

9/26/24

Week 39: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*, last week

James and Betty Robison

Ed Rush #2

**In the studio**

**BETTY:** Thank you so much for joining us on *Life Today*. I'm Betty and this is James. You're going to be so blessed. We're going to talk about hearing God and God talking to us. We'll know it. We can tell the difference.

**JAMES:** Do you really believe you can hear his voice?

**BETTY:** I do!

**JAMES:** Do you think he likes to talk to people?

**BETTY:** I think he does. He likes to talk to his children.

**JAMES:** Do you think anybody can hear him?

**BETTY:** Anybody!

**JAMES:** And hear him clearly?

**BETTY:** That will have ears to hear.

**JAMES:** And know it's him.

**BETTY:** And know it's him.

**JAMES:** Now you met this author, Ed Rush. Did you like him?

**BETTY:** I loved it!

**JAMES:** Did you think he knows what he is talking about?

**BETTY:** I absolutely do.

**JAMES:** Because he didn't even believe you could hear God anymore. He was a church guy but didn't believe it and he had church folks backing him up, that these things have passed away. And all of the sudden, he found out in fact they hadn't passed away.

Well, he is here. He is a marine and a pilot. Did two tours in Iraq. Boy, he got to where he wanted to hear from God. And he didn't just want to hear the tower, or somebody warning him in his group, he wanted to hear this voice. Do you seriously believe you hear God?

**ED:** Yeah.

**JAMES:** The real God?

**ED:** Yeah! In fact, I think he is so interested in the conversation that when he went to naming himself, one of the names he gave himself was "the word." And you'd think, if he's the word he'd have something to say.

**JAMES:** It says, "In the beginning was the word." And of course, we have *the word* too. But *the word* has a voice. Do you really believe that?

**ED:** It is like this. I have kids just like you have kids. I love talking to my kids. My oldest daughter is 19. She just went off to college, community college. She is with us. But she is

starting to make decisions. She is starting to go out on her own. It would be crazy of me to write a letter to her, a long letter, and say, I don't have anything else to say to you.

I love the word, by the way. I read the Word, memorize the Word; and understand that God speaks through His Word. It is a primary means through which God shares his views of the world and how you ought to live. But at the same time, he is a wonderfully interactive God who likes a good joke every once in a while, loves to help you along your way, and can answer questions about every part of your day.

That's what we talked about, in that wonderful show that we talked about last time. We talked about how you can ask God questions about anything in your life, money, your family, your business and he'll answer you when you know how to do it. I've taught atheists how to talk to God. I tell people, if I can teach an atheist, I can teach you too.

**BETTY:** I love the way in the earlier show you talked about how as a pilot and learning you went to those who knew more about it. You hadn't learned yet and you took instructions from them. So it was good training for learning how to hear God, wasn't it?

**ED:** And it is that word too, training. I had a whole team that said, don't use that word. People don't like training. People love training as long as it is the right thing that they're doing. And learning to hear from God is nothing more than practicing. After a while, you could do it—like, today I may be walking through the airport. Just have that conversation as you go. But at first, you're going to want to do a little work ahead of time. Kind of slow yourself down, take your journal out, ask some questions, journal the answers, and maybe have some people around you who you can bounce your ideas off of.

**JAMES:** You know you might fall in love with a girl and write letters and y'all read each other's letters. Then if you got together, you would not want to just write a letter, read each other's letters. It would be nice if you could actually talk to each other.

**ED:** Yeah, yeah. Talk, give each other a hug. Maybe get married down the road or something

like that. There are a lot of good things that come with that relationship. And those relationships, as you know, are designed to point us to God. Those are frameworks to show us how much God loves us.

**JAMES:** If you love somebody, you'll want to hear their voice. And if you love somebody you want them to want to hear your voice. And we share. With God, who loves us more than anybody, he wants to hear our voice. He welcomes it. He tells us to call. He'll answer. He always will. That means he is here and he answers, he delivers, he directs, he guides. He wants to bless us. And much of His Word is a blessing. Everything he says is a blessing. And if we'll hear him, he will direct our steps. There is not anything he can't deal with. Sometimes it takes us a little while to seemingly understand what it is he is saying to us because he writes it in the Bible and it is like we can't understand it. It is there in black and white, and as plain as day. But we've got an enemy who is attacking his voice, who is imitating his voice, who is appearing as an angel of light, or a minister of righteousness. He is a deceiver and the father of lies. So you're not talking around in a silent setting. It is a noisy setting. The realm of the spirit is very active and very busy, and they're two very different sounds. But they are very, very seductive, they're very effective when they come from the deceiver because he is the father of that kind of stuff.

How do you get to where, okay, I hope this is not too complicated a question to throw up early, but how do you discern the difference in the deceiver's voice and the father's voice when the deceiver can be so crafty? What warnings?

**ED:** Great! Great questions. By the way, I like the hard questions. The reason I love the hard questions is because everyone is asking the hard questions, you might as well just answer it. So a lot of voices in the world say you have the media's voice, you have the world's voice, you have your friend's voice, your family's voice, your wife, your husband's voice. You've got your voice rattling around someplace in your head which can be confusing after a little while. You have God's voice which sounds quite a bit like your voice because you're a spirit, God's a spirit. He talks to your spirit. I talk about the mechanics of that in the book. And then you have the enemy's voice.

So there are a lot of competing voices and there are a lot of ways you can hear it and maybe get it wrong or hear it and not 100 percent get it right. But Jesus said with firm resolution, "My sheep hear my voice." He used the lowest form to describe us, by the way. Because he tells us we can be partners, friends, or lovers. We can be sons and daughters but he said, "sheep." He took the lowest one and he said, "Even the sheep, even my sheep."

**JAMES:** By the way, sheep aren't really smart. They had to use a Judas goat to lead the dumb sheep anywhere. And really, the sheep couldn't make it without a shepherd. They just wander all over the place, and he calls us his sheep. So we're not too bright, and we do need a shepherd. And they can hear his voice. That's about as plain as you can get. If the sheep can hear me, people can hear me.

**ED:** Even the sheep, even those dumb animals. By the way, the subtitle of the book is, "Even if you'd made a million mistakes." And the reason I wrote that, number one is because I'm a member of the million-mistake club. The reason I wrote that is because we talked in the previous show about how sometimes people come and say, I feel disqualified. I've literally had Christian leaders that I've been training and mentoring, wonderful people, who lived beautiful lives feel like they're disqualified because of something they did 20 years ago; because of some way they thought, or some dumb thing they said. Everyone has that story. And those are the things that begin to tune out the voice of God.

So we're talking about sheep hearing. A sheep doesn't go, ah, I had a bad day yesterday. I'm disqualified. A sheep just goes, that's the shepherd, and tunes their ears to the shepherd. What hearing from God is about is tuning your frequency to hear from the Good Shepherd. I'm here to tell you, you get better at it and it gets easier. At first, you're just working through it and that's why there are exercises that I teach. After a while, you can just be doing it like we are sitting here on the set today.

**JAMES:** He leads you to good pasture. He leads you to safety and security. When you're in his shadow there is not a bear or a lion or an animal or anything that can take you down. And if you live in the shelter and the shadow of the shepherd and the Almighty, there is a safety there. His

voice will guide us to that shelter, to where that shepherd is, to where that pasture is. Is that right? And sheep can hear him.

Now are you convinced, Betty, that you hear God's voice?

**BETTY:** You know when God got a hold of James's heart, I watched it. It was just a miracle. I could see God working in his life. I could see how God's Word came alive to him. I would always read the Bible, like a good little girl, every night, did my lessons and all that but I didn't understand the Bible. I could not grasp it until I began to see and know that I too could hear from God. It is just like getting to know him, like you said. It is getting that relationship—

**JAMES:** You were probably thinking, if James can hear him, then surely, I can hear him.

**BETTY:** But when I realized that I knew I was hearing him I got to know him as my father, he began to speak to me through His Word and all of that mumbo jumbo that I was reading became alive to me. Now I can pick up His Word and I think, that is my Father talking. That relationship that you're talking about is so real if we allow him to teach us and grow us.

When James went away to college, I was a senior in high school but we would write letters back and forth. I so cherished those letters. Because why? I could grasp a little bit of his heart and what was going on and I got to know him better and better. But it made me want to know him more and more, to get to see him. I still have that shoebox full of letters that he wrote me when he was in school. They're precious to me. But better than that, is loving him and knowing him and living with him. That's the way I feel about God. I love him, I know him, he lives with me in my heart.

**ED:** It is interesting. So I started hearing from God for the first time like 14 years ago. So I'm just teaching people this out of this story. The first time I went to listen to God, I'm just telling you this, very transparently, I was expecting him to say how disappointed he was. I was sure he was going to tell me, I gave you all these gifts and look what you've done with them and how disappointed I am. I come to think about that.

By the way, I've never heard him say that. His voice is always love. Sometimes he is stern, sometimes he'll lead you in a direction that's challenging. He's challenging you but I've never—

**JAMES:** Let me insert something right here. I've told people this because I just realized it in the last few years. I've never heard him say, “I’m disappointed in you.” Do you know what he says? I'm disappointed for you. When you miss my word, you miss my will, you miss my way, you miss my voice, I'm disappointed for you. Does that make sense?

**ED:** It does make 100 percent sense. That's why I say, sometimes he is like a coach pushing you along. I'll simply tell you, if you came—I have four kids, 19, 17, 16, and 5. Same wife. I do know what causes that I would tell people. We just had a big gap there. That's just the way things go. So I say if you went to my five-year-old, who is the apple of my eye, I love all my kids but man, that little five-year-old girl, there is something about her. And if you said, what does your dad think about you? And if she said, he's disappointed in me. You would think, what's wrong with dad? So if I'm thinking God's disappointed in me, that's actually a reflection not so much on me, that's a reflection on my heavenly Father.

So what God does when he communicates to us is he reveals his true nature. And when he does that, it shows us we're made in his image so we can become more like who we're supposed to be, the authentic us when we hear his voice. It is the single most, I tell people, like the second most unbelievably powerful gift that God gave us, the ability to communicate with him. Salvation is the first and most important gift because that opened the door to that. But the ability to communicate one on one is just unbelievable. And the life-giving, life-changing power and the time that I've saved and the decisions that I've made that have changed my life, it's been incredible.

**JAMES:** I live in constant fellowship and conversation with God. It is not an exaggeration. I find myself excited about the fact that he loves to share his heart with me. And here's the thing. He's always made it clear that he likes to hear our heart, even our broken heart, a damaged heart, a heart that has wandered. He still wants to hear it because he wants to heal it, he wants to hold

it, he wants to mend it. He wants to guide our steps. He loves us to want to hear him.

What he's let me know recently has put a smile on my face. He says you put a smile on my face because, he says, "I know you want to hear my voice. Not in response to something you say, you just want to know, Father, what's on your heart? I ask—actually be able to ask him with everything in me, Father, what's your dream? What's your dream? And his answer was, do you realize how few children ever ask their father that? Many say I want to give my mother her dream. I want to do this. You get successful and don't have a lot, give my mother. But how many are going, Dad, what's your dream? He said not many people ask me about my dream. He said you asked me, what is my dream? And he said I knew how deeply you wanted to know what my dream is because you wanted me to see my dream come true.

Now listen to me. What is his dream? He knew the kingdom would come, that's a promise. He knew the king would come. When the king came and said the kingdom of heaven is at hand and the kingdom of heaven is in you, and after the resurrection the kingdom of heaven in resurrection power is in you, which means you can pray the model prayer thy kingdom come and it has and it is in fact in you. And then you can pray, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And that's not just wishful thinking. My will can be done on my earth because the king has come. And he said you *believe* that. So if you want to know what my dream is, it is to see my family and the body of Christ the church do my will on earth as it is in heaven. Does that sound like him?

**ED:** A hundred percent.

**JAMES:** Does it sound like his dream? I'm going to tell you, Ed, more than I want to live another day, I want to see his will done on his earth. We don't have to let the devil and the deceiver walk over us, destroy peace, destroy freedom, destroy possibilities, destroy blessings and benefits, and all the joys, and all the beauties that God wants us to enjoy but not worship. We can see that happening. Do you believe that? Isn't that his dream?

**ED:** If you look, for example, I think it is Psalm 11, don't—it is in the Psalms. It says if the



foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do? You look at the last 80 years, the enemy has been on a constant, constant foundation-destroying mission. So if you look at what we believe, for example, just in the United States 80 years ago compared to what we believe now, you can see that the foundations have been destroyed. The writer was saying if the foundations are destroyed there is a point in which the righteous become powerless in a nation like that because of what they can do. I said it's taken the enemy 80 years. I mean this when I say this. I've been in prayer with God about this, it could take eight months for God to restore that. That's how quickly he can move. And it is his heart. You're talking about his will and his desire. Fundamentally, when you get into conversation with God you start to find out what his heart is. You showed a video of these kids with cleft lip and the surgeries that you're able to do. The compassion of the Father, you could feel that actually through the video. You could feel God's compassion. When you look at a nation that's turned its eyes toward God, you can feel not his anger, you can feel his love drawing, wooing—

**JAMES:** He wants to pour them out on us. He said that in Isaiah 58. If you have the chosen fast you become a well-watered garden. He says if you will keep flowing in that, you will build the age-old foundations. You can restore them. That's what you do. We need to restore the foundations and you can do that more rapidly than you could imagine.

**ED:** Yep. You got it. So the word, you know the Greek but there is a word for time that is kairos, which is clock time. There is a word in Greek for chronos. There is kairos which is on time time. I was in a conversation with God one day about this idea of kairos, on time time. And I was looking at Israel who is supposed to go into Egypt. It should have taken them a few weeks, it took them 40 years because of disobedience. I asked God and as he said well, that's because kairos was slowed down. It was decelerated. It took them 40 years to do what they should have done in four weeks. I asked him, can it work the other way? So if time can slow down because of our disobedience, can you speed it up?

**JAMES:** Yes, he can! Yes!

**ED:** And he called it kairos acceleration. I said okay, fine! It took the enemy 80 years to try to

ruin America, it should take us about eight weeks to eight months to be able to fix it. Let's do kairos accelerated.

**JAMES:** He has told me that. And it is his voice. He's told me it can turn faster than you can imagine. You can see how ugly, ugly is. Ugly is ugly. You see it. The enemy can't reveal his ugly fruit any more clearly. And it is everywhere! But God will reveal the beauty of his fruit if we return to him as God and Father first, and we begin to do his will and let him direct our steps. I'm telling you, we restore the foundation and we can restore the beauty. God, let it happen. Listen, that's his dream. Let's spend the rest of our lives seeing his dream come true.

**ED:** God just took over the interview. It just went.

**JAMES:** If you want the book, just ask for it. But here's what we're asking you to do. Help us give some *Shoes and Smiles* to children; 150,000 of them right now. Help us complete a neurological center. Would you help us do that and give children a new mind, corrective brain surgery, and cleft palate surgery too? Give them smiles—*Shoes and Smiles*. Would you please?

If you make any gift, we're going to send you the beautiful little shoes to put on the trees to talk about conversationally. We'll send you the beautiful "Water of Life" bronze. Give a gift of \$1,000. If you'd like to have the book, we'll send it to you to say thank you. Thank you. Watch closely. And then let God move you. Thanks for putting his arms around the hurting. Thank you so much!

### **On the mission field**

**ANNOUNCER:** As the world celebrates the birth of Jesus this Christmas, *LIFE Outreach International* is also celebrating nearly two decades of spreading this good news in a very special way with shoes! Yes! Shoes! We, along with our mission partners located throughout the world, have provided two and a half million children with a gift of shoes. Children who in many instances have never had a new pair of shoes.

**ISAK:** We all celebrate different holidays around the world. The holiday that is pretty common

to most of us is Christmas. That's what it feels like here today. It feels like Christmas for us because we're getting to do one of the most incredible things and that is to bless these children with a pair of shoes.

**ANNOUNCER:** It is because of friends like you that we have been able to reach 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.

>> But thanks to James and Betty, and the friends of *LIFE Outreach International*, we're able to make lasting changes in children's lives through corrective surgery.

**ANNOUNCER:** *And this year, LIFE Outreach is expanding our corrective surgeries to include children of neurological disabilities such as spina bifida and hydrocephalus, commonly known as "water on the brain." To meet these children's needs, we need your help to build a new surgical center. This new neurological surgical center will allow our mission partner to expand their capabilities and to perform even more lifesaving surgeries for children and their families who are waiting and so desperately need our help.*

*So this Christmas season, as you gather with your loved ones and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus, know that as you give to our Shoes and Smiles emphasis, you will be providing hope, dignity, and the opportunity for a brighter future to thousands of precious children!*

**End of video**

### **In the studio**

**JAMES:** Boy, I remember taking businessmen to a retreat and one of them came up to me and held up a little shoe like this. He said his life had been changed going to the various ministry events that we had. He said, "James, I can get little shoes like this for almost nothing; just like this and they'll last so long. Could we give shoes to little children who have never had any shoes?" I thought, man, I don't know. I've never thought about it.

Boy, have we ever given it to millions and millions of children. We're doing that. I remember when my staff came to me and said, "We're going to give people a little Christmas shoe gift." I told that to Betty, do you think that would be really neat? She said—by the way, we have a tree—we've got a whole tree that's got nothing, this is the decoration. And then we have these on the bigger tree, the family tree. By the way, you get this whole box of four of them if you give a gift of \$100 plus the other, get all of that. We're good givers. And by the way, if you give a gift of over \$1,000, we send you the beautiful "Cup of Water" bronze with Jesus offering a cup of water. And you know how much water we've given by drilling wells.

Well, we want to ask you right now, you make as great a gift as you can make because we're going to build a neurological center where we're going to give smiles. More than that, we're going to give brain surgery. We've got to have \$1.2 million to finish it, and one of our donors gave \$700,000. We need \$500,000 to complete that. So you talk about giving shoes and giving smiles and giving life, we can do it.

Father, would you please give people joy at the thought that I can do that! I can give *Shoes and Smiles*. I can give children life. I can give them a future. And we can share you; in Jesus' name.

Would you please go get your checkbook, go get your credit card, and use it like a check? Would you go online or would you call that number and make the best gift you can? Would you do that right now, please? It is easy to put it off. This is the last week. Don't put it off! If we're going to get it done, if we're going to meet the goal it needs to be now. Please, go get that bank card. If you write a check, call us and tell us what you're mailing; put it in the mail. Thank you so much for doing it. And we will send you *God Talks* because he wants to talk to you. Please do it.

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**

### **In the studio**

**JAMES:** Betty, I think this has been probably more important than we realize. It is really important to him. He talks. He'd love for you to want to hear him. He loves to share his heart. He

loves to hear your heart. He wants to direct our ways.

You help us put *Shoes and Smiles* on kids and give them a future. This is the last week. We need to hear from you, hopefully today. We'll gladly send you the book if you ask for it, plus the other gifts.

Ed, we're going to be friends for a long time. We'll spend eternity together. We're going to get a lot more people to go with us and we're going to see the glory of his kingdom now on this earth. Amen?

**ED:** Amen!

**JAMES:** Thank y'all for watching. Tell your friends to watch *Life Today*. You'll be glad you did.