



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Healing Childhood Wounds Through Mentorship – Part 1

Guest(s): Joe White & Jon Gibson

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Dr. Dobson: Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, a radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Benjamin Franklin once said, "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn." He understood that the best way to pass along meaningful knowledge was through inclusive relationships. I know I can attest that the more memorable lessons I've applied to my life have come from those friendships, men and women who provided guidance and spoke wisdom to me when I needed it, and that insight and intentionality are at the core of mentorship. Today we're going to discuss a Christian's charge to advise and support the next generation here on Family Talk. Dr. Dobson has so passionately believed in this cause. I want you to hear what he had to say in this clip, which was recorded many years ago.

Dr. Dobson: There's a very special gift that men and women in their 50s, 60s and 70s have to offer the people they come in contact with. That gift is wisdom, gleaned from years of experience. It's wisdom that can encourage and build up and offer hope in troubled times. In days gone by, extended families lived together in the same house, young and old alike. People were able to get fresh perspectives just by hashing out the events of the day at the dinner table. But in today's mobile society, most of us live away from our families, and this valuable interaction between generations is lacking. If you're getting up in years, I'd urge you to find someone younger in your life that you could befriend. That frustrated young mother of a toddler down the street might love to have an older woman come by for coffee, to listen and to say, "That's normal. I remember when I felt just that way."

The young man in the office down the hall needs to hear from someone older and wiser, "You're doing a good job. Keep up the good work." If you're younger, seek out someone older and wiser at work, or in your neighborhood, or at church, and ask for their advice. You'll find that wisdom is a precious gift and sharing it benefits both the giver and the receiver.

Roger Marsh: Dr. Dobson is absolutely right. When we mentor someone, our affirming words and direct actions can bring them closer to the Lord. To help further unpack this important topic here on Family Talk, we are reaching back into our audio vault to share a classic interview with you. Dr. Dobson's discussion today features guests, Joe White and Jon Gibson. Both men have a heart for ministering to children who have not been given adequate role models in their lives. In a moment, all three of these men will discuss how the rampant problem of fatherlessness impacts generations. They also will speak to their passion for mentoring and highlight their organizations that minister to at-risk youth.

This conversation was recorded many years ago, but it is still so relevant to all believers today. Before we get into today's broadcast, please know that some of the content that we'll be discussing is really intended for more mature audiences, so if you have little ones listening in right now, we encourage you to use parental discretion. You can either keep them busy with something else or just come back to this presentation at a later time. Thanks so much for joining us. And now here's this edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. Dobson: We have two men with us today who are deeply concerned about the welfare of children and young adults, and they have set about making a difference in as many lives as possible. They're both great friends of mine and I thought it was time that I introduced them to each other because I've known them both for many years and they have not crossed paths until a few minutes ago. And so it's a pleasure to have these friends here. They're here to talk about mentoring because of the great need for godly adults who will teach and model what it means to be a godly man. And that is the essence of what we're going to talk about today.

Now let me introduce the two gentlemen. And the first one is hardly new to this ministry. I'm speaking of Joe White. He is the founder and president of Men at the Cross. It is a mentor training organization. And he's president of the Kanakuk Sports Camps for children and teens. But anyway, it's wonderful to have you back, Joe.

Joe White: Thank you.

Dr. Dobson: Especially to talk about such an important subject. The other man that I want to introduce to our listeners, whom Joe just met, is Jon Gibson who founded the Jon Gibson Company 30 years ago. That's a real estate development enterprise in California. And this is your first visit inside the studio, but we should have done it a long time ago.

Jon Gibson: Correct. It's an honor.

Dr. Dobson: Now, we're going to talk about mentoring, and this is a passion of your heart, Jon, and you have headed up an organization called MentorKidsUSA.

Jon Gibson: Actually, the founder was a good friend of yours, Orv Krieger. Orv Came to me one day and Orv said, "Jon, I'm a dead man. I have renal cancer and I'm going to be gone within a year and God has spoken to me and said that he wants you to take over this ministry." To which I responded, "God's going to need to talk to me because I'm a real estate developer in Sacramento, not here in Arizona." But God, I prayed that He would give me a passion and He did in a big, big way.

Dr. Dobson: The bottom line for what Mentor USA is all about is?

Jon Gibson: MentorKidsUSA is about reaching out to the kids who should have been loved by the folks who bore them and were not. They specialize in kids who are especially at high risk and with preferential treatment to a child who has a parent who's incarcerated, because we know they are seven times more likely to go to prison themselves.

Dr. Dobson: Jon, you have many talents and abilities and you're so generous with your time and money. Why did you choose this one area of service? Why did you respond to Orv Krieger as you did? And why have you poured your life into a ministry to boys? First of all, tell us what the name of the organization is.

Jon Gibson: Christian Association of Youth Mentors. I think it's because of my original work with your friend Chuck Colson, and going to prisons and learning that 75 to 85% of the men who are in prisons are men who grew up in a fatherless home. So Orv's dream was, if we can reach these kids when they're young, then we can stop that cycle and we can divert these kids to reach their God-given potential.

Dr. Dobson: Joe, when we were in my office a few minutes ago, I asked you how children, how teenagers have changed in the last 10 to 15 years. Are you seeing something different? And you just shook your head.

Joe White: You know, just yesterday I had my little grandson at the ice cream place, and here comes the kids from the town and I knew some of the kids and had had some of the kids at camp, and here comes this precious girl who I had actually baptized, after she had gone through rape. And there yesterday, hugging her in the ice cream place, and just pretty much, that was a picture of the American child of the 21st century. And she was just one girl, Jim. But our camps, I see it from all over the country and they come from inner city and they come from the suburbs and from rural life, and, Jim, their little eyes are just hollow and they're vacant. They come to the cross, Jim, like people who've been across the desert and hadn't had a drink of water for weeks, because they're so hungry for the real touch of Jesus in their lives, because their daddies didn't tuck them in bed at night, and their mommies weren't there with spiritual care for them.

But when they find the gospel presented, they want it so bad. Well, I'm out hugging all these students and this one girl comes up to me and she's just got these precious broken brown eyes, just like this girl yesterday that I was hugging in the ice cream shop. And she said, "I was pornography when I was 17. They

filmed me. They set me up." And again, this is just one girl, one story, but she so represents the kids of America. They're the collateral damage of all these awful decisions that our nation is making, and in the absence of the daddies in their lives. And she goes, "I died that night." And she had been cutting herself and doing things with her body that she never would have done had she not died inside when somebody filmed her and put her on the internet.

Well, she received Christ that night. She received God's grace and I held her in my arms, and I'll just tell you her name was Annie. And I just said, "Annie... And I quoted 2 Corinthians 5:21. I said, "Annie, God made Jesus, who knew no sin become sin, on your behalf, Annie, that you might become the righteousness of Christ in him." And this little girl received Jesus's grace and I just... Jim, it's like the veil of purity just fell over her face from heaven and she received the grace of God. And that little girl walked away a changed woman in Christ. But that is just a picture of the youth of America today and all the junk they bring to the cross [crosstalk 00:10:03]-

Dr. Dobson: So, when you have a new class coming in, I don't know what you call them, a new group, this huge number of kids that are arriving at your camp in the summer, and you look at them, they are very different than 10, 15 years- They have the same needs, but they've been more wounded, more neglected, and more hurt.

Joe White: Yes, and hungrier. It's interesting, I still speak in high schools. Sometimes principals will let me in public schools and I'll speak, and again, they're like dead leaves laying on the spring ground, waiting for the rain of spring to fall on their little hearts. They're so hungry to be touched spiritually by somebody. And, Jim, in the midst of this broken generation that we get to work with, kids are taking the lead today with boldness that I've never seen before. I mean, we believe that every kid who comes in our camp's a born Christian leader.

We just believe that, and we believe it in them and we believe it them, we believe it in them till they begin to believe it in themselves. And they'll go out after we train them over the days at camp to become a Christian leader, whether they're little guys who take this thing called Iron Man and they go out and they start training spiritually and start speaking into the lives of their fellow students, or whether they're high school kids, they'll start prayer clubs, they'll start Bible study groups, they'll start mission awareness groups for Africa and different places. Out of the collateral damage that they are, these great Christian leaders are coming alive out of our kids.

Dr. Dobson: I got tears in my eyes when you were talking just now because I've seen that same thing. I've seen these wounded, broken kids. I wrote Bringing Up Boys in 2001, and boys are in such trouble then, and they still are, but the girls are in just as big a mess as the guys are.

Joe White: Yeah. Beat up.

Dr. Dobson: They are. And the absence of fathers is not only a tremendous handicap to boys, but to girls as well. And I see why you all are into this ministry. Jon, did it touch your heart and did it sound familiar?

Jon Gibson: It brings me to tears because these kids are neglected, abused. You know what we've got going on in our nation. If you can imagine taking a look at your hand and imagined the hand, what it does as parents. We cook for our kids, we help our kids, we nurture our kids, we hug them. But imagine if you take two of the fingers out of your five away, or if you take both hands and take four out of the 10 away. That's what's happened in America, because four out of 10 kids today go to bed in a home without a dad. And it's crippling our country.

Dr. Dobson: Yeah. In fact, I've heard that four out of 10 are born out of wedlock. And then you have the broken home attached to that, and so there are just so many of these kids and the answer that you all are working on is putting godly men in touch with those kids. And Joe, in your case, those that are already grown but are products of that kind of early home life, right? You're mentoring grown men.

Joe White: Yes. Our vision is to empower every man in every church to be an effective disciple-maker. We're all born to be Pauls to a Timothy, and in fact, Jesus' last words as Luke records in Acts 1:8, "You will be my witnesses." Then to the group at the end of Matthew, you know the disciples, he said, "You will go out when the Holy Spirit takes your heart and you will make disciples of all nations."

Dr. Dobson: Jon, what's the mechanism? What are the logistics of connecting men with children in need?

Jon Gibson: It's the beauty of what mentoring ministries are all about. We have discovered that we've now trained some 300 church and parachurch ministries across the country through Christian Association Youth Mentors, and the beauty is that every one of them has an absolute open hand to say, "We'll help you." Our dream is that everyone who listens to your program, you have such powerful listeners who have so much capability, that they will be propelled by God to take a look within their own church, right within their own church. I don't care what ethnic background they're in, I don't care what financial background they're in. Every church in America has orphans. They may not be the traditional orphans that are in an orphanage, but they have a mom or a dad who's walked out on them.

And our prayer is that those people will see those kids, perhaps for the first time in a different light than they have before, and that they'll get in touch with Joe's ministry, they'll get in touch with our ministry, and they will be led and shepherded as to how they can put together a ministry within their own church, to reach first their own church, and then hopefully reach outside the walls of the church and make an impact on their community.

Dr. Dobson: Is there always, or is there a perpetual need for more mentors? You've got more children than you do mentors, right?

Jon Gibson: It's one business where we don't have a fear of competition because there is such a crying need. I mean, if you've got four out of 10 kids, you've got abundant supply. And my dream, Jim, is that through your program, people will be awakened throughout this nation. And can you imagine if men and women will stand in the gap, that they then can take these kids, who are kids with unfulfilled promise that can become shining stars.

Dr. Dobson: And you've seen it happen?

Jon Gibson: We've seen it happen. I've got abundant stories I can share with you. That it happens, I like your story about the gentleman who started the boys' ranch. Tell them, if you would, Joe.

Joe White: Well Cal Farley, all of us have been going down the road working with kids for years, have always held Cal Farley up as the guru of shepherding and mentoring fatherless boys, runaways, throwaways, however you want to say it. And Cal Farley, among his many quotable quotes, he was like the late President Reagan. You'd hang on every word he said, but he said, "I never saw a boy go bad who had at least one good adult friend."

Jon Gibson: Exactly.

Dr. Dobson: All right, let's role play a little bit. Let's suppose I'm a busy businessman. I have all that I can handle and I'm trying to take care of my own kids and the church needs my help, and there's all this stuff in my life. And I've heard you today and what you've said has touched my heart, but how do I help?

Jon Gibson: Well, I've discovered in my own life that if God puts a passion in your heart, He'll give you the time that you need. And it doesn't take that tremendous abundance of time. Even three hours a week with that kid can make the difference in his life. And we can share stories, both of us, about those differences and what it does for those kids. And take him fishing, take him to work with you, and it works.

Dr. Dobson: Do they want to go? Do the kids want to go?

Jon Gibson: Do they want to go? They want to go big time, but it takes a man who will have the passion to say, "I will make a commitment, so that I won't be one more person in a string of adults who's broken a promise to them. I will be faithful and I'll stick it out." And times will get tough, because those kids will test you to find out if you're going to be one more adult who breaks a promise and walks away.

Joe White:

Well, and in Romans 1, was it 1:12? Paul talked about what Paul gets out of the relationship, because Paul grows more in the Paul Timothy relationship than anybody. Paul said, "It would be that I would be encouraged together with you, each of us by the other's faith. Both yours and mine." Jim, at one of the men's events several years ago that I did, a young man came out of the crowd. He was a basketball player at a D1 school. His name was Adam and he didn't have a mom, he didn't have a dad. He had live with his grandparents, his grandparents were dying. And he sought me out backstage and we bonded, and he just, with his beautiful brown eyes, he was a 5'9" kid, never really had a parent at all, but somehow bootstrap. He made it, got himself to college. And so I adopted him and took him to Kanakuk down to the camps and just became his daddy.

And I remember one time I said, "Adam, where are you going Christmas?" And he said, "Well, I'm going to be with Jesus Christmas." He didn't have a home. And I said, "Will you go do Christmas with us? We're going down to we were, you'd go do Christmas with us, we're going to go down to Cabo San Lucas and have a Christmas as a family." And he looked at me and he said, "Can I get back with you on that?" And I said, "Adam, whatever you need." Three days later he came back and he said, "Do you remember you invited me to go to Christmas with you and your wife?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "Could I ask you a question?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "Will you ever leave me?" And I said, "No, Adam. No, I promise."

And then it all came together for me. He'd been left by his mom and dad, he'd been left just in death by his grandparents. Anyway, to make a long story short, he's asked to be a college coach. He turns 'em down because he wants to give kids what I was able to give him and what he never had. Takes a job as a youth director in a local small town, kind of a throwaway town down in our part of the country, encounters a fatherless young man who's in special education, big old, tall, wonderful kid named Dave. 6'5", 340 pounds, special ed. Adam is helping with basketball in that little high school to get in with kids in the high school, sees Dave in the hallway, says, "Dave, we need you on the basketball team." And Dave's never had a dad, and he's never had anybody pay attention to him.

And he goes, "Well, I'm in special ed." And Adam goes, "I don't care what's you are." and Dave said, "Well, I don't have any shoes." Well, we get him shoes. Make a long, long story short, Adam becomes Dave's dad. Dave starts on the basketball team even though he's a special ed. Dave's in college today in a v-tech college doing well. We're tutoring him class by class. Jim, Dave today is becoming a movie, and it's this whole Adam's story with what Adam didn't have, he gives it to Dave. I was able to be daddy to Adam, and prayerfully, Jon, with the synergy of... There's going to be an awakening, Jim, through the Men at the Cross events and what Jon's doing through the movement, of prayerfully, millions of guys. And it's like Adam said at the end of the movie, he goes, "Dave, you've become my hero."

Dr. Dobson:

That really moves me, Joe. And I understand. I understand now why you are so called to this ministry to men. You have witnessed many examples like that and I

want to hear some more next time. But we are out of time for this program. And Jon, I'd like to pick up right here on our next broadcast because we need to explain more about how this works. But before we close, I want to make sure that people know how to get in touch with these gentlemen, and we're going to start with you, Jon. How do people reach you?

Jon Gibson: Christian Association of Youth Mentors, caym.org. Go on the website and you will get all the information. And you can reach somebody who'll call you back then and get you hooked up with somebody close to you.

Dr. Dobson: Okay. And Joe?

Joe White: The men's movement is called menatthecross.org. And of course Kanakuk. The camps are kanakuk.com, K-A-N-A-K-U-K.com.

Dr. Dobson: Well, I really regret that we're having to stop now because this is so important, but we'll pick it up next time. Thank you, gentlemen, for having a heart for kids, kids who are hurting, kids who are wounded, kids who are in need. Thank you, and I hope that the inspiration of what you've said today will bring many other men, especially, but men and women.

Jon Gibson: Absolutely. And unfortunately too many women are walking away these days too.

Dr. Dobson: Okay, we'll talk tomorrow.

Roger Marsh: Our call as Christians is to make disciples, so we must intentionally seek out that struggling young person and literally just put your arm around them. And as we heard today, that mentoring relationship can have an eternal impact. Boy, this program has been so enlightening and challenging to all of us. I pray that you have been stirred to start mentoring a young person in your life, a young man or a young woman who needs that guidance. Now, our guests today here on Family Talk have been Joe White and Jon Gibson, and if you'd like more information on their ministries, we have their links linked up at drjamesdobson.org. Also, more information about the work that they are doing. Also, many of the concepts covered today are connected to Dr. Dobson's popular book called *Bringing Up Boys*. This timeless work has a lot of practical insights for raising a godly young man. You want to get your hands on a physical copy or the audio book version of *Bringing Up Boys*, we can tell you how to do that when you go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org, and just tap on the "Broadcasts" icon.

Are you looking for help in areas like raising your kids or building a lasting marriage? Well, I encourage you to go now and check out the "Resources" page at drjamesdobson.org. Once you're there, you'll find Dr. Dobson's classic books, informative PDFs, teaching DVDs, and much more to help you in your quest. Our mission here at Family Talk is to support marriage and parenting, so take

advantage of these tools now when you go to dr.jamesdobson.org and then click on the "Resources" tab. And be sure to join us again tomorrow as we will play the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's interview with Joe White and Jon Gibson. They'll continue discussing the importance of mentorship and what you can do to change a young person's life. That's coming up tomorrow on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Have a blessed day.

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

Tim Clinton: This is Dr. Tim Clinton, executive director of the James Dobson Family Institute. Thanks for listening today. We hope you found this program helpful and encouraging. Please remember that our ministry is here to serve you and your family. For more information about our programs and resources or to learn how you can support us, go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org or call us toll free, (877) 732-6825. I pray that God will bless you in 2020. And as we start the new year, we're so grateful for your partnership. We ask you to stand with us and to continue to defend the Christian values in an ever-changing culture. Thanks again for joining us. We hope you'll join us again on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Time.