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Week 37: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*
Randy Robison and Tammy Trent
Rabbi Jason Strobel #2

Studio discussion:

TAMMY: Hi everybody! I'm Tammy Trent and this is Randy Robison. Welcome back to *Life Today*. I'm so glad to be back again. Honestly, if you missed the show, we had Rabbi Jason on. He is back again with us today. He has such an authentic voice, Randy. Like the way that he connects ancient wisdom to the teaching of the Messiah, it is revelation to me. Like mind mind-blowing!

RANDY: The last program you were like wow!

TAMMY: I know. I couldn't even think of a question. I put my notes down and I just zoomed right in on him.

RANDY: Just wait! There is more. By the way, if you missed the other program, it is on LifeToday.org with all of our programs. But we're going to talk through some today that I think are going to minister to you. Rabbi, welcome back, by the way.

RABBI STROBEL: Thank you. It's great to be back. Thank you for having me back again.

RANDY: *Signs and Secrets of the Messiah*, that's your new book. I love—I just love the revelation of the reality of Christ through what you're talking about. It is always fun to talk about miracles. The gospel of John has always been the gospel that I recommend to people if they're new. And it is just fun to read. And a lot of it is because of all the things pointing to the divinity of Christ, the signs, the miracles, that tell us who he is.

There are a couple of those in John that you really relate to. I'd love for you to kind of usher us

into these. And maybe even tell us how they've played out in your life as you've seen it.

RABBI STROBEL: Absolutely. One of the reasons why we wrote *Signs and Secrets of the Messiah* is that we want people to find hope and healing and wholeness in him. That's part of the supernatural, miraculous work that Yeshua-Jesus does in our lives.

And the first one I wanted to chat with you about was the miracle of healing. The miracle of healing chapters in *Signs and Secrets* is talking about the man at the pool of Bethesda, John chapter five. Here's a man who had been an invalid, and hadn't been able to walk 38 years, maybe his entire life or certainly from the time he was young. And Jesus comes and encounters this man, and asks him, "Do you want to be made well?"

And when you think about it for a moment it seems like a silly question. Like do you want to be made well? Like who wouldn't want to be made well? But here's the reality. The reality is that oftentimes, and we're going to see this is important, this connects back to the children of Israel who came out of Egypt.

Oftentimes, when we've come out of a season that's been difficult, where there has been sickness or trauma or pain for a long time, that oftentimes, defines our identity. It becomes so part and parcel of how we feel, how we see ourselves, and how we interact with the world that it is hard to see past that. And that was like the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt right there, free. And they're like, man, we miss the food back in Egypt. Let's dump Moses and go back because the cooking is better. That's like crazy! But there was a slave mentality. There was a victim mentality. They were struggling to move out of the past season. They were stuck.

And this man was stuck. And when Yeshua asked him, "Do you want to be made well?"

He's like, "Well, I don't have anyone to pick me up when the water stirs and put me in, and the angel." That's not what Jesus asked. He didn't ask, why aren't you well? The question is do you want to be made well? And the reality is hope deferred makes the heart sick.

And what's interesting, and a key detail in the story this man could not walk for 38 years. There is a reason why it says 38 years. Think about it for a moment. When you ask most people how long did Israel wander in the wilderness, the answer is usually what? Forty years. Correct but not totally correct. Israel was in the desert for 40 years but they wandered as a result of unbelief for 38 years. Deuteronomy tells us this in the opening chapters. See, for two years God was helping them build the Tabernacle, he was giving them the Ten Commandments, he was preparing them and purifying them and healing them to go in and take the land. It was in the second year that God said to the children of Israel, "Go up and take the land."

Sends the 12 spies in. They come back with an evil report. Say, "There are giants in the land. The land is good but there is no way we're going to be able to take it." And the people lacked faith. They don't believe. And because they didn't believe that entire generation wanders in the wilderness. That was 38 years.

This man was representative of the children of Israel who came out of Egypt. And because of their unbelief wandered and died in the wilderness.

And Yeshua is saying to this man, do you want to be like the ten spies and that generation who died in the wilderness, 38 years, because of their unbelief? Do you want to remain stuck in the past? Stuck in the past trauma? Whenever there is trauma that is unhealed there is always drama. Drama and trauma go together. So you should have said, but you don't have to. You can be like Joshua and Caleb. You can go in and find healing and possess the promise. But the choice is yours.

What's interesting is 38. So Hebrew is alphanumeric. What that means is that there are no numbers, and there are no Roman numerals in the Hebrew Bible. The way that you write numbers is with letters. So if I say open up to chapter one of your Bible, I'll say, open up to chapter aleph because aleph is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet so it equals number one. So every word has a numerical value. The Hebrew numerical value of his heart, *lebab* in Hebrew equals guess what? 38. Because God is saying, Jesus is saying, I will heal your heart. The 38 years of the pain and the trauma, I want to heal your heart. I want to make you whole. Or you

can choose to remain stuck in your old way of being, in your old way of seeing. You can remain stuck in the pain of your past but if you do, you'll die in the wilderness like the children of Israel. And all of us have that choice.

TAMMY: Absolutely. And I think you're right. Many of us do get stuck in our pain, in our circumstances. And if we hang on to that for a long, long time it does become your identity. And it's not meant to be your identity. And maybe even asking him, do you want to be healed? What he wants to do is take us from that pain or brokenness and bring wholeness, healing, and fulfillment, so that we can live a fulfilled abundant life.

RABBI STROBEL: And it takes a step of faith. You have to be willing to—this man could have stayed on his mat, stayed on the ground. Yeshua reaches down to heal him and he chooses to get up. Okay, he takes that step of—

RANDY: So here's the other thing, when he asked him if you want to be healed, he is like, yeah, and here's the formula for it. I just can't get there. And the answer is standing right in front of him if he will just believe and obey.

I think a lot of people, probably some people who are watching right now, are in a place where they're stuck. They feel like they're wandering in the wilderness. Right now Jesus is saying, do you want to be healed? Do you want to be healed in your mind? The solution is in front of you. It is Jesus. All these signs are pointing to him. Believe, obey, and if you want to talk to somebody, there is a telephone number on the screen where you can call and someone will talk with you.

But all you need is Jesus. He's the one that can heal you. He's the one that will take you out of your past, out of your wilderness. Jason, what you bring out in this is just such deep, deep healing truth.

Now I know you have some experiences with literal healing. I think the greater healing is the forgiveness of sins, as we saw on one of the miracles of Christ. But you've seen physical healing.

RABBI STROBEL: Absolutely. I think what happens with the invalid, 38 years, is he's lost hope. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. Hope is the belief that your future is going to be better than the past. God wants us to know that our future can be better than our past. Oftentimes, we have a hard time believing that. That's the power of these miracles and the power of the testimony both past, like in the Bible, but also that we experience in our lives.

So there was a—I've seen this several times, there was this young girl who was a cheerleader. She came up to me after I spoke. I gave a message and I talked about God's healing power and God's ability to do the miraculous. And she is a cheerleader. She was injured, torn ACL. She is the first person to come forward for prayer.

Usually, when you pray for people, you can't tell if they're healed instantaneously. But this was very clear, she is healed. And I'm like, Lord—I said, Lord, give me the faith to believe for this. Prayed for her and she was like, "Okay." She puts down her crutches. She has two friends holding her up. She is trying to walk. She said, "Okay, let me try walking on my own." She walked on her own. Next thing she was running around the sanctuary. The Lord completely healed her.

I needed faith to believe God could do it. I literally asked God, to give me faith for this miracle. She needed faith to take literally, the man who was invalid, she literally took a step of faith and said, "Well, let me try and walk with some help. Let me try and walk on my own." And then ran just knowing God had healed her. And she didn't have to worry that she was going to reinjure herself. God honors faith that is expressed in both risk for him and obedience.

And another situation where I had a friend who was homeless in New York. He was sleeping outside and got frostbite from the knees down. Had gangrene. The doctors told him his legs needed to be amputated. I was a new believer. I went to the hospital. I'd just read the book of Acts. Okay, God can heal. Laid hands on him. You know that faith and zeal of a new believer, right? And said, "Silver and gold have I none but I have in the name of Yeshua Jesus, rise, take up your bed and walk." He came to faith. He got healed, and he walked out of the hospital.

That's what God does. There is hope. It doesn't matter, 38 years, how long you've been stuck, how long you've been suffering, how many times somebody has prayed for you and you haven't been healed. You never know just one more time of faith and risk and obedience could result in God doing something miraculous.

RANDY: Here's the hard question because I get everything in scripture where Jesus did forgive sins, he didn't heal the heart, heal the mind, and that's an ongoing process of sanctification. But there was an instance where people wanted to see Jesus do the tricks. They came to see the miracles and he—without a word got in the boat and left. Because he wasn't going to be a dog and pony show.

And when you talk about our faith, you talk about—we know God can heal, we know he doesn't always heal the body. And really, any healing in the body is temporary anyway. How do you align sort of the sovereignty of God when it comes to the physical?

RABBI STROBEL: I think one of the beautiful things is that when he dies on the cross, why does he die on the cross? Well, think about it. How did sin enter the world? The first man and woman stole from the tree, took from the tree. So God puts back on the tree Jesus for you and me to undo the sin that happened in the very beginning. So when Jesus dies on that cross, he comes to undo the fall. Jesus is made manifest in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil and to bring the kingdom. So when he dies, what happens? The kingdom of God begins to break into this reality.

He preached, "The kingdom of God is at hand." He didn't say the kingdom of God is fully come. He said the kingdom of God is here in part. So what that means is right now we are standing in the tension between the kingdom being here and the kingdom not fully here. So we straddle two realities: This fallen world and the kingdom reality where there is power and healing and wholeness. So that means because the kingdom has come, healing does happen, miracles do happen. We can have hope but because the kingdom hasn't fully come what it means is miracles don't always happen. But they're possible and available to us right now.

RANDY: But the goal is wholeness. It is not necessarily physical healing, it is spiritual wholeness, is it not? Because that's what we see in the—

RABBI STROBEL: We talk about in the book there are these four aspects. There is the spiritual, which is the most important. There is emotional or inner. There is relational and there is physical. Physical is one of the four aspects of this reality of the healing transformation and wholeness God wants to bring into our life.

This actually connects to another miracle which is a miracle found in John chapter four, which is Jesus healing the noble man's son in Cana of Galilee. There is a royal official, whose son is sick, comes from Capernaum.

I love taking people to Israel, by the way, doing tours. Love it! Love going to the places where the miracles have actually happened.

Capernaum, comes to Cana and says, "My son is sick. Would you please come down with me and heal him?" Well, here's the interesting thing about that. Jesus heals this man's son at a distance. What's interesting is he says, "My son is sick." Well, the Hebrew word for sick is the word for a man is *choli*. Which interesting, is that the word for sickness in Hebrew, the root of it, or hospital, Hebrew is *Beit Choli*, the house of the sick, comes from the word *Chol*, which by the way, equals 38, which is another miracle. But it means, the root word for sickness in Hebrew means to bore out, to make hollow, or to make empty. So sickness is a result when something that is there goes missing. Then a vacuum is created. That vacuum creates a space for sickness and the unhealthiness to be able to enter.

So here's the point. When God creates the world, he creates it to be filled. Before it was filled it was chaos, it was void, it was empty until God said, "Let there be light." When Jesus cast out the demons, he said listen, casting them out, if you don't fill it with my presence, the demons will come back even worse than before. Why? Because space is created to be filled. Either it is filled with God and it is filled with the good things or it's going to be filled with demonic things or addictions and things that are unhealthy.

Now, it is interesting that God spoke to me one time and he said, holy, holy, holy. But it wasn't Isaiah six, it was H-O-L-E-Y, H-O-L-Y, W-H-O-L-E-Y. And what the Lord said to me is that all of us, before we know the Lord, as we come to know the Lord, we have holes in our souls. We have places that are void, we have places where there is a vacuum. We've got things that we've filled in our lives that are not healthy. All of us have those holes. But he wants us to go from being holey, like holes in our socks, he comes in and by his holiness, he brings about wholeness in our lives. And there is a wholeness in our lives that completely changes who we are. And that's what he wants to do in our lives.

RANDY: That's the redemptive beauty. I've got a bunch of other points right here about these miracles that we didn't even get to. So, Tammy, I want people to support the outreach today and request *Signs and Secrets of the Messiah*.

TAMMY: So when you call to give to the ministry, make sure to request this book because we want to make sure to get it to you. I'm so grateful for you, Rabbi. I feel like I've just been soaking up so much information today, so much that I need to learn. But you explain it in such a great way that I can understand. So thank you for that. It makes me to want dive in more. I think this book and many of your teachings are going to be great for me to grow in my relationship with Jesus. Thank you for that! I'm so grateful for you.

We're grateful for you as well. And if you've got just a minute to hang out with us, I want to share something really, really special with you right now so take a look at this.

Transition roll-in: [More Than Shoes]

TAMMY: These are tough conditions. These people are living in absolute poverty. I'm sure it is hard to provide for your family. I don't know what they have. I don't know what their need is. But I love that I don't have to figure it out, God just sends us. He sends us and he says, show up.

It's what I do love about *LIFE Outreach*. For the many years that I've traveled with them around

the world, wherever we see a need we just jump in. Whatever it looks like, we're thinking of kingdom-minded things. We're thinking of saving a life but saving their very life, their soul. To me, that's the gospel, what it's all about—spreading the love of Jesus Christ and sharing the good news of Jesus.

You know, James and Betty started this *Christmas Shoes and Smiles* years ago. I think their heart was absolutely about just showing the love of God, especially to these children all around the world. And it's so, so wonderful. The joy they feel getting something brand-new! Gosh, it just could change everything for you! Oh my goodness, baby, you need—you need these shoes.

These shoes that protect their feet will keep them from danger, will keep them from infection, from injury, from hookworm that ultimately could lead to death. This is an important need right now all around the world.

So if you've given before, thank you so much. If you've never had a chance to give to this ministry, this part of it, *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*, then I would encourage you to make the best gift you possibly could. We want to keep putting shoes on children all around the world. We want to do it all. It's been a great year, it's been an incredible year of ministry, whether it's been water, whether it's been food, or whether it's been shoes. Right here we're so blessed to do kingdom things. And together, we are changing the lives of people all around the world. We couldn't do it without you. We love you, we appreciate you. Thank you so much!

Studio appeal:

TAMMY: [Laughing] Honestly, I love watching that. It is the first time I've actually seen it all put together. What a beautiful trip to Central America that I was privileged to go on and meet so many beautiful people! And so many people with great need, whether us stopping and praying for them or me getting a chance to put on a new pair of shoes. I love this part of our ministry. It brings me so much joy. It brings me a huge smile. And I know it changes the lives of these children, bringing them joy, bringing them a smile, especially at Christmas. I can't think of a better time for us to pour into the lives of people, especially children, who don't have much of

anything. But a brand-new pair of shoes, Randy, I mean it seems so simple and it doesn't cost a whole lot to do this.

RANDY: No. It is easy. You saw the joy on their faces. It lights them up. We talk about Christmas being a season of joy, my goodness this is your opportunity to do something that really will bring joy to a child but also has the potential to be a real health improvement.

TAMMY: Absolutely! You could see some of the danger of some of the feet and the toes and the cuts. And it could actually, and we've heard of many stories before where they have died from that because they're not near a clinic or a hospital where they can get care to take care of that. So for us to put on a little shoe like this—look, it almost fits me! [Laughing] But it's so much fun. And they are filled with not just a brand-new pair of shoes but I think the love of Jesus when we get to love on them.

RANDY: They get to know what Christmas is all about. Here's how it looks. You can put shoes, a brand-new pair of shoes that will last a long time. They'll probably actually, the children will probably outgrow them and pass them down.

But you can do that for ten children right now with a gift of \$36. Maybe you can give shoes to 20 children for a gift of \$72. Or 50 pairs of shoes, 50 children for \$180! What a simple thing but it's huge to them.

And there's also one other thing I want to bring to your attention. It is *Shoes and Smiles*. There are many children who cannot express any joy any time of the year because they were born with a cleft lip or cleft palate. We're also providing surgeries. A typical surgery is about \$500, which is why some of you may want to give a gift of \$500 today to provide that corrective surgery. But whatever you can do, many of you can give even more than that. You can give 275 pairs of shoes for \$1,000, or two surgeries, or maybe four or more. Whatever. I'm just saying whatever God's enabled you to do and put on your heart to give this Christmas season, this is your opportunity.

You can share the love and the joy of Christ through these shoes, through these smiles. Will you

do it now? Go online, go to the phone, make the gift that God puts on your heart, and let's make Christmas special.

CS&S Cause 2025:

***ANNOUNCER:** Poverty is a killer, and because of it, children needlessly suffer not only from lack of food and clean water, but also from a lack of things we take for granted, such as a healthy smile or a protective pair of shoes.*

Far too many children living in extreme poverty have never owned a pair of shoes. And while that may seem minor, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of painful infections, injury, and life-threatening diseases.

But this Christmas, you can bring hope and healing. Your gift today will help provide new shoes for 150,000 children in time for the holidays. And for some children, a beautiful new smile. Your gift of \$36 will help provide shoes for ten children, \$72 will help provide for 20, \$180 will help provide shoes for 50, and a gift of \$500 will help provide a cleft surgery, restoring a child's smile forever.

As a thank you for your gift of support, be sure to request the beautifully crafted yellow crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to display each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake set featuring four of LIFE's colorful crystal 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 smile surgeries, and you may request the beautiful bronze sculpture, "Lion of Judah."

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

Studio good-bye:

RANDY: I hope you are going online or going to the phone. Make the best gift you can. And you know what? You can get yourself an early gift when you request *Signs and Secrets of the Messiah*. And Tammy, I know this has blessed you.

TAMMY: It has! It's been a huge revelation to me. I can't thank you enough for this. There's almost a fresh start in my life.

We pray it is a fresh start for you as well. If you're watching today, dive all in. Seek and you will find. Thanks for watching and we'll see you next time on *Life Today*!