

8/24/15
Week 35: Christmas Shoes and Smiles
Foster and Lynn Friess

James: Thank you. Thank you all. It's a joy to be joining you. Thank you for tuning in. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are thrilled to have Foster and Lynn Friess.

Now here's the thing. Foster and Lynn have been blessed. They really have. They would be part of that one percent that we're just training America to fiercely hate. The thing that's really puzzling about it is they came from the 99 percent, and they got the one percent. But they got the 100% of the love of God for you -- Him first, then you.

Betty and I are blessed to know the poorest of the poor all over the world, and we're also blessed to know someone that's got what the world calls "success" but it didn't mess them up. They realize that God is the giver of every great and perfect gift, every good gift and they're grateful. So they just help people.

Foster Friess has been trying to help America come out of the ditch of debt and depravity and lack of love. And he's really trying to build bridges where people talk. We're actually going to talk to Foster at length this week about how we can have a civil conversation and really love each other. But his wife Lynn is quite a bit more talented actually, than he is, more gifted than he is.

[Laughter]

I tell you what. I love this couple because they're both really strong. Foster will make a great statement and then Lynn will straighten it all out. They just cheer for each other. But what I got my hands on that I think was kind of unexpected for them, I saw this *Western Lullaby*, and all these other little stories, for their grandchildren. I was so impressed and overwhelmed, I said, "Foster we'll let you come but we want to talk to Lynn."

I want you to welcome Foster Friess and Lynn Friess to *LIFE Today*; would you please?

[Applause]

Lynn, I think you know that Foster and I have had some good times together and we prayed with a lot of people and leaders and others because we care about everybody, and we want to

have a positive influence. And I've always thought you were a sweetheart but I didn't realize -- I knew you did things to help, a lot of things that are important, but this really, really surprised me.

I want you to tell our viewers because even when I read what you've done for children I can see that you love them going to museums and things like that. Tell me why you have an interest in children seeing museums or people seeing them. What is it that causes you to have a heart for that?

Lynn: I think museums are terribly important. It gives children a perspective on culture, on learning, and opens up their eyes. When you take a young child into a museum and watch what the light, a dinosaur or an amazing painting that mom or dad or the caregiver is explaining, there is a delight there and you expand their horizons.

I'm a daughter of a gentleman, my father, who was born on the kitchen table of a farm. My dad was a country mouse that married a city mouse, my mom. So my mom made sure that we went to see museums, and I grew up loving museums. I think they're very important -- all different kinds, children's, science, art museums -- it expands a child's horizon.

James: I think you're right. I thank you for doing it. You have an interesting pin on and it's significant. I want you to tell us about it.

Lynn: This is my Annie Oakley pin. I'm involved with the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Foster: She's not only involved, she is vice chairman. This modesty thing she gets carried away with.

[Laughter]

Lynn: I started it with my dear friend, Kathy Keating, who is the former First Lady of Oklahoma.

Annie Oakley was an extraordinary young woman who always had an impeccable reputation. Can you imagine at 12 she paid off her mother's mortgage on her log house? Extraordinary! And she was a fabulous shot. She is a wonderful role model. There was never really a hint of anything in her life that was wrong until late in her life when somebody said she was Annie Oakley and the press picked it up. Annie, on her own nickel went to newspapers after newspapers and she fought them and told them that this was not right; that she was Annie Oakley, not this other lady. The only person who did not apologize to her was William Hurst.

James: Wow! A publisher.

Lynn: A publisher of newspapers.

James: Well, thank God he did tell us about Billy Graham. So he did do that.

[Laughter]

I know Billy wanted to be there. So we're counting on that. Foster, you know this is pretty extraordinary. As a matter of fact, we're going to actually give our viewers this, if they want it, for their children or grandchildren. But there is some reason that you wanted us to...

Foster: Oh, I've got to tell you about this book. Can I do that?

James: Go ahead. This is Carl, the mysterious little nibbler.

Foster: So Carl is this chipmunk that Lynn created. I'm convinced if she keeps writing books this could be replacing Mickey Mouse. This is big!

[Laughter]

So what I love about this book is, the story is that, Robert Coon is a very famous artist who has a studio with all his drawings and sketches. Lo and behold, mice are nibbling on the edges of these sketches and actually potentially destroying them. So Lynn takes this concept and finds out and builds a story about someone is nibbling on the edges of these sketches in The National Museum Wildlife Art. So they lay a trap and so they watch and they watch. All of the sudden they catch Uncle Twitch.

Do you have a picture of Uncle Twitch? He's this skinny little guy.

And Uncle Twitch, they catch him. Well, he's mortified. They talk to him. They counsel him. But the beauty about the book is suddenly, after it's all over, he becomes a guide -- a guide or a guard?

Lynn: A guard.

Foster: He guards now the sketches.

James: How did he get him to do that?

Foster: It's an honorable story of redemption. It's kind of like what Jesus does with us.

James: I was worse than that guy there.

Lynn: He wrote a letter of apology and said he would never do it again. And he is related to another little character, Willie, Willie mouse.

Lynn: What parents like about the book is that Carl models the perfect behavior for a kid. He asks permission can he go out? And he reads at night. What else does Carl do?

Lynn: He comes up in one of the books with a solution and checks with mom and dad and makes sure that it is okay that he can do it, and they give their permission. So he's a cute little chipmunk, and the museum has lots of them running in and out. It is marvelous because the children come in and they're looking all around for Carl. Where is he? He lives at the museum.

Foster: Tell what the one little girl saw when they saw the one painting on the wall by Carl Rungius?

Lynn: The very first book I did, a little girl had been given a book at Christmas time and she poured over it, loved her parents to read it to her all the time. They took her up to the museum. She walked into the museum and she walked into this one room and she went running up to this enormous painting of a huge black bear. And she goes, "Mommy and daddy, this is Carl's favorite painting." And she just stood there and the guides were like, "Oh, my golly!"

[Laughter]

And I went Bingo, got it! I got a little person who really likes --

Foster: Also, Lynn, I think it is a neat story about her illustrator. The fellow who created those guys are beautiful. Tell them about John Potter.

Lynn: Well, John is the Native American; he is Ojibwe Indian. And he has brought this little character to life. We had a competition and when the staff walked in they walked right to John's drawings and said, "Here's Carl."

Foster: He's funny because he wears a headband. He is very into his traditional thing. We talk about immigration. Where was a good immigration policy when we needed it?

[Laughter]

Betty: You wrote this book...

Lynn: This was my first book because I had done a little song for my oldest daughter who had our first grandson and then our second daughter came to us and said, "Mom, I think I'm having a little girl. Could you write a lullaby?"

So I wrote the lullaby, and then she began singing it and somebody said, "You really need to do something with this."

James: And so it became a book, and this is absolutely fabulous. We can show you where we'll cut to full screen on some of this but the paintings in here are just fabulous and it is the lullaby on every page. What you envisioned was actually giving your daughter something that she could actually sing, and then you actually saw it become a song that parents would sing as they would look at the beautiful pictures. Tell me what happened as a result of teaching people to sing like this, the *Western Lullaby*? What did you watch?

Lynn: I began to receive notes from parents and they would say, with a baby they would hum, and as they got a little bit older they would start singing the song and it was always at night whenever they put the child down. Now they were to the point where they'd put the child down, turn off all the lights, stand at the door and sing the song, close the door and that was it. They went to sleep.

Foster: I'll tell you the best story. The lady who sang the song, Lynn can sing the song but she found a friend who --

James: We were actually going to ask her to.

Foster: So this lady sings this song and there's a DVD on the back of that. So lo and behold, we got a little YouTube video one day and it's this lady, our friend, Marilyn Gordon singing the song to her dog. And all of the sudden the dog's eyes start to --

[Laughter]

Three o'clock in the afternoon this dog goes to sleep!

[Laughter]

James: Let's sing and we'll actually let our viewers just see some of the beautiful images. I

know Lynn, we don't have a big orchestra or background or anything. Would you sing this lullaby?

Lynn: Okay. Pretend you're closing the door for your youngsters.

Go to sleep my little cowgirl,
It's time to rest your weary head.
The mountains are painted dusty gray
And the moon's come out to play.
In the distance hear the coyotes call
Softly echoing o'er the plain.

Telling everyone
That nighttime has come again
With a gentle refrain.
So close your sleepy eyes my love
And cuddle next to me.
Your momma and your daddy dear
Will keep you close to thee.
And as the moon dances high,
Across the diamond sky,
The cowboys croon this lovely tune,
A Western Lullaby.
Snuggle down beneath the covers
And close your eyes and dream sweet dreams
Of the buffalo and the antelope
Running through mountain streams.
And as the lantern light grows dimmer
A quiet hush is everywhere.
So sleep tight cowgirl,
Good night little one,
For now the day is done.

[Applause]

Betty: I'm sleepy! Are you?

James: Betty nearly fell asleep on my shoulder. How many grandchildren?

Foster: Fourteen! But I just want to announce that I am Lynn Friess' husband.

[Laughter]

James: Listen to this. This is the last page in the book, the *Western Lullaby*. Code of the west for little pokes: Live each day with a smile. Be the best in all you do. Finish what you start. Do what has to be done. Be honest and fair. Keep your promises. Ride for the brand. Talk less and say more. Never forget some things can't be bought. Know when to stop.

As Lynn was singing with a heart of a grandmother that really loved not only her children but yours, and she really does, and our grandchildren, I felt like I just sensed the heart of God wishing he could hold all of you and sing over you like the Psalmist said. Then I found myself saying, why don't we all be like that? Why don't we ask God to give us a heart like Lynn just expressed and like I've seen in my wife that's inspired me beyond measure? Why don't you ask God to let you bring peace into their life?

Foster, I've known you for a while and I've watched you love people. How is it with the two of you that there's not only love, but you and I had an incredible time in the presence of the Lord sitting in a pickup truck. I feel like we're like in another upper room experience and just tears running down your chin and all over your shirt.

One of the things you told me when you left was, "I want to spend more time with my grandkids." You were doing a little bit of what I did. I tried to help everybody else's kids and I didn't spend enough time with my own, and started spending more. But what is it with the two of you that there's a love that God has put there that you just want it to spill out on others? How do you explain it?

Foster: Well, that's hard to explain because it's one of those spiritual things. Lynn and I were kind of walking in our own directions when we first got married. We didn't have the understanding of what love was. Remember when C.S. Lewis talked about agape; love is not an emotion. Love is an act of the will to want something for someone, or do something for someone that is in their best interests without expecting anything in return? Well, we suddenly realized our relationship wasn't really based on that. It was going to -- tell you what, honey. I bring home the bacon and you just keep the sock drawer filled and don't burn the toast.

[Laughter]

It was meeting each other's needs, a quid pro quo. So the relationship was based on kind of transaction of meeting one another's needs. And we've just had modeled to us so many Christian families who, to be a successful marriage, you sort of have to have not 50/50, that's a

blueprint for disaster. It is not going to work. It has to be 100% because there are some times when one of the partners can't give 5%. And Lynn will tell you a lot of times when I was not giving 5%. When I was building my business, we both had our heads bowed every Sunday morning. Lynn was in church praying and I was over a three foot putt.

[Laughter]

And then our lives turned into somewhat of a very dysfunctional, we were skirting with divorce. We were having some challenges. The kids and I were estranged. I'm making a six figure income but it was boring, as I built my business because the richest guy in town where I grew up, Rice Lake, like 5,000 people, there was a Mobile gas station operator, the undertaker, and the guy who ran the feed mill. It turns out it was all the same guy, too.

[Laughter]

So I just think coming to understand that what our role was of being more submissive to God and it was demonstrated by a wheel. Lynn and I were kind of on the rim of this wheel and Jesus was in the center. And once we realized who Jesus was and we asked him to come into our life, and be the chairman of the board of my life, and Lynn asked him to take control, as you move on the spokes closer to him you come closer to each other.

James: When you saw what Lynn was doing here and all the other things, did it please you?

Foster: I was pretty upset because I mean I wanted to be the big shot. You know? Can I tell you how this woman ruined my life? Listen. We come out of the army, \$800 accumulative pay, '62 Volkswagen, a baby, animal, TV and a hide-a-bed. So she is a classic wife of centuries past. She sews her clothes, the kids' clothes, the draperies, the couch covering, cuts my hair, packs my lunch, scrubs the floor. It's great!

[Laughter]

So I'm pretty happy with this deal.

James: I want to get back to the book.

[Laughter]

You can take us on this journey around the world. You and I are both gifted with that. Lynn, you wrote something for your children that you want to bless the children of the world. And

what is here? I want to just say this to you. Where would people find any of these stories? Would it be online or do you have a web site?

Lynn: They're available on Amazon.com.

James: Would they go to Lynn Friess or would they try to come up with Carl or what would they go for? Just find your books?

Lynn: I believe you can do it by author. So I'm the author, Lynn Estes Friess.

James: F-r-i-e-s-s. We want to send this one to you. And really, what I believe God will do is give Lynn an opportunity to help parents and grandparents begin to tell their children stories in a way that is going to captivate them. I really want to see that happen.

Let me tell you what we're doing right now that I think you'll be blessed by. We're going to take them, and Foster, I know how much you all have helped the suffering here and around the world, I know how much you love people. We're going to give little shoes like this to children all over the world. It is our goal for Christmas and we start in the summertime, we have to start now to raise the \$750,000 to buy 200,000 pair of shoes and to give as many smiles at \$500 apiece for cleft palate surgery as we possibly can.

I want you to look in on the situation. I know y'all are going to be blessed to see this; to see the need that we can meet and do such an incredible thing at a time when we're pointing to Jesus and yet doing something that changes children's lives.

Watch very closely please and then see if you don't want to be a part of this. I really believe you will.

On the mission field

Ralph: At *LIFE Outreach* we try to help children all around the world in various forms. In so many different ways we want to bless these kids. One of the things we like to do this particular season of the year is we like to bring shoes to their lives.

These guys run around. Their feet are getting torn up by the terrain. They're stepping on stuff, hookworms, all those things that come into their little lives. And this time of the year we just like to bless them with a pair of shoes. I think this is a beautiful thing that *LIFE* does.

We're just asking for your help that by your generous gift we can provide a little pair of shoes for a guy who has never had his own pair of shoes. So it's really difficult to put in words how

much your gift of shoes will change this little guy's life because he won't have to run around in all this terrain barefooted and all the dangers that are there with no shoes. Look at them running right through all that with their shoes. Look at that!

[Laughter]

That's what it's about right there.

Open captions:

>> Thank you for my new shoes.

End of clip

In the studio

James: God bless you, little fella!

Betty, just tell us what it does for you. I want to say a thank you again, not only for standing with me all the years that I went all over this nation preaching and around the world and then you going to the ends of the earth with me, thank you for doing that -- but for sharing your heart. And when you see the children like we've seen and then realize what this can do, what goes on in a mother's heart?

Betty: I think, of course, when our children were small, I'd say, "Okay, you've worn these shoes out. Let's go buy a new pair of shoes." Never thinking, never even understanding that there are some children that have never had shoes, James.

You and I have been over there and we've seen these precious little feet that God loves so much -- he loves all these precious children -- and to look at their little feet and some of them with sores on them and some of them just chewed up because of what they have to walk on, the filthy, dirty terrain that they have day after day after day.

When you put a pair of shoes on their feet, James, the smiles, it's just all the reward we need just to look at their faces. They're just like so surprised like these are for me? Really -- for me? That's what I feel like is coming back from them. It's just like it's the biggest, best gift they've ever had. And it's so much more than that, James. They look at it as a gift like that but I look at it in my heart and say, God, it is going to help them stay well. They're not going to step on that old terrain that has rocks and all kinds of disease that they get in their feet because they don't have shoes to protect them. That's what I think about.

I thank you so much because you've always been so giving and loving in helping us put shoes on the feet of these children. And not only that, but helping us fix some of them, their teeth, James so they can smile and that's the biggest thing! Put a smile on their faces.

James: Well, we know that you have proven to us that you not only love God, you love others and you express it with an act. You don't love just in word, but you love in deed, you love in action.

You can go to LifeToday.org or you can dial that number. Take your bankcard and use it like a check. What we're asking you to do is help us provide these shoes. This is a tiny little foot and we've got the sizes to reach the different children in the different areas where the missionaries are going to be distributing them.

We start way early for Christmas. So we're asking you to make the gift God puts on your heart: \$36 and you've got ten pairs of shoes; \$144 as an example, you've got 40 pair. What we're asking you to do, please, is give us often opportunity also to say thanks with the little shoe ornaments. If you give a gift of over \$100, we're going to send you not only a new one this year but we're going to send you every one of them that we've had for the last years.

Betty, we have people come into our home and look at the tree and see those little shoes and start talking about it and we begin talking about sharing the love of God; not just talking about Christmas, but about the love of God through Christ and that we can share it with others.

So would you make the gift God put on your heart? We're going to share blessings with you that will mean a lot to you, to encourage you and inspire you around Christmas. But you're going to be giving not only shoes but like Betty said, for the surgeries, we're going to correct cleft palates and other problems to give these children smiles.

Would you go LifeToday.org and give life today? Or would you dial the number, take your bankcard, and use it like a check, how you should always use it? Thank you so much for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it, children needlessly suffer not only from 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. And while that may seem minor in the light of all their needs, walking with 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 pairs. 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 green antique shoe ornament, a treasure to place on your tree each holiday season. With your gift of \$100 or more you may also 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 request our beautifully framed canvas print of "The Forest Chapel."

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

End of clip

In the studio

James: I also want to mention that we're not only sending the gift, the shoe, and the beautiful gift, but if you'd like to have the *Western Lullaby*, you're going to enjoy reading this to your young children, going over and hopefully singing the lullaby. I think Betty probably would have taken my place in that. But it is just beautiful, and it actually shows an appreciation of God's creation. Lynn knows so well, as does Foster, God revealed himself in what he created like Romans one says. And I really believe this helps children to look out and see the greatness of our God.

I would like you to join Betty and me thanking Foster and thanking Lynn for being a blessing to all of us. You can go online and find all the other books. I know Foster, he wants you to get this one right here.

[Laughter]

Thank you for watching! Thank you for being with us!