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Week 41

Randy Robison & Betty Robison

Dr. Robert Jeffress

"More Than A Miracle"

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

ANNOUNCER: What do we do when the miracle we prayed for doesn't happen?

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS: God doesn't give us grace until we need it in the moment. He doesn't usually give it ahead of time. But when it comes, it's sufficient.

Keep our suffering in perspective. You know, what we go through is real. The pain of losing Robin, the pain of losing my parents is real, but it's also temporary.

ANNOUNCER: Pastor Robert Jeffress tackles the hard question of unanswered prayers, next.



RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today", welcome back. If you joined us for the other program with our guest today, Dr. Robert Jeffress, author of "Divine Invasions", well then, you know we're gonna talk about some interesting things today. If you missed that program, you can always go to lifetoday.org, stream.org.

Do catch it, it's definitely worth it. Mom, I thought the conversation last time was--.

BETTY ROBISON: Really, really good, oh yeah, explains a lot of what maybe misconceptions we have about miracles.

RANDY: Yeah, so welcome back.

DR. JEFFRESS: Great to be back, thanks for having me again.

RANDY: So, you know, I think when we talk about miracles, the number one association usually is, you know, I got sick, or someone was deathly ill in the hospital, no hope, we prayed, and now they got well. And we go, "Well, that's a miracle." And I don't know about

you, but when I gotta go to the doctor, I'm not just going to the doctor, I am praying for healing.

DR. JEFFRESS: And it's not one or the other, it should be both, you know. God told Hezekiah that he was going to die, and Hezekiah begged for more life, God granted him 15 more years, but he did it through medication, the figs that Isaiah brought to the king, and it's a picture of, it's not medicine or faith, it's both. God creates both to bring healing.

RANDY: Yeah, so healing is something God still is in the business of, you would say?

DR. JEFFRESS: Yes, I think God does heal sometimes. Sometimes he doesn't, but again, all healing in this life is temporary. We're all gonna get sick from something.

I think about poor old Lazarus, he died twice. I mean, he had to go through it twice. But that shouldn't keep us from asking for God to heal us, and we have what we call faith kneeling services at First Baptist Dallas.

There'll be times that we ask people who are sick to come to the front, and we pray for them and pray for healing. God says yes sometimes, he gives them a length of days. God says no other times, but the fact that God doesn't always say yes doesn't mean we shouldn't ask him.

The Bible says keep on asking, keep on knocking, keep on seeking. Until that window is shut and there's no possible way to be healed, I think we ought to keep asking.

BETTY: Well, you know, we just recently went through the loss of James and your dear friend, and of course you know we prayed for God to heal him, and it didn't come the way we planned it in our hearts that it should be, but he is healed, he's with Jesus.

DR. JEFFRESS: And it's forever. And you know, it's interesting, Betty, my dad, when he was in his early sixties, went through a great rededication of his life to God, and it was shortly after that he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. And he became very interested in James and his ministry, because it was at that point in James's ministry when he was more open to the supernatural workings of God.

There was a great shift, and that attracted my dad, and my dad listened to James fervently. God didn't answer his prayer to be healed, he died, but he left in his will a portion of his estate to this ministry because he so believed in the message of hope that James was proclaiming. But you're right, sometimes God says yes.

My mom was 54, she was diagnosed with colon cancer and given three months to live. We went up, charismatic pastor, Assemblies of God pastor anointed her with oil, we prayed, and she still died, so God says no sometimes.

BETTY: He does, our daughter was 40 years old, had cancer, she died, and we definitely asked for healing. Well, she's healed, she's rejoicing with her dad.

DR. JEFFRESS: That prayer has been answered.

RANDY: Yeah, and that's hard, that's really-- I mean, you know 'cause you lived it, right? What should--how should we process that when we pray for-- especially situations that just seem unjust? I mean, like with my sister, 40 years old, three kids, small kids at home, it just seems unjust.

And you go, "Well, God, you're a God of justice and love and mercy," and we didn't get any of that with her. How should we even just deal with those prayers for healing that end with the premature, especially, loss of a loved one?

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, I talk about in the book what to do when your miracle doesn't come, because it's something we all struggle with. When we pray and pray, whether it's for healing, or for divine provision of financial need we have, or for protection, what happens when God says no? And there's several insights from Scripture I would offer.

There are no pat answers, but there are some insights that Scripture gives us. First of all, when God says no, we can rest in God's grace. 2 Corinthians 12, Paul said he prayed three times for the thorn in the flesh to be removed, but God said no, and he said instead, "My grace is sufficient for you."

You know, I remember Corrie ten Boom, you all remember "The Hiding Place". She said one time that her daddy told her when she was a little girl, "Corrie, remember, I don't give you the ticket for the train ride until we're about to get on in case you lose it," and it's the same way with grace. God doesn't give us grace until we need it in the moment.

He doesn't usually give it ahead of time. But when it comes, it's sufficient. And then I think a second insight is to keep our suffering in perspective.

You know, I tell people the illustration of that is I hold up a brick, is this light or heavy? Well, as compared to what? Compared to a feather, it's heavy.

Compared to a 787 airliner, it's light. It's all a matter of perspective, and so is suffering. Compared to what is ahead of us, it's light, and it's also momentary.

Again, there are people watching right now that have been dealing with afflictions for years, decades perhaps in your life. How can you say they're momentary? Again, it's a comparison.

Think about eternity. Think about the length of eternity. I heard somebody say one time, "Imagine a mountain 30,000 feet high, Mount Everest, and there's a little bird that comes once every million years to sharpen its beak on the top of Mount Everest.

Sharpens its beak, flies away for a million years, comes back, sharpens its beak. By the time that bird has worn down all of Mount Everest, eternity will have just begun." Eternity is

a long time, and that's how long we have to rejoice in God's blessings and the freedom from sickness and the afflictions that weight us down right now.

RANDY: That is true, but you know, when that brick, which you can make seem light, when it hits you in the head, it hurts, it hurts bad. And you know, honestly, with the loss of my younger sister, that was a difficult point for me. And when I prayed about it and said, "Lord, but she was too young," and he said, "She's gonna live eternally," like you say.

I said, "But Lord, she's got three kids at home," and he said, "But they have a perfect Father." And I said, "But God, her family's gonna miss her," and he said, "That's why I sent a Comforter to comfort you, and that's why I promised peace that passes understanding." And I went, "Okay, I'm gonna trust you, God, that you know what you're doing, because it doesn't look right on my end at all."

I think a lot of people, when they don't get their healing, they turn their back on God. When they don't get that miracle they're looking for, they think he has abandoned them, and in fact, I think when we don't get that miracle and it crushes us, and that brick hurts when it hits us, that's the time to take it to God.

DR. JEFFRESS: And to realize, when we take it to him, we're not talking to some cosmic deity way up there that's separated from us. Hebrews 4 says, "For we do not have a high priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who was tested in all things as we are."

Let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we might receive grace to help in our time of need." But the brick still hurts.

RANDY: It does, and we need the grace in that time of need.

DR. JEFFRESS: And we shouldn't try to diminish it to other people when they're going through heartache. And I think about Joe Bayly, the late Christian writer, he lost three of his sons, and he said, you know, "People would come and sit with me and try to explain to me, and I just wanted them to be quiet." So don't give pat answers, we don't have any pat answers, except that God's in control.

BETTY: And that's what's meant the most to me. It's friends, family, loved ones, people to let you know that they're there for you. And God's grace, I have found out, is so sufficient.

His peace passes all understanding. But I didn't know that until I needed it.

DR. JEFFRESS: 2 Corinthians says, "God comforts us." "He strengthens us in our afflictions so that we can strengthen those who suffer the same affliction." I can talk to somebody all day trying to comfort them about losing a child, but I've never lost a child, and I can't enter into it the way you can.

You've got a special ministry I will never have, and if we really believe the reason God has saved us and left us here on earth was to be a priest, to represent him to others, then every hurt we go through gives us a broader audience, more people to speak to and to encourage in their faith. And I think without that ministry focus like you all have, things don't seem to make sense at all.

RANDY: Yeah, yeah, some days you still wonder, but you know, she talked about just the presence that people would give, and you gave the illustration of someone just being there for someone. And I had a friend here in the local area who was a chaplain for the police and fire department. And he would be first on the scenes of some awful, awful situations, accidents, just the worst.

And I just looked at him off camera, I was like, "How do you do it, what do you say?" And he goes, "You don't say anything. It's what I call the ministry of presence," and she's testifying to the power of that right now.

But that's what God promises, is his ministry of his presence. And I think when we don't get our miracle, we just have to lean into that promise that his presence is with us.

DR. JEFFRESS: A miracle delayed isn't necessarily a miracle denied. Sometimes God answers instantly and powerfully, and then other people pray and pray and pray. One of my former seminary professors, he's in heaven now, Howard Hendricks, he had a dad who was unsaved.

He prayed for him 40 years to be saved, and one night he was at his desk, the phone rang, it was a chaplain at a convalescent center in Virginia. He said, "Dr. Hendricks, I thought you'd want to know your dad accepted Christ as Savior tonight," and within a few months he was gone.

But he had to wait 40 years for his miracle to come. Some wait longer.

RANDY: Some do, and we hear that a lot from our audience. I know there are people out there right now that are watching that they've got a loved one that they have been praying for, and you kind of maybe get a little bit tired. When we ask for that miracle, Pastor Jeffress, how much does prayer come into that?

Does it make a difference, do you think? I think scripturally you gotta say yes, but--.

DR. JEFFRESS: I think you have to, and sometimes God does things apart from our prayers. He's able to do exceedingly and abundantly beyond all that we ask or even think or imagine. But sometimes, our experiences are limited by what we don't pray for.

There are just some things that God isn't going to do apart from the prayers of his people. I've got a quick story, Adrian Rogers, late pastor who was a friend of yours, and he said when he first was in Bible College in Florida, he lived in a second-story apartment and there was an orange tree right outside the house. And he said a little kid next door came

over, and without thinking anybody was looking, took one of those oranges and put it in his overalls and scampered off.

And James laughed because he said it was a sour orange. He said, "Now, a sour orange just looks like the real thing," but he laughed thinking about that little boy biting into that orange. Well, it so happen that Adrian had been preaching at this church and they didn't pay him anything.

They gave him two sacks of oranges, real oranges. He put it in his closet and he said, "You know, if that boy would have come over and asked me, 'Mister, can I have one of your oranges from your tree?' I would have said, 'You don't want one of those oranges."

Let me show you what I've got in my closet, there's a real orange.'" But he had not, because he asked not. And he said, "If there's any regret in heaven, it's gonna be when God shows us all of the things we could have had, all of the miracles we could have experienced, had we had the faith to ask for it."

RANDY: Yeah, that's good, I got it-- miracles, man, I love talking about it, I'd love to see more of them, frankly, that'd be fabulous, but at the end of the day, I think it's critical for all of us to not put our hope, our faith, our trust in the miracle, but in the one who can perform them.

DR. JEFFRESS: And the greatest miracle of all, that God could take us who are spiritually dead, and headed for an eternity of separation from God, that he could give us the ability to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to be saved, to be transformed, and to one day experience the miracle of heaven. That's the greatest miracle.

RANDY: You talk about a divine invitation. For the viewers watching today, what is their divine invitation today?

DR. JEFFRESS: The divine invitation is the one Jesus gave to Nicodemus. You know the verse, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes, trusts in, clings to him, will not perish but have eternal life." And I would say to anyone watching right now, it's no circumstance, it is not just by chance you're watching this program right now.

God had you tune into this program at this time so you could receive the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus Christ as your Savior. Could I lead us in a prayer together? If today you would like to receive that divine gift from God and know that your sins are forgiven, know that you're gonna be with your loved ones again who are Christians in heaven, just like this family knows they're gonna see James and Robin again, if you want that assurance, I invite you to pray this prayer with me.

"Dear Lord, thank you for forgiving me. I know I have failed you in so many ways, and I'm truly sorry for the sins in my life, but I believe what I've just heard, that you love me so much

you sent your Son Jesus to die on the cross for me to take the punishment from you that I deserve to take.

And right now, I'm trusting in Jesus and Jesus alone to save me from my sins. Thank you for forgiving me, and help me to live the rest of my life for you, in Jesus's name, amen."

RANDY: Amen, thank you for that, Pastor Jeffress. And if you just prayed that, I would love for you to pick up the phone, call that number there on the screen. Someone can talk to you, pray with you.

If you didn't pray it, but you're kind of regretting now that you didn't, just pick that phone up. You can pray it on your own, but we have someone that will pray with you as well. And you know what, if you did that for the first time or you do that for the first time, that's just the first miracle that you'll see in your life.

God will invade your life in divine ways that you can't even imagine. So if you haven't taken that first step, please do, because you know what, that's what we're about here at Life Outreach International. We're sharing God's love in word and in deed, and the primary word is Jesus Christ.

That's where everything starts, the new beginning for you, a new beginning for so many others. And you know, Mom, there's a great thing that we've been doing to share God's love both in word and deed, and it's shining that light into some very, very dark places. And recently, many of you came alongside of us and made that a reality, and I'm about to show that to you.

But as you see this, I want you to consider how maybe today you can be that light, you can share, by partnering with us, the light of Christ into some very dark places. You could even call it a miracle.

You can be that miracle in someone's life. Watch this, and you'll see how.

ANNOUNCER: We refuse to look away from modern-day slavery. That is why Life Outreach International and our faithful partners are continuing to fight to rescue girls trapped in the sex slave trade, and to help restore them on their road to lasting freedom.

JOHN YEATTS: For a child that has been exposed to the horrors of human trafficking, the only gates they've ever known have been the gates that locked them in a prison. But the gate that's behind me is secure, it's mighty, it's powerful, and it is a gate that is there to prevent evil from ever getting to them again. Here in our newest Life Center in Southeast Asia, that is a gate of refuge.

Tammy and I are here, and we are celebrating with all of our friends, and we are saying thank you to you as we begin to dedicate and cut the ribbon on this new Life Center. And it is all possible because you, our friends, chose to give to Rescue Life, so thank you, God bless you, let's celebrate.

CLAYTON BUTLER: Sometimes people will say to us and our staff, "You guys are heroes," but we are praying for heroes as well, and the heroes that stepped in were you. Now it's a home that I can hear laughter in the background, I can hear staff preparing meals for girls to have tonight, and none of that would exist without you. This miracle, we couldn't have done it without you, and we just personally want to say thank you from the bottom of our heart.

JOHN: This room is a sanctuary. It's an opportunity to look somebody in the face and say, "You matter to me, you matter to Jesus, and we will do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes, to make sure you're made whole again."

ANNOUNCER: Today we celebrated a vital victory against the evils of human trafficking, but right now, predators are still targeting vulnerable young girls, and the spiritual war continues to rage. We cannot back down.

Your prayers and financial gifts are the lifeline these girls need for rescue and restoration. Please stand with us today.

RANDY: Many of you watching right now made that happen, and I want to say thank you. Those children are safe, they are hearing and seeing the gospel in action, because of viewers just like you. But we're not finished.

There are many more out there that need to be reached before they're trafficked. Maybe they need to be rescued because they're in the middle of it. Maybe they're on the other side and they need that spiritual restoration.

That's what we do through Rescue Life. Let me tell you, the average cost when you look at our program as a whole and the number of people that are reached, it comes out to about \$128 for one child. That means your gift of \$128 would basically enable us and our mission partners in the field to reach, rescue, or restore one child.

Many of you could reach out to 10 children with a larger gift, \$1280. Whatever you can do, I want to see more success stories just like that, because I know that a story like that is not just about a building or a facility or a program, it's about a human life. It's about a precious, innocent child.

It's about being the gospel in their lives. So I'm asking you right now, please go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. It will make a difference.

And today, we have something very special for those of you who will do anything as a part of Rescue Life. We have something we wanna put into your hands, just as something to encourage you, but it also means a lot to us, Mom, we have--.

BETTY: It's really special to me. And thank you so much for caring for the children. I know you wanna rescue the perishing, and I thank you for that, you are blessed in your heart by giving, but we wanna bless you in your heart.

This is a book, my husband's last book he wrote before he went to be with Jesus. And it's called "A Life Proclaiming Freedom". And I lived that life with him, I know this book from front to back.

I read it in a day and a half, it blessed me so much. I was there so much of the time that this life story was written. Please, give and help us rescue those children, and we'll bless you with the book that James has written.

RANDY: Yeah, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", that's what it's about. And as we offer that book to you, we want you to write that story in someone else's life.

You can be the freedom for someone today. So please, we'd love to hear from you right now.

FEMALE 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.

MALE: As you've seen today, the world of human trafficking is dark and it's evil, and it breaks my heart knowing that there's boys and girls in various places of the world, and at this very moment they're being abused, and they're being forced into slavery. They're lost, they're abandoned, and they're without hope. God hears their cries, he is the Father to the fatherless, he is the defender of the weak, he is the defender of the poor and the oppressed, and so we pray that you will stand in the gap for these children.

We pray that you too will hear their cries, and that you will help them in their distress, and you will help to set them free. We are here, we are on the ground, and we are ready to move

on these kids' behalf, but we cannot do this alone, and we really need your help. So please do what you can do.

Call the number, go online, and just make the best gift that you can. You will be answering this call, you will be answering this child's cry in distress, and you will be saving their lives and providing each one of these kids with a new life.

RANDY: I do hope you're going online or going to the phone, make the best gift you can. The situation, mm, it's tough in so many places, but we can be the love, we can be the light of Jesus Christ in their lives.

I hope you'll request "Divine Invasions" today when you support Rescue Life. I know it will bless you, and Mom, I've just been-- I feel buoyant, if I can use that word, after our conversation.

BETTY: Thank you so much for being here, you've really blessed my heart. You've ministered to me, so thank you, God bless you. And God bless you, I hope you were ministered to today.

Jesus loves you, please receive him into your heart. Call that number that's on the screen.

If you feel desperate and alone, Jesus will take that away. Thank you, God bless you.

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FEMALE: And it was like I got to look at the face of blindness, look at the face of healing, and see God in both, see that he is just, even if his ways don't feel fair to me.

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. The ministry features specific outreaches as examples of the programs it supports and conducts.

Gifts are considered to be without restriction as to use unless explicitly stipulated by the donor. The ministry is a member of the ECFA.