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Week 40: Christmas Shoes and Smiles, last week

James and Betty Robison

Dr. Robert Jeffress #2

JAMES: You know I'm excited about who's here. Who's here with us today?

BETTY: Dr. Jeffress.

JAMES: Does he pastor around here somewhere?

BETTY: First Baptist Dallas!

JAMES: Yeah, I started preaching there when I was 23-23 years old. I preached there since he's been there. I've preached there with every preacher that's been there. He was listening to me when he was a kid. I didn't mess him up. He told me that. I didn't mess him up at all. I didn't mess him up. [Laughing]

I love this man. I'm looking down here at this book called *18 Minutes With Jesus*. Are you curious, if you didn't hear him earlier in the week, are you curious? 18 minutes? What's the significance? Well, there is a lot of it. He told us the other day, I'll just tell you this, he said you can read the Sermon on the Mount, the greatest most famous sermon that's ever been preached by the most famous preacher that ever lived and the most famous person that ever lived and you can read it in 18 minutes—the Sermon on the Mount. Well, we're going to let him talk about that.

Dr. Jeffress, I wish this crowd was standing room only, and it would be except you know something? We don't have an audience anymore. It doesn't mean we won't sometime, but I've

been able to focus so much more just on you because see I notice people, and I'm drawn to people, and I start talking to people. But somehow the people at home have told me I can tell you're just focused on me—on us. I want you to know we are. That's why we're glad Dr. Jeffress is here because he is going to bless you like you can't believe.

Dr. Jeffress, I know you like to come on *Life Today*. Can I ask you why do you like to come on *Life Today*?

DR. JEFFRESS: Because of the worldwide impact you all are having for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your audience is the most responsive audience of any I ever get to speak to. And you have a worldwide ministry. And the things you're talking about doing for children, I mean that's the heart of Jesus. And it is the heart of Jesus that he talks about revealed in the Sermon on the Mount.

So thank you for letting me come. I have to tell your audience this story. You know when James started preaching at First Baptist Church in Dallas back in the '60s and I was a teenager up in the balcony listening, we had a very prominent member of the church known around the world as the wealthiest man in the world who wanted James to be the next President of the United States and was willing to fund that effort to become the next president. But James knew exactly what God's will was for him and for Betty. We're so glad you resisted that temptation and are having a much greater impact.

JAMES: Well, I thank God. Do you know what he told me after following me for two years? And they said his wealth was equivalent to Gates and Buffet combined when they were at their height. And he did offer a fortune. Here's what he said and I think it is significant you hear this. He said, "What drew me to you is what I think may make me the saddest person I can ever imagine. I think you'll probably say no." I said, "Sir, I wouldn't trade places for being the preacher God called me to be with a king anywhere in this world." He said, "I was afraid I would hear that but that's also why I came to you. I didn't think anything, money or anything could buy you off of what God called you to do."

And buddy, I want to tell you something, you have that same commitment to the call on your life that I have. You knew that story and you knew the Hunt family and God did do a deep deep work in so many of the Hunt family members. Tell us about this. Take off.

DR. JEFFRESS: Well, *18 Minutes With Jesus*, as you said, it's the Sermon on the Mount that can be read in 18 minutes. I'll tell you, I did myself in with this title because now I have church members saying why can't you preach in 18 minutes? If Jesus did the most famous sermon in 18 minutes? Well, I'm not Jesus so it takes me longer to do it.

But a lot of people think the Sermon on the Mount is for the kingdom of God for heaven, for some other time but it is how we're to live right now. And then these 18 minutes, Jesus talked about the things that matter most to him but also matter most to us; you know straight talk about your money, your faith, and anxiety.

One topic he talks about that I think is particularly relevant is straight talk about your faith. What is it we're supposed to be doing with our faith in this world? James and Betty, you see this all the time. Christians are confused, they're troubled by the times in which we're living. They wonder what is it we're supposed to be doing to push back against an ungodly culture. Do we have 24-hour prayer meetings? Do we register people to vote? Do we hand out evangelistic tracts? What is the role of a Christian in today's godless society? And Jesus answers that question in the Sermon on the Mount. He said I'm going to give you two illustrations of what you're to do. He said first of all you're the salt of the earth.

Now in Jesus' day salt was something more than something to flavor your food or raise your blood pressure. It was a preservative. In the days before refrigeration, salt delayed the decay of meat. Now, this is key. It didn't prevent the decay of meat. Eventually, meat would decay and have to be thrown out. But it delayed that decay. What Jesus was saying is the reason I left you here in this world and didn't take you to heaven the moment you were saved is to be a preservative. You're not going to stop the ultimate destruction of this world but you can delay it.

JAMES: You can protect and preserve the precious far longer than one might imagine.

DR. JEFFRESS: So that we have more time to share the gospel.

JAMES: Absolutely.

DR. JEFFRESS: I use this illustration. Imagine a giant dam that's holding back millions of gallons of water and there's a little village below that dam. And the villagers look up and they see the dam is starting to spring a leak, and the bricks are starting to crumble. And a group of townspeople goes up to the dam and they push back against the dam while at the same time urging the people below to go find a place of safety.

Now they know their work is ultimately futile. They're not going to be able to hold back that dam forever but they're trying to give time for the people below to find safety. That's a picture of what we're doing right now. We're not going to, as my friend Cal Thomas says, the kingdom of God isn't going to come riding in on Air Force One. We know that. We know politics has a limited effect. But by voting for people who uphold godly principles we're delaying the collapse of this world. We're giving this world a little longer until Christ returns so we can share the gospel. That's what Jesus said our job is to do.

How do we act as salt? We do it by voting, that's one way. It's by opposing ungodly principles in our schools. They're trying to cram this transgender agenda down people's throats, we ought to be salt and stand up and push back and say no.

JAMES: They're teaching anti-God agenda too. Everything against God and the one who knows what matters doesn't matter, therefore who knows what matters? Nobody! It is just whatever you say matters, which is lawlessness now prevailing. And we can stop that by being righteous, and by being salt and protect and preserve the precious. Protect life for heaven's sake!

DR. JEFFRESS: I tell the story in the book about a survivor of the holocaust, a Christian survivor of the holocaust. And she wrote, she told about a little church they would gather in every Sunday morning. The train tracks ran behind the church, and they would hear the train

coming carrying the Jews off to the crematoriums and they would hear the cries of the Jews. And instead of doing something, they just sang louder. They sang the hymns louder to drown out the cries of the Jewish victims of the holocaust.

And she said 30 years later she still heard that train whistle coming and wondered, why didn't we do something? We shouldn't have been silent. We, as Christians, ladies and gentlemen, can be silent no longer. We're the ones who ought to be standing up and saying no more! We need to push back, Jesus said. But, at the same time we're supposed to be light; light pointing people to the light of the world, Jesus himself. The only ultimate answer for people is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And this may offend some people who are watching this program, this is my last time on this week so I don't have to worry about it, but you know God is no respecter of people or nations. Any nation that reverences God will be blessed by God. Any nation that rejects God will be rejected by God. Jesus doesn't get chill bumps when he hears "The Star-Spangled Banner." He doesn't stand up and salute the American flag. The truth is America has been great because she followed after God.

Our role as Christians is not to save America, it is to save Americans from the coming judgment of God by introducing them to faith in Jesus Christ. That is our calling. So we're to be salt and light. No, people say, well, which is it? Are we supposed to be engaged in the culture and push back? Or are we to share the gospel? Well, Jesus didn't say you can be the salt of the earth but if you're not comfortable doing that, you're to be the light of the world. He said you're to be both, salt and light.

We've got to be balanced in what we do as Christians, but that doesn't mean being passive. I think of the words of William Watkins in his book *The New Absolutes*. He said, "It is time for Christians to reject the new tolerance and become a people marked by intolerance." Not an intolerance that unleashes hate upon people but an intolerance that is unwilling to allow error to masquerade as truth any longer. An intolerance that is willing to stand up and call good good and evil evil. That's what Jesus said our role is.

JAMES: Well, he absolutely made it clear that if you are light you illuminate the best way. You expose that which is dangerous, that which is damaging, which is evil, which is deceptive, which is destructive. That's what light does.

I'm telling you, if we live in the light, the light of the world is in us and we lighten up the world, we brighten up everything.

Jesus talks about relationships in the Sermon on the Mount, too. And I'm guaranteeing you if you throw away the truth of God you won't have a relationship in marriage. We've been married for 60 years. Now that takes a mighty big God, she's a sweetheart but she's tough too. Don't you ever think that's not one tough woman right here. She is as strong as a grizzly bear. God, I love you so much. And Lord, I love you for putting us together. But I guarantee you, doc, we couldn't have stayed together without Jesus. Because you can find a point at which you can be pulled apart, and then you live an existence rather than a love relationship. Jesus talked about how to have a love relationship and talked about how love is the greatest force and greatest power in the world.

Talk about some of the things Jesus said on the Sermon on the Mount that have everything to do with getting along with relationships, with business. You know if you scrap the sermons on the mount you can't have a good relationship, you can't have a good business, you can't have a good church, you can't have a good school, you can't have anything. You don't scrap God at the start and all these other things will also follow without him. We've got to have all—in so many ways, the Sermon on the Mount is like an understanding of how we have relationships that are lasting and meaningful. Touch on some of those. Would you?

DR. JEFFRESS: In talking about relationships—the most important relationship is that marriage relationship that God created. And Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount said, "Now you've heard it said, the Old Testament said, 'You shall not commit adultery' but I say to you, whoever looks on another person to lust after them has committed adultery in their heart."

You know one of the greatest misconceptions about the teachings of the Bible is these teachings

are given to limit our joy in life. God's principles are coming from one who is a Cosmic killjoy. He doesn't want you to have any fun at all. We forget God is the one who designed sex. And he is the one—think about it, just think about that. God is the one who sat in heaven one day and said wouldn't it be interesting? And took out his sketch pad and said, what if this person—

JAMES: Good work, God! [Laughing]

DR. JEFFRESS: I mean he came up with the idea! But he also knew the best way it operates. It operates within the security of the marriage relationship.

JAMES: Yes, commitment!

DR. JEFFRESS: And it's commitment. And that's what we have to understand about the Sermon on the Mount. This wasn't given for God's benefit, this is for our benefit. Ever since the very beginning, Satan has tried to convince us that God is trying to deprive us of something good. He said to Eve, "The reason God told you not to eat of that tree is he knows it will open your eyes and you will be like God. And God is paranoid and he doesn't want any challenges to his leadership." No! God gave that restriction for Adam and Eve's benefit.

And that's the thing about relationships. If we'll follow what God says, we can have meaningful relationships. Purity is important in a relationship. Forgiveness is the oil, the grease that makes relationships work. Jesus said if you are offering your sacrifice and you remember somebody has something against you, leave your sacrifice and go be reconciled to them. The Bible says when it comes to your mate, don't let the sun go down on your anger. Do you know the best thing a couple can do to ensure a great marriage? Now we're not like you all, we've only been married 45 years, you've been married 60 years, but never go to bed angry.

JAMES: Absolutely!

DR. JEFFRESS: Absolutely do your best to resolve that before the sun—

JAMES: We made that commitment right upfront, didn't we? And we never have. Now we have gone to bed angry, we've never gone to sleep angry. We would face opposite ways but pretty soon we're going to turn over and we've never ever in 60 years, ever gone to sleep angry with one another. We've laid down and played like we were going to stay angry, but we didn't stay angry. We did not. I'm going to tell you, that's huge!

And let me tell you something Dr. Draper said to us before we were married. As a matter of fact, he said it to the whole church. He said, "One of the things Carol Ann and I have done is that when we hear the other person in our relationship say something hurtful, it hurt, we immediately think, they would not have meant it that way. She would not have said something to try to hurt me. He would not have tried to hurt me." Right? That was some of the greatest advice we ever heard. Does that make sense? If you'll hear it and then you can sit down and realize, did you mean, did you mean to cut me with that? Of course, they didn't. No, I just got loud because you can't hear James. I was loud because I don't know if you hear me. Okay. You get the point. This is so important that we have this relationship.

I think you and I both have very strong opinions and a very strong will. I'd say we're both courageous about what we believe. I believe you and I are committed to a love for God and a love for one another that all hell could never shake. And that is what every person can have. We can have a relationship like that. That's what Jesus is encouraging throughout the Sermon on the Mount and through his whole ministry. And in his last prayer, in the 17th chapter, the last part of it is the toughest part, that you love one another so the world will know you're my family.

DR. JEFFRESS: "I pray that you may be one." He didn't pray that we would be the same but that we would be one.

JAMES: Absolutely! I think we're seeing some progress among Christians and leaders in the church even, in a supernatural unity. I want you to get this book. You can go online and get it right now. You can order it. And I guess they can get it in an eBook. I don't know what all it's available in.

DR. JEFFRESS: It is. And even a study guide is available so groups can study it in churches.

JAMES: Fabulous! I'm going to tell you what we're going to do if you'd like to have the book. We're going to ask you to gift this little shoe. Betty actually, we have them all over our big tree, but she had to buy a little tree that we just got these shoes on. And we will give enough money to give a lot of shoes because see, we try to be as good a giver as *LIFE* has. It's not because we have money like a lot of people have. We've got people who are leaving their estate to the outreaches of LIFE.

DR. JEFFRESS: My father left part of his estate to you all because he so believed in your ministry.

JAMES: And you told me that and that blessed me. And you told me I called him—

DR. JEFFRESS: When he had pancreatic cancer before he died.

JAMES: And I just thank God. I have such—our whole staff of people, we love people. We love you. But we want you to get the little shoes. And we want you to give shoes for Christmas—and smiles, cleft palate surgery. But we're going to send you this book to bless you. Do you want to know why? Because you as viewers tell us we love Dr. Jeffress. We love what he says, we love the way he preaches, and we love him to be your guest. We can tell you all love him. We love him. We like what he shares. We're going to send you the book just to say thank you.

Dr. Jeffress, you're always welcome. Every time you write something, every time you say I've got something I just wish people would hear all over the world, we will take care of the bill to get it out there with our audience. And our audience will share it because they love Jesus, and they know you do. So Betty and I want to thank you. We're going to show people right now how they can give some smiles and some shoes. But thank you for blessing us.

DR. JEFFRESS: Thank you for having me.

JAMES: I want you to just watch. You're going to see some very well-known Christians touching people nobody knew they would ever be noticed. They are the least of these but they're big to God and they're big to you, our viewers. Watch closely.

On the mission field

Announcer: All around the world children face severe problems like starvation, filthy drinking water, and sexual predation. But where heartache abounds, so do opportunities to put God's love into action.

Recently you may have helped us seize these opportunities by providing a child with a daily bowl of food, rescuing an at-risk girl from human traffickers or drilling a clean water well for a needy village.

This coming Christmas, we have an opportunity to bless many of these same children with a special gift that they will cherish and that will protect their very lives.

BETTY: This is Berta, and we want to be able to get her children some shoes. It's not just a matter of giving them something for their feet, it's very important, but the main thing is they get diseases walking around here barefoot and their little old feet just get tortured.

TAMMY: I guess you don't really think about if she's walking around without a pair of shoes how it affects her feet. If her foot gets cut and she is stepping even in contaminated water, how that could affect her feet -- infect her feet.

SHEILA: This really is a gift of life as much as anything else. So let's try these, buddy. Let's see how they go. This so reminds me of like Christmas morning in our house. They're like showing each other their shoes. They're excited! Because they look so cool. Something as simple as a pair of shoes can really change a child's life.

ANNOUNCER: Help make this Christmas one these children will never forget. Help us provide Christmas Shoes and Smiles.

SHEILA: Because of your gift, we're able to put shoes on her feet. Now she'll be able to run around and be safe!

[Laughter]

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Well, I just can't do anything but sit here and smile. You may not know it but you saw some very well-known Christians there. You saw Lisa Bevere. You saw Tammy Trent, a great singer, a great writer. You saw Betty. You saw our grandson Luke just briefly. And you saw Sheila Walsh. You say what are these people doing going all over the world? It is the love of God that carries them there. It's the love Jesus talked about, by the way, in the Sermon on the Mount. It's the love that you who watch *Life Today* show and share every day all over the world.

We need a miracle right now. There are two things. We need your help to give 150,000 children shoes. Lord, I pray we'll give more than that. I pray people will say let's do more than that! Okay, let's do it. Would you do this?

Did you know that you can give ten pairs of shoes for \$36? Did you know that you can do something else, too? We're giving cleft palate surgery this time of the year. And Betty, the surgeons go, and they give their time and their skill. And it costs \$500 with what the cost, the bare cost is for them to do it. Basically, their services are free. That's the cost of everything involved for them.

Would you give, could you possibly, we've already given 2,000 children a smile, the ability to nurse, to eat. And if we can get them when they're babies because they can't nurse with cleft palate, if we will do all these things right now it will be a miracle Christmas. We can give *Shoes and Smiles*. It is the last week now. Could you give \$1,000 or more and give smiles? Could you

give that many pairs of shoes that a \$1,000 would buy? Would you give ten children shoes?

Father, help every person right now to go and get their bank card and use it like a check. Go online or call the number and make the gift you put in their heart. In Jesus' name.

We're going to send you some beautiful little shoes that you can hang on the Christmas tree. As a matter of fact, we'll send you a whole set of them, several of them if you'll give over \$100. And you'll get this one that we're giving for any gift. But you're giving the greatest gift, you're giving the love of God in demonstration form.

Betty, don't you love to watch those children?

BETTY: There is nothing like it! To see them jumping around and smiling because they've got shoes on their feet so they can run and play. But the favorite thing for me is to give a baby a smile because there is nothing like the smile of a baby. It just lights up your heart, and makes your day. I know it does mine.

So thank you for everything that you can do to help these precious little ones.

JAMES: I hope they'll let you just see those little lips and a little child wanting to be able to smile. You can give them a smile. I pray we see a miracle. I pray you become that miracle. You can be someone's miracle. You can be an answer to prayer. Thanks for doing it! Thank you!

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!"

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

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: I'm praying that more than 150,000 children will get these shoes. I'm praying that you'll say, you know what James? Count on me. I'm going to help more. And we'll be sending the thank you. We'll send the little set of shoes for those who give over \$100. You give to just help us this last week, this is it—*Shoes and Smiles*! Boy, if you could give a couple of smiles with a \$1,000 gift or a lot of smiles if you're able to do it, let's do it, and let's give shoes.

But if you'd like to have Dr. Jeffress's book you just ask for it, we'll send it to you to just say thank you for sharing *Shoes and Smiles* this last week. Dr. Jeffress, Betty and I love you so much. And like I said earlier, you're welcome here anytime. All you do is give us a call.

DR. JEFFRESS: I appreciate it! Thank you so much, both of you.

JAMES: Thank you. Thank you for watching. Thanks for sharing God's love. Remember—last week.