



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Back to School with Dr. James Dobson

Guest(s): Dr. Tim Clinton

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a 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.

Roger Marsh : Well, hello there. I'm Roger Marsh. And it's that time of year when students are beginning to hit their stride, as the school year is now underway. Here at Family Talk, we are thrilled to participate in the back to school excitement. And today we're bringing you a very, very special broadcast. Dr. Dobson is with us. He has a special guest in studio with whom you will all be familiar. And they're going to be talking about a valuable resource that is specifically available for anyone who ever wanted to influence families and society for Christ. Doctor.

Dr. James Dobson: Today, I'm honored. And I mean this from the bottom of my heart, I am honored to have a colleague and a very good friend with us. He's been here before. He will be here afterward, but he is Dr. Tim Clinton. And most of you have heard him here before. Today in the studio, I have Dr. Clinton with us who is working to strengthen minds of people throughout the nation to be educated and to reach others for Christ. Tim is president of nearly 50,000 member, American Association of Christian Counselors, AACC. There's no other organization in the world that is of that size or significance. He is a professor of counseling and pastoral care and the executive director of the Center for Counseling and Family Studies at Liberty University. And that's the topic we're going to be talking about today. He is licensed in Virginia, as both a professional counselor and LPC and marriage and family therapist, that's LMFT.

Tim now spends the majority of his time working with Christian leaders and professional athletes. Tim is recognized as a world leader in faith and mental health issues. He has authored 20 books. Tim has been married to his wife, Julie, and together they have two children, both grown, Megan and Zach. Julie has a powerful ministry through her Extraordinary Women's conferences. Well, Tim, what I'd like to talk about for a few minutes today, because it really excites me. You were on your way to Colorado Springs several years ago, and you had an idea that when we got to Colorado Springs and you'd come to be on this program, you ask if I'd go to lunch with you. And during that lunch, you talked about something that you wanted to see me do. Now, a lot of people have a plan for my life and they can't wait to tell me about it, but you had a plan that

would become highly significant in my life. Describe what it was the Lord laid on your heart on that trip on the way to Colorado Springs.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

I was seated on the plane, flying into Denver and on the approach in I just felt moved by the Lord in my spirit, that my reason for coming needed to change, that he had laid something in my heart about you. And that was that God had given you so much wealth of information and the spirit that was inside of you that needed to be shared primarily through an educational program. One of my favorite verses in the scripture is out of 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, where Paul wrote these words, he said, "Bless it be, God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He's the father of mercies. He's the God of all comfort who comforts us in all of our affliction so that we may in turn comfort others who are in any affliction with the comfort we ourselves are comforted by God."

And when you think about a ministry of counseling or coaching, you begin to realize that God, I think God has no greater plan than to use people through which he channels his message of hope, of encouragement, of love, of presence in the lives of other people, especially when they're going through a hard time. Dr. Dobson, I listened growing up through my young years of aspiring and wanting to be a counselor, a marriage and family therapist, a Christian one at that and marveled at the work, God has done, continues to do in and through. And by the way, if you've never been to Colorado Springs and seen Family Talk and the amazing ministry, the team that's going on here, you need to get here. But Dr. Dobson, the idea was we need to train up. There are a lot of people out there who do coffee cup counseling.

There are a lot of people out there who God has given the gift of helps to. They speak into the life of a friend who maybe is in a bad marriage, or they have a son or daughter who's gone wayward, or maybe they're wrestling with depression, or they could be just wanting some hope and encouragement because they lost their dad. They're out there and they don't necessarily have the training, or they would love to learn how to use the Bible more effectively. I wish I could sit with Dr. Dobson every day and have him tell me what to say to someone who's going through a tough time.

That's the inspiration that gave birth to this project that we developed. And it really is called the James C. Dobson Center for Child Development, Marriage, and Family at Liberty University. And inside that, the goal was let's develop coursework so that if it's a stay-at-home mom and she passed on school so she could put her husband through, but she has the gift of helps. She ministers every day, but she would like training and she wished she could stay at home and yet study under the best in the world. How could we do something like that? That was the Genesis. I'm just amazed at what God's doing in and through this project right now.

Dr. James Dobson:

There are two institutions involved in this one, is American Association of Christian Counselors, your organization, AACC. Where people can get a certificate indicating that they have training in some aspect of family life or

interpersonal relationships. That's the one, that's AACC. And some of them are already state licensed counselors. Some are church members who know they have a gift of training people or helping people who are crying at night. People who are in marital difficulty, people whose children are in trouble. And where do they go to get godly advice like that? And AACC is now providing that to people who want to be certified in one of these areas. You talked to me that day about a related program at Liberty University with a completely different career objective, describe it.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Yes. The programs at Liberty University and Liberty University, by the way, the world's largest Christian university now, over 100,000 students, Dr. Dobson. If you've not been to Lynchburg, Virginia to see the campus at Liberty, about a billion dollars worth of construction over the last few years have taken place on campus. It's astounding, some nearly 15,000 students in residence, but Liberty has the vision to embrace a project like this, where they said, we want the James C Dobson Center for Child Development, Marriage, and Family Studies at Liberty.

"And yes, Tim, we get the idea, the concept here. We want to develop areas of study where regardless of major," now, listen, if you're out there and again, you've got the gift of helps, or you feel like God has called you to a ministry of caring for others. Maybe you've walked through some tough roads and God's giving you a lot of wisdom and more, these programs, and what I love so much about them is they're based on relationship psychology. They are really practical in value and what we were able to do through online education now, and in these online programs, you can study in the area of marriage and family and become a marriage and family relationship coach.

We have five courses that you can go through. You can get a minor from the Dobson Center at the undergraduate level and or graduate level, regardless of major. The other area of concentration is in child development and parenting. Who better than Dr. Dobson on child development and parenting? But going through... And what we were able to do was build up five unique courses there, again, bring all that wealth of wisdom to the classroom. And in addition to that, Dr. Dobson and I, we sat down and hand-picked the number of faculty that we wanted to join in on this project. These are the Gary Chapman's and more who would help really just bring the life, this classroom experience. Liberty said, let's do another one too Tim. Let's do one in family advocacy and public policy and relationship development. We were able to put that together. There are many out there who want to stand boldly in their state, maybe their community, and understand what it means to be a champion for the family. Those three areas-

Dr. James Dobson:

How many units of credit do they get for these?

Dr. Tim Clinton:

So, in each of those areas of study, there are five courses. Each course is a three credit hour course, and we have undergraduate and graduate level studies. What's really encouraging is we've launched the programs that are going very well. The students are high as can be about studying with Dr. Dobson and these

other faculty. And student completion rates are way up off the chart. But what they're getting is practical knowledge too, not just head knowledge. What does it mean to bring this alive in the ministry in my local church? What does it mean to bring it alive in my private practice? What does it mean to bring it alive in my workplace? That's, what's so valuable here and the personal value, not just the professional value, the personal value. I teach a relationships class at Liberty and have for years, a couple of thousand undergraduate students go through that class every semester.

And when you start looking at what's ahead for them, many of them grew up in a lot of brokenness. If you're a mom or dad, and you sending your son or daughter to a Christian institution, a program like Liberty, you can actually take a minor in this area. The personal benefit of going through and studying the scriptures, learning from men and women who are rooted deeply in a vibrant faith walk, who by the way are also clinically excellent. They're up on the latest research and direction on what it means to help other people. I don't think it gets any better than that, Dr. Dobson. It's powerful. It's special when it comes to online education.

Dr. James Dobson: What I like about it, Tim is that the program that we have put together contains information that I've gleaned over 43 years of teaching, and radio, and speaking, writing, and my own academic work. I was at the University of Southern California before I went to Focus on the Family and now Family Talk. But if you are going into a field where you need to understand people or children, this is the place to go. Suppose you're going to be a minister, what better information should you have than is contained in these lengthy courses that talk about marriage, that talk about raising children, that talk about interpersonal relationships, conflict, other things of that nature. We could probably name 100 fields where this would make a good minor or a supplement to what your major is.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I can't tell you how many pastors I've talked to through the years. I've taught at the doctoral level at Liberty for a long time in ministry, as well as in counseling and repeatedly the issue is the challenges are overwhelming. The empty loveless relationships and marriages, the divorce epidemic that's out there, children growing up in homes, where there is horrific abuse, where they watch mom and dad maybe fight a lot, domestic violence. You think of other stories of just like the concern of tragedies in everyday life. How do you respond to someone who's going through a horrific trauma situation? What do you say when you don't know what to say? What do you do when you don't know what to do? What do you do when it happens to you? When your heart cries out, why. Dr. Dobson, one of your earlier books I read was *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. It was really a book that mattered to me because there were some confusing times in my life where I said, "God, this isn't the way it's supposed to be. And are you there? Are you there for me?"

Dr. James Dobson: And that came out of a plane ride from Lynchburg, Virginia to Denver, and then Colorado Springs, where this vision occurred to you. And we went to lunch

together and you described it to me. And it made sense to me because I've done over 8,000 radio programs and all that content still exists. It's all recorded, it's all available. And all of the guests who have come with expertise in those fields, the things that they said, the things the research has showed is in there. And it really lit my fire. It took us two years to do this.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know. We were able to get Dr. Dobson in the studio a lot, made sure that we made this cutting edge. It really got dialed into effective ministry. And again, the professional and personal value of going through this kind of curriculum. You and I have talked a lot about people on the front lines, making a difference. I call that soul care ministry. That God has no greater plan. But what a beautiful thing it would be if we could raise up 100,000, maybe 10 mentor coaches, relationship coaches, marriage and family coaches, parent coaches, people who stood for the family inside the church who were the first line of defense. Dr. Dobson, I believe they're there. And they're doing that. A program like this is about how to encourage them to do it more effectively.

I have five sisters. They do a lot more counseling than I do. And they work on me a lot. It's that phone call, it's the moment after church when somebody pulls you aside, it's maybe in the mall somewhere where somebody walks up to you and says, "Listen, my daughter, I'm worried about her and I don't know what to do. I feel like I'm losing her." In those moments, being ready with an answer of hope. I mean, Scripture to share and more. You know how effective, how important, how significant that is.

Dr. James Dobson: I don't want to sound like this as a commercial, but if there are parents out there who have sons and daughters who are graduated from high school and aren't sure where to go to college, there are a lot of great Christian schools that are out there.

Dr. Tim Clinton: There a lot of great Christian schools.

Dr. James Dobson: I mean, there are a lot of them, so it's not just one, but Liberty University is one of them. And now they can go and not only have the academic training that they need for a field that they've chosen, but they can also either do a minor or just supplementary instruction and curricula in a field that will be beneficial to them. And if they don't go to Liberty, they can do it online. They can start out doing it from home. And I'd tell you, this material is high interest stuff, because it's got a lot of videos, a lot of radio recordings, a lot of my own teaching, looking straight into a camera.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I'll call it Dobson gold. There's so much gold in there. And when you pepper that too with a lot of the current research and teaching, it's just a, it's a spectacular curriculum. I wanted to address something that I think is important. Maybe some listening, many listing you heard of online education, it's transforming, revolutionizing the way education is done now. You can literally study at home on a computer and go to college. You can get your undergraduate or graduate

degree at home now. It's the same as going to campus and getting a degree. The viability, the comparability, it's all there.

Dr. James Dobson: That's the coming thing, isn't it?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Oh, Dr. Dobson, I mean over 100,000 students now at Liberty alone. 2100 academic institutions are now offering online classes. Liberty University, I'll stay with Liberty, I teach there, ranked number seven out of 2100 institutions offering online education. The quality of that experience is amazing. And Dr. Dobson, how it works, a lot of people don't know what that means. Does that mean I'm in school? What happens is they actually have semesters in eight week formats. So you go to school for eight weeks. There are eight different starts per year. So it isn't just like two semesters, like traditional college. It's an eight week term, eight different starts throughout the year. So you can start pretty much at any given month you want to start. And then you have the opportunity to interact with faculty. And you have academic advisors who guide you and direct you.

Whether it's through email chat, phone, whatever, and they help facilitate your educational experience. They don't want you to getting stuck. And what we're finding is students satisfaction rates are going very high. Student completion rates are going very high because they build the courses in a way that's sensitive to adult learners. That's how we built the Dobson curriculum at Liberty University, so that we would pace your week. I know everyone's out there working. You've got a schedule. You have to make money. You can't just pack up and go to Lynchburg, Virginia, or to any other college or university. This is online. And when you start going in those directions and you start interacting with the material, what I've found with these adult learners and these young learners is it comes alive in their everyday life. That's what's exciting.

Dr. James Dobson: And this is not something coming down the road. This is a reality. It's available right now.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Right now. You can get in on one of those starts probably within the month. That's how real, how alive this is. Through the years I have number of conversations with Christian leaders. Most believe this Dr. Dobson, they believe the platform for evangelism is through education.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, I do too.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We can change the world. This is global. You can study anywhere you want. All over the globe.

Dr. James Dobson: Tim, I sense that parents and students need a little more information about what we're talking about. Name some of the courses that I prepared and tell them about the content.

Dr. Tim Clinton: In the marriage and family concentration courses like Child and Adolescent Issues and Helping Strategies, Marriage and Family Systems, got to learn the foundations, the models and more. Divorce, Remarriage and Blended family. It's a big time topic in current culture. Effective parenting, child behavior and Discipline Strategies, Healthy Sexuality. You start going through the list and you start thinking, wow this is... It is, it's amazing. Child and Adolescent Development, Deviance and Violence. You got course on Relationships, Public Policy and Advocacy. You've got courses on Human Development Across the Lifespan, Childhood Issues, Trauma and Abuse, and more. Dr. Dobson, courses that I believe are foundational to understanding relationships and why there's brokenness. And then most importantly, what do you do? How do you help? How do you make a difference?

Dr. James Dobson: I'll tell you this much. I knew when I was a junior in college that I wanted to do something with regard to the family. And I was riding along in the car with my tennis team and the wife of one of the tennis players heard me say, I don't quite remember this. I sort of do, but she does. She heard me say, I'm very concerned about the institution of the family. And we've got to do something to save it. I was 22 years old when I said that. I would love to have taken some of these courses at that time and gotten credit for it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Dobson, that's the amazing thing about education today. It's changing so much. You get to learn from some of the best of the best. It's just coming alive. And let me encourage you if you're out there listening, and you may be thinking, I don't know if I could even go to school. Everything starts with a decision. Pick up the phone, get up on the internet, take a bold step forward. Who knows. Who knows Dr. Dobson, maybe the next child and family experts listening right now. And those seeds are being sown like they were for you. Even if you've never taken a college class, your very first class could be with Dr. James C. Dobson. You can enroll in that class and get started.

Dr. James Dobson: Or at graduate levels too.

Dr. Tim Clinton: At the undergraduate or graduate level.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. And do you have any more ideas for my life?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah, we do.

Dr. James Dobson: Has the Lord said anything to you on the plane?

Dr. Tim Clinton: We better go off mic for that one. Yeah. Yeah. What is exciting to me again is I really believe God, there's something stirring in the church and the hearts of people they want hope, and they want to know that God's real, that he's alive. When that starts coming alive for them and then all of a sudden they realize that they have a place, that God wants to use them, boy, it's transformational.

Roger Marsh :

And that was the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's conversation with his friend, colleague, and cohost, Dr. Tim Clinton here on Family Talk. If you or someone you know wants to learn more about the Dr. James C. Dobson Center at Liberty University, visit liberty.edu/dobsoncenter, or you can find that link and more on our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. That's drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. Like Dr. Clinton and Dr. Dobson explained, the Dr. James C. Dobson Center at Liberty University offers programs for earning a master's in human services counseling, a master's in pastoral counseling, and three different undergrad minor programs. The goal of the Dobson Center for Child Development, Marriage, and Family Studies is to equip men and women with the knowledge and training they need to influence the family and society for Christ. Each course offered through the Dr. James C. Dobson Center allows you to learn from professionals who have firsthand experience working with families in a counseling setting.

Video lectures, that feature Dr. Dobson, as well as other distinguished Christian psychologist and family therapist are integrated into the courses. Also each of these online master's degrees and minor programs through the Dr. James C. Dobson's Center are offered 100% online. This allows you to stay where you are and remain active in your job, with your family, and in your community all while learning about God's design for the family. Thanks so much for listening to Family Talk. And if you have any questions or prayer requests, you can give us a call at (877) 732-6825. That's (877) 732-6825. I'm Roger Marsh. God's richest blessings to you and your family, 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.