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Week 35 Christmas Shoes and Smiles

James Robison

Scott Turner #1

James: I am so glad. I'm thrilled to be here. I'm not happy that Betty is not sitting here. You say, "Why in the world is she not here?" Because we have come in at a time we never tape. Like kind of right in the middle of the day. Because... By the way, I'm James Robison. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. And I miss Betty but she is so glad I'm here.

What we're going to do today is share an answered prayer. I mean an answer to a prayer that I've been praying for more than 20 years because you know this, you're going to see us give shoes and smiles to overlooked children all over the world and you're going to be excited about it. And every time you watch us you know we're going to touch somebody that has a need. But for years I've been praying for people who grew up like I did without a father, grew up in challenged areas where they wondered if anybody ever noticed.

And we have so many communities here in the United States, in the urban areas, in the inner city, so many that live without dad in the home who really feel like nobody notices. And I've been praying, God... I mean this is a 20-year prayer, it is a fervent prayer! God, would you please make it possible for those who have been blessed by you with entrepreneurial skills, who create wealth and jobs and opportunity, to go on into these challenge areas and be willing to take a risk to invest in the future of these beautiful people too often overlooked and show them a father, a mentor, somebody that loves them and get involved to help them get started? I'm telling you what, I'm seeing the answer to that prayer.

And I met the man, the football player, the N.F.L. football player, played for several

teams, didn't play for Dallas, dear God, forgive Dallas for not getting him but I'm telling you, when I found out that Scott Turner, a tremendous communicator, one of our state representatives right here in Texas was suddenly sent by God right into the room with a bunch of leaders that love God with all their heart and began to talk about something that was being initiated in Washington, right in the White House, working with Dr. Ben Carson, who has been here so many times, sometimes he thinks this is his own TV show. Dr. Ben Carson over housing and urban development. What a wonderful man! He and Candy are beautiful. This gentleman is working with him.

I want you to welcome to *LIFE Today* Scott Turner. Would you welcome Scott? I'm glad to see you, buddy. I'm sorry Betty is not here. You know you came in the middle of the day. Why would you go to the trouble of rearranging your schedule so you could come in here and talk to me about what you're doing? I'm curious about that. Why did you go to all that trouble?

Scott: Well, it's you! It's you and Miss Betty.

James: Well, Miss Betty is not here. And you understood that.

Scott: Yes, sir. Because I believe this is something that could revolutionize our country. Number one, being a believer and a Christian I believe that is very important that we get this story, and what's going on right now out to the viewers, out to the people who have the same heart, and even those who may not even have that heart yet, but after hearing what's going on they will. And so I want to do everything we could to be here. And I'm so grateful.

James: I want you to share a little of your testimony but tell our viewers the names of this revitalization program that the White House has launched with Ben Carson's oversight, with the ability God's given you to help carry the ball, carry the load. What's it called?

Scott: So it's called the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council. President Trump signed an executive order last December; created this council and appointed me a little over six weeks ago to be the Executive Director. Dr. Ben Carson, whom we all love, and I do personally, is the chairman of this council. So from the President's vision and encouragement and his heart for the stressed communities as well as Dr. Carson, this council was created. And I'm humbled to be the leader of this council and God's already doing amazing things.

James: Don't you believe that this can give people who didn't think anybody cared, give them hope and opportunity, and the entrepreneurial mind understands a risk. But because of the oversight that's going into this from Washington, from the White House, proper oversight they're going to have less risk because they're going to know that they're going to have an opportunity to actually do what they go in there to do and help the people.

You see this as changing the lives of the people and then suddenly finding that they may not have a father but they've got a mentor representing a father's heart which you're doing also, Dr. Carson does, but they're going to then see that they can actually find opportunity, create opportunity and maybe create their own way out of let's say the challenges that they've been experiencing all their life.

Scott: Absolutely. That's the heart. The spirit of this is to bringing revitalization and real transformation to distressed communities in America. And oftentimes the President, Dr. Carson and others talk about the forgotten people. Those that live in the distressed underserved communities of America where there hasn't been a lot of investment in decades. And even with the systemic problem we have in our government system that doesn't incentivize people to move forward. It doesn't incentivize people to work hard and get raises; in particular, if you're on government assistance because then your rent goes up and then there's no motivation. There's no motivation to have a mother and a father in the house because now you don't receive the same subsidy. So that systemic problem has to be broken.

James: It does. It's keeping those people in bondage. It is a worse form to find oneself in than slavery itself. They're in total bondage, subject to a higher power that never lets them go anywhere and they've never become productive.

Okay. I want you to tell us a little bit about your journey. You played for several football teams so we know -- name some of the N.F.L. teams you played for.

Scott: So I got drafted by the Washington Redskins.

James: Oh no!

Scott: I could have got drafted by the Cowboys, but we've already had that conversation. We talked about it but we're good.

James: You told Jerry you wouldn't even have a plane ticket, you're right here.

Scott: I'm right here. So I got drafted by the Redskins and also played for the San Diego Chargers and the Denver Broncos from 1995 to 2004. So God gave me nine years in the N.F.L. I was the seventh-round draft pick. I wasn't expected to get drafted, wasn't expected to make it, and particularly, that long.

But I have a story of coming from a broken home. I love my mother and my father, but their marriage was broken. There was domestic violence, there was alcoholism. They were young teenagers that got married and they stayed married for ten years; unfortunately they were divorced. So I saw my family unit broken right before my eyes.

But it was in that moment when I saw my mother and father separate that God put a dream and a vision in my heart. I told my mother. I said, "One day I'm going to play in the National Football League and I'm going to take care of you."

She taught me. She said, "You can do it." She said, "Trust God." So my mother instilled

in me faith in Christ. I accepted Christ at 13 years old at Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church and was baptized and have never looked back. God brought men in my life along the way that disciplined me and that mentored me and that challenged me at the right times in high school and college, and in the pros. And then with Dr. Jack Graham being my pastor now, and David Soto from San Diego, and Pastor Brett Fuller; so these men helped disciple me; and Darrell Green and Tim Johnson and on and on -- Aeneas Williams. So with that God has been preparing me.

And my father taught me to have great work ethic, to have a sense of pride in working hard to achieve and to earn what you want. So my mother taught me faith, my father taught me work ethic, and then God put the men in my life to teach me spiritually and give me a strong foundation.

The greatest part of that is that I got to portray those skills at Spring Creek Barbecue in Richardson, Texas. I was a dishwasher. With all the faith that God gave me, I stayed in that dish room with my friends ridiculing me, laughing at me, looking in the window saying, "Hey! We're going out. You're washing dishes." But in my heart of hearts I know God was saying, "Don't despise the small thing, the little things I have you."

So when I went to the University of Illinois I wasn't highly sought after as a recruit going to the N.F.L. but Illinois had a stadium there called Memorial Stadium, and by that time I'm 23 years old and God had been sending these men to disciple me. I had been through a lot of hardship as far as my career at Illinois, not being able to get on the field for three years. I was a full-time starter. Then started finally my senior year at a position I never played. I was a running back all my life and now I'm a corner my senior year.

So here comes the N.F.L. Combine. I wasn't invited. They invite 300 players to the Combine. I was a starter on the defense, but I didn't get invited. I'm like, I know I'm supposed to get invited. Right? And all of my friends started getting the invitations in the mailboxes. And I'm looking in the mailbox for mine, I never get it! You know sometimes we look for things in life and they never show up. And that's why our faith in

Christ has to kick in because we walk by faith and not by sight. I didn't see an invitation, but I saw God and I went over to their stadium. I started running stadium steps by myself in the cold in Champagne, Illinois because I knew the vision that God gave me that he would reveal it to me and that it would come to pass if I trusted him.

Well, long story short 22 teams came to my school for a pro day and they allowed us to run the 40-yard dash. When I stood up to the lines, they didn't even know my name. Have you ever felt obscure before? Invisible? I stepped up to that line and I said, "I don't see 22 men, I see 22 stop watches." And all of these visions from my childhood and working hard and the victories and the defeat, at that moment, at that time on that line I looked down there and I said, "I'm going to get down there as fast as I can, from here to there as fast as I can." I took off. Man, I'm running. And I crossed the finish line and all I hear them saying is, "Whoo!"

[Laughter]

They looked at their watch and they were like 4.22, 4.24 and they were like, "Son, where have you been?" I said, "Man, I looked in my mailbox, but y'all never sent my invitation!"

Well, I was 23. When I was standing on the threshold of that front door of my mother that day I heard my father separate, I was ten years old and I'm reminded, that was 13 years of trusting God, of believing him, of saying "yes" when everybody said "no" -- 13 years of preparation for four seconds. Changed my life. And my life has never been the same.

A lot of people say, "Oh it was just a 40-yard dash." No, that was transformational in my life because God that put that vision in me, he did it on that day 13 years later. So I encourage people, hold on to the vision and to the word and to the dreams God gives you. And even though the world may say no, the devil may say no, your flesh may say no, what is God saying?

James: I want us to stand against everything that ever killed the vision of every young man like me and like you who didn't have a dad or could have killed the vision in Dr. Ben Carson because he didn't have a father. I want to pray for all of you that felt like, I don't know if I have a dream. It breaks my heart to think that might be the case with any of you or anyone you know. Maybe you know someone that feels like they don't have a dream, or you wish they did. And maybe you could get them to watch this on line where I'm talking to Scott because I want everybody to know that God has a dream for you.

Father, I pray for everyone that feels like I don't even have a dream. Lord, I want you to show them your dream for them. Because I know Scott Turner has come to talk about your dream for all the people he's going to seek to help and that others who are gifted will seek to help. And then Lord for those who have a dream, but they've never seen it fulfilled, I want you to give them hope that it will be fulfilled; in Jesus' name.

I want to say to all of you watching, you pray for Scott Turner. The first time I heard him speak he was running to be a representative here in the state of Texas. I knew I was listening to an athlete, a former N.F.L. player who had God all over him. I don't know if I've ever seen any more zeal or passion but what's best for the people in our state. Then when I saw him in Washington D.C. and knew that he was actually working with Dr. Ben Carson that I love and prayed with for so long for so many years; he spoke at my 50th anniversary, my wife and I at Gateway Church. What a blessing. All the speakers were. Ben's been a blessing.

Well, when I realized that this great young man is now working with him, that he's actually going to implement a vision that God gave people around the President who loved Jesus with all their heart, and the President caught it and launched it and you're going to talk about it in-depth in the next program that we're going to do together.

I want you to tell me what you believe God will do with you as you go into these urban communities and inner-city areas where that dream needs to come alive and people need to see opportunity. What do you think is going to happen in these areas where you all go

with this revitalization effort?

Scott: I believe that God has prepared me for such a time as this. Because I like to tell people, I've been through a lot of hardship, but I've also seen victory. I've been very blessed, and God has given me a tremendous platform. And he's given me a heart for the hurting, a heart for the lost, a heart for those that may have been victorious but now are on hard times.

In Isaiah it talks about being a repairer of the breach and a restorer of the streets. When I went to the White House and I got this opportunity and accepted it, said, "It's great to be here in D.C., it's great to be in the White House and I'm so blessed but I'm a street man." I want to go to the people and to bring about this and be a catalyst to restore dignity and hope in the communities that have not seen that. And to bring in public investment and private partnership, private men and women that have resources to partner, to invest in the communities that have not seen it, to build new businesses, to build affordable housing for people to live and to work in their community, and the benefit, and thrive in the communities that are being revitalized, not to be displaced, not to be moved, but to live and thrive right there. That's the spirit of this. That's the spirit of the legislation, that's the spirit of the President, Dr. Carson, and all of us that are involved in this, that's our heart is to bring true revitalization.

You see revitalization, it doesn't have a color. It doesn't have a party. Revitalization starts in the heart. So that's what we're bringing. I'm excited to see what God will do.

James: I want our viewers of *LIFE Today*, if there are any people on this planet, all over the world who care for the people too often overlooked, Jesus said "the least of these," you do. I want you to focus your prayers on what Dr. Carson, what Scott and all those associated with him, and yes, what the President has initiated and put his, not only approval on but support behind, that we will literally see a miracle take place.

When the people who have -- and this is what's sad. A lot of these people who create

great wealth, then the government extracts from that wealth certain taxes. Erroneously, these wealth creators who pay these taxes like many Americans think, well, I paid taxes, that's supposed to take care of the poor, and take care of this. Without any personal oversight or compassion connection you're just taking the people's money and targeting it at something that it seldom hits and sticks. And if there is no love involved, there is no change made. It actually keeps people depraved and defeated, and with no incentive, and they never change. They just stay stuck. But people in power use them to stay in power where they never help them.

I want our viewers to pray that this will bring real life to the wealth creator who will say, okay, I'm not just going to hand it over here to Uncle Sam or to some Pharaoh or Caesar, I'm going to personally get involved, let me give them money, but I'm going to be personally involved, risk taking, and putting my life in let's say the gifting God's given me and the ability, I'm going to invest it right there. Don't you see this being -- this is called real on-site coaching from somebody who knows how to win. And it can totally change everything.

Scott: Yes, sir. And I believe that it will. Because there is economic development and there's community development. There is economic impact and then a social impact. And there's new tools with opportunity zones which we'll talk about later.

James: That's what we're going to talk about in detail. Scott's going to go over this in detail in the next program. Scott, simply because I've never been able to have as much time as Oprah, so we have to kind of wrap ours up in a half hour, and you understand that.

But do you know what we're doing? I know you love this. We're putting, and I used to hold up little shoes, I'd almost tear up because it looked like something that you'd be saying, put a little shoe for a little bitty foot. But we're going to put shoes of all sizes and these do pretty well expand a little bit as a child grows, but we're going to give 150,000 children, most of who have never had shoes in their life all over the world for Christmas.

We call it Christmas Shoes and Smiles.

I think you like this. I bet you'd like to have this on your tree. This is a little shoe, a little crystal ornament and we've got them in all different colors that people put on their tree and then people come in and see the Christmas shoe they talk about giving shoes and smiles for Christmas. This is what we're going to do.

So right now I want you to look with all our viewers. Now watch this: Christmas Shoes and Smiles. You look and see if you don't want to join Betty and me and all the missionaries in putting shoes on precious little feet and giving so many children a smile. Watch closely.

On the mission field

James: Betty, all these people have wondered why we're here. How are you? And we have told them through translators that we're here because we love them and because we want to give them a better life. We came in the name of the Lord Jesus but we didn't just come to talk about God's love, we came to share it and demonstrate it.

I'm kneeling here in Central America by a contaminated water source and we love to give water wells. But we found out something else. Because of contaminated water, and even contaminations and problems in the soil, children get little cuts in their feet and they pick up hookworms. And as I understand it that ultimately gets into their intestines and it is a horrible sickness. But it is a disease that not only brings incredible pain and discomfort but in so many instances death.

Betty: I'm standing here with these children and they're just a small example of children all over the world. They deserve to be cared for. And we have an opportunity to do that right now, to put some shoes on their feet, to give them a chance in life. And I ask you to help us do that.

It's just a simple request but a very urgent and important one. Please join with us. You'll get such great joy out of it. I know you will. God bless you! Thank you!

End of video

In the studio:

James: Well, I know, Betty, you're watching at home. I miss you being here with me. I sure love you, honey. Thank you for going to the ends of the earth with me to show children how much God loves them. You've been such a blessing.

Just looking at those little kids and knowing how many nations we've been to and how many little ones we've held in our arms, as the arms of Jesus. And then to know that we could put shoes on precious little feet that so often, because of cuts and vulnerability and bacteria in the areas where they play or even like those dumps, they get the hookworms and other diseases. We saw one little child that we didn't know if they were going to make it. That little child was fortunate there was even a doctor to try to save their life. So Betty, thank you, honey. Miss you today.

But to all of you who are watching, I want to ask you to give shoes for Christmas. We start way ahead of time. We have to raise the funds way ahead of time to buy the shoes. \$36 as an example will buy ten pairs of shoes. But we have to start way ahead so we can not only get the shoes, and we're asking God to give us 150,000 pairs, we get the shoes and then we have to ship them all over the world, to the various parts.

You talk about lighting up somebody's life, I mean this not only brightens the day of the little children but what a difference it makes for the missionaries who get to see these little children that they love blessed so much. So would you right now just dial that number that's there or go online and would you give? Would you give ten pairs of shoes? Could you possibly give \$180 and give 50 children, think about it, what a Christmas for 50 kids! Would you give 50 pairs of shoes?

And then would you help us do the cleft palate surgeries where their facial disfiguration will be dealt with and we could give those surgeries that cost an average of \$500 apiece? That's because doctors sacrifice their time and their skill. But \$1,000 will give two smiles for Christmas.

So would you join us with Christmas Smiles and Shoes, please? Go online or dial the number, take your bankcard. You'll need to go get it now. I wish you would do it right now. Just go get it and make the gift God put on your heart. We're going to send you one of those beautiful little crystal shoe ornaments that everyone enjoys so much. And if you make a gift of over \$100, I hope that you would give the \$180 for 50-pair of shoes, we're going to send the box of shoes which includes the little crystal green one and also other colors. We want to bless you as you bless others.

We've got "The Arms of the Shepherd" bronze. You are actually putting the shepherd's arms around precious little ones when you just put shoes on their feet and smiles on their faces. Thank you so much for making that gift.

By the way, if you tried to call and get a busy, be determined. Call until you get through. Say I'm going to make this gift. It will make such a difference. Thank you for doing it.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it children needlessly suffer, not only from a lack a food and clean water but also from a lack of things we often take for granted like a simple pair of shoes.

Far too many children living in extreme 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 provide 20-pair and a gift of \$180 will help provide 50 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

As a thank you for your gift of support, be sure to request this beautifully crafted green crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to display at each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 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 the beautiful "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms" bronze sculpture.

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

End of video

In the studio:

James: I'm hoping you will get the bronze, "The Arms of the Shepherd." We really do, as believers, have an opportunity to put the arms of the shepherd around so many who suffer. If you could make a \$1,000 gift to give all the shoes we can get for that amount or give two smiles. It sure would mean a lot. I hope you'll do it.

I want to just thank you, Scott Turner for who Jesus is in you. I really love you. I count it an honor to be your friend and to pray with you. Our viewers are going to do it. Would you join me saying thanks to Scott Turner for being here and for what you're doing? Thanks to the leadership in Washington who says we're not going to overlook those too often overlooked.

Thank you so much for watching. Don't miss the next program with Scott.