



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Turn Your Season Around – Part 2

Guest(s): Darryl Strawberry

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Dr. 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. Clinton: Well, hello everyone, this is Dr. Tim Clinton, executive director of the James Dobson Family Institute and you're tuned into Family Talk. Joining us again today on day two is our special guest baseball Hall of Famer, Darryl Strawberry. Darryl's a baseball legend and his many accomplishments in the Major Leagues include four World Series titles, eight all-star game appearances, and a nomination to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Though Darryl was extremely successful in his career, his personal life was also plagued with addictions, abuse, divorces, cancer, jail time, and other issues. Darryl, however, finally found true redemption and restoration in Jesus Christ. He began sharing that with us yesterday. Today Darryl's purpose and passion are serving the Lord Jesus Christ by traveling the country and speaking a message of hope and restoration through the power of the gospel.

Darryl is the author of numerous books, including the New York Times bestseller *Straw: Finding My Way* and *The Imperfect Marriage: Help for Those Who Think It's Over*, which he wrote with his wife Tracy. His newest book, *Turn Your Season Around: How God Transforms Your Life* is the topic for our conversation today. In 2011, Darryl and his wife Tracy founded Strawberry Ministries and they use their global reach to restore the multitudes through spiritual and practical life applications. Darryl, welcome back.

Darryl Strawberry: All right, well, thanks for having me Dr. Tim, I appreciate it.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl again, your new book, *Turn Your Season Around: How God Transforms Your Life*, our friend Greg Laurie wrote the foreword to it. You've got some amazing endorsements on here: Mariano Rivera, Albert Pujols, Jack Graham our friend, Miles McPherson, others. Darryl in this book, your real effort, your real message is a message of hope Darryl. I think it really just embodies your life. You

again, storybook career, had a real period of darkness. I think a lot of people, Darryl, did a lot of people give up on you?

Darryl Strawberry: Yeah, I think so. A lot of people did give up on me because of the fact they think because you have everything from an earthly standpoint, you shouldn't have problems. And I think we never look at people's real lives and know where they come from and we just assume they should be well because you reached stardom, the top which they call it. But they don't understand when you at the top it's very lonely because everybody just really want to be around you because of what you have. And I'm glad everybody gave up on me because when I didn't have nothing and I was \$3 million in debt and didn't have a driver's license, guess who came? Jesus, the greatest gift that one could ever... Dr. Tim, I received the greatest gift that I ever had in life.

And I had a lot, I had a lot of stuff and a lot of success, but to receive Jesus and to receive a new life, it just doesn't get any better than that. And I think people look today and they just shake their head and they just don't understand. They don't know who I am. They're just like, "He's so far different than he ever was when he was successful and playing. And the conversations that he has now is so far different than you can ever imagine."

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, let's go back to finding our way, turning our season around. We talked yesterday in the program a little bit about grace. It's at the heart of this whole change process until you grasp how much God loves you and that He's there for you and that it's all about Him. It's not about you. Darryl, that's the foundation out of which we get started, right?

Darryl Strawberry: That is the key right there. The key is for so many of us, because society makes you believe you're all that, and that's the problem. It puts you on a pedestal where it makes you believe you can't fall and nothing will never happen because you have so much. I think you see the rich get richer and they get themselves in so much more mess. And they wonder how do I end up in some of these situations that I never was supposed to be in? Well, it's because of the emptiness on the inside of us. Like I said before: all of us have this real emptiness on the inside of us, and nobody could fill that place but God Himself. And I just encourage people, if you let God fill that place on the inside of you, you won't need all this extra stuff.

You'll realize that it's not important. It looks good for the moment but at the same time, when you still walk home and walk through that door... Like I used to and living in a \$2 million home, you still empty on the inside, something just ain't right. It's like, "Why am I still searching? Why am I still chasing?" Today in my life. I don't chase. I have a beautiful wife. I have beautiful kids. We live in a suburb of Missouri, a simple life, no fancy lifestyle and stuff like that. My life is blessed. We go to a small church out in Troy, Missouri where people are hurting and we just get to help people and love on people and help people mend their life back together, man, that's what it's all about.

That's what turn your season is all about, it's being able to turn that around in your life, God did it for me. Why wouldn't He do it for you if He did it for me? But I think the key is you are going to have to surrender. You're going to have to surrender you to get God's good. God's goods are better than earthly goods.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl. It's amazing what we actually give our heart and our time to, I saw the modern day definition of the word tragedy and here it was, being successful at the things that really don't matter.

Darryl Strawberry: Yes. That's why I encourage people to read the Bible. Because if you read the Bible for yourself, not for someone preaching to you. Yeah, you got to have a pastor leading you and you got to follow the lead and everything, but you got to pick it up and read it for yourself. Because if you read it for yourself, God's going to give you the revelation of who you are. It's the blueprint of every person's life. He's mapped it out way before we were here. And way after we're gone, He's going to be mapping it out for more people. And those that pick it up for themselves and read it. They will have the revelation of Jesus Christ Himself. He is so amazing when you have the revelation of Jesus, and when you read the Bible and then you start understanding Jesus, He's speaking revelation to you. Revelation of who He is and what He will do for you if you just follow Him, that's what He does. He tells us to follow Him.

He doesn't tell you, "I'm going to give you this. I'm going to give you..." He says, "Follow me." He has something for you when you truly follow Him. And I thank God for it. I thank God for my wife, she's the reason, and my mother, is the reason why I follow Jesus like I do now because they followed Jesus, and I saw them follow Jesus. And I saw their joy and their happiness about who Jesus was and I wanted that, and I finally got that because I started following Him.

Dr. Clinton: I can't wait by the way, Darryl to give a copy of this to my son, Zach, you know Zach and he's going to love this. Darryl the second thing you talk about in here, there's so many nuggets in here to latch on to, but Darryl, you talk about redefining your identity. For most people involved in sports or work or whatever, their identity is based on what they do and what others think of them. Daryl, they get lost in that. Their identity is baseball. No, baseball is something they get to do, who they are is different. Daryl, tell us what really came front and center for you in your heart and mind here.

Darryl Strawberry: Well, what can come front and center to me was who I was as a baseball player, either you liked me or you didn't. So you were going to criticize me on who I was as a person because you didn't even know me. You just criticized me because I played baseball and I had these problems. So you really didn't know me and that just shows you about people. They define you on what you do instead of who you are. They have no idea who you are. See, they see me today and it's like, "He's all about God. He's turned into this totally different person." I'm super glad that I've turned into this totally different person because now I've truly found peace inside of myself. Because at the end of the day, Dr. Tim, this is what really all of us are trying to do.

We're trying to find the peace, what's inside of ourself and we search for so many other things to try to make this piece come. And we miss it so much because we fill it with all the wrong things. We want a new car, want a new house, want a new girl, want the new this, want the new that. We try to fill it with all these different things and what really happened is my identity was completely wrong. It was a baseball uniform and it was just a baseball player, not a man. See, I didn't become a man until I met Jesus. That's when I became a man because He's a man but He teaches us how to be that man just like He is by obeying Him and following Him. It doesn't mean you're going to be perfect. I'm not talking about being perfect. We all going to have some shortcomings, but I do know one thing: I follow Jesus because I know he's a man and I want to be that man.

The Father says, "Follow my Son, my Son knows my ways. And He operates in my ways and He's going to show you how to live this life according to these principles, if you follow Him." That's why it's so important for us to know who we are in Christ. Because when you know who you are in Christ, you follow Him. Now you live according to different standards. You don't live for the earthly things, you live for the things of the kingdom because you know all about the kingdom of God.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, another piece you write about is renewing your mind. I don't know if you remember this, but you and I sat together one time in an IHOP in Tampa and talked about what it was like for you. How difficult it was when you didn't hear the roar of the crowd anymore, that your identity was lost and your mind started spinning. And all that stinking thinking, that battlefield for the mind, Darryl, it's a brutal walk that you've got to get yourself through.

Darryl Strawberry: It is. It's a very difficult challenge that we all have to get through because so many people have told us so many things about ourself and we believe so many different things. But at the end of the day, who am I? And it has to be renewed. It has to be renewed, Romans 12:2, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." It has to be renewed, and what renews it? It is the word. It is the word that renews it, it washes out every darkness, sickness, filthy thought or whatever it may be. It washes it and it cleanses it outside of you. And if you allow it to you, if you allow yourself to be clean and sit with the Holy Spirit and be quiet and turn your thought process off, you will hear him speak.

He speaks clear. God's a gentlemen, He doesn't force us. He'll use the Holy Spirit that will allow you to know that, "You're not supposed to talk like that. You're not supposed to act like that." But if you allow the flesh to rule and reign over you, you'd do it anyway. So the battles between us and the flesh, do I let the flesh operate over me or do I let the spirit man operates over me? So I control the flesh by telling the flesh to shut up because the flesh is stupid because the flesh is always going to get you in trouble. But the Spirit, man, will never get you in trouble, He will always lead you the right way. And you got to know these

things, if you don't know these things then you're going to always be butting heads, and you're going to always be struggling to get to that next place.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl as we press in to Him and acknowledge His presence in our life. When we're able to, "remove the distractions," and really bring ourselves into that place where we're able to pray. The apostle Paul taught in Philippians 4:8, "Then whatsoever things are true, lovely, noble, good report," and more, "think on those things." Get rid of all that garbage thinking. And like you said in Romans 12:1,2, transform your mind by the renewing of your mind. It's a tough thing to do, but Darryl, you've got to get in there. And the only way you can do that is you've got to anchor yourself in the word of God. And you've got to be around people who actually speak truth into your life too, don't you?

Darryl Strawberry: No question.

Dr. Clinton: That's why you need a good coach. You need a good mentor in your life.

Darryl Strawberry: Well, no question, but the thing, the most important thing Dr. Tim is we got to be disciplined. And I think that's what a lot of Christians are not, they're not disciplined, they're always agitated or always need more. Be satisfied in what today brings you and keep rising up and doing something to help somebody else. I think that's where so many of us get to our place, where we are unsatisfied with our own self and we have to learn how to live with ourself. It's not the circumstances around us, it's about me living in the circumstances. And when I learn to live in the circumstances and learn to be okay with it, and learn that God has something far greater for me than I ever achieved from an earthly standpoint. See, I know this now, and I think that's where so many Christians go wrong.

They think the earthly things are things that are important. What has He always said? Bible says, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but not my word." So basically is what He's telling me, He's telling me, "I got something far greater on the other side in the kingdom than you will ever achieve here from an earthly standpoint." And when I got that I was no longer living for none of this. I was living for the afterlife or next life when that comes, so that means I get into action, I get into who God's created me to be. He has created us to be lovers of Jesus that love people. We say we love Jesus and don't love people then you don't love Jesus, because Jesus loved people. And I think that's where so many of us might end up going wrong. And so many of us young pastors and leaders and stuff, found a new way of getting in pulpits and trying to brand themselves. Jesus is the greatest brand you will ever meet, what do you want to brand yourself for? You're nothing without Him.

And when you can think like that and understand that, then you will never have this ego problem, you'll never think about yourself so highly. And this is why so many run into traps and holes because the devil is always planning. See I've been in the devil pit, but see when God removed me out of this pit, I never went back to his pit because I know how the devil acts and I know his plan. His plan is

real. He's come like Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief does not come except to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly." And they don't understand abundant life. The abundant life is not fame, it's not fortune, it's not being a celebrity. You don't want to be no celebrity when you're called to preach the gospel, that's not what you want to be. You want to be a man of faith. You want to be a man of principle and you want to honor God in everything that you do when you step into his pulpit for Him to help somebody else find salvation.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, you also teach about revealing your scars. I think in our culture, our society, we spend a lot of money trying to cover everything up and fix everything Darryl. But Darryl, you push the other way. You say, "You know what? Those scars are... They're important. And they're significant to people around you."

Darryl Strawberry: They are, they truly are. They're very important for people to know that just because you're this way now, you didn't live a perfect life. Because people try to pretend like they get to a place where, "I have it all together." Why are we so afraid to show our scars and Jesus showed everybody his scars on the cross? I don't get it. I just don't get it. Why are we so afraid? This man went to the cross and showed every wound, every scar that he had for us. And here it is, we as people we're sitting here and we're afraid to show you our scars and wounds because you know what? I'm not afraid to show Him because guess what? Jesus healed them. This is the problem that people don't understand. If you show your wounds and scars publicly, Jesus can heal you publicly, behind the scene, it don't matter where it's at. You have to understand that He's the healer of all things.

And if we can get that for people to understand that that is not who you are because you've got scars and wounds, but He had scars and wounds too, but they were for you. And I think most people don't realize that He carried it to the cross. And I don't know why we sit here and worry about all these things because He's already done it for you. All you have to do is enter in and believe it. And if you can believe what he's done for you, now you can have this real revelation and you can be able to show your wounds and scars to somebody else so somebody else can get well.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, they say when you've been forgiven much, you look at life and others differently. You want to forgive others. You talk about releasing God's grace in your book. In other words, extending the same thing that God's given to you to others. I see that in you Darryl a lot. I see that when you embrace men, God's got you traveling all over the country. He's expanded your ministry tenfold. It's unbelievable. And the response to God in and through your heart and your messages, it's just exciting to see the power of God fall. But Darryl, when you talk about releasing God's grace and you speak to all of us, what are you trying to challenge us to do?

Darryl Strawberry: Well, I'm trying to challenge all people to understand that the grace that was given to us, we have to give it back to others. It doesn't matter what they've done to you or what they've said about you. It's just part of the reality that God brings to us is being able to give it back to somebody else, even if they struggle, they've been through something, and we should never point our fingers at them. I was a laughing stock. Most people pointed their fingers at me and I realized that I never wanted to be that way to other people. When I realized that God had given me something that I didn't deserve, I needed to make sure I give that to other people along the way. And that's why I have such compassion and love and understanding and sympathy for people.

Because I was a person where I was broken and I was lost and everybody was laughing, and Jesus came along and he just picked me up and he lifted me up, and through a whole process He turned me around and He gave me hope. And that's what He calls us for, to give the grace back so we can go back and give somebody else hope to show them that He's merciful for whatever you've been through. When we understand that, then we can live the abundant life He talks about. That's the abundant life He talks about when people learn how to give grace that's been given to them.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, let's go back to the story of your dad for a moment. We'll go back to the Betty Ford Clinic episode, where your dad comes to visit you. And it was a painful moment for you, but tell the rest of the story about your dad, how God eventually worked in and through both of you.

Darryl Strawberry: That was a painful moment. It was a time that I never had a relationship with him throughout my whole baseball career and he got to see me from far away. And he came to games, I let him come to games and stuff like that, but there was never a personal relationship, a dad hug, "How proud I am of you." It was just, "How you doing?" Take a picture, just say a few things, but the relationship was broken because there was no forgiveness there. I was hurt because, "Well, you rejected us as kids and rejected my mother and she raised five and was by herself and I saw the struggles she went through." And I ended up in a life that just spiraled down, out of control with drugs and arrests all kind of sorts of things that happened to me. "You were never there for me." And then eventually God would stop me after He changed me over the years and stuff like that, it didn't happen immediately. But He would stop me on a Saturday morning at a men's breakfast in California. My father was in a hospital in San Diego.

My brother had told me he was down there and then God just came all over me and started saying, "Go to the hospital and see your father." It was like, "Really." And I told my wife, He was all over me on a Friday night. And I called her and had her pray for me because I couldn't sleep. He just kept pulling at me, she said, "Well, you need to go if He's pulling at you." And I go down there Sunday and I see him in the hospital and God sends me down there to repent to him, "Don't talk about what he did to you. You repent to him and ask him to forgive you for keeping him out of your life." And I struggled with that, but I obeyed

God and I did it. And I went down there and I looked at my father. And I said, "I'm here to see you," I said, "good to see you."

And I said, "You know God's changed my life and I just needed to ask you to forgive me." I didn't say anything about what he did to me. I said, "I need to ask to forgive me for keeping you out of my life. Will you forgive me?" A tear came out of his eye and he said, "Yes." Shaking his head. And I lost it. I just laid in his lap and I just cried. I laid there and cried. God said, "Lead him in the sinner's prayer." The man that rejected me and beat me and I'm leading him to the Lord. And I led him to the Lord. And then a few months later he would go on and pass away. And I just remember leaving that hospital that day when the Lord reminded me, "You need to understand it's never about you. It's about what I want to do through you."

And so many of us miss that because He want to do it through us. We're too selfish to say, "Well, I forgive you. Forgive what you've done to me." We hold people hostage. But you know what happens, we hold ourself in that place. And that's what happened to me for so many years, I held myself in that place and God said, "That's why you never had the freedom. And that's why you never been able to experience me to the fullness because you would never forgive."

Dr. Clinton: They say Darryl that we often act out what we haven't worked out. And it comes out-

Darryl Strawberry: That's good.

Dr. Clinton: ... all over the place, you know that? Darryl, as you look to the future here, you've got your ministry, God's got you speaking all over the country, around the world. You're speaking to all audiences. We've got you speaking in counseling conferences, but you speak a lot to men. Darryl, what do you want to see happen in the hearts of men in particular?

Darryl Strawberry: I want to see men repent and come back to God. Don't be afraid. He's not mad. Don't be ashamed. Do it. Lay on your face with God. I think we hesitate so much because we get consumed that we want all these earthly things to satisfy us and they will never satisfy us. And that's it. And I think what men need to understand, you got to be able to stand without people liking you or not. You're going to take some heat. I've taken a lot of heat but you know what? I'm standing because I stand with Christ. I don't stand with man. I stand with Christ and he's created inside of me this safety confidence in myself that you don't need everybody in your life. See, everybody think they need everybody in their life, but you do not need everybody in your life.

You only need a few people in your life and you need the right people in your life, and you need to do the right thing, you need to have the right friends. And I have that and I'm grateful for that. And I'm grateful that I stand who I am and people that have come against me and I took a lot of heat, but so what I don't

care. I'm never going to change. I'm not a follower, I'm a leader because I follow God Himself.

Dr. Clinton: Darryl, let's close this way. And it's the way you closed out your book, *Turn Your Season Around*. Every time I encounter you, you got a smile on your face. I love talking to Darryl Strawberry, he's one of my favorites. But Darryl, you closed out the book this way, "Rejoice, always." I really think that's your life's motto. What's this joy that just flows out of you now?

Darryl Strawberry: It's rejoicing because life is short. You go through seasons and you go through different storms that will come along. Either you in a storm or a storm is on the way or you coming out of a storm. It's a part of what we all deal with and when you learn how to balance that, and you learn how to stay and you learn how to be still, that's Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I'm God." See we won't be still and know that He God, we want to be busy and trying to make things and create things to happen instead of being still and knowing that He's God and that He's making a way. And that song, Michael W. Smith - Way Maker, He's a way Maker. He's making a way out of no way, behind the scenes, even when you don't see Him working, He's working it out.

And this is what my heart is for guys, they need to understand that. Stop worrying about what somebody else is thinking and go get your Jesus fix, so you can get on and get this joy and get this happiness in your life and be liberated and redeemed and set free forever. That's the key right there, so many of us trying to be people pleasers instead of pleasing God.

Dr. Clinton: Well, Darryl, He's obviously working in and through you and I can't wait to see what's ahead for Darryl Strawberry. Thank you for joining us.

Darryl Strawberry: Thank you for having me Dr. Tim, always a pleasure.

Roger Marsh: Get connected with the work of Darryl Strawberry and his ministry by going to drjamesdobson.org. That's D-R- jamesdobson.org and then click on today's broadcast page. Once you're there, you can also see how to order a copy of Darryl's new book called *Turn Your Season Around*, which is just available even today. Or if you'd like to revisit this entire two-part interview again later, request a polished broadcast CD. You'll find the information on how you can do so when you visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org. That's D-R, jamesdobson.org. This is Roger Marsh. Please know how much we appreciate you listening in for this edition of Family Talk. Be sure to tune in again tomorrow for more enlightening and God honoring content for you and your family. Until next time, have a blessed day everyone.

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