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Week 39: Christmas Shoes and Smiles: Last week

James and Betty Robison

"Return to Me"

James: I want to welcome you to *LIFE Today*. Betty and I consider it an honor that we can spend this time with you. We want you to know first of all beyond any ability to adequately describe, God loves you beyond measure or imagination and has shared that love in his son Jesus.

Betty, he's given us one another. I want to thank you for loving me for now, married to me for 57 years but loving me for over 60 years because we started loving one another when we were teenagers. And thank you for loving people that watch us because it wasn't easy for you to come in and sit by me when you wanted to be at home, a homemaker, but you came and loved people. What are your feelings when you see the challenges that our viewers face? And we know what's going on all over the world. And you realize how much love our viewers share because God loves, they pour his love out on others. What do they mean to you as you just look into their setting wherever they are?

Betty: First of all, let me say personally how much we love you and appreciate your support for *LIFE Outreach*, and how much we've been able to do together as family. We consider you family. But during these times I think it is a great opportunity for us to show our world, our nation how much God loves them through our actions, through our love for them.

I just believe a time is coming when people are going to be desperate, they're going to be hurting so bad. And we're seeing some of that now. They want to know there is something beyond what's going on right now. And we know there is because we know the Lord Jesus. We know him being in our hearts makes such a difference in our lives, and what we can accomplish with God

in our lives, and what he wants to accomplish in this world. He wants to make it a peace-loving world. He wants to express his love for him. He created us all. He loves us all.

So what an opportunity! I know there is stress maybe sometimes some of us are going through but there is hope in Jesus. And if you know Jesus, you know that hope.

James: Let me just say to you right now, we just reach out with arms of love and prayer. God, I want you to hold every person watching in your arms in a way that they sense that you would like to just hold them the way they would hold a child, a needy child, a hurting child, or just a child to love, let them know how much you love them. And that you want to flow that love freely through all of us as your family, in Jesus' name.

Can I just say to you in this pandemic situation, the viewers of *LIFE Today* have told us that you've been blessed not only by watching and hearing our guests, and Sheila Walsh, and our son Randy blessing you, and all the guests that we talk to and everything that we have shared. And some of you have been so thrilled by Ravi Zacharias sharing, even though he is in the presence of the Lord now, sharing with us. I mean you have just let us know that we have lifted you up in the presence of the Lord. We rejoice in that.

But you have also faithfully helped us provide water, helped us provide food. Right now we're going to try to give shoes and smiles for Christmas. But I want to talk to you very, very personally.

Betty, I want to share with our viewers something that God says is really sometimes hard to grasp. We know the enemy is always at the door. We know we're not wrestling with principalities and powers of visible flesh, we don't wrestle with flesh and blood, we don't wrestle with liberals and Democrats, Democrats and Republicans. It may look like that but we're actually wrestling with principalities and powers in the spiritual realm. We know that the enemy is always trying to get through the hedge that God has put around us, that's his word, that's his truth.

I want you to listen to something the prophets said when he was writing Lamentations. And boy, he was writing this. This is Jeremiah with a broken heart. He was talking about the lack of obvious concern on the part of many in the family of God, many of the inhabitants of Israel. He said something when he asked the question, is it nothing to you all who see what's going on? I believe God would say to every one of us as Christians, are you not disturbed by the chaos and the anger and the hatred and the violence and the destruction? Well, of course, if you love God and you love peace and you know the Prince of Peace, you're very disturbed by what you're seeing.

Listen to what Jeremiah said concerning what happened: The kings of the earth -- this is Lamentations chapter 4, verse 12: *The kings of the earth did not believe this, nor did the inhabitants of the world that the adversary, the enemy, the destroyer, the deceiver, could enter the gates of Jerusalem.*

Why? How did the enemy get in the house? How did the enemy get in the gates? I remember Betty, I remember when we came out very strongly in prayer. We had a wonderful Southern Baptist Sunday School teacher as president but Billy Graham, Bill Bright, Adrian Rogers, Charles Stanley, myself, Billy Graham called the prayer meeting and said, "I think we may not have enough strength in our leadership." It's our own Sunday School teacher. "I think maybe there is someone God's raised up that can stand now." And God gave us, miraculously through prayer, he gave us Ronald Reagan to bring down that communist Soviet threat to even see the walls come down. But once he said, "Tear these walls come down." When all of his advisors said, "Don't say that! Tear them down!"

And we were there when they were tearing down the wall. Betty, we stood there in Berlin. We watched it come down. We asked everybody tearing it down, "How did it come down?"

They said, "It was prayed down! Prayed down!"

Reagan even answered, "It was prayed down." But here was a man who stood up. The enemy was not at the gates. The enemy was in Red Square, he was in Eastern Europe, he was all over

the world seeking to come in here. Betty, the enemy has showed up right here! Right here -- highly visible to stand against a biblical worldview, against the position and understanding and wisdom of our founders and our foundation upon which this nation became the most blessed, prosperous nation in history! And the most benevolent, the most charitable, the most giving! And the greatest blessing freedom has known in this life.

And as that ground was being lost, all of the sudden, you wouldn't believe this, but the adversary, the enemy has entered the gates of Jerusalem, right here in the center, right here in the highest places of authority, in Washington, DC. All the nation's capital cities, places you're seeing people rise up that represent not a biblical worldview, not God's truth, not understanding a relationship with God as important; and liberty, understanding the precious relationship of our ally, Israel. And they're not going to stand for that, they're not going to stand for the freedom we've enjoyed. And you want to know why this happened? Verse 13, still in Lamentations: *Because of the sins of our prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who have shed in her midst the blood of the righteous.*

Betty, somehow, for many years now, we have stepped back and watched the shedding of the blood of the innocent unborn -- 60 million! We have watched the most precious aspects of life: Marriage, gender, sex, natural commitment, love -- all these things redefined. The truth of God's word not only denied but changed into a lie.

And the last verses in Romans chapter one: *They not only did all these things, but they gave hearty approval to those things.*

Do you realize there is a tremendous movement right now to get all of our nation's leadership in DC, to every capital city to every community to disregard the absolute truth of God's word; to not only not glorify him as God but deny his truth?

I want you to listen to something that Paul said that I think we better grasp today. In the 13th chapter of Acts to the New Testament church, he said, *"Take heed, therefore, so that the things spoken in the prophets may not come upon you..."*

Now who is he talking to? He is talking to New Testament Christians. Take heed what the prophets talked about not come on you. *"Behold, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish; because I'm accomplishing a work in your days, a work you would never believe, even if someone described it to you."*

Now what is that? That was a direct reference to Habakkuk chapter one. Now please listen. Let's get over there in Habakkuk and look at it. When you allow the hedge of God's truth and boy, you can ask Job what it is like when that hedge comes down, he was vulnerable. Well, that hedge was up like Satan said, "I can't get at him."

You take the Word of God, the truth of God, the foundation upon which we not only hear but heed and act on Jesus' words. We build a house on the solid rock foundation that all the forces and consequences that come against us cannot tear it down. The house will stand against a furious assault, against every storm, against every pandemic. It doesn't mean that you won't see an effect, but it won't destroy you. But once you let the hedge come down you become vulnerable to the intentions of the enemy.

Here's what the enemy does. This is what we've been watching him do now for years. He's just tried to shift it in high gear because he was actually losing ground. We were seeing miraculous answers to prayer where people were putting God first again. Where government was no longer the access, the source upon which you depend. We were no longer going to have a nanny state. We were no longer going to have Uncle Sam taking care of us. We were returning back to Father God. And we were seeing wise decisions made as an answer of the prayers of the righteous, the remnant, and God promised to answer the prayers.

But what happens now, and you're seeing the enemy, he's right here, he's trying to take over. *"Strife exists and contention arises. The law is ignored, justice is never upheld. The wicked surround the righteous; justice comes out perverted."* That's what we're seeing now! Even the legal system, everything you read about in the papers, everything you see on the news, you're watching it.

This is Habakkuk chapter one. This is what you wouldn't believe. But you're watching it! Can you believe what's happening? Can you believe that continuous riots, attacks, and violence and destroying law enforcement and security and protecting the people, allowing the enemy to prevail here at home? Not in Red Square! Not in communist China! In the United States! This is precisely what the enemy wants to intensify and increase. Excuse me! Excuse the zeal! But I'm telling you it is happening.

"The wicked surround the righteous, justice comes out perverted. Look and be amazed and be astonished. You wouldn't even believe this if you were told but now you see it. I am raising up the Chaldeans."

Who are the Chaldeans? These spiritual forces and powers that come in to take over when you allow the enemy to enter the gates of Jerusalem. To enter the family, the home, the community, the marriage, education -- all aspects of life. And he comes in like a flood.

"They are a fierce impetuous people..."

These are spiritual powers. The principalities and powers in the realm of darkness, deception, division, and destruction. And here they come.

"They march through the earth and seize dwelling places which are not theirs."

The first dwelling place they try to seek is this, the temple of God, our life, this fertile field of God and destroy it. Then all the dwelling places, the houses of God, the houses of worship, the family that is to be the center of life, they enter. He said earlier in Lamentations when Jeremiah was writing that the enemy comes through the windows like a thief! Takes the little ones captive he said. We're watching it.

"The enemy is dreaded and feared; their justice and their authority originate with themselves."

Not with the Word of God, not with absolute unshakeable irrefutable, historically confirmed truth but with themselves, what they think. They assert their will and their ways on others. They want to put it in law. They want to get it in the highest places of congress. They want to take over. This is the enemy! This is the enemy of freedom and life and righteousness and godliness, and foundation natural truth upon which freedom stands and the only way it can be preserved.

"They are dreaded, and they're feared; their justice and authority originate with themselves. They come for violence. They collect captives like sand. They mock at kings. Rulers are a laughingstock to them. They laugh at authority! They laugh at every fortress, every source of resistance. They sweep through like the wind and pass on. They will be held guilty, those whose strength is their god."

Their own power. They boast in their numerous warriors and their violent protestors and the destroyers -- this is the way they act. They're against freedom and peace and righteousness.

Why did this happen? *"Because you, Rock, God, allowed them to correct. You were too pure to approve evil. You can't look on wickedness with favor."*

So you've allowed those whose righteousness originates within themselves to come in and bring judgment.

"You've allowed men to become like fish of the sea. And the Chaldeans, the enemy, the invading forces take them away with a hook."

Much of our population is hooked on various forms of addiction: Drugs, alcohol, sex, all manner of things to hold them captive. And they're gathered and dragged in the net.

"They continually slay nations without sparing."

Betty, this is precisely what we're watching, and we need to be aware of. We're going to make a decision in just a matter of weeks concerning our future. Do we believe that there is an absolute

foundation of truth upon which we build that Jesus said you build and the house stands, freedom stand, the future stands, the potential for security, blessing stands, the opportunity to be blessed and be a blessing which is what this nation has been so noted for doing.

Folks, listen to me. We're choosing between life and death, right and wrong, good and evil, light and darkness. That's what we're choosing. This is the most serious time of prayer and choice, not only in America's history but freedom's history. It's for freedom Christ set us free. Why did God lead his children out of bondage? Because freedom is precious to him.

Why did he lead them into a land of promise and prosperity and productivity beyond anything they could have ever imagined? Because our Father loves his family. He wants the very best for us that he can provide. But he says when those great blessings come -- and they will -- because when you follow my principles and my truth, you are productive, and you prosper, and you can't even measure it monetarily. It's beyond the monetary and the material.

But don't let it capture your heart no matter how beautiful or good the benefits and success freedom's offers are. Because once you have an idol, Paul made it clear writing to the Corinthians, you let an idol rise up and you begin to fellowship and share with these Chaldeans, these trespassers, these who take you captive. You begin to share with the demonic forces.

Father, we were witnessing the beginning of a great miracle of your blessings beyond anything we had imagined, and suddenly all hell seemed to break loose. But beyond the pandemic, the real problem is the enemy has entered the gates. No longer across the ocean but the trespasser, the divider, the deceiver, the destroyer is right here. God help us to stand against the gates of hell and the intentions of hell and save themselves and overcome, in Jesus' name.

More than ever in your life you pray for God to raise up a people that will put his truth, his word, his principles, everything he says first and build on that solid unshakeable foundation of eternal truth found in his word. Betty, that's really the choice we have in a few weeks.

Betty: It really is. We have a choice whether we're going to believe God or believe what's

happening in our world. We've changed good into evil, we've change evil into good, we've changed truth into lies, lies into truth and we've accepted that. When is it going to stop? Only when the God in heaven comes down through the hearts of his children and has an impact on this world. We have to be courageous enough to want to be a part of that.

Now is the time. God wants us to stand strong and to vote our convictions, to live our convictions and the foundation that he laid out for his children to live by. Let's bring it back. It's right, it's good, it's God!

James: Betty, our viewers, I think you are the most amazing people. Every time we show you someone thirsty and we say you can give them water, you say, count me in. Somebody is hungry, we'll feed them. When we point to a need, you say count me in. You become the hands of Jesus.

Betty, we are right now, way ahead of Christmas, we're asking you to give Christmas shoes and smiles. Now here's what I know. You're going to be praying for God to heal our land and to direct us. But I believe you're going to say, "I'm going to be a healing factor in that life."

I want you to watch this. And I want you to see every image as an opportunity for God to show up through you and you become the miracle desperately needed. You watch carefully, closely, and prayerfully.

On the mission field:

James: I love you!

Announcer: For a child living in poverty in a developing country their smile may be the most valuable thing they own. But imagine if that child was born without a big beautiful smile.

People told me not to dream
To live in their reality
But I am walking through those doors
Because I am sure

There's something more
Than what I've been told
Oh, I know I found my way
Oh, tomorrow is a brand-new day
And the whole world is going know my name

Announcer: More than a decade ago, *LIFE Outreach* started an annual mission campaign called, "Christmas Shoes and Smiles." In addition to providing over two million children with a new pair of shoes, *LIFE* and its mission partners have also changed the lives of over 2,000 children born with a cleft lip or cleft palate by providing the surgery needed to give them their very own brand-new smile.

Tony: A big thank you to the *LIFE Outreach* family. It's a privilege to serve with you as we share the gospel of Christ and as we provide life-changing surgeries in our part of the world. Our partnership has resulted in children's lives being transformed; from disfigured faces to faces beaming with smiles all because of your generosity in providing these surgeries.

Our world is going to know my name.

End of video

In the studio:

James: How could any parent, grandparent, family member see those little children with those challenges and not want to be the miracle?

I want to show you again, just look. Here's just a few of those that first came up. And when you saw the tremendous deformity, the challenge, did you realize that you could be a miracle? Would you say I'm going to be a miracle for one of those children and their family? I'm going to give them a smile. Maybe you could do it for two. Look at these little children. Here's what they look like before the miracle and after. You're the miracle.

You know what you've been as viewers of *LIFE Today*? You've shared *LIFE Today* all over the world. You've shared God's love, not just in word only but in demonstration and deed. Well, this week we're asking for the greatest outpouring we've ever seen to give shoes, \$36 gives ten pairs of shoes. Could you give \$100 towards that and give several pairs of shoes? Quite a few? Could you do that? Would you please? Could you give a smile -- \$500? Wouldn't it be great if you gave two? There's some of you that can do that. Say you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to be a miracle for two children and their families! Would you right now go online, take your bankcard, use it like a check? I wish you'd call and you'd write a check. Well, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're mailing it.

We just thank you so much for sharing God's love. Not just in word, but in action, in deed. This is the last week. We've got some gifts to send you that will put a smile on your face but you're going to give a lot people a reason to smile when you correct that cleft palate, that challenge. Thank you for sharing God's love. Let it flow freely.

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.

This is the last week! Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of video

In the studio:

James: We're anxious to send you those special gifts. I want to thank you. Thank you for the gift of life and love. Remember, God gives us everything pertaining to life and godliness. The enemy attacks subtly, craftily, effectively everything pertaining to life and godliness. You're going to choose between life and godliness in just a few weeks. Make a wise choice. God bless you. Thanks for watching.