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Week 36: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

Jennie Allen

Betty: Thank you so much for joining us on *LIFE Today*. I'm Betty Robison, and this is James.

James: There are so many happy ladies out here. We've got a lot of men too -- happy men too. You men don't look unhappy at all -- you're very happy. But a lot of ladies have heard Jennie Allen. She is just really special. We find it such a privilege to not only have great guests, we find it a privilege to talk to you. But we find it a privilege to bring in truly gifted, truly anointed treasures of God that literally pour the love and truth of God all over -- all of our viewers, Beth Moore, Christine Caine, Jennie Allen, Priscilla Shirer. We can just go on -- the Women of Faith. You know what's really neat? They tell us this is their favorite place to go and to share. I think you probably feel the same way.

[Laughter]

If you don't, I'm not going to introduce you. Would you welcome Jennie Allen to *LIFE Today*?

[Cheers & Applause]

Jennie: And I do love being here!

James: Well, are you having fun going and teaching?

Jennie: Oh, yes. It is fun and it is hard. When I have a bunch of kids back in...

James: Four kids!

Jennie: Four kids -- and so life is really full. And yet, to some measure right now this is a calling that we both feel, like I'm supposed to go and serve and love people well in this way with my gifts. It's been trying and yet, I've had a peace through it and I'm loving it; yes. Getting on an airplane and being in a Holiday Inn Express probably are not my two favorite things but getting on that stage and sharing God's Word with women that are hungry and they want to learn it, and they're hurting, that is worth the airplanes and the Holiday Inns.

James: You said the change. Let me ask you this, if the ladies who are watching on television, a lot of them here say where are you going to be -- people want to know, where are you going to teach? And then if we wanted to communicate to see if you could ever come in our area, web site, where would they go?

Jennie: JennieAllen.com.

James: And you'll have your schedules wherever you'll be speaking there. Now I want to ask you this and ask you all, would you ever consider coming and doing a little mini seminar here in our studio and we teach it on our Wednesdays in the Word?

Jennie: Absolutely! Yes!

James: Would y'all like to have her teaching on *LIFE Today*? Because if you didn't know it, *LIFE Today* can be seen by one billion people. If they want to watch and it is so interesting that when I'm an 18 year old kid, flying on a Braniff prop plane from where she says good-bye to the guy she loves and she thinks she is going to marry, and I fly up here and I'm flying and we circle kind of in to land at Love Field and I look out over the city, then it was about a million people and now it's over four million and tears welled up in my eyes because everywhere I saw a light I saw a house -- I just knew there was a house there -- I see all the lights, see the streets.

And an 18-year-old boy who had maybe preached about twice prayed, "Dear God, I want to go in every home and I want to tell all those people how much you love them." And boy, did God hear the prayer of an 18 year old because I'm in every home. I

literally then thought, well, I'll probably just knock on every door; go house to house. We want to share you. So let's try to work that out and you can come back and do that. Tell us about this *Restless*: Because you were made for more. You don't write anything that isn't birthed in the spirit but also in your journey so tell me about this.

Jennie: I felt restless; I still feel restless at different times. I feel like it was a common feeling among friends and other women. And as I would go out and speak, the number one thing I would hear after I wrote about surrender and anything was, "I'm in. I want to surrender my life to God but I don't know what I'm supposed to do." And if they did know what they were supposed to do they didn't know really if they could do it. They were afraid, held back in some different way and it really made me frustrated.

God put this fire in me, this vision of our generation running in the purposes, the lanes that God had given them, the good works that he prepared in advance for them to do. Not flashy, different roles but all of us just doing the part we're supposed to do.

I think Beth Moore says, "Stick to your row." Like stick to your row and do your row and then all the sudden there's this orchestra, this garden, this thing that grows that's beautiful. That's what I saw when I looked out.

But yet what I saw was so many people held back and fearful. I think what would happen is they become restless because they weren't living in their purposes. Now they were going through the actions but were really good at sometimes going through the actions to make everyone else happy, to measure up, to live the life we're supposed to be living but we're not actually obeying God in it.

So that became my greatest passion. So *Restless* really was born out of that desire and seeing that in other people as well.

James: How did they respond when they heard the message now when you teach it or you've written it?

Jennie: Well, it's really fun. It's hard first because a lot of people, the first thing that

comes up is their fear. Whether it is insecurity that, "Hey, am I really wired for something unique and special? Has God really built me for more?" I'm not saying more as in greater, like necessarily bigger or flashier. I mean more in this epic story that we are called, every one of us that knows Jesus Christ to participate in.

I think we often miss it in the target runs, and the cubicles, and for me it is wiping down the breakfast table, sometimes, and sometimes it is never wiped down. But that's where I think we tend to go as humans is oh, it's supposed to be more, bigger. But no, it's actually seeing more in the spaces that we already live.

So it goes in the life of Joseph. He was in slavery and he was in prison for 20 years with this great vision that God had given him and yet he was faithful. God was building this man that could execute his plans and purposes but it was quiet and dark and there was a million little things building the big things that he would do one day.

Betty: And you're not talking about just everybody going and doing what you do but finding where your place is where God has you maybe at that season.

Jennie: Right! Could I be more clear? No! If we all -- how silly like if we all go and do the same thing? But we do this with each other, especially women. We compare and we look side to side and we think, that's important, that's noble, that's a good work.

We adopted our son and a lot of times women will come up to me and go, "I want to adopt. That's so amazing."

I'm thinking, is that your story? Great! If that is your story, live it. But is that the good work that God prepared in advance for you to do? Because body of Christ: Ears, eyes, noses, hands, knees. Paul said, "Go be the thing that God made you to be. If that happens, then the body will be working well."

For me, it is so ironic because I thought it was more humble to not be on a stage. And when God put messages in me I would suppress them because I was a pastor's wife and I thought, I need to sit on the back row and I need to let other people shine. So for

me, obedience was actually coming off the back row and moving deeper into some of this.

But it was hard for me because I love people's approval and now, you can write an Amazon review and it can be a one star and your mother goes and reads it and it's hard for a people pleaser -- so none of that really is good for my soul. I can't imagine it is good for anybody's soul but it really isn't good for my soul. So there was a lot of angst in moving into more of a public space for me.

But I think that's increased my dependence on the Lord and it's made this more about him and what he wants me to be doing than some platform because nothing lasts very long. It all moves quickly anyway. So I don't think it is stages in adoption and all the things I've done. I hope and pray that that would never be a distraction to people. That they would see the story they're supposed to be living.

Betty: And God's purpose for them.

James: Never measure or compare yourself with others. It's so easy to do that. We're pretty well trained to do that. How do we measure up? We see somebody else we're impressed with that think, well, if I'm not doing that, I must not be very impressive or must not be doing much. And the thing I really wish every one of you could hear, all of you sitting here in the studio, everybody here, a lot of times the people you see the least are actually doing the most.

I've told Betty that many of the great things that have happened in our life have happened because she prayed them in. A lot of things that have happened with us as a ministry have happened because people who watch pray. A lot of the great things that have happened in the world happened because somebody is praying.

Think about this, the meetings you have, the meetings and outreaches we have, somebody is praying for them and supporting them and those people are necessarily seen. How important is it for the people... we're going to ask people today to give little children a shoe. How important is that to God? How big is that? That's huge! -- Because they're going to change a kid's life. They may save his life and they will enable

a missionary to win that child and that child's family to Christ because they've seen the love of Christ, they've seen the love of God.

So when you start trying to be like Jennie or like somebody else -- let's say there is one Joyce Meyer. Forget it! Forget it! You're not going to be there. And there is one Billy Graham; there is not going to be the next Billy Graham. There is the you. Quit comparing. You really are void of understanding and you lose direction. There is that crazy restlessness too often to be like this and not realize how special you are right where you are. You won't do anything greater probably than just be mother to those kids.

Jennie: Amen! Those people, they're my life. They'll be my life in 30-40 years, and my Twitter followers, who knows? And these are the people that first have to have my attention and my heart.

But back to the comparison thing, Beth Moore, she was on VHS when I was a young girl, in my young 20s and I was like why -- but I knew I had the zeal and this passion in me to teach God's Word but I was like, "Why would I ever teach when there is a VHS of Beth Moore?"

[Laughter]

And it's there -- and like yeah, it's still kind of there.

[Laughter]

James: We've got DVD's -- now it's even easier!

[Laughter]

Jennie: But yet, I know that God has called me to this. So I just think when we get to heaven, we're going to regret how much time we wasted looking side to side and holding ourselves back. I think that's what happened for me.

I got this glimpse of heaven and forever in just this little taste one night; I was reading Katie Davis's blog who adopted several children off the streets in Uganda as a 23 year old. I was reading her blog and I just tasted heaven that night in a way that I thought, I want to be sure that I don't get there and act surprised that this is all real. But I get there and I'm out of breath and I'm like, "We've been living this thing. Yes, I've been waiting for this day. I knew it was real."

I think up until that moment I was living for what I saw and for now. I think the fear for me shrunk when my fear of God got bigger and eternity got bigger to me.

James: How does suffering play in because you talk about how that can be a part of God taking us where he wants us.

Jennie: Well, one of the things that I saw was I needed guides to start -- either show many options. So one reason we compare and look side to side is because we're not very creative and it's just easier to go, "Oh, that inspires me so I'll go do that."

And what we need to do is one, to seek God in his Word, and two, to look at what he's already given us because in front of you in your life there is, I call them threads. There are pieces of life that God gave you and actually I compare it to Batman in Batman Begins, Bruce Wayne. And Bruce Wayne is this little kid and his worst fears come true. He falls into a well, bats attack him, and then his parents are shot right in front of him because he is afraid of a bat in a play.

And he goes on and runs away from his calling and all of these threads, his wealth, his education, his power that his dad gave him and this city in need, all of these threads are kind of blowing around and they're a big mess. And he hides in his mansion and then he goes downstairs and he finds the Bat Mobile and the Bat suit. Except it wasn't Bat, it is just some black suit and he made it into a bat. And his worst fears and the darkest things became the things that would save many lives.

It was the same for Joseph; the darkest things built him into the man that would save many lives. It wasn't any longer about Joseph, it wasn't any longer about Batman and his comfort, it was about the saving of many lives. I think, oftentimes our suffering

makes us into the people that can actually care more about others than ourselves because we're all kind of prone to be awfully selfish. I mean I have a lot of those people in my house right now that are little.

[Laughter]

We're training the heck out of them but it is not easily fixed. So that's how we're prone and so through suffering and losing, oftentimes we become the people that God can use. And then also through that he often births our passions, our greatest desires to give back to the world, oftentimes what we wish for.

James: That's so good! This is good versus evil. I think it is pretty cute that she sees -- see if you could just see -- if you could just see God in so much that's really trying to get you to look at the other. At least this movie is really showing good versus evil and good winning! And you're actually admiring good and you're actually wishing for Superman, Batman, Spider-Man conquer evil.

Well, greater than Batman, Superman is here, his name is Jesus! And he is in us and we're more than conquerors in him. And if we could just understand the way that we conquer evil is by the evil being conquered in us, by the greatness of our God who causes a mother to want to show the child that greed is not good no matter what somebody says.

And you don't have to be the Wolf of Wall Street but you could be successful and love people and you don't make an enemy out of people who know how to do good because God gave them the ability. In other words, get your thinking straight because we're so twisted up right now we don't think straight, we don't walk straight, we don't live straight, and too much of the church is settled in not to resist or fight evil until you hear this little homemaker and mother come in and say, "Thank God for Batman! I learned something. And I can do it in the name of God we can stand." We really need to hear that.

So you're going now and pouring it out and you're inspiring people to stand up and that's why we're here. You're a contagious person. You're anointed. You're beautiful!

Do you see the glow? Get a close-up of this girl. Get a close-up! Do you not see the joy of the Lord? I see it all over you. Your children, boys/girls?

Jennie: Two boys, two girls.

James: All right, listen. Kids, y'all are so special! Let me say to all the children, and dad, thanks for sharing her! Thanks for sharing Jesus in her with all of us in the world in helping people who are restless to understand that it can work for the positive, it can actually bring you to the place God wants you, and all the things that happen can actually begin to shape Christ in you and you can release his glory and his presence and his power right where he is. Is that what you hope they get when they read this book?

Jennie: I hope so and I hope it will look a million different ways. I had a girl contact me this last week and she's been an artist since she became a mother and she does it at home.

She decided, she and another friend that was an artist and they were believers, and they decided, "Let's go out and reach the art district in this town." They've gone into art studios and made friends and they're building a little community. I just think, this is what it is. It is a million different things. It is not one way, it is taking the places God's given us and the passions he's given us and living those things out. So I pray that it will be contagious, and I pray it will be freeing.

That is true, what you said about me. I used to not feel this way or look this way. Like I used to be tied up in knots, and I've tasted freedom and I want that for other people.

James: And we can see it.

Father, I just pray that it will flow over everybody watching us at home and they will release the river of your love and your life all over this planet, all over their community, their own family. I pray they might be able to look at their own children

or their spouse and say, "I am different. I want to be different. He will make me all I'm to be" and release the river of your life and love; in Jesus' name I pray that.

Would you say thanks to God and thank Jennie for her blessing to us today?

[Cheers & Applause]

The book is *Restless*. I'd love to send it to you if you'll do something. I want you to do something. We don't sell product, never have. We ask you to help us help others and we want to bless you and help you. Help us give shoes to little children. I want you to take a journey with us. Betty, you've not seen this. This is our journey and I want you to listen to what's going on in our heart with the precious little children. Watch.

On the mission field

James: We want to give children like these, beautiful children shoes -- children all over the world. There goes another one! We want to give them shoes.

You know what Jesus said? "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not."

You know what? We are the representative of Christ. We are his body, we're his family and we can share his love. We love these little children. We're going to give these little children shoes. Look at these beautiful little feet!

Betty: They have nothing, really but they can still play, they can still have fun. They're children! I think that's what they're supposed to be instead of having to worry about walking around without any shoes where they step on stuff and hurt their feet and also get diseases through that too.

James: Betty, they just tough it out and they play but we found out right here in this area that hookworms get in the skin, maybe where they have a little tear in the skin, get in the bloodstream, ultimately into the intestines and cause very serious disease and sometimes death.

Just look here! This boy has had a blowout in his tennis shoe! He has played so hard and gotten so dirty.

You need to wash your shirt, man!

Isn't it great to see? The kids, they want to have fun. We're going to love them with your help. We're going to give them good new shoes. We -- not me -- all of us together! Let's put shoes on all these beautiful children's beautiful feet! It would just be such a wonderful gift to make at this time and I hope you will do all you can. Just give as many pairs as you can to bless as many children and their families as you can.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I love those little noises in the background! I love those children!

Betty, you saw us sitting there. You didn't get to see a lot of the shots. But I said, "Betty, let's just pray children into our laps." And it was amazing because a lot of times people will be a little bit afraid because of the strangers, somebody come from maybe another country but they'll just begin to come and crawl in my lap. That's what happened.

You walk in this studio, those of you here tonight, you walked into the studio, if you didn't notice, when you go, look when you go out, you'll see a bunch of little kids in my lap. Those were the Rwandan orphans right after their parents had been murdered with machetes. And those little children in my lap crawled out from under their parents' mangled bodies. Their parents laid over them to protect them while they were being maimed. And they were terrified of people, especially white people, even though it was black people that killed black people. But those little children came and got in my lap and we never took our arms away from them. I see Jesus reaching out when I was just holding those children because he's in all of us.

And if only you would understand that what the missionaries said to me and Betty when we were so moved on the foreign fields of the world after preaching in all the

stadiums and coliseums to millions of people, and when I saw the pain of the frightened and overlooked world, I said, "I think we'll just come stay here."

The missionaries tearfully said, "Please don't!" It wasn't they didn't like us. They said, "Go home and ask people to help us so we can stay -- and so we stay and have something to do for them."

And we did. And when I came back and asked you, I had no idea you would help. Every mission conference that we had at any church I was in was the one thing nobody attended. And I came back and said, "Please help!"

Joel Osteen's dad called me right before he died and said, "James, I'm a mission-minded pastor. Thank you and Betty for bringing the mission fields of the world into our homes." Well, we have. And you know what? You put the arms of God around children like those children Betty and I were holding and talking about. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And for what we call Christmas Shoes and Smiles, would you make the greatest gift you can right now to help us put little shoes on little feet -- feet like this? Stop the hookworms that get up into their little brains and hurt them or kill them or make them sick. Make them happy for Christmas.

You say, "We're giving you a gift, it's special." Would you do that? Would you help us give smiles to little children with cleft palates? It costs \$500 for each surgery. We have doctors that work with us. Could you give a smile for Christmas? Maybe a couple of them with a gift of \$1,000?

Did you know that the shoes are \$3.60 and \$36 will give 10 kids 10 pairs of shoes? \$144, 40 kids! There's a level at which you can help.

We want to send you a little Christmas ornament. It's a little shoe. This year it's red. We have a whole box of the shoes with all the different colors over the last years. You can just decorate the whole tree. I tell you what; I bet if you just gave several thousand dollars and said, "Send me several boxes," you can just have a whole tree with shoes.

And everybody that comes in you say, "You know what that is? We're giving shoes and smiles."

Father, I pray everybody watching will help; in Jesus' name -- do all they can.

Would you dial the number, take your bankcard, make the best gift you can? Please do that! If you write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're mailing it. You can go to LifeToday.org. A lot of you will do that. Probably half the people who give today will go in there and make the gift; use your card like it's a check. Please give these shoes and smiles. Would you do it? Thank you so much!

Begin video clip

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it children needlessly suffer not only for a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we take for granted such as a healthy smile or a simple pair of shoes. For most of these children they've never owned a new pair of shoes. While that may seem minor in the light of all their needs, walking in bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections that could lead to crippling consequences, disease, and even death.

By responding today you can help *LIFE* immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 200,000 children around the world just in time for the holidays. Your gift of \$36 will help provide ten pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will help provide 20 pair, and a gift of \$144 will help provide 40 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need. With your gift of any amount, be sure to request this beautifully crafted red antique shoe ornament, a treasure to place on your tree each holiday season. With your gift of \$100 or more you may request a special boxed set of *LIFE*'s Christmas shoe ornaments from past years.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes or two children with corrective cleft palate surgeries. And you may ask our commemorative glass sculpture "The Blessing."

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: We would so happily send you *Restless*: Because you were made for more. Jennie is such a blessing! What a beautiful, I believe manifestation of Jesus. Thanks dad! Thanks kids for sharing mom.

If you make a gift to help us share shoes, it's in the bookstores, you can go get it or get it online. You can go to Amazon and write a good review, a five star review and get all your friends to do it. That would be nice. Then she'll say, "Mom, go read the reviews!"

But we'll send it to you if you would like to have it just to say thank you. Would you say thanks to Jennie again for being with us? What a blessing! You're a beautiful person! We love you. Thank you. Thank all of you. Thank you! You're great! Thank you for watching.