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Week 36: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

Beth Moore

Encased in Grace #7

James: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm James Robison. Betty and I are so glad that you're here.

I will never look down here and see these little shoes, there are some this size, that I don't just say thank God for the joy of giving something that is so special and yet so simple. We're giving away and we start way ahead of time to raise the funds to give what we call Christmas shoes and Christmas smiles. We do cleft palate surgery and we give shoes to little children to keep them from getting hookworms that are going to cause serious illness, even brain damage.

And the thing that is exciting, just like all of you sitting here, the people that are watching us at home, you are a treasure because when you see something that needs to be done or should be done you say count on me. And you show us what's important because you support what works and what is important. So we're going to be giving shoes.

Beth Moore is teaching encased in grace. Betty, I think women like to watch Beth. Men like to watch Beth and listen to her because when we have her here to teach, they'll be men who come. They like her because she just downloads the Word of God. I just praise God for her.

Now this is the last part of what she called encased in grace. So how about welcoming Beth Moore? Here's Beth.

Begin video clip

Beth: Somebody listening today needs to know that God is glad you're coming home! You think that he's not glad to have you. You think that you're just going to somehow just slide in the door and tell him you'll never be any trouble again if he'll just forgive you this time.

How many times have we said, "If you just forgive me one more time -- one more time -- one more time? And we stay in that same cycle of behavior because that one more time promising never to do it again, we just continue to do it over and over and over and over. We practice our speech and here is our speech, "No longer worthy -- no longer worthy -- no longer worthy -- no longer worthy -- no longer worthy."

We get up in the morning, maybe we have some prayer time. We confess our sins, we believe Jesus cleansed us from our sins. We start our day. We start the whole cycle of messing up over and over again. We get to noon and we're already going, "No longer worthy -- no longer worthy -- no longer worthy -- no longer worthy." And we can never get to no longer enslaved to sin because we are too wrapped up in "no longer worthy." And I ask you, which of those two phrases, where does your "no longer" belong? Because we all have got a no longer going. Either our no longer is no longer enslaved to that, or I'm just no longer worthy -- no longer worthy. We keep crying out the same thing over and over and over and over again.

Number five is this: Let's trade "I'm no longer worthy" for "I'm no longer the same." Somebody? Let's trade "I'm no longer worthy" for "I'm no longer the same."

His father dressed and covered him and kissed him. No speech necessary. "My son was dead and he is alive!" God is just waiting for you to turn your face back toward him. You've not gone too far -- you've not done it too long -- it is time to go home and have a robe thrown over you, the robe of a son, not a servant. A ring on your hand -- freedom in your heart.

I have noticed something because I've seen it in myself and I've seen it in others, this propensity we have with how we measure how far someone can go in sin and still be used by God. Have you ever noticed? Because there is a very, very perfect way to

measure how far we think someone else can go. And it's just exactly as far as we went. Have you noticed that? We draw the tape measure. You can be used of God if you've done what I have done or under. But if you have done more than that, then you are no longer worthy. You're no longer worthy. So this is what we do, over and over again, we just keep pulling out our tape measure. It makes us feel better to find someone that's blown it more than us so we love it when we get to like, "Oh, no! No longer worthy! No longer worthy!" And we're just looking at God going, "How far? How far can they go? How far can they go?" And God's just looking at that tape measure going no... longer, longer, longer, longer.

This is dangerous theology here because somebody is just going to stay in their sin. Oh, no, no, no they're not. They're going to have the power to get up because they think this is who they are and it's a lie. It's a lie! We're alive in Christ. We are free in Christ. His Word becomes iron to our souls. We are made new and nobody -- listen -- nobody gets to make you that person again. Nobody! Nobody!

When we're in a time of temptation and you feel that coming up, then you know they're baiting your old dead self; go, "No!" That's when you want to say, "No. If you're trying to draw out my old dead self, no! Because I've been made new. I'm no longer enslaved to sin. I'm no longer unworthy because of Christ and what he has done for me."

In Romans 5:15 it says: The free gift is not like the trespass. For if many die through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

Let me read that second sentence again: For if many died through one man's trespass, (that would have been Adam) much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

Now think about that for a minute because what it is saying is this: That the gift does not equal the trespass. It is always abounding more than the trespass. That means if here is your trespass, here is the gift. Anybody getting that with me? Let's see if I can

try to explain this clearly. It's contrasting the difference between when sin increases but grace abounds. Sin increases, but grace abounds! So grace is not the antidotal equivalent, it doesn't just match our sins and the antithesis of it, it drowns them. If grace were perfume, you would choke.

[Laughter]

If grace were a bath, you would drown. Anybody getting that with me? If grace were a skyscraper, you would get a nose bleed. It's not the equal antithesis of your sin. It doesn't just cover your sin. Grace suffocates it to death. Anybody? Praise you, Father! That is freedom -- that is some freedom for us.

I've got to tell you something; a way that God displayed this and I can already feel a lump in my throat just thinking about it because it hit me so profoundly. I come from the pit. I come from a trash heap of sin. Where it does me a favor is that I never get confused about why I get to serve anybody like you. I did not get confused about that because I know there are times when I say to Jesus, just in intimate times between just he and I, I do like this, "You and me, we know. We've got our thing going, nobody else knows about. You and me know how many bends we've been around together. We know what we've been through together." That's me and Jesus -- that's me and Jesus. So I don't have a lot of stones to cast at people.

But something did happen not too long ago that I just thought, was a little bit undoing. I was in a pretty good size city for a Living Proof live event and when we were coming into the city to the hotel very often the hotel we're staying in will be close to whatever arena we're holding it in. So it is very often downtown, that will be where that city's kind of gathering place, in an arena-type gathering. So we were downtown, coming off the freeway, exiting, and right as we were going to the hotel where we were staying I looked over here and there was one of those real like upscale strip clubs and it was like seven stories high because I was counting up -- seven story high building. I don't know where all that's -- I've no idea why they need so much room.

[Laughter]

But I'm just saying it seemed to be the whole building because it's got this huge marquee and it's got all these names going across it -- really, really bright lights. What time, who is on, and all of this kind of stuff. And so I said, "Wow!" And I'm not naive - it's really not like me to do this but I'm like, "Whoa! I mean that's right by our hotel." And so I thought, well, okay, that is interesting.

So I get to my room, I check in and I am about that same level up, of course, because that would be the way God would do it. I walk over to my windows and pitch them open and I'm staring at it. I mean I'm flat out staring at it. It is about a block's distance from me but I'm staring at it. I can tell you what their names are, I can tell you what time they're on. I mean it was like whoa! And I thought to myself, "Wowzers!" We're here to do ministry and this is distracting! It is at the very least distracting. So I kind of tucked it into my heart and thought, okay. All right then. Well, I'm going to try to keep my eyes to myself. That's what I'm going to do. I went -- how to goes on Living Proof live is all Friday evening and then Saturday until noon. So we had all Friday evening together. God had been so faithful to us but I'd left in the light so I came back in the dark and so I closed my blinds to sleep.

Well, the next morning I get up really, really super early on Saturday morning for Living Proof live so I was in the bathroom of the hotel room putting on my mascara, getting ready to go, having my praise music going and I walked through the room to get me another cup of coffee, and when I did I saw what was a strange thing. I saw, my blinds were closed but there was this sliver -- I just wish I could show you. I wish I could somehow demonstrate for you how bright it was of this orange light -- I do mean orange light coming through just a sliver, just shining through this little opening in the curtains. Such a sight! I'm not making any comparison, I'm just saying -- you know when it says like Moses in Exodus three went over to see why. It was like what in the world is that? What in the world is that because it was like a bright light is coming right through my window and it's orange -- it's orange. I thought, is that those fluorescent lights? So I go over there to the curtain and I throw the curtain back and the biggest sun I have ever seen in my life is coming up over the horizon and as it comes up, it lifts straight up and I mean it is like it freezes right on top of that strip

club -- right on top of it. It's just like whoa! Because that day God did not bring the sun up over a steeple, that day God brought the sun up over a strip club.

And I thought, and I'm getting chills about it again, what is that? And it moved me. It moved me. Because let me tell you something, y'all, I've got no stones to throw. Nobody in that building had been any more depraved than I have been over the course of my life. No one -- no one! It's just that it was somehow uneasy to have right in front of me on a ministry weekend; does anybody get that with me? It was kind of an odd -- let's admit it was an odd dynamic for a ministry weekend.

[Laughter]

Odd dynamic -- 'til right then and there's the sun right over it -- there's the sun right over it. Well, I cannot get it out of my mind. I start kind of choking because I want to like sob about it and I'm not even sure why but I just want to sob about it. What was that? What was that?

And so I get there that morning to our Living Proof Live. We've had the whole evening before and so I did what I do with you, I had them all stand so we could go into prayer and I was down on my knees. So I was talking to them before I prayed. I said, "Y'all, I want to pray about something really specific." I said, "God let the oddest thing happen this morning." So I told that story. I said, "He brought that sun up right over that strip club." I said, "And it was just like he froze it there -- just froze it there; I can bring my light right there -- right there." I said, "I want to ask you in this room, would you pray with me for so much love and grace of God to pervade right into that place."

Let me tell you something. Stay with me here. I had no idea but I found out after that session, not one but 20 dancers from that place were in that arena -- 20! 20! 20! And the whole group prayed and groaned for them -- groaned with love and groaned with prayers of freedom. One of them, when we came for the invitation, I mean she jumped up and came all -- they were sitting at the very top. I guess they did not even feel like they could be -- it was open seating but they were at the very top. But then Jesus... And who can beat a deal like that? Who can beat a deal like that? "I'll forgive you all your sins. I'll make you completely clean and that will be your old dead self and this is

the new you. In an instant, you don't have to grovel at my feet. You don't have to tell me for the next ten years how sorry you are. Right now, I make you new. Right now I make you new!" And 20 women knew that day that Jesus Christ loved them and brought the sun up for them that morning.

End of clip

In the studio

James: I hope you hear that. I make all things new. In the movie, "The Passion of the Christ" which we definitely saw Christ's passion there and it was powerful but what moved me, Betty as much as anything in the movie, as a matter of fact, it was the only time I just totally broke out in tears is when Jesus stumbled under the cross, and his mother was there, Mary was there and she was looking at her son and she hurt so deeply for her beaten, mangled son and under the weight of the cross he looked over at his mother and he said, remember, I make all things new.

And Betty, I just lowered my head in the theater and I wept because he made all things new -- he made all things new for us. He makes all things new for everyone who will receive him. So receive that grace and all things new right where you are. If you want someone to pray with you, the phone number you see there on the screen is a prayer line and you can call any time of the day. And somebody that loves God and loves you will pray with you and bear your burden.

Betty, I mentioned the joy of these shoes. You have no idea what this means to a little child who has never had shoes to put on little feet. And these can actually be adjusted where a child, they don't wear out very easy at all, they have tremendous life. They can adjust them with a little adjustable strap and wear them quite a while. I want you to listen to Tammy Trent. I want you to hear Jesus through her talking about what we can do for kids. Just listen to her.

On the mission field

Tammy: Something that we take so for granted is wearing a pair of shoes every day. I don't think any one of us watching this right now is without a pair of shoes but the reality is that there are hundreds of children around me at this moment that have no

shoes. I love *LIFE Outreach* for so many reasons -- not just Water for Life or Rescue for Life or the food programs but even bringing shoes to little ones.

Listen, without it, they're in danger every single day. The simple things that we think about like even cutting your feet, walking in water that is diseased and full of bacteria getting into a cut. They could literally lose their life. What a privilege we have to bring them a pair of shoes. Every one of these little ones is going to get a pair of shoes today.

Tammy: What I love is that this simple pair of shoes has become a treasure to this little girl. I love that she is holding on to it like it's the greatest gift she's ever been given. And it costs very little! For a little amount of money we can produce thousands of shoes that can change a life, one child at a time, starting with her.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Tammy, I love you! I love Jesus in you.

Most of you know, maybe here in the audience and at home that she lost her husband who was a great swimmer and he drowned. And she's just become a great missionary.

Aren't those children beautiful, Betty?

Betty: They really are! James, as I watch and we've been there. We've passed out the shoes and how precious and beautiful the children are. They're so grateful because it may be the only gift they've ever gotten of any kind. But they're so grateful and they do hold their gift close to their heart like that.

But I think of them and I think of our oldest daughter, when she was very small she loved her shoes. She had more than one pair though to protect her feet but she loved them. She slept in her shoes -- they were so precious to her.

But these shoes for these children mean so much more even though they may not realize it because they walk around and all the kind of disease that's on the ground that gets in their little feet in their cuts and it can eventually kill them and destroy them.

The fact that these shoes, yes, they are a beautiful little gift to them but they mean so much more -- they can mean life to them. So I hope you will join us and let's give a gift of love and life to these children.

James: Yeah, and I can go ahead and tell all of you that our daughter Rhonda never saw a pair of shoes she didn't want to buy. She is a shoe shopper to this day. And you know what's really interesting? Is it was her husband who really likes for his wife to be able to buy shoes that he has such a heart for missions that he designed and helped us have the little Christmas shoes to hang as an ornament to just remind you to pray for the children that they would have peace on their feet, not just shoes -- but peace.

And we're giving away this one for any gift. It's \$3.60 to buy a pair of shoes. \$36 will give 10 children shoes. And a gift of \$144 will give 40 children shoes. If you make a gift of \$100 or more we've got all four, including the one this year that we have offered over the years for you to just decorate your tree and any angle people come at your tree, they can see a shoe and it will remind them to love the little children of the world.

So what we're going to ask you to do, we try to say thank you in a way that is meaningful, but would you bless children and missionaries by dialing the number there on the screen and saying, "You know what? I think I'll just give \$1,000 to help with the shoes but I think I'll also help you pay for those smiles for the little children with cleft palates that never been able to see their face and like what they see." We're going to give them a smile. And we're going to give shoes.

You know \$36, I think most of all of you could afford to do that. Would you do that and put it on your bankcard or go to LifeToday.org online and put it on and say, "Here's the gift"?

But if there's any way you could give 40 children shoes, \$144 will do that. There's a level at which all of us can participate. Would you make that love call right now and would you show people what Christmas is really all about? It is the life and love of God shed abroad in our hearts through the great gift of Jesus.

Please make that call today or go online. Thank you for doing it!

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: Oh, boy! I... Betty says she loves this little red shoe. I think -- I just love what... actually, it is our son-in-law, Terry who works real hard to find things to bless you because he so loves our mission work and outreaches. Now we have all four that we've offered over the years, including the little red shoe and if you make a gift of \$100 you get all of these little ornaments. Here's the neat thing. They become a conversation piece around Christmas because they will stand out on the tree and people will ask you about it, you say, we give shoes -- we give little children shoes all over the world. And they'll start thinking about that. They will be a part of it in the future.

Thank all of you for being here. And thank you for watching. Thank you so much for helping us share smiles and shoes for Christmas. God bless y'all!