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Week 38: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

James and Betty Robison

Pete Hegseth #2

JAMES: All right. Betty and I welcome you to *Life Today*. We have told you that we have 25 grandchildren now. That's from three children married who gave us 11 grandchildren, and ten of them are married and they have given us now 14 great-grandchildren with another one on the way. And we care about their future. We care about your children and your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren's future.

And Pete Hegseth who is as gifted a communicator as he is on any television network in the country, he does the weekend news, does a lot of stuff with FOX, but does the weekends, just super. Talking to him right now, Betty and I interviewed him because Betty got so excited about this book that she wanted everybody to get it. Because we've got a *Battle For the American Mind* because we're losing our schools. And the American people are waking up about the time Pete really woke up.

Betty and I are talking to him and I want you to listen to this because we have tried to get this out as far as we can get it. You're going to be blessed listening to someone who cares about you, your kids, your future, and what's best for everybody you love. Here we are talking to Pete Hegseth who wrote the book, *The Battle For the American Mind*.

Begin video clip

JAMES: Pete, a few years ago I launched a website called The Stream, STREAM.org. A river of truth and wisdom. Eric Metaxas who wrote *Amazing Grace*, and also Bonhoeffer, Eric has told the leaders in Washington, I heard him say the most brilliant minds right now like our founders are streaming every day on the stream. Ninety-five million people

have visited The Stream. And I'm praying everybody in America will listen to what you're saying because what we're pointing out with these brilliant people who are flowing this wisdom, and there are no ads, nobody is cutting in, nothing is trying to lead you away, nobody is trying to raise money on it. It is the wisdom of God in answer to prayer just flowing continually, which is precisely what you did marvelously, you and David together. It's like a gift from God because we're fighting for the minds.

Here's the deal. It's not flesh and blood that the battle is with. It is not Democrats, Republicans, and liberals and conservatives. The battle is with the deceiver, the father of lies, Jesus said, who is a murderer. We are not fighting flesh and blood but these spiritual powers in the heavenly realm. We have seen the fruit and the ugliness of the deceiver. It is ugly beyond description.

History records the catastrophic consequences of believing the deception and casting aside the principles of God. If the people who know God, love God, who are his family would look like that Father and the body of Christ, the church would look like the body of Christ, we could correct course because people are fed up with what they're seeing. But they need to see what love looks like. They need to see what transforming truth looks like. And that comes through the family of God. It comes through people like you, and like Will, and you guys are trying to help save the future of freedom with the transforming truth about God and his love and about what has to happen in education. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

PETER: Thank you. Amen. So well said. It is a fight against the deceiver. And Ernest Hemingway once said of bankruptcy, "It happens gradually until it happens quickly." The same thing happened with education; it happened gradually under our noses for 100 years and then COVID-19 came, we call it the COVID 1619 moment, and the classroom was brought into our homes and parents started to realize the depth of the deception you're talking about. It is wake-up call time and there isn't much time left to your point.

Get politically involved, I get that, there are policy solutions in this book. I think the next

election cycle is critically important. But we also can't expect the ballot box to save us and it won't. It's going to be our own homes and churches and schoolrooms and how we educate the next generation. It was only three percent of people in our founding era that were actively involved in the cause for liberty. We need to pump out our three, four, five percent right now out of institutions in the next generation that can be that next generation to lead the fight for freedom.

We're humbled to do our small part, we're grateful for the part that you guys play, and certainly, it is all in the Lord's hands. All we're going to do in the meantime is swing away with everything we've got.

BETTY: Well, I'm very encouraged that we are seeing people, families, and parents finally stepping out. And I think one good thing that could have come from the pandemic was being homebound and seeing what our children were being taught. It opens your eyes once you see. You think how could I have been blind to this for so long? We kind of accepted it. But no more. Enough is enough, don't you think?

PETER: Absolutely. And they've pressed their--I mean they've overplayed their hand because they're overconfident because they know they're totally unaccountable to anybody. All of these teachers' colleges and teachers' unions, administrators, and most school boards are in the pockets of the unions. The education departments are completely controlled by the democrat party and the unions.

So all of their power is so consolidated. Howard Zinn is writing his textbook, *People's History of the United States* is in the textbooks now. They are so overconfident that they're now just coming out and saying, I'm your dad, I'm your mom now, and if you want to change your gender pronoun at the age of six I encourage you to do so. The lunacy of their thinking has gone full circle and gone public, which had given us a chance to reorganize, a military context, consolidate and reorganize, assess our situation, get our feet underneath us, and build a plan. And the plan is not to hope we can survive public schools or change them overnight, because we can't.

And that's why the last five chapters of this book are about the solution. I call it a radical reorientation around the education of your kids and grandkids. It is not enough to move to a nice zip code. You can't justify that you paid the property taxes, they have to go to that school. It is big bold choices that we all have to make. And I make them in the same situation that hopefully our readers and our viewers do. I'm learning in real-time.

I've learned a lot from David Goodwin in this project. It took me a while to pull my kids out, but it is necessary now. And I'm just grateful to try to shout it from the rooftops.

JAMES: I've been pointing out to all our viewers on *Life Today* television all over the world and I've been on television 50 years, I've been pointing out that it is our money that funded the enemy's agenda. We have funded what's gone on in our schools with our tax dollars. We've been left here by God as overseers of his garden, which is planet earth. We've done a very poor job. And it is our money that has funded the agenda that you're watching that you're trying to expose and correct. And we can do that.

But why don't we stand together to say you're not going to keep using our money to fund the very movement that will destroy that which gave us opportunities? We've got to bring a stop to it. And we can do it. It needs to happen in the next two years.

Why did you get so suddenly stirred right now that you knew I have to start not only talking openly but pay the price to write something that helps us correct course? What moved you to do that right now?

PETER: You know, Andrew Breitbart said, "Politics is downstream to culture." He's right. Culture drives politics first. Politics is a lagging indicator. My pastor Chris Durkin took it to the next level about a year ago and said--I remember my wife and I talking about it on the way home, and I wrote about it in the book. Culture is downstream of religion, of faith. If you're devoid of faith in believing in God, you will find another religion and that religion will drive your culture and eventually drive your politics.

In my particular case, undertaking this endeavor was an extension of a learning process I'd been on where I thought politics was going to fix this. I wrote a political book in 2016. I thought I'm interested in politics. I'm getting in the arena, fight for it. And then the deeper I dug, I wrote a book called *American Crusade*, which in that book I said, "Someday I'm going to give my degree back when it is the right time." It wasn't. I don't think my heart was where it needed to be. It wouldn't have had the maximum impact.

But that was more about culture. So it went from politics to culture and when you strip it back—I mean, I've said this to my kids—if the Lord had called me to be a minister, I would have; but I know that's not my calling. But I think that's the most powerful way to change lives is by saving souls and by introducing people to Jesus Christ. And I'm hoping in this particular way through this education and through options that we're bringing people to salvation and then saving our Republic in the process.

So it was a shift of realization in my mind of where you actually win the battle. It is not politics, it is not even culture, it is faith and it is in the classroom and it is reviving that, reawakening that that is going to reawaken our country. So we're being very arrogant if we think we have it all figured out, and I certainly don't. I know I have learned a ton in the last six years. I learned a lot more than I ever learned at Princeton or Harvard, I'll tell you that. And the real education I got was with my men in a platoon in Iraq. You want to learn about human nature and good and evil and deception.

So it's lifelong learning and ultimately, hopefully leaning toward seeking what real truth is. It is going back to basics.

JAMES: Pete, for some reason, business leaders and church leaders, and national leaders have been willing to listen to me for one reason. I don't talk partisan politics. I don't talk sectarian positions. I don't talk personality. I talk principles--irrefutable principles that are taught in the Word of God, but history confirms them. You apply those principles to people that are blessed and benefited. You throw those principles aside, you ignore them,

and the consequences are historically proven catastrophic. We're seeing that today.

So what you're doing in this book is you're saying restore principles. That's what birthed the nation. That's what this book is about. The two of you did an amazing job. This is not a difficult read and it is full of historical, irrefutable truth. It is inspirational. And if we would take this truth and just come together like the family Jesus prayed we would be, the Father desires, I want to fulfill the Father's dream in my life. I want to see your children blessed by his dream being fulfilled.

By the way, if you build on an unshakeable foundation, you don't just hear the word, you don't just declare it, debate it, or defend it, you do it. You do what he says and you build an unshakeable relationship, unshakeable future, unshakeable business and we can restore the future of our nation. Does that make sense to you as a commentator on television?

PETER: You're motivating the heck out of me. That makes complete sense. That's why this book is an action book. Yes, we want you to read it, and we want you to understand the depth of the problem and the history behind it. That will probably rattle your cage and we want to.

But more importantly, I want everyone to self-examine what they can do to put those principles to work in their lives right now with their kids and grandkids. Take a look. Look at the newsletter of your alma mater. Look at what's coming home in their homework. Look at what they're talking about with their friends and what they're doing on social media and where they're getting it from. And intervene now as a parent or grandparent and put--the progressives wrote about it 100 years ago. They said, "What can one hour of theistic training on Sunday do against our 40 hours a week of humanistic training?" They wrote about it. They knew it. It was their deception from the beginning.

We hope this book rattles people's cages and then lays out directly the types of schools that are out there, the things we have to do to find them, how we afford them, how we grow them, and how we lock shields with other patriots and Christians to rebuild our

culture from the ashes. And thankfully, we're not alone. The darkest days of this fight were the 1970s when there was not a single classical Christian school in America today. It was totally buried. They buried the educational system of our founders. Some brave parents, mostly out west started some classical Christian schools in the '80s. There are thousands of online, tens of thousands of online homeschool classical--the options are out there. The insurgency has begun and we're pumping out the types of minds that can read Latin and Greek, that know the Old and New Testament, that understand the great books, have engaged with the big ideas, and can't be deceived by fallacies. And they understand what critical thinking looks like. That's the most dangerous thing we can do in our culture today, to the ruling class, and nothing about that is political, that's just about preserving freedom and passing it on to the next generation.

So I think this is a part of getting that back. That's why I'm so passionate about it. And we're in the fight. That's what we're in this for. I'm not in this to be on TV, and neither are you. I'm in this because I love the country and our Lord and Savior, and hopefully, we can keep our shoulders to the plow.

JAMES: Betty, what did you want to say?

BETTY: I wanted to say too, I want to encourage the older generation to get your book and to read it, to be inspired, to be encouraged because we're to be the mentors. We've seen a lot of the history that these young people are missing out on.

I want to encourage them that it's not time to retire from life. We have work to do. And so I just want the older person to be encouraged. And you have the time to read now whereas the younger generation might not have. But you can pass it on. You can tell them about what's in the book and encourage them to get involved.

PETER: I love that! And that's why I always say parents and grandparents, always, every time. It is a level of influence we need a lot more of in our culture and our life today. So here here! I agree.

JAMES: The last challenging word from you. If every American was listening right now, I want them to hear this. I would like to think that every American understands that freedom is important and it's being threatened. What is your challenging closing word?

PETER: Oh man! Freedom is never--is only one generation away from extinction. Nothing we have here is inevitable. Nothing will self-perpetuate. This world is full of evil. Most governments that have existed in human history have failed or have descended into tyranny. Ours could do the same. And we are raising a generation of self-loathing, left-wing activists who believe America is an evil place.

The only way to turn back that tide is to go on the offensive; is to stop making excuses, explaining away okay, it's just that school or my kid's going to be just fine. Or we'll try to deprogram at home. It's not going to work if we want to transform and turn around--not transform, turn around our country back to its founding principles. Do your part in the sphere of influence you have, which is the most precious resource you have, which is your kids and your grandkids. By arming them with the truth and the ability to think freely, you are creating the most dangerous weapon our culture has. And if they are able to lock arms with other kids and grandkids across the country, you have a potential movement and a reawakening that this country desperately needs as you both know.

So we humbly hope this book opens some people's minds and that they take action as a result. So thanks for giving me this opportunity.

JAMES: Well, thank you for giving your time and risking your life to help protect and preserve freedom for us. And you not only did that before an enemy, but you were also trying to give Iraq freedom, and I want to thank you for that. And we together can give our lives and our time and our prayers for freedom.

Pete, thank you. I pray everyone that is watching will encourage everyone in America and around the world to read the great truth in this book. Thank you so much.

PETER: Well, James and Betty, thank you so much. Congratulations on 59, almost 60! What an accomplishment!

JAMES: I think we're going to make it. God bless you, buddy, you have a great week.

PETER: God bless you! Thank you.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Well, I tell you what, Pete, we help a lot of people make it in their marriages if they could remember God's role in our life. We left prayer out of the schools because we didn't keep it in our homes with the focus we should have. And now, we've left God out because we haven't kept him in the focus, we haven't kept him in our marriages, we haven't kept him in our business, and we have certainly not kept him in our national leadership. I think Pete is part of what I see as the next great spiritual awakening. I do believe that, Betty. I think the stage is set for people who love God, who love their family, who believe faith is important, who love freedom, for us to stand up and take back our schools, take back the future, and begin to show people how great our God is. I think we can do that.

BETTY: One of the things he says all through his book that grabbed my heart was we're indoctrinating our children, we're not educating them. In other words, we're telling them how to think, we're not letting them have free thinking in their hearts, James. And before it was according to the foundations of God, that God gives us the freedom to think and to do things that we know are right. But now they're trying to take all those freedoms away from us even in our thinking.

JAMES: Let me just say this to you. We are right now in our Shoes and Smiles emphasis; that's what we do for children for Christmas. And we have to start way ahead

of time. If you will give \$100 or more, now think about this, we can give ten pairs of shoes for \$36. For \$100 you can give a whole lot more than ten kids. But we're sending you four of the beautiful little shoes that you can hang on the tree, and we're sending you a little box with four of them in addition. But if you will give at least \$100 to help us share the shoes, we'll send you Pete's book. Just keep that in mind.

I want you to look at the beautiful settings related to Christmas, and the opportunity we have to give shoes and miraculous smiles to little children. Our viewers love this. It was a viewer like one of you who brought us the shoes that we could afford to get and made it possible. It is a miracle. The smiles are doctors that go to the fields and you pay the basic cost of the surgeries. I want you to watch this prayerfully.

On the mission field

Announcer: There is nothing like the sights and sounds of Christmas to bring a smile to one's face, especially to the face of a child. But for tens of thousands of children around the world, there is little to smile about at Christmas time. That all changes when they receive a brand-new pair of shoes -- many for the first time in their lives.

Without shoes these children must face the very real challenge of disease and infection entering their bodies through their feet. A very real danger is being infected with hookworms that can lead to stunted physical and mental development.

The smiles on their faces upon receiving their new shoes reflects the joy of Christmas that comes from giving to those in need. And yet, there are still others that cannot share their gratitude because they simply cannot smile without corrective surgery for cleft lip or palate. Now you can help bring smiles to so many with a gift these children will never forget no matter if they smile for a season or for a lifetime.

Won't you please consider making a lasting difference in the lives of these precious

children? There is a child waiting for someone to help them smile this Christmas. You can be that special someone to give them a smile.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Isn't it great to give a little child a reason to smile? But also, Betty, to give a child that couldn't smile a smile?

BETTY: To me, there is no greater joy than to give them the gift of shoes which they think are wonderful. But it goes so much further because it protects their precious little feet from disease and all manner of cuts and everything you can think of. But also then to see the smiles, what a--that makes my day, James. You see our grandchildren smile and it just lights up my face. Well, I believe it lights up God's heart when we give to the children; to give them shoes and then to put smiles on their faces.

JAMES: I looked at that little child a while ago that we showed you with the lip pulled up this way. I just wanted to hold that child. And then I wanted to say we're going to give you a chance to smile real big.

God, there is somebody right now who is going to help two children smile and they're going to be so happy. It's going to put a smile in their heart. And then Lord, all the people that will just--please, Lord the people that say I couldn't give \$100 or more but I'll manage to give \$36. Let them see what that means to those ten children that get shoes, in Jesus' name.

Please see that! Please recognize how special God's love through you is. That you put smiles on a child's face through a miracle surgery. Or you put smiles on their face because you gave them shoes to protect their little feet for the first time.

And by the way, they can wear these over the years. They expand a little bit the way the buckle works. So it's not like something for a few months. And they have lasting soles. And by the way, you're going to reach their families for Christ because it's love that never fails. That's why when you give this love, Betty, it's changing their lives now and for eternity because most of the families give their lives to Christ, the Jesus they've seen through the love you've expressed.

Would you right now get your bank card and use it like a check? Dial the number there on the screen. Tell them what you want to give. If you make a check, make it to *LIFE* but call in and tell us you're mailing it. We need to know. Or you can go online and make the gift.

Thank you so much. Thank you for giving *Shoes and Smiles* for Christmas. And we have to collect the support ahead of time before Christmas to get the gifts to them. 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 diseases that could lead to crippling consequences -- and even death.

By responding today, you will help secure and make ready 150,000 pairs of 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 beautiful crafted red crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to display each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake boxed set featuring four of *LIFE's* crystal Christmas shoe ornaments.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more, to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes, or two children with corrective cleft lip or palate surgeries. And you may request a beautiful bronze sculpture, "Let the Children Come!" Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: I just want to thank God for Pete and this book, and for David Goodwin who helped with the classical schools. You can go online and see what they're doing. If you give \$100 or more toward the *Shoes and Smiles*, we'll send you Pete's book, *Battle For the American Mind*. That's what we're in, we're in a battle for the American life, and the American future. We're in a battle for the future of freedom. Jesus died that we might be free. It is the truth that makes us free and keeps us free. What we've been teaching in our schools is anti-truth and we've allowed our resources, our finances, and our tax dollars to fund all of this nonsense. We can stop it now. Thank you for doing it.

Betty, thank you for your zeal and your concern. Thank you so much for watching and thanks for sharing life and the love of God.