



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Changing the World Through Prayer – Part 1

Guest(s): Dr. Dick Eastman

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Prayer aligns our hearts with God, and we are called to be faithful and obedient to the Lord when it comes to prayer. So when we truly put these things into practice, God can surely do incredible things in our lives. Today we're going to hear a classic program featuring Dr. James Dobson and his special guest, Dr. Dick Eastman, as Dick will be sharing about how Christ has moved in his own life. Dr. Dick Eastman is the chief prayer officer of Every Home for Christ, a ministry that has planted gospel messages and homes worldwide since 1946.

Dick has served as the international president of Every Home for Christ for more than 34 years. He currently also serves as president of America's National Prayer Committee, a group of evangelical leaders who plan the annual National Day of Prayer event. Dick Eastman is also the originator of The Change the World School of Prayer, training millions of Christians worldwide about the power and intimacy of prayer. He's the author of numerous best-selling books, and along with his wife Dee, they have two grown daughters and several grandchildren. Now, let's join our own Dr. James Dobson and his special guest Dr. Dick Eastman right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: You and your team have literally taken the gospel to the ends of the earth, and that's not an exaggeration. We're going to talk more about that prayer ministry that God laid on you very, very early, and you've been at it for a long time. You have been the keynote speaker at many national and international events on prayer and leadership and evangelism. You've written 14 books on these topics, and you've conducted hundreds of hours of seminars and workshops including the monthly Change the World School of Prayer. There's so many components to the work that you've done, Dick. I admire you, and I thank God for you. This training has impacted more than three million Christians in 120 nations. You are obviously a very busy man, but the work continues.

Dr. Dick Eastman: It does. It certainly does.

Dr. James Dobson: We're so glad to have you here today to talk about this. You and I were in a mutual support group back in the '90s.

Dr. Dick Eastman: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: And we got together and prayed together.

Roger Marsh: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: So we're kind of soul brothers in some way. Let me take you back to your college days because you had a pretty rough road. You've always been just, you've had barely enough money to support what you felt God was asking you to do, and that was true in college, wasn't it?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, when I first went to college, I remember my mother saying goodbye to me, putting me on the train and handing me a \$20 bill. That's exactly what I started with.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Dr. Dick Eastman: So I had to get a job right away, and just miracle after miracle of how the Lord sustained us and just set in motion the things He's doing today. But those are great times that really teach you to depend on the Lord.

Dr. James Dobson: As a matter of fact, let's go back earlier than that because you had pretty tough childhood, didn't you?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, yeah. My father, I never ever knew him having health. Even when he passed away, as he was in his last moments, I asked my mother, "How long has dad been regularly in the hospital for months at a time?" And she said, "I was thinking about that yesterday, and it's been 29 years," where up to three to five months or more in the hospital. So we just didn't have money. I remember I was a paperboy. I delivered like so many young guys did. And I had picked up the newspaper one day, there had been a track meet the day before, maybe it was that morning, and it was an evening paper. I opened up in the sports page to see Henry, or my idol back then, or whatever it was. And there was my picture, that someone was at the school, and I was running in socks because I couldn't-

Dr. James Dobson: Afford track shoes.

Dr. Dick Eastman: ... afford track shoes. It had my name and it said, "Socks askew running in the ..."

Dr. James Dobson: That really does illustrate it. Was it really that bad?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, it was a real struggle. It was a struggle. Yet during those days, the Lord had His hand on us and working into my life. It was a season. Now you look back at and just say, "Lord, thank you for what you've done."

Dr. James Dobson: How many years have you been married now?

Dr. Dick Eastman: 51. In fact, I decided this one night late, we were up together and I just thought, and we were sitting really close and it was real cozy.

Dr. James Dobson: I understand that.

Dr. Dick Eastman: I said, "I need to tell you something." And she graciously said, "What?" And I said, "I love you." And she just jerked away from me. I mean literally jerked. I thought, "Oh boy, I've missed the mark here." And when I said to her, "Don't you have something to say?" She said, "Well, what am I supposed to say?" And I said, "Well, usually when a young man says to a young lady, I love you, they say back, I love you too." And she said, "I can't say that." And then I said, "Well, do you think you ever could?" And she said this, "Well, maybe in six months and then again maybe never," which set up an encounter with the Lord three days later that really changed our lives.

So in the afternoon of that third day, I was in prayer and had this in our closet, the big closet in our dorm room, and the Lord just began to speak to me and made what now seems like unbelievable promises. People might think you're making this up, but like, "You're going to be involved in millions of souls coming into the kingdom." Well, I was dating Dee who had been working at the Billy Graham Association as a correspondent secretary. So I said, "Oh Lord, you mean I'm going to have a ministry like Billy Graham?" And he said, really I heard this in my heart, in my spirit, "No, these will be prayed into the kingdom." And then all of a sudden, and this is no exaggeration, I heard in my heart, "And Dee will marry you." And I said, "Oh, thank you, Jesus. Thank you." And then I stopped and said, "Pardon me, God, would it be all right if you tell Dee this before I do it?" And he said, "I am taking care of that now."

Dr. James Dobson: The miracle is, He did.

Dr. Dick Eastman: I need to add one thing though. She asked me to pick her up from work where she was working at the end of the day. So I went and picked her up, and she looked at me, I still can remember the dress she had on, and she said, "Let's go out to eat tonight." She was asking me on a date. After we ate, she said, "Let's go down and park by the lake."

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my goodness.

Dr. Dick Eastman: So I said, "Well, okay." And we agreed, on our dates, we would pray together. She has a beautiful voice and sometimes she would sing. She sang solos with a choir in college. She looked at me and said, "Would it be all right if I sing?" And I

said, "Well, sure, okay." She took both my hands, started to cry and sang the popular wedding song back then, I Love You Truly. And she only sang the first line, threw her arms around me, and that was our proposal.

Dr. James Dobson: You know what, Dick? We can see now that the Lord has answered that prayer. She has been your partner, your friend, your wife, your lover for all these years. She is one great lady. And I'm talking about Dee Eastman.

Dr. Dick Eastman: She's had an office by me all these years. And oh, one thing I should add is that the Lord later said to me, "See? I said to you I'm taking care of it now? I'm going to take care of the rest of what I promised you."

Dr. James Dobson: So your whole life really has been a fulfillment of that revelation in a prayer closet.

Dr. Dick Eastman: Oh, yes. In fact, 20 years old. So it's been great.

Dr. James Dobson: And really, that led to Every Home for Christ.

Dr. Dick Eastman: Yes, it did.

Dr. James Dobson: Would you explain what Every Home for Christ is? Are you literal about that?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Yeah, it really is. Some have said that they appreciate the name because the name actually reflects exactly what we do and what our focus is. Every Home for Christ, actually sometimes people think I founded the ministry, but it was founded in 1946 in Canada and became a literature ministry, just sending literature to the missionaries. Our founder, he was a Canadian, but was out in Japan with another Canadian missionary, and trying to reach people at the train stations in Tokyo. And for every one person they could give a gospel booklet to, 10 got by him and they prayed that night, "Oh God, how could we reach a whole nation?" And he put on their heart dividing the country up into prefectures and into districts and start a campaign to take the gospel literally no matter how long it takes to every household, every home. And thus was born the Every Home crusade part of the Every Home campaign.

Dr. James Dobson: And you're talking about people knocking on doors of people they don't know and sharing the gospel with them door by door by door?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Literally. And keep in mind that the early church in Acts 5, when the authorities, they had arrested the disciples, the apostles, and they said, "You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching." And we wonder, could that have been literal? Because when you get to the end of Acts 5:42, it says this is how they did, it says, "Daily, in the temple courts and to every house, they never stopped proclaiming the gospel." So what we're seeking to do is to do that literally. We've now actually had Every Home campaigns in 215 nations.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, how'd you get involved in it?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, during the Jesus movement in California, we started a prayer center for young people that when they finished high school, before going to college, we asked them to give a year to come and help pray day and night prayer. And we called it the Prayer Corps. 10 years before that, President Kennedy had started the Peace Corps, and I thought the only way we're going to have peace is more prayer. We started this and started mobilizing young people, and over about four years, we had a hundred young people give a year of their lives. I've often been interviewed and said, "Well, how did your prayer ministry begin?" I say, "With a century worth of prayer." Well, what does that mean? A hundred young people giving a year to pray day and night in assigned times. And that's how our ministry began. And our founder heard about that and said to me, "Why don't you come and take what you've learned and put it into a school of prayer and take it to the nations?" And that's exactly how I got involved in this ministry.

Dr. James Dobson: And you have been president now for how long?

Dr. Dick Eastman: 28 years.

Dr. James Dobson: 28 years. Shirley and I were invited to a celebration of 25 years.

Dr. Dick Eastman: That was our 25th year as president. Yes, I remember that was such an honor.

Dr. James Dobson: You showed films and slides of you being in just all around the world. It's amazing what the Lord has done through this ministry.

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, it's just our policy. When we go to a home, our policy is to leave actually two messages, one for adults and one for children, in the language of the people there. And then they can respond by sending a decision card or a response card to the nearest office, and we have them all over the world. And then we follow them up with a four-part Bible correspondence course. And then we go into the villages where you might have 10 or 20 people genuinely respond. They'll even write a testimony of how they've come to know Jesus, because that's a part of the last part of the courses. It was to write your testimony. Well, then we go in and start New Testament fellowships we call Christ Groups. And that's what's really been taking off in our ministry.

Dr. James Dobson: Ah. Well, there's so many of the components to it. The National Prayer Committee came along, what, 20 years ago?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Oh, actually more than that. I was in the very first meeting with Vonette Bright and a number of other prayer leaders. She felt led to call that meeting, the wife of Dr. Bright, Bill Bright. And that was in 1975.

Dr. James Dobson: I've got to tell you something about this. I know this, I'm going to share it. That of all the members of the National Prayer Committee, with the passing of

Vonette Bright, a great loss to the Christian community. Shirley and I loved her. I just can't even describe it. You're the last one.

Dr. Dick Eastman: That was in the original meeting. Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: The last one that was in that National Prayer Committee foundational meeting. And you're still there, but everybody else has moved on or gone on. Many of them are in heaven, aren't they?

Dr. Dick Eastman: Yeah. It is a scary thing sometimes. I was telling someone the other day when I heard that I was just seven years younger than the Pope, that really concerned me. I thought, "Oh, man." But he's young, so.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell me what the passing of Vonette Bright meant to you.

Dr. Dick Eastman: Well, Vonette, and Bill too, they're just absolute giants in the faith. And Vonette, it's interesting when I look back, and the Prayer Corps ministry we mentioned, actually the vision for that came to me in November of 1971. And if you know the history, that's the exact month in time that Vonette Bright started The Great Commission Prayer Crusade with Campus Crusade for Christ. So we have that history of being very focused on the prayer side of the coin of The Great Commission because I say one side is the prayer, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of Harvest, would thrust off forth labors." And the other side of the coin is the go ye therefore. So you've got the pray ye therefore and the go ye therefore, and Vonette lived that.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let me tell you a story that's very meaningful to Shirley and me about Vonette Bright. Shirley and I were very close friends with Bill and Vonette, and of course they were the founders and he was the president of Campus Crusade for Christ. We went out to dinner together one night, and toward the end of that meal, Vonette turned to Shirley and said, "Shirley, I've been feeling the Lord would have me step down as the executive director or the chairman of the National Day of Prayer." Vonette had founded the National Day of Prayer, and she said, "I feel there are other responsibilities for me, and I just am feeling a leading that you should succeed me in that responsibility." And Shirley smiled and she said, "Vonette, I really can't do that. We have a very busy plate. We have two children we're raising and I serve on Jim's board of directors, and that requires a lot of me. So I thank you, but I just really can't do it." And Vonette smiled and she said, "Well, Shirley, will you at least pray about it?" And Shirley said, "Of course I will."

The more Shirley prayed about Vonette's request, the more she felt God's hand in her back. And finally, Shirley said in her own prayer, before the Lord, "If you really want me to do this, I would like you to confirm it in two ways. The first is for Vonette to ask me again. I'm not going to respond to her, but if you want me to do this, I just pray that you will tell me through Vonette. And secondly," she said, "I would like you to confirm with Jim that this is something I ought to do."

So Shirley talked to me one night about it and said, this request had been made of her by Vonette Bright. And Shirley knew I would say no because we were too busy for anything else. And instead I said, "Shirley, what more important thing can you possibly do than calling the nation to prayer?" So Shirley said, "Lord, I will do it."

It has been a labor of love. And frankly, it's one of the things I'm most proud of in Shirley's Christian walk, including of course the raising of our two children. But Shirley has carried that responsibility and done it very, very well. And Vonette is responsible for it. Now, of course, she's gone on to be with the Lord, and she was one great godly lady. We absolutely loved Vonette and Bill Bright, and thank God for them and we're going to see them again someday in heaven.

Dr. Dick Eastman: Oh, it was incredible. The one thing I should comment too was that during the days of the founding of the Prayer Corps, I was doing some conferences in Christian colleges where God spontaneously would begin to speak at the end of some of our meetings of young people to sacrifice things that stood between them and the Lord. Well, actually *The Purple Pig*, it became a book.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. I have no idea.

Dr. Dick Eastman: One of my books is titled *The Purple Pig and Other Miracles*. And in that book, I tell some of the stories that were just incredible. Can you imagine young people coming to the altar? I remember one young lady coming in one college and bringing her violin, and I said, "Why you're bringing your violin?" And she said, "This has been my whole life," and she said, "I've won many awards, but I've only done it for myself. I don't even want to pick this violin up again if I can't do it for the glory of the Lord." Well, that started happening with young people in one college. There were about 8 or 10 young people, and I imagine that some things sparked others doing it, but went out to their car and brought ... Some actually took out of their car their where they were playing rock music.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Dr. Dick Eastman: I mean, it was just, in one way I want to say crazy, but it was really amazing. Well, I was going into a big conference in Michigan, and I knew God wanted to do the same thing in that conference with these young people. They were about 2,000 there. And that afternoon in prayer, the Lord asked me if I was willing to give up everything I had. And I said, "Sure, everything." "Even all the money you have on you?" "Sure." And then I said, "Well, Lord, could I just keep \$2?" And I'm hearing this in my heart. "Well, what do you want that for?" Well, he knew what I was going to say. I always buy our daughter Dina, who was just three years old then, a gift at the airport. When I go in, can I just ... He said, "Well, how much do you love me? Do you ..." And I just wept and said, "Okay, Lord, I'm going to give it all." Well, I came home from that trip and didn't have a gift for my daughter, and she was kind of acting up. I just remember this because-

Dr. James Dobson: She was expecting something from you.

Dr. Dick Eastman: ... she was a little 3-year-old. And the next morning or the next morning after that, I opened the front door and there was a gigantic box that had come from some place in Michigan. I opened it up, it said, "For your daughter," and it makes me want to cry now, she said, "For your daughter." And it was this giant stuffed purple pig. But I forgot to say about when I was in prayer that afternoon in this auditorium alone before the meeting, the Lord said to me, and this was the lesson of the Purple Pig, "If you'll give me everything you have, I will give you everything I have."

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Dr. Dick Eastman: And I thought that's a good deal.

Roger Marsh: Well, what a beautiful story about how God cares for even the smallest details of our lives. Friend, you've been listening to part one of Dr. James Dobson's conversation with Dr. Dick Eastman here on Family Talk. Be sure to join us again tomorrow as Dr. Eastman will tell us about the American Center for Prayer. He'll also share practical tips to strengthen your prayer life, as well as more stories about world-changing prayer.

Now, by the way, if you'd like to learn more about the ministry of Every Home for Christ or some of Dr. Eastman's many tools and resources for a powerful prayer life, you'll find helpful links for those on our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Prayer is such a vital part of our lives every day, especially as it pertains to the raising of our children. As a matter of fact, Dr. Dobson has said, "The ultimate goal for people of faith is to give each child an understanding of scripture and a lifelong passion for Jesus Christ." This I believe is the most important responsibility for those of us who have been entrusted with the care and nurturance of children. Creating a spiritual climate in your home that can help nurture your child's faith is your most important assignment, mom and dad. What will be your legacy on behalf of those you love, especially your children? The new resource from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute will help you accomplish that goal. It's a PDF download called "Sharing Jesus with Your Children." It provides strategies that can help ensure that your child will be ready to accept God's gift of grace when the time is right. To receive your copy, simply go online. It's absolutely free. Just go to drjamesdobson.org/sharing-jesus-with-your-children. Again, it's a free PDF from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Go to drjamesdobson.org/sharing-jesus-with-your-children.

If you enjoy listening to the wisdom of Dr. Dobson here on the Family Talk broadcast, I have an exciting new resource to share with you. It's designed to help reach the next generation of parents and children. The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has remastered Dr. Dobson's biblically-based transforming

truths into 60-second audio messages. The brand new feature is called the Dr. Dobson Minute, and it will provide young families with practical insights that will strengthen marriages and help build better parenting skills. Now, you can listen to a free preview when you go to drdobsonminute.org. That's drdobsonminute.org.

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

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 for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself. And remember, your legacy matters.