



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Will Never Leave Thee – Part 1

Guest(s): Darlene Rose

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome, everyone, to Family Talk. It's the ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute, supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Darlene Rose: He said, "Honey, just remember one thing, dear, that God said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'" And I'll tell you tonight that I really thought there were times when my God had left me and forsaken me.

Roger Marsh: God will often allow trials to show us who we really are and to remind us who he really is. Our guest endured the trial of a Japanese POW camp and learned that God had not forsaken her.

I'm Roger Marsh, and I'm glad you've tuned in to today's edition of Family Talk. You know, it's no accident that you're here; God wants you to know that he hasn't forsaken you either. And so with that, let's hear now from Dr. Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, thanks, everyone for joining us on this edition of Family Talk. I'm your host, James Dobson, and what we have to share with you today is what we call a classic, a recorded classic in every sense of the word. It should be heard by every Christian and would-be Christian. It is an account told by the late Darlene Rose about her experience as a prisoner of war in World War II. I don't think you'll ever forget this story as she retells it.

Darlene was a very well-known missionary who has now gone on to be with the Lord, but she endured great hardship in that Japanese prison camp in New Guinea, and yet she never lost her faith. She had a profound commitment and love for Jesus Christ, and she walked and talked with Him through the years that she was in that camp. I don't think you'll want to miss a single word that Darlene Rose has to say. So, with that, let's hear her testimony. This is Family Talk, and we're glad you joined us.

Darlene Rose: There are many of you here tonight that don't even remember World War II. There are those of you that are learning that there was a war followed by the Korean War, followed by the conflict in Vietnam, but many of you don't even remember those days. And I'm sure that those who do remember could never believe, as I could not have believed, that within just a matter of two months,

after Pearl Harbor, that the Imperial Japanese army and navy could have taken Hong Kong, China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, came down the back door into Singapore through Malaysia. And that within those two months, they were making their inroads in the Dutch East Indies.

I had been a missionary in New Guinea. I had walked over the trail from the south coast into the interior. My first husband was the first missionary that ever went into the heart of the western half of the island. And I waited a year and a half before they gave me permission, and I joined my husband in the interior, crossed 14 mountain ranges, and I shall never forget that first day when I came to the top of the mountain range and saw below me the first of the villages among these precious Kapauku people, Stone Age people who had only been discovered just a year or so before. And I remember the carrier saying to me, "[foreign language 00:04:16]. Quickly now, let's go."

And I finally got to the top of the mountain, and they were so excited because they realized that we really were human beings just as they were. And they wanted us to hurry and get there, not only because we were novel, being people from the outside world, but because of the fact they realize now that all of the things that my husband had told them about God, who loved them, and His son, Jesus Christ, was available to them too. Before, they had always said, "But if Jesus loved you, He didn't love us because we're just human beings and your spirit beings."

But after I recorded their folklore, moving across the mountains, I've realized that all of these people believe that the known world is that pocket in the mountains there where they live, that people die and their spirits go over those mountains. And because we came from the other side of the mountain out of the spirit world to them, and no one of the early group who went in there had a wife, none had children. So if they weren't spirits, how did they come into existence in the first place? And that's a natural question for them to ask. And so they decided they were going to kill some of the Dutch people from the government post. And if the spears went through them, they would know that they were spirit beings if they didn't die. But if they died, then they would know that they were human beings.

And a government party was ambushed by a group of our natives. And in self-defense, the police had pulled up their guns and killed seven of our people, and things were very serious. So it was either they bring women into the interior or they get more police, or they abandon the post in the interior. And here I was, and these carriers with me knew that we were human beings just like they were. And I came to the top of the mountain that day, and I looked down, and I saw the people coming out of the gardens and rushing up the mountainside to greet me. Half your crowd goes, "Hoo!" The other half says, "Hoo!" so you get, "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" and I was so excited. I was running down the mountainside to greet them, and I was waving my hands. And the tears were running down my cheeks, and I said, "I'm home. I'm home." And for 43 years, that was home to me, and those were my people.

And from that moment on, I walked into their village and into their hearts, and they walked into mine, and I was so thrilled when the day came and I could tell them that God so loved the world in their language. [foreign language 00:07:00].

And then the day came when we heard that Holland had been invaded and Holland had fallen within five days. And so we had to pack up and we put a lock on that little house. It was a very beautiful, my first home. Don't worry about your missionaries, you with your modern homes here, we have air-conditioned homes out there. The air comes through most any place. We had bamboo mat walls, a tree, bark roof. It was very easy to repair your roof. I had carried in some icing glass, and so I had a window of icing glass, but it was home. I was home among my people, and then, to lock that door and go back down the trail, a little fellow followed me, and he was the first little fellow that I had really come to be close to; his name was Imopiah.

And the day before, I had led him to the Lord, and he followed me down, and I said, "Now, Imopiah, today you must turn and go back to your people because if you go any farther down, you'll get into the area where there's malaria, and I don't want you to get malaria again."

And I looked up, and I said, "Now you stay here and then turn around and go back to your people." And I could see that he was embarrassed at crying because, when you get to be a certain age, you mustn't cry. And he was going like this and wiping the tears off on his hip. And I looked up at him, and finally he raised his one hand. He said, "Mama, [foreign language 00:08:39] come back quickly." And I said, "Imopiah, as soon as I can, I'll come home again." I little realized that day it'd be nine years and a war away before I would get back to Imopiah and my people in the interior. When we got to Makassar on the island of Celebes, my husband was chosen as assistant to Dr. Jaffray and then became the field chairman. And so we had to remain in Makassar, and even though the field later opened up and the Dutch went back in because they found that it was a very strategic place in keeping contact as to the movements of the airplanes and the ships around the island.

We were not permitted to go back because the headquarters was on the island of Celebes, in the city of Makassar. And that day, when we had stood and heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, we knew that it could not be very long before we would also be involved very personally in this war. And we watched as the boats came down the Makassar Straits, and we had sent all of our people from our Bible college home; we had them from all of those islands there in the Dutch East Indies. We tried to get them home so that they would not become involved away from their families and from source of food supplies. After we had taken care of all of them, then we went up into the mountains, about 60 kilometers from the coast, where we had some houses that we used for missionaries who needed to get away from the heat of the tropics, and also our conferences were held there. Instead of coming into the Port of Makassar, where all the fortifications were, they came in a place in the south coast on the beach at Brongbong.

There wasn't a shot fired there; they just walked in and just took over the place. And, of course, we waited for them after they made their landing on the eighth day of February. And finally, they came up, and they said that we were prisoners that we were to, at the present time, remain there, not have contact with anyone around us. We had brought in a few things, kerosene for our lamps, we brought in some rice, and some sugar, but very little else. They said, "You are not to have contact even with the natives around you to get food. Nothing." If you're ever seen off of this property, you'll be shot on site. The men were badly beaten, and then they said, "We're leaving you now; we will be back again." The second time they came back was Friday, the 13th of March. And I have a bit Irish in me, but I'm not at all superstitious.

I really believe, and I learned as a little girl, nine years of age, that God means exactly what he says. And Romans 8:28 means exactly what it says: "That all things work together for good." That isn't the way we like to read it. That isn't the way we want to interpret it. We want to think that those good things that happen to us work together for good for us, but God's word says, "All things work together for good." I remember that day, on the Friday, the 13th of March, they said, "We're going to take the men somewhere else and imprison them, and the women are to remain here." And I ran into the house when he said, "Go and get some... No suitcases, but get some of your husband's clothes." And I ran into this little house, and I grabbed up a pillowcase and I put in some of his clothes in his bible, a notebook, and a pen.

And then, as I came out, one of the officers was motioning for me to come. I ran over to the Jaffray house. Dr. Jaffray was in his bedroom with one of the officers. He said, "Now what is wrong with this old man?" And I said, "Well..." And I began to enumerate the things that were wrong with him because Dr. Jaffray had been very ill. I said, "He was in a coma on the coast just before you people came," and I said, "He has a heart condition; he also has a kidney condition." And I went on to name all of the things that were wrong with him. And he said, "Well, anybody that needs all the medicine that man needs is not going to last very long anyway. So he'll just stay here. Just tell him he doesn't need to pack."

Well, I knew that the only thing Dr. Jaffray was using was saccharin, and I couldn't understand what all this medicine was that he was packing. And so after they had gone, I went into and see him, and I said, "Dr. Jaffray, what was all this medicine that he said you were packing there?" He said, "Well, I realized that if they took us out of the mountains, they must be going to take us down to the coast." And he perspired profusely; he loved Eau de Cologne to put on his handkerchief and to mop his face with because it was very refreshing to him, and that was what he was packing. And that officer thought that it was medicine, but that was God just keeping that man with us; we needed a man there on the property. And I've often thought how God brings to naught all of the machinations of the enemy. And so then I ran out after telling the officer all the things that were wrong with him.

And I ran out and I saw that Mr. Diebler was already in the truck, and I ran up to it and I handed him the little bundle of clothes and things, and I thought they could have at least waited until I could say goodbye to him. They'd already started up the motors, and he looked down at me and he said, "Honey, just remember one thing, dear, that God said: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And I'll tell you tonight that I really thought there were times when my God had left me and forsaken me, but when I looked up and took my eyes off of the circumstances and closed my ears to the sound of the bombs, and I could see him there on the parapet of heaven, never for a moment was I out of his sight.

I never saw him again. We were there for about a year, and finally they came and said that we were living in much too much luxury, they were going to take us somewhere else. So they took us five kilometers farther into the interior, and then they pointed across a valley, and up on the mountainside, there were some crude shacks over there, and they said, "Now you're going to go over there." When I got to the house, finally, my nerves got a hold of me, and I really was sick. There are many things about those months there that I have blocked out of my memory. The Lord brought to my recollection some of the things that happened, but the things that I remember most about it is seeing the faith of a man like Dr. Jaffray.

It wasn't until I was writing this book that I realized that that flashlight of Dr. Jaffray's and those batteries that he had lasted for over two years, and never once did they go out. There was no way to get new ones, and Dr. Jaffray needed that flashlight. And I said to him, "How is it that they have never discovered your flashlight?" He said, "When I hear them coming," and we would always sound the alarm, everybody knew when they were coming. And he said, "I just go up there, and I lift up my pillow, and I put that and my father's watch under there. And I say, Lord, these things are meaningful to me. I need that flashlight and this watch they don't need. That was my father's. And I put the pillow back down on there, and then they never lifted up the pillow."

And Dr. Jaffray would come in conscious that they were going to be there. He would put down that mattress, he would lift up the pillow, put his watch back up on the little stand beside the bed. I saw the man of faith that he was; those were very precious experiences to me. And the time when he stood at the end of my bed there and I had been out working in the garden, I thought it was a sunstroke, and I had a very high fever, and there was no way they could get it down. And I remember Dr. Jaffray standing at the foot of the bed, and he had his hands on the iron bedstead. And he just looked up without even closing his eyes; he said, "Lord, it's difficult to be sick at any time." But he said, "Especially in this time of war and when these soldiers come," he said, "Would you keep them away as long as Darlene is sick in bed?"

And I was in bed for six weeks before my fever finally came down, and never once did any soldiers come to that place. And I said the day I got up and I had dressed for the first time and gone out, the alarm went off and said, "Soldiers

are approaching." I said, Dr. Jaffray, "Couldn't you just set six months instead of six weeks?" After we had been there, about six months, they came and said, "We're going to take you somewhere else and intern you." We packed up a few things; we were only allowed to take three other dresses beside the one we wore. So I put on all the clothes I could get on. I was within six months of furlough when the war came, so I knew my clothes wouldn't last very long. And we went from the place where we were staying there across the mountain over to the village of Malino, where the Dutch people had been interned.

And that night we slept in a church. We put the older people up on the benches in the church, and we slept down underneath on the floor, waiting for the trucks. And the trucks were beginning to pull in at dark and then, just as it was getting light in the early morning hours, we heard them start to rev up the trucks, and everybody was beginning to move. And I can remember lying there and thinking, "Oft me thinks I hear his footsteps stealing down the paths of time and the future, dark with shadows, brightens with the hope sublime." And I thought, "Lord, couldn't you just come back today?" And always there was there, even in the darkest of the days, the realization that God was there, and things became bright again. I remember that day as we got into those trucks. They drove just as fast as they could and round the corners, and we were just sure that somebody was going to be thrown off of that truck or the whole lot of us were going to go on down the mountainside, hundreds of feet below, you could see the valleys down there.

But by the time we finally got to the coast, they pulled up into an area that they had been making into an internment camp. We looked and saw these great, long barracks; they were about a half block long, and they said, "This is where you're going to be staying." They divided us up into groups, the Dutch people in most of the barracks, and then all of the foreigners were in the one barracks. And I was chosen, I think perhaps because of the fact that I was fluent in Dutch and also Indonesian, as well as English. And I was head of this largest barrack in the camp. We called it the Heinz Barracks because we were almost 57 varieties. There weren't many nationalities that weren't represented there, and yet, being so many people from so many different areas of the world, God just brought us together.

And I'm sure it was because every night I called them together, and we all came up to the front of the barracks, and I read God's word to them. And then we had prayer together, and there were out of those that gathered with me there, those that came to know Jesus Christ and could thank God for that war because they came to know Him as Lord and Savior. We had to have people to work and fulfill all of the jobs that were given to us by the Japanese. We made their uniforms, the older women knit socks for them, we worked in rice fields in mud up to our hip, and of course, in the mud so that we got these terrible tropical ulcers on our legs. I've built roads for the Japanese, worked out in the sun days on end, felling trees. We worked on the Cooley gang, those of us who were young and strong.

We moved up to the back of the trucks; they hurled the big bags of rice and sugar on our backs, and you grabbed the ends of the bags and you walked away with it or else. There were many times when I thought my legs were going to crumble under me, and yet I said, "God, just help me to get this to the storehouse so I can throw it off my shoulder." And then you turned around and went back again. It was a difficult time then; those of us who were young were doing two and three jobs a day, running from one place to another. And it was in the fall in November of 1943, when Mrs. Yastra, who was the Dutch head under the Japanese camp commander, came over to the barracks this morning, and she said, "Mrs. Diebler, I want to talk to you for a few minutes." She said, "Your husband up in the camp in Pari Pari," which was 100 kilometers to the north of us, "has been very ill."

And then she stopped, and I saw the tears in her eyes, and I grabbed her shoulders. I said, "Mrs. Yastra, you don't mean he's gone." She said, "Yes. He died three months ago up in the camp, in Pari Pari." It was one of those moments when I thought my Lord had left me. I was like every young person; I was waiting for the day when the war would be over and I could go home to New Guinea to my people. And I just turned around, and I went to the only one I knew to go to. And I said, "God," and immediately he answered me. He said, "Did I not say to you, my child, that when thou passes through the rivers, I would be with thee; and through the floods, they not overflow thee; and neither should the fire kindle upon thee." And I turned away, and I said, "Lord, all right." I learned in those days that there's a peace that cometh after sorrow of hope surrendered, not of hope fulfilled. A peace that looketh not upon tomorrow but calmly on a tempest that is stilled.

Roger Marsh:

Wow. Even in the moment of learning about the loss of her husband, Darlene Rose still found peace and comfort in the Lord. What a truly powerful presentation given by the late Darlene Rose here on Family Talk. Be sure to join us again tomorrow and then again on Wednesday to hear more about her time being held captive during World War II. And by the way, if you'd like to learn more about Darlene, simply visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Now here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we want to help support and encourage fathers and father figures on the journey of raising God-led families. So we've designed a resource specifically designed to help men be the husbands and fathers their families truly need. It's a free five-day email series called "Dads, It's Time to Step Up."

To sign up, simply click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page when you go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Again, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk and click the link for the free five-day email series called "Dads, It's Time to Step Up."

From all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we thank you for listening and making us a part of your day today. We are a truly listener-supported Christian radio program, and it's because of you, your prayers, and your faithful financial support that we are able to bring quality content to you

and your family each and every day. To learn more about how to support the JDFI, simply visit drjamesdobson.org or give us a call at 877-732-6825. Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Be sure to tune in again tomorrow for part two of the powerful presentation featuring Prisoner of War and World War II survivor, Darlene Rose. That's coming up next time right here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.