



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Dr. Ed Young Interviews Dr. James Dobson

**Guest(s):** Dr. Ed Young

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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.
- Roger Marsh: Well, hello everyone. I'm Roger Marsh. And from all of us here at the James Dobson Family Institute, Happy New Year. I hope you're relaxing today and enjoying time with friends and family. We are so grateful you've joined us again as we start yet another year of broadcast. This ministry would not exist without your help, so please know how thankful we are for your prayers and your financial support. As you set your sights on giving in 2021, please be sure to keep us in mind. Visit [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) to learn how you can stand with us for another year of encouraging families.
- Roger Marsh: Now all last month, we brought you some of our best broadcasts of 2020. And to wrap up this week, we're going to play one last program from that collection. A few years ago, Dr. Dobson was invited to speak at Second Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. The church's pastor, Dr. Ed Young has been a dear friend of the Dobsons for many, many years. During a Sunday morning service, Pastor Young interviewed Dr. Dobson about the important role of dads. They also discussed Dr. Dobson's upbringing and emphasized a few career highlights as well.
- Roger Marsh: Now, before we replay that touching conversation, let me remind you of our guest interviewer, Dr. Ed Young. In addition to being a pastor, he hosts his own radio and TV ministry called The Winning Walk. Dr. Young is also a bestselling author and previously served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. With that said, let's go back now and hear Pastor Ed Young's interview with Dr. James Dobson on this special edition of Family Talk.
- Dr. Ed Young: Dr. Dobson, your wife's maiden name interests me. She was Shirley Dear before you got married. Have you had any problems with that name?
- Dr. Dobson: She has, I can tell you. It's so good to have her with me today. I'm pleased that she could join me. We've been married for 58 years.
- Dr. Ed Young: Strong marriage.

Dr. Dobson: We think it's going to work. And it's not a perfect marriage, it really is not a perfect marriage, but it's a good marriage, but it's not perfect because Shirley's not perfect.

Dr. Ed Young: I understand.

Dr. Dobson: Can I tell you a story about her?

Dr. Ed Young: Sure.

Dr. Dobson: As a place to start?

Dr. Ed Young: Sure.

Dr. Dobson: Shirley is a very feisty lady. You wouldn't know that just meeting her, but she's a lot like her mother and we were flying along on a plane one day and there's a console between us and she ordered tomato juice and put it on the console. And I didn't know it was there and I was working on the computer or something and I hit it with my elbow and it went off and landed, half of it went on her lap and she was wearing a white suit. For some reason, I thought that was funny. And I was laughing with my eyes shut and she poured the other half of it in my lap. That is my Shirley.

Dr. Ed Young: Tell me, you were in academia for so long there, 14, 17 years. What led you to leave an atmosphere that you knew and loved and to move into another pursuit? What was behind all of that?

Dr. Dobson: It's really interesting, Pastor, because I loved academia. I love research. I love the medical community and the influence that it has, and I could easily have been happy there the rest of my life, but I saw something happening in the culture. I saw the family starting to unravel, the institution of the family. And I felt so strongly about it that I really thought I ought to resign and do what I could to try to help because I'm not a prophet, but I saw today's world in what was taking place in 1977. And I just felt like that God was calling me to another world. So I was on two different tracks and the Lord really put his hand on my back and led me, I think, into a family ministry. And I started a little two room office, called it Focus on the Family, and I was there 33 years before I left to start Family Talk.

Dr. Ed Young: What led you, not only to get there, but how did you have a Christian background? You were in a scientific world, intellectual world, and medical world. What is your Christian background? What is your home? And with Fathers' Day, tell me maybe about your dad. What was the influence there?

Dr. Dobson: Well, that's where it started. My dad was a very godly man. He was six foot, four inches tall. He was my hero. My first memory of him, I was thinking about this this morning, my first memory he had to remind me of, but when he did, I

recalled it, even though I was only two years old. We started off in a very humble circumstance, very small church. And we lived in a two room or one room, really, one bedroom, apartment above a garage. And there was no room for my crib and they had to put it in the parents' bedroom, my parents' bedroom.

Dr. Dobson: So my dad said later that it was not unusual in the middle of the night, when all was still, they hear a little voice say, "Daddy, Daddy." And he would say, "What, Jimmy?" And I would say, "Hold my hand." And he would reach within the darkness back and forth to find my little hand. And he said that when he grasped it with his big hand, my arm would become limp and my breathing deep and regular. And it's obvious that I had gone back to sleep and he only wanted to know that I was there. And that characterizes the relationship we had.

Dr. Ed Young: So your dad began to build the right stuff in your life from the very, very beginning we hear about, we used to hear that was a good dad. What is a good dad? And what all does it take?

Dr. Dobson: Well, my dad is a good model of it. He hunted and fished with me. One of my happiest memories is waking up at 5:00 in the morning, putting on hunting clothes and hunting boots, going out to the car, it's still dark, driving 20 miles outside of town and stopping at a place that was called the big woods because the trees looked so big to me. We followed a little creek along the pathway and he was different out there. He was totally focused on me and he taught me a lot about being a man just by being with him. And I look back on those days as just being foundational. It made me want to be like him and made me wanted his God for my God, his values for my values. And I can't tell you what impact that had on me through the years.

Dr. Ed Young: So many times I've said, as we talked about marriage as a family, that children spell love time. I thought that was original. I got it from you. I got it from you.

Dr. Dobson: Time, talk, and touch. That's what a family needs.

Dr. Ed Young: Time, talk, and touch.

Dr. Dobson: Yeah.

Dr. Ed Young: Boys and girls, any difference in bringing up a girl than a boy? What's the difference? The same.

Dr. Dobson: You know what? I appreciate that question because we're hearing some absolutely ridiculous stuff from the popular culture today. I mean, it is breathtaking that it's so foolish. It's saying that there's really no genetic differences between males and females. Gender's a matter of choice. And they're telling kids as young as five or six or seven, "You want to be a boy? That's fine. You want to be a girl. You can be. You can change. It's all a matter of

choice." It's ridiculous. When a boy is in utero, he is bombarded by testosterone and it changes his entire brain. The structure of it is different. A girl is bombarded by estrogen. And from that point on, they will be incredibly different and the way fathers relate to boys is different from the way they relate to girls.

Dr. Dobson: It's important for dads here to know that it was between the two, because a boy is born not knowing how to be a man. He has to learn that. He has to see it modeled. And he is totally bonded to his mother for the first 18 months. She is everything to him and will always play a role in his life. When a soldier falls on a battlefield and he's dying, often, often the one word that he utters is mother. She has played such a role. But it has to change. And about 18 months of age, a boy begins to pull back from his mother and to bond with and reattach to his father. And that's where sexual identity, his masculine behavior comes from what I talked about, what my dad taught to me in the woods needs to take place.

Dr. Dobson: For single mothers who are here, you are not equipped to teach your boy to be a boy or a man. It really requires a man who has been there and done that. I hope that doesn't insult anybody, but that's the way it is.

Dr. Ed Young: A surrogate needs to come in, so a male image in the life of a boy.

Dr. Dobson: If it's not a father, you need a male role model. When I was in the ninth grade, we had a coach. I haven't seen him since then, but a wonderful coach who was teaching us how to be boys. And I remember one day we were all sitting. A whole class of us was sitting in the stands at a basketball court and a pretty girl walked by and she was wearing a sweater and you know how guys will respond. And we were all hooting and hollering and yelling and calling to her and whistling and everything. He jumped down our throats. He said, "Listen to me, you will not act like that. You're making fools of yourself. Don't you know that a woman needs to be treated with respect? Don't you know that she needs to be talked to in a civil way? What's all this yelling and hooting?"

Dr. Dobson: And I, we were shamed. We kind of slunk back into the benches there. But what he was doing was teaching us to be a man. That's what ought to occur in the childhood. So between 18 months and five years of age, that detachment and reattachment needs to take place and mothers who are here need to know it. It's very hard for a mother to let go, because as he is everything to her, she is everything to him. And he sees this movement that this child is moving toward the father that has to happen. And a lot of the confusion in sexual identity today in adults is because that transformation didn't take place.

Dr. Ed Young: The father to the son, but the father to the daughter also?

Dr. Dobson: Different game. A girl is also bonded to her mother and will be for the rest of her life. That will not change, but a girl needs something from her father that

the boys typically don't look for. She needs affirmation. She needs that kind of love. She needs appreciation. She needs somebody to tell her that she's pretty. Her self-esteem hangs precariously on a relationship with her father. He's the first male to tell her. He's the first male to kiss her, the first one to tell her that she's his little girl. And if that doesn't occur, then there is a vacuum within her. If she doesn't have that sense of identity and that love and that affection from her dad, she may find it in somebody who has motives that are not so pure. It's really important that the dad be the daddy to that little girl in a different way. And you know, what's really ... I'm rattling on here is it okay?

Dr. Ed Young: That's perfect. We like it.

Dr. Dobson: Something unusual happens when a girl goes into puberty. This is not always true, but fathers often get nervous about the development and if they hug their daughters, they lean backwards. I call it the leaning tower of Pisa. They don't want to do anything inappropriate. And so they are very cautious and they quit touching their daughters. They quit hugging them at a time when they're most insecure and need to know that they are worthy as a woman, they're worthy as a girl. And I urge fathers at that time, hug your daughters and tell them that you love them, continue. She looks over at the boy and he's wrestling with his dad and he's physical with him and the daughter feels something's missing in the competition for dad's attention.

Dr. Dobson: The girl is third. The mother, the wife, has to be number one for his attention. And the boy is second in line because everybody knows that fathers need to be there for their boys and boys need their dads. Many fathers don't know is in a different way those girls need their dads every bit as much and maybe more. And when it is missing, there's a certain kind of agony. I learned more about this from watching girls than I did in textbooks. But we had an institute for college students who were in their junior and senior years. And there were about 40 girls there, just on the edge of womanhood. And I invited those 40 girls to have lunch with me when we were in the board room and I brought them in, we served them a good lunch.

Dr. Dobson: Then I said, "Let me tell you why you're here. I'm writing a book called Bringing Up Girls." I also wrote Bringing Up Boys. This one was about bringing up girls. And I said, "I want you to help me write this. I want you to tell me what I need to know about the female experience. I want you to tell me what you're thinking." They made a beeline for their fathers. They didn't say much about their mothers because that relationship is established and not threatened, but they began talking about their dads. They were not angry at them. And they were not bitter. But they were hurt. And they began talking about the fact that "Sometimes I think my dad doesn't even see me. Sometimes I think he does not know what I care about." They said, "We have come to this institute and my father didn't even ask where I was going or what I was doing."

Dr. Dobson: And there's a longing. Then they started telling stories. This went all the way around the room and they were all crying. The entire room. About two thirds of those girls told me stories on that day about their dad about-

Dr. Ed Young: Illustration. What would be a story?

Dr. Dobson: One of them talked about the fact that her dad never affirmed her, never told her that she was pretty. And they were in the car on a trip. They were going to the beach and they were in the car and she was in the back seat. She took her shoe off and put her foot on the console between them and her father looked down at her foot and he touched her foot with his hand and he said, "Honey, you have such beautiful feet." He'd never said anything like that. And she cried who would understand that? Except there was a need there that she had met.

Dr. Dobson: And there was a girl who talked about the fact that her dad would come down in the morning and whatever she was eating, he would say, "Do you know where that's going to go? That's going to go right to your hips and your legs." Comments like that. He would, he would put his arm around her and kind of squeeze the fat a little bit. It wounded her. It hurt her. And there were so ... One girl told me about her father being an NCAA football coach. And he was so busy that he had absolutely no time for her. And she said, "The only way I could be with them was walked the sidelines to get some time with him." And she said through her tears, there is no way to understand this, "How could he love those boys on his football team more than he loved me?"

Dr. Dobson: They were just stories. I wish we did record them. And I mentioned some of them in the book. But there were others, about a third of them, who had wonderful stories about their father. One of them talked about going to bed at night. There were about four or five kids and he would kneel down and talk to them and pray them and tuck them in. And how precious that was to them. Everybody wanted the Kleenex because the girls did not know that one another felt this way until I asked the right question. And there was also a girl I'll never forget. She said that she would wake up sometimes at 5:00 in the morning and see the light was on in the family room. And she would get out of bed and she would come in there and her father would be sitting in his big chair with a Bible on his lap.

Dr. Dobson: And when he saw her, he would, "Oh honey, I'm so glad you're awake. Would you come get on my lap? I want to show you something." And she would snuggled up with him. And he said, "You see that scripture? I wrote your name there. That's for you. I'm praying for you." And that relationship is not casual for a girl coming through her childhood years and adolescent years. And we decided for Fathers' Day one year to invite women, to call and talk about their relationship with their fathers and more than 600 called and we recorded them. And one was, she said her name was Kathy from Georgia. I'll never forget it.

Dr. Dobson: And she just talked about how, "Dad, I loved you so much. And I needed you so much, but somewhere along the line, I don't know where went wrong. But the

drugs and the prescriptions and the alcohol took its toll. And I could never reach you. I could never find you." And she said, "On Fathers' Day, I contacted my dad. I wrote him a loving note and said, it's not too late, Dad. It's never too late as long there's life." And then called. And the line was busy. It was busy all day. And she got on a plane and flew to Portland and found the letter in the mailbox and went in the house and her father was dead on the floor with the upturn phone beside him. She never had an opportunity to make that connection again. If it has not occurred, those of you who are your kids are older and they've had a bad relationship, it's not too late. They still need it.

Dr. Ed Young: These are two tremendous books. Folks. Dr. Dobson has unusual gifts of saying things medically, intellectually, a deep, profound truths, but he applies it. So here's one, Bringing Up Boys, Bringing Up Girls. He's had New York Times bestsellers. So you want to pick that up. It's well worth your time. Thank you, Dr. Dobson. My, my, my.

Roger Marsh: You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and today's broadcast featured Pastor Ed Young's interview with Dr. Dobson during a recent visit to Second Baptist Church in Houston. This was a heartfelt conversation between two good friends and it included tons of helpful wisdom for all of us. Now, due to time constraints, we weren't able to play all of Dr. Dobson's appearance at Second Baptist Church. However, there's good news. You can hear this full interview in its entirety with even more touching stories and honest advice. All you have to do is request a physical copy on CD. Visit today's broadcast page at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) and click onto the link that's marked order a CD. Click the order a CD button. You will be glad you did. You'll find it at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Roger Marsh: Well, that brings us to the end of our 2020 best of broadcast retrospective. I hope you enjoyed revisiting some of our most popular programs from the last calendar year. You can learn more about how you can support our ministry headed into 2021 when you visit us online at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). And now as we conclude today's program, I'd like you to join me in a word of prayer as we close out one year and head into another.

Roger Marsh: Heavenly Father, how grateful we are that you are faithful and you are true. Your word says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And in spite of one of the most turbulent years any of us can imagine, maybe even the most turbulent year ever, that year being 2020, please help us Lord to keep our eyes on your son Jesus Christ. We know in scripture that the apostle Peter was able to walk on water when he focused on Jesus, but when he took his eyes off of him, he would fall. Father, please help us as peacemakers in our nation, a nation so badly and bitterly divided. Please bring revival into our hearts and help us to understand that revival will only come when people get honest about who you are and who we are apart from you. Thank you, Father, for hearing our prayer. Thank you, Father, for healing our land. And thank you for blessing the ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute and others who seek to preserve biblical integrity throughout our nation. We ask all these things in the precious and powerful name of Jesus Christ, our savior and Lord. Amen.

Roger Marsh: I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening. Be sure to join us again Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Hope you have a blessed weekend and Happy New Year.

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