



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Redeemed: My Journey After Abortion

Guest(s): Toni McFadden

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Thank you for listening to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and the program you're about to hear was recorded in January 2022 at the National March for Life in Washington, DC. Enjoy.

Dr. James Dobson: Hello, everyone. This is Dr. James Dobson and welcome to Family Talk. Before we start the program today that we've scheduled, I have something very important to share with you. As you have been hearing, the United States Supreme Court is on the verge of issuing a ruling in the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*. It could strike down *Roe v. Wade* and return the abortion issue to the states and the people where it belonged in the first place. Let me make it clear. Despite what you've also heard, the United States Supreme Court will not outlaw abortion although the liberal media and the abortion industry have been claiming that it will. Depending on how the decision is ultimately written, it could give states the power to regulate the practice of abortion or even outlaw it all together in some states. That would be very good news indeed. So I want to ask the believers in our listening audience today to be in prayer about this life and death decision which is about to be handed down.

As we began today's program, which is an interview, my co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton did with a kind woman who had an abortion but through the grace of God found forgiveness. I ask you to pray also for these women who have had abortions. Some of you may be listening to me right now and you need to know that Jesus loves you and He forgives you no matter what decisions you made in the past. That's what you're going hear from our guest, Toni McFadden, today. It has a positive ending and you won't want to miss it. Here is Dr. Tim Clinton.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hello and welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and your co-host. We're here in Washington, DC with our JDPI, that's the James Dobson Family Institute broadcast team at the National Pro-Life Summit. Yesterday was the 48th annual March for Life held on the 49th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade*

decision. There are so many pro-life leaders here at the summit and I have one of those leaders joining me right now, Toni McFadden.

She's dedicated her life to being a voice for the voiceless. Her passion for pre-born babies comes out of her own abortion experience. In particular, Toni works to expose the lies of the abortion industry in order to prevent other women from choosing to abort their babies. Toni is also the founder of a program that she calls Relationships Matter. That organization urges teens to honor their future spouses and themselves by equipping them to walk in healthy relationships. She's a graduate of West Chester university. Toni earned her master's degree in biblical counseling from Clark Summit University. She's been married for over 11 years and is blessed with four children. Toni, thank you for joining us here on Family Talk.

Toni McFadden: Thank you so much for having me and I love James Dobson, I love the ministry. I've learned so much from your ministry and I'm so glad that I'm able to speak with you today.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, we're going to win this fight together, that's what it's all about. By the way, what an electric, encouraging event it's been this weekend here and you had an opportunity to speak. You said you stepped up to the microphone. That was quite an opportunity, wasn't it?

Toni McFadden: I think that I'm still taking it in. I just remember stepping up to the microphone and seeing a sea of people all the way to the Lincoln Memorial, taking a quick breath, and saying, "Okay. Lord, this is what you've called me to."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Toni, everybody has a story, things that weave together the tapestry of their lives. And often, the messy parts usually become our message in life. For you, you found yourself as a young teenage girl, 18, pregnant and that's a pretty dark place to be, isn't it? Especially, when you get the news and you feel all alone. You want to take us back there?

Toni McFadden: Yes. I actually remember writing out how I felt in my journal. I wouldn't say I was even a believer but I knew that God existed. I actually still have that journal and I said, "Dear God, I don't know what I'm going to do." I remember being in that place and telling my best friend and the first thing she said to me was, "You can't keep it." And then, we told my boyfriend and he said, "She doesn't want to keep it, does she?" and I thought abortion was my only way out. I didn't want to tell my family because I was known as the good one in my family so they would've never expected me to be in this situation. And when I look back now, I see the deception that was there from the abortion clinic just telling me, "We have everything set up. We'll give you a different name so when we call your house and your parents pick up, we will say this name so you know it was us calling." As a teenager I'm thinking, "Oh, they care about my situation."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Mm-hmm. They're going to protect me. They're going to help me.

Toni McFadden: I mean, how deceptive is that? This is why parents need to be involved with what's going on with their kids as well. I literally thought this was my only option because when you're in crisis mode, you can't see beyond your crisis.

Dr. Tim Clinton: No.

Toni McFadden: I remember walking into the abortion clinic and immediately wanting to run out. It was very dark there and I didn't understand it spiritually yet. I remember sitting down and having almost an outer body experience like, "How did I get here? This isn't right but I don't know how to stop what I'm doing right now."

I thought this will be a quick fix, my boyfriend will stay with me, my parents won't know about my secret, and my life could go along as planned and abortion facility made me believe the same thing. I knew nothing about fetal development. I knew nothing about procedures of abortion. I was so uneducated and I believe they feed off of those who are uneducated in this. I remember going to get an ultrasound. As I walked in, I laid on the table, she pushed the screen away and I said, "Could I see the screen?" and I could tell she was frustrated by that question and she tried to get me not to. She said, "You know, I don't really think that's a good idea for you to see the screen." and I was like, "I just want to see," so she turned it around and immediately, before I could say anything, she said, "See, it's nothing. It's just the size of a pea," while knowing what I know now is seven weeks along.

If you know anything about fetal development, you know there's a heartbeat, you know at conception this baby had its own DNA that's never, ever going to be created again. The blueprint for their entire life, how tall they're going to be, their eye color, their skin tone, they're not going to tell you any of that because their whole purpose of having the ultrasound is see how far along you are so that they know how much you have to pay them. That's the only purpose for that. Because I was seven weeks along, I was given the chemical abortion pills. When I went into the doctor's office, it was a male so that was uncomfortable, just because it was a male. He gave me these pills in a little cup that had dissolved in the juice.

He said, "This will stop the pregnancy." I don't know what he means except that, "Okay. I won't be pregnant after I take this." What I know now is that, that blocked the hormone progesterone so that the baby would detach from my uterus and starve to death and die. I took those pills and he said, "In 24-48 hours, you're going to take a second set of pills in the comfort of your home and this will expel the pregnancy." So you're giving an 18 year old girl pills to take home herself, to expel the pregnancy, and he said, "It'll be a little bit heavier than a period." I went home 24 hours later, stayed at my best friend's house, took those pills, nothing happened. I was like, "Is this it?" Nothing happened.

A month later, I'm in school, in music class and I started out of nowhere unexpectedly, these excruciating pains that it was so painful that I couldn't even

stand up. I had to have someone help me walk to the nurse's office and I'm not being graphic to just to be graphic.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Sure.

Toni McFadden: But this is the reality of first term abortions which some people think are not a big deal. I finally get into the nurse's office and there were blood clots the size of my fist leaving my body. What I didn't realize then is that was hemorrhaging and this is the pills you're giving teenage girls which now, the FDA has lifted the restrictions that these girls now can get these through the mail.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. Basically, no medical advice.

Toni McFadden: Now, this was 1999, for me. I lied to the nurse and said, "I had cramps." I had no idea. My body was literally going through shock and my mom came and got me. I was too afraid to tell her what was going on and I just remember going upstairs in my bathroom and I was in there for hours and traumatized by what I'm seeing. The last thing I can remember is laying in fetal position in my bed, praying and hoping all of this was going to be over soon. What I don't want to forget to mention as well is that, after I went to the abortion clinic, initially, my boyfriend broke up with me the day after. He just stopped talking to me. Not only was I dealing with the heartbreak of that relationship, but then I'm dealing with the trauma of this, of walking through it, basically, on my own. What I did was I think what a lot of girls do is you stuff it down and you just try to survive.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's a rough journey.

Toni McFadden: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You're trained in counseling and you understand the word trauma.

Toni McFadden: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And what it does to a heart... Trauma is not about remembering. Often, it's about re-experiencing what you went through over and over and over again and you think of all the young girls who've had to go on that journey that you just talked about. Often alone, big secret, horrible nightmare. Toni, I know in your story you talked about your journey toward healing. It took a long, long time, you said, to get over the regret, the shame, guilt from all of it. Do you mind sharing some of that?

Toni McFadden: Yeah. Yeah. This is the most amazing part because every time I get an opportunity to share my story, I look back and see the graciousness of God and His redemption in my life. I became a believer at West Chester University three years after I had my abortion. It was through Campus Crusade for Christ that I became a believer and God has always had me on an accelerated course. That's just how my life is with Him. It took me three years after that though, to talk

about my abortion because I thought that was the one thing Christians wouldn't forgive me for, for some reason but God is too good to keep us where we're at. So what happened was I... Long story short, I met a girl who spoke in schools on saving sex for marriage and she worked for a crisis pregnancy center. I didn't know that they were connected. I just knew she spoke in schools.

So, I was like, as she was telling me all of this my heart starts beating and I knew this was the time the Holy Spirit was like, "It's time. Share your story with her." As I shared my story with her, she said, "Do you know how many girls need to hear your story?" and I said, "I never told anyone about my abortion." She said, "I think it's going to set a lot of other women free and spare others from going through what you went through."

So, I went through post abortion counseling and I went through Linda Cochrane's *Forgiven and Set Free* and I love that post-abortion counseling Bible study because I love the Scriptures that go along with the truth of healing. It helped me, also, to take on my responsibility of what I did alongside of forgiving others that I had to forgive. But I also think my real true healing came because I took responsibility of what I did, I didn't blame other people for that. What God revealed to me was how wicked my heart was apart from Him that we're capable of so much evil when He is not Lord over our lives. Once I was able to really understand that, that made the gospel become even more beautiful to me because I knew I don't deserve this. I deserve death but yet He took that upon Himself to set me free.

Dr. Tim Clinton: As you talk to women and you journey with them, who've been down this road, what do you think are one or two of the biggest challenges, the biggest hurdles for them to get through? I know that shame is a big deal. I know it's tough to forgive ourselves, to receive God's forgiveness and then to forgive ourselves in this process. But what are you seeing?

Toni McFadden: I mean, I really think that's the biggest one. Honestly, any of the messages I get is I can't forgive myself. That's another reason I share my story so much because they see it, they see it in me. They know I know who I am in Jesus Christ. Yes, I'm always going to have the regret of my abortion. That's never going to leave me because you have to live in the consequences still, I can't take it back. I think that is number one because you can't go back and change that. But if you really know who Jesus is, He doesn't come with condemnation, He doesn't come with shame. You have to be rooted and grounded in who Jesus says that you are. I think it's almost, and I hope this doesn't come off the wrong way, it's almost disrespectful to think that His blood wasn't enough. Do you believe His blood was enough to cover that sin?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Toni, I wanted to ask you about the abortion industry's message of freedom. I mean, it's like you will not be enslaved, you won't be in bondage anymore here. That freedom thing is the biggest lie that's out there.

Toni McFadden: Yeah. When I began to research more about the history of Planned Parenthood that's when this came about. Because I learned about Margaret Sanger, I learned about her eugenics roots of wanting to wipe the Black population out called the Negro Project which was initiated in 1939.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's hard to believe.

Toni McFadden: Yeah. It's working. It's still working because over 80% of abortion clinics are in minority neighborhoods within walking distance. The Black population, they make up about 12% of the population and Black women account for close to 40% of abortions. We're being wiped out from abortions so I always say to those who say Black Lives Matter, well, it needs to start in the womb because if we can't even get out of the womb, where is the justice there? Where is the social justice? Planned Parenthood came out recently trying to move away from Margaret Sanger. I say, actions speak louder than words and if you really want to move away from her name, get your clinics out of our neighborhoods.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It seems like there's a lot of energy, excitement that's going on right now in the pro-life movement. It seems like the pro-life movement's winning.

Toni McFadden: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: There's a lot happening. Toni, I know you are out there. You know about the Texas case, the Mississippi case, and more, what are your thoughts, what are you seeing, and what's your hope?

Toni McFadden: I'm very hopeful for *Roe v. Wade* to be overturned but I don't think the pro-life movement will ever stop being the pro-life movement. Because even if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, women are still going to face crisis pregnancies.

Dr. Tim Clinton: They are.

Toni McFadden: The church needs to be the church where women are running towards the church if they end up in this situation, not away from the church. I think pregnancy resource centers need to be innovative in meeting these women when abortion is no longer legal and we need to be there for them the same way we have, even with *Roe v. Wade* here.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Toni, I wanted to ask you about your organization, Relationship Matter. Tell us a little about what you're trying to get done.

Toni McFadden: What I'm trying to get done is getting to the root cause, and that is upholding sex and relationships in a valuable way because our culture has degraded sex. It has degraded marriage and it's affecting our kids. More kids are in households with a single parent, divorced parents than parents that are together. I think we have to get to the root of that right now in our country because the family unit is everything. I fought really hard for that myself.

I didn't get to share this part of it. This is a miracle from Jesus. The guy that I married, almost ten years later, after I was speaking in schools and everything, was the same guy I had the abortion with. So, he came back and found me to apologize. I had no idea he had become a believer. He didn't know I was a believer. He just came back to apologize to me, and a year after meeting, we got married.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What a story.

Toni McFadden: We have now four children and we were able to honor our unborn baby at our wedding to acknowledge their life. We are living proof that your past doesn't have to determine your future. So, I think it's important for me to not only say these things to teenagers, but to see that I've been on both sides and I've lived it out, and I'm on the other side and I'm saying it's worth it even though it's not the easiest thing to walk out.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You know in mental health, we know this, that the antidote trauma is relationship. I want you to speak to moms and dads, I want you to speak to maybe that young 18 year old who's out there, maybe listening and they're in trouble. What do you say to them, Toni?

Toni McFadden: I would first say to parents that your voice is more powerful than you think in your kids' lives. I think parents often are afraid to have difficult conversations but I'd rather them hear it from you. It's not about being perfect, it's not about having a perfect story for them, it's being honest and authentic. When you are authentic, even if they don't want to agree with what you're saying, they will still gravitate towards it because there's something in them that knows this person cares about me. And so I would say to parents, don't be afraid to have the hard conversations, that your voice is more powerful than anybody else's because you're with them. Don't underestimate that.

To the young girl who is in trouble, who's dealing with maybe a crisis pregnancy, I would tell them what I wish someone would've told me and that is, "Yes, this crisis is in front of you but you're not alone. There are organizations, there are people who will go before you and help you and walk you through whatever you need, whether that's financial, whether that's emotionally..." That there is someone out there that can help you and that you're stronger than you think. That this life inside of you is a part of you, it is a person that has value, and it's not that, that child inside of you is more valuable than you, you're both valuable. But at the same time, you can get beyond this crisis. You're not going to stay there forever, there's always hope on the other side.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. The words of our friend Max Lucado, "You will get through this." I'm reminded of the words of Chuck Swindoll when he said, "The busy, preoccupied parent misses many a cue or moment to step up into those kind of moments and be that voice of hope and reason in times of darkness." Toni, what a delight to have this conversation with you. What a story, I can see how God's going to use you in mighty ways. He already is and we pray that God would advance

Relationships Matter, your organization. If people want to learn more about you and how they could get connected with you, where do they go?

Toni McFadden: You can go to my website, tonimcfadden.com. I'm also on Instagram and Facebook, Toni McFadden.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Ah, that's so great. Well, hey listen. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, our team at Family Talk, we salute you the great work God's doing in and through you and for your position on life. What a voice for such a time as this. Thank you for joining us.

Toni McFadden: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Psalm 103:11-12 speaking about God's love say, "For as high as the heavens are above the earth so great is His love for those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." I'm Roger Marsh and you've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and Dr. Tim Clinton's conversation with author and pro-life speaker, Toni McFadden. Their conversation was recorded back in January at the National Pro-Life Summit in Washington, DC.

As you just heard, Toni has an incredibly powerful testimony. She actually recently released a book about her story. It's titled, *Redeemed: My Journey After Abortion*. You can find a link to her book and information about her ministry and more at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk or you can give us a call at (877) 732-6825.

Now, before we leave the air for today, I want to remind you about a very special Facebook premiere we are doing tonight with a live Q&A immediately afterwards. This special Facebook premiere is tonight, Wednesday, May 25th on the Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk Facebook page. It begins at 7:00 PM Eastern time with a compelling video presentation given by Dr. William Lile, the Pro-Life Doc, on the science behind life. He will then be joined by our radio co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton for a live question and answer session. They'll be taking your questions about the miracle of life, the tragedy of abortion, pre-born babies, *Roe v. Wade*, of course, the evil abortion pill, and the hope of abortion pill reversal. Those are among the topics that will be discussed tonight. Come prepared to join the conversation on our Facebook page. Just go to facebook.com and search for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and remember, you can participate with us live by posting your questions in the comments section. We'll be sure to see you there.

And for all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I'm Roger Marsh. God's richest blessings to you and yours 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.