



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Have Walked with the Living God – Part 1

Guest(s): Pat Robertson

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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: Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Well, many of you have heard about the passing of the great TV evangelist, Pat Robertson. He went home to be with the Lord on June the 8th at the age of 93. Pat was a Southern Baptist minister, a broadcast pioneer, and a strong advocate for Christian values, but he was most well known for being the host of *The 700 Club*. That's a position he held for over 50 years.

Pat Robertson was also a dear friend of Dr. and Mrs. Dobson, and we want to honor his memory today and tomorrow on the broadcast by celebrating his glorious homecoming into the arms of the Lord. We're going to hear a classic program both today and tomorrow that was originally recorded in August of 2020 when Pat and Dr. Dobson sat down to talk about Pat's life and his walk with God. This was a truly remarkable, fascinating, and dare I say, historic conversation between two men who were giants in the 20th century evangelistic movement, a movement that saw the likes of Chuck Colson, Billy Graham, Luis Palau, Dr. D. James Kennedy and Adrian Rogers, along with Pat and Dr. Dobson, who served the body of Christ here on Earth. Truly remarkable this season of God's hand on us. Well, let's join Dr. and Pat Robertson right now on today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, it's so good to have you here.

Pat Robertson: Well, Jim, it's good to be with you. We've been friends for so many years and I congratulate you on all the work you've been doing. So it's a joy to be with you today.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I was on your program many times and it's about time you were on mine.

Pat Robertson: Well, thanks for returning the favor. It's my pleasure.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, you're still going strong and we are very honored to have you join us. I want to start by reading just a portion of your bio from your book, and it is most

impressive. Pat graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor in arts from Washington and Lee University. He has a juris doctorate from Yale Law School and a master of divinity from New York Theological Seminary. He's written 21 books, including *The Secret Kingdom*, which was the number one religious book in America.

Pat and his wife, Dede, have four children, 14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Pat, I'm going to start by asking you to name them all.

You know I was kidding, don't you?

Pat Robertson: I know you were, and by the way, I'm up now to 17 great-grandchildren. Two more going, so I'll have 19 before the ones that are in the womb are born. So I'm getting there. 19 great-grandchildren.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's start with a health report. How are you doing these days?

Pat Robertson: I'm doing great. I've got an old car. I've got a pacemaker that keeps my heart going, and I had my prostate taken out and I don't have one of them, so I don't have cancer, and I had a fall off a horse. I broke eight ribs and ruptured my spleen, so I lost about a third of that and I've had a bunch of stuff going on over the years, but I'm still going strong.

And for that, I work out about three times a week and lift weights and do all that. So I'm very vigorous.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, praise the Lord. In 2011, I fell off a horse too. I grew up in Texas and so I was very, very familiar with horses and feel comfortable on them. The horse was just standing. We weren't even moving. And I had a \$500 Texas hat on that somebody had given me, and I liked it. It was white and the wind blew and that hat blew off. And I reached over to get it and my foot came out of the stirrup and I went down and I landed on a six gun and I broke my scapula and my clavicle. I was in the hospital for 17 days so-

Pat Robertson: My goodness.

Dr. James Dobson: I've done what you've done.

Pat Robertson: Well, I really enjoy it. I was riding what they called dressage. I was into a high level dressage and I had some great horses, but this one horse spooked, a dog started chasing him and he took off and I lost the stir up and he just was wild. I tried my best to control him and I couldn't do it. And finally I went off and oh boy, the rest they say is history. I was bleeding to death. My spleen was torn all to pieces. But anyhow, I'm all recovered, Jim. I'm good as gold.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, so am I. Those are beautiful animals, but they're dangerous and you have to know what you're doing. Pat, I just quoted a few of your accomplishments,

but that wasn't even the beginning of it. Of course, I didn't even mention the *700 Club* and you're the founder of Regent University and so many other accomplishments. You have had a very full life haven't you?

Pat Robertson: It's been amazing. I was coming out of seminary and I was asking God what to do, and he led me very clearly to come to Tidewater, Virginia and to buy an old television station. I only had \$70. I didn't even own a television set and I didn't know anything about television. And God said, "Buy a station." And here this old station had been taken off the air and I came down and began that first ministry. It was a miracle. That was 1961. It's been quite a time since.

Dr. James Dobson: You talk about starting from scratch. You really had to begin putting it together from virtually nothing and look what the Lord has done with it. Pat, let's go back to your childhood. Your father was a U.S. senator, wasn't he?

Pat Robertson: He was a senator. He went to Congress when I was two years old, and he served for about 14 years in the House of Representatives. And then he was elevated to the United States Senate. He served 20 years in the Senate, so he was there about 34 years. And I laughingly say when I was two that I first learned mama, and then I learned daddy, and then I learned constituent. And all I heard about was, "Don't do that. What will the constituents think?" And so I grew up trying to behave myself in the public arena because of what the constituents would think.

Dr. James Dobson: So did you spend time hanging around the US Capitol?

Pat Robertson: I worked up there for the appropriations committee when I was in law school. I had my first congressional campaign. It was crazy. I was in the 7th grade and we had something called Robertson for Congress and I was in that little committee and it was sort of a joke because I was just a kid, but I was involved in politics from the early get go. And so I ran for president and in my book is quite a story of how I got that going.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, I want to know more about that. Were your mom and dad both Christians?

Pat Robertson: My father was the son of a Baptist preacher. He kind of made a decision. He was a youngster. But at my mother's funeral, my father knelt down beside the bed where we were and I led him to Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: When did you first give your heart to the Lord?

Pat Robertson: I was about 23 years old I think. I'd told my mother that I had wanted to go into religious work and my mother was a deeply committed Christian and she said, "Son, you didn't quite sound right." And I knew why because I really hadn't come to the Lord. And she said, "Well, I know these people, this guy named Cornelius Vander Brien, he might talk to you."

So I said, "All right." I'm living in New York and I was in business and I took the train down to Philadelphia and we met in this fancy hotel, Jim, I mean really fancy, I mean the waiters wore white tie and tails. I mean it was fancy stuff. And he brings out this great big black Bible and puts it on the table. And I was just embarrassed out of my mind. I thought, "These people are going to throw us out for being religious fanatics." And I thought, "Oh my goodness." And then he said, "All right, Pat, you are here. Tell me about your experience." And I told him and he said, "Any mhamadan could have told me what you told me. Isn't there something more?" And at that time, something came out of me and I said, "Yes, I believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world and for my sins too."

And then it was like a voice in my ear repeating something I read from the Book of Romans, which said, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God had raised you from the dead, you'll be saved." And I knew at that moment that I had come to the Lord. Boy, I was transformed. I mean, it was amazing. I used to be quite a party boy. And I got back to my apartment in New York and the first thing I did, I had a bottle of Valentine scotch and I poured it down the sink and my wife said, "What are you doing that's expensive stuff?" And I said, "Well, I've just found the Lord." And well anyhow, that was the start of it.

- Dr. James Dobson: Isn't it amazing how the Scriptures can reach out and talk to you when you didn't even know what you were looking for and there it was?
- Pat Robertson: Exactly. I mean, my mother had prayed for me, my aunt had dedicated me when I was just a little baby to the Lord and I had this godly heritage and I couldn't get away from it.
- Dr. James Dobson: I just read something about you that I didn't know. You were a lieutenant in the Marines in Korea, weren't you?
- Pat Robertson: That's right. I was assistant adjutant of the 1st Marine Division. When we were engaged, we were in a place called the Punchbowl and Heartbreak Ridge in North Korea. It was a freezing cold winter and I was there with the Marines and I'm proud of that time of service.
- Dr. James Dobson: Why did you get out of the military?
- Pat Robertson: Well, I was a civilian. I joined the platoon leader class when I was in college. And when I graduated from college, I got a commission in the Marines and my parents gave me a trip to Europe for a summer. And so I was over there studying at the University of London, and I went to Paris and I was sitting in one of those Paris sidewalk cafes and I was reading a paper and it said, "[inaudible 00:11:39]." I didn't know what [inaudible 00:11:40] was, but it said a group called the [inaudible 00:11:42] were being called up. Well, the [inaudible 00:11:47] was what I was. I was a lieutenant in the Marine Corps.

And when I got back to America from Europe, I had orders to report to Quantico and I went there for training. And then from training, I went on over to Korea.

Dr. James Dobson: I assume you were not in combat at that time because you were a lawyer, you were in the adjutant general's office?

Pat Robertson: Well, I was in a combat unit. I've been given three battle stars so-

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Pat Robertson: Marine Corps considered it combat. I mean, I was with a combat division, but I just wasn't in the front line, although my MOS is combat infantry, so I was trained in all the skills of how to shoot people.

Dr. James Dobson: I'll bet we've just told people something that they didn't know. And here's something else that I didn't know. When you became a civilian, you lived for a time in a hippie commune in Brooklyn, New York. What was that all about?

Pat Robertson: Yeah, like Ted Turner said, "I was country before country was cool. I lived in a commune before communes were cool." When I got through seminary, the Lord gave me a Scripture, Luke 12:33, and I said, "What am I doing next?" And the things said, "Sell what you have, give to the poor and come follow me." And so I put an ad in the paper, sold my furniture, and moved in with a friend who was living in Bedford-Stuyvesant, one of the worst slums in America. He had a parsonage there. And in the parsonage was a former madam of a house of prostitution, several other people.

One guy was a big fella, he was a little bit mentally disturbed. And we were all living together in this commune. And I had my wife and two little children at the time, and we were living in that environment. And you talk about rough, I remember, Jim, I was praying, "Lord, what do I do now?" And I told my wife, I said, "Are you willing if we buy the house next door that had been a house of prostitution and we make it a mission here in Bedford-Stuyvesant?" And she said, "Okay. If the Gods wants you to do it, I'll do it and I'll be with you." And I was sitting there in that old church with a little light on and the Lord said, "Read Jeremiah 16:2." And I said, "Okay, Lord." And I opened the Bible and it was the most beautiful Scripture I think I've ever seen.

It said, "Thou shall not take a wife or have children in this place." And I said, "Praise God, I'm out of here," so...

Dr. James Dobson: That's called proof texting.

Pat Robertson: Yeah, I told my wife, "Honey, we're leaving and pack your bag." And I had an old '53 DeSoto and we had a U-Haul trailer and a few baby beds and some pots and pans, and I took off for Virginia and they say the rest is history.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever practice law?

Pat Robertson: I never did. I graduated from law school, but I never practiced. I went into business right out of law school. I was with WR Grace in New York, and then I was in business with a couple of friends from law school. But I never practiced law as such, but I've sure practiced it since. I was taught corporations, I was taught SEC, I was taught tax law, and my specialty was learning how to form corporations.

And I've done a lot of that since.

Dr. James Dobson: Huh? Well, tell me about Dede. When did you get married? How did you meet her and tell me about your life together?

Pat Robertson: Well, while I was in law school, they had a nursing school at Yale and they had a mixer over in the law school. I went over there to see how these girls were doing and she was trying to get away from this guy and she went over to the punch bowl to try to get away from him. When she did, she got close to the candles and her hair caught on fire. And I showed up, Sir Galahad, and put the fire out of her hair. And of course her wonderful thing, she said, "He put the fire out of my hair and he started a fire in my heart." And so from then on, we got married not too long after that.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let's talk about the *700 Club*. How did that come about?

Pat Robertson: I was praying. I came down to Virginia and I bought this little old TV station. My first year, I think our total income was \$8,000 and the second year it was \$20,000. And we were struggling. I mean, I had almost nothing. And it was so a great temptation to walk out of the thing, but I was saying, "God, what do you want me to do?" And I've been reading a book about a man named Charles Mueller. You remember the one over in England that had those orphans?

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Pat Robertson: And he never asked anybody anything. He never solicited money. He always trusted the Lord. So I thought I will do the same thing. And as I was praying, God basically said to me, "I didn't call you to be George Mueller. I called you to broadcast to the world."

And I said, "Okay, Lord." So I said, "Our total need is for 700 people to give \$10 a month so that'd be \$7,000." And I said, "That will take care of our budget. So I started something called the *700 Club*, and we had a telethon, and our first year we got 300 people to give \$10 a month," and it wasn't exactly what we needed, but about the third year of doing that, God moved in a tremendous revival. He shook the area we were living in. It was unbelievable what God did and people were being healed and one woman said, "I'm walking softly in my home because of the power of God coming through the radio station."

It was just a fabulous time, and that was the *700 Club*. And so a couple of years later, we did the same thing and God moved again. And so I thought, "Well, we'll call a program the *700 Club* because it sounds like 007, it sounds like something kind of interesting," and that that's how it started, 700 people to give \$10 a month.

Dr. James Dobson: You knew then that God's hand was on you, didn't you?

Pat Robertson: I did. I did. But I tell you, a lot of times you're just young. You have to test God and God tests you and you always question, "Am I doing the right thing? Have I got it right?"

Really when you're just starting out, you're not sure, but later on, I know for sure a lot of things, but in those days, the Lord was just teaching me little by little by little. This book I've written called *I Walk With a Living God*, God has come out of the pages of the Bible and he's been real to me step by step by step I've seen His hand.

Dr. James Dobson: This is a book of stories about your life and they're really interesting. If I can share my own experience, I was at USC School of Medicine and I felt like God wanted me to leave there and start a radio program. And we started with nothing or very little. I got a grant from Tyndale House in exchange for a book that turned out to be *The Strong-Willed Child*, and they gave me \$35,000 to start the ministry with, and two years later, I had run out of money.

If all of the bills had come in, we would've been \$30,000 in debt. And so one day, a friend of mine knocked on the door and he's a godly man and I invited him to come in. My mother was there and my wife, and we went into the bedroom and got on our knees and I said, "Lord, I thought that this is what you wanted me to do. I thought, I felt you're leading and we have gone on that basis, but if I did hear you right, this would be a good time to hear from you." That was in October. And in November, \$60,000 came in and from there, the Lord had just revealed Himself in so many ways. I couldn't miss it. It's wonderful when that happens, isn't it?

Pat Robertson: Well, this is so amazing parallel to what I've seen, because I got down here and I was living on faith and I was going to trust God. Somehow along the way, a man came to me and he said, "Okay, I want to help you a little bit." And the next thing I know, I had run up about, oh, I think \$15,000 in debt or something like that. And I said, "I can't do this to the Lord." And I said, "God, there's a particular day. If I don't hear from you, I'm going to consider that you didn't want me to do this, and I'll pack it in and whatever's here in this television thing, I'll sell and try to liquidate these debts and quit." A friend I'd known in New York came down to Virginia and I didn't know anything about it and he didn't know that I needed the money. And he came into my living room and before another thing happened, he said, "God has sent me down from New York." He said, "I want to give you something."

So he handed me a check and it looked like 80. And I thought, "Well, it's \$80. That's kind of sweet, but it won't meet my need." And I looked on it. It was 8000. It was \$8,000.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Pat Robertson: And it paid the bills, and it was, honestly, it was God. The night before I was going to close it all down, God heard and sent it. It's just exactly what you were talking about. Isn't it amazing how these things parallel each other?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Well, I think the Lord has to let you know that He's the source of your strength, that you think you can do it on your own. You have a whole different perspective on who runs it and he lets you struggle. He just does. People think when you're Christian, everything just goes swimmingly. But yeah, he lets you go through some difficult times and you learn from that.

Pat Robertson: That's right. Well, it is that whole idea of the chicken and the egg. If that chicken doesn't peck on that egg, the little chick, he doesn't get strong enough to live. If you try to help him and crack that shell open, he dies. He can't live. And there was a time I had to trust him for \$1000 and now I have to believe him for several hundred million. And I'm used to it. I can believe God for all kinds of things now.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, he has blessed you in everything that you've done. The title of your book is, *I Have Walked With the Living God*.

Pat Robertson: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, we're out of time, but if you don't mind, I'd like to just continue to talk to you and we'll let people hear this next time.

Pat Robertson: Okay. That'll be fine.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. It's a pleasure to have you on. I have respect for you and we want to talk about your presidential run and other things, so stay tight.

Pat Robertson: All right, I'll be here. All right.

Roger Marsh: Well that was the late Pat Robertson and our own Dr. James Dobson here on the special edition of Family Talk. Praise God that Marian Gordon "Pat" Robertson is home in Heaven, reunited with his wife Dede. Be sure to tune in tomorrow for part two of this conversation where Dr. and Pat Robertson will be discussing Pat's book, *I Have Walked With the Living God*, and also more memories of his life. Of course, if you missed any part of today's program, remember you can go back and listen to it on our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Now, if you enjoy Family Talk and have been blessed by our ministry or if you'd like to

bles others, please consider supporting us with a financial contribution here at the end of our fiscal year. The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is listener supported and it's because of you and your generosity that we are able to provide quality content and resources each and every day.

During this month of June, thanks to some special friends of the ministry, we have a matching grant in place. So for each and every dollar we receive, it will automatically be doubled for twice the impact. Now the grant only goes up to \$300,000, so why not consider a gift today to double your contribution? You can do so online at drjamesdobson.org. It's absolutely secure when you donate online at drjamesdobson.org or you can make your contribution over the phone, 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. I'm Roger Marsh and from all of us here at the JDFI, thank you for your prayers and your support. Have a blessed day.

Announcer:

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