



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Life and Leadership

Guest(s): Dr. Ronnie Floyd

Air Date: June 14, 2024

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- Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.
- Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. You know Dr. James Dobson has long been an advocate for important contributions that men make in the lives of their children. And with Father's Day coming up this Sunday, let's recognize the significant dads and father figures have in the lives of their children. On today's classic edition of Family Talk, we're going to turn the tables a bit as we'll hear Dr. Dobson as a phone in guest on the "Life and Leadership with Ronnie Floyd" podcast. Dr. Floyd served as senior pastor of Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas for more than 30 years. He currently serves as honorary pastor emeritus there. During his career, he also served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention for two terms, and was president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force. Dr. Floyd is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Power of Prayer and Fasting*, *Our Last Great Hope*, and *How to Pray: Developing an Intimate Relationship with God*. Dr. Floyd earned his master's and doctoral degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ronnie and his wife Jeana have two grown sons and many, many grandchildren. So now let's join Dr. Ronnie Floyd and Dr. James Dobson, as we hear this special edition of Family Talk.
- Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Let me ask you a question today as a man, is there anything greater than the privilege of being a dad? I mean, think about it. Is there any issue today that is more significant to our culture than the defense of the family and the vital role of fathers? Today I'm going to interview the man who has been the foremost leader in preserving and promoting the institution of the family in American life. I am interviewing the man who is sounded the alarm for a long time on the importance of fathers in the culture. I think a true American hero who has championed the family and the role of fathers like no other man in recent modern-Day American history. Yesterday, I am interviewing Dr. James Dobson. Dr. Dobson, thank you for being on this program today.
- Dr. James Dobson: Well, pastor, thank you for tracking me down. I'm in a hotel in Washington, D.C and I agree with everything that you just said that dads are incredibly important to families. I don't think most dads really realize just how significant they are.

The Scripture really gives about five key roles that fathers should play. And I scratched them down here just anticipating this call. The first is leadership in the family. I really do believe that God gives that responsibility to men, not that they override the will and purposes of the mother, but that a man should realize that his family depends on him to provide that ultimate leadership.

The second is spiritual training that often falls to the mother that I'm convinced that men are as important in spiritual training as the women are.

Third, of course, is protection for the family. That's a divinely ordered obligation.

The fourth is provision. A woman can earn money, but ultimately it's the man's responsibility I think, to see that the bills are paid and that money is earned for the family. And then I think that fifth is discipline. That falls a little easier to men than it does to women. So when a man does those jobs, he really ought to be honored, and I hope that the men and the families that are listening, the women who are listening and the children who might be listening today will recognize that Father's Day is not just a day for giving socks and ties and off we go. It's a time to really let a man know that you care about him and that he's important to the family.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: The vital role of fathers, Dr. Dobson, has become so minimized in American life and now is such a major problem in society. I want you to, if you would, take a moment and reflect on how serious of a problem this is in America.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I think it is very serious because of the tendency of men to overwork themselves. Just the easiest mistake to make, especially if you're good at what you do. If you don't leave time for those that depend on you at home, everybody suffers. And I believe that's occurring. I think that there's a tendency today for men not to realize just how important the relationship with both the sons and the daughters is. Pastor, everybody seems to know that fathers need their sons because boys are not born knowing how to be a man, or even how to be a boy.

They identify totally with their mothers in their early days and men realize that boys need them. What they don't often understand is that girls need their fathers as much, if not more than boys do, because a girl's self-esteem hangs precariously on the relationship between her and her father. He's probably the first male that will kiss her or hug her, or tell her that she's pretty or affirm her to make her feel important. That's a dad's job for a daughter. And if we don't notice her, we look right past her, it really does something to the spirit of a girl. So there's just so many responsibilities that a man has.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Yes, no question about it. Well, after all these years, Dr. Dobson, of you championing the place of fathers and their value, let me ask you this question. What is the most unintentionally missed lesson by dads?

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I think I just touched on it. I think it's becoming so busy and so involved outside the home that we're worn out when we get home and our kids are already in bed and we just fail to realize that what is missed there cannot be recaptured. I have to admit something to you. When I got out of graduate school, I'd worked hard to get the PhD and when it was finally finished, the whole world opened up to me and I began taking everything that came. I remember going 17 nights without being at home during one period of time, and it was good stuff. I mean, I was working in church and I was writing books and I was teaching and I was doing counseling and all that good stuff.

But my father, who was always a moral beacon for me, wrote me a letter and he took me to task and he said, "I'm proud of you. I think that you're doing great things and God is really blessing you, but I'm telling you, if you're too busy for your kids, you are going to make a big mistake. And when you sit where I sit today, you'll regret not taking the time to pray for your kids and to invest in their lives." At that time, I only had a three-year-old daughter, but I got it, and we made changes in my life and it is one of the reasons I left the academic world and started the radio program so I could be at home. I bet you thought some of those same thoughts, haven't you?

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Absolutely. There's no question about it and you nailed it. And that's what happens with dads who have an element of success about them as men are so driven by their success. Well, many of those dads, they'll still have children living within the home. What are two or three lessons perhaps you wish that you you'd have done it earlier in your life.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, especially today, and if we're not paying attention, the culture will take our family to health. I'm absolutely convinced of it. I have seen it and my dad is right. There is nothing that will compensate for that when you're engaged outside the home to the degree to which you're failing to notice what's taking place there. And for that matter, your wife needs you tremendously too. She should not bear the total responsibility for raising children in this kind world. I have said in my newer book on the Legacy, the most important thing you can give to your children is faith in Jesus Christ.

And that is job number one. There's nothing more important than doing that. If you don't take time to pray with your kids, pray for your kids and involve them in devotional times and take them to church... I won't ask you this question, but I wonder how many people in your church on Sunday, we'll take their kids to a Little League game or even play in a little League game. Now that sounds like something good that a father should do. He should take his boys out to play Little League, but not at the expense of the spiritual aspect because that's the most important thing.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Absolutely. And that is now probably one of the most pressing issues, Dr. Dobson, within churches across America is the very thing you touched on right there. How can families honor dad not just in the coming weekend, but perhaps beyond and do it in a special way more than the normal gift of a necktie or a

pair of socks or something you absolutely do not need? Do you have any thoughts on that?

Dr. James Dobson: I sure do, because everybody needs to be appreciated. Dads are no different. They need to know that they're making a difference and that you care. I remember when my little girl was about three and I had to drive a long way to get to Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, and I would leave every morning with my briefcase and then they would cry. Yeah, she would cry because I was leaving. It was a personal affront to her that I couldn't stay home with her, but she made me know I was important to her and surely always honored me too. I've always appreciated the fact that anytime Shirley had something to say about me, it was positive and it was honoring. That's what dads need.

They need to know that they play a role that's critically important and they're loved at home. I think many men would be willing to take up the responsibilities that God has given them if they knew they were not just in the house, and they don't just earn living, but they're there to protect and provide and care for and teach and train and guide, and those can't be replaced by just anybody. That's a dad's job.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Well, Dr. Dobson, when I was reflecting on preparing to have the privilege to interview you, I was thinking back and I was a very, very young man at that time, really just very young adult. That's what I was. But it was a difficult time in the 1980s and 1990s in America. You were so engaged with other national leaders who stood beside you, championing the family. If you men had not done this, then there is no telling where we would be today. I want you to mentor our listeners for a minute or two and tell us about two or three people who were with you out there on the front lines of the culture with you, fearlessly and courageously championing the family in American life.

Dr. James Dobson: Three come to mind immediately, and the first is my dad. I talk about him often. He's gone on to be with the Lord, but he prayed for me. I think he prayed for me every day and my dad was a prayer warrior, and when I say he prayed, he prayed long hours for me and then for my family. And then when he saw that I was missing the mark in a very kind way that he helped to pull me back. A second person that had great influence on me was Chuck Colson. He became a brother to me. I miss him too. He's also gone on to be with the Lord. Talked to him on the phone sometimes once or twice a week, just taking his pulse. And he mine. He was also willing to say things to me that were hard to say, and he had a lot of influence on many, many Christian leaders. The third one was Adrian Rogers, Baptist minister at Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis.

He served as a member of my board. I want to tell you, when we invited him to join our board, the first day he was there, he changed the entire board just by the warmth of his personality. And you knew him too, didn't you?

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: I absolutely knew him well. What a tremendous man of God.

Dr. James Dobson: And he's gone too. I've lost my three mentors there. Now maybe I can pass it on to others.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Well, absolutely, and that's what you're doing today, and we really, really do appreciate this. Dr. Dobson, let me turn it this way for a moment. From all the life you have lived and all the books you have written and all the thousands of radio programs you have done, what is the one thing that stands out today that is the number one key to bringing success in the family?

Dr. James Dobson: I think it's giving priority to those that matter most. I want to evangelize the world. I know you do too. It's the great commission to go into all the world to preach the gospel, and that is very, very important. But evangelism begins at home, and you start by making sure that your own children know the Lord and have their values straight and that you have lived a consistent life at home. You get that straight and everything else tends to fall into place.

Dr. Ronnie Floyd: Love it. No doubt about it. Hey, one final quick question, Dr. Dobson, I've got to ask you this. Would you tell all of our listeners today what it means to you to be a dad?

Dr. James Dobson: It's a cliché to say some of the things I've said today because people have heard them, and not new ideas at all. But when you have that kind of relationship with your kids like I have with my son and daughter and daughter-in-law today, I can't tell you what it means. It is everything to me because I want to be loved by people, I guess we all do, but there is nothing like feeling like that you did the best you could. It wasn't perfect. And what you did at home was not perfect, because we all make mistakes, but when you feel like you paid the price to do it as best as you can and you poured love into those around you, man, there is nothing like that. And there's also nothing like failure at that point. I kind of feel like maybe some of what we have said today has made some people who didn't get that done feel somehow that they have failed, but it's never too late.

I've actually had people in their 60s, and 70s, whose children are still reaching out for them, are still trying to hear those words. I love you and I thank you and I appreciate you, but you can still build a relationship even late in life. And I do hope that some of what we've said today will motivate some people to do that and to say that, "I do care and I'm going to call that son or that daughter that I've been estranged from and I'm just going to tell them how much I love them, how much I appreciate them." It'll be interesting to see what would happen.

Roger Marsh: And that concludes a very powerful presentation from Pastor Ronnie Floyd today here on Family Talk. And if you'd like to learn more about his information, you'll find it all at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Earlier this week, we shared with you about a special new document that has been prepared by Dr. James Dobson, along with Gary Bauer, who's the senior vice president of public policy here at the Dobson Policy Institute. It's an open letter to President Biden and Gary's joining me here in studio yet again today. Gary, welcome back to the Family Talk broadcast today.

Gary Bauer: Thank you, Roger, great to be with you.

Roger Marsh: This is a powerful document, this open letter to President Biden that you and Dr. Dobson have been working on pretty fastidiously for the past couple of weeks. And as you mentioned a couple of days ago, it wasn't difficult, unfortunately for you to find citations for all the issues that you have with Biden policy. Talk about why it's important to not just attack someone's character. I mean, there's been a lot of that mudslinging going around, especially in the area of a guy like Donald Trump, and to actually say, well, no, wait. This is not about Joe Biden the person. This is about the Biden administration's policies that were supposed to bring us together. But now you found nearly 30 examples of criminal activity, basically where they're using Lawgate? What was the term that they used?

Gary Bauer: Yeah, lawfare. Right.

Roger Marsh: Lawfare, yeah. To divide us. Talk about why this letter's important.

Gary Bauer: Well, Roger, we're living in an extraordinary time in the country, and virtually every one of our key constitutional liberties that are outlined in the Bill of Rights are under attack. I still run into a lot of our fellow believers who will say to us... And I know Dr. Dobson gets frustrated with this, "I'm just not interested in government." Well, what we're trying to say in this letter is that government is interested in you, and if you don't pay attention to this interest our current government has in us, it is going to hurt our religious liberty, our families, our children, and our futures. Roger, I try not to get into the Washington DC exaggeration business, but I actually think this letter could end up being historically significant because I think the country is at a crossroads.

There's powerful forces trying to rip us away out of the rich soil of Judeo-Christian civilization, and turn this into a totally secular America built not on the idea that liberty comes from God, but built on the idea that liberty comes from Caesar, from government. So this letter means to not only get the attention of the President and let him know that we believe more than half of the country does not want these policies, but we also want the letter to be a wake-up call for millions of Americans that don't fully understand yet what's at stake and why three quarters of us tell the pollsters that we think America's headed in the wrong direction.

Roger Marsh: Well, I'll tell you when you read this letter, and you can find it at drjamesdobbson.org/bidenopenletter. That's all. Just think of it all one word. There's no hash marks there. drjamesdobbson.org/bidenopenletter. When you read these, Gary, it's shocking. You and I follow the news and the headlines every day and we see how valuable it is to get truth being told to us. But the way you've lined these up, nearly 30 of these offenses with regard to racism in terms of dividing people by race or open border policies that are risking America's welfare, even the one that just boggles my mind is here's the President of the United States saying, "We want to protect everyone and

especially ensure the safety of women and their wellbeing." And then these policies come in that actually are a threat to them that really put women at risk. It's just mind-boggling how they'll say one thing and do the other. This letter just aims to kind of put their foot to the fire and say, "Hey, let's walk the talk here."

Gary Bauer: That's right. Roger, I think everybody's been a little shell shocked at how quickly the transgender issues seem to explode all over the country. And it's complicated in some areas. But one thing that Americans have looked at and said, "Oh, now wait a minute." That's not right. And that's this idea that if a boy claims he's a girl, he has a right to go into your daughter or your granddaughter's locker room, her changing room, her bathroom, he's got a right to compete against her in high school or college sports.

Well, that's just absurd. The public is overwhelmingly against it, and states are passing laws prohibiting that. So what did the Biden administration do? This is unbelievable. They're literally threatening to cut off the lunch program for poor children in public schools if that school won't let a boy go into your daughter or granddaughter's bathroom and changing room.

Roger Marsh: Incredible.

Gary Bauer: They're using the full power of the federal government to eliminate safe spaces for our wives and daughters and granddaughters. It's outrageous. We can't sit still and be silent about it, and that's just one of the things we outline in what, again, I think will end up being an historic letter. We want literally millions of people to join with us in signing onto this letter.

Roger Marsh: Well, Gary, thank you for the work that you and Doctor did in putting this together and making this available. And thanks for being with us today here on Family Talk. Appreciate the time.

Gary Bauer: Great to be with you.

Roger Marsh: Okay, the letter that Gary mentioned is an open letter to President Biden, written by Dr. James Dobson, Gary Bauer, and the president of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, Joe Waresak. It's available for free when you go to drjamesdobson.org/bidenopenletter. That's drjamesdobson.org/bidenopenletter. Read it, look at all the citations. You'll be shocked, but you'll also be encouraged to know that we're paying attention to this, and we then can have hopefully a fair conversation about these issues that are so important to us.

You read the letter, put your name on it, sign it, and then see the thousands of, like Gary said, hopefully millions of people who will join in on this campaign and on this crusade to literally take our nation back to where God intended it to be during that first Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thank you so much for celebrating Flag Day with us today here on the Family Talk broadcast, and we encourage you to have a great weekend. Have a wonderful Father's Day, and join us again Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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