



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Seeing God as a Perfect Father – Part 2

Guest(s): Louie Giglio

Air Date: August 31, 2023

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

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.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hello everyone and welcome into Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host of the broadcast here at The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I also serve as President of the American Association of Christian Counselors and I'm honored to serve alongside Dr. Dobson as resident authority on mental health and relationships here at the JDFI. We're so glad again you've joined us.

Well, if you were with us yesterday, you got to hear our guest Pastor Louie Giglio. What a conversation. Share about his own father and why God is the perfect Father. He's back on the broadcast again today to share on how we can discover God in powerful personal ways and how we can really receive from Him when we accept His forgiveness and redemptive grace. Louie is the pastor of Passion City Church. He's a best-selling author of over a dozen books, including his latest we're going to be talking about here again, *Seeing God as the Perfect Father and Seeing You as Loved, Pursued, and Secure*. He has a master's degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Louie and his wife Shelly, they call Atlanta home.

Hey Louie, welcome back. As we pick up on yesterday's conversation, I want to go straight to a quote out of the book about dads, but it comes back to A.W. Tozer, I was mesmerized by this, "What do you think about when you think about God?" Louie, take us there. Why is that so important and critical as we try to navigate this sea of relationship with our dads?

Louie Giglio: Yeah, such a pivotal quote by Tozer. He said, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." And the reason he says this, Tim, is because of what you referenced yesterday. We are hardwired to pursue our Creator. And there are so many faulty views of who God is out there, so many crazy concoctions of what kind of God He is. Is He a great scorekeeper in the sky or is He like a cryptocurrency God who's just dropping Bitcoin into our account when we need it or some nebulous force? And it's important that we get the concept of God right because we're going to pursue God or run from God based on what we think about Him.

And so what comes into your mind? I asked a listener today, "When you think about God, what picture comes into your mind?" And fortunately, we don't have to search like we search for a needle in a haystack because the creation tells us who He is. Then Jesus specifically shows us who He is. And then Jesus teaches us who He is. And, Tim, of all the things Jesus taught us about God, the thing He taught us most is that He's a father. 189 times in the four Gospels alone, Jesus refers to God as Father. He refers to Him other ways, but primarily Father. "And when you pray, this is how you pray." O great Creator? No. O mighty Lord? No. Father. What kind of father? "O hallowed be Your name. Yes, you are a holy Father." But Father, He's inviting us, Jesus' is, into an intimate relationship with God.

Dr. Tim Clinton: For years Dr. Dobson has taught that we view God often through the eyes of our father. What we experienced at the hand of our dads is usually how we see Him. And that's why people have such broken images, if you will, in their mind about who their Creator God is. And so, Louie, when you do mention the father piece, I'm going to go back to something anchored in your book again, "God wants you to know who He is. He wants to reveal himself to you. You, like all humans are on a desperate search, believe it or not, for who He is." Louie, take us there.

Louie Giglio: Well, we all are going to move towards our originator. And some people can say, "I don't believe in a creator." Well, you're searching for something right now, and you can call it what you will, but we all know it is that internal homing mechanism where we are seeking for God. The scripture says that He put it in our hearts to search for Him and to find Him. This is the way Paul said it, because He's not far from each one of us. He's closer than we think right now. He's closer than a breath away right now. His eyes are on us in this moment and He's just waiting for us to look up and see that He is there.

And for a lot of people, they look up and they go, "Well, He's just a bigger version of my dad." And that's why Tim, the enemy has fought so hard to destroy fatherhood. He's fought so hard to break apart that relationship with the Father and His children. That last verse of the Old Testament says that there's someone coming to restore the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. First story in the New Testament in the gospel says, "Here comes John the Baptist. He's going to foretell and prepare the way so that God can return the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers." And so this is in the gospel, is reestablishing this relationship between fathers and children on earth, but it's also in the gospel to give us a brand new Father. Amen?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amen.

Louie Giglio: A perfect Father, a heavenly Father, a dependable, trustworthy, eternal Father who in every single way is going to fulfill the longing that is in our heart.

Dr. Tim Clinton: How do I know that God is a loving God? As I was reading through your book, Louie, I came to that piece where you wrote about the baptism of Jesus and

how God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And when you begin to connect those dots that Jesus wants us to know that our heavenly Father is a father who is knowable, who's relatable, that you can press into that place. Louie, when did that kind of light bulb turn on for you where it just went, "Oh. I see that. I believe that. I know that."

Louie Giglio: Well, I think, A, just going back to what you were talking about, the baptism of Jesus, how powerful is that Tim?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Louie Giglio: Jesus hadn't walked on water, to our knowledge, hadn't fed 5,000, done any miracle, healed the sick, the blind, hadn't raised the dead, hadn't preached a message, hadn't died on the cross, yet His father said, "This is my Son whom I love, and I am pleased with Him." That's the unconditional love of God. And what it says to us is, "You don't have to move through your life to get acceptance from God. You already are accepted by God. So you can move today from acceptance, not for acceptance." Of course, you want to do your best, of course you want to please God, but you're not doing what you do so that you can be accepted by God. You're doing it because you already know that you are accepted by God.

And for me, the moment that this became overwhelmingly powerful was a huge awakening, I would call it, a revelation, if you will, of the cross of Jesus. And I know that sounds so elementary, Tim, for people like me who grew up in church and have known about the cross all their life. But when I was in college in a moment in time I had such a clear understanding of Christ giving His life for me, that I knew the love of God for me equaled that, to put it in a simple way, that I was worth Jesus to God. And that's not the only reason Jesus died. Jesus died for the glory of God, but He also died to show me how much I was worth to heaven. And I've never been the same since. And I struggle with a lot of things in life. I've had a lot of ups and downs in my journey. But I know that I am moving through life today from acceptance, under the waterfall of God's love and blessing, not living and striving today for the waterfall.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And Louie, when you get to that place, it's hard to describe the freeness that's there because it's like a weight gets lifted off of you. I can imagine some listening today maybe they didn't catch yesterday's broadcast, Louie, but maybe they're struggling and saying, "My dad left us. My dad was cruel." I still have an image in my mind of this kid who played baseball, Louie. Kid was playing college level ball. He got into a funk. He just couldn't find himself, Louie. He went down on three called pitch strikes.

Louie Giglio: Wow.

Dr. Tim Clinton: But down the third base line, in the midst of all this, somebody screams, "Swing the stupid bat." And you know who it was.

Louie Giglio: Oh yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And you know what it did? He stepped out of that batter's box, kind of flipped his bat, walked back to the dugout, and that put a signature on his career. He was done. That ended someone who probably should have been playing in the bigs, Louie. That influence, and I think of father types, you write about that in your book, absent fathers, abusive fathers, passive fathers, performance-based fathers, they can be antagonistic. Or, Louie, they can be empowering.

Louie Giglio: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Tell us about how to press through that stuff and make sense and climb up out of that pit, if you will.

Louie Giglio: Well, this is going to sound simplistic, especially to this young man or someone like him, but that dad down the third baseline probably never knew a father's blessing. And I think for us, this is the power today. Anyone listening to us right now, yes, your dad could have bailed. Maybe he never was even in the picture. Maybe he's been your biggest nemesis your whole life, told you you're never going to amount to anything and you've been trying to overcome him, not feel his wind in your sail. He's actually been the wind in your face all of your life.

Here's the story. There's another Father. There's another Father. He's the perfect Father. He is not like your dad. He is not a bigger version of your dad. He's not your dad blown up to a greater proportion. He is the perfect Father and He's inviting you right now into a different kind of relationship. And it's a relationship where if you step out of line, He's not going to just give you a pass. And none of us want that anyway honestly. We want someone that loves us enough to tell us what we need to be. But if you whiff on three pitches, He's going to say, "Hey, let's go to the batting cage today. Let's work on your swing again today. You know you got it inside of you."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Sure.

Louie Giglio: "I believe in you."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Louie Giglio: "I know you're going to come back. You're going to come back stronger tomorrow than you were today. And hey, just by the way, if you strike out tomorrow, we'll just come back to the batting cage the day after that."

Dr. Tim Clinton: We're coming back.

Louie Giglio: "You can count on me to be in your story." And here's the power. Once you discover this Father, this perfect Father, you're going to look at your father in a different lens. That kid right now is looking at that dad like, "I hate that dad. I

don't want to be anything like that dad. I don't want anything to do with that dad."

But once you find the perfect Father, something powerful happens. And you can look at your own father, who did not give you one ounce of blessing and say, "My goodness. I never realized. You never got the blessing and you've just been giving me what you didn't have all these years. But guess what? I found something else. I found a perfect Father. My heavenly Father's blessing is so strong, there's enough of it for me and enough of it for you. I've got enough for both of us. And even though you cursed me, I'm going to bless you." I know that sounds like a long way off for someone today, but it's powerful and possible.

My dad, at the end of his life, Tim, he never talked about his childhood at all, but I kind of had heard that he got passed around to different family members, didn't live with his mom and dad, went to multiple schools because he was being passed around so much in the town he lived in. He gets disabled. We're sitting in a hospital room. I'm sharing the love of God with him. And he looks at me, 60 years old, my dad looks at me, his son, and says, "Son, I've never felt loved a day in my life. No one ever wanted me. And I don't believe God loves me and I don't believe God wants me either."

And I froze in that moment. I was like, "My dad has lived his whole life without a father's blessing." And I walked out of the room that day and I said, "God, let my dad live long enough that I can share with him the blessing that You have given me because I've got enough for me and for my dad. And even though some of it didn't come down the family tree, I can send it back up the family tree and bless my dad."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Louie, it takes courage. It's not easily done. We have to face our woundedness, be honest about it. Louie, you write in the book about forgiveness. Somewhere you got to let it go. Think of that old Tim McGraw song, Live Like You're Dying. Somewhere you got to give forgiveness a try. And forgiveness doesn't take two people. It takes one.

Louie Giglio: Wow.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It starts right here. And Louie, maybe speak to someone listening right now and they need to let it go. They're not to blame for what's happened. Louie, honestly. As a matter of fact, it's sad to be on the receiving end of someone's anger or someone's brokenness, but I can't swallow this stuff any longer because it's destroying me.

Louie Giglio: Yeah, unwillingness to forgive is one of the most deceptive tools of the enemy. What it sells us is, "You're in control now. Yeah, they left you. They hurt you. They abandoned you. They mistreated you. But now you're in control. And you can withhold that forgiveness. You can withhold reconciliation. You can punish them for what they did because you're in control now."

But that's a lie. Bitterness doesn't hurt the person who hurt us. Bitterness just hurts us. I said it this way in a message I preached a few days ago, "Bitterness paves a pathway into the past, and forgiveness paves a pathway into our future." And we're not letting people off the hook when we forgive them. We're just realizing they're already on God's hook. He said, "Vengeance is mine and I will repay, says the Lord." And we can trust Him. He's a perfect judge. And in time, everyone will come to that moment. And no one is going to get off the hook. We're not sweeping anything under the rug. God didn't sweep my sin under the rug. He hung it on a cross on His son. And we're not sweeping anybody's sin under the rug. We're just exercising the same power that was afforded us. God forgave me, therefore, I have the power to forgive.

And when I do, Tim, I get free. Even if it's not received, reciprocated, desired, wanted, acknowledged, that the email isn't answered, the phone call is not returned. The person says, "I didn't do anything wrong." The moment I'm willing to let go, I get free in that moment, by the grace of God.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I love what you wrote Louie, in Seeing God as the Perfect Father. You said, "You don't release your dad from something as much as you release him to someone."

Louie Giglio: Wow.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's a beautiful statement. Louie, let's flip the script just for a second. What if my son, my son, my daughter, they're gone. And I'm crying out and I'm begging God for them to come home. Speak to me, encourage my heart, because I am almost on the edge of hopelessness, despair, if you will, for my prodigal son or daughter.

Louie Giglio: Wow, there's no more pain greater. And I would just encourage you today if that's the situation that you're in, that God, He's right there with you. When Jesus told the story of the prodigal son, God was the Father in that story. And so today, in this very moment, God is brokenhearted over millions and millions and millions and millions of those that He loves, who are far off in the distant land. And like that father, He is watching and waiting today for them to come to their senses and turn home.

So I would just say today, "You're not alone. You're not waiting alone. You're not weeping alone. You're not longing alone. God is right there with you, and He loves your son, and He loves your daughter even more than you do. So He's in it with you today." I would encourage you, don't lose hope. God is a miracle worker.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Louie Giglio: And maybe your son or daughter is closer to being done with their crazy than you think they are. And I would just step in faith again today one more day and

say, "God, I believe You hear my prayer and I believe You answer prayer. And I claim in the name of Jesus, fullness for my son, fullness for my daughter, so that You can be glorified, God, in their lives." And I wouldn't take your eyes off the road because you never know what day they're going to turn toward home.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Louie, what is our closing piece here as we wind up today's broadcast and bring home this whole conversation on seeing God as a perfect Father?

Louie Giglio: The natural tendency, especially even in spiritual things, is, "What can I get from God?" And obviously there's a lot God wants to deposit in our lives, but at the end of the day, this is about giving glory to God. It's not just about knowing I'm loved and I'm blessed and I'm a son or a daughter of heaven. It's about growing up and maturing. And it's kind of like that moment when you're about 14 years old and your aunt and uncle come to town and they haven't seen you for a year or two, and you open the front door and your aunt says, "Oh my goodness. Look at you. You look just like your mom." But in the same way, when I was born again, I got all my spiritual genes from Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So I should be, not could be, should be. Growing up day by day as I follow Jesus, as I absorb His truth in His word, as I live in relationship and keep my eyes on Him, and as I grow and mature, I should be looking more and more like my Father every day.

And someone who hasn't seen us for a while and shows up should say at some point, "You know what? You're not as angry as you used to be. You know what? You're not as impatient as you used to be. You don't drink as much as you used to drink. Y'all's relationship is different than what it was a few years ago when I saw you."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Louie Giglio: Because we're growing up to look like our Father. That's what Paul wrote. "Be imitators of God, as dearly loved children." And that's what we are in Christ. And so let's dive into that and let's grow up into that and let's mature into Him so that we can bring honor to the one who's given us this beautiful blessing.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Louie, I have to get this Tim Keller quote in. I love this. "The only person who can wake up a king at 3:00 AM for a glass of water is a child."

Louie Giglio: Love it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And we have that kind of access to our heavenly Father.

Louie Giglio: So great.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Closing thought, Louie, closing word from you.

Louie Giglio: Yeah, let's don't squander that opportunity, Tim. If we can walk into the throne room of heaven at 3:00 in the morning and tell our father, our Abba, anything

that is on our heart, anything that concerns us, we can have that kind of intimacy with God, let's don't waste it. Let's draw near and let's walk in the Father's blessing that He is pouring over our lives today.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What a delightful couple of days together, Louie. Thank you so much for taking time and congrats again on your new book, *Seeing God as a Perfect Father and Seeing You as Loved, Pursued, and Secure*. If you don't have a copy of that book, you need to rush out and get it in the hands of someone you love. And may God strengthen our hearts as we cry out, "Abba Father, our Father." Louie, thank you again,

Louie Giglio: Tim, it's a pleasure to be on with you, such an honor. Thank you so much. God bless.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We've been talking the last two days all about Louie Giglio's new book called *Seeing God as a Perfect Father and Seeing You as Loved, Pursued, and Secure*. I don't know where you're at in your relationship with your dad, but I know this. Your heavenly Father loves you. I'd like to close out with how Louie ended his book. He quotes John 14, Verse 18 that says, "I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you." That's the promise of your God. Receive it, breathe it in, live it, and reflect it to the world.

You're not forgotten. You will never be left behind. You're chosen. You're dearly loved. You're not an orphan. You're not alone. You're a child of God. He knows your name, you're His. You're not unwanted. You're not powerless. You are who He says you are. You not defeated. You are made new. You have what He says you have. You can be and do what He says you can be and do. You're not a victim. You are in Christ's victorious procession. You walk alongside the King. You're loved as a daughter of the King. You're loved as a son of the Most High. You are a trophy of His grace. You are the loved son or daughter of a perfect Father. You are His light shining like a city on a hill, bringing Him glory as you grow up to be like Him. And that's our prayer here at JDFI, that God would fill your heart with His goodness and grace and that you would embrace Him as a loving, tender, kind, Father.

Roger Marsh: Well, I hope today's conversation really touched your heart as well. That was Pastor Louie Giglio and our own Dr. Tim Clinton here on Family Talk. Fathers certainly have an important role in the lives of their children. We talk about that all the time here at the Dobson Institute. But no matter what the circumstances or however someone's dad may have come up short, our heavenly Father is the perfect Abba, who is always there with us, as Louie said, a waterfall of cascading, never ending love and provision for you.

Now, pain and suffering are real, of course, and so is the uncertainty and indecision of human thought. And as the enemy is attacking men with confusion about our masculinity in a culture gone awry, we must remember that masculinity is actually a gift from God to all of us here on Earth. Biblically

defined masculinity is vital to the family for strength and undergirding. So husbands and fathers step up.

Because gender is under attack right now, the issues surrounding it can be quite challenging to talk about. So how can Christians effectively engage with and address the rising tide of transgenderism? Well, Dr. Owen Strachan has written a book called *What Does The Bible Teach about Transgenderism?* He has a unique understanding of the complexities involved, and his insights can help deepen your perspective on this crucial issue. In addition to this book, in collaboration with Dr. Strachan, The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has compiled a wide range of helpful resources for you on this topic as well. To access them now, simply visit our special website, drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism. That's drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism.

I'm Roger Marsh, and that's all the time we have for today. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for another edition of Family Talk.

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