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**Week 37: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles***

**James and Betty Robison**

**Susie Larson #2**

**In the studio**

**JAMES:** We welcome you to *Life Today*. Susie Larson has been with us for many, many years. She's probably been with us, I guess, as many as any guest I can think of. I don't know. You know, Dr. Robert Jeffress is getting in more because he's close. He's just right up the road at First Baptist Dallas. By the way, we know you do love him and you love Susie.

We talked yesterday about how we were going to talk about the accuser. Susie brought something up yesterday that we want to expand on a little bit, and that is the enemy makes us think God is just out of the picture, and we find that we feel he's silent. Why are we not hearing him? We're going to address that. Why do we find what seems to be a silent Father? How are we supposed to interpret that? How do we deal with it?

Susie, address that. But I wrote down from the last chapter something, and I referenced it yesterday that we would talk about the accuser of the family of God. Listen to this. This is one of the last sentences in the book that just jumped out at me and I just typed it up: "While we're busy giving airtime to the enemy's accusations about our past"—we're giving airtime to the accuser — “Jesus is earnestly preparing for our future. While the enemy intently points out our flaws, Jesus purposefully advocates and intercedes for us. God is actively making notes of our offerings and obedience to him."

How do we deal with the accuser? And how do we come to understand and handle those moments of silence? Either one of those, start on that.

**SUSIE:** I'm so glad that you pointed that out because that last chapter is my favorite chapter

titled, "God Remembers and God Forgets." Because there are some things that I say we often remember that he's decidedly forgotten and there are things we forget that he's asked us to remember.

I open that chapter with this story about a time that I worked in fitness and I managed a fitness department. One of my old staffers came to one of my conferences and I never knew her to be a person of faith. We met during the break and I was so excited about her faith. She said, "Susie, do you remember when I was going through that divorce and you gave me \$100 to help me through a hard time?"

And I'm like, "No, I don't. But I'll tell you what I do remember, every idiotic thing I've ever said and what I was wearing when I said it." And we laughed about it. But I thought that is just so true. It's like we keep the stuff on the table, and then the enemy—it is like open loops in our brain. And the enemy then feels he has full carte blanche access to accuse us. Somebody once said, "The devil accuses us day and night. Jesus intercedes for us day and night. We're the ones that cast the deciding vote."

I will tell you, having worked in radio for 16 years and interviewed a lot of leaders and heard from a lot of listeners, there are seasoned believers who still put up with the constant condemnation of I can't believe I did that. I can't believe I failed. You were saying, I don't know if it was during the break or out in the green room but we actually shouldn't be surprised that we fall and drop the ball. That's why the mercies are delivered to our door every morning. And there is at times an inverted pride where we feel like our failure and our sin somehow escapes the blood of Christ. Because we are beggars who have found the bread line.

And so we've got to get a little bit feisty around what we're deciding to remember and deciding to forget because he lost his right to accuse us when Jesus won that victory on the cross.

**JAMES:** You know, we seem to forget the Bible was written by people who failed. God uses imperfect people always to accomplish his perfect will. And the enemy accuses us for our lack of perfection, which we certainly know we are not self-righteous, and we have no righteousness.

And when you see yourself and the enemy accuses you, you say, yes, I failed. And if you are a Christian and you've ever experienced the grace and the mercy and the forgiveness of God, you regret failing. You hate the fact that you failed. You don't want to fail. Well, the enemy just builds on that and builds on that and accuses you until you'll find yourself agreeing with him when God is telling you, I covered it. I covered it. I love you. I want to hold you. I'm not going to put you down. I'm going to lift you up.

Why is it so hard for us to hear that when he is speaking it so clearly? And he's spoken it through everybody who wrote the Bible and failed. And yet, miraculously they stormed the gates of hell for his glory and to give us victory in Christ.

**SUSIE:** I think we are averse to grace. I think it is so hard to receive this lavish, scandalous gift of grace, and we have this propensity to want to earn our way. So it is just so hard to accept and receive and believe what this ocean—I always say, no matter how long you've walked with God, we hold the Dixie cup and the ocean remains.

But truly, I have to say you can't impart what you don't possess. So if you're not fully receiving the grace of God, quit being surprised when you fail. If you're not fully receiving it, you're not imparting it to people.

Now I'm not talking about the big scandalous affairs and those kinds of things. I remember a pastor said to me, a friend, years ago, we were in a life group together. He was one of our pastors in an old church we went to. He had an affair and we asked him what happened. He said, "Well, I kept changing the rules a little at a time." And that could be a whole other show. That's not what I'm talking about.

When you fear God and you walk in his way and you eat too much or you spend too much or you say too much or whatever, and then you come under this condemnation, you're debilitated by it, that is from the enemy. And it disempowers what God wants to do in and through us.

And in that last chapter, I look at Abraham and Lot side by side. There is a passage in the New

Testament, it talks about our work is going to go before the fire and what is not of God and not built on him will burn up. And what is very clear in that passage is that some will seem like they're barely saved. All of their work burns up because they were building their own kingdom and they will be escaping through the flames.

So that's put a holy fear in me to want not only to look at what I do but why I do it. That I want to have a spirit-led motivation. So when I looked at Abraham and Lot, Abraham sacrificed his son to the Lord. Lot sacrificed his daughters to the mob—he was willing to if not for the angels blinding them. You put them side by side, Lot was greedy, he picked the choicest part of the land. He camped among the ungodly. When it was time for him to warn his family that judgment was coming, they thought he was joking so he lost his credibility. Where Abraham was favored of God because he followed him.

So when you just read the Old Testament context, you kind of would wonder if Lot is a poser in a way. Just because it's like you don't see this evidence of faith. But you jump to the Hall of Faith in Hebrews and it says Lot was bothered daily by the wickedness around him. So he was saved. I thought, who knew? Well, God knew.

And what that tells me—and even Sarah, she laughed on the inside when God pronounced she would have a child. And she told Abraham to sleep with her mistress and then, "Look what you've done to me now!" So there is a lot of dysfunction there. But you look in the Hall of Faith, you know what Heaven remembers? Is their faith, their righteous deeds. God has put those sins as far as the east is from the west. This tells me that when we see Jesus face to face, when we cross the finish line, there are going to be some running all in but others are going to be falling on their face, maybe still battling some of their addictions, and those kind of things where they fall in a ditch and they hate themselves and they get back out again. There are going to be some who are burnt out because they were striving in their own strength. Some are still struggling with so many of the things of the voices in their head that they never stopped to deal with.

Does it affect their eternity? No! Does it affect their identity? No! But it does affect their influence. Because Lot's, I would say was a squandered life in many ways but still he had some

kind of saving faith. So that should tell you about the scandalous gift of grace. But it also is a cautionary tale to me. I want my life to count. I don't want to be sitting here listening to the condemning voice of the enemy because you have examples in scripture also. When you have a heart for God and you mean what you say and you pray His Word and you stand and you do what he says, the world is changed. You two are evidence of that. So it's not about striving and performing but it is about believing and receiving, and then seeing what God will do with it.

So we've got to get a little bit feisty and not give the air time to the enemy because daily the heavens are pouring forth speech. God has things to say to us and I'd rather bend an ear toward Heaven than listen to what hell has to say.

**BETTY:** And we give too much time to the enemy in the thoughts and the failures. We sit around and we let him pour the past upon us. But we have to remember that God forgets, just like you said. He remembers the point when you came to him and asked for forgiveness and he changed your life. We do that so many times with strongholds that we grew up with unknowingly. I grew up with a spirit of fear all over my life until I was an adult. And then one day, God showed me that I didn't have to live with that and he set me free of it. And I'm still free of it. But that doesn't mean the enemy isn't waiting for that opportune moment to just pounce on you. But I know what it is now. Like you said, you can put your foot on the enemy and hold him and say, no, you will not do to me. God is good and he puts things in my heart and my mind to remember the things that he has done through me and for me.

**SUSIE:** Amen! And see, what you're talking about, you're a meek humble woman but you've got a feisty faith. And I think we need to make the distinction between passivity, a spirit of passivity, and the spirit of meek humility. I just think there is too much passivity and we put up with so much from the enemy, and you don't come upon the abundant life because it is delivered to your door. Jesus won it but we have an enemy. And my friend puts it this way: There is a pattern of theft in everybody's life because that's how the enemy works. Once you establish that and discern it, then you put your foot down. And you partake of the promises of God.

**JAMES:** You know what God has been putting on my heart with such clarity is his dream. I

asked God in the last several months, Father, what's your dream?

It is like he responded, have you ever noticed how many athletes and gifted people say they want to fulfill their mom's dream and give her a home when they suddenly make money? But how many do you ever hear say, I want to give my father's dream? And God said, James, you ask me what's my dream. He said I'm going to make it really clear to you. I dream that my kingdom come and my will be done on my earth as it is in Heaven. That's my dream.

I said, Father, the king has come. He said the kingdom is in us. He said the kingdom is in us in resurrection power. So that means the kingdom has come. That means your will can be done on earth, this earth as it is in Heaven. And the Father said to me, that's my dream. My will being done on my earth. Heaven and earth are the Lord's. My will can be done on earth. I have lost my life.

Jesus said, "You lose your life in me and you're going to find it."

So I'm losing my life in his kingdom's purpose. I want to see his will done on his earth. And the only way that can be done is not just for a somebody but for his body, a family of believers to behave in supernatural unity that Jesus prayed for. John 17 is clear, a relationship with the Father shaped by the word, sanctified, and then living in supernatural unity, harmony, all the parts fitting together giving glory to God. Does that make sense to you? Does that give you an excitement?

**SUSIE:** It's taking all my restraint not to just jump up and shout. But this is your show so if I was in my radio studio I would be. But amazing! And yes! And amen! I'm thinking about the Israelites, they groaned under slave labor, and they cried out to God in their groaning. Their cry reached God's ears. He mobilized Moses to be their deliverer. When it came time for them, for their emancipation, he loaded them down with the riches of the Egyptians.

And then it says, "Not a feeble one was among them." I believe they were healed when the blood was on the mantle. So God set them up for success. But do you know what? In Hebrews it says,

"The promise did not benefit them because it was not met by faith."

So I want you to think about this. It goes back to what you were saying, Betty, that we can live all day groaning and complaining and giving in to some of the things the enemy is doing and we never change. His promises are as potent as they've ever been. But in that time in between, especially when God seems silent, when you're between God encounters, so to speak, what are you doing with your heart and your faith? Because they grumbled and complained, and in Psalms, it says they refused to believe the promise of God and stayed in the smallness of their circumstance and refused to obey the Lord.

That shocks me. He set them up for absolute freedom and success but the promise and the answer when it came didn't benefit them because it wasn't met by faith. So you have stuff you can do in the silent season and the in-between season. You can remember what he said. You can remember what he's done. You can open up the Word of God because you're opening up his mouth. His Word is alive and active. It matters how we steward those times in between because that's how the kingdom comes and his will is done.

I'm telling you a lot of times people are crying out to God and it is in the form of a complaint but they never deal with the issues of their heart. So when the answer finally comes, it doesn't benefit them because it is not met by faith. And yet, the kingdom comes when he finds faith on the earth.

So again, this isn't like name it, claim it like you can dictate to God and you'll never have problems. We have a fierce enemy. But overwhelming victory belongs to us. So how we posture ourselves, what we believe and listen to, all of that matters as far as where we put our feet while we're walking this earth.

**JAMES:** Can't you see the excitement that's overwhelmed me? The fact that I'm excited about his will, the Father's will being done on his earth through his family as his dream, I'm captivated by that, not by the enemy any longer. I'm captured by the vision and the prayer and the desire of the Father, and what Jesus prayed for. John 17 lays it out. And you end it in supernatural unity so the world knows you're my family, you're my disciples, you're my followers. And they brought

down the greatest power that had ever been built on this earth by doing what he prayed for.

**SUSIE:** I'm sorry but I've got to do it!

**JAMES:** And opened the door for great things to happen like even the birth of this nation. The birth of this nation was so much bigger than the founders. It is the truth and the principles that they established on that established freedom. We don't have to give our marriages to the devil, our children to the devil, our communities to the devil. We don't have to give God's earth to the devil's will. We can do his will on his earth where he's going to come back for a people that are adorned in his glory.

When you talked about getting closer to him, he let me know, I'm going to be beside you, I'm not getting out of the car, I'm going to be beside you, I'm going to be talking to you, I'm going to be sitting on the sofa when you're talking to your family and your friends. I am right here with you. And I can sense that.

Can you tell I'm excited about it? Because it is real and it can be real to everybody.

Father, I pray that what our wonderful guest, Susie has said about closer than the next breath, that's how we can be to you. Lord, I pray our viewers will get the book. I pray our viewers will lose their life in your kingdom purpose to find it. That they will be excited about your will being done on your earth through their life as a member of your body, the church. Let us be excited about your will being done on earth, in Jesus' name.

I'm so glad you joined us today. Susie, you're a gift from God to his family, to all of us, and we love you deeply.

Lord, I pray that these attacks physically that have come at Susie so, it seems unceasing, will be stopped, halted, and let her literally walk over the enemy's intention, and continue to use her to pour your love and your life out on people with your gifting, in Jesus' name.



Susie, we love you. I hope you'll get this book. I'll tell you what we'll do too. You can get it online, and you can get it in the bookstores, but we'll send it to you today if you would help us give Christmas shoes. These are the little ornaments that we send you for your tree because we're giving *Shoes and Smiles*. These are the little shoes. And they go all the way up to teenage. And we can get these for \$3.60 a pair. Ten children could receive shoes for \$36. We're also giving smiles to children with cleft palates. A gift they never dreamed they would have and their family, it overwhelms them.

Betty, our viewers love to do God's will on his earth for his glory and you're pouring his love out on the least of these, the overlooked. That's the one group of people, Jesus said, who are definitely, unquestionably my sheep. They notice the least of these and they do these things. That's what you do when you say I'm going to give smiles, I'm going to give shoes, I'm going to give food, I'm going to give water, I'm going to give life. You're doing his will.

I want you to look at these children while you're thinking about giving shoes, I want you to also consider giving a smile. Watch closely.

### **On the mission field**

**James:** I love you!

**Announcer:** For a child living in poverty in a developing country their smile may be the most valuable thing they own. But imagine if that child was born without a big, beautiful smile.

People told me not to dream  
 To live in their reality  
 But I am walking through those doors  
 Because I am sure  
 There's something more  
 Than what I've been told

Oh, I know I found my way  
Oh, tomorrow is a brand-new day  
And the whole world is going know my name

**Announcer:** More than a decade ago, *LIFE Outreach* started an annual mission campaign called, "Christmas Shoes and Smiles." In addition to providing over two million children with a new pair of shoes, *LIFE* and its mission partners have also changed the lives of over 2,000 children born with a cleft lip or cleft palate by providing the surgery needed to give them their very own brand-new smile.

**Tony:** A big thank you to the *LIFE Outreach* family. It's a privilege to serve with you as we share the gospel of Christ and as we provide life-changing surgeries in our part of the world. Our partnership has resulted in children's lives being transformed; from disfigured faces to faces beaming with smiles all because of your generosity in providing these surgeries.

Our world is going to know my name.

**End of video**

### **In the studio**

**JAMES:** I don't know if you noticed the little girl that was sitting in my lap when we first saw that. Betty, I prayed that little girl into my lap. I just saw her walking very timidly, walking down the road and turning. And I sat down and I said, "Betty, did you see that little girl a while ago?" Said, "I'm praying she'll come get in my lap." And she turned around and came and sat down in my lap. But with that little girl, we went and we saw children whose feet were all torn up and diseased. We saw where a child had died of the disease that had started in his feet, and then hookworms got into his brain and killed him. And the doctor there told us what happened. And we realized what shoes could do.

Do you remember the little boy that had never seen his face in Angola? We took a video, turned it around, and let him look at the monitor. And when he saw his face, see he had never even seen

a mirror, he went, "Aah!" And he screamed and ran away. It so broke our hearts that he was scared when he saw himself. We came back and talked to you. And Betty and I got the money together. We found we would have to take him, because it is a serious surgery, to Johannesburg, quite a trip. And we asked you to pay for it, and you did. And we gave that little boy the most beautiful smile.

When I say we, that encompasses all of you. I've said many times, and I don't think it is an exaggeration even in the slightest, the most love-filled, unselfish people I think on the planet are people who watch what you God have called us to do for the least of these and the unnoticed, and you know love never fails. We could weep over the hurting, the suffering and the unsaved, and the thirsty and the hungry but we could not feed them, give them water, give them a surgery, give them shoes. You do it. It is the body of Christ. It's the family of God doing God's will on his earth for his glory.

Could you give \$500 for a surgery? \$1,000 for two as Christmas gifts? Could you give \$36 to give ten children a pair of shoes? For Christmas, we have to raise the money now, Betty. We're several months ahead in order to get the shoes, to get the doctors lined up, and get them to the places of need and deliver the gifts and the surgeries.

Would you right now go online or dial that number and take your bank card and use it like a check? Have you ever made a \$1,000 gift or several thousand to work miracles? Could you give over \$100 to give shoes? We have gifts to send you to say thank you. And I pray you'll give the greatest gift because of the great gift God gave us through his Son Jesus.

Would you go get that card right now? Use it like a check, please. Give a smile if you can. Give as many shoes as you can. Let's do this for Christmas. We have to raise the money now. Thank you for your response.

**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**

**JAMES:** Well, we want to send you the little Christmas shoes for any gift. I hope you get the little box by giving over \$100. And as many as you can, would you give the \$1,000? We've got the beautiful Cardinal bronze that is just magnificent just to say thanks. You're going to give some children smiles. It will bless them and their family.

This book is awesome because Susie has the awesome God living in her gifting her and communicating through her. This could change your life and enrich you in ways you've never imagined. If you want the book, we'll send it to you but more than anything, we want you to know how close you can be to him.

Susie, always know you've got a place here. This is your television show. I you need to do is come. You can add this to your radio ministry.

**SUSIE:** Thank you! I may take you up on that.

**JAMES:** Well, you do it. Hey, we love you. Thank you for helping us show people clearly his love. You are amazing. Thank you for sharing that amazing grace.