



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: One on One with Bill Gaither – Part 2

Guest(s): Bill Gaither

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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.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi everyone, Dr. Tim Clinton here. When you think about your family and where they'll be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? You hopeful? What kind of a legacy are you leaving for your children and their children right now? Here at Family Talk we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving your family. Join us today at drjamesdobson.org. You're going to find helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. Dobson himself. And remember: your legacy matters.
- Roger Marsh: Well welcome. I'm Roger Marsh and on today's edition to Family Talk we're going to share the second half of a delightful conversation that Dr. Dobson had with Bill Gaither back in 2013. Bill and his wife, Gloria Gaither, are legendary gospel singers and songwriters. Together they wrote the classic hymns "Because He Lives," "He Touched Me," and "There's Something About that Name," along with hundreds of other praise and worship songs. Bill Gaither is also the founder and leader of the Gaither Vocal Band, which he still tours with regularly at the age of 85. Now the interview you are going to hear today was recorded just hours before Bill and his team performed a concert in Denver, Colorado. Dr. Dobson and his wife Shirley had been friends with Bill and Gloria for decades, so we hope you'll enjoy this warm dialogue between two old friends right here on Family Talk.
- Dr. James Dobson: You gave me some advice one time that I never forgot. You and Gloria had come out to Arcadia, California, and you stayed with us and we had a wonderful time together. And that night of all things, that afternoon, actually, we were talking about investments. Obviously, when you are well known and you sell a lot of books and a lot of records, you have a problem because money is coming in, you have to decide what to do with it. And so we were talking about investments, and you looked at me and you said, "I'm very concerned about something because when God blesses somebody in a creative way, money comes with that."
- Bill Gaither: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And so, everybody comes running at you and says, "Here's what you ought to do with it. You ought to invest it." And you said what happens is when a person like that begins to invest, then one of two things can happen. It can either be very successful, or it can fail. And in both cases, it draws you out of, and from the ministry that God called you to-

Bill Gaither: The original thing.

Dr. James Dobson: And makes you a businessman. And don't fall into that. Give it away. It doesn't matter. But don't try to hoard more when God has blessed you. You remember saying that to me?

Bill Gaither: Yeah, and here lately, I kind of fancy myself back in the classroom. In fact, I even asked a college the other day, we were there for a concert say, "Can I come back and talk to the kids? And I'm going back next week. So, on my own, I'm just coming here to talk to the kids." And my big kick these days is this: I ask kids, "One of these days," I said it wasn't long ago, "I was sitting in chapel, right where you were sitting. But with the snap of a finger, all of a sudden I'm 76 years old. I cannot tell you how quickly that is going to happen. And one of these days everybody in this room is going to die. And people will gather around, they'll go out the cemetery and throw dirt on you, and go back to the church and eat potato salad, you know?"

Dr. James Dobson: That's at the end of that.

Bill Gaither: And they're going to say something about you. What are they going to say about you? I was kidding. I had said to my good friend, Ben Spirit, I said what are they going to say about you when you're lying there. And Ben says, "Look, he's moving!" But that ain't going to happen. You know, they're going to say something. And I ask kids, I say, "How many of you would like for people to say about you that you were generous? Hold up your hand." And if kids are honest, most kids will hold up their hands.

I said most of you are not going to get there, and you know why? There's a step you have to go through to get to generosity. And that step is called responsibility. To take the resources God has given you, your influence, your word. You know, for instance, people come to you all the time, "Would you endorse my book?" I mean, that stock that you have built up by doing things right, right in life, you know your health. I never forget Ken Davis saying he was so much overweight, he showed me a picture, and his granddaughter was out in the ocean.

"Had she got in trouble, I wasted away some of my physical resources, I couldn't help her." But let's get to money. The same thing is true with money. To not be able to manage the resources that God has given you, so you can be in a place that when somebody does need help, it's a sad thing to say I'd like to help you in

any kind of way, but I can't because I've mismanaged the resources that God has given to me.

Dr. James Dobson: And gambling it, even gambling in the stock market or whatever it is, it's going to take your time and attention. And if you've got enough to live on be satisfied with it, and let the Lord have His share.

Bill Gaither: Gloria wrote this song: "If you want more happy than your heart can hold, if you want to stand taller, when the truth is told, if you watch something else, da, da, da, da, then give it away." And the whole song is about give it away. And we sang that every night for about two years, that was our theme, give it away. And we were having the crowd yell, "Give it away, give it away."

If you've ever been in Israel, the Jordan river is full of life. I mean you could reach down with your hand, you've been there, and pick out fish. It's so full of life. It flows into the Sea of Galilee full of life, because the Sea of Galilee's full, flows out of the Sea of Galilee because the Sea of Galilee is giving out, giving out. And it flows into the Dead Sea-

Dr. James Dobson: Which hoards it.

Bill Gaither: Which hoards it, there is no outlet, and it dies. It dies. God built something into us from the very beginning: to live outward and give it away. Every day of our lives some way or other, but by the time we're done, we should have wasted every bit of energy we have left.

Dr. James Dobson: My dad would have said, if he were here, "That'll preach. That will preach." Bill, you told a story in your book that I would like you to share. It had to do with your father and your memories of him. He was not a talker. He was not an effusive man, but he touched your life. Talk about that.

Bill Gaither: Very deeply. It was interesting. He lived until 91, 91 years, and he was sick only probably the last seven or eight months of his life, he had lung cancer. And he worked 30 years at General Motors. I still have his badge, 701. Showed up every morning, went to work, and put three kids through college and loved a wife for 67 years, and was just there and consistent. So he retired from General Motors after 30 years and got on our bus.

Dr. James Dobson: You're kidding? Is that right? And traveled with you?

Bill Gaither: And traveled with us for the next 30 years. A total new way of life. He was a tool and die maker, and he evidently was very good because at his memorial service they came out of the woodwork and said, "Boy, your dad could build a die like nobody could build a die." And a great farmer. Just a good man. In fact, at his funeral when Mark Lowry came up and looked at him because he'd been with Mark on a vessel, Mark said, "Are you sure he's dead? He didn't talk much more than that when he was alive," and he looked so-

Dr. James Dobson: Were you close to him?

Bill Gaither: Oh, was I close to him. And he was part of a generation where you didn't love and hug and touch each other, you know? And I can't remember him actually saying to me he loved me, because that was part of a generation where guys just didn't do that.

Dr. James Dobson: It was not considered manly or something.

Bill Gaither: It just wasn't considered manly, yeah. He did to Gloria. He just loved Gloria dearly. In fact, when he had to go back to the hospital at the end, he was so clean. He was such a clean human being, and he was out of energy. And so he was trying to just bathe himself, just with what he called, he couldn't get in the bathtub, but just with washcloth and bathed himself. And so Gloria said, "Let me help you, George." And she went in and literally bathed him. And he said to her, "You didn't know you signed up for this when you married Bill, did you?" She said, "Oh yes I did, and a whole lot more."

But at any rate, when my mom was breathing her last breath, he was down there day and night. And I finally said, "Dad, you've got to go home and get some rest. You just can't keep staying here." And he said, "Okay." And so he went home. About two hours later I thought I better go check on him. And he was down. And so I said, "Dad, let's go look at your garden," because I thought that might get him up. So we went and looked at the garden, and we were bragging on the garden, what was happening. And then he left me and went over behind the shed, and I saw his shoulders shaking. And he didn't cry much.

In fact, I had seen him cry very little. He was a strong rock in my life, but his shoulders were shaking. And I went over and put my arms on those strong shoulders even at, he would've been 88 years old, and I said, "Dad, don't worry about it. You just lost your son." My brother Danny had died six months earlier. "Now you're losing the love of your life. It's very understandable. Don't worry about it." And ever since we had been kids, we had an old pump back in the field where we would pump water for the cattle every day. And in the last 10-15 years of his life, it wasn't necessary. We still had cattle, but it wasn't a matter of life or death, but we still would go back because we'd talk when we'd go back there about things that we would normally talk about. And as I was putting my arm around his shoulder, he did not know what to say except, "You want to go back and pump some water?"

Dr. James Dobson: Those were the close moments that you had had with him. In fact, you said in the book that it was very meaningful for you to go pump the water even as a child and even when you were young, because you did some sorting out and some thinking there.

Bill Gaither: Somehow my big life decisions, I think, were made back there. So I said in my book that day, I said, "You want to go pump some water?" He said, "Yeah." So

I've said to many young guy who's been going through some stuff, "Some days all you can do is just keep pumping."

Dr. James Dobson: Just keep pumping.

Bill Gaither: Life doesn't make sense at all, but let's go back and pump some water together.

Dr. James Dobson: You know where that occurred for me was not at a water pump, but in hunting together. My dad and I from especially the teen years on, there's nothing I loved more than being out in God's nature with him. And he was different there than anywhere else. It was there that I touched the soul of the man, and he saw mine. And you know my dad's been gone since 1977, and I would love to have one more day with him. I was close to my mom, too. But as an adult there was something manly about my relationship with my dad.

Bill Gaither: That's the only way we learn, or at least that's one of the primary ways that we learn. I really try to encourage the young guys that I'm around, Jim, today. And sometimes you win and sometimes you lose on it. And I can remember back I think 22 or 23 years ago when we were talking to you, this is before even Promise Keepers, that Suzanne and her husband who written this song, "Men full of compassion who laugh and love and cry. Men who will face eternity, and aren't afraid to die. Men who will fight for freedom and honor, once again, God just needs a few good men." And I keep trying to challenge the...

Dr. James Dobson: Did she write that?

Bill Gaither: She wrote that, isn't that a great song?

Dr. James Dobson: It is a great song.

Bill Gaither: "Men who fight for honor and freedom. Once again, he just needs a few good men."

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Marine Corps would-

Bill Gaither: Would die for that song.

Dr. James Dobson: I would remember that. Speaking of manly men, did you ever work with Johnny Cash?

Bill Gaither: Yes, I did. And I got to know him a little bit. Not real personally, but...

Dr. James Dobson: He was that kind of man. He went through a lot of struggles with drugs and other things, but he finally got it right, I think.

Bill Gaither: Oh, I think absolutely he got it right. And in the heart, in the core of that person, was a poet, because he wrote a lot of great tender, sensitive... And then after he met June, I mean-

Dr. James Dobson: She had a great impact on him.

Bill Gaither: A big, big impact on his life, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: I was at a Youth for Christ television special where he spoke and then he performed, and that's where I met him. I didn't know him real well, but he seemed to be a man at least who knew what it was like to be a man.

Bill Gaither: Last time I saw him was at the St. Louis airport. I heard this big old voice, "Bill!" And I turned around, there with Johnny Cash, you know? And he was with another guy. They were coming back from somewhere and he said, "Be sure tell Gloria, Hey." And I said, "Same thing with June."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, Bill, I have really enjoyed talking to you. You've got a concert to give tonight, and I'm going to be on the front row cheering as usual. But it is such a pleasure to renew our friendship and to talk again. Our lives have intertwined for so many years going back to 1976. And give Gloria our love and regards. She and Shirley wrote a bestselling book called *Let's Make a Memory*.

Bill Gaither: And you have to do that on purpose.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that's right. And now she's out there with her grandkids making a memory, right?

Bill Gaither: Making some new memories.

Dr. James Dobson: Before we go tell us what's new. I want to remind everybody of this new book *The Gaither Homecoming Bible*. It's actually the New King James Version of the Bible, plus all of the writings of the people that you work with, many of them will sing tonight, and your writings and Gloria's writings. Just it's full of stories.

Bill Gaither: It's full of stories and good topical stuff, stuff like I got a piece in there on priorities coming back to what we were talking about earlier. You know what we say yes to and what we say no to finally determines what kind of life that we are going to leave behind. And I would say to young kids, even in ministry, who are doing good things and, and there are good things. I mean, they're not saying no to something bad, they're saying no to something good.

But the last time I checked, there were only 60 minutes an hour, and there were only 24 hours in a day at are only seven days in a week, and only 52 weeks. The last I checked, there are no more than that. And we wrote the song one time that said, "Hold tight to the sounds, the music of living, happy songs of the laughter of children at play. Hold my hand as we run through the sweet fragrant

meadows making memories of what was today." We had this moment to hold in our hands, and don't make this mistake. One of the lines say, "To look back and wish for this day." And how many times it happens, and that doesn't happen from bad people saying, "I want to go out and do something bad."

Dr. James Dobson: In fact, you can do it for the most noble Christian purposes. Pastors have great trouble with us. "I'm doing this for the Lord."

Bill Gaither: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: I know, but your primary responsibilities is to evangelize your own kids.

Bill Gaither: Yeah, I know.

Dr. James Dobson: That comes above everything else. Then you go out and evangelize the world.

Bill Gaither: Yeah, I know. I know. Yeah, I think people in ministry have more of a chance to take the wrong road here.

Dr. James Dobson: Bill, you are a great friend. I've loved talking to you and being here tonight. God be with you not only this evening in the concert, but in the days to come, and God's not through with you yet. You still look good, and you're still good. And you're healthy, right?

Bill Gaither: The last I checked, I'm very healthy.

Dr. James Dobson: And I have no reason to be as healthy as God has allowed me to be at this stage. So, let's finish strong.

Roger Marsh: Dr. Dobson talks about how an inheritance is what you leave for someone. A legacy is what you leave in someone. Well, you just heard the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's classic interview with the one and only Bill Gaither. Both of these men of God had fathers who were strong, godly role models for them and the influence that their dads had on them is evident in how they live their lives, and serve the Lord.

Bill Gaither is now eighty-five years old and he still tours with the Gaither Vocal Band. He has a rich life with his wife, Gloria, their three children, and many, many grandchildren.

Now, at the beginning of the program, I explained that this interview was recorded just before Bill and his team performed a concert in Denver back in 2013. Dr. Dobson attended that concert, and had the pleasure of sitting next to a special young man during that performance. Here now is a brief story that Dr. Dobson shared about his interactions with his new friend. Now, since this program was first aired several years ago, you'll be able to hear Dr. Dobson's old

co-hosts, Ryan Dobson, and Luanne Crane, reacting, in the following clip. Let's listen in now.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, I need to explain something that happened during the concert that was to follow. It was a sold-out house. I mean there were people all around the front that didn't have chairs. It was jammed. And I happened to be sitting by a young man. I guess he was in his early 20s who was severely disabled, mentally and physically. He wasn't able to talk but he was enjoying the concert because he could understand that the music spoke to him.

Sitting on the other side of him, was his adopted mother and she chose to take this young man into her arms and care for him. And she doesn't have a husband. She wrote me afterwards; I know a little bit about her. She was caring for that young man and I made friends with him and I was holding his hand through part of this concert. At break time, I was back in the green room with Bill Gaither, and I told him about this young man. And I said, you might acknowledge him in some way. When we came out of the break, Bill came off the platform, came around. We were on the first row. Came around and stood in front of this young man beside me and he began singing a song specifically for him. And I can't sing it, but the song was, "I am a promise, I am a possibility. I am a promise, with a capital P. I'm a great big bundle of potentiality." And I listened to his voice, and I thought... This young man was enthralled as you can imagine. With several thousand people watching the spotlight was on him and us at the front. I appreciated what Bill said so much.

Roger Marsh: Well, as you could hear that story was just too special not to share once again. Well, if you'd like to learn more about Bill Gaither, his wife Gloria, and their many accomplishments, please visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. We'll also have a link to the Homecoming Bible that Dr. Dobson mentioned today there as well, just go to D-R James Dobson.org or feel free to give us a call.

We are here around the clock to answer any questions you might have about Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. We would be honored to pray with you, and for you, when you call us as well. Our number is (877) 732-6825. That's (877) 732 6825. And finally, please write to us. We would be honored to hear your thoughts on the broadcast. You can also request a resource when you write, or send a tax deductible donation of any amount through the mail as well.

Our ministry mailing address is The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, PO Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Once again, our ministry mailing address The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute PO Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. And that is all the time we have for today. I'm Roger Marsh hoping you'll join us again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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

Dr. James Dobson: One of the most poignant songs ever written is "Cats in the Cradle" by the late Harry Chapin.

Roger Marsh: Dr. James Dobson for Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: The lyrics of that sad song tell the story of a father who has good intentions toward his young son, but there are always planes to catch and bills to pay. And the father finds himself making excuses. "When you coming home, dad?" "I don't know when, but we'll get together then son, you know. We'll have a good time then."

Despite the disappointments, the boy loves and admires his father. Again and again, he says, "I'm going to be like you, dad. You know, I'm going to be like you." But time passes and the boy becomes a young man. The father's priorities have changed now. He'd like to visit with his grown up son, but now it's the son's turn to offer excuses. "You see my new job's a hassle, and the kids have the flu, but it's been nice talking to you, dad. It's been nice talking to you."

As the father hangs up the phone, the tragedy hits him. "He'd grown up just like me. My boy was just like me." I sincerely hope that all fathers who hear this wonderful song take its message to heart. The years with our growing children are all too precious to squander. Let's use them wisely so that when the time comes to look back on our lives, we can do it with gladness instead of regret. To the memory of Harry Chapin I say thank you for this timeless reminder.

Roger Marsh: Hear more at drjamesdobson.org.