What happens when the miracle you prayed for doesn't come?

DR. JEFFRESS: Every hurt we go through gives us more people to encourage in their faith.

ANNOUNCER: Tomorrow.

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