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**Week 35 Christmas Shoes**

**Lysa TerKeurst**

**Randy:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Randy Robison and this is my wife Debbie. We are glad that you have joined us today because we have a wonderful guest for you, Lysa TerKeurst. If you don't know her, her new book is *The Best Yes*. And I promise you, she's going to talk directly to you today. Lysa, we're so glad that you are with us.

**Lysa:** Well, thank you. It is an honor to be here with you and your beautiful wife.

**Randy:** And she is my beautiful wife. But we have four wonderful children and because of that, she likes to take care of them and she likes to do what they want done as much as we can but she can kind of back herself into a corner sometimes, especially with one neighbor who will go unnamed who likes to ask favors, "Can you pick up our kids?" She likes to say yes. And she can become a little overwhelmed at times. This is what you're talking about?

**Lysa:** This is exactly what I'm talking about. I write about what I struggle with. I have written about my struggles with food in my book, *Made to Crave*, that's a struggle what goes in my mouth. The struggle with what comes out of my mouth was *Unglued*.

So now I'm talking about the way that I fill my schedule because I've experienced this and maybe you have too that when a woman lives with the stress of an overwhelmed schedule she will ache with the sadness of an underwhelmed soul. As a Christian woman, I think I felt the pressure to always say yes.

Really, I think it is because I was confusing the command to love with the disease to please. I wanted to love everyone and serve everyone and it just felt like the Christian thing to do to say yes. And so in this book I want to give people the understanding

that it's the two most powerful words, yes and no, we have to pay attention to how we use those.

**Randy:** You're not suggesting we don't ever say yes.

**Lysa:** That's right. I'm not suggesting that we don't ever say yes. I'm suggesting that we discover what our best yes answers are.

**Randy:** Which is what?

**Lysa:** Live life very intentionally. Well, the best yes is not just one thing. A best yes is really you playing your part that God has assigned you to play so one of your best yes answers today might be to be on this show, and to support your husband and to be in ministry. But tomorrow, maybe your best yes answer is to sit down and read a book to one of your kids.

So every day is you playing the part that you know you're supposed to play and it is you operating out of the overflow of your life rather than scraping at the bottom of the barrel and always feeling incredibly worn out. We were talking backstage and she was saying that really, there is a plaque that you think maybe you should have made from one of the quotes in *The Best Yes*.

But saying yes to everything won't make you wonder woman, it will make you a worn out woman. I know what that feels like. I want to give women the excitement of taking an honest look at how we schedule our time because how we schedule our time will determine how we live our life. How we live our life will determine how we spend our soul. So every time we pull up our calendar and we make those decisions yes or no, we have to think about it with a much bigger picture in mind.

**Randy:** And you're coming from a woman's perspective, which is entirely accurate and appropriate but it is the same for us guys. When we are trying to balance work, family, being a husband, the stuff we like to do, time management is a major issue. And the interesting thing that you pointed out is that you say it impacts our soul. We think of -- it's easy for men to think, hey, it's my time. I do with it what I think is best.

But you're suggesting that it's even bigger than us, which is quite profound actually. Are you relating to any of this?

**Debbie:** I am. My question is how do you choose what to say yes to or no to.

**Lysa:** Well, that's where wisdom comes in play with the book. You've heard the expression where it says, "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime." So that's why the subtitle of the book is: Making wise decisions in the midst of endless demands. Because I want to equip people to use wisdom to make those every day decisions and it's biblical wisdom and it is God directed. So that's very exciting.

But one of the patterns I encourage people to do is to start practicing wisdom and make wisdom the habit of your life. I tell a story in the book about one of my daughters. She is a very athletic girl. I have five kids and she's the most athletic. She did gymnastics from the age of three to 13, suffered an injury that would not allow her to continue gymnastics so she was going into high school though. She came to my husband and I and she said, "I have discovered a new sport I want to try. I want to be a pole --" Well, of course my heart seized because I didn't know how she was going to finish that statement.

[Laughter]

But she said, "I want to be a pole vaulter." I was very relieved -- as are you at this moment.

[Laughter]

So pole vaulting is a really crazy sport. You run down this track, you strap on your cleats, listen to the voice of your coach, grab this long pole, plant the pole while you're running, bend it back, fling your body upside down, hopefully over a bar, land on the mat on the other side and live to tell about it -- at least you hope you do.

**Randy:** I've seen them do that.

**Lysa:** So Ashley did that. She wanted to be a pole vaulter so her whole freshman year she tried and tried and tried, and at the end of her freshman year she was in last place. So she decided her sophomore year she was going to try it again because she has the heart of an athlete, she wants to be a pole vaulter. So she is going to go where pole vaulters go, she is going to do what pole vaulters do. So she would show up at the track every day. She would strap on her cleats, listen to the voice of her coach, grab that pole, run down the track, plant the pole, fling her body and she hit the bar time and time and time again. And of course, if you hit the bar and knock it over, your jump doesn't count.

By the end of her sophomore year, last place. She has the heart of an athlete. She wants to be a pole vaulter. So her junior year, shows up at the track, because you see, if you want to be a pole vaulter you've got to go where pole vaulters go, you've got to do what pole vaulters do. So she kept that pattern of practice all those years. Junior year, same thing, showed up at the track, strapped on her cleats, listened to the voice of the her coach, grab that pole, run down the track, plant the pole, fling her body and crashed into the bar. Half way through her junior year she is still in last place.

Now came the meet that would determine whether she would actually be able to go to regionals. She has never gone to regionals before. And something clicked. All that practice finally clicked. And I watched her -- of course, I'm in the bleacher. I've gone beyond begging God to help her. I mean I'm beseeching God on behalf of my child; right? And I watched her go in this pattern of practice she'd established all those years, strapping on her cleats, listening to the voice of her coach, grabbing that pole, running down that track, and at this meet something clicked and she made it over 8 feet, 8.6 feet, 9 feet, 9.6 feet.

Now the coach is like, "Ashley, you've qualified for regionals! No need to go any higher." I'm in the bleacher. I have tee-teed on myself seriously. I'm now stunned by the whole thing. I'm now a wet beseecher in the bleacher; right?

And I'm like, "Ashley, you don't need to try anymore." I watched this girl. She said, "Set the bar at 10 feet."

And she runs down the track, plants her pole, flings her body up and over 10 feet breaking the school record. It was amazing! It was amazing!

[Applause]

But that's, I think such a picture of what I'm trying to teach in this book, *The Best Yes*. Using wisdom, establishing that pattern of wisdom day after day after day and when it matters most things will click and then suddenly we will wake up one day and we'll realize we have become a wise woman. And we are no longer subject to the disease to please.

And you know you're caught in the rip current of the disease to please when you dread saying yes but feel powerless to say no. I want to give women that feeling of confidently, with the Lord's direction, using wisdom, being able to be excited to say yes. And not being so afraid to say no, and really discovering a best yes life.

**Randy:** That is a wonderful deep insight. You've got great stories in here. I'm going to just destroy the moment because there's a story I have to ask you about in your book that she pointed out so I fully blame her for this, but again, tons of great stories, a lot of profound depth but not this one. You did something that came back to surprise you in a way that you didn't expect. By telling your children that what you were doing with them or where you were at was your favorite place in the world --

**Debbie:** You loved being home with them.

**Lysa:** Oh, that story!

[Laughter]

I was like which story? I know exactly.

Well, when my youngest daughter was in preschool I was already in ministry and a lot of the other moms would question me about, "Do you ever feel bad when you travel?" "Do you ever feel bad leaving your kids?"

I understand it, I really do and I was wrestling with that. But my husband and I, we have a very unique family dynamic, I love my kids, I love being with my kids but because of those questions I felt the need to tell my kids all the time when I was at home, like we would be sitting on the couch, "You know Mommy's favorite place is on the couch right now with you." Or one of our favorite family things to do is all pile in my bed, my husband and I, and all the kids, and we'll watch TV together or we'll play games or whatever. So I would say, "You know Mommy's favorite place is in bed right now with everybody."

Well, the Muffins with Mom day was coming to celebrate Mother's Day so the teacher had all the kids paint artwork. The teacher asked each one of the kids, "Paint the scene where your Mommy's favorite place is."

So a lot of the kids painted like "My Mommy's favorite place is at the beach."

And the teacher would write it. "My Mommy's favorite place is at the grocery store."

"My Mommy's favorite place is up the mountains."

So when I showed up for Muffins with Mom, already feeling insecure, in front of all these other moms, I went down the clothes line, I was looking for my daughter's picture and there was my daughter's picture. "My Mommy's favorite place is in bed with daddy."

[Laughter]

Awesome!

**Randy:** Maybe I should ask if there is some spiritual application on it. I just like the story.

**Lysa:** No, I think you just let that one sit. I think you just skip right over that one.

**Randy:** That just cracks me up. So lots of fun stuff in the book. I do need to ask you something serious and that's one of your biggest yes moments was one of your most painful moments, which led to some of your greatest success in doing the thing that God has called you to do which is to write and to share your heart. Go back to that moment where you decided to say yes and it changed everything for you.

**Lysa:** Well, I remember as a little girl my daddy brought a typewriter home. I remember being so fascinated by this typewriter, laying my hands on the typewriter. Having a love for writing but thinking at that point in my life, I don't know enough words to write a book but one day, I want to write, and maybe even write a whole book.

So all those years went by and I could never find time to write. I could never make time to write. But here's the reality, we don't find more time, we don't make more time. We have 168 hours in a week. So it dawned on me one day, where could I capture some time to write? Because just like in Chariots of Fire, I -- it was said, there's a quote in that movie, I feel the pleasure of God when I write. In that movie, it was, "I feel the pleasure of God when I run." So I wanted to capture some time.

So I did an hours assessment. I said, "Okay, I have 168 hours in a week, where could I carve out a little section of time to write? And I wrote down everything I was spending my time with and after I wrote down all of my hours in a very conservative way, there were only 3.5 hours left in the entire week. So I scheduled on my calendar a 3.5 hour time block and said, "Writing."

Of course, right after I blocked out my time a friend called and said, "Hey, we're going out to lunch and we're going to let the kids play in the park. We really want you to come."

And I felt so foolish to tell her, "I've blocked off this time to write" because at that point in my life I wasn't what I would consider a real writer. But I kept the appointment and

that first day I decided to write part of my testimony. Part of my story is that in my 20s I felt like a throw-away person so I acted like a throw-away person and wound up getting pregnant and having an abortion. It was the most devastating decision that I've ever made.

There was this little newsletter that asked me to write my story so that first 3.5 hour block of time with my hand shaking and tears running down my face, I wrote that part of my story, and sent it off to the newsletter and never really heard anything. I knew it got published. They sent me a copy but that was that.

Well, 16 years later I became an author and I was at a book signing and I was at a speaking engagement and there were two women that came through my book line. When they got up to me they introduced themselves and they held out a picture of a 15 year old boy. They said, "This boy is alive today because of something that you wrote many years ago."

They said, "You wrote about your abortion." And the girl said that her daddy was a preacher. She wound up getting pregnant and he told her that she needed to have an abortion so that kind of shame wouldn't come on their family.

I don't judge him for that. I know that fear. I know the deception that Satan can wrap in that. So I don't fault him but I'm so thankful that that family got a hold of the article and because of this little article that I had written they made a different decision and now they have this beautiful, beautiful amazing teenage boy in their lives as a result.

I think back to that day where I wrote that first article. Sometimes God says, "This is an assignment and I want you to do it." We know it, whether it is to paint or to speak or to do some kind of sport or to make a cake and carry it to the friend down the street. It can be big, it can be small, whatever it is. I call it your soul thing.

I think all of us have some kind of sense in us that God has an assignment for us and we won't ever find time for it, we won't ever make time for it, we've got to carve out that time in the 168 hours we've been entrusted to each week. And it is not a selfish



thing because I always add at the end, my soul thing, I always say so that I can bless whom?

And so for me to carve out three and a half hours worth of writing times all these years later, it's added up to 17 books and a ministry that I love.

**Randy:** And changed lives that we can see! I want you to get her book. You just heard a few of the stories, humorous, and poignant. I want you to learn how to say yes in the right way to the right things, to the things that God wants us to do. So I'm going to show you how you can get Lysa's book. We want to send it to you if you'll say yes to something we're doing to bless other people. Watch this.

**On the mission field:**

**Announcer:** Unfortunately, there are children around the world who have many different kinds of needs. Some are hungry and thirsty, in need of food to eat or clean water to drink. Others still simply have never had a new pair of shoes or they're unable to smile due to a cleft palate.

>> All year long we come to you and tell you about things that change people's lives, that save people's lives and you're a part of that. I want to tell you what we want to do this Christmas, is we do what is called "Shoes and Smiles." A little child just like this that has a cleft palate, that's never had a real smile, we give them surgery and this little child will have a new smile. Little kids like this that have never had a pair of shoes before in their life, we give them one.

**Announcer:** A child with bare feet may seem harmless but the potential danger for children living in these types of conditions can be life-threatening.

**James:** One of the things we found in the Central American countries is that they have a real problem with hookworms, which they get from walking in dirt or sand and then it creates a tremendous intestinal problem.

The answer is just shoes. We can provide literally for some of them the first pair of shoes they've ever had, not only for fun and comfort, but for health.

**Announcer:** During the past several holiday seasons, *LIFE Outreach* and its missionary partners have passed out thousands of pairs of shoes to children in many different

countries around the world. In addition, we have been able to restore numerous children's smiles through corrective surgeries.

>> You know we put smiles on the faces of these children today as we've given them shoes but others need a little more, they need that cleft palate surgery. I hope you can help put a smile on even more children's faces. Do the best that you can and you can give shoes and smiles to children all over the world. So I have a special message just for you --

**End of clip**

**In the studio:**

**Randy:** It was a privilege to be there in Cambodia on that trip, to give those shoes to those children. For some of them, it's the first shoes they've ever had, which is kind of hard for us to comprehend. We've got four kids. Have we ever given them shoes for Christmas? I'm sure we have.

**Debbie:** Yes.

**Randy:** Definitely, when they grow out of them and we've probably handed a few down a few times -- as much as possible.

This year, though, Christmas, we're already talking about it. It is too early for my taste. I'm the Grinch that doesn't talk about Christmas until after Thanksgiving.

However I want you to think forward with us because if you will partner with us not only will you give a gift that's not just a gift, it's something that's essential for these children. You won't just give them shoes which will make them more comfortable, (although it will,) you will give them something that will potentially save their lives. Think about that. Your gift of \$36 this year will provide shoes for 10 children. That's more than we could ever do over here when we're buying shoes for our kids. Your gift of \$144 will provide shoes for 40 children! A lot of you can do that.

When you do that we'll send you the Christmas Shoe ornament that you can hang on your tree this year; it is a great conversation piece and something to remind you of what you have done to change someone's life. If you can make that gift of \$1,000 or more, not only will you give a child a smile, you'll give them the ability to smile; that will provide surgery for two children. I hope you'll do something.

Some of you can do more than I've mentioned. I'm asking you to do what you can. It's not just important, the amount that we give, it is the attitude with which we give. I hope you will go to the phone, go online, make that best gift you can and know when you partner with us not only will you celebrate the birth of our savior this year, you will celebrate his gift to us by giving a gift to someone else, a gift that will change their life. So partner with us; do it now. And let's give shoes and smiles to children around the world.

### **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**

### **On the mission field**

**James:** Well, we literally stopped by the road where I say we knew we would bring them shoes and I'm confident that we will because children like these need shoes -- all over the world. It is amazing. You may say, "Why would they stop and let you take a picture with them?"

Well, the truth is they stopped because I just got out and sat down here on the road and smiled at them. And they came over and started sitting down by me.

Then we explained to the parents through our missionary interpreter that our plan was to come right back to this area, this village and bring shoes. So that is our intention. But it is going to take you making that possible.

I'm asking you to give as many pairs of shoes as you can to put on these beautiful, beautiful feet of these beautiful children. Thank you! Thank you for your help!

**End of clip**

**In the studio**

**Randy:** Do go to the phone, go online. When you participate in this wonderful mission outreach today request Lysa's book and we will send it to you. You can start saying yes to all the right things and no to the things that you need to say no to. Again, thank you for being here. Lysa, thank you!

**Lysa:** Thank you for having me!

**Randy:** Well, thank you for opening up your heart and sharing some tough things and for putting them down and I know it is going to bless a lot of people. We appreciate you so much.

**Lysa:** Thank you.

**Randy:** Join us again next time on *LIFE Today*. My parents will be back next week.

**Announcer:** Are you concerned about your family being ill equipped to manage resources when you pass away? Do you want to leave a legacy gift that impacts the lives of others? As a free service to our friends and partners, Life Planning Services, a ministry of Life Outreach International, is here to help with your estate planning needs and chart your financial future.

Do not put off this important step to protect your loved ones and leave a lasting legacy. Contact Life Planning Services today!