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Week 37

Randy Robison & Betty Robison

James Robison

"Thank God, I'm Free"

MALE ANNOUNCER: The following program is sponsored by friends of LIFE Outreach International.

JAMES ROBISON: I pointed a twin-engine airplane toward the ground very near where Ricky Nelson died, and I tried to take my life in East Texas while headed for a beautiful new home with a wife so lovely and three wonderful children. But I had no reason to live.

I had just preached to 7000 people in Texarkana. Hundreds had been saved, and I tried to take my life.

ANNOUNCER: James Robison's life message next on "LIFE Today."

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RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "LIFE Today." Mom, I'm excited about this program today.

BETTY ROBISON: I am too.

RANDY: This took place--

BETTY: "Thank God I'm free."

RANDY: "Thank God I'm Free." I mean, it's one of his classic sermons. Of course, we're talking about my dad, James Robison, but the interesting thing about this, this was when I was a student at Oral Roberts University.

BETTY: Oh, really? Is that when it was?

RANDY: Yeah, I was there. I hope they don't have a crowd shot of me because it's been a while. But this is-- this sermon impacted so many people in many different places because he preached it several times, obviously.

But interestingly, the motto there at Oral Roberts University is "Expect a miracle." I still have it on my license plate frame today on my car. But this was the result of a miracle in Dad's life.

BETTY: It was, it was. You know, you can get so busy in ministry that you actually don't have time for God, and I think that's the point he got to. He was doing all the meetings, making all the schedule and everything, and you just don't have time for God.

RANDY: The relationship. Yeah, the personal relationship, the daily--

BETTY: You're doing all the right things, but sometimes you can get away from that space and that time with God, and that's so-- that has to come first.

RANDY: It has to, and it's interesting because even Jesus did that. I mean, Jesus modeled that when he pulled back from his own disciples, from the needs of his world, from his mission, to spend time with the Father, and so that's really what we hope you will hear today because it was true back in the '80s when I was a young college student and it's absolutely true today and it's a wonderful reminder. So Mom, I know people are gonna be blessed as they hear this one.

BETTY: I know you-- God's gonna really talk to you through this message here because it is the "Thank God I'm free." That's what you're looking for.

JAMES: I was ministering out of an overflow relationship with Jesus Christ. While I was a student in college, every day after class, I would be seen racing across the campus, racing out into the woods alone. I remember every day when I got there, some of the students talked about the strange guy on campus who always rushed away to be with Jesus, but I was consumed by love for Jesus.

When I would arrive in the woods, Jesus was always there first. He always got there before me. And I was aware of his presence the moment I got there, and I said, "Lord, you were waiting for me." He said, "Yes, I knew you would come." I said, "Why were you waiting for me?" He said, "Not many are coming.

Not many ever come, but I knew you would come." I said, "How did you know I would come?" He said, "Because you love me." And he said, "You know you need me." I said, "Oh, yes, Lord, I do." He said, "James, I'm going to use you within one year to preach in the largest churches in America. Within two or three years, you'll be preaching in the Coliseums, the civic centers, and the stadiums." The first time I came to Tulsa, I was but 22 or 23 when the Coliseum was filled to overflowing. In Oklahoma City, we set the all-time attendance record for the Coliseum when I was but 23 years of age.

We broke Elvis Presley's attendance records all over America as the fire marshals would close the Coliseums. I was a man consumed by the love of Jesus, and that relationship with Christ spread in a glorious contagious fashion, but suddenly in my life, I was distracted. I was distracted by the praise of men, by the appeal of the world.

I was distracted by denominational teachings and the doctrines, yes, even of the Scriptures, and I was blown about by the winds of those doctrines and those truths. And I

began to find myself divided from the very body of Christ that I loved. I began to play the galleries and play to the expectations of men.

I knew what they wanted to hear. I had identified my crowd. I had identified the following.

Everybody that was mad at something loved me. I had a magazine called "Life's Answer." It should have been called "Mad Magazine." I was mad at everybody and a lot of people were mad and they got on the bandwagon. I was in a rage.

Inside, the battle was raging and I was losing. I found myself in the grasp of the enemy. And my life was being plowed up and torn up.

My mind was being shredded. Listen to me. The Bible that I had once loved so much that I went to, to drink and to eat and to be refreshed.

The Bible became the tool of my trade. I waved it furiously and dynamically. I tried to frighten away the evil ones and sin, but I did not go to this Word to get refreshing.

I went to this Word to prove a point. I went to the Scriptures to get a sermon. I did not go to the Scriptures to get life.

Everything was duty and obligation and expectation. There was no more intimacy with Jesus. I became trampled ground.

I became an unfruitful field. Briars began to grow up in my life. The beasts of the field came to consume my very flesh.

The joy of the Lord was taken away. The peace that passes understanding was gone, and I was filled with torment. On the back cover of my book you can read right here that one night I pointed a twin-engine airplane toward the ground very near where Ricky Nelson died, and I tried to take my life in East Texas while headed for a beautiful new home with a wife so lovely and three wonderful children.

But I had no reason to live. I had just preached to 7000 people in Texarkana. Hundreds had been saved, and I tried to take my life.

I did not want to live. Now, I'm preaching to students today who are hooked. They're defeated.

I could read you on page 139 in my book, when Milton Green got a chair, and I really need one. And he put it in the center of a room in the Holiday Inn in Selma, Alabama, and said, "Would you get in that chair?" And he said to me, when I sat in that chair, he said, "I have delivered hell's angels. I've delivered prostitutes and drug addicts." And I'm sitting here like the big preacher.

And he said, "And you're the most demonized person I have ever looked at in my life." He said, "You are the most tormented man I have ever seen." He said, "I cannot imagine how you've been able to minister. Your brain must be on fire." And I said, "It is. And I'm dying.

And I wanna die. And there's like a claw in my brain, and I pray to die." And he said, "Son, you don't have to." And he laid his hands on my shoulders, and that man began to pray for me, and then he began to take on the powers of darkness in that Holiday Inn room, and he began to tell those powers to loose me and a free man. I sat there thinking, "My God, I hope nobody can hear him.

This man is talking to the devil and I'm the only one in the room with him." I said, "Lord, God, don't let anybody find out about this." Milton Green got through praying for me and he sat down across from me and he said, "How do you feel?" I said, "Fine." He said, "Do you feel like something loosed you?" I said, "I didn't feel anything." He said, "I mean, do you feel like something sort of lifted off of you?" I said, "I didn't feel anything." "I mean, you feel like something sort of released you?" I said, "Milton, I didn't feel anything." He leaned over and patted me on the knee. He said, ha, ha, he said, "It's all over, son." He said, "The party line's gonna clear up. The traffic's gonna stop, son.

You're gonna start hearing God again, boy." He said, "The Bible's gonna come alive to you, son." He said, "I'm telling you, boy, it's over." This man didn't live by sight. He knew he had absolute authority over the power of the enemy. Do you know why so few people get free today?

Because it takes free people to free people. People in prison can't free people. Let me tell you something, when you get a bunch of religionists and you get a bunch of people around you trying to pray for your freedom who are not free, the spirits on them get on you.

That's why you don't lay hands on people too hastily, and don't let people lay hands on you too hastily. It takes a free man to free men. A man in religious bondage can't free anybody.

A man that's bowing down before his denomination can't free anybody. No denomination's gonna get Jimmy Swaggart free. It's gonna take free men to free him.

It's gonna take free men to heal those bruises that are in his heart because the devil's gonna condemn him from now on. The devil's gonna remind him from now on what he did. He won't be able to stand up and preach like Peter preached unless he gets free of the condemning spirit that would accuse him.

And no denomination can bring that healing. Only men who are anointed of God, who are walking in freedom, who don't bow down to any idols. They're the only people that can free people.

Milton Green set me free. I was in a pastors' meeting in Florida, and I said, "Let's bow for prayer." A hundred preachers, and a little preacher jumped up, said, "Brother Robison, Brother Robison!" He ran down the front. "Brother Robison, oh God, oh God." He said, "Brother Robison, one of my deacons paid my way here.

I drove 600 miles, 600 miles. Deacon saved his money and paid my way." He said, "Brother Robison, did I understand that some man asked you to sit down in a chair, and you sat down in a chair, and he prayed for you, and God set you free?" I said, "Yes, sir." And that man turned around in front of those preachers, and he reached over and grabbed one of

those chairs. He picked it up where they could see it, and he threw it down on the floor like that, and he said, "There's the chair and I'm in it.

O God, free me, free me. I burn with lust. Free me, O God, free me." And every preacher in that room fell on their face at his feet and looked at me and said, "Free us too.

Free us too." And I went to preach in the Pentecostal Holiness Church in North Carolina, the largest in the world, and every Baptist church in the area let out on Sunday night and brought their people. And I got through preaching that night and I was leaving, and there was a little preacher that caught me going off the platform. He had four children and his wife.

He says, "Brother Robison, Brother Robison, you remember me?" I said, "I don't think so." "Oh, Brother Robison, I'm the preacher that drove 600 miles. I'm the preacher that grabbed the chair and put it down in the middle of the room. I'm the preacher that sat in that chair and you prayed for me, Brother Robison, and God set me free.

And here are my children. Here's my wife," and he grabbed my neck. "I'm free, I'm free.

Thank God I'm free." I wanna tell you something. You don't have to have the hooks in you. You don't have to be in his talons.

You don't have to be stripped and shredded by the enemy. You don't have to be trampled. You can walk out of here today to walk over all the power of the enemy.

You can plant your feet on him like he's dust. You can overcome. But you can't defeat him until you're freed from those chains.

You say, "James, how do I get them off?" In the name of Jesus, I can get them off of your back. You can be delivered today. I want you to bow your heads and close your eyes all over this building.

I want every head to be bowed and every eye to be closed. And the Spirit of the living God move through this place today. Do not be distracted by schedule or anything else important.

Do not be distracted from the deliverance that is available in Jesus. Oh, how we wish our brother had gotten help. How I long to see everybody get help.

Thank God I got help. And today, God wants to help you. Most Christians have never known real freedom in their life.

I had known the real freedom and I had a conqueror living in me who couldn't stand for me to be in prison, that's why I had to keep looking back. I wanted God. Some of you have never known freedom, some of you've known freedom and you're not walking in freedom.

Some of you know that the beasts of the field and the birds of the air are attacking you. And it's in your heart to be free. How many of you here in this place would be honest enough to say to me, "James Robison, thank you for sharing your heart.

James, I've wondered who I could talk to." If you wanted to tell me all the things you've ever done, I wouldn't want to hear it. I wouldn't let you tell me. I don't want to know what you've done.

I want you to know what he's done. He has come to take away your sins. He's come to cover your sins.

He's come to free you from the hand and the power of the enemy. How many of you here in this place would say to me, "James, I'm not free. The enemy has overcome me.

His hook, his talons, are in me. James, I'm a prisoner too often. I'm defeated too often.

Would you pray for God in heaven to set me free, please?" Would you lift your hand where I can see it all over this beautiful assembly real high and hold it up. I want to be free. I want you to keep it up because I want the Lord to deal with anyone who has a spirit of deception and fear and pride that won't allow you to be honest.

Those of you here who are free, you're the only ones who can help me pray for these who are not free. If you're not free and you're sitting there in hypocrisy trying to pretend you are, you're going to be the greatest loser of all. Our dear brother fell trying to be free but not getting free.

Oh God, don't sit there. Do you know that in a moment when I release these people who are in bondage, evil spirits are going to leave them by the thousands and they're going to go looking for another place to go? And everywhere that the house is not occupied by the presence of God is where these spirits go.

They go to dry ground, dry waterless places, and if you're dry, waterless places, they're coming to you. And I do not exaggerate when I tell you that. Oh Father in heaven, I pray for these who say, "I'm not free, but I want to be." God, today I pray that this will be the greatest day of deliverance and liberation in the history of this school.

Lord, if you free these students today from the hand and the power of the enemy and fill them anew and afresh with the power of the Holy Spirit, they will walk from this place to shake the world for Jesus. Oh God, to trample the enemy under their feet and to rule and reign in Christ, and that's my prayer, dear God in heaven, set them free. Strip away hypocrisy and religious pretense and, God, bring about brokenness, break up the unfruitful ground, and oh Lord, tear out the briars and the thorns and set your people free today.

I'm going to ask those of you that said, "James, I wanna be free, I wanna be free," as an expression of your repentance, I want you to quickly get up from your seat and move out into an aisle, and where you can, just move here toward the edge of this platform very quickly. Don't wait to see if it's going to be fashionable. Don't wait to see if anybody else is coming, and don't worry about what your friends think you've been doing.

You cannot be delivered if you're full of pride. You cannot be delivered if you're full of pride. And the moment you move out, do not fix your focus on me.

Fix your focus on the Lord. Many of you have spirits of addiction and spirits of compulsion and spirits of lust and spirits of fear and of harlotry and of idolatry.

God in heaven today wants to set you free. God wants to set you free.

BETTY: And you know, God does want you free. I remember the days when I was so caught up in fear, it just took up my total thinking and mind, fear of everything around me, fear of the future, fear of not knowing about the future or what was ahead for me, but God set me free from that because I accepted his love in my heart. Maybe you're at that point now.

God wants to set you free from whatever it is that's holding you back from walking in that freedom with him. We have a phone line.

RANDY: Yeah, we do. In fact, if you want to pray with someone, we have people standing by who would love to pray with you. Just call that number, because that is a timeless truth that you just heard.

God, he's a God who delivers, whatever you're facing. And you know, we have sat here many times, Mom, you've sat here with Dad. I've sat with here with various hosts, and we have heard time after time testimony of God setting people free.

BETTY: Absolutely, and none of us are exempt from it. You know, we go through life, things hit us hard and we get bound by whatever it was that hurt us or disappointed us or whatever it is and it stops us cold.

God wants to set you free from that. He wants you to go on in freedom and in his love to proclaim his truth for him.

RANDY: Yeah, and it doesn't matter if it's emotional, if it's spiritual, if it's physical. Again, we're gonna leave that prayer number up for a long time because so many of you have heard God's Word delivered many years ago but still true today and it has impacted your life. So please do-- please do call and talk to somebody.

Let's start that process of freedom. It may be instant, it may take a while, but God promises to be with you wherever you're at, so stay close to him. You then can someday say, "Thank God I'm free." What a beautiful message.

And you know what it frees you to do? It frees you to accomplish all the things that God has put before you and before us as his body and really, Mom, that's what I saw after all these great sermons that we're revisiting.

You look back and you see you and Dad leading us into reaching out and sharing God's love with a hurting world. Not just in word but in deed.

BETTY: Absolutely, and we-- forget the protocol about everything. Forget what-- is this the way I'm supposed to act or to do? Find out what God wants you to do and do it and follow him.

He will be-- he will go before you and he will be your rear guard. Put on that armor of God, Randy, and just stand strong with him.

RANDY: Yeah, and I can tell you one thing I know is a part of God's heart because it's right there in those words written so long ago in Scripture: the disciples that met with Paul and they talked about the gospel of Christ. And then they added this one thing: "Remember the poor." And Paul said, "I was glad to do it." Let's remember the poor today. There are some people right now who need to see God's love in action, and guess what?

We're his hands, his feet. We reach out, we go around the world, we share God's love. We have a very special opportunity to do that.

But it involves you as well. It's nearly Christmas, time of Christ's birth, and we want to make this Christmas special for some children around the world that need something simple, something you can provide today. Watch this, see how you can join us in what we call, "Christmas Shoes and Smiles."



ANNOUNCER: For millions of children around the world, every step is a struggle against disease, injury, and the elements, but thanks to the incredible outpouring of love of our ministry's friends, that story is changing as we are distributing thousands of pairs of brand-new shoes to children in need. A new pair of shoes is more than just protection from soil-borne parasites or rough terrain. It's a message that tells a child who has often felt forgotten that they are seen, they're valued, and that someone halfway across the world truly cares for them.

RANDY: More shoes and smiles here in a village made possible by you, those of you who watch and respond. We wanna do this again this Christmas for other children in need. I pray that in the spirit of Christmas, in the name of Christ who was born this season, you would just reach out with the love of God and be a part of "Christmas Shoes and Smiles."

ANNOUNCER: Join us this Christmas to put shoes on the feet of waiting children. Your support turns a journey of hardship into a walk of hope.



RANDY: I love seeing the children dance and smile and say thank you.

BETTY: And you know, one of the biggest joys for me as a grandmother and a great-grandmother now is to see our children come over, our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren, come over and they'll have a new pair of shoes on, and I immediately notice them. I comment on them because they're so proud of them. These children are just as proud, Randy, because it's probably the first pair of shoes they've ever had.

RANDY: Yeah, and they last a long time. We've gone back later to many villages and you see children wearing those shoes and they'll grow out of them like children do. But they'll pass them down.

Yes, they get passed around. So I mean this is an ongoing thing. I do want to mention, though, that it's not just a luxury item in a third world country.

It actually is something that can impact their health because, Mom, you know that hookworm is prevalent over there. There are other diseases that get in through the feet because--

BETTY: It can affect their whole body.

RANDY: It can affect their whole bodies because it starts to deteriorate their health.

BETTY: Resistance is down. They--everything that comes along, it's gonna affect them one day.

RANDY: It does, so while you're helping to put a smile on a child's face by giving them a new pair of shoes, remember, you're actually providing them with something that can protect their health and, of course, those who have the cleft palate and the cleft lip that receive the corrective surgery, it makes all the difference in the world oftentimes. Oftentimes, life-saving.

BETTY: That just blesses me so much because one of the first times we went over there, Dad and I saw a young boy. We had our cameras going, you know, and everything, and one cameraman showed him on camera, and it's the first time he'd ever seen himself. He backed off in disgrace because he thought he looked so bad, but we were able to help that young man.

RANDY: Oh my goodness, there's not much better in this world than seeing the photo of a child or a video before and then after the corrective surgery. And again, that is only made possible through the support of friends like you who have been coming alongside of us for so long even since those those days back in those crusades but today, it's a new day. We need to reach our goal.

We need to give shoes to 150,000 children. That's what we wanna do this Christmas with your support. Will you provide 10 pairs of shoes perhaps for a gift of \$36?

Maybe you can provide 50 pairs of shoes when you give a gift of \$180 or maybe you'll provide two corrective surgeries for a gift of \$1000. That \$1000 ultimately would provide 275 pairs of shoes. That's 275 children.

Whatever you can do, join us in this beautiful outreach. Let's put some smiles on children's faces as we put shoes on their feet. Go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can.

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 things we often take for granted, such as a healthy smile or 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, 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 10 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 for a lifetime. As a thank you for your gift, please request the first time ever, dual-colored crystal shoe ornament with beautiful green and red accents.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake boxed set, featuring 5 of Life's colorful crystal shoe ornaments. Finally, please consider a gift of \$1000 or more to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes or corrective smile surgeries for 2 children, and you may request the beautiful bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd." Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

BETTY: We wanna hear from you now. We need your help. Thank you so much.

If you've helped before, please don't stop. You make a difference in the lives of these children. Thank you.

RANDY: Absolutely, yeah, and you know, I've enjoyed so much hearing these old sermons. I know you have too, and I know so many of you have.

If you missed any of them, if you wanna see them, the whole thing in one shot, you can go to stream.org as well as LIFEToday.org, but we appreciate you being with us. We'll see you again next time here on "LIFE Today."

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ANNOUNCER: For over 60 years, LIFE Outreach International has shared the transforming truth of God's love in both word and deed. Our ministry to the lost and hurting is only made possible because of the prayers and generous gifts of our friends and partners who provide consistent faithful support.

Call now or go online to become a friend for life. Your monthly support will help us continue to bring God's love, hope, and healing to a world in need, one life at a time.

TIM TIMMONS: So they gave me 5 years to live, 25 years ago.

ANNOUNCER: How God gave Tim and Hilary Timmons the strength to wake up again, next week.

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