



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Getting to Know Sarah Huckabee Sanders: Speaking for Herself

Guest(s): Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Air Date: July 27, 2022

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: I'm Roger Marsh and this is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Thanks so much for joining us today. Now on today's program, we're bringing you a special presentation featuring former White House Press Secretary, Sarah Huckabee Sanders. What you're about to hear was recorded at an Extraordinary Women's Conference back in 2020, in front of a crowd of women from all walks of life and from many Christian denominations.

Now full disclosure, this year here in 2022, Sarah Huckabee Sanders is a candidate for public office. She is the GOP nominee for Governor in the state of Arkansas and she'll be facing Democrat Chris Jones in the general election on November 8th. Regardless of who you would support, we encourage you to register and get out to vote this coming November. And now let me introduce you to our featured guest on today's edition of Family Talk, Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

As we mentioned earlier, Sarah is a politician, she's an author, and also a *Fox News* contributor. Previously, she served as the 31st White House Press Secretary under President Donald Trump, serving from 2017 to 2019. Sarah is the author of the New York Times bestselling book called, *Speaking For Myself*. She and her husband Brian, have three children and make their home in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Now, many of us probably know that Sarah Huckabee Sanders is the woman behind that tough veneer, who you only know is the spokeswoman taking the heat from behind the podium, under those hot lights and flashing cameras, of the White House Press Briefing Room. But what you're about to hear is a fascinating testimonial, an honest and from the heart revelation in her own words, from a woman who is a wife and a mom behind that tough veneer.

Here now is Sarah Huckabee Sanders addressing the crowd at an Extraordinary Women's Event in Lynchburg, Virginia in 2020, here on Family Talk.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders: Thank you. Wow. Thank you.

I'm not used to walking into a room and people being excited to see me, so you'll have to forgive me if it takes me a little time to get comfortable. Normally when I stand behind a podium, I don't see very friendly faces out in the crowd, so I like this version a lot better.

As they mentioned, I was the former White House Press Secretary, that's what most people know me from, and that was an incredible job. It was one I absolutely loved. Even on the worst days, I really loved my job because I love my country and I loved what we were doing. And I loved that I had a platform to stand up and talk about my faith.

And while I loved that job and it was a great one, it was not the most important job I have. One of the things they mentioned, I was the third woman, but I was also the very first mom to ever be the White House Press Secretary.

So while being the press secretary was a great job, the best job I have is being mom to my three kids. I have three amazing, wonderful, wild, crazy, unruly, beautiful kids. Scarlet, who is eight. Huck, who is about to be seven. And George, who is five. In case she didn't catch that again. I'm going to say eight, seven, five. So, it's pretty much all chaos, all the time, at my house. I think I was one of the few people that went to the White House to actually get a break because my house was crazier than the White House.

People often ask me, "Sarah, what was the best preparation for being the White House Press Secretary?" And for me, the answer is very simple. Being a mom. You see, I had toddlers. When I first started at the White House, my youngest was one and a half. I had very young children, so I was used to saying, "No," a lot, repeating myself, and needing the patience of Job to get through each morning.

As a mom working in a 24/7, all-consuming job, I was constantly trying to figure out that balance. How to be both a good mom and fulfill my role in the White House. It's a constant struggle, one that I know many working moms across the country have every single day. People always ask, "Sarah, how did you manage to do it all?" Well, some days we did better than others. But one of the things I found that was so important for our family was to be very intentional about our time and to make sure that even if I couldn't spend a lot of time with my kids, I was very focused on them in the time that I did have, setting my phone aside, prioritizing them, making sure they knew they mattered to me.

I learned very quickly that taking all three kids to any work event and still trying to get something done was next to impossible, so I put my kids on a rotation system. On one particular day, it was Bring Your Kid to Work Day at the White House and it was my son Huck's turn. I debated. Huck was four at the time. Most of the kids that would be coming were seven, eight, nine, 10 years old. My

husband and I talked about it and I decided, how many chances would I get for Bring Your Kid to Work Day at the White House? So I decided let's roll the dice. We'll take Huck. My husband will be on standby. Have his phone by his side all day and if should things start to unravel, he'll come pick Huck up. My job will be saved.

So, Huck and I go into the White House and he's on perfect behavior. I couldn't believe it. I mean, you name a kid Huck, you sort of set a certain expectation for him in life and every minute of every day, he lives up to that expectation. But on this particular day, Huck was on perfect behavior. He had on his little blazer, his bow tie. I'd taken about a million pictures and we had had so much fun. Memories that I thought would last forever. What I didn't realize is that the biggest memory of the day had yet to take place.

You see, we decided to do something different that year at the White House and we invited the press to bring their kids, to participate with all of the staff kids as well. So I go into the Oval Office. I'm briefing the President and telling him as a reminder, "Half of the kids that are out in the Rose Garden, their parents are reporters. You might watch what you say."

He naturally ignored my advice and as we're sitting there and I'm talking to him, we notice the bushes in the Rose Garden start to violently shake. We both think, "Well, now that's a little odd." About the time I realized what's happening, this little blonde head pops up out of the bushes and runs full steam ahead, directly towards the window of the Oval Office. This little four year old face presses his face completely up against the window to the Oval Office, where the President is sitting only feet away. And the President jumps back, "Oh my gosh. There's a little boy looking into the Oval Office." I said, "Yes, sir, that's my son, Huck." and he said, "Well, Sarah, at least he's handsome."

Not to let that be the only mark of the day, we walk out of the door of the Oval Office and the President walks on to that beautiful, famous Colonnade. The President walks out of that office and the cameras are all going crazy. The kids are cheering and I'm about 20 yards behind the President. All of a sudden here comes that same little blonde headed four year old boy, this time running directly at the President of the United States. I get nervous. The President steps over, crouches down, ready to receive the little boy and greet him.

Right when he got to the President and just before Secret Service tackled him, he sidesteps the President, goes around him and runs and jumps into my arms. The President turns around and looks back and gives me one of those, "This kid, again," looks. I just smiled but I knew in that moment that I hadn't done everything wrong. I hadn't totally ruined my four year old because for every kid that was there in the Rose Garden that day, the President of the United States was the most important person. But for my son, he only wanted his mom and that's not too bad.

I wish I could say that was the worst that Huck had ever embarrassed me, but it wasn't. Shortly after that, one of those moments where I was trying to be intentional with my daughter, Scarlet, it was a Saturday morning. I'd been doing work and I set my phone down. We had this great little visit, great time. I go back and I pick up my phone about an hour later. I look down and I realize, "Oh my gosh, we must be at war," because I couldn't figure out what else would constitute the number of missed calls, text messages, and emails that I'd gotten from reporters over the course of that hour.

I quickly find an email that has a tweet embedded in it. Unfortunately, that tweet embedded was full of emojis. Huck had managed to get his hands on my phone and put out a tweet roughly to the tune of 4.5 million people around the world, from my official White House account. I don't know if you've looked at your selections of emojis lately, but there is a lot of opportunity there for a four year old. I was extremely thankful that he stuck with planes, trains, bridges, and stoplights. It could have been much worse. Just as I was getting ready to yell at Huck and talk to him about how it was not okay for him to play with mommy's phone, I realized it was infrastructure week and Huck was actually perfectly on message.

Not only did kids give me great preparation for standing behind the podium, but they also are great in keeping us humble. On more than one occasion, you start to hear all these great things about yourself and you may start to believe it for a minute. Then you come home and you're reminded you're really not that big of a deal.

On one particular occasion, my daughter Scarlet, who was about six at the time, was getting ready to go on her very first father-daughter dance. I was so excited. I was so proud of her. We spent the day together, picking out the perfect dress, getting her hair done, doing all the things that would make her feel excited about her big day. She had insisted on a grand entrance as any princess would and wanted to come down the stairs and have her big reveal moment for her dad.

As I'm sitting at the top of the stairs and I'm talking to her about her heart and how proud we are as parents of her and how beautiful she is, but how being beautiful on the inside is more important than being beautiful on the outside. I'm having what I think is just a really heartfelt special moment with my daughter. I start to get a little teary eyed as I'm talking to her. And in that moment, Scarlet reaches up. She pats my shoulder and says, "It's okay, mom. One day you can be pretty too."

So, while kids can be an amazing and very joyous in all their ways, they also are such great reminders of what's really important. Every single day, when I stood up at that podium, I knew I was there because I wanted my kids to have a better future. I wanted my kids to grow up in an America that they loved. I wanted them to be unashamed and unapologetic about who they were, why they were created, and who created them.

I loved my job at the White House, but I loved being a mom more and it was one of the reasons that I left. A lot of people can be the White House Press Secretary, but only one person can be the mom to my kids and it was important for me to take that step and go back home so that I could be there with them a lot more.

It was so important for my kids to see me stand in that moment, under relentless attack. I wanted them to know that they could be strong, that they could be brave because they didn't need the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* or *CNN* to define them. They had a creator who had already done that and given their life purpose.

When I was in high school, I was getting ready to go to college. I'd enrolled in the University of Arkansas and I was getting ready to go off to college and I actually went to be a counselor at Arkansas Girls State. I'd attended as a camper the year before and I was going back as a counselor and something that week as I was watching these young girls in high school, not much younger than me make decisions about their life, decide what they were going to do, I realized University of Arkansas was not the place I wanted to be.

Keep in mind. I was already enrolled. I had a roommate. The matching bedspreads. The whole nine yards. I was ready to go to college. I didn't know where I wanted to go, but I knew that wasn't the right fit. So I sit down, I talk about it with my parents and I tell them, "I think I want to go to Ouachita Baptist University. I like that. There's one.

My parents had gone there. My older brother, cousins, aunts, and I swore I would never go there. I didn't want to do what everybody else in my family had done but for some reason I kept having this draw. So we called and they had a late application process. I submitted and I was accepted.

The first week I was there, I met a girl named Lauren Brown, who quickly became one of my best friends. We were both political science and communications majors. We had a lot of classes together. So it was only natural that a couple years later when my dad was running for reelection of Governor in Arkansas, that over that summer break, when I was going home to work on the campaign, she went with me.

You see, I spent most of my childhood when other kids were going to summer camp and the pool, I was hitting the Arkansas festival circuit, passing out brochures, asking people to vote for my dad. So, this summer would be no different but thankfully I had graduated from being an envelope stuffer and a yard sign distributor, to being a field rep where I would travel the state, help organize and execute a three week bus tour across the state of Arkansas. I was pretty proud of my promotion and excited to set out on this adventure with my best friend.

We had been about a week into the bus tour and everything was going extremely well. We were up in the Ozark Mountains one morning. It had been raining all night and the roads were extremely wet and very curvy and windy. I was driving, as we figured out, Lauren was a better navigator than she was driver. And as we were going around the curve of one of those mountain roads, we started to hydroplane. And when we did I over corrected the wheel and sent us into a tail spin where we flipped multiple times off the side of the mountain. Had we not hit a tree on the roof of the car, we would've continued hundreds of yards down the side of that cliff. It was the only tree growing out of the side of that cliff that stopped us.

I'm hanging upside down by my seatbelt. Lauren pinned to the floor of the car. We're in the middle of nowhere. We're frantically looking for our cell phones, only to find out there's no service. We're afraid that if we move too much in one direction or another, the car will continue toppling down the rest of the side of that cliff. As we sit there, constantly asking the other, "Are you okay? Are you okay?" In total shock, we go back and forth for a little while. We're screaming out for help. We can't see anything, but rock and sky and valley. We have no idea where the road is, how far off the road we are, and if anyone will ever find us.

All of a sudden out of nowhere, we hear voices. We think surely it's angels who have come to take us to Heaven. We come to realize not quite angels, but pretty close. It was two good old boys in a pickup truck, who just as we went off the side of the cliff, thought they had seen that happen and turned around and came back. They said they thought they would be pulling bodies out of that car and were relieved when they heard us shouting. They helped one another get down the side of the mountain and pulled my friend out over me through the window. As they pulled her out, I waited for minutes, but what felt like hours for them to come back and get me too.

Finally, they got us both back up to the road. My dad showed up a few minutes later and that was when we fell apart. We found out that just a day before us, another car had gone off just a few feet ahead and all four people in the car had been killed. If that tree had hit us six inches further up, it would've crushed us and killed us both immediately upon impact.

In that moment, I couldn't have been more thankful for God's grace. But it wasn't until several years later when Lauren Brown became Lauren Huckabee and was my sister-in-law, the mother to my two nephews and my niece and another one the way, that I realized how grateful I was for God's grace in that moment.

I often look back on that day as a reminder and as a reaffirmation of God's grace and a thankful heart to live a life worthy to have been saved, and to always do what I can to speak out about my faith, to be strong in that, to be unapologetic in it. And it was a reminder that God is always in control. But just because God is in control does not mean that we don't have a part to play. It doesn't mean that

evil doesn't still exist in this world and it doesn't mean that we don't have to stand up for what's right and do our part to fight the good fight.

There's no moment that's ever been more apparent and more vivid for people to stand up for what's right and to be willing to put everything on the line than what happened in our world's darkest moment in history, in the Holocaust. There is no greater reminder for people to stand up and to do what's right, than the example we have in the Holocaust when good people set by and did nothing for so long.

There was an 11 year old girl who traveled with her parents to Israel. They were going to go to all the political, the biblical and the historical sites around the country. She was excited just to travel.

One of the last stops that they would make would be to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Remembrance Museum. The parents had debated whether or not their 11 year old was too young to walk through that exhibit. They knew, having been there before, how graphic and how intense that visit would be for an adult, much less than 11 year old. But they ultimately decided that the lesson was too important for her to miss. They wanted her to know what happens when good people don't stand up. They wanted her to understand why it is so important to always stand up for what's right, to always have conviction and to be principled. They decided her dad would walk her through that museum and that he would stay by her side the entire time. And if at any point it became too much, he would simply take her out.

As they walked through that museum, the little girl could tell before they ever stepped foot, this was an important moment. She didn't know why, but she could tell by the demeanor of her parents, that this meant something. As she looked at the photos of the thousands of pairs of shoes that had been ripped off of the feet of children, stacked dozens of feet high, just before they were marched to their death. She walked through that exhibit hall and she listened to the voices of the Holocaust survivors, recount the horrific things they had endured and experienced and fought through, to come out on the other side. She never once said a word.

At some point, as they were walking through that museum, she still hadn't spoken, but she'd reached up and grabbed onto her father's hand. She held onto it for the entire walkthrough. When they walked by and saw the videos of the bodies that were stacked one on top of another, of thousands of innocent lives taken for no reason at all, she didn't speak. Quite a feat for an 11 year old.

They went through an hour and a half of that museum looking at the graphic and horrific images, listening to the voices. The father, all the while, never looking at the exhibit, but watching his daughter wondering, "Did she get it?" Wanting to know? Had he put too much on her? Had they ruined her in a way they may never be able to bring it back? Had they taken her innocence?

They got to the end of that museum and they stepped up to a podium much like this one. There was a guest book there and had room for you to write your name and your address and leave comments. The little girl reached into her father's pocket and took out a pen that she knew he always kept there. In that moment, the little girl wrote down words that neither he, nor she, will ever forget. Very simple. Why didn't somebody do something? Why didn't somebody do something?

In that moment, the father knew that his daughter got it. He knew that she understood that good people have to stand up or bad things happen. At the age of 11, she learned a lesson that we need to be reminded of every single day. We are called to be the somebody's, to do something. God has created us, as people of faith, to always be the somebody's who do something.

The reason I know that story so well, the reason I know the impact that it had on that 11 year old girl is that was my dad and I was that girl that was walked through that museum. It was a moment I will never forget and one I don't want to because I always want to have the type of conviction and principle and faith that drives me to be the somebody to do something.

Let this be the moment where you decide, where you declare you will walk out of here and you will be the somebody to do something. No one else can define you because our creator has done that and he has created a purpose for your life. It may not be to stand up and do something in a very public way, but he's called you to be part of the fight. He's called you to be the somebody's who do something. Let's answer that call. Let's be the somebody's who do something.

Thank you so much. Have a great weekend.

Roger Marsh:

You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and that was a heartfelt presentation by Sarah Huckabee Sanders. She was speaking to a room full of Christian women from all denominations at the 2020 Extraordinary Women's Conference in Lynchburg, Virginia. From 2017 to 2019, Sarah Huckabee Sanders served as White House Press Secretary under President Donald Trump. She then stepped down to spend more time with her family.

Now, if you would like to learn more about Sarah Huckabee Sanders or to listen to any part of today's program that you might have missed, please visit drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Or give us a call at (877) 732-6825.

Well, thanks again for listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk today. For all of us here at Family Talk, I'm Roger Marsh. Hope you have a great rest of your day and be sure to join us again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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