



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Positive Psychology: God's Design for You – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Valorie Burton

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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:** Well, hello everyone. I'm Roger Marsh and we have a very special, very encouraging presentation to share with you today here on Family Talk. We're going to be listening to a recent keynote presentation by author, speaker, and positive psychology expert Valorie Burton. Valorie gave this address at an Extraordinary Women's event in Griffin, Georgia earlier this year. Extraordinary Women's Ministries is led by Julie Clinton, who is married to our own Dr. Tim Clinton, our co-host here on Family Talk. By the way, you can learn more about Extraordinary Women by visiting [drjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://drjamesdobson.org/broadcast).

Valorie Burton is an international speaker and the CEO of the Coaching and Positive Psychology Institute. Her life-changing message has an intriguing, researched-based emphasis in the field of applied positive psychology. Valorie will be explaining more about that during today's broadcast. Since 1999, Valorie Burton has written 13 books, including *Let Go of the Guilt*, *It's About Time* and *Successful Women Think Differently*. Valorie has appeared on the *Today Show*, *CNN*, *Dr. Oz*, and in *Essence Magazine*. She's also spoken for hundreds of organizations all over the world. And most importantly, she's a devout Christian and a follower of God. Valorie and her husband Jeff live on a ranch south of Atlanta with their children. Well, now that you know a little about her background, let's listen in as Valorie Burton speaks to thousands of women about God's plan for their lives.

**Valorie Burton:** I want to thank you, Julie, for inviting me. I have known about Extraordinary Women for years. And you know, sometimes when you start down your journey, I started writing, gosh, my first book was 1999. And over the years as I moved forward, I would always hear about your conferences and how good they were. So, when I got a call last year, I was like, "Oh yeah, yeah, I'll come. Oh, when it's only 25 miles from home, even better." So how many of you over the last, I don't know, year, year and a half have felt a little stressed? Anybody? Anybody felt a little stressed? Some of y'all didn't raise your hands. We need your secrets. I love, she's like "No, I'm just fine."

We've had so much going on. You heard Dr. Tim mentioning, not just the pandemic and all of the changes and upheaval and for many loss. We've lost three people in our family, four family friends. It's just devastating. And then we look at how our world constantly is changing and the upheaval that's happened in our country, the racial unrest, the political, and then you think about "Hey, what's going on in my own house?" So often we're dealing with challenges and struggles that nobody else even knows about. And then you turn on the news and it can just feel so very heavy.

But it's so important for us to keep things in perspective. So as I talk today, as Julie just said, my background is in something called positive psychology. And I know some of you probably went, "Did she make that up?" Admit it, did somebody else say did Valorie make that up? I've never heard of positive psychology. I promise it's not just positive thinking, as I have been writing and speaking for some time, and I just knew this is the work that God called me to because I had prayed for so long, Lord, what am I here for?

For me, I was in public relations. I had my own business. I was good at what I did. And yet I felt empty. I felt like there's something else God has for me to do, and I had no idea what it was. And I would just say, God, is there some way you want to use me? Is there something you want to do with just the gifts you've placed in me? Because we all have some kind of gift, even when we don't acknowledge it, right? The people around us know about it and they'll tell us, and sometimes we bat it away because whatever gift God has placed in you, it comes so easily to you that you probably take it for granted. You probably think everybody can do it like that, but they can't. And the people around you can see that.

And that's what I was asking, God, what am I here for? And I was literally standing in a bookstore one day in 1999. I was at a journalism convention in Seattle and I just felt the Holy Spirit speak to me. "Your mission is inspiring women to live more fulfilling lives. You'll do it through writing and speaking." I remember the moment, the day. It was July 10th, my dad's birthday. It was a Saturday. And I just felt like the Holy Spirit was speaking. It wasn't audible. It was just I knew immediately in my spirit, I felt like I was going to float away and I'm there by myself at a Barnes and Noble. I want to tell the people around me, but I'm thinking, I don't think they're going to get it. I'm just going to keep this to myself.

I got back to my hotel room. I was like, I better write this down. I don't want to forget it. And within about three weeks, I started writing. I was like, He said write, speak, inspire. But here's the thing, ladies. I had thought about writing before. I had tried to write two other books and it just didn't happen. And I think the reason it didn't happen is I didn't understand the why. I didn't understand the purpose behind it. When I got the purpose, boy, I was on fire and the words were flowing literally from the tip of my pen. I wrote the first book entirely on yellow legal pads. I know that sounds ridiculous. But I would sit at my computer and try to type, and I was too busy checking the word count

every 30 seconds or so. And I thought, I just need to write on paper. And I just felt the Holy Spirit writing through me, like it was easy.

Writing had never been easy before, but when I got the purpose, it was coming easily. And so I've been so clear about that mission, but I began to wonder God, is there something else you want me to study that would help and empower the people that you place in my path? And that's when one day I was kind of looking into what else could I do when it comes to life coaching? What else can I learn? And I discovered this pioneering new field called positive psychology. So most of the time when we think of psychology, most of us think about fixing problems, right? You think of psychology, you think, they got issues. Anybody in here got issues? Anybody got issues? Raise your hand if you got issues, anybody with issues. Okay. All right. A couple of you have not raised your hands.

Again, you have not raised your hands. The second time you have not raised your hand. Let me tell you, if you haven't raised your hand, you really got issues. Okay? Those are the people really have issues. Just playing with you. Because we all have issues. Psychology, it's relevant. We need to understand how to treat and deal with things like depression and anxiety and even more serious mental illnesses. But positive psychology is the study not of what happens when things go wrong, but what is it that happens when things go right with us? And when I discovered that I was like, I can study that, because the psychology part, I was like, I don't know. I don't know. I don't like dealing with problems, but dealing with what happens when things go right, what makes you happy, what makes you resilient, what happens when you thank God for the blessings in your life. That, I want to know about.

And so, I went back to grad school at the University of Pennsylvania back in '07 to study it. And here's the best part. As I began to study, I realized every single piece of research that scientists were talking about and explaining, I'd sit in class and I'd go, "Oh, I know what Scripture that goes with it." And I realized everything that was being proven out through research was already established in Scripture, which should not be a surprise to any of us, that the word of God would be proven out by science, would be proven out by research. And that really was a relief to me because I thought, what have I got to learn here? And I started learning and I thought, oh my gosh, this lines up with the Word of God. So, I want to just start us out in prayer as I really talked through some key points of this Scripture theme that we have for today, from 1 Corinthians, chapter 16.

So, if you'll just bow your head with me. Lord, we come to you this morning grateful, Lord, grateful that we can assemble like this, Lord. Particularly in the times that we're living in, Lord, we thank you for community. We thank you for Extraordinary Women and for the words that they are bringing forth and the impact that they are making all around the country and all around the world. God, we come to you just saying, thank you, God, thank you for the things we don't even think to thank you for because we take them for granted because we are so abundantly blessed. God, right now we just thank you for being born where we were born, Lord. As we heard Shelene this morning, I was reminded

that so much of the world does not have the basics that we take for granted right here in the United States, Lord.

So, we just say, thank you. We had nothing to do with where we were born, but you saw fit to place us in a place where as women, we can speak up. As women, we can assemble. As women, we can be respected. Lord, we just say thank you. Thank you that this morning when we wanted something to eat, we just went into our refrigerator, just drove up to a drive through and ordered what we wanted. Lord, thank you that when we wanted to take a shower last night, we just turn the knob and clean hot water came out. Lord, we thank you for the things we forget to thank you for, because you are so very good. Help us not lose sight of just how good you've been to us. And Lord we ask, right now, for your presence to show up in a big way.

Lord, you've already been here, but we just invite you to help us see what you're saying to us as individuals on this day, through the messages, through the music, through the people who are surrounding us. God, I pray you just give me the words to speak in exactly the way they need to be spoken so that each person listening to my voice right now can hear you and not me. God, we pray for those who don't have the freedoms that we have. Lord, we pray right now for the people of Afghanistan who are feeling desperate, Lord, and terrorized and scared about their future. Lord, we pray for protection and we pray for favor for those people. Lord, we pray for the people of Haiti as they deal with yet another devastating natural disaster. Lord, we pray for healing in that place. Lord, we pray for our own nation.

Lord, we need healing. And help us to be a part of that healing. Help us to stop turning against one another and turn towards one another, Lord. We just ask for prayer for those most in need. And then Lord, I pray that you will just plant a seed today in each woman and man's heart that's listening. That they will see how you want to use them to influence and impact this world. If they're here, there's a reason they're here, Lord. So I just pray that you show them the next steps you have for them. So God, we're just expecting great things for the rest of this day. And we just thank you for this opportunity, for this moment, for your love, for your grace, for your mercy, God. We love you. We thank you. We worship you in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.

So, as I look at the scripture in 1 Corinthians 16, I just want to reread to you what it says. And I'm reading from the NIV. When we look at verse 13, "Be on your guard, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong." And then I'm going to continue to verse 14 because I think it's particularly relevant to us right now in the times that we're living in. It's four words, do everything in love. Do everything in love. "Be on your guard, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong, do everything in love." I just want to start first with be on your guard. Be on your guard. I know you know that we're living in times that are unprecedented, that there are things, sometimes I ... Actually, I don't flip on the TV very much because almost every time I do, I regret it. But there are things

that have become normal that are simply not normal. There are things that have become acceptable that we know are not acceptable to God.

And if we keep feeding that stuff into our spirit, it becomes our normal even though it's not God's normal. You need to be on your guard about what you allow into your spirit, what you allow into your home. Some of this stuff is so very stressful and disturbing, I think, to our spirits, that when we're dealing with the kind of change and turmoil we're dealing with right now, we have to be more on our guard. We have to protect our spirit, protect our children, protect our home, protect our marriages, protect our friendships more than ever, because many of those things are so under attack. And often the attack doesn't look like people coming at you with weapons. It's insidious. It's the little comments and the little things that happen. And because they're happening so much, they just appear, well everybody else is doing it. Everybody else is talking that way.

And so, we start to let our guard down because what looks normal becomes the new norm even though the new normal is not normal. We start questioning our own beliefs and our own values, because we're seeing a normalization of things that simply are not Godly. So be on your guard. But one of the other ways we need to be on our guard is just for our own energy. When you're dealing with more, you need more capacity to handle it. That means you don't have time for things that don't really matter very much. You don't have time for petty arguments. You don't have time for the things that are not the things that God has for you to focus on. You don't have time to be stuck in last season when God has put you in a new season.

And for some of you, God is trying to get you to move into a new season, and you're turned around, looking at the way things used to be and holding on to things God wanted you to do five years ago, or two years ago, or a year ago. And He's saying "We're done with that season. Let it go and trust me to move into a new season." It's like showing up in summertime and you've got your parka and your scarf and your gloves and not noticing how uncomfortable it is. And God is saying "Take off the coat, take off the boots. It's 95 degrees outside. You're in the wrong season!" We have to be on guard and notice what season we are in. And right now we're in a fight. Right now we are in a season that's testing us like no season we've been in before. And what I see too often, even among us as Christians, is worry, is arguing, is focusing on the wrong stuff.

Do you know what you need right now? You need God, you need strong relationships, you need prayer. If you are focused on all the infighting, if you are glued to the television, watching all of whatever the media wants to say, you're not quiet enough to hear what God is saying to do for you, for your home, for your work, for your family. Sometimes you need to be on guard, meaning you need to cut out all of the noise so you can hear from the Lord God Almighty, because He's talking to you. We know it, even from Scripture that often he's not talking loudly, He's waiting for you to quiet down because He comes in a still small voice. But if you're running around listening to everybody else's voice and

you're not quieting down to say, Lord, talk to me, and then being quiet enough to hear Him when he speaks, then you won't get the message that He's trying to send you.

You know, when this whole COVID pandemic really began, I remember the week that it was, you probably remember too. I think it was somewhere around March 12th when it really, really got real. I remember in part because my husband and I had just been led to go ahead and finish our basement. We had moved in late 2017 and we bought a property that we had not planned to buy. We were perfectly happy in our house in a cul-de-sac. But y'all, one day I was online. I don't know if I was on Facebook or where I was, but an ad popped up for a house. This is why you shouldn't go on Facebook anyway, okay. An ad popped up for a house. We were not looking for a house. I had a plan for exactly what we were doing with the house we were in.

In fact, we had done all this landscaping in the backyard. The neighbors have been saying, "Boy Valorie, you work really hard. I saw you out there with the shovel and the gravel, I would just leave my husband to do that." I was like, "No, it's a family affair. We're getting it done." We had done landscaping. We had added another little parking pad to the side of the garage. We had expanded the deck. This is not the picture of a family planning to move. But this ad popped up. And what caught my attention was that the ad said house with an airstrip. Now I know that sounds crazy, because it sounded crazy to me the first time my husband told me his dream was to have a house with an airstrip. He said it before we got married. And I was like, a house with an airstrip, who has a house with an airstrip?

He said, people do. Sometimes it's a neighborhood of people that like to fly, and it exists. And he drove me by this neighborhood and I was like, oh, okay, that's your dream. Maybe one day. It's not my dream. Maybe you'll find a house with an airstrip. And lo and behold, this ad pops up. And all I did with the ad is I just sent it to him in a text. He was on a trip. My husband's a pilot and he was on a trip, and I forgot about it. You know how you see something interesting and you just pass it along. So that night he calls and he goes, "Did you stop by that house?" And I said, "What house?" Because I had already forgotten what I had sent him. I said, "What house?" He goes, "The house with the airstrip." I said, "No, why would I stop by the house?"

He goes, "Well, it was only like three miles away." I said, "It was?" He said, "Yeah, I've already looked at it." I said, "Well, I'm not planning to go by there. We're not moving, right?" He's like, "Okay." He didn't even tell me. My husband had been driving by that house once a week, he had driven by the house because we had to drive by the street to get to his dad's and my mom's house. So we had bought this house with an airstrip, we have land. And we bought it and I partly justified it because I thought, "You know what I can do. We're going to finish out this unfinished basement and this will become the office space. I'll let go of the office space that we're renting, and we will do this from home." Does that sound like a good plan to y'all?

And I wasn't planning to do it until the lease was up in March of 2021, but in late 2019, we just had this inkling, let's go ahead and finish the basement. And y'all, the last day those people were there after four months was on March the 12th. Interesting coincidence, isn't it? And so that week, March the 12th, is everything started to unfold. And for so many of us, it was like, what on earth is going on? But about a month into it is when many of us started saying, "Why is this happening?" And many of the answers sounded something like, a lot of us needed to slow down.

A lot of us needed to stay home for a little while. We needed to have some face-to-face conversations with the people in our own homes. Some of us just needed a break. Some of y'all were not upset that your job told you to go home and work there. Some of you are now upset because they're asking you to come back. For some of you, this was a break that allowed some things to happen that would not otherwise have happened. And even in the midst of tragedy, in the midst of difficulties, my husband, being in aviation, got laid off for an entire year, just went back to work four months ago. But God saw fit to make it the biggest year my business had ever had. You know, God will just work things out. If we get quiet and trust that He has a plan, but we have to be on guard and get quiet and quiet out the noise so we can hear what He is saying.

Roger Marsh:

Some inspiring, and hopefully life-giving words from Valorie Burton today on Family Talk. You know, I'd never heard of the field of positive psychology before, had you? As Valorie described it, she called it the study of what happens when things go right with us. You'll definitely want to listen in again tomorrow to hear the conclusion of Valorie's presentation, but for now, to learn more about Valorie Burton, Extraordinary Women Ministries, or to listen to any of the program that you might've missed today, visit our broadcast page at [drjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://drjamesdobson.org/broadcast). That's [drjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://drjamesdobson.org/broadcast). Remember, you can also feel free to give us a call. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer your questions about the broadcast and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. We're also happy to pray with you and for you. Our number is (877)732-6825.

Well, we're almost out of time for today, but before we go, I want to remind you that September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month. Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, male or female, regardless of age or background. If you or someone you know is in crisis or is experiencing difficult or even suicidal thoughts, call the national suicide lifeline at 800-273-8255. That's 800-273-8255. Or you can visit [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](http://SuicidePreventionLifeline.org).

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of crisis centers that provides free and confidential, emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also text the word "Home" to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor right now. Again, text the word home, H-O-M-E to 741741. There is help and there is hope. And to find a Christian counselor, remember you can also go to [connect.aacc.net](http://connect.aacc.net) for the

American Association of Christian Counselors. Again, that web address is [connect.aacc.net](http://connect.aacc.net).

Thanks so much for joining us today here on Family Talk from Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley, Dr. Tim Clinton, and all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. God's richest blessings to you and your family.

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

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton here for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. You know, the news comes in all kinds of shapes, sizes and formats these days, but how do you cut through the noise and get to the heart of the matters that affect your family? Come to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and sign up for Dr. Dobson's monthly newsletter. You'll find clarity on tough issues, encouragement for your everyday life and trusted principles to help you build strong, healthy, connected families. Go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). Sign up today. That's [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Roger Marsh: Hey everyone. Roger Marsh here. When you think about your family and where they will be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? Are you hopeful? What kind of legacy are you leaving for your children and their children? Here at Family Talk, we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving for your family. Join us today at [DrJamesDobson.org](http://DrJamesDobson.org) for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself. And remember, your legacy matters.