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Week 36: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

James and Betty Robison

Robert Jeffress #1

JAMES: It is such a joy to share this time with you. I know there is a lot to be concerned about -- deeply concerned about. So Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. We're going to talk about experiencing the fullness of life, the abundant life -- not a life without challenges or problems, storms, very difficult valleys, even the shadow of death. But we're going to talk about how we walk and live in the shelter and shadow of the greatest Shepherd, the ultimate. He anoints our head with oil, even the oil of gladness, joy, peace, power in the presence of all our enemies.

We have one of the greatest shepherds and pastors, in my opinion, on the planet. He's in a church where I started preaching when I was very young, First Baptist Dallas. And he actually sat out there as a teenager and listened to me. He said it had a positive effect on him. I appreciate it. Dr. Robert Jeffress is here from First Baptist Church Dallas. He's got a book we're going to talk about it, *Invincible*. Wow! The word *invincible* is very biblical and very important to God. Invincible is reality if we're suited up in the armor of God and the fullness of his presence and power living in the shelter and shadow of the Almighty. I think you would probably say amen to that.

But Doc, we don't have an audience cheering as they would, but at home, they're cheering. So we're just really glad you're here.

ROBERT: Well, thank you so much for having me.

JAMES: Let's talk about this. I'm going to quickly read ten chapters. These are the titles: Moving from doubt to faith, moving from guilt to repentance, from anxiety to peace, from discouragement to hope, from fear to courage, from bitterness to forgiveness -- so

important -- from materialism to contentment, from loneliness to companionship. I have an idea that's talking about a companionship beyond just those people around us, that's real fellowship with the Father. Am I right about that?

ROBERT: It takes both. You can't have one without the other.

JAMES: You're good, man! You ought to pastor a church. Lust to purity and grief to acceptance: You said you wanted to emphasize several of those. Take off for us. We want to hear, and I really want you to pray about getting this book because I believe at this moment, and the very concise biblical clarity that he deals with each of these issues we're facing today. It seems like they're ever-increasing in the pressure that's coming our way. So I want him to deal with that. What do you want to talk about?

ROBERT: When I'm talking about being *Invincible*, I think the subtitle says it all: "Conquering the mountains that separate you from the blessed life." You know, in the Bible, mountains are a metaphor for difficulties we face. Jesus said in Matthew 17:20, "If you have faith as tiny as a mustard seed, you can move mountains."

Well, Jesus wasn't speaking literally, but he was speaking truthfully. The fact is, we're not going to remove these obstacles we have in our life, but we can conquer them with God's help. So what I've done is identify the ten mountains that are separating Christians from the life God wants them to experience: Anxiety, fear, and worry. And again, it is not that we will ever rid our lives completely of those things, but we can conquer those problems and experience what God wants us to experience.

JAMES: All right, touch that first, anxiety because I think a lot of people are anxious about a lot of things.

ROBERT: Over the last year and a half, I think many people's mountains, obstacles have grown in size, and certainly, anxiety has. We have all kinds of things to be worried about and fearful about. But Jesus said, "Do not worry." Paul said in Philippians four, "Be

anxious for nothing but in everything through prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God."

Anxiety comes from a number of directions. Some of our anxiety, frankly, may be unconfessed sin; some of it is a wrong value system. But, when we build our security around things that we know can be taken away from us, there is that low-grade fear.

But I think some of the anxiety we face, worry, comes from Satan himself. Have you ever had this experience? You've been on vacation, enjoying a great time, when all of a sudden, out of nowhere, this fear comes. What if this happens? What if this happens? You can be worshipping on Sunday and have this fear hit you, and it paralyzes you. That kind of fear paralyzes you where you don't want to read your Bible, you don't want to pray. You don't want to do anything. You're paralyzed.

That comes from Satan himself, I believe. It's one of those flaming missiles Ephesians six talks about. And the way we overcome that is by upholding the shield of faith, which Paul says will allow you to extinguish the flaming missiles of the evil one.

So in my book, *Invincible*, I talk about some practical things people can do to remove anxiety from their life. One last thing. An interesting study, Walter Calvert, 92 percent of the things we worry about never end up happening. That's Satan, isn't it? John 8:44 says he is a liar and he is the father of lies. He loves to get us to worry. And the two words that will make you worry more than anything are what if, what if, what if? We don't need to live in the "what ifs" of life.

BETTY: With today, everything that's going on, people do have a lot of anxiety. They don't know what the next day is going to bring for them or their families. But if we can understand and recognize that that fear and anxiety comes from the enemy, from Satan, then we'll realize that God has put within us the power to resist that and live beyond that and walk in the peace you talk about.

ROBERT: Can I say something that may get me in a lot of trouble with some folks, but I need to say it anyway? Christians, right now, if you're dealing with worry, watch what you put in your mind constantly. I want to tell you something. I don't care whether we're talking about liberal news outlets or conservative news outlets; they're all the same in this. They have one goal, and that is to get eyeballs watching them. And they know the way to get you to watch, whether you're a liberal or a conservative, is to either make you angry or make you anxious. And that is what every program and broadcast is designed to do.

So instead of having three or four hours of cable news every night or talk radio or reading a website, read the Word of God. Meditate on that which is true and good and right.

JAMES: Now, when you go on, and you're on the news saying something, you should watch that. It will be fairly brief because they never give him all the time they ought. He ought to have about half the show. But he will give you the good stuff. And then you might just want to check out and pick your Bible up and kind of play off of what he says.

You kept talking about the fiery darts and the enemy suggestions. I think it is very important for people to realize that all their thoughts are not their own. Many of them are suggestions of the enemy. He'll tell you why you should be angry, why you should not forgive them, why you have a right to hate, why you have a right to be angry. He just continually sets you up and fills you with dissension, division, and accusation. Those are not arrows but suggestions that lodge.

ROBERT: Let me give you a real practical suggestion that I think our listeners will appreciate. This is an original with me. My friend, David Jeremiah, came up with it and talked about it. But if you deal with anxiety, and I imagine many people watching today are dealing with that, take out a legal pad. Put at the top of the pad, "My Worry List." Make a list of everything you can think of that you're worrying about: Your job, your children. Make a list. You may need several pages.

Once you have exhausted everything you can think about to worry, take your pen, scratch out the word *worry* and put prayer. Turn your worry list into your prayer list. And if you will do that, that's what Paul said, don't worry about anything, instead pray about everything, and the peace of God shall come.

JAMES: And if you don't even want to use the word *worry*, you don't like to think I'm worried, you might say I'm concerned, the same thing. Take your legitimate concerns or your silly unnecessary worries, but take those concerns and take them to God. It's the only way we're really going to see things change because God promises to answer our prayers and even heal our land. He can actually turn everything.

I believe all the great things that happen are answered prayers. We tend to give too much credit to the politicians or the leaders. We'll tend to make a hero out of them, rather than understanding the principles of God are the foundation stones you build your house on, and it will withstand all the tests and storms that are sure to come. And it is not just reading the Bible or even believing the Bible, and he says, and you do what I say, you build the house.

So when we get our national leaders to restore God's principles far beyond even what we might call "Founders' principles," these are freedom's true principles; these are the Father's principles. I know we're in agreement on that. You'd be saying amen if you were sitting out front. I want you to take that next point that you said you wanted to touch on today.

ROBERT: One of the things we talk about in the book, in fact, the first chapter, is moving from doubt to faith. Because again, over the last year and a half, people have doubted many things. Some have doubted God's care, God's sovereignty. And I think people need to understand that doubt, especially about spiritual things, is natural. You know people think they're going to hell if they've ever doubted. I really believe the only people who really take their faith seriously have doubts at some point in their life. I mean, you look, I don't care whether it is Calvin, Luther, even Billy Graham; early in his life

talks about a time where he doubted whether the Bible was truly the Word of God.

JAMES: That was a major point in his life. He settled it, "I believe you, God."

ROBERT: So we all deal with doubt. The important thing is what we do with our doubt. There is a difference between doubt and unbelief. The Bible condemns unbelief; that is a settled conclusion you've made. But doubt is something we all go through. And I tell people, doubt is kind of like a mushroom. Mushrooms grow best in the darkness. And I think doubt grows in isolation from other Christians. One of the unfortunate things about this pandemic is many people have become disconnected from other Christians. They've become disconnected from church. You've seen this in ministry, both of you. Satan's favorite tactic is to isolate Christians and then attack. That's why Solomon said, "Two are better than one. And a cord of three strands is not easily broken."

I talk about in my book, *Invincible*, a portrait of doubt, and that's Thomas. He's one of the examples. We call him "Doubting Thomas."

JAMES: He was a disciple.

ROBERT: He was so torn with grief over the crucifixion of Christ that he separated himself from the rest of the apostles. And when Jesus appeared to them in his resurrected state, he wasn't with them. He missed out on the benefit of seeing Christ because he was separated from other believers. Those of you watching today, let me tell you something. When you're going through a hard time in your life, there's only one person who thinks you shouldn't be in church, and that's Satan. He's the one who is going to tell you to take some time off. You need a little sabbatical from church. That is a lie of the enemy. We need other Christians, and they can help us work through that doubt.

JAMES: Well, the fellowship of the presence of the Lord is in the presence of the family. There's just something beautiful about it. We've got like five minutes. Let me say this to you before we close. I want you to touch on that last point. I read all the different points

that he deals with. I want you to get the book. I don't know anyone I respect more than Dr. Jeffress. No one comes on our television program that communicates with you, the viewer, any more effectively, period! And we just have the greatest communicators on the planet. Nobody communicates better. He really loves you. He leads well. So give him an opportunity to kind of sit down like he's in your home and point out God's plan and his way. Touch that last point. By the way, get the book.

ROBERT: One thing I would say to all of you watching today is this. It doesn't matter what obstacle you're facing; God's will is for you to conquer. Not to remove but conquer that obstacle.

On May 23rd, 1959, Sir Edmond Hillary conquered Mount Everest, the highest, tallest mountain in the world -- 29,000 plus thousand feet. But it was Edmond Hillary's first attempt. He had tried two years earlier, and he had failed in that attempt. And after his failure, he stood at the base of the mountain and shook his fist in the face of the mountain, and said, "I will conquer you one day because you're not getting any bigger, but I'm growing every day."

And that's the attitude of a Christian. We are growing if we are in Jesus Christ. I think about Zechariah 4:7, the angel said to Israel, they were supposed to rebuild the temple. It was a huge effort! And remember what the angel said? He said, "I will level the mountain into a plain."

God can take your biggest problems and turn them from a mountain to a molehill if you trust him. And that's what *Invincible* is about; how to conquer those mountains you're facing right now that are separating you from the extraordinary life God wants you to experience.

JAMES: I think you can see why I have so much admiration and appreciation. Betty, are you willing to comment on not only the things that he is saying but something that's on your heart that you know he touched in the book, and you want to be sure people read it?

BETTY: I think he hit the key ones, being afraid, being anxious. God tells us to be anxious about nothing but to trust him with our whole heart. Sometimes when the day seems the darkest is when God is the brightest I have found in my life.

JAMES: I really do want you to know, Doc, that your ministry here has blessed these viewers. I want to speak very directly to you. I'm going to give you an opportunity to put a smile on a lot of people's faces. But I want to put a smile on your face. You have come together during this pandemic pressure time. You have to wonder if we have become vulnerable in all these diseases and all the opposition and all the dissension has come because perhaps, you remember when prayer was removed from the schools, and we said we need to get it back in? Dr. Jeffress, I contend that prayer was removed from the schools because too many American families had moved prayer out of the homes. They weren't taking prayer seriously, and therefore, it was put out. I think if we get prayer back in the homes, I think you'd be surprised where it would show up. We may not have public prayer time, but I think if we get our lives right with God and our schools began to change and their leadership, you won't stop anybody from praying. You'll see prayers all over the school. You'll actually smile. Even if you don't believe in God, you'll smile at the belief and the confidence those praying have in God.

So please know this, you have during this crisis time, those of you who watch *LIFE Today*, you've been reaching out and putting God's arms of love around the people he gave Jesus to redeem. You have been amazing. And people have told us we've watched God give us the invincible aspects that Dr. Jeffress talks about that you'll enjoy reading.

I want to hold something up right now because these visions come many times from viewers. A businessman came and said, "I can produce shoes like, well, they're kind of like the popular Crocs. I can get them very inexpensively, and we could put shoes on the feet of children and people all over the world." This one right here says on the ribbon, "Christmas Shoes and Smiles." This one is for this year if you'll help us give Christmas Shoes and Smiles. We have to start now to do it so we can deliver by Christmas.

Betty, you're going to love this! This is the first time I've actually seen all of them in the box. Here are four of the other shoes. And the one I just mentioned is in here, and all the major ministries like Water for LIFE, Mission Feeding, Rescue -- all of these are on the ribbons. And we're sending this to those of you who will simply give \$100 to help us give shoes. And you're going to see we can also give smiles.

I want you to look in and see the situation we're dealing with, and just say, "God, how do I not only get my arms around these precious ones you love so much but how do I bless them in a way that they can clearly see?" Watch closely.

Begin video clip

Announcer: If there's one thing mothers around the world pray for above all else, it's the health of their children. And with everything these children are exposed to, that can be a tall order.

This year you may have partnered with *LIFE Outreach* out of compassion to take care of some basic needs like clean drinking water and a daily bowl of food. But have you ever thought about the dangers children face every day simply from being children? With poverty as the deciding factor in what these mothers can provide for their children, a pair of shoes is a necessity that many children will never have.

This coming Christmas season, we'd like to do something special for these children and give them a pair of shoes of their very own. These shoes will not only protect their feet from injury and disease but will be a treasured possession that will remind them of God's love.

BETTY: We come over here to be a blessing, but we always go back so much more blessed, James. I think because we see what can be done, we know that our friends, because they love children, they love to give, they love to share, that's you I'm talking about! You love to help. And this is a real need--shoes for the children. Please join with

us. You'll get such great joy out of it. I know you will. God bless you and thank you!

End of clip

In the studio

JAMES: Honey, you have a beautiful smile! That's what got me -- and watching you smile all over the world. Just think about this. Betty and I, after preaching crusades in stadiums and coliseums for over 30 years, and seeing millions of people come to Christ, started going to the ends of the earth. And for the last 25, now pressing 30 years, we've been going and putting arms of love around those children. Watching those smiles on Betty's face, looking at all those ones you'd recognize giving the shoes, seeing these beautiful children smile, I know you love that! There is no question in my mind. I wish you'd come back and show the picture where we're all sitting there together and just holding those kids. I look at that and say, God, that's so beautiful! Those are your children, and you love them; we've got your arms around them. We're not just telling them that we love them; we're showing them we love them by giving them water or food.

And now then, we're going to put some shoes on their little feet. You saw those awful sores. You've got to understand, Betty and I stood there and watched children die because of hookworms that got in their feet through the cuts on their feet and ended up in their brain.

Father, please let us put peace on the feet of these children that you love so much, in Jesus' name.

Would you give us a miracle outpouring of love right now? Did you know that for \$1,000 you can give 275 pairs of shoes? And Dr. Jeffress, I always start high. People can think small on their own. So I know that if we give a \$36 gift, for instance, that's ten pairs of shoes. So don't think \$36 is small because for ten children it's big, and their families. Doc, I want to always try to get people to think beyond what they might think and say,

God, can I do more? If you do exceedingly abundantly, can I do more than I thought? I want you to pray about giving the largest possible gift.

We're going to send you the beautiful little Christmas ornament for any gift. We're going to send you this beautiful box of Christmas shoes, many that we've shared over the past years. Remember the ribbon represents Water for Life, Mission Feeding, Rescue Life, and then the new one, Shoes and Smiles, Christmas Shoes and Smiles. We'll send that to you if you make a \$100 gift.

But I also want to encourage you to consider, and Betty, let's really be praying together right now this will happen; if you could give \$1,000 or more or \$10,000, do it. What a gift! Let me tell you what we're going to be doing with some of those larger gifts. We're going to do cleft palate surgery. And we're going to give children not only shoes but smiles for Christmas.

Let's just pray. Father, please touch every heart, everyone who can help to help, even above and beyond what they might have thought, in Jesus' name.

We're trusting God to bless you as you bless others. Let me tell you something else. You make any gift to Christmas Shoes and Smiles, not only what I mentioned, but if you want Dr. Jeffress's book say, "Would you please send me that?" You better believe we will because we want to bless you just as you're blessing others.

Go online, dial the number, take your bank card, use it like a check. Make the best gift you can. Do it now. 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 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:

JOHN: Hi, James and Betty! Thank you so much for the opportunity that you've given us to be your hands extended, to be able to provide shoes for children just like these.

MARITZA: Yes! Because of your faithfulness and your generosity, along with so many others that join hands with *LIFE Outreach*, we're able to make such a difference in Latin America. Children like these can have shoes and go to school now and play on a playground just like this, and we don't have to worry about them cutting their feet. They

can be normal children.

ALL: Gracias!

End of video

In the studio:

JAMES: Well, I want to thank you. Betty, we prayed, I prayed for one of the greatest responses we've ever seen. I pray we can even give more shoes than we even talked about. I pray it goes beyond anything we ever even dreamed or prayed about. So whatever God wants you to do, do it.

If you'd like to have Dr. Jeffress' book, you help us give shoes and smiles and ask for it, we'll send it to you. You might want to go online and get copies for friends because you won't be wasting your money or your time, and you could change somebody's life.

Dr. Jeffress, I want you to come back. You and I have been around a while. I will have been preaching 60 years in October -- 60 years! But we've been around a while. I think it's real serious right now. Can we do another program where we're going to talk about this book? But could we give some suggestions to people about how to pray and what to do in these times we face?

ROBERT: I'd love to do it. Thank you.

JAMES: We're going to do that. Doc will be back with me. We love you. Thanks for loving others with the love of God. You're such a blessing.