

8/24/21

Week 34: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Christine Caine #1

SHEILA: Welcome to *LIFE Today*! I'm Sheila Walsh here with Randy Robison. One of the things we get to do, Randy, is we have the privilege of interviewing lots of people, so we meet amazing people. But now and again in my life, I'll meet someone and think, wow! This is somebody God has placed his hand on and said, "For such a time as this." So I'm going to raise you up in ways you cannot even begin to imagine. That's how I felt, even the very first time I met our guest today. So I just want to say, Christine Caine, welcome to the show!

CHRISTINE: Okay, Sheila, I'm fired up to be here. I love you guys. We did have that instant; we just knew and became friends.

SHEILA: When I picked up your book, her new book is called, *How Did I Get Here?* I thought there are different ways you could ask that question. There could be like you're in the best days of your life and you're like wow, *How Did I Get Here?* But you turn it slightly different. What was the genesis of this book?

CHRISTINE: There was a few things, but one of the main things was I had what I call a perfect storm. This moment where, particularly, I was celebrating my 50th birthday, and I came home from the celebration and had 26 of these calls from my brother in Australia to tell me my mom had passed away that night.

So it was, that's devastating for everyone but particularly, when I was left in a hospital unnamed when I was born. I didn't know my biological mom; had a very complicated relationship with my mom. It sort of triggered some things, obviously there.

My sister-in-law, now within three months, there was a lot of back and forth to Australia because my brother's wife, who was my age, died of cancer. One of my husband's sisters died, and one of his brother-in-laws died. So we had this, when you're living on the other side of the world, a lot of back and forth. And when it is people your age dying as well, there is kind of some of that going on.

I also experienced, Sheila, at that time, a personal betrayal. You know the Psalm that David wrote, if it was my enemy that was against me, it would have been fine. But when it was my friend that I went to the house of God with, it cuts you at a level that is so different. So apart from also running a global organization, there is always something happening.

And then you might remember, unless you were asleep, you might have slept through this, but coming towards the tail end of 2016 into 2017, it was a particularly volatile time on the planet, and in America, in particular. So I don't know if you remember. There was that little thing. So during that time, if you had any sort of public profile, you woke up every day thinking, who am I going to disappoint today before I breathe? Because there is one group of people that was like, you're saying too much about this. Another group of people, you're not saying enough about this. You should be. And I just remember going, this is like, I'm not even meaning to hurt people, and this is all kind of happening.

This one day, I came home. Nick was watching a movie on the Navy Seals hell week. There was this scene where they dropped the seals out of the helicopter into the Pacific Ocean, and I started crying. Which if you know me, I'm not likely to be crying at a bunch of soldiers being thrown out of a helicopter. But Nick goes, "What's up?"

I said, "This is how I think I feel spiritually." I've always said we're the Navy Seals of the church. We're rescuing slaves through the work of A21, empowering women, and preaching the gospel. That's who we are.

I said, so I've always thought we were a Navy Seal, but I feel like I've been dropped out

of the helicopter, the ocean is freezing cold, I've got to swim to shore, and fulfill my assignment. And here's the deal, I know I could do it. I know I'm not going to die. I know that I have the muscle memory, the strength, the tenacity to do it. And I remember saying to Nick with tears streaming down my face; I went, "But for the first time in over 30 years, I don't know if I want to."

Sheila, I'd gotten to some places in my life where I had said before, I don't know if I can. Like when the Lord has asked me to do something. You're like, I don't know if I'm smart enough, if I'm resourceful enough, I don't know if I can. But I had never said the words, "I don't know if I want to." That was like, looking at him going, *How Did I Get Here?* That's really where it kind of happened.

RANDY: When you say "here," what are the "here's" that people get to? Is it just giving up? Is it despondency? Is it just...?

CHRISTINE: That's a great question because in my case, the here wasn't that I was leaving Jesus or anything. But the here was I'm going to take my foot off the gas. It's too painful to keep pressing at this level.

When I was younger, I was young and dumb, so it's like Jesus, here I am. Send me anywhere! I'll do anything. The thing was now, I'm 50, and I know the cost. And I know that the currents of the world are shifting so much to do what we do. It's costly. There is always someone that's not going to be happy -- or the emotional cost, the spiritual cost.

So there's that moment of going, am I prepared yet again to deny myself, take up my cross and follow him? And I remember saying to Nick, if I take my foot off the gas, there is so little spiritual discernment out there no one will even know. I've got so much momentum from 30 years. Nobody's really going to know. You post a nice picture and everybody -- you know. And then I remember through my tears I go, "But Jesus will -- Jesus." That really was my wake-up call and gave me some hope that I actually cared that Jesus would know that I'm still in this thing. Like I really, really care that he

cares.

I want to cross that finish line and hear, "Well done, good and faithful." I want to run my race and finish my course. Because at my level, the here is more like will I coast instead keep going? But at the same time, it was the beginning. Now since then, we see a whole lot of that. People would post regularly, either walking away from church or walking away from Jesus so that it could be walking out of your marriage, walking out of like, this drift.

My dad used to take us to the beach in Australia, and he would put up; we're Greek, so everything is loud and bright.

SHEILA: I love that story of the flag.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. Something big like the Greek flag umbrella here and the towels here. And he would say to us, when you're out there swimming, check your markers because the current is shifting so much underneath. Whether you realize it or not, if you don't check the markers, you will drift.

I remember he'd say to us, "Kids, all you have to do to drift is nothing." And that pertains to someone like me, as well as the person that's been following Jesus for ten minutes. All you have to do to drift is when someone is posting, "I've deconstructed my faith, and I've walked away," that's not the start of the drift. We started drifting way before we ever got there.

And for someone like me, taking my foot off of the gas, going, it's just too costly to keep pressing. Literally, Nick and I were talking about let's buy a Taverna in Santorini, serve people baklava, and talk about Jesus one-on-one. You know what? That would be a lot easier! Because I knew the currents of the world are continuing to shift, it is not going to change. So we will have need of endurance and check our markers regularly if we're going to run our race and finish our course.

SHEILA: Honestly, the way you wrote about drifting spoke to me really deeply. Because you tell the story of you and Nick are out in a boat, and he tells you to throw the anchor down. And you think you've done that, but it didn't quite go that way.

CHRISTINE: No! We're like in Thessaloniki visiting one of our offices. Nick's like, "Throw the anchor overboard."

And I'm thinking I want to sunbathe. That's why I'm on a boat, period. So you're in the Greek sun, you're on the Mediterranean, and so I like literally threw it. And then a little while later, there's this bump against another boat, and Nick's like, "Chris! What did you do?"

I said, "I threw the anchor."

He goes, "Did you check that the anchor actually connected to the sea bed?"

I'm like, "No one told me."

SHEILA: You should have been more specific!

CHRISTINE: Really? I threw it out. I think this is not a day for followers of Jesus to say, oh yeah, Jesus is my anchor. It's awesome. Like it doesn't really matter if I pray or read my Bible. We're just throwing it out. It's like the currents of this world are shifting so quickly you've got to check that anchor really regularly to make sure the anchor is secure. Jesus is the hope we have as an anchor for our soul. But our connection to the anchor, that's what we've got to be checking, I think, like really regularly.

RANDY: Well, it's good. I think we know how to check the anchor. Are we abiding in Christ as he said? Is that a daily thing? But what are some of the markers, maybe? How do we know if we're drifting, if we're on course?

CHRISTINE: I think for all of us, it is different things at different times. But I think there are several that we can look at. I always think one of the markers is when I'm talking to other people more than I'm talking to God, when I'm tweeting more than I'm talking to God. When I'm blogging more than I'm talking to God. When I'm offering my opinion more than praying. I know these vary; when you're more worried about whether you've got a blue check than whether you're having a heart check, whether the Holy Spirit is really doing a work on the inside of you; when you're seeping more than you're healing. When you're trying to control things more than trusting God. There are subtle -- there are the obvious ones, but there are subtle ones where you go, am I just seeping all my anger and bitterness and unforgiveness and gossip? Is it just seeping out of my woundedness rather than going to Jesus? Maybe that's a sign that I'm drifting, that I'm not going to Jesus to be healed.

When I'm trying to control everything, I'm not going to step out in faith anymore because what if? What if this goes wrong? Or what if that goes wrong? Or the cost of following Jesus, especially in today's culture? It used to be okay being a Jesus follower ten years ago, but nowadays, your colleagues at work are going to think you're strange. In the general climate of the very secular world we live in, it is not cool to be a Jesus follower.

So a lot of us are like, what if? So we pull back. We don't share our faith. We don't really want people to know. Rather than an even-if faith that says you know what? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the fire, God can deliver me out of this. But even if he doesn't, he is still God. And I think that whole sort of sign of drifting is when my what-if's are overriding my even-if's. It's like the fear, and I'm not stepping out in faith.

So I think there are -- when I'm no longer, for me, my sign of drifting was that I was tempted to stop pressing and start coasting. And the longer you've walked with Jesus, as some of us watching this program that walked with Jesus for 20, 30, 40 years, we've got the Christian language. We can turn up. We know what to say; we know how to say it. By and large, we are unlikely to go and commit one of the big five sins. For me, I'm just

too old.

SHEILA: Too tired!

CHRISTINE: It's like, honestly, I'd rather go to sleep. You kind of go, I always say it is easier to be pure the older you get. It's wonderful. In the midst of all that, if you go, I'm not likely to do that, but I could be tempted to go, I'm just going to cruise into heaven. And Paul says, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things that lie behind, I press -- I press on to lay a hold." And I wonder if we're still pressing. I wonder where we are with our first love. I wonder, they were the questions to myself. Now I can say I'm running a large global ministry. I could, like I said, nobody would know, but Jesus would, and it matters.

SHEILA: I want to back to one of the words you said because of your chapter on trust. If you saw my book, I've underlined so much in that chapter. I sometimes think we know the word, but we don't understand the weight of the word. Talk about trust.

CHRISTINE: Trust, you think the children of Israel, ultimately, they died in the wilderness, and it was over not trusting God anymore. That's really what it came down to. The difference between an Abraham faith, which we're supposed to have, the Bible simply says he believed God. Ultimately, he trusted that God is who he says he is, that God is going to do what he says he is going to do.

And I think if we all look at our lives, particularly, the last four or five years that have been very volatile, and the last year, without a doubt, post-pandemic, I think we can really evaluate and allow the Holy Spirit to show us somewhere along the line, were we trusting God like we thought we were trusting God? Because what are the things that made us unravel? Where is it that we freaked out just like the world?

Because the thing is if we truly believe the scripture, and when I say things are not going to get better, I mean it's not going to get easier. We will have to understand it's time to

grow up as Christians; what it is to need endurance. So for me to endure in these days, and to flourish and to thrive, all the things the Bible wants me to do doesn't mean anything is going to be easier, but I can flourish in it, I need the kind of faith that says, despite what I see, even when I can't trace God, I will still trust God.

And that's the world we're living in because so many of us face disappointment, discouragement, disillusionment. So many things out here are not aligning with what we thought we believed. It's going to come down to all of us. Will you still trust him when you can't trace him? Will we still believe that he is God and still able? It is a fight for our faith. That's actually what this is. We're arguing about everything out there on social media, and I'm like, you know what? I actually think there is only one fight worth having, and Paul says, "Why don't you fight the good fight of faith?" I think what is at stake right now is a fight for our faith.

SHEILA: I totally agree.

RANDY: What do you think the consequences are? Yeah, Jesus will know. We know that in our heads, but we sure don't act like it a lot of times -- speaking from personal experience. What do you think the consequences are, and not just in our lives but in our family and the body of Christ if we just drift?

CHRISTINE: That is what it comes down to. Because for a lot of us Jesus followers, it's going to be that subtle. Because we could go, well, I'm not doing sex and drugs and rock and roll, so I'm okay. But the cost of us not pressing to the end to our families, to our children, to our grandchildren, spiritual and natural, and to the body of Christ, we've been put on this earth, God knew the time and the seasons, so he chose this time, this season, and he's given us an assignment.

We're his workmanship, Ephesians 2:10, created in Christ Jesus for good works that he prepared when -- beforehand, that we should walk in them here on earth. So my lack of obedience, even though it would be subtle, it would result in other people -- I don't know

the people that wouldn't be reached, saved, delivered, healed, whatever it might be, but there are always people on the other side of our obedience.

So I could take my foot off of the gas and lead a morally good, nice, comfortable life. It's not that I've done anything bad, but there are sins of omission and commission. And so, imagine what I would have omitted to do. And what example would I show my 19-year-old daughter and my 15-year-old daughter that when you reach 50 and a certain level of ministry and what? Take your foot off of the gas? So then they would be wondering forever, was Christine in it for Jesus? Or was Christine in it for a nice, great ministry for 30 years, and then she got there, and so she then took her foot?

So then, I'm not showing my daughters that Jesus is worthy until the day I die. That to run my race and to finish my course, it will look different of course, as I age, but the fact is the call to obedience, the call to basic discipleship for every Jesus follower until our dying breath is to die daily, deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him. Like it or lump it. It doesn't matter if you're Chris Caine or if you're the person that's been following Jesus for five minutes. That's a call for all of us.

RANDY: I also think you run the risk of setting an example that when you get old that you don't have value and that you don't have worth. I think that's exactly the opposite of scripture. The older we get, we're getting there, the more we should be pouring into especially, younger generations.

CHRISTINE: Absolutely! Caleb was 85, and when Joshua said to him, do you want to cash in your 401K? This is the Christine revised standard edition, but you know, he said, no! He said I've done all these awesome things. He came out of Egypt, saw the Red Sea part, saw manna from heaven, saw the river Jordan pushed back, saw the Jericho walls come down, took the land to possess the promise with all of the tribes -- but he still felt, I haven't done what I'm here for. Moses promised me Hebron. I'm 85. So we've all got our Hebron. So that is really what Nick and I are saying. Do we say at 55, I'm done?

Just because the world says you can now retire and I get a special card that I can get a discount at McDonald's, awesome! It's like that's not the goal. The goal of my Christianity is not -- now, of course, Dr. John Piper did that famous sermon about are you going golf your way into heaven? Retirement is a very worldly concept. The scriptural concept is "refirement." So I'm sort of saying to people older than me, I'm climbing mountains at 55. We've still got, if Jesus was finished with me, number one, I would have woken up this morning with a white chalk mark around my body. But since I didn't.

SHEILA: Technically not woken up.

CHRISTINE: Well, yeah. I wouldn't have woken up. I would have been not awake or maybe in heaven. But the thing is, the fact that we're still here, still have breath in our lungs, means there is a purpose. The lie of the world is that you're done. Rather than you're an empty nester, you've got more resources, more time, more energy now. Whatever that might be, whether it is for prayer, whether it is to give. So I want older people not to coast.

And then I want to say to the young people, there are some markers that have been in the historic Christian faith for 2,000 years. It is not legalism to follow that. Praying is not legalism. Obeying the Word is not legalism. Reading the Bible is not legalism. These are markers that will keep you alive in this time. Not isolating yourself but being part of a church community, it's not legalism.

So I think I go through some of these things to go; some of these things have kept us on course for 2,000 years. We don't need to throw them out. And for the older ones, you can't fool God. And there is so much in you. There is so much potential. There is so much purpose. And the generations to come need it. And if we're saying God is not worth living to our dying breath, what are we telling them?

SHEILA: Okay, so as you can see, you're going to want to get this book for yourself. I'm going to tell you how you can get a hold of it. Honestly, I read it cover to cover, and it is

such a great book.

But first of all, I want to ask you to look at something with us. At this time of year, we turn our hearts and minds to children around the world who have never in their lives had a pair of shoes. That causes all sorts of problems. But our great, not kind of, not like we have to, a great privilege is we get to do something about that. So watch this, and then I'll tell you how to get a hold of, *How Did I Get Here?*

On the mission field:

Announcer: Every year, friends of *LIFE Outreach International* have been bringing joy to thousands of children around the world during the Christmas season.

Africa

>> This is like Christmas!

>> Yes!

>> High five! Show me your smile. Let me see. Look at that happy face.

[Children laughing]

Cambodia

Ralph: God bless everybody who provides these shoes because you're putting a big smile on mama's face today.

South Asia

Tammy: This is going to change your life! I'm so happy for you. You ready?

Announcer: The joy goes way beyond just receiving a new pair of shiny shoes. It's knowing their feet are protected from injuries or infestation, such as hookworms that enter their bare feet and can cause severe and sometimes fatal consequences.

Central America

JAMES: And we're asking you to help give as many pairs as you can. Make these kids happy. This is going to be something so special to them.

Announcer: Won't you join us in providing joy to children around the world? Christmas Shoes and Smiles.

End of video

In the studio:

SHEILA: You may be thinking, why are you talking about Christmas at this time of year? But we have to because we want to be able to get these amazing little shoes into the hands of these children before Christmastime.

I'll never forget the first time when I was in Thailand, and I had the privilege of actually going to a village with a whole van full of our shoes and seeing the children line up and realize they have never worn shoes in their life. Do you know that we get these made for \$3.60? That's what it costs. So literally, for \$36, you can provide a pair of shoes for ten children.

So here's my thought. Every Christmas we all spend too much money, we get things that we don't need, that we don't want, that we take back to the store. Why don't we decide this Christmas that part of our Christmas budget, whatever that is, is going to go to this? It's going to go to bless children around the world and their moms and their dads and their grandparents. Because it is not just that they don't have shoes, it is that they walk on these

terrible surfaces and their feet are in rivers where there is disease, and they get hookworm, and it causes severe malnutrition. It's huge!

Let's make this Christmas not about what we can get; let's make this Christmas about what we can give and make a difference in the lives of children. And then I think we have the right to tell them that Jesus sent us. We can all do it, Randy.

RANDY: We can! And another aspect of this, the Christmas Shoes and Smiles outreach are those surgeries that we do. Let's not forget that. These children who have the cleft lip and the cleft palate, in the third world countries, that's very, very difficult, and it's damaging to their health. It's not just cosmetically unpleasant, but it is a health risk.

So as we put the shoes on these children's feet, which I love, we can also reach out and correct a very serious situation with these cleft palates and cleft lips. So whatever you're able to do, we just hope that you'll join us. Yes, it is early. But you know what? Christmas will be here before you know it, and we want to be ready. We want to give 150,000 children a pair of shoes because we know the blessing that it will be in their lives.

We also want to correct a very serious situation. We want to change their lives so they can smile, they can eat, they can breathe. This is a part of *LIFE Outreach International*, and that we just like to give life to people in Jesus' name. We want to give shoes to 150,000 children. It is as simple as \$36 for ten pairs of shoes, \$72 for 20 pairs of shoes, \$180, that's 50 children that will receive a pair of shoes, and those corrective surgeries run on average about \$500. If you can make that gift, we invite you to do it now.

Here's what I ask. Go online or go to the phone, make the best gift you can and let's make this Christmas special. Do it now!

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 with life-threatening infections and diseases 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 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, green crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to display each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may also request this keepsake boxed set of all four shoe ornaments celebrating the various outreaches of LIFE.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes or two children with corrective cleft lip or palate surgeries. And you may request the beautiful "Divine Servant" bronze scripture.

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

End of video

On the mission field:

Isak: I'm here with this mother and her child, Aralmundo. You can see from what you're seeing on your screen how this little baby boy has been born with a cleft palate. The reality is that in order to correct this, there needs to be surgical procedure done. And yet it is so easy for us to be able to bring this solution to Aralmundo.

And I want to ask you from the bottom of my heart to please be the person that says, "Yes, I'll bring that smile. I'll give a smile for a lifetime to this little baby boy." Please, do that for me today. Give the greatest gift, give the gift of a smile.

End of video

In the studio:

RANDY: I'm so excited about the opportunity we have because I've seen what this does, and I'm hoping you will join us this Christmas with the shoes and smiles. Sheila, it just warms my heart.

SHEILA: I know, I love it! And for any gift at all, simply say, I want Christine Caine's brand-new book, *How Did I Get Here?* Christine, thank you for writing this book. It is so good. And just to see your face again makes me smile.

CHRISTINE: Me too! Me too! I love listening to our accents. They're very similar.

SHEILA: It's true.

RANDY: We appreciate all of you being with us on *LIFE Today*. Don't miss it next time.