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Week 38: Christmas Shoes and Smiles

James and Betty Robison

Kelly Shackelford #1

JAMES: Okay. I don't do a show I'm not excited about; don't have a guest on I'm not excited about. I'm excited about you. And you've heard us say -- by the way, I'm James Robison, this is Betty, next year 60 years married and 60 years of ministry. But when I tell you I'm excited about something, I can't go beyond the excitement I have today.

Our guest has just been an instrument of Almighty God to pull you about as close to God's shelter and God's shadow and his security and his love as anybody has in decades. I'm talking about decisions made by the Supreme Court that affect you in ways beyond anything you could ever imagine. I'm talking about the miracle of God. And by the way, you may not understand this but so much of it happened because, Betty, of the prayers of people just like you.

But here's the thing you need to understand. What happened did something not happen for you, it did something for everybody you love and care about. Betty and I have three children, one in heaven, 11 grandchildren, and now 14 greats and more will be coming. We've got 25 grandkids. We care about all of them. You know what? We care about our neighbors. Do you know all our neighbors believe we love them? Because we do. I think you do.

I'm telling you what has happened recently, and the man I'm going to talk to is an answer to your prayers. I think he is an answer to the prayer of Jesus in John 17. And I think he's an instrument of God to get the whole church, the family of God, the perfect Father's family, the body of Christ with Christ the head, I believe that he is being used of God to

get us healthy and to give us the way to be what we were left here to be. I'm talking about Kelly Shackelford with First Liberty Institute that has won numerous cases over the years of the Supreme Court, but he's won two recently.

Oh, I know, Roe vs. Wade. This was actually I think either side of it, you'll find out in just a moment, but all of these happened, but two of them had to do with what mattered most to our founders not lessening the value of life. It was part of it, but it was the freedom to be who God made us to be, to worship God, and to share our hearts. And even if we disagree, to treat each other with honor. And not have trials like we just had in congress where the decision is made, the verdict is settled, the judge has settled it, the attorneys have settled it, and the witnesses are all against the one that needs the defense, and he has no defense. Do you realize that's what's going to happen to all of us if we don't see what happened with the Supreme Court happen in every area of leadership in the land?

Kelly Shackelford is here. Kelly, you can tell I'm pumped.

[Laughter]

You know I don't lack for zeal --

KELLY: I need to bring you on the road with me.

JAMES: I'm going to tell you something, if it would give you one more little notch of success, I would travel to the ends of the earth.

KELLY: Well, you're coming!

JAMES: Kelly, we've been together a long time and we have been praying for leaders. But you know some of us are blessed to talk to them. And here's what people need to know. Listen to me. I've always spoken truth to power. You've been watching that all the

way back to the Reagan years, haven't you?

KELLY: Absolutely!

JAMES: And I never compromise.

KELLY: No!

JAMES: I don't promote a party, a personality -- but principles. Is that true?

KELLY: God's principles.

JAMES: Exactly! And they're confirmed by history. All right. I've spoken truth to power. Here's the thing you need to know, who do you think showed us who the best possible Supreme Court justices were? Many contributed but Kelly Shackelford, Kelly, you know how much we talk, you know how much I would try to get this to all the people that mattered, including the president and we never wavered. Is it amazing who we got and what they've done since they went into office?

KELLY: I've been fighting for religious freedom for 33 years. Things that five years ago I would have told you are not possible in my lifetime are all happening. I mean it's -- in the middle of all of what looks like darkness, God is doing something dramatic here.

It's really because God opened a door that none of us expected him to open. We were faithful, not in ways that were public, to try to do our best to make sure that we had the best people placed on the court. And here we are now with dramatic decisions. Obviously, everybody knows about the Roe V Wade overturn, but these two religious liberty cases are huge, huge cases.

JAMES: And talk about -- we know the one with Coach Kennedy. We're going to dwell on that. As a matter of fact, we're going to show coach here in a moment, with you

standing there with him on the street. There was another one I think that came out of Mississippi. Tell us the importance of these.

Here's what you've got to understand. Would you agree that it is the prayers of people like this who brought about these miraculous happenings?

KELLY: Absolutely! This came from not the top, this came -- well, it came from the top, and God, but he used his people and people were faithful. A lot of people voted even in that election on judges. And then we were like, well, let's make sure we pick people who are honorable people, who are people of character, who are committed to the constitution, who have a proper judicial philosophy.

You know what? That's exactly what happened. I can't tell you, that we had calls before and what about this person for judge? You know he's good friends with so-and-so. We said we don't care who he is friends with. What's his record? What has he shown that he's done? "I'm friends with so-and-so" is over. We're picking people based on their past, their willingness to stand for what is right, to hone themselves to the constitution no matter what it cost.

JAMES: They were committed to the principles that made the nation great, that keep it great starting with every relationship, marriage, and through business, education, and entertainment. It's really and truly principles that matter. That's the foundation.

KELLY: People don't understand what's happening. Why is this somewhat shift occurring in the Supreme Court? It's been 80 years since we've had a majority of the Supreme Court who thinks their job is to find the original meaning of the text. Not a living breathing constitution where they read into it what they want; they make up what they think the country needs. Those are legislators, not judges.

We now for the first time have judges. So guess what they do? They go, well, what does it say in the constitution? So they're taking us back to those principles that our country

was built on, and religious freedom is right at the center of that. You asked me about the other case. We've got the Coach Kennedy case which we'll talk about. The other one is a case about whether you can have school choice programs and exclude all the Christian schools. That's what was happening. There are school choice programs all over the country; some state-wide, some local, some city. That decision says if you have any school choice program you must include the Christian schools. Every church who wanted a school can now open one. Every school that is being discriminated against, every parent who is having their freedom taken away of what to choose what's best for their children, that's all over. And that's just one of the cases that came down that has a significant impact on religious freedom, on the freedom of everybody to do what's best for their kids.

JAMES: You know if we do that -- by the way, Betty has just got through reading *Battle For the American Mind* with Pete and with Goodwin. But the thing about it is, these cases give us the ability because we're talking about starting schools. And it could actually change the public schools. Because if the public school -- I don't think the public-school teachers are all evil. I think they'd like to tell you they love God and that they love you, as students. And if you need somebody to talk to and pray with you, you can come talk to us. They should be able to say that.

The schools are saying, we can come in and teach your kids about transgenderism and we can teach people about the L.G.B.T. and all the movements. Well, how is it you just teach openly anything you say and even force it on us and use tax money that we pay to fund what you believe but we can't talk about what our founders believed?

Well, you just set the whole church free. You know what it could -- don't you agree, Kelly? It could change the public school system to where the teachers would say, and the school board would say enough of the nonsense. And our public schools could become meaningful again. Don't you think we could even see that miracle?

KELLY: Absolutely! Especially when you look at the Coach Kennedy case and what it says as well. It is a dramatic turn. It is a 50-year turn. All of this hostility to religion in the

schools and monuments, prayers, kids, parents, teachers -- all of this, they just totally turned it over. Because why? Because they did something legislatively? No! Because the Supreme Court said let's look at what the first amendment says. It protects free speech. It protects the free exercise of religion.

JAMES: The right to pray!

KELLY: Yeah! We're actually going to go back to what the founders intended. And I'm telling you it's -- and again, we'll go into depth on this because everybody knows Coach Kennedy. The guy was fired for going to a knee to say a 20-second prayer after a football game. Everybody knows that. But what they don't know is, if you read the decision, there was this sort of Roe v Wade of religious freedom. The thing that caused for 50 years for nativity scenes to come down, any references to God to come down, and religion to be banned in our public schools.

JAMES: To say "Merry Christmas" was banned.

KELLY: Yes! All of this came not from the constitution but from this decision called Lemon -- aptly named. God chose the case name for them, I think. And in the middle of the Coach Kennedy decision they said that case is over. We've had 50 years of this hostility to religion, and they completely reversed and threw that case out. That is a *seed* change in our country. All the hostility from the government to religion, which the founders would never have wanted, is over.

BETTY: Don't you think that people are beginning to wake up? Maybe one really good thing that came from the pandemic is parents were at home with their kids and they saw what they were taught. And they're beginning to wake up and realize how precious our freedom is.

KELLY: Absolutely! Absolutely! People were scared. They still are. They look around and they go, what is going here? This is darkness. This is not the United States of

America!

But the great news is, in the midst of all that darkness, God is doing this dramatic thing in our courts, especially for religious freedom. Again, two cases have been harmful to religious freedom. One that's taken out our free exercise clause and put it in a shackle. The other has taken our establishment clause and made it kind of used as hostility to religion. They just blew up one of those precedents. We're now going after the next one next. And I feel like we're going to get that one too. I think every person is about to have more religious freedom than they've ever had to do the things that God has laid out for them, and maybe they have been prevented from doing. The door has been blown open and it is time for the church to walk through the door.

JAMES: Nine people of which five can change the whole direction of our nation, will no longer control the people who have the right to decide who rules, what rules, what principles are in place, what policies come, and practices from those principles. I've said the stage is set for the greatest awakening in history. Do you believe that's true?

KELLY: Absolutely!

JAMES: And we're seeing glimpses of it. Look at Coach Kennedy. Here's a guy who wants to pray a little bit with a team others want -- I have an idea probably half the stadium might have wanted to join but they were told they couldn't. They were told this guy can't even get down on the football field that our tax dollars pay for and the whole school program and say a prayer. Well, guess what? Let's look at you and the coach after the Supreme Court.

Begin video clip

>> I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. I mean, I could not do this without everybody else by my side. I'm not out there all alone or just a guy in the front line. Everybody is on the front line with me. And it is all because of the support across

the board financially, spiritually, the prayers, and encouragement; that's what has got us through it and sustained us all these years. I hope I did everybody proud.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Let me just ask you this, he knows he's standing by the guy that won the battle. And First Liberty Institute, I want to say to all of you, you help us give food to the hungry, you help us notice the least of these and the unnoticed and get God's arms around them. You help us drill water wells. You help us set those who are trafficked free. You help us put God's arms around people that think nobody noticed.

Well, let me tell you something else, you need to help people like Kelly. First Liberty Institute really can receive gifts to accomplish purposeful things.

KELLY: We're a nonprofit.

JAMES: If people wanted to know where to go online to find out how to support you in prayer, know what the cases are we need to be praying about, and how I can send money to help you, the website.

KELLY: You spell out First Liberty.org -- FirstLiberty.org. They can get an alert every week on what's happening with all the cases around the country. And they can donate, and they can get behind people like Coach Kennedy. That's the thing, I would say, think of all the people that have supported you all the years and the Presidents you've had to influence, the fact of the judges. Same with Coach Kennedy. We don't charge anybody. Over \$6 million for his case was given.

JAMES: Came from the people.

KELLY: And it came right from the people.

JAMES: Who said we care about our neighbor, we care about what matters to God, our founders recognized it. This nation was birthed because of what mattered to God. And these diverse brilliant people with their wealth, they sacrificed everything to birth a nation that offered freedom that you can easily abuse. All you've got to do is neglect it as Reagan said, it is one generation away from gone if we don't protect and preserve it.

And the way we protect and preserve it is by keeping in place the rock-solid unshakeable principles upon which relationships and futures and freedoms stand. And those are all in the Word of God and they're all confirmed, irrefutably, by history. The blessings of doing them, the tragic consequences of not doing them. I think we've got to return to that right now.

KELLY: Absolutely! I want to make clear, and people don't understand this, this was of God. This -- and on average, about 8,000 requests a year to the Supreme Court to take their case, they took 65. Okay? Normally you don't ever get a case at the Supreme Court. You're one of 8,000. No, no, no, is what you get. No! Okay.

JAMES: And you were getting it before a Supreme Court that likely was not going to vote anywhere close to the constitution.

KELLY: We had two cases, major religious liberty cases, not just before the Supreme Court, which is miraculous in itself, two victories handed down within six days! That was God saying, just in case you didn't know that this was me and you thought it was you.

So I would just say this, because that victory, of people sending me all kinds of texts and emails, thank you. And I would go back to them immediately and say, no, no, no. Thank you! You are a part of this. All of the supporters of First Liberty, all of the supporters of you -- I mean, this was a victory from the base all the way up. This is everybody saying, I want to change things. I want to bring back our constitution. And it's happening.

And we're just at the beginning, James. That's the thing that's so exciting. This is just the first term with this court. We've got other cases on the way. We're just getting started and this is exciting.

JAMES: And the enemy is scared. The gates of hell tremble when the one force on this planet that they cannot, the gates of hell cannot prevail against, it is called the church, it is called the body of Christ.

Kelly, thank you. We're going to talk to you about some other things. Betty, in another program, what would you like to hear from Kelly because you're one fired-up grandmother, great-grandmother. What do you want to hear him discuss that can help our viewers understand the importance of what he does and what their prayers do?

BETTY: Kelly, I want people to understand and realize what is going on behind the scenes that's gone on for years, for decades. Just like with education, and just like with Christianity and religion, and how it's been beaten down, I want people to wake up and know that they have a responsibility to be a part of what God wants to do.

JAMES: And they're the difference-makers. We're going to talk to you in another program. I want to say to all of you right now, you watch *Life Today* knowing that this guy right here is going to let you know we love you as much as we love any hungry child or thirsty child or needy child. We tell you that. You say we mean it. And see, we live not only to inspire getting God's arms around the unnoticed but also to get his arms around you and everybody you love. And we know we need godly leadership, and we know we need his principles in place. But we also know that when you see what we do, and you're about to see, and you see what we can do together and what we do, how shall they preach Paul asked unless they're sent? You see they can't believe in a God and a gospel they've never heard so we have to preach it. But how shall they preach that gospel if they're not sent? How shall we do anything for the unnoticed, the overlooked that matters if you don't make it happen?

I want you to watch. See if you don't want to be the miracle that is needed right here. Watch.

On the mission field

James: Betty, all these people have wondered why we're here. How are you? And we have told them through translators that we're here because we love them and because we want to give them a better life. We came in the name of the Lord Jesus, but we didn't just come to talk about God's love, we came to share it and demonstrate it.

I'm kneeling here in Central America by a contaminated water source, and we love to give water wells. But we found out something else. Because of contaminated water, and even contaminations and problems in the soil, children get little cuts in their feet, and they pick up hookworms. And as I understand it that ultimately gets into their intestines, and it is a horrible sickness. But it is a disease that not only brings incredible pain and discomfort but in so many instances death.

BETTY: I'm standing here with these children and they're just a small example of children all over the world. They deserve to be cared for. We have an opportunity to do that right now, to put some shoes on their feet, to give them a chance in life.

I ask you to help us do that. It is a simple request but a very urgent and important one. 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: I want you to understand something that boy, I loved watching you there with the children and all these just -- you notice how I reached down to the children? I don't

know if you've noticed how -- I want you to notice how comfortable I am holding them. I know a lot of them are dirty, a lot of them are diseased, I don't even notice. I want you to try to notice how comfortable they are.

The little Rwandan children, where they had crawled out from under the dead bodies of their parents that had been killed, most of the time with machetes. They were terrified of adults. And they were really terrified of whites. Betty, they crawled up in my lap when I was just sitting and talking on a rock wall. And all of the sudden these little kids are crawling up and somebody took the picture. And I said, that looks like Jesus! I wish I could always look like Jesus.

What I'm trying to tell you is I'm real comfortable holding broken hearts. And I'm real comfortable holding those who hurt and who need because I know our viewers are going to help us touch those lives.

When I reach down here and I pick up this little shoe, and it's a beautiful Christmas ornament! You said you had to get a bigger tree to get more -- I said I don't care if you -- we can't drag the tree through the house. But this year we're sending you a whole little cluster of them. You may have gotten them before, but they just keep adding. She hangs them on a little tree too, different little tables she puts them on.

The beautiful thing is that we're giving shoes to little children who get disease. We've watched a child die from hookworms. It was not something you could take. And they tried to get that child medical help. I want to ask all of you right now please, when you think about \$36 giving ten children shoes, gosh, I feel like that's almost like a token. But today \$36, it's more than it used to be, isn't it? But could you give \$1,000? I'm going to look down here. I'm looking at 275 children for \$1,000 and get shoes. I don't know what you can do.

And smiles, they're \$500 on average. They usually cost thousands, but the doctors are doing it and this is just the cost to get them there to fix their faces. But you determine

how many smiles we can give. We're not saying we're going to give 100 or 50, you determine it. Only give smiles.

Lord, please help everybody to give. We're going to send you some beautiful gifts to bless you. But you're not only giving love, you're giving life. Please go online, use your bank card, and dial that number. If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*. You really are giving life. Please make the best gift you can. Please!

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: Please know I wish I held your hand. Thank you for putting God's arms around those who need to know how much they're loved.

And to Kelly Shackelford, Betty and I want to say -- we don't have words to express how grateful we are for you. You're going to come back and we're going to answer some of the questions you have. And you may say, Kelly Shackelford, he helped move the Supreme Court, bring about some great -- yes, he did. But he wouldn't be without you. And he says it's answered prayer.

So Kelly, thank you. We're anxious to talk about some of these other things. The viewers need to know because the real key is God's people doing what Jesus prayed we'd do, and God promised to answer our prayers. So I'm excited to talk to you in the next program.

KELLY: Me as well! Me as well.

JAMES: God bless you, buddy.

KELLY: You too!

JAMES: Thank you so much for being who you are in Christ. We really do love you.