



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Healing the Past and Moving On – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Carolyn Koons

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- Dr Tim Clinton: Hi, this is Dr. Tim Clinton for the James Dobson Family Institute. Are you leaving a lasting and godly legacy? When you think about your family after you're gone, are you worried about them, or are you confident they'll hold on to what you've taught them? At the Dobson Family Institute, we're committed to helping you understand the importance of passing on your faith, not only to your children, but to your children's children too. Check out [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) today for helpful hints, tips and advice to help make this happen. Remember this: Your legacy matters. Don't waste it.
- Roger Marsh: Welcome everyone to Family Talk, a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you for tuning in today, here on January the second. Now, we have a special treat for you as we have one last entry in our Best Of broadcasts dating back to 2019. We had some festive breaks in December, but we want you to hear those final two Best Of programs from 2019, so let's listen to part two of the broadcast that we began yesterday. It features the testimony of Dr. Carolyn Koons here on Family Talk.
- Speaker 3: Today on Family Talk.
- Dr. Dobson: Hello everyone. This is Dr. James Dobson. I want you to hear a short clip, a recording that will kind of tell you where we're going today.
- Dr. Koons: My parents said, "Do anything you want, Carolyn. We don't care." And I knew it, and I did it, so I wouldn't go to school for weeks. I had nothing to live for. I had nothing. Nobody believed in me, nobody cared, and I guess I didn't care either.
- Dr. Dobson: That was the voice of our guest today, Dr. Carolyn Koons. Last time, she talked about the deep emotional scars that she experienced as a child and as a teenager. You can hear that in the clip that we just heard, and that she very well may be working through those feelings of rejection now that were brought on by her distant parents. In a few moments, we're going to hear the balance of

the presentation that we heard yesterday, as she described her heartbreaking testimony and why she felt like that she had nothing to live for.

Dr. Dobson: Before we hear the rest of her story, let me reintroduce you to Dr. Carolyn Koons if you haven't heard her before. She's a very well known speaker and a popular author. She currently serves as President of Life Bridge Ministries International and she's an executive director of a missionary outreach organization in Mexico. Dr. Koons was also a celebrated faculty member at Azusa Pacific University for more than 50 years. She's an amazing godly woman with a great testimony of God's redeeming power. With that, here on Family Talk is our guest, Dr. Carolyn Koons.

Dr. Koons: After a couple of years, my parents got back together again. I'm now in the ninth grade. I just turned 14, and we moved from the motel because we basically had to leave town. I almost don't even remember the ninth grade, and then in the summer, we moved three times. And in one of the moves in the summer, we had circled the United States and now we were back, because railroad work, he was doing construction and you always moved to the next site. We were coming back on one of our trips, we were coming from Montana, which I'd never been to a town in Montana.

Dr. Koons: We were going to Indiana, and on one of the trips we had stopped by, they had visited some other people in Minnesota that they had met that also had done railroad work, and we stopped by their house, and I had just casually said, "Why don't we stop moving and live like everybody else?" Because all I knew was living in a trailer, moving from place to place. So my mom looked at me and she said, "I've got a better idea. Why don't you just leave?" She said, "Caroline," she said, "I just have to be really honest with you. Since the day you were born, you've been a problem in our marriage, and your dad hates your guts. He will never change." And again, she said, "One of these days, he's going to kill you, and the best thing for you is just leave."

Dr. Koons: And I remember standing there, I had never even been in Minnesota, and I watched my parents drive away when I was 14 years old. You talk about loneliness, and I remember I asked these people if I could stay with them and they said yes. What I didn't realize, I'd moved from one hell to the next. And what it was is the guy was an alcoholic. He'd literally drank all of his money away, and she worked in a bar, and it just wasn't any different.

Dr. Koons: And for six months it was just so bad. I worked my way down to Indiana, I caught back up with my folks, stayed there for a couple of weeks, realized it still wouldn't work, and left, and I came out here to California because my older brother was living out here. And alls I knew how to do was party it up, drink, cuss, don't study, have fun, disrupt the classes. My grandmother who lived in Long Beach was just disgusted at this filthy granddaughter of hers. She had given up on me, and she was complaining to a neighbor, and the neighbor was really interesting. She was saying, "Oh, my granddaughter, she's left." Of course, the story was that I ran away from home, and that I was no good, and I was

always in trouble, and I was just one of these really bad juvenile delinquents, and I just drank all the time. 14 years old, now 15, moving up. And it was interesting, though. Her neighbor was a Christian. She says, "Well, where does Carolyn live?" And she told where I was staying. She said, "Well, can you get a phone number or something like that?"

Dr. Koons: Tuesday, I get a call from a lady named Jean Farner who tells me she is from Bethany Baptist Church in Long Beach, and that she was talking to my grandmother, and my grandmother was just mentioning you, and Jean says, "Carolyn, you know, I attend this church. We've got a great youth program, and we would love to invite you to church." I'm saying, "Church? Church? No way." Thursday, this obnoxious Christian lady called me again. "Hi, Carolyn. I just want you to know I've been praying for you, and just felt, I'd like to give you another call and invite. Sunday School starts about 9:30. Just love to have you come to Sunday School." And I said to this lady, "No thanks. I told you before I really wasn't interested. Church is really not my thing." And she said, "Well, I'd really love to have you come, Carolyn, and I just want you to know I'm praying for you." Oh, you know what? There was something inside of me that was saying, "I wish I could give in." But I realized I had fought so long to survive I almost didn't know how to give in. Have you ever had that?

Dr. Koons: Saturday, we get a knock on the door. "Hi, Carolyn. I just happened to be in the area." She lived eight miles the other direction. "Just happened to be in the area, and I just wanted to share with you, I just wanted to let you know that I wanted to meet you and spend a little time." So I invited her in, and she sat down. Very nice lady, and I thought, "The only way I'm going to get this lady off my back is to tell her I'll come." Now, of course I wasn't going to come, but I was going to get her out of the house. And so I said, "Well, you know, maybe. I'll see. Maybe I might come." She was all ecstatic, and she says, "Great, Carolyn." She said, "I'm praying for you."

Dr. Koons: Well, the next morning was Sunday, and I was over at my brother's house and he and his wife were kind of having a spat, and I felt like I needed to get out. I needed a little fresh air, and it really had bothered me about this lady. This Jean Farner really bothered me. I mean, so much, I wanted to say yes, but so much I wanted to say no, because I wasn't going to give an inch. And I started walking just to get out of the house, and I walked and I walked and I walked, and I walked and I walked four miles to the church. And I remember standing across the street and I saw the Sunday school classrooms, and I says, "Well, that looks like one of the Sunday school classes." And these kids really looked neat. They were looking like they were having a good time. I thought, "I don't know." I didn't want to go, but my legs kept moving, and I walked over there, and anyway, there was this good looking guy out front with blond hair. I mean, he was a knockout, and I walked out and he says, "Hi, my name is Skip." And I says, "Hi, my name is Carolyn Koons." He said, "Carolyn?" He said, "It was my mother that was at your house yesterday. Come on in"

Dr. Koons: He walked me into the Sunday School class and he walked me right up to the second row in the middle, introduced me to everyone. You know, I sort of had this feeling they knew I was coming. I walked into the second row and they just kind of all surrounded me. I mean, I couldn't get up if I wanted to. And so I sat there, and I looked up, and I sat there and I listened to this Sunday School teacher. His name happened to be Wes Hardy. He directs adult camps up at Forest Home now. And he sat there and he started telling me about Jesus, and he was so excited, and he any related messages, and he started talking about Jesus loved us, and he started relating some stuff, and I says, "Hey, this is good stuff, but boy do I feel uncomfortable in this place."

Dr. Koons: And the Sunday school class was over, and so I got up and I started to walk out, and the kids literally surrounded me. They would not let me out. And they says, "Carolyn, Carolyn, come on to church with us." And before I knew what happened, the whole group, a gang of them, walked me into church and sat me down in the second row in the middle. You know, I don't know too many young people, youth groups that do this today.

Dr. Koons: And then of all things, at the end of the service, they have you stand up, and if you want to come forward and accept the Lord. I stood there, and they started singing the song, and my heart was going, "Boom boom, boom boom boom boom." And I says, "If I ..." I start perusing around, I look for the nearest door. I just held on. I said, "You're not moving, Koons. Hold on. It's almost over. The last verse is almost over." And as soon as that thing was over, that last song, I made a beeline toward that back door of that church as fast as I could. The young people said, "Carolyn, Carolyn, come on back tonight. Youth group is at 6:00. We'd love to have you." I says, "I'm not coming back. I'm never coming back." I said, "This is not my thing."

Dr. Koons: That night, about 5:00, the youth director pulled up in front of the house, knocked on the door. His name is Louis Files. He's one of my best friends today. "Hey, Carolyn. I just happened to be driving by." I found out later he lived literally five miles the other side of the church, and I was four miles that way, and he was not driving by. He didn't happen to be just driving by. "Hey, I tell you what. Come on, get in the car, I'll take you to church, bring you back after youth meeting." I went. There was something in me that kept fighting. "Yes, I want it. No, I don't. I can't give up. I've got to control my destiny. I've got to take care of myself. I want to be good so bad." I went. I walked out again saying, "I'll never come back." I did that for three weeks.

Dr. Koons: The third week, there stood up there an evangelist, and they were starting spiritual emphasis week, and the evangelist gave an invitation for us to come forward and accept Jesus Christ. And I remember sitting there saying, "If I don't do it now, I will never do it." And I stood up and I walked forward, and I gave my life to Christ. I asked the Lord to come into my life. You know what happened? I am not exaggerating. That moment, my life, all the energy and everything I had, you know, it was just energy, and all the energy was destructive. It was like God said, "Okay, Carolyn." And it went that way.

Dr. Koons: It was like I was a new person. I had somebody that believed in me and his name was Jesus. Somebody loved me. Somebody cared. All of a sudden, for the first time in my life, I had purpose. I really had purpose, and it was like saying, "Oh, isn't it great?" You know what I began to realize, though? So much of my past was still with me. So much of my past, it was there. Everything I remembered, and I began to realize I had to deal with it. Becoming a Christian didn't erase my past. Becoming a Christian allowed me to deal with my past. It allowed me to look at it and know that there were solutions and it allowed me to remember situations. It allowed me to deal with it. And so every time I came up with something with my past, I kept trying to deal with it, and I mean I really had some things that I had to deal with in my life, and I thought it was very interesting.

Dr. Koons: It was only five years ago today that I received a phone call, and it was the switchboard operator. She said, "Carolyn," she said, "I had a very strange phone call." She said, "A man on the phone said, 'Does Carolyn Koons still work here?'" She said, "Yes." And he says, "Well, you tell her this is her dad, and I'm coming for her, and this is the last time. Tell her to be ready." I knew what that meant. My dad, even here I was, a Christian for almost 20 years, and my dad five years ago came after me with a gun.

Dr. Koons: I hung up the phone. I left the campus. I went over to ... I was working at Glenkirk Presbyterian part time. I went in, I sat in the office and I said to myself, "35 years old. Why am I still dealing with my past? I am a Christian. Why is my past still haunting me?" And I sat there and I made great plans. I was going to leave. I knew some people that had a cabin in Big Bear. I was going to go hide out for a couple of days, and then I was going to notify the police and find out what happened. And I sat there, and Walter Ray, the pastor, walked in, and for the first time I shared a little bit about my past, and I said to myself, "Okay, God, if I am your child, I'm not going to have to run from my past any more. I don't have to run, God. If you are my God, you are going to have to take care of me."

Dr. Koons: And I walked out of the office, and I remember going over to my condominium, and as I reached for the door, I didn't even know if maybe my dad could have gotten there and gotten in. And I remember going in there and waiting for hours, waiting for a knock on the door. I knew my dad was coming after me with that gun. And I remember going to bed that night wondering if he was standing outside.

Dr. Koons: About 5:00 in the morning I got a phone call from my sister in law. "Carolyn, Carolyn, your dad's in emergency hospital. He was drinking on the job yesterday. They said he was absolutely irate. He got out, he made a phone call. He got off work early. He took a gun, he walked toward the car, and he had a stroke." And I had such mixed emotions, and I had to say, "God, you've given me my pass for a reason. Okay? You've taken care of me. I know that you are my God. You will always take care of me."

Dr. Koons: You know what? I'm going to close with these thoughts. Now, listen. Out of everything I said, forget everything I've said and think about yourself. We all have come through different journeys, right? Every one of us has a different journey. I do not regret one minute of my past. You know why? God gave me my pass for a reason, to make me who I am today. And I looked back and I realized that God had prepared my past for a reason, and I say, "Lord, thank you for my past. I thank you."

Dr. Koons: You know, some of you out there say, "Yeah, Carolyn. I was raised in a Christian family. I've been going to this church since I was in diapers. You know, I don't have a past like yours." You know what? You are prepared to do ministry than I'm not prepared for. You can relate in a way I can't. We've got to be very careful to realize that every one of us is on a specific journey. All the pain, all the blessings, all the joys that you have been on has made you the unique person that you are today. You are a unique person and you have a choice. You have a choice right now to say about your past, your past can either make you or break you, and it's your choice. Your past can either be the most powerful thing that has made you to be the person you are, or it can break you and say, "Oh, but you don't know what I've been through."

Dr. Koons: We have a tendency to keep reaching back into the past and pulling it with us. "Let me just bring this little bag of tricks with me. Let me bring this along with you, so if I just by chance do something wrong, I can say, 'But look what I've got here.'" But what we have to be careful with is, are we bringing our past with us as an excuse for our present behavior? Or are we using all of those experiences, good and bad, for God's kingdom?

Dr. Koons: Your past can be a crutch to lean on or it can be a rod of power. The memories of your past can become the blessings of the future, and the choice is yours. And we get caught some times in the middle, and sometimes I have to say, "Okay, Carolyn. Wait a minute. Are you behaving that way? Are you saying that because something that you have brought with you? What are you going to do about it?" It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably end up doing something that's wrong. It's like I've been programmed from the past.

Dr. Koons: I'd love to give you some illustrations about how we have realized that we reprogram our brain by continually bringing up impressions of the past, that we make some of the things of the past live today in our lives. Maybe that's why I have not wanted to always relate about my past. I don't want to make it a current situation. I will only relate upon my past like you've asked me to do if maybe, if just maybe one person in here it might help. Maybe.

Dr. Koons: I love to do the will of God, so far as my new nature is concerned, but there is something deep inside me. It's like something I keep remembering, something in the past that sometimes wars within my spirit and my mind, and sometimes it wins. In my mind, I want to be God's willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved sometimes to the past. So you see how it is? My new life tells me

to do right, but the old nature is still there inside of me. Oh, what a terrible predicament. Who will set me free to the slavery that I'm in? Thank God it has been done by Jesus Christ who has set me free. God only asked one thing for you to do: Look where you have come from, deal with it, thank him for it, and leave it with him. Do you hear me? Leave it with him and be set free.

- Roger Marsh: This is Roger Marsh once again, thanking you for listening to this special edition of Family Talk. Sadly, we have reached the conclusion of our countdown of our most popular programs from the previous year. We hope you enjoyed this look back at Family Talk's Best Of broadcasts from 2019. By the way, if you missed any of these presentations, you can request our 2019 Best Of Broadcast CD Collection. It includes most of the interviews that we've been highlighting over the past five weeks. You can learn more about our 2019 Best Of Broadcast CD Collection by visiting [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) or by calling us at (877) 732-6825. That's (877) 732-6825.
- Roger Marsh: Well, that's all for today's broadcast. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.
- Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.
- Dr. Dobson: This is James Dobson. Again, before we go, I'd like to remind you that Family Talk is a listener supported program. If you've enjoyed this broadcast, we'd appreciate your helping to keep us on the air. As you know, we talk about everything from religious liberty to the sanctity of human life, and raising boys and girls among others. These are the passions of our hearts, and I hope they are for you too. Thank you so much for listening and for being part of this ministry. For more information, go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).
- Roger Marsh: Hi, this is Roger Marsh for Family Talk. Do you remember Dr. Dobson's touching interview with Rebecca Gregory?
- Rebecca Gregory: The hardest part of that day was not the physical, though. It was the emotional. It was everything that not only I saw but my son saw as well.
- Roger Marsh: Or what about the powerful interview with Dennis Prager?
- Dennis Prager: Nice people can do damage. Nice is not the same as wise. Lack of wisdom creates evil, not lack of niceness.
- Roger Marsh: There were so many great Family Talk moments this year it may be hard to pick your favorite, but don't worry, we've done it for you. We've selected 18 of the most popular broadcasts of the past year and present them to you together on six audio CDs in the 2019 Family Talk Best Of Broadcast Collection. These entertaining and informative programs are sure to bless you and become a cherished part of your family resource library. This compelling CD set is our

thank you for your gift of any amount in support of Family Talk. Learn more at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) or by calling (877) 732-6825. Thank you and God bless you.

Dr. Dobson: It's very difficult to forgive your enemies, and it's even harder when they happen to be your parents.

Roger Marsh: Dr. James Dobson for Family Talk.

Dr. Dobson: When we're kids, our needs and feelings are so intense that the wounds and injuries suffered during those early years often stay with us for a lifetime, and the pain is immeasurably worse when the one who has wronged us was a parent. Maybe a mother rejected us and tore us down instead of giving us the love and compassion that we needed. Maybe a father was alcoholic or abusive. Many people find that even 20 or 30 years later, the resentment and anger are still very much alive in their minds. They want to let it go, but they have a hard time accepting the simple truth. The only way to get free of that kind of bitterness is to forgive.

Dr. Dobson: It's much easier to talk about than to accomplish, of course, but those who can't forgive, those who feel they have a right to hate and therefore they do so, are the ones that suffer. That kind of unresolved anger burns up everything it touches. Perhaps that's why Dr. Arch Hart said, "Forgiveness is giving up my right to hurt you for hurting me." When we find the emotional maturity to release those who have wronged us, that's when the hurts finally start to heal.

Roger Marsh: To hear more, visit our broadcast page at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).