

8/26/24

Week 35: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*

James Robison

Dennis Quaid #1

In the studio

JAMES: Well, I'm really excited! Because I'm excited about a great man by the name of Ronald Reagan. I was blessed, by the way, to meet him. I was blessed because Billy Graham called a prayer meeting that actually let me go to him and convince him he had to run for president because he wasn't going to. But this is all a miracle. Then you know I hosted a meeting where he said, "I know you all great Christian people, leaders, all over the country, this is by partisan, you can't endorse me. But I only say that because I endorse you." That was headlines nationwide.

Well, we've got a great actor that has played some of the greatest films that we'll ever see. *I Can Only Imagine* is one of them because I watched that whole story while it was going on, and then all of a sudden it came up on the screen and they did a great job. Dennis Quaid is here. Dennis, I just got to ask you. By the way, I put this coat on because I'm trying to honor Reagan. [Laughing]

By the way, it was at the same time he came along that I started preaching against ties. And I got every preacher set free from ties and tried to set churches free from having to have a tie to go to church, but Reagan, he deserved a little respect here.

Okay, I've got to know this. You've made some great movies, you're a great actor. You're very gifted. And you've made it clear that you care about people, you love them, you want the best for them. And you believe there is a God who knows how to deliver the best and you don't apologize for that. Your feelings about the Reagan film and the

privilege and the honor of getting to do the part.

DENNIS: First off, it was such a privilege. Probably the biggest privilege I've had as an actor, really. The response even before the movie comes out, I've never had before. We've been doing so many previews around the country for it. I was offered to play Reagan by Mark Joseph, who was carrying the torch for it back in—it was 2018, I think it was. It was two years getting it there.

But I did not say yes at first because I was very intimidated. Reagan was my favorite president. I think he was the greatest president of the 20th century, really. He won the Cold War. That was number one. He made America America again. Really.

JAMES: He saved freedom. He did. He gave freedom an extension.

DENNIS: Like you said, all those freedoms that we have, can be lost in a generation. I never really quite understood that until recently, to tell you the truth. I didn't say yes for quite a while because you go through feelings about not feeling worthy of it. Reagan is so known around the world. Like Muhammad Ali, everybody knows who he is and I didn't want to do an impersonation. I didn't see myself, didn't think I looked like him or sounded like him or anything.

But I got to thinking and we both have sunny dispositions which he did and we're both actors. But I went to the Reagan Ranch and was able to go up there. Have you ever been there?

JAMES: Not just—only briefly, just like right through.

DENNIS: Instantly, you go up five miles of the worst road in California to get there. It's on top of the mountain. As soon as I came through the gate, I could feel him. That was the thing I was looking for, to feel the man. And I realized that Reagan was a very humble man.

JAMES: Very!

DENNIS: I could see it in his ranch up there because he had done all the work himself. The house is less than 1200 square feet. They had a king-sized bed but it was two single beds zipped-tied together. Their clothes are in the closet. They left it exactly how you would expect them to come back, he and Nancy.

JAMES: I've got to ask you this because I've seen the films and clips, and we're going to see a trailer, but I heard you, "Tear this wall down." See, I had been there where that needed to be said. I knew how badly it needed to be torn down because I went to all the third-world countries as I was preaching, ministering, and doing mission work. But I was actually there when they began to tear the wall down.

DENNIS: I was too.

JAMES: And I asked the people tearing it down, what brought this down? And every one of them, either side of the wall, soldiers, "It was prayed down. It was prayed down." Then Reagan basically said that. But when you said that, "Tear this wall," did you feel the moment, how—

DENNIS: Yes, I did. We shot that moment, it was out on the street in Oklahoma that we recreated it. I myself was there. I was—I was in the first grade when they put the wall up. It was a similar moment in all of our lives, the baby boom generation back when they had drills getting under our desks for a nuclear attack, the Cuban missile crisis. Houston, where I grew up, that was within range, we got kept home from school.

So when I heard that the Berlin Wall was coming down, which even two years before, nobody could even imagine that; got right on a plane and went to Berlin from New York. Just dropped everything and went there. And got to take a sledgehammer and got pieces of the wall. I remember the guards were walking around with their German shepherds

who were trained to attack. The dogs didn't know what to do. But it was the greatest feeling.

JAMES: I've got pieces of it in my office, pieces of it in my home.

DENNIS: Reagan, and the pope—and prayer, mostly.

JAMES: That's it. Let me ask you this. What stands out? If you could say to everybody watching us right now, what do you want people to take away from this movie when they watch it?

DENNIS: Number one I want them to be entertained because that's what movies are for. For us to go into a dark room and go into another world and forget about the rest of the day and get immersed. I hope they learn something about Reagan because I learned a lot. But it's about—for those that were born after let's say 1980, '85, something like that, you'll get a chance to kind of see and feel what America was like back during that time. It was an incredible time to live through. And for those that were born before, to be reminded of how America was and what America can be.

JAMES: Well, you know, I know because the military met with me, and once they found out that Reagan liked me and listened to me, they wanted me to be sure he was hearing certain things. I know for a fact from the military and the C.I.A. and all that could be trusted to be honest, that the Soviet Union had set the stage to take over within less than 24 to 36 months the entire world economy. What happened there, when they made fun of Star Wars and the possibility of taking it down, the fact was, if we get this laser, we take the missiles down before they reach altitude and it comes right down where they're launched. So I was able to introduce Mr. Reagan to that possibility, and the scientists had confirmed it. So anyway, he did save freedom.

DENNIS: He really did. And it was through—he had really that plan well before he took office; that the key to the Soviet Union was bankrupting them in a sense because they had

nowhere near our economy, not even a tenth of the size, really. That was a patient plan that worked. He didn't even talk to the Soviets for the first five or six years of his presidency because they kept dying on him.

JAMES: Yeah. That's right. It was a miracle. We need another miracle like that. What was it that you want people to know and take away from the film? What's the biggest thing that you saw happen?

DENNIS: Well, our story is not just recounting history in a sense that it's getting inside, in-depth the man Reagan, who was a man. He was my hero and stuff but he was also a man. The love story I think with Nancy is very central to this movie. They had an incredible love story. Nobody knew him like she did. And yet, I keep finding—there was something I heard, which was a common thing with people who knew Reagan; that there was a part of him that was unknowable, in a sense. There was a private place inside of that—a kind of a mystery to people. I think part of that was his relationship with Jesus Christ. That's what I came to conclude. But he was a great communicator. He was an intensely private person at the same time.

JAMES: When I had the privilege of talking to him, you can see a picture of when we had just gotten up off our knees in a small hotel room in Atlanta. We'd had an incredible time of prayer and somebody snapped the picture. But that's when he knew he had to run for president. But I had asked him this question. I said, "Who is the greatest person you've ever known? Who has made the greatest impact on you in your life?"

He said, "Well, you know my father was an alcoholic so I didn't really have a father."

And I said, "Well, mine was too."

He said, "So my mother was the greatest person I ever knew. She had the greatest impact on my life."

I said, "That's really wonderful." He said, but he referred to Jesus as being the greatest person.

But that was an amazing thing to realize he was a very unusual person and he never wanted to get credit. A lot of people around him that helped defeat the Soviet Union—

DENNIS: Yeah. Yeah. He said you can get a lot done in Washington if you don't care who gets the credit. [Laughing]

JAMES: Well, would you agree right now that if we don't move away from the trends that are throwing out all the principles of our founders, all the biblical truth, all the historically confirmed principles if we don't come back to those principles the future of freedom is short?

DENNIS: I think in peril. In a way, it reminds me very much of the years 1979, '78, '79, '80, it's very much like today. A lot of the same things going on. The same forces taking place. It's kind of spooky. Reagan came along and reminded us who we were. It was inspiring.

JAMES: Do you think viewers will be inspired when they see this? I think they will.

DENNIS: I hope so. I really do.

JAMES: Let's see a trailer. I want them to see it. Watch this. I think this will get your attention.

Reagan Movie trailer

>> I will be frank with you that as a citizen I would not like to see any political party outlawed based on its ideology. Because I still believe, Mr. Chairman that democracy can handle it.

>> I was a brand-new case officer given my first intelligence assignment, a certain actor and union leader.

>> Dutch, there is a purpose for your life.

>> You can run from a bully for so long but after a while, you're going to have to stand up to it.

>> Here's my boy!

[Cheering]

>> There's about to be another war right here in Hollywood. The commies on one side, the mob on the other, and you're right in the middle, son.

>> If you put as much work into your career as you do making your speeches, you'd have an Oscar by now.

>> Hello, I'm Nancy Davis.

>> Hello, Nancy Davis! I'm Ron Reagan.

>> I'm curious, Ron, what would you say is the issue of our time?

>> No question about it, Communism and the Soviet Union.

>> Get in the game! Run for office.

>> It's you!

>> I'm running for governor and I would like your vote.

>> I forgot your name.

>> Do his initials help? R.R.

>> Honey! Roy Rogers is here! And he is running for governor!

>> Ronnie, do you remember when we met? You told me you wanted to make a difference in this world. You know what you have to do.

>> Governor Reagan again, typically is against such a proposal.

>> There you go again.

>> He was not afraid to take us on.

>> There is nothing a retired governor can do about the Soviets, but a president, now he can do a thing or two.

>> Welcome to your life.

>> I was a lifeguard on a river. I learned how to read the currents. Not just the ones on the surface but also the ones deep underneath the water. I am about to start the biggest war of this century and I'm not going to fire a single shot.

>> You're going to blow up eight years of diplomacy.

>> Well, if you think that got their undies in a wad, you just wait.

>> What did the president know and when did he know it?

>> What would you have me do?

>> I want you to fight!

>> Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Wow!

DENNIS: That's Penelope Ann Miller. She is playing Nancy. I couldn't ask for a better person to play her, she was Nancy. She really was.

JAMES: When he said, "I know you can't endorse me but I endorse you," and that was headlines, well, he called me from the ranch the next day. We talked for 40 minutes. But I had to talk to Nancy 20 minutes because he had another call. She was almost tearful.

She said, "James, I've never seen Ron so excited. He said, 'Nancy, this is the greatest night of my life.'" And he said, "What I saw was unbelievable!" He saw people who loved God, who loved business. He's for the free market. We brought the wealthiest people in the south also to be there with him who were capitalists and free market people. It was just so phenomenal. His speech was incredible. You can get it online; just watch the national affairs briefing. Listen to him.

But I'm telling you that Nancy was a tremendous encouragement to him. And boy, that fight, it was there. Look, go see the movie.

DENNIS: If it hadn't been for Nancy, there would not have been a President Reagan. That's not to take anything away from him. It is just the strength that he drew from that

relationship that both of them had. And God was in their relationship as well. It's something else.

JAMES: I want us to do another program. You know we try to help the poor, we try to help the suffering, and I'm going to mention exactly how you help. But I want us to talk about the specifics that you believe we, the people of America, must learn from what happened in the Reagan years that we must return to. In many ways, they have to be repeated so let's do that.

Look, you know that we're going to give *Christmas Shoes and Smiles* and we start way ahead of time. We're asking you to help us give 150,000 children shoes. For many of them, it will be the first pair they ever had. For some of them, it will save them from getting infections in their system that will go to their brain and even kill them. Well, interestingly, we're also building the number one brain operation center in the world, and it is in Uganda, of all places. Now we've got to have another one and a half million dollars.

By the way, you're looking at that little shoe. Yeah, you can for \$36 give ten children a pair of shoes. And you can give scores of them if you give more. We work on cleft palates and other things. It is fabulous! But one of our donors stepped up when they saw it and gave \$700,000, which means we need a half million.

Lord, we can do the shoes and the smiles. So Lord, help our viewers to give the rest.

I want you to watch this. But I want you to be listening to God. And then I want you to give what you can to provide an incredible miracle.

On the mission field

JOHN: Well, I'm here in Uganda, standing in what is going to be operation room number

three in the brand-new surgical center that we are building in partnership with our mission partners here in Uganda. Specifically designed to treat neurological disease in children, more than 2,000 surgeries a year, more than any hospital in the world, it is going to happen right here.

ANNOUNCER: For many families in developing countries, a child born with a neurological disability has little hope to survive, largely due to a lack of facilities or funds to get the proper treatment they need. That's why *LIFE Outreach* has joined with mission partner Cure International in building a brand-new neurological surgery center that will provide expert care and life-saving surgery at no cost to families.

This state-of-the-art treatment center isn't just about operating rooms and equipment, it will save lives while providing hope, love, and dignity for children suffering from neurological conditions like spina bifida, hydrocephalus, and brain tumors. Without surgical intervention, these conditions can be a death sentence for those most vulnerable. Yet with access to specialized treatment, these children can defy the odds and continue to grow, play, and learn as all children should.

JOHN: Listen! We do so many wonderful things through *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*, but this facility specifically is the difference between life and death for children who have severe but repairable disabilities. I can't say thank you enough for spreading the gospel through word and deed. God bless you.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Well, I'm believing that every single one of you watching will respond. If you could give \$1,000, several hundred, I don't know what you can do, but we want to bless these children. So I'm asking you right now to go and get your bank card and use it like a check. But call the number on the screen that's always there as a prayer line, paid for by love. Or go online and you make the best gift you can.

We've got some gifts to send you to say thank you. We always want to bless you. But you're going to become the miracle that somebody thought they would never witness. All of you who watch us and help us put God's arms around the overlooked, you know the miracles that are literally brought in place and to bear and to happen because you extend God's arms of love, and enable the missionaries and the doctors and the people who are nearly all these doctors are volunteers that go there with their special gifts and stay for an extended period to cover different things, and they come from all parts of the world. Many of them are also based there in Uganda. But you are creating a miracle.

Thank you so much for doing it. Please go right now online or call the number. Please don't put it off. Make the best gift you can knowing that you're giving someone a miracle of life and we will point them clearly to Jesus and his love. Thank you so much!

Begin video

ANNOUNCER: For almost two decades *LIFE's Christmas Shoes and Smiles* has continued to provide shoes for impoverished children throughout the world, as well as corrective surgeries for children with cleft palate disorders. By responding today, you can help provide new shoes for 150,000 children in time for the holidays, and for some children a beautiful new smile. Your gift of \$36 will help provide shoes for ten children. \$72 will help provide shoes for 20. \$180 will help provide shoes for 50. And a gift of \$500 will help provide a corrective smile surgery.

This year we have an incredible opportunity to help construct a new surgical center that will provide lifesaving surgeries to children suffering serious neurological conditions. This \$1.2 million project is up and above *LIFE's* normal budget but because of one generous friend for *LIFE*, only \$500,000 is needed.

As a thank you for your gift of support to this life-saving outreach, be sure to request the blue crystal shoe ornament, a treasure to display each Christmas. With your gift of \$100

or more, you may request this keepsake boxed set featuring four crystal shoe ornaments.

Finally, please consider an extra gift of \$1,000 or more to help construct *LIFE*'s new surgical center. And with this gift, you may request this beautiful bronze sculpture, "A Cup of Water."

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

End of video

On the mission field

>> So one of the amazing projects that *LIFE Outreach* has partnered with us on is the new surgical center for our hospital. We went through a master site planning process. We put all these different new facilities on our campus map. And then we had to say, okay, we know we H we need all this to treat thousands and thousands of children but we don't know where those resources are going to come from.

So after some time praying about it, we heard the tremendous news that *LIFE Outreach* was going to partner with us, supporting the new surgical center. So we've been flooded by patients. In the last three years, we've grown by over 50 percent—and that's for brain surgery. Brain surgery is one of the most intense specialties in surgery that exists. Very complex, to do 2,000 of those operations in a year! It is unheard of, actually. That's why we would be the largest provider in the world of these cases.

So the new surgical center, we're thrilled. It's going to be three times the size of our existing facility. So the new facility, having *LIFE Outreach* involved with this is just a miracle. We're so thankful. I can't tell you how thankful. We didn't know where the resources were going to come from but very excited about what this was going to provide—more life-saving surgery for some of the world's most vulnerable children.

End of video

In the studio

JAMES: Dennis, I saw you pick that shoe up and we give them a little bigger if we can. So it usually lasts at least two years. For some of them, they can wear them longer than that. But I want to just tell you that I appreciate you. We're going to talk more about Reagan because the Reagan movie will be in all the theaters in early September. Isn't that right?

DENNIS: August 30th. It comes out on August 30th in a theater near you.

JAMES: Yes! Everybody needs to see this! But we're going to talk about the things you pray to God people see in this movie and bring them into action.

DENNIS: Tickets are actually on sale right now for groups, church groups, school groups, for your office. Just go to Reagan.movie—Reagan.movie.

JAMES: Go ahead, fill a theater from your church. Fill a theater. I want us to do another program. Don't miss it now! Because I promise you, you're going to hear from God through what he did with an actor and a former governor of California, a miracle worker. Don't miss it!