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Week 35: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

James and Betty Robison

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Jimmy Evans

Modified from 2/13/20

James: I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We're blessed to go to Gateway Church. And Pastor Robert Morris, as most of you know, first taught *The Blessed Life* here. He was on our staff and one of our closest friends. And then Jimmy Evans, is also pastor. They have beautiful roles at Gateway. And both of them have been a tremendous blessing on *LIFE Today* for many years.

Jimmy has a great marriage and family ministry that is on television but also incredible seminars and conferences. He has a book that he has just written and released called *The Overcoming Life*. Randy and Sheila, our son and Sheila Walsh interviewed him. And with all that we're dealing with right now and the need for overcoming, dealing with fear, which is major, and then the need to understand the power and necessity of forgiveness; and not only does Jimmy touch on that in this book and in this program but Sheila does and this is powerful. Betty and I really felt at this moment we needed to share this with you. I think you're going to be very glad we did.

Begin video clip

Jimmy: Well, Jesus died not to give us the ability to cope but to conquer.

Jimmy: Well, Jesus died not to give us the ability to cope but to conquer. And so he conquered death and hell. He conquered Satan and all of his power and he's given us authority but we have to use it. Luke ten, Jesus said, "I have given you authority over serpents and scorpions, over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means harm you if you use the authority." If

you don't use the authority you're going to get hammered. And so the wonderful news is we can overcome, because of Jesus, we can overcome in any area of life but we have to claim it. So this is what this book is about.

Randy: There's a lot; right?

Sheila: What would that look like, say somebody who is trying to overcome something in their own strength and somebody who then is overcoming under the authority of Christ?

Jimmy: That's perfect. So we talk about fear. I grew up all of my life fearful and insecure. When I got saved... now on the outside I looked real macho and I acted macho. In fact, the more fearful I was the more macho I acted. And I tried in my own power to overcome that, the fear. I just couldn't do it. In fact, it got worse. It didn't get better, it got worse.

I can't remember exactly the series of events but I got to the point one day, I read Second Timothy 1:7 and it says, "God hasn't given us a spirit of fear." What I realized was this wasn't my fear. See I always felt... There were events that happened in my childhood that were traumatizing. See, the devil is not a gentleman. Whenever you're traumatized he uses that as an open door to come in. I wasn't demon possessed because there is no such phrase in the Bible but he's attacking us in that area. So I had certain traumas that had happened to me that were open doors and he was using those to harass me. I didn't know it was him.

What makes the devil so dangerous is stealth. When he came into the Garden of Eden, he didn't take the form of a wolf or a bear, he took the form of a serpent. And the reason that serpents are dangerous is you don't know they're there, they're stealthy. So Satan slithers in, slithers out and he doesn't want you to know it's him. We are his perfect disguise. So he came into my life through me and he was introducing thoughts and feelings into me that I had no idea were him. I knew they weren't God but I thought they were me.

What helped me so much was the day that I realized, this is a spirit that I have authority over. We're not born with any fear. We're born fearless. All of the chronic debilitating fear is of the

devil and you cannot defeat it until you begin to deal with it as a separate entity.

Randy: Okay, that's interesting because you could take the idea of a spirit of fear as just an attitude of fear but you're saying it's more than that.

Jimmy: Well, for many people, their lives are debilitated by fear. They have this chronic... See, there is a good fear. And a good fear that God creates us with is you're driving down the street, someone swerves into your lane. Immediately you swerve out, fight or flight. It was temporary, it was circumstantial, and it was helpful. But bad fear is chronic, it is paralyzing and it is confusing.

What the devil is, and this is the way I say it is, fear is a prophet spirit from hell sent to give you a negative report of the future so that you'll make a fear-based decision that God will not honor. And see what fear does is...

Sheila: I actually would love you to repeat that because that's really profound.

Jimmy: Fear is a prophet spirit from hell sent to give you a negative report of your future so that you will make a fear-based decision that God will not honor. Because God only honors faith. And so the true prophet spirit is the Holy Spirit. "I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "Plans of good and not evil, to give you a future and a hope." So God's out here saying, "Hey, child, it's all good. Keep walking in faith toward me." The devil is over here saying, "He doesn't know what he's talking about. You're headed for disaster and you better do all these things to keep it from happening."

In fact, in the case of debilitating fear, in many cases there is nothing to do to keep it from happening. You're just waiting for the next shoe to drop. You're just...

Randy: Isn't that the goal of the enemy?

Jimmy: He only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Part of the question is why does Satan use

fear so much? Well, that's what he's full of. See, there's no peace, the Bible says for the wicked -- and he is the ultimate wicked person. This is what he... The devil thinks in fear terms, he feels in fear terms. As much as you know the presence of God by peace, you know the presence of the devil by fear, this chronic, debilitating fear. Again, the secret is the stealth. Once you realize...

So anger, it says in Ephesians four, "Be angry, don't sin. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath. It will give a foothold to diabolos, the devil." So what happens when couples go to bed on anger, when you go to bed on anger? So let's just say you're married. I went to bed on anger for three years. I was mad at my wife for three years. So I went to bed on anger. When you go to bed on anger the devil slithers in and accuses your spouse, slanders your spouse to you. So you fall in love, you just feel so great about each other. How does a couple go from being so madly in love and thinking the best of each other to just hating each other and thinking the worst?

Well, part of that formula is you go to bed on anger. You don't resolve it, you don't talk it out, work it out, and the devil slithers in and slanders your spouse to you. He slithers out. You wake up the next morning and you've been counseled by the devil and you don't know it.

Sheila: Wow! That's huge! That's huge! I'm thinking back in the early years of my marriage and that's exactly what would happen. I would get so mad at Barry and I didn't want to talk, and I would go to sleep. And you're absolutely right! You're counseled by the enemy. That's a horrific thought.

Jimmy: I did that for three years. In my family, when we grew up, we didn't know how to deal with anger so you just didn't make eye contact. We didn't know how to talk...

Sheila: So you never deal with anything.

Jimmy: You knew how mad somebody was at you by how long they wouldn't look at you. Well, that's the most dysfunctional... Well, that's what I did to Karen. So when Karen would make me mad or something I'd yell at her for a minute, whatever and I would go silent for days

just to punish her. Well, it's the most dysfunctional thing in the world. But I was under the influence of the devil's thinking. I was literally looking at my wife through the devil's eyes. I believed that I had made a mistake.

Sheila: I cannot just move on. That's huge to me! I think of how many Christian couples that's their story right at the moment and they don't even recognize it because they think, well, this is just what I think. They don't realize, no, actually I've been counseled by the enemy.

Jimmy: It is a spiritual world that we live in and we have to see through those eyes.

Sheila: Let me ask you then, so I'm thinking of a couple who are watching right now and they're sitting there and they're not even looking at each other as they're watching this program. How do you deal with that? How do you interrupt that? How do you change that?

Jimmy: Well, first of all you have to realize that the devil hates you, he hates your marriage and he's there to destroy you. And if you're a couple, your spouse is not the enemy, the devil is the enemy. And you have to come to the point of realizing, Sheila, like you said, and I did this for years, that when I go to bed on anger, it is an open door and the devil is going to take that door every time because he wants to come -- he only comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

You have to come to the point of saying, and I had to say this, I've made mistakes and these mistakes have been devastating to our marriage. And the mistake that I made for all those years was going to bed on anger and believing that my wife was the enemy. I truly believed that she had all the problems, and if she would change our marriage would change. And I believed I'd made a mistake. I know where I was standing and I know the moment when I had the thought, I shouldn't have married her.

Now we've been married 46 years. I married the perfect woman but back then because I was under the influence of the devil's thoughts, I thought I'd made a mistake.

Randy: So hang on. I cannot remember if we talked about this before the show or yesterday, or

the previous show rather but the first thing that mankind does is deflect that blame, "The devil made me do it." Which there is an element of that but yet you're saying you had to own up. So where's the... How does that all work between pointing the blame at the devil and then owning up for our own shortcomings?

Jimmy: His part of the formula is he is going to take the door that I leave open. I left it open. When I went to bed on my anger... see even if your spouse won't talk things out you can devil proof your heart. And before you go to bed you can say, Lord, I forgive them, I'm not going to punish them. I pray that you'll bless me and protect my heart. I pray you'll bless them. That's not the problem. The problem is when you go to bed and you're laying there and all these thoughts are racing around your head and all the what ifs and all the scenarios of what's going to happen, that's when the devil begins to play with your mind. So he took the open door, I left it open. That's my part of it.

Sheila: But that's beautiful because some people will think, well, my husband doesn't want to reconcile tonight. But you're not left abandoned in that.

But you know what? What you're talking about makes me think that's how you can get to the place where the person that you looked at and said, "I love you more than any..." you can suddenly think, you're an idiot. That comes from the pit of hell. That's not from... That's huge!

Randy: You're looking at it through the devil's eyes. That idea right there will stop you. What you're talking about in a lot of cases is unforgiveness and that's even bigger than the marriage relationship. That's something that scars people for their entire lives. It can be family, it can be work, and it can be friends. Do you find that unforgiveness is one of the biggest areas where we need to learn how to overcome it?

Jimmy: I think it really is probably the biggest because we're all going to get wounded in life. This is in the book, there is a chapter on unforgiveness. I'm not a hater. I've never been a hater but there have been a couple of people that I really hated. One guy in particular just did me a lot of damage. I just hated his guts, wanted him to die. I just had a little torture chamber in my heart

and I drug him down there five or ten times a day and just beat him up; just beat the nonsense out of him. So I just hated his guts, I just did.

It doesn't matter who you're unforgiving towards, it comes out on the people closest around you. So what happened was it came out on Karen. I began to be short with her. And Karen walked up to me one day and she said, "Your personality is changing." And I felt oppressed the longer I hated him, because I hated this guy.

So I was praying one day and Karen said, "You need to deal with this." And I was a pastor. This is not back in my bad days. So I was a pastor and I was praying one day and the Lord said, "I want you to bless him."

Sheila: Yikes!

Jimmy: And I said, "No! No, I'm not going to bless him."

Randy: Well, he didn't deserve it I'm sure.

Jimmy: I thought, Lord, if I prayed a blessing on him and you actually blessed him, now I'm mad at you. And the Lord never says, "Jimmy, you're right." So the Lord kept on. So he said, "I want you to bless him." He just stayed in my face about it.

So finally I prayed a prayer of blessing. Didn't mean it. And here's what the Lord said, "You pray for him like you pray for you." And I thought he doesn't deserve -- I deserve, I'm such a wonderful person, I deserve to be blessed. He doesn't. So I prayed the prayer, had my fingers crossed, didn't mean it. It made me sick to pray it. And the Lord said, "I want you to pray it every day." So I woke up the next day, prayed it, didn't mean it. Woke up the next day prayed, I didn't mean it.

I think it was 10-12 days into praying for him and his family every day, and I was praying one day and I, in my heart now, I saw a little ten-year old boy standing out in a field and kind of on a

ranch, kind of by a house, and I knew it was this man that I hated, as a little boy. What I knew is something horrible had been done to him. And the Lord said to me, "You see him for what he did to you. I see him for what was done to him."

And instantly, all the rage and the hatred became compassion and I never ever felt ill toward him again. And here's why I say it. A lot of people will say to me, "Jimmy, I have prayed to forgive my abusive father, stepfather, mother, ex-husband, ex-wife a million times but nothing changes." Jesus said, "Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who spitefully use you." That's not trite advice, that is healing. And if you can't bless you haven't forgiven. You can say with your lips all day long I forgive you, I forgive you, but you have to take it to the next level. And I'm talking about people that sexually abused you, I'm talking about people that did horrible things to you.

Jesus forgave us all that we did. We put Jesus on the cross -- we did. My sins put Jesus on the cross. So whatever a person does to me does not compare to what I did to Jesus and so it is grace for grace.

Randy: I also find that when you get stuck there, a lot of it is that conflict we have with that sense of justice, which is a right sense. But what we essentially say is I trust my sense of justice more than I trust God's by holding on. And not just letting them go, letting someone off the hook, putting them on God's hook.

Jimmy: Well, bitterness is a justice spirit. Bitterness demands justice before it will move on. It is the opposite of grace. See grace says God gave me grace, I give you grace. I'm going down the road, I don't have to have justice. But bitterness is I demand justice.

The thing is, that's great. If you want justice then God has to get justice with you. And see when Jesus in Luke six says, "Give and it will be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over" the context there is grace. He says, "Love those who hate you. Bless those who curse you."

Randy: We like to quote the model prayer, "The Lord's Prayer" we call it. Do we read the next

two verses?

Sheila: It's so interesting because 20 years ago somebody really wounded me and for ten years I prayed to forgive them. And I still felt this lump in my heart and then I began to pray that God would bless them, would bless everything that they were doing. And two weeks ago, it's the first time I've seen them in 20 years, and when I saw them it was like my heart was full of love for them. I went over and hugged them and it was like, we both asked each other for forgiveness.

But you're right, there is such power in praying blessing and it is trust in God's goodness when you pray a blessing on other people.

Jimmy: It is the ultimate form of God's love. It is easy to love someone who is lovable. It is so difficult to love the ornery ones and the hard ones and the mean ones.

Randy: The ones that don't deserve it.

Jimmy: That's exactly right.

Randy: In our eyes.

Jimmy: But you know, loving people like that is a Christ-like spirit. And in many cases, it shows them Jesus in a way that they've never seen it.

Sheila: And if anybody could have said, this is not my job, that would have been Christ on the cross. If there was ever anyone who could have said, I don't have to do this, it would have been him. But he did everything for us so it is a privilege to forgive.

End of video

In the studio:

James: Boy, I hope you understand you can have an overcoming life in an overwhelming world, a world that is so out of control. You can be brought under the control, listen, of the greatest force and source in the universe -- God's grace, God's comfort.

Father, we pray that for everyone. We really believe Jimmy Evans has offered us something. And I pray, dear God, that everyone will take opportunity to get the help he offers, in Jesus' name.

This really doesn't just come from a pastor, a shepherd, Jimmy Evans, it's coming from the Lord, the one who enables us to overcome. And I can tell you, boy, this has been a real challenge, what everybody has gone through. Betty and I have been amazed at the grace. Because I mean, a lot of people's idols, everything they really liked is gone, whether it is sports, entertainment, whatever -- it is over!

Now we believe it's coming back, and let's pray it never comes back as an idol because we've seen we can live without it. We might not have enjoyed it as much. But if we get the joy of the Lord and the overcoming that he offers, then it's going to be amazing what happens. But you just make a gift to help us give these Christmas Shoes and Smiles and we're going to send you the book if you'd like to have it.

Well, we're going to give some people a smile. We're going to give shoes for Christmas and we're going to give smiles. Betty and I made a commitment this week to give two smiles immediately and that's what we're going to do. And we're going to be giving some shoes too because we always do.

I want you to watch closely. Really watch this very prayerfully and then say, God, what do you want me to do? Can you give somebody a miracle? Could you give them a smile? Something they thought they might never see and the parents so wanted? Yes, you can! Watch closely.

On the mission field:

>> The day my child was born I was so very happy. But seeing the shape of my baby's little mouth broke my heart. My child deserves to know love and happiness like anyone else. But everyone just turns their eyes and looks away. Each day I pray that God will send someone to help us. What's a mother to do?

Announcer: Each day another child already destined to grow up in a developing country is born with yet another challenge from birth to overcome, cleft lip or cleft palate. And the question remains, what's a mother to do? Fortunately, every year at this time, *LIFE Outreach International* and our mission partners around the world seek children who need corrective surgery through our Christmas Shoes and Smiles emphasis. The corrective surgery provides them a gift for a lifetime -- a smile that will last forever.

We also see children smile when they receive shoes to protect their feet from injury and disease. This Christmas season help answer the question of "what's a mother to do" by providing Christmas Shoes and Smiles to children in need.

End of video**In the studio:**

James: I have to smile! I cannot look at that and not smile. Look at me just a moment right here. I'm glad I can smile. And I've seen so many of those little children. I remember seeing a little boy in Angola. It was like he'd never seen his face clearly in a mirror even. And we showed him a playback; we were talking to him and we showed him on a monitor. And when he saw himself he threw his little hands over his face and screamed and ran.

And did you know that in love, when I showed that response to people here in the United States and around the world, did you know the viewers said, "We're going to give that little boy a new smile." And we had to literally, and you gave it, the money to take him from Angola to Johannesburg where we could get the surgeon capable and your love gave that little boy a smile. He didn't have to run from his own face.

Father, I pray for every mother, every father who has ever looked at a little child and wished they could smile -- and that little child wished they could; sometimes they can't even eat properly. They have such a tough challenge. Would you give us lots of smiles? In Jesus' name.

I hope every time you watch me and Betty on *LIFE Today*, I may say some corrective words, hopefully, in obvious unconditional love, but I hope we make you smile. Because you sure have made a lot of mothers and fathers smile when you saved their children, you saved their families and you gave them a future.

Right now we can give some children shoes for Christmas. This is not a life or death thing. Well, for some because they get infections and hookworms and that can take their life. So it can be life or death, but basically, it is just joy. It is just showing them you notice. But these surgeries, I can tell you right now, Betty and I know you're for this, I don't have to ask permission but we're going to write a \$1,000 check today. As soon as we leave here, we're going to leave \$1,000 for these smiles.

And then we'll be giving shoes too, a bunch of them because we do every year. That's why we've got so many of these beautiful little shoe ornaments hanging on the tree. They're just everywhere. Betty just loves them! Our family loves them; our children, our grandchildren do. Would you make the best gift you can today? \$36 will give ten pairs of shoes. And Betty and I are going to give that \$1,000 right now, and that's two surgeries.

Go online or call that number and take your bankcard and use it like a check and make the greatest gift you possibly can. Give some smiles! If you can give \$1,000 or more, I believe you will and I believe there will be a smile on your face when you do it either online or calling in. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*; put it in the mail. But call us and tell us you're mailing it because we need to know if we're going to be able to get all these shoes and how many surgeries we're able to provide. Thank you so much!

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 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 will help secure and make ready 150,000 Christmas shoes to be shipped and delivered to 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 \$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 blue 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 all *LIFE's* Christmas shoe ornaments.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide 275 pairs of shoes or two children with corrective cleft lip or palate surgeries. And you may request the beautiful "A Mother's Strength" bronze sculpture.

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

End of video**In the studio:**

James: Well, Betty and I just say thank you. We're making that gift for two smiles. We will send Jimmy's book, you just give shoes. You give a smile, it would be wonderful. But you just make a gift to help us give these Christmas Shoes and Smiles and we're going to send you the book if you'd like to have it. I think it will be a tremendous blessing to you. I really believe that.

Thank you so much for watching. Thank you for giving us an opportunity on *LIFE Today* to share what God puts on our heart. And thank you for joining us in prayer. We share the concerns, you pray for them, you share your concerns, we pray for you. Thank you for caring about others. God bless you.