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Week 38: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Benny Tate

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. Tammy Trent is with me. And Tammy, I'm excited because Pastor Benny Tate is back with us. For those of you who don't know, he is the pastor of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia. And if you're going to Milner, you're going there on purpose. He has one of those churches that well, you have more people in your church on a weekend or at least watching the service than live in your town; is that right?

**BENNY:** Well, that's exactly right. I think the population is somewhere around 800 people. I often said that our zip code is E-i-E-i-O. We're literally out there, Randy and Tammy. But thousands of people, I think, I don't know, but thousands of people show up on a Sunday.

**RANDY:** Which is amazing. And really goes to the message in your book that we're talking about today *Unlimited*. The subtitle says "Experiencing the fullness of God's power in your life." This is something that you have lived and you are living. Give us a little bit of a taste of what God has done in your life when you have said, Holy Spirit, you take over. I'll follow.

**BENNY:** Randy, there are just so many stories. Oswald Chambers said this. He said, "The Holy Spirit is the first practical power that we experience." But he said, "It is the last power we come to understand." And I think there is power when we realize Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

There is supernatural power that's available to Christians. And to be honest with you, my wife probably taught me this early on. Barbara and I were very young when we started dating. Tammy, we'd just had a few dates and we were in love. Somebody said that's puppy love but it is real to the dogs, isn't it? I mean we were just in love. After just a few dates I said, "Barbara, I want to marry you. I want to get married."

We were both from rural Tennessee and she said, "You've got to talk to my dad. You've literally got to go to my father and ask for my hand in marriage."

I said, "I'm willing to do anything."

So I went to her father and I simply said, "I want to get married."

He said, "I don't recommend it."

**TAMMY:** He did?

**BENNY:** Tammy, he said, "I don't recommend it." He said, "You don't understand what you're getting into." He said, "My daughter is a very sick girl." He said, "My girl has eight or ten seizures a day. My daughter will have a seizure and she will lose five pounds. She will gush up blood." He said, "Look at you, you're in health." He said, "Are you wanting to commit to this?"

I said, "All I know is I love her." By the way, almost 40 years later, I still love her.

He said, "Are you sure?"

I said, "I am."

So we got married, Randy and Tammy. We were so young we didn't know whether to go on a honeymoon or summer camp. I mean we were just kids. And sure enough, he was correct about some things. We would go to church and Barbara would have a seizure. We would go shopping

and Barbara would have a seizure. And we would be in various places and she would have a seizure. Randy, our finances got so bad that when she would have a seizure I would say, "Please don't call—please don't call an ambulance. I have more bills right now than I can pay. Please don't call an ambulance."

Finally, the people in the community said something has got to be done. They started raising money and I sent Barbara to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. And the Mayo Clinic in Rochester said, "Barbara has got a scar on her brain. We don't know if her mother maybe had a—in the pregnancy, we don't if Barbara has taken a hit to the head. We just don't know. But there's a scar on the brain and it is too delicate to touch. Just keep taking the Dilantin, keep taking the phenobarbital, and keep taking the medication. It will help. But it will never stop."

And so I was hiring people to stay with Barbara. I was working as a machinist in a machine shop. A few years passed and Barbara said to me, "You know, Benny, God has touched me of those seizures. I believe that God has healed me."

And I said, "Barbara, I don't know about that."

She said, "Benny, I don't think I need to take all this medicine." I think she was taking 14 pills a day. She said, "I don't believe I need to be taking all of this medicine."

I said, "Barbara," just me being a man of faith, I said, "You just keep taking the medicine."

And that went on for a while. One day I was at work working, and I told the Lord, "God, I'm going to make a deal with Barbara." I said, "I know how to cuff my hand over her nose and mouth and get her out of those seizures faster than anybody." I'd become pretty good because I had so much experience. I said, "God, I've got to work during the week but what about on the weekend? What about on the weekend she doesn't have to take the medicine?" Because I said, "I could be there with her." Randy, just a young man, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart. I said, "I could be there with her."

The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart, Tammy, and he said, "Son, what could you do that I can't do?"

I got into a '79 Ford Fairmont. I left work. I walked into my house. I looked at that little ol' wife in the face and I said, "Barbara, I believe the Holy Spirit has spoken to me. You don't ever have to take the medicine anymore."

Randy and Tammy, that's been 30 years ago and the girl went from eight to ten seizures a day to totally healed. I'm learning that he is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above according to the power that worketh in us. I just want people to know that the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is the great equalizer. The Holy Spirit, he is so wonderful.

**RANDY:** You talk about three attitudes we tend to have towards the Holy Spirit in your book *Unlimited* and that would be ignorance, indifference, and indulgence. When that happened and your wife was saying I think maybe I could go off these meds and you were struggling with that, and I understand it completely, what was your attitude or your view of the Holy Spirit at that point?

**BENNY:** My idea of the Holy Spirit was I don't know—I don't know if this is for us. I almost thought, Randy, this is for the indulgent people.

**RANDY:** The kind of crazy people.

**BENNY:** Yes! Because I think churches can have a—I think they can swing. I think a church can swing to a cemetery or some of them can swing to insane asylum. Do you know what I'm trying to say?

**RANDY:** I've been in both of them.

**BENNY:** I think I have too. So that was my attitude. That this would be an indulgence. Barbara, we need to be practical. In all getting, get wisdom. But what I didn't realize at that time is God

was building something in my life because here I was just a young preacher. And God was showing me that he could do exploits. The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And God was showing me that he could do exploits in my life and he could do exploits in my ministry. Just a person who had—just a common run-of-the-mill guy that God can do great things.

**RANDY:** But at the same time, in the Bible, when they ran after him for the miracles, the exploits, whatever, he shut them down.

**BENNY:** That's exactly right.

**RANDY:** So how do you see the role of the Holy Spirit in miracles and what's the goal of all that?

**BENNY:** I think the goal, Randy, is seeking him. You know, I think I used to travel and I'd preach a lot. Even sometimes today, I'll say to my wife, "Honey, I think I'm traveling too much."

And she'll say, "Why do you say that?"

I said, "The other day I pulled up to the mailbox and ordered a Big Mac and an order of fries and circled the house." Do you know what I'm saying?

I used to travel a lot and I've got a daughter, Savanna Abigail and when she was really small, when I'd get home, here I am with you all at *Life Today*, but when she was small if I got home, I wouldn't be home no time because she would say, "Dad, did you get me something?" She was looking for that—

**RANDY:** I have a grandson like that.

**BENNY:** You know all about that. She was looking for that gift. But you know, I learned as she grew up, it seemed like as I got home, Savanna just wanted to see her daddy. She just said, "Dad,

I miss you." And I think the secret is when we are seeking him when we're seeking a relationship with him.

Somebody said, "What's going to be the motivation for prayer?" Somebody said, "Well, needs has got to be your motivation for prayer." Well, I disagree because if needs are your motivation for prayer, when you don't have needs you're not going to pray much. Your motivation for prayer has to be to know him. It has to be for a relationship. It has to be intimacy with him.

So I would say to that person seek that—seek that. And it's amazing what God will do through our lives when he seek him.

John R. Rice was praying on one occasion, he prayed to God the Father, and he prayed to God the Son, and he prayed to the Holy Spirit. And somebody approached him and said, "John, you prayed God the Father, God the Son, the Holy Spirit, you pray to all three of them?"

He said, "Yes. I've lived long enough to get to know all of them. I've lived long enough to get to know all of them." I would challenge people to get to know all of them.

**TAMMY:** Yeah. I love that you said that pastor because I was going to say so many of us talk about God the Father, God the Son, but we're not always talking about the Holy Spirit. And like we said a moment ago, sometimes I think people think it is too spooky.

Why is it—first of all, for people that might not know, practically, who is the Holy Spirit? And why do we need him in our lives daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Why is it important?

**BENNY:** Here's what I would say. First of all, Jesus said this, Tammy. He said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is necessary for you that I go away. It is necessary for you that I go away. For if I go not away the Helper will not come."

See, when Jesus was here if he was in Jerusalem he wasn't five miles away in Bethlehem. He was just in Jerusalem. But he said, "When I go away the comforter, the helper will come." Here's

what he actually said. He said it is more important that the invisible Holy Spirit is here than the visible Jesus is here. Because the invisible Holy Spirit could be everywhere. He could be everywhere. He could be in all places. That's why Jesus said, "He that believeth on me and the works I do," he said he'll do the works I do and greater works.

Well, certainly, Tammy, our listeners, and myself, we don't have more faith than Jesus. So it is not on the basis of faith. He said, "You'll do greater works." It is on the basis that the Holy Spirit could be everywhere. The Holy Spirit could be everywhere.

**RANDY:** It is interesting that sometimes, I know I've spent time in some pretty traditional denominations and they can kind of back off from these things. But when you look at the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they are very practical. And they are very much geared towards expressing God, giving him the glory, not us the glory. How do you see the role of spiritual gifts playing out properly when the Holy Spirit is in the lives of believers?

**BENNY:** You know, when a person receives Christ, they receive the Holy Spirit. And whether we realized it or not, God, the Bible says as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another. God, every person listening to me today is a gifted child. God takes those unique gifts and he uses them to build his body. He uses them to enhance other people.

And you know, what I challenge people is you know, stay in your gift zone. God has gifted you. Well, pastor, I don't know what my gift is. Here's what I would say. Your gift is what you do best with the least amount of effort. And God's gifted all of us. And God wants us to use those gifts. I would say to the listener today, God wants you to stay in your gift zone but certainly, he'll take you out of your comfort zone.

**RANDY:** Yeah. And he can give gifts freely any time he wants.

**BENNY:** Yes, he has! I've seen it throughout my ministry.

**RANDY:** So how do we get there? Is it just surrender in obedience? Is that kind of the

prompting? You know you talk about unlimited presence of the Holy Spirit, unlimited power, unlimited purpose. I guess, I'm just trying to put a physical—see how it physically looks.

**BENNY:** Here's the way I would simplify. Randy and Tammy, in the book of Ephesians, the great Apostle Paul said to the church in Ephesus, "Be not be drunk with wine but be filled with the spirit." Now what was interesting is who is speaking to? Not to a bunch of pagan Greeks. He is speaking to the saints at Ephesus according to Ephesians 1:1. So here's what he said. He said to us believers be ye filled with the spirit. And I can just tell you my life. I'm constantly saying, God, fill me with your spirit. I need your spirit. I need your presence in my life.

See, Randy, in Ephesians 5:18 he tells us to be filled. Well, in Ephesians 5:21 he talks about husbands and wives submitting yourselves one to another. In verse 22 of Ephesians five, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as to the Lord." And then in Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands love your wives even as Christ loved the church." Well, how do we do those things? By being filled with the Holy Spirit. By being filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 6:1, "Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right." How do you do it? By being filled with the Holy Spirit. Masters, be good to your employees. How do you do it? Through being filled with the Holy Spirit. Employees, how are you good to your boss? Through being filled.

D.L. Moody—it is a neat story. Somebody asked D.L. Moody, they said, "Every time before you preach, Brother Moody, you say 'God fill me. God fill me.'" And they said, "Why? Why do you do that, Brother Moody?"

He said, "Because I leak."

[Laughter]

Randy, listen, we're here, Tammy, with the world, flesh, and the devil, and whether we like it or not we leak. And we have access to the Holy Spirit's power. Randy, he told the early church and I know I'm on a roll, but he told the early church, he said, now listen, you go to Jerusalem. For ten days, don't you do anything. Don't you preach, don't you teach, don't you do anything. You



just wait until you be endued with power from on high.

Randy, how can we do anything outside of the Holy Spirit? How can we have success and significance in any teaching, preaching, or ministry, using our gifts that you spoke of? How can we do any of it outside of the power of the Holy Spirit?

**RANDY:** Well, scripture says without him we can do nothing.

**BENNY:** That's exactly right.

**RANDY:** But with him, all things are possible! Unlimited possibilities. I love it. I want you to get the book *Unlimited*. It is available for preorder now so reserve your copy wherever you get books. But right now I want you to see how you can be a blessing in someone else's life. This is so special. Watch this.

### **On the mission field**

#### **OPEN CAPTIONS**

>> My name is Dr. Joseph Theuri. I'm a surgeon who does many operations that include the repair of cleft lip and palate deformities. Okay, let's pray. We pray that You're going to guide us through this procedure to enable us to get a good correction.

Cleft lip and palate deformities are very common in Kenya. For the cleft lip, the child has a split lip, usually the upper lip. For the cleft palate, usually there is a hole in the palate. Once they are born, there are quite a lot of effects. Usually, when someone sees a person with a deformity of the face, it is very conspicuous. And that kind of brings a lot of shame to the family. And a lot of children tend to be hidden as a result of that.

A cleft palate has a more challenging, functional problem because children with a cleft palate have problems; difficulties feeding when they are young. Because of that, children usually have malnutrition when they are young. Repair of both of these deformities is able to forestall all these

types of problems. So a child that has a cleft lip that is repaired is able to lead a normal life. When someone has a cleft palate, the function of that child and the social interaction, and also opportunities are better when all these are repaired at a young age.

We'd like to thank James and Betty and their friends of *LIFE Outreach International*. We believe that their support will help us to reach more children and be able to treat children with cleft lip and cleft palate. But we know that there are very many children that are not treated and they are out there in our country. This type of intervention is going to help treating these children. And these children will be able to grow normal lives and be able to access opportunities of life just like any other child in our country.

Thank you. May God bless you!

**End of video**

### **In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Thank you, Dr. Joseph, for all that you do. What a gift you are to so many children and families, and a gift you are to us at *Life Today*. May God continue to bless you, sir, with the gifts that you have. And I think about those children when I watch that piece and it makes me emotional. Because I just think, I hate seeing it. The struggle that they must face, it breaks my heart. But I think to be able to see those pictures where they show the before and then the after. I see the after and I think, oh, my goodness! They've been given a chance! They've been given a chance at a new life, a normal life for them.

And it is possible. You don't have to just look at that before picture and think, whoa. That's a life they'll live forever, which is such struggle, and probably just shame that's been brought on them. I know that in those different countries, it is like a curse and it is embarrassing. To think that I could look at that picture after and go, look at what they've been given. Because of you—because of your gift maybe through the years. Maybe today's going to be a brand-new day for you to go I want to give to this. I want to change the life of a little child with a cleft palate or a cleft lip, that

will change their entire life forever—build a different future for them.

If that's you on the other side and you've never had this chance, I'm telling you, it will impact your life probably even more than you think it will. So for \$500 today you could change the life of a little child forever. Help them build a better future, Randy. I think that's what we're all about here. Truly, in everything we do, everything we're a part of is helping to save lives and build lives as well.

**RANDY:** It is. And the interesting thing about the cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries is, you know, in all of our outreaches, whether we're talking food, water, rescue, when we reach someone with the love of God, they smile. They have the ability to. But these children, so many of them, literally don't have the ability to smile until we reach them with the surgery.

And so this is such a beautiful outreach. If you can provide a surgery or two or three or four, whatever God puts on your heart, do it. At the same time, I know some of you are like, man, I wish I could provide a whole surgery. Everything—everything helps.

We're also giving out shoes—*Shoes and Smiles*. A \$36 gift today will provide shoes for ten children! A \$72 gift will provide shoes for 20 children. So whatever you can do, perhaps you can go big. And maybe it doesn't seem so big to you but it is big to God. Whatever we do to bless others, both in their physical need and with the spiritual blessing of doing it in the name of Jesus, it's big.

So let's make Christmas special for some children this year. Let's give them *Shoes and Smiles*. Go to the phone, go online, and make the best gift you can. And do it today because Christmas is coming quick. I know it seems like we're way out but it is coming quick. So let us know what we can do as you give some *Shoes and Smiles* to some children this Christmas.

### **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 the beautifully crafted, green crystal shoes ornament, a treasure to display at each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake boxed set featuring three 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. With this gift, you may request the beautiful bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds."

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

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** I hope you are going online or going to the phone making the best gift you can. Let's put shoes on children in need. Let's put smiles on their faces. You will bless them just as Benny Tate has blessed us here today. I've just been so blessed. This is so good.

**TAMMY:** It means so much to me. And I wrote something down that I'm going to have on a sticky note. I want to read this every day but I want to read it to you because it is so important. "When we allow the Holy Spirit to fill and direct our lives, everything will change, relationships

will be healed, self-esteem will be lifted, purpose will be revealed, direction will become clear, hope will overflow, peace will reign in our hearts, and God's goodness and faithfulness in their lives will be undeniable." What a word from God. Thank you so much, Pastor Benny.

**BENNY:** No, thank you.

**TAMMY:** May it be undeniable in my life and may it be undeniable in your life. Let the Holy Spirit overflow in your life today. Thanks for watching. We'll see you next time.