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Week 39

Betty Robison & Randy Robison

"Christmas Shoes and Smiles"

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

ANNOUNCER: On this special episode of "Life Today."

JAMES ROBISON: They're gonna be devoted to Jesus!

ANNOUNCER: While leading global initiatives that altered the lives of millions, James, along with his wife Betty, traveled the mission fields of the world to find those who had been forgotten and overlooked.

JAMES: You know, 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 wanna 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.

ANNOUNCER: Next on "Life Today."

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RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to a very special "Life Today." I hope you will stick around, because you're going to see something that really blesses people around the world, and it's only made possible by you. Mom, it's a bit Christ-- are you doing Christmas at your house yet?

BETTY ROBISON: Oh, me, you know, normally I start shopping in July. So to talk about Christmas is not really too early for me. It takes time to think about what you wanna get them, but I know what I wanna get these children: shoes. They need shoes for their Christmas.

RANDY: And you know, we have one right here.

BETTY: I love this one. I think it's so cute. But more than being cute, it's great for the kids, to protect their precious feet. They can get so many diseases if we don't help them out here, and it can take their life eventually.

RANDY: Yeah, it is, so this is not just a fun thing, this is a serious thing, and yes, it is a bit early because it takes time to make this possible. And you know what? It takes viewers like you to make this beautiful outreach possible.

We call it Christmas Shoes and Smiles, and let me explain that. You saw the shoes, right? We give shoes to children who don't have any, or maybe they've had some in the past, but they just need some new ones. And so it's a blessing on that order, and it's frankly quite fun when you see the smile on the face of a child who gets a pair of shoes, because they value it.

It means a lot to them, and when they outgrow it, they pass it on usually to a sibling or someone else in their village. But there is another part of the smiles, and that has to do with children who are unable to really smile because they have cleft lip or cleft palate, and again, that poses a health risk. So yes, it's a wonderful, feel-good time of year with Christmas, but we're doing something, Mom, that I love, because yes, it is kind of fun, right?

BETTY: It is.

RANDY: But it's also demonstrating the spirit of Christmas.

BETTY: Well, and not just Christmas, it's the spirit of giving, and we should have that spirit of giving all the time, no matter what it is, to share someone that needs help. And these children really do need our help, to help protect their precious little feet. You know, when they're born, Randy, that's one of the first things we look at too is their little feet, to see if they're perfect or not, got all their little toes. Well, they're liable to lose some toes if we don't help them with the shoes, so please join with us, and let's do it together.

RANDY: Yeah, let's take a look at this, this Christmas Shoes and Smiles outreach, because we really do want you to be a part of this, we need you to be a part of it. But remember, they say it's more blessed to give than to receive, and you're gonna find out how you're gonna receive the blessing in Scripture when you reach out and give a pair of shoes or a smile. Watch this.



ANNOUNCER: As the world celebrates the birth of Jesus this Christmas, Life Outreach International is once again celebrating this good news in a very special way: with shoes. Yes, shoes! We, along with our mission partners located throughout the world, have provided millions of children with the gift of shoes, children who, in many instances, have never had a new pair of shoes.

ISAK PRETORIUS: We all celebrate different holidays around the world, but a holiday that's pretty common to most of us is Christmas, and that's what it feels like here today, it feels

like Christmas for us, because we are getting to do one of the most incredible things, and that is to bless these children with a pair of shoes.

ANNOUNCER: It's because of friends like you that we have been able to reach into remote areas every year, providing the gift of shoes and sharing the good news of Jesus. This year we want to once again see children's faces light up with smiles as they receive a new pair of shoes. Unfortunately, there are children who can't smile because they suffer from a condition known as cleft lip or cleft palate. The good news is our annual Christmas Smiles outreach allows us the opportunity to minister to some of the world's poorest children who have no hope of correcting their condition with surgery.

DR. ANDREW HODGES: But thanks to Life Outreach International, we're able to make lasting changes in children's lives through corrective surgery.

ANNOUNCER: Life Outreach has partners who work with some of the world's most skilled surgeons, who have performed thousands of corrective surgeries for children. These surgeries not only protect them from health-threatening issues, but provide the gift that lasts a lifetime, the gift of a smile. So this Christmas season, as you gather with loved ones and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus, demonstrate his love for others by providing shoes and smiles to children in need.

RANDY: So much fun, and you know, Mom, one of the things that I like about this is that, yes, it provides something physical in the way of a pair of shoes or a surgery, but it also says something to those who received that gift, and that is, "You are seen."

BETTY: "You're noticed." I saw too, Randy, you talked earlier about they'll pass their shoes on when they outgrow them. You know what that is on their part? They're learning how to give and to share, and as they give their pair of shoes, someone else is gonna pass theirs on to them.

That's the way it works. That's the way God wants it to work. You give and God's gonna give to you too. Always God gives back to us, maybe not in material things, but in the spirit of his love and his care for us.

And in the smiles, oh wow, to give a child a smile. I noticed in one of those shots there was a definitely a little girl, and she had a little princess crown on. That mom was trying to make that little girl look as pretty as she could. That mom loves that baby, she thinks her baby's beautiful.

RANDY: Yeah, we do too. We think they're beautiful, because we recognize that they're God's, and God loves them just as much--hard to say, because I don't know how you could love a child more than I love my children and my grandchildren, your great-grandchildren, but that's God's heart, it is love. And that is the spirit of Christmas: giving, expressing love, with no expectation of return, but you know what? You're right, God, when we obey his Word, he rewards us in ways that money cannot buy.

So, let's give this year. And you know, I've heard from so many of our viewers, I hear this quite often whenever we have a banquet or, you know, just people that leave comments or write in, they say how much they enjoy being a part of this outreach at this time of year, because it blesses them. And so, you can be a blessing, you can be blessed, simply by being a part of Christmas Shoes and Smiles, so.

BETTY: And you know, one of the things I like about it too is we send them, you know, the little ornaments. This is our new one this year, Randy, multicolored, isn't it beautiful? I have had to go to a larger tree, because I've got all the ornaments and I just love it. But you know why I like it? Every time I walk by that tree, I'm reminded that I was a part of helping put shoes on the feet of these precious little ones.

RANDY: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that, and some of you may wonder, "Well, why do you do that?" Well, we do it so that you can remember that you put a smile on a child's face. So yes, we are celebrating Christ, we're celebrating Christmas, and we're inviting you to be a part of the celebration as we reach out and we say to children, "God loves you, we love you in the name of Christ, and you're not forgotten this Christmas."

JAMES: They're going to be devoted to Jesus!

ANNOUNCER: For James Robison, standing before massive crowds, preaching to literally millions of people, never overshadowed his desire to comfort the least of these. While leading global initiatives that altered the lives of millions, James, along with his wife Betty, traveled the mission fields of the world to find those who had been forgotten and overlooked.

JAMES: You know, 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 wanna 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.

ANNOUNCER: James firmly believed that hand-delivering a brand new pair of shoes to a child was just as important as any mission he had ever undertaken.

JAMES: 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's a horrible sickness. But it's a disease that not only brings incredible pain and discomfort, but in so many instances, death.

ANNOUNCER: To he and Betty, that simple gift of a pair of shoes was a powerful message that whispered directly to a child's heart: "You are seen, you are loved, and someone cares for you."

BETTY: You know, I'm standing here with these children, and they're just a small example of children all over the world that they deserve to be cared for, and we have an opportunity to do that right now, to put some shoes on their feet, to give them a chance in life, and I ask you to help us do that. It's just a simple request, but a very urgent and important one. Please join with us. You'll get such a great joy out of it, I know you will. God bless you, and thank you.

[children chanting]

BETTY: Thank you so much for the opportunity to share our hearts with you and to let you know the needs around the world, and especially this time of the year, Christmastime, when we are offering the shoes and the smiles for these precious little ones. It makes such a difference in their lives, so please join with us if you will. Let's give some shoes and smiles to very deserving little children.

RANDY: Yeah, we really do want people to go online, go to the phone right now, make the best gift you can, because we need to get this in motion so we can reach our target with Christmas coming here in a few months. But Mom, there's an important point that I want to bring out, because these surgeries, they cost money, they cost expertise. There have to be facilities that are clean, that are suitable, in order to repair the cleft lip or the cleft palate. Do you know what it costs the the families, the mothers, the fathers, the children who receive these surgeries?

BETTY: Nothing, that is wonderful.

RANDY: Nothing, it costs them nothing, why? Because friends like you have said, "You know what? I want to give this Christmas. I want to give that child who can't smile the ability to smile." And the smiles that it puts on the faces of the families and the other children, it just--it's contagious in a good way, right?

BETTY: Yes, it is, very so, and there's nothing any greater in my heart than to see a little child smile. It lights up my day when my great-grandchildren come over. They're smiling, they're jumping around, and they're playing. They leave, I've just got the biggest grin on my face, because it's been such a blessing. These children deserve that too. Their parents deserve to see their children smile again.

RANDY: Absolutely, and you know what? I honestly believe that if you can put a smile on God's face, I know it makes him happy, he's pleased when we are expressing his love to people unconditionally like this. So here's what we're going to ask you to do. Our goal this Christmas is to give 150,000 children a brand new pair of shoes, and you can do that. I know that sounds like a lot, and it is, but when we come together as the body of Christ, as his hands, as his feet, we say, "You know what? We're gonna reach around the world and we're gonna show God's love this Christmas season to children," we can do it. We need to hear from you to do it, and we need to hear from you, frankly, today, because again, it takes

some time to get all of these things in place, but we're ready. We've got people on the ground ready to go. You know what we need?

We need you to provide, I don't know, maybe you can provide 20 pairs of shoes for a cost of \$72. Half of that, if you-- \$36 is a sacrifice for you, you can provide 10 pairs of shoes. You could provide 50 pairs of shoes for \$180. This is just to give you an idea, because sometimes you think, "Oh my goodness, 150,000 children, 150,000 pairs of shoes? What can I do?" Well, you know, you can actually do quite a bit, because we know, when you pick up the phone, you go online, you make the best gift that you can, it's about the obedience. God wants obedience more than sacrifice. And I understand it can be a sacrifice this time of year, but let me tell you, the smile that you're gonna put on a child's face, and I think, on God's heart, it's worth it.

You'll be blessed in ways that money can't buy. The surgeries, let me tell you, a corrective surgery costs on average about \$500. You could provide one of those today. You could provide two for a gift of \$1,000. And look, I know God's blessed many of you, you know, beyond means that most of us can relate to. Some of you may be able to give to impact many, many children. I don't know what that looks like, but I know it looks like obedience, and it looks like making children happy and reflecting God's love. Whatever you can do, let's celebrate Christ and celebrate Christmas, reach out and give shoes and smiles around the world. 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 duo-color crystal shoe ornament with beautiful green and red accents. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake box set, featuring five 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 corrective smile surgeries for two children, and you may request the beautiful bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd." Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

JOHN YEATTS: So we are here in Angola, on the way to a village where Victorina has had a life transformation through Christmas Smiles. We're talking about a beautiful little girl that was born with such a tragic cleft palate, one of the worst I'd ever seen. It's been a two-year endeavor that has been with many ups and downs. She was so malnourished, she had

wounds on her body that were so infected, she literally spent three months in the hospital before she could have her surgery.

ASHTON VESTRAND: I just remember thinking, "Lord, if this is your will, you have to make it happen," because there were so many barriers, and God was just faithful, and I'm excited to see how she looks today. John: The first time I saw Victorina, I saw her off in the distance on this huge granite boulder with her and two women pounding out what little bit of cornmeal that they had to make a meal. When I got up here, my heart just sank for her. We left, we went back to the village that night where we were camping, and after a long exchange with the kids, it's time to go to bed, and Ashton gets up and she walks over and she puts her hands on Victorina's cheeks. And Ashton, trying to lovingly tell her how beautiful she was, Victorina ran off crying, devastated, why?

Because she wanted to dwell in the shadows, she wanted to be hidden, she didn't want to be seen, she was ashamed. She was literally in a prison of despair. That so broke Ashton's heart that she spent the rest of the night crying in our tent, and she asked me, she said, "Dad, isn't there anything we can do for Victorina?" And it began a journey that took hundreds of people, hundreds of hours, multiple trips to make happen.

And now, it has been a day of celebration, it has been a day of miracles, it has been a day of wonder and laughter. Here's a little girl who just two years ago had no friends, and as I'm watching her today in class and she's raising her hand and answering the questions of the teacher and her multiplication, she goes along and she introduces each one of her friends to me by name, playing their dance game or kicking the soccer ball. And Victorina has moved from a prison to an open land of possibilities, simply through your generosity and your kindness and your compassion through Christmas Shoes and Smiles. Victorina is an example of thousands of children around the world that we can help this year, with a simple surgery. There are so many ways that we can bring smiles to families' lives through giving to Christmas Smiles.

RANDY: What a story.

BETTY: Oh man, what a beautiful story of the miracle of love. And you're a part of that, because you have given in love to help these children. Please don't stop. They desperately need your help. We need your help so that we can help them.

RANDY: Yeah, it doesn't happen without viewers like you, and that--Victorina was an especially tough situation. It required a lot more. But you know, on average, those surgeries that are life-changing, they cost about \$500 each for the cleft lip, cleft palate, and you know, if you notice, not only in the before and after pictures with Victorina, you see the smile, yes, but you can also see, Mom, the health difference in her.

BETTY: It does make a difference, because it has made her not so susceptible to disease and everything else that could come her way because of that.

RANDY: Yeah, she can't eat.

BETTY: She couldn't eat, she couldn't take care of herself, and that it's just like with the shoes, you know? If we don't take care of their feet, they get all kinds of diseases.

RANDY: Yeah, so the effects are far-reaching here. When you reach out today with a simple gift, you reach around the world and you impact a child in ways that you might not always see the fulfillment of, but I can promise you that that smile is just the beginning. So we're asking you to go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. We want to give shoes to 150,000 children this Christmas season.

We can only do it when you reach out today and you say, "Yes, I wanna give 10 pairs of shoes for \$36," or 20 pairs of shoes for \$72. Maybe some of you can give 50 children that new pair of shoes with your gift of \$180. And then some of you, I know you're saying, "I wanna make that change like I saw in Victorina.

I want to give a child not just a smile, but the ability to smile." A gift of \$500 will provide that surgery. Maybe you can provide two, three, four, whatever God has enabled you to do and whatever he puts on your heart. We just want you to join us because Mom, we know this is how we share God's love, and we make Christmas really, really special, life-changing, for a child.

BETTY: And you know, we wanna give you a little gift of love if you'll help us.

RANDY: I know you love this.

BETTY: I love this. I have a bigger tree every year, it seems like, to put my ornaments on, the shoes. It's a great reminder of sharing God's love with children that desperately need it. So I hope you'll go to the phone, whatever it takes, and call and share what you can give. Share from your deepest heart what God wants you to give, and help these children, thank you.

RANDY: Yeah, and you know, I love the ornaments too. My wife loves Christmas ornaments too. And you know what, I think that's great. I think it's a wonderful reminder when you walk by that Christmas tree later this year and you see that shoe hanging there, it's a way to say, "You know what?

I did. I was a part of giving that child the shoes that that could change their lives," could save their lives, realistically, but definitely a smile. Will you join us? Again, we appreciate you so much. You make this possible.

It warms our hearts to see the children smile, and I know it does yours too. So, come on, let's make this Christmas extra special. Join us online, on the phone, make the best gift you can. Let's give some smiles out this year.

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.

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TAMMY TRENT: I love this moment, I love it. No child should ever have to play around, walk around, without a pair of shoes, something that is good for them, something that will protect them, not just their feet, but their entire life. This is where they play, this is where they walk, this is where they live.

There's nails, there's metal, and when you live in these places, it's not like you can rush to a clinic right away. Their medical care is not like mine. So what a privilege it is to come in here and give them something that I know will keep them safe.

So as you are prayerfully considering giving, please remember that we also have a ministry where we are changing the smiles of little ones as well who have been born with cleft lip or cleft palate, so don't forget that today, Christmas Shoes and Smiles. Thank you so much for your giving, it all matters. Go online or call that number today and give the best gift you can, yeah!

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RANDY: Please do go online, go to the phone, make the best gift you can. We need to hear from you today so we can get all of this in motion. And we so appreciate you. Mom, I know the viewers, they make this possible.

BETTY: You really do. Thank you so much for the love that you give out to these children to help them have a better life too. Thank you for joining with us. Thank you for trusting this ministry to give to others, to help them, and to show our love, the love of Jesus Christ. That's what you're doing. You're showing God's love.

RANDY: You know, that's so true, and you know, it starts with you. You put that smile on a child's face one at a time, and when we come together, we make Christmas so special. So we hope to hear from you. Thank you so much. We'll see you again next time.



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