

8/2/23 from 2/16/23

Week eight: WFL

James and Betty Robison

Robert Jeffress #2

JAMES: Well, Dr. Jeffress is here with us again today and I'm glad you're joining us. He's at First Baptist Dallas. I started preaching there when I was 23, he was hardly born then. But he heard me preach for years there. I don't know that we ever realized how close we would be. He tells me he liked my preaching; I didn't hurt him any.

But here's his book, *What Every Christian Should Know*. Every book he writes in my opinion is great. This one should be a textbook in every church, and every Christian school. It really should be. It is "Ten core beliefs."

We covered yesterday "God's Word," the importance; that's a core belief. "God as Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit."

And then we got to the chapter "Angels and demons." We want to talk today about humanity and sin, about salvation, about the church—not churches but the church. There is only one church. There are many parts of it that seem to be divided up, but if they're born-again people, they're in the church.

And then "The future things," what's happening. And "Christ-likeness," the importance of Christ-likeness.

When we closed yesterday with "Angels and demons." And doc, I said I wanted to jump on that just another moment. How would you want Christians to see angels? I'm trying to think of angels as angelic and positive, which I see is what you're saying here because we know demons, demonic is the opposite. How do you think Christians need to see angels?

ROBERT: Well, like everything in this book, they need to see it through the biblical lens. What does the Bible tell us? Not what does Hollywood tell us about angels, what does the Bible tell us? And the Bible tells us that in Hebrews 1:14 they are ministering spirits sent by God to render service to those who inherit salvation. I call angels God's triple A service. God ministers to us. He is the one who does it but he does so many times through angels.

I tell you, my dad was a great follower of yours, James and you made such an impression in his life. You called him when he was sick with pancreatic cancer. And he died and I will never forget we were driving home from his funeral, about 90 miles north of Dallas, and we were in the limousine of the funeral home, and I was in the front seat. We were making a left-hand turn and the driver, the funeral director didn't notice the light was still red. And he turned in and there was a car coming at us at 90 miles an hour. My last thought was I'm going to die on the day of my father's funeral. And somehow that car miraculously missed the other car. There is no explanation for it. I think it was an angel that came and lifted up that car.

I think everybody watching this program today can think of some supernatural occurrence in which you had supernatural help. Those are angels.

JAMES: That's great. Demons.

ROBERT: Demons, well, they are fallen angels and they are real. You know people say, well, I don't believe in all that stuff about demons. Well, then you believe Jesus must belong in an insane asylum because he talked to demons all the time.

By the way, demons are very orthodox. They recognized Jesus as the son of God when other people didn't. I think last time you hit on a great truth, James. We don't need to be afraid of demons, we need to be aware of them. The Bible tells us to resist the devil and his demons, and they will flee from you.

JAMES: And take authority over them.

ROBERT: Yeah! Yeah! And you've already got the authority. You've already got the authority. I would just say, remember, Ephesians six, our battle, our struggle is not against other people, flesh and blood. It's against the unseen forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

JAMES: It would be good if you would just realize it is not against Democrats or Republicans or conservatives or liberals. It is against the powers of darkness and deception and destruction and death. That's who the enemy is. And we can overcome. But we overcome by the blood of the lamb, by the lamb's work in our lives through salvation. This is our power to overcome. And we don't have to be overcome by the enemy, we can be more than conquerors. That's what we're supposed to do with demons.

ROBERT: Jesus had authority over them, and he's given us authority over them. In fact, the other day, this is a true story. I was preaching about Jesus casting out demons and after the first service my executive pastor came, he was so afraid to say it. He said, "Pastor, you realize the mistake you made, didn't you?"

I said, "No."

He said, "You said Jesus went around casting out deacons."

[Laughter]

JAMES: Did you?

ROBERT: I did! I did!

JAMES: Excuse me, but a lot of preachers might have agreed with you. I'm sorry. I did

too many crusades where they had deacon issues; not only demon issues but had deacon issues. And some deacons say, "Well, we've got some preacher issues too."

All right. Here's the next one now. Let's get on with this, "Humanity and sin." Why that way of putting it? "Humanity and sin?"

ROBERT: Well, it is what the Bible teaches about humanity, and that is that we've all sinned. Most people don't have an understanding of what that means, even Christians. They think, wait a minute, I may be flawed, I may be imperfect but I'm not that bad. Surely, God wouldn't send me to hell. I'm a pretty good person.

We compare ourselves to other people. We don't understand how infected with sin we are. And you know, I use this illustration, the difference between the north pole and the south pole, the distance between the two is considerable, but it is nothing compared to the distance between the north pole and the furthest planet in our galaxy—hundreds of billions of light years.

When we think about ourselves, we measure ourselves by other people. Well, I'm not as bad as Adolf Hitler, or Jeffrey Dahmer, or Charles Manson. I must be pretty good. But God doesn't compare us to other people. We are compared to him, the distance between the north pole and the furthest planet in the universe. That's why we need to understand, we've all sinned. Some have sinned more than others, but we have all fallen short of the glory of God.

What you believe about sin determines what you believe about salvation. If you don't understand the horrific nature of our spiritual condition, you'll never appreciate the salvation Christ comes to offer.

JAMES: We are failed humans. We have all sinned, but he has given a sacrifice for sins. He's raised that Jesus who died for us to live in us to give us the ability to overcome the power, the destructive, deadly power of sin. Does that make sense?

ROBERT: That makes complete sense. And that's again why we talk about it and *What Every Christian Should Know*. It is a core doctrine that people are not going to hear in schools, they're not going to read about it in magazines, and they're not going to watch it on TV. We need to reclaim these historic truths. You can't apply what you don't know. You can know things you don't apply but you can't apply what you don't know.

BETTY: To me, the sad thing is that in today's society, today's world that we live in right now has kind of watered down sin, so to speak. Once some of the things that we as Christians believe so strongly, we've allowed society and the world to say oh, that's okay. That will be okay.

ROBERT: Betty, that's exactly what Jesus was talking about when he said, "You're the salt of the earth." You know salt is supposed to influence meat. We've gone the opposite direction. We've become more like the world instead of encouraging the world to become more like Christ. And Jesus says, "If you lose your saltiness, your distinctiveness from the world, you're worthless."

JAMES: Well, you'll be trampled underfoot. And everything sacred and precious is being trampled underfoot because we have lost our salt effect. We're not preserving the precious and we need to get on with doing that.

Okay, "Salvation." All you could hear is salvation. I read some more words with it inside the interior here. Salvation, what do you mean?

ROBERT: Well, this is what Christ came to do for us, was to save us from our sins. But I want to talk about the two misconceptions people have, even some watching perhaps today about salvation. First of all, they think salvation is automatic.

R.C. Sproul, the old theologian said one time said, "Most Americans believe in justification by death." In other words, you get saved just if you die. You are

automatically going to heaven. Jesus said no, there are two roads that lead to two very different destinations.

So they think salvation is automatic, and then they think salvation is the result of believing the right things. This is what most people miss about salvation. They think, oh well, whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. Do I believe the right things about Jesus? Yeah, I believe he was the son of God. I believe he died for the sins of the world. I believe he rose again on the third day. I'm saved. Guess what? The demons believe all those things. They believe Jesus is the son of God. They believe he died on the cross, and they believe that he rose from the dead. In fact, they believe it more than you do.

JAMES: Well, they know it! They witnessed it.

ROBERT: They saw it. They were eyewitnesses. No, that word *believe* means to trust in, to depend on, to put your whole weight upon. It is not when I believe that Jesus died for the sins of the world, it's why I believe he died for my sins.

Every year as a pastor, my favorite day is Vacation Bible School day when I give a plan of salvation to the kids. I always do it the same way. I have a big box wrapped up as a gift, call the director up there and I tell her I have this great gift and I want to give it to her. Oh thank you so much, Dr. Jeffress. I still hold it. And I say, well, don't you believe I have a gift for you? Oh yes! Don't you believe there is something in here that you want? Oh yes! I said but it is not yours yet. I ask the kids why. They say, she has to receive it. And that's right. Only when she opens her hands and receives the gift does she have the gift.

I will just say to those watching right now, you may believe all the right things about Jesus. James used to say in his crusades, you can believe the right things about Jesus, and when you die, you'll split hell wide open. The fact is, there has to be a time in your life when you receive that truth. And right now, if you know you've sinned, you don't need a

Baptist preacher to teach you that. You know it, I know it, we've all sinned. If you believe you need God's forgiveness, all you need to do is ask right now. Lord Jesus, I need you. I know I've failed you. I know I can't save myself, but I believe in you, and that you provide my only way of forgiveness. And when we say that, he forgives us, no conditions.

JAMES: He didn't say beg me.

ROBERT: No! Just ask me. Believe in me. That's what every Christian needs to know about salvation.

JAMES: You know if you prayed that prayer, it is a simple prayer, I'd love to send you a book called *Knowing God as Father*. I didn't have a father. I met the Father. I want you to know that Father through Jesus. You just asked that. Let me just give you a simple Bible study. And this, by the way, is a quite thorough Bible study that I'm hoping you'll get this book too. But if you'll call and say, I just prayed that prayer with Dr. Jeffress, and I'd really, really like to have what James talked about, that book on *Knowing God As Father* to help me get started. I don't think there is a better way to describe trust and faith than believing in a parachute, even putting one on, saying, I believe it works. I really believe it works. I'm convinced it works. You still hadn't trusted that parachute until you leap, and you trust the parachute. And really and truly, that's what faith is. It's a leap into the arms of God to trust him to do everything he said he would do, and he does.

All right, let's go to the next one, the church. What do you mean the church?

ROBERT: The church ---

JAMES: Are you talking about First Baptist Church?

ROBERT: I'm talking about, it is interesting, the word *church*, *ecclesia* in the Bible, is used 110 times; 10 or 15 of those times it refers to all Christians everywhere, the

universal church. But 90 of those times it refers to the local church. The local church is the body of Christ cut down to size. That's an interesting thing. Most people think the church is a necessary evil that only wants their time and money, and it's outdated. No. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. The church, the local church is God's plan for doing his work.

I think a lot of people thought the church is optional. I'm really upset about what has happened as a result of this pandemic. We've seen people slip away from the church. They thought that the church was unnecessary. I saw two articles on drugs just last week. One was about how church attendance has fallen to an all-time low. The second is how mental illness has gone to an all-time high, anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation. Gee, do you think there is a connection?

Hebrews ten says, "Let us not continue not associating together but let us continue how to stimulate one another to faith in good deeds, not forsaking own assembling together as has become the habit of some." Too many Christians right now have fallen into the habit of not gathering together. We're like those porcupines we talked about yesterday. We need each other even though we needle each other. We desperately need one another and that's why God created the church.

JAMES: Well, it's fellowship. It's a fellowship with one another; is a little picture of the family that God wants. The perfect Father wants his family to come together like a family loving him, loving one another, loving the neighbors, loving the overlooked, loving the least of these, and loving and caring about the unnoticed, which is what people who watch us do all the time.

I think our viewers are amazing people. They notice the unnoticed. They care about the least of these. They find great joy in helping them. They find great peace and fulfillment in doing it. So keep it up. All right?

Now the fellowship is so important. It really, really is important. He wrote to the

churches in the revelation, he wrote to specific churches. John spent a lot of time writing to the church, but to churches. And so you just made a great point and made it well, this book makes all points well. Future things.

ROBERT: Yeah, people get so worked up when they hear about Bible prophecy, "It's too difficult to understand." And yet, so much of the Bible is about, not Christ's first coming but about his second coming. He is coming back again. There is a great story about a group of seminary students that were playing basketball and the janitor was in the bleachers waiting to shut up the gymnasium, and he was reading his Bible. After they finished, they came by and saw him reading the Bible. And in a condescending way, they said, "What are you reading?"

He said, "Oh, I'm reading the book of Revelation."

They said, "Oh, do you think you understand it?"

He said, "Oh, I understand it perfectly. Jesus is going to win."

And that's what the book of Revelation is about. Jesus is coming back again. In this chapter, we talk about the basics of Bible prophecy. It is important that we know what to expect when the end comes. You know one of my best friends at FOX when I first got there was Allen Combs who was the resident liberal at FOX. He used to have me on his show all the time and give me a chance to give the plan of salvation even though he was Jewish. And one day, we were on the program live on the air, and he said, "Pastor, do you believe you're going to live to see Jesus come back again?"

I said, "Allen, I really don't know but it doesn't matter."

He said, "What do you mean it doesn't matter?"

I said, "Because I'm 55 years of age, and I know that in the next 30 years, one of two

things is going to happen. Either he's coming or I'm going but the end is near for me. And it's near for you and all of us as well."

That's what we need to know. Yes, we ought to understand the basics of Bible prophecy, and I do that in a simple chapter. But what we really need to know is we better be ready to meet God whether it is through his coming or our going.

JAMES: I looked at the last chapter, and this is interesting. I looked at the last chapter, it is "Christ-likeness." I looked at the last chapter of Christ-likeness and I looked over here. This is what I see. I've lived with Christ-likeness and sometimes, I think she hasn't, but she's been so patient with the lack of it. And look at that, isn't that smile beautiful? Christ-likeness, people see Christ in us. And isn't that the hope of glory? Don't we want his life and his light to shine through us?

ROBERT: It is. It is like you talked about—

JAMES: That's what they're calling for.

ROBERT: It is what you talked about yesterday. God causes all things to work together for good to those who love him. Well, what is the good? Well, he tells us in the next verse, verse 29: For whom God foreknew he predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. Everything in your life, not just the good things, but the bad things, the horrible things are being used by God to shape you, to mold you and me into the image of Christ. And frankly, it is the hard things that make us more like Christ than the easy things.

A.W. Tozer once said, "When God goes to work on us, he uses a hammer and a chisel, not a manicure set."

[Laughter]

It hurts sometimes but it is part of the process.

JAMES: You remember the greatest quotes! Do you know what I tell him when I say, "Now I want you to shape me. But could we just use some buffing paper rather than blasting powder?" You know you put the clay in the shaping hands of the master potter, he will shape us into a vessel of honor. I believe it is a vessel through which he flows freely his life, and his love, and his truth. And that's what he's wanting to shape.

I want you to get this book. Would you be somebody's miracle? You're going to say, James, we're going to help drill those wells and I want that book. Because it is just that good. It is simple but it is profound. It's written by a man who loves God and loves you. He loves truth and he knows truth. He shares it effectively, you know he does. Thank you for the way you receive him on *Life Today*. Thank you for the way you receive us. Thank you for the way you share life with others.

I want you to listen to the broken heart of a grandmother and then I want you to know you're the miracle her heart longs for, for other grandmothers and mothers. You are somebody's miracle. You can be the answer to somebody's prayer. Watch carefully, prayerfully. Please!

On the mission field

Open Captions

>> I feel terrible that I could do nothing to help my grandson.

TAMMY: At some point, we all wish we could go back, that we could change things. But for some people, even if they could go back, there's nothing more they could do.

Open Captions

>> I had no money to buy water. All we had was water from the pond, so I just put sugar in the water. He got sick with vomiting and diarrhea. It happened so fast. I tried to give him herbs to help with the diarrhea. My grandson died in the night.

TAMMY: For Amek to go back would simply mean reliving this horrible tragedy all over again! There is nothing we can do to bring her grandson back. But we can provide clean water to countless families just like hers and alter the course of their lives forever.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Well, you're looking at grandparents. You know what that feels like to lose a child, a daughter. We had two of our great-grandchildren stillborn. And Betty, we know what that woman feels.

BETTY: Yeah, we do. As Tammy said, she would love to be able to go back, that grandmother would. And she knew what the answer was, it was better water, cleaner water that would save her grandson. But she couldn't get to any. She did not have the resources she needed.

We all go through life thinking if we've lived very long, we know there are things that we're disappointed about that we didn't do differently, that we could not go back and change something. But God can make the difference.

If you join with us in the water wells, we can keep this from happening to the grandchildren of those grandmothers that love their grandchildren so much.

JAMES: Well, we are literally the miracle somebody is praying for—you are! Now we've committed, now listen to what I'm saying, 350 more wells in 20 various countries, most of them in Africa. I've said we've committed 350. What that does is that gives the missionaries hope that we have at least targeted that area. And we try to target what we believe is reasonable. We believe we can do it because you don't want to give hope and not be able to deliver.

Now here's the thing, sometimes you enable us to go beyond the hope, to hope for them. So please understand it's one well at a time, it is one gift at a time. Now there are people, Betty who tell us the greatest joy they personally have is knowing they can give a village, and give people, water for the rest of their life. And they still cost on average \$4800 which is miraculous—\$4800 to drill a well. \$48 will give ten people water, basically, the rest of their lives. \$144, multiply that out, will give 30 people water the rest of their life. Many of our viewers can't give \$4800. Most can give \$48. And if you can, I believe you will. But sometimes people say, "I can give \$1200 and pray three join me." There you go, we've got a well. Or \$2400 and pray one joins you. There is a level at which everybody can help to be the miracle that grandmother needed. Many grandmothers and mothers and parents and families need that miracle. Many children need it.

Would you right now please dial the phone number there that's always there as a prayer line, paid for by love? Or would you go online, and would you get your bank card and use it like a check? That's how you should always use a bank card. Would you make the gift God put on your heart right now, please? Call the number, go online, get your bank card. If you want to make a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail, please.

Would you be some grandmother's miracle? Some child's miracle? Some parents' miracle? Would you be the answer to someone's prayer? I say this many times: Do you want your prayers answered? Seek to be an answer to someone else's prayers. It's wonderful what happens when you focus on others. Would you make that gift God put on your heart? Thank you so much for doing it.

Begin video clip

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, life-giving water for*

thousands of children and their families before it is too late.

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. \$72 will provide for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the Life Prayer Journal complete with customized art, scripture verses, and inspirational quotes from Life Today hosts and co-hosts. You'll find plenty of room to write down prayer requests, answered prayers, and your own personal reflections as you spend time with God.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the Blessed cutting board, a beautiful addition to your kitchen and preparation area. This pine wood cutting board is custom engraved with the word Blessed as a reminder of the daily provision of God in your life.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our colorful bronze sculpture "Consider the Birds." Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: I'm smiling because I believe you're going to drill a well or part of a well. But I'm also smiling for another reason, I believe you're going to get this book. You're going to say, James, we're going to help drill those wells and I want that book. And the bronze, the cardinals. Our Robin loved cardinals, so we have to think of our beautiful daughter that's with Jesus, looking down at four little grandkids. I want to just thank you for the way you love Dr. Jeffress.

Thank you so much for watching. Hey! Thank you for helping us share *Life Today* every day.
Thank you so much. God bless you. He is using you to bless others and we thank you.