

9/28/17 Week 40
Christmas Shoes & Smiles: Last Week
James and Betty Robison
Dr. Robert Jeffress #2

Betty: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! Thank you so much for joining us. I'm Betty and this is James.

James: We're just thrilled to have Dr. Robert Jeffress back with us. He shared on heaven this week, not because we're just all getting up to load right now. But *A Place Called Heaven: Ten surprising truths about your eternal home*.

Would you welcome Dr. Jeffress back to *LIFE Today*?

Dr. Jeffress: Thank you, James and Betty for having me. Thank you.

James: You pastor First Baptist Church and our audience is as vast as the sea. It is people from all parts of the world and Christ's body. You capture people's attention as well as anyone we have. I'll be honest with you, sometimes preachers don't. Sometimes we have preachers and people listen to them a little bit; maybe if he's their guy and their deal they'll listen. But they don't necessarily capture everybody's attention. But you do. I mean that as a compliment. I think one of the reasons is your devotion to truth and to seeking, and also your courage and your conviction, but your concern, your compassion.

I've got to believe that you didn't just write this to give us surprising truths but you also wrote it because you knew people wonder about it. But I have an idea just like you know about us, you knew people that probably have someone very close to them in heaven and they want to know how it's going for them. Am I right about that?

Dr. Jeffress: You're exactly right. I think God has left us all here for one reason. It's not to build a successful career or to accumulate a lot of money or even have a happy family life. He's left us here to be representatives of Jesus Christ and point people to him. I've just have had a feeling that there is a hunger in this world now for heaven like there's never been before. We, as Christians, ought to take advantage of that and remind people, God has something better planned for you.

I didn't write this book, *A Place Called Heaven* to be an escape for people to say, "Let's get in our bunkers and wait for heaven to come." C.S. Lewis said one time, "History has shown that the Christians who have made the greatest difference in this world are those who thought most about the next world." He said, "Aim at heaven and you get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither."

I think this is a time for Christians to be talking about heaven and to be pointing people to the only way to heaven and that is through faith in Christ. Yet, very few Christians know that much about heaven. They're limited in what they know and that's why I wrote this book after 40 years of ministry to answer the ten most frequently asked questions people have about our home in heaven.

James: I think it is exciting that you're willing to do that. You were talking about not just getting in the bunker but doing things that resonate with the glories of heaven. You look down here on this table right here and you're going to see some little shoes like this. These are pretty cute little shoes. They belong on real cute little feet that have never had shoes and bigger feet, bigger shoes.

Then you'll also see, Dr. Jeffress all these little Christmas ornaments. We do every year for just a month, way early like we are now, Christmas Shoes & Smiles. I want, because this illustrates everything you preach, everything you believe, this is probably one of the most powerful things I've seen in a long time. I want to show you what happens when somebody gets a glimpse of the glories of our Lord in heaven and they decide to share that glory right here on this earth. And it happened when somebody saw us talking about shoes.

Now I want you to watch -- just look at this -- watch what a couple does because here's the deal. Right here in this studio and right here watching me, you've got the ability to move heaven and earth and touch people beyond anything you've ever imagined. Get ready to get blessed. Watch! You're going to love this, doc.

Begin video clip

Lisa: Hi! I'm Lisa Hawley and this is my husband, Glenn.

Glenn: Glenn Hawley. We own Off the Hook restaurant.

Lisa: In Warrendale, Pennsylvania which is right outside of Pittsburgh. We have three children. One of our sons had a little foot issue and I took him to the doctors but then I came home and I was going through the remote on the TV and I came across this child walking on a garbage dump and it broke my heart. Then I saw that they were unwrapping a rag around this little child's foot. It was stuck and he had to pull it off. And it was a life changing moment.

So I went to my husband and I said, "We need to do something." Being in the restaurant business we said okay, let's try to figure something out. And then we came back with this idea of "A dessert to share -- a reason to care."

Glenn: Our desire and what's in our heart is to get all kids that need shoes this shoes. This is the vehicle that we've chosen to use the truffles to bless our guests and then by that we bless the children with the shoes.

Lisa: From the production now we're over 31,280 pairs of shoes. There was a time in our life when it wasn't comfortable and it wasn't easy and we thought we lost everything but when you turn to God, like really turn to God, he turns things around.

Glenn: It is the talent that he's given us that he wants us to turn on and shine Jesus' light back out to our guests, to our employees.

Lisa: These shoes were a solution -- such a simple solution to such a big problem. They said children died from this.

Glenn: We would like to say thank you to James and Betty for bringing the world right to us -- right into our living room that then was a catalyst for us to try to also try to help and bring the shoes back to the world.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Isn't that great? Don't you love that? Isn't that awesome?

Dr. Jeffress: That's great!

James: That is exactly what we were able to do. We were able to bring the mission fields of the world into people's homes so they can put the arms of God around the missionaries and the people they're trying to assist.

Dr. Jeffress: It reminds me watching that video of a quote I use in the book and that is: "What we do on earth reverberates in the halls of heaven forever." That's what you're doing -- what we're doing with these shoes is going to reverberate forever and ever.

James: Exactly! That's when you're talking about not only getting ready for heaven and loving

heaven, but letting people see that there is the glory of heaven in us now and that we can actually lay up treasures in heaven.

Now you said you wanted to talk to us about what we're going to do in heaven and people are asking that and I told you even before we came out here. I said I like to fish. I do catch-and-release. Every now and then God will call one of the fish home.

[Laughter]

Jesus, the last thing he did was fix fish. So it's really okay to do that. Really, any meat is not murder. Abortion is murder. Now eating meat is not. But anyway, Jesus did fix fish. But there is a going to be a river. You think I can catch some fish in heaven?

Dr. Jeffress: I think you could. I think you absolutely could.

[Laughter]

It's going to be great. Again, that's one of the things I talk about in the book and answer is what will we do in heaven? I think one of the biggest misconceptions about heaven is that it's going to be a boring place or that it is going to be a place of unending worship, a 24/7 worship service.

Now look, I'm not minimizing the importance of worship. We are going to worship in heaven -- worship like we've never experienced on earth. I mean we have tremendous worship at First Baptist Dallas: Great choir and orchestra, wonderful singing, mediocre preaching but that's okay. It's a great time. But that's nothing compared to the joy of heaven.

We'll worship but that's not all that we're going to do. We're going to work in heaven. We're going to have real responsibilities. Now some people watching may be disappointed in that. They say, "That sounds like hell to me. Responsibilities? I don't want that."

Look, God created us to be workers. Remember what God said to Adam and Eve? "I've given you the garden but you are to cultivate it and keep it." That was before the Fall, before sin. God said, "You're to be a worker." God's created us to accomplish something. The only reason work isn't pleasant to us is because of the effects of sin. We have bodies that get tired. We have interpersonal conflicts. All that's going to be removed and we're going to have real responsibilities in heaven.

I think we'll be creating things in heaven. God said, "Okay, I'm going to give you cherries. Cherries are good." He created cherries but guess what? Cherry pie is even better.

[Laughter]

Avocados are good, but avocado dip is the best. So God wants us to take what we have and he's going to use us for something better. Some people are going to be given realms of responsibility; some to manage cities, some nations, some galaxies and so forth. The interests we have in this earth I think are going to stay with us.

Let me just say, I know so many ladies watch this program. Maybe you're at home right now and you say, "You know, I've had so many interests and gifts and things I'd like to do but all of my time has been spent rearing my children and taking care of my family. I've never had the opportunity to exercise my gifts and my interests."

Well, here's the good news. This earth is not the only place you get to do that. The interests, the gifts that God has given you aren't for this world only; they're going to extend all through heaven. So we are going to have responsibilities and work that we're satisfied with in heaven.

James: There's another question here that you indicated you wanted to touch on. I think it is important. How do you prepare for that journey? What do we do right now?

Dr. Jeffress: Well, we need to have adequate preparation for our journey and it first of all starts with making sure you've got the right passport that will get you into heaven. I mean if you knew you were going to a foreign country you'd make sure you had the right passport.

I remember I had just been the youth director at First Baptist Dallas for a year and we took 200 kids to the Soviet Union. So the time came for us to leave and I made sure all the kids got through and all the sponsors, my wife, Amy and so forth. I was the last one. I reached for my passport and it wasn't there.

James: Way to go!

Dr. Jeffress: I'm telling you, I started explaining to the guards I had to get over to be with my kids. My wife was crying on the other side imagining me in a gulag forever and so forth. At the last minute, a friend waved my passport. He had taken it as a joke. It wasn't very funny at the time.

You know what? There's going to be real tears when some people die and realize they don't have the right passport to get into heaven. If you've waited until that moment you've waited too long. There is only one way to get to heaven and it is through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I am not a way," He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me."

And if you are not a Christian and you're watching this broadcast, the most important thing you can do before this program is over is to place your faith and trust in Jesus as your savior.

That's the first thing that you can do but it's not the only thing you should do. I think secondly, we need to develop a here/there mind-set. By that I mean we need to be focused on fulfilling our responsibilities here on earth while we're preparing for the next world as well. God has given us real responsibilities here but he's also told us to lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven. And through *LIFE Outreach*, you're providing a way for people to lay up treasures in heaven by this great ministry.

James: I think you can see the joy of heaven in that couple a while ago. You could just see -- and everybody working -- they realized we're working for something of eternal value. Incredible!

Dr. Jeffress: I think that's true. I think thirdly I say to people, minimize regrets here on earth. The poet said, "Of all the sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are 'what might have been.'" I think about my own parents. They both almost died exactly the same way. They went to a doctor. They weren't feeling well. The doctor discovered cancer and said, "You have four months to live." And I watched them, each one of them prepare the last four months of their lives to meet the Lord. They were both Christians, great Christians, taught me so much. But I remember my dad especially, he died with some regrets. He talked to me. He said, "Robert, the relationships I wish I had restored that had been broken, the trips I wish I had taken." I remember he said to my brother and sister and me, he said, "You know I spent my life working to accumulate this money and now I'm having to leave it to you knuckle heads."

[Laughter]

He really died with some regrets. Don't have regrets when you die.

I think about the scripture that talks about Abraham; that said Abraham died at a ripe old age, a man satisfied with life. God wants us to be satisfied with the life that he's given us here on earth. So I think it is very important to minimize regrets.

Finally, I would say, take care of practical matters before you die. You know Isaiah the prophet said to King Hezekiah, "Hezekiah, you're going to die. Get your house in order." A lot of Christians die without their house in order; 66 percent of Americans die without a will and it leaves their family with a lot of confusion. Guess what? If you don't decide where your money is going to, Uncle Sam is going to decide.

James: He won't do right.

Dr. Jeffress: He won't do right. So make sure you have a will. Remember your church. Remember your family. Remember *LIFE Outreach* as a part of your will. Let your family know what you want them to do when you die. Go ahead and make those preparations for your service that will glorify God. The fact is, we're all going to take that journey one day and we need to be sure we're ready for it.

James: What you said about people preparing a will. We actually have a whole department that helps people know how they can give, not how they can give to *LIFE Outreach*, how they can give to help their family, to protect what God has allowed them to oversee or to accumulate and how to disperse it properly with minimal tax let's say depreciation against what they have earned. So please give us even that opportunity. You can simply say, "We'd like to have that help."

I think you were really thoughtful and wise to mention that to people because you know a lot of the money right now is controlled by widows whose husbands left it to them and they're gone. Many of them are saying, "What do I do with it?" Let's do something of eternal value. I think that's one of the greatest ways that you do lay up treasure in heaven.

Betty, you and I know we're going to heaven; not because we became a member of a church. I was christened and didn't meet the Lord. I didn't know him. Betty was baptized, sang in the choir and taught Sunday school, and didn't know the Lord. Good church members, both of us. But we both had an encounter with Christ and met Jesus. You came out of the choir to give your life to Christ. I came forward as a shy boy to put my hand in the pastor's and my life in the master's. Even though we had both had a religious encounter, we didn't have that relationship that Dr. Jeffress was talking about. A lot of people are members of churches that have not met Christ. You will not go to heaven without a relationship with Jesus.

Why don't you, just like you suggested, why don't you right now invite the Jesus who gave his life that you might have life? Would you just invite him in like a child? Jesus says we all have to come like a child; of such is the kingdom of heaven. Would you right now say, "Jesus, would you come into my life? I do believe you died for me. I know I'm a sinner. Forgive me. Cleanse me. Save me, Lord Jesus right now. I want to be born from above. I want to be born again." Just tell him that. And then thank him. You don't have to beg.

Father, for everyone who called upon your name, who invites you in, thank you for the reality of that glorious promise that whoever asks receives; in Jesus' name.

If you'd like for someone pray with you, you'd like to have a simple Bible study that we've

prepared for you called *Knowing God as Father*, you just call that number and say, "I'd like to have that simple Bible study." You want someone to pray with you? Ask them to do so.

All of you here in the studio, would you just thank Dr. Robert Jeffress for sharing?

Dr. Jeffress: Thank you very much. Thanks for having me.

James: His witness, his influence -- and the book, *A Place Called Heaven*. And then just like you saw, at the very beginning of the program, that beautiful couple that took their gift, their talent, their business and said, "We're going to bless people" and inspired them to bless others. They've given over \$100,000 for Shoes and Smiles. To God be the glory!

Would you right now, would you consider giving ten children a pair of shoes -- shoes for Christmas, smiles for Christmas? We're doing it now so we can deliver the Shoes and Smiles by Christmas as a gift. We have gifts for you to say thank you and they're going to bless you. They're going to put a smile on your face. But you're going to change everything for some children.

Would you do it right now? I want you to watch closely and very prayerfully say, "God lead me. I want to help some children. I want to give some Shoes and Smiles." Watch closely.

On the mission field

Ralph: James and Betty, you came to China many years ago and you saw the need and your heart was touched. In fact, your hearts were broken. These little children here didn't have a home, didn't have nowhere to live. But we have a missionary partner here now who takes these children in. They come from several different scenarios that would just break your heart. But these people bring them in. They have a home here for them. It is one of our LIFE Centers. They have various needs.

Some of those kids have that cleft lip, cleft palate need and they need a surgery. Little Isaac here, he's been one of those that came here with that need but he's had the surgery now. He's one of the recipients of Christmas smiles and we really thank God for that.

James, because of that vision God gave you that year, many children's lives have been changed forever and God has been bringing children through this center year after year after year, just many of them coming through with various needs. I'm always reminded in Matthew 25 where Jesus says, "As you do it to the least of these you do it unto me."

And just know that when we bring smiles, Christmas smiles to these little ones like Pippa, we know Jesus is smiling up above as his children are being loved on in a way that he would

desirous us to do.

So thank you to everybody for being so generous so that these little ones can have life and have it more abundantly and just bring joy to their little hearts. God bless you!

End of clip

In the studio

James: As Betty and I watch those cut ins of the time in China, you can tell that was many years ago, we went there with a broken heart. Those were called "the dying rooms." We were the only people ever allowed to go into the dying rooms with cameras and the only reason they let us do that is because they trusted us. They knew we loved them. Those weren't actually dying rooms. In their meager means of approaching disease, they didn't know how to deal with the ones they couldn't diagnose. So they would put those little children that were very sick, away from the other children trying to keep them alive. And we told them, "We want to help you keep them alive." They weren't trying to be mean; they were trying to save lives.

And one of the little girls you saw was Hope, the little girl with the kind of communist jacket on; she was blind. We loved her and I prayed she would get a home. She got one here. And boy, it was quite an experience. She has now graduated from college. She's quite a leader and she brought her best friend over here, because they went back and got her too. The stories are just endless.

Betty, it is what love does. When I go back and look at those scenes, I realize that we would come home with a broken heart of the missionaries and the broken heart of people and we would say to you, "Let's heal those hearts." Do you know what you did? You put the arms of God around them.

And right now we're doing Christmas Shoes & Smiles like we just showed you a child that could smile that couldn't before. Betty and I have decided we always give at each project, when you start, we give right up front, everything we do with the missionaries. But we decided this week we're going to give two more smiles, another \$1,000 for two more smiles for Christmas. And we're going to give another 50 pairs of shoes this week. We need a lot of that.

In this last week now, because we want to give the shoes to all these children all over the world, thousands and thousands of little children have shoes. It's \$36 to give ten children shoes. Surely you can do that. Would there be any way you could give 50 children shoes for Christmas by giving \$180? If you can, I believe you will.

Then \$1,000 for the smiles; it may be some of you can do even more than that. And say, you know what? I'm going to help a lot of children because I want to. See I'm smiling because I know what love does. So Betty and I are asking you right now this week, go online, you see the website, call that number and you make the best gift you can. Take your bankcard, use it like a check, that's how you should always use it. Or you can write a check and make it to *LIFE* but please call us and tell us you're mailing because we need to know this week because we really do need a big boost of support to get all of these shoes out.

We have some beautiful Christmas shoes to send you. The one this year that we're sending for any gift is a crystal shoe. It's absolutely beautiful. I don't know how well the light reflects off this but I'm telling you, that is beautiful! And then we have the whole box of shoes, that's seven of all of them that we've given over the years, one each year and we'll send all of them to you if you'd just give 50 kids some shoes. Make that gift of \$180. We're just sending this to you to bless you. You hang these little shoes up and you think about all of the smiles and all the joy you've given to children all over the world.

Go online, or dial the number and you make the gift God put on your heart. Thank you so much for doing it. Remember! This is the last week right now and we really do need some special help. Thanks for giving 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.

Far too many children living in poverty have never owned a new pair of shoes. And while that may seem minor in light of all their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections and disease that could lead to crippling consequences -- and even death.

By responding today you can help immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 150,000 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 the gift of \$180 will help provide 50 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

With your gift of any amount, be sure to request this beautifully crafted crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to place on your tree each holiday season. With your gift of \$180 or more you may also request this keepsake boxed set of LIFE's Christmas shoe ornaments.

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 determined eagle bronze sculpture. This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of clip

In the studio

James: Well, Betty and I are holding the "Determined Eagle" and the beautiful shoes. Would you give 50 children shoes? We want to send you all these beautiful gifts. And the "Determined Eagle," would you give a couple of children smiles for Christmas? Would you do that? This is our last week.

If you would like to have this incredible book, *A Place Called Heaven* by Dr. Jeffress, we'll send it to you if you'll just say, "I'm going to give some Shoes and Smiles." Ask for the book. It is in the bookstores, online. I know some of your friends would love to have it too. Thank you so much for watching. Would you join us in saying thanks to Dr. Jeffress?

Dr. Jeffress: Thank you so much, James! Thank you, Betty!

James: In the bookstores. Thank you for sharing Shoes and Smiles. Thank you for doing it. Thank you for watching.