



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Men and Marriage – Part 2

Guest(s): George Gilder

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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: Welcome back to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. And here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we are so very grateful that you have chosen to make us a part of your day. Thank you for your prayers and faithful financial support throughout the years. We pray that you are healthy and remain connected to God, anchored in your faith and practicing your faith in the public square as well as in your community. We know that that can be difficult and that's why we are here to offer you encouragement. Together we can do this in the midst of an ever-changing culture and serve as a godly model for others as well. In that spirit, we present to you part two of a classic conversation between our host and founder, Dr. James Dobson and his guest, author and economist, George Gilder. We have entitled both yesterday's and today's programs "Men and Marriage," and that's exactly what these men have been discussing.

Together they've been unpacking some long-term hot button issues, like the downside of the feminist movement and the assault on biblical truth in the public square. That assault includes the attack by secular culture on masculinity. And media inspired confusion on traditional male and female and husband and wife roles inside and outside of the home, coming from a secular and subversive agenda. George Gilder also explains to Dr. Dobson some of the governmental, medical and societal factors at play for both men and women that affect the institutions of marriage and the family. They'll be tackling everything from poverty to race and the divine ordination for the uniqueness of the male and female creation and makeup. In fact, George Gilder will share what prevents new couples from achieving the marital success and realization of God's true plan for them. This includes what he calls, pure media fantasy. There is so much to cover, but first I'd like to tell you about George Gilder.

He was born in 1939. He grew up in New York and Massachusetts. His father lost his life flying for the United States Army Air Forces during World War II. George Gilder attended Harvard University and graduated in 1962. He returned to Harvard as a fellow at the Harvard Institute of Politics and edited the Ripon Forum, the newspaper of the Liberal Republican Ripon Society. George Gilder

also served in the United States Marine Corps. He has lectured throughout his career on economics, technology, education and social theory. He also has addressed audiences everywhere from Washington, D.C. to the Vatican. And he has appeared at conferences, public policy events, and on TV and radio news talk programs. He's the author of several books including *Men and Marriage*, which was published in 1986 and also *Wealth and Poverty* released in 2012. So now let's return to this classic Dr. Dobson conversation that I think you'll find most fascinating. Here is part two of "Men and Marriage" on today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: George, the man who does not have a family then, how does he see life differently than a married man with responsibility for a family? Describe the plight of the modern, unmarried man.

George Gilder: He is disconnected from future generations. He's disconnected from the biological fabric of life, children leading on into the future. Man's link to the future passes through the womb of a woman. When that link is broken, he is set adrift and he is abandoned to his own devices. And it's a short term compulsive sex drive. It's just a new argument to lure women into bed.

Dr. James Dobson: Short-term goals and short-term satisfaction, which mitigates against the stability of the culture. That's essentially your theme.

George Gilder: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: The essence of it is what, George, you said in *Men and Marriage*, that the woman's contribution to the culture, to civilization, to the continuity of the race is secure. It's defined by biology. She is the producer of the next generation. Now with artificial insemination, we don't even need sexual intercourse for it to happen. The man's role is minimal. Her role is defined, her role is secure, her importance is secure. His is manufactured by the culture. He's either given an important role or he doesn't have one. It's not defined biologically, it's defined culturally. I'm not saying that-

George Gilder: The way Margaret Mead put it is that motherhood is a biological fact. Fatherhood is a social invention. There are many societies anthropologically where the role of the father, where paternity is not even acknowledged. Fatherhood has to be enforced by society.

Dr. James Dobson: All right. If that society cuts him out, if government pays the bills and leaves him with no protector and provider role, if they live in a government housing project where when it needs painting the man doesn't do it. The government man comes in and paints or fixes the screens or provides a new house and sends the check each month. He is now defined out of an important role and all of that energy that would've gone into the building and growing and developing of the family and therefore the culture, goes into antisocial behavior where you dare not walk the streets at night. Now, the liberal sociologists will look at that and

say poverty causes crime. That there is this deep anger because they're have nots. Well, there've been have nots in the past who haven't perpetrated that kind of violence against society. So it's something other than poverty, isn't it?

George Gilder: It's a pattern that you can imagine if you try to consider yourself growing up in a inner city household, the father is only an occasional visitor in the household a lot of the time. And because he's only occasional visitor, his position is insecure. The woman knows that she's not dependent on him for support, so she doesn't respect him fully. And because he's not fully respected, he's often angry. He drinks a lot. And imagine that you're brought up as a teenage girl in that household, a lot of times liberals say that welfare is insignificant. It's not a major force in these people's lives. But just imagine you're a girl and the state offers you way out of all that. It says you can have a room of your own, an apartment of your own, free. You can have several hundred dollars every month free. You can have independence. You can go out into the world and assume adult responsibilities.

Dr. James Dobson: Be your own boss.

George Gilder: Be your own boss, all under one condition, get pregnant. If you have an illegitimate child and you do not marry the father, then all this is yours. An apartment of your own, a reliable source of income month after month, a position in the community are all yours provided you don't marry the father of your children. What's happened in the welfare state is that fatherhood has been made illegitimate. And the only legitimate pursuit that's endorsed by the government and the culture is illegitimacy.

Dr. James Dobson: Which runs at 80% in some states.

George Gilder: Which runs at 80%. As you would expect, this deal is increasingly accepted by girls in this culture. Now the boys on the other hand, they grow up and they don't have any regular paternal disciplines. So they go to the streets to find their manhood. And sometimes they gravitate into crime because violence is exciting and violence accords with the greater strength of young boys, their energies, their aggressions, find some kind of fulfillment in being a criminal. Or they turn to drugs sometimes which offers immediate intense gratifications. Or they may be captured by the very patriarchal religions that tend to succeed in the inner city.

Dr. James Dobson: All right, George, I want to kind of turn a corner again and ask you about something that really fascinates me and I want to get your perspective on it. If you sit down and you interview 1000 married women about their relationships with their husbands, and you start talking to them about what frustrates them the most, the areas of greatest antagonism and their wish list, the things that they wish were there in the relationship that are not there. You will typically hear complaints about the lack of softness in a man, that maybe the more feminine side to him. He doesn't talk to me, I can't get through his outer shell. He doesn't seem concerned about the things I'm concerned about. The romantic

side of the relationship isn't important to him. He's preoccupied with his work. Sometimes I don't think he knows the kids' names.

There is a frustration on women that men are not more like them than they are. You are saying that they shouldn't be more like women than they are. That softer side is not necessarily the target. We don't want to feminize men. How can we bring the sexes together without compromising a man what he was made to be by God, who he is anatomically and biologically and yet link them up with the sexes in a way that's harmonious? Wasn't that a great question? That impressed me.

George Gilder:

The answer is that men who are truly confident in their role, who are confident as providers and protectors for their family, who feel needed and loved by their family, find it much easier to be tender and nurturant than men who somehow feel threatened all the time. And it's the men who feel threatened who feel that perhaps the welfare state, for example, that welfare actually could support this woman as well as he can. Or the man who feels he can't quite make it at his job, supporting the family is very difficult and he may soon lose his job, he feels threatened. And when masculinity is threatened, it tends to retreat to the shell as you describe it. And then the woman tries to replace the man in some sense and then you have them fighting each other and you have all the conflicts and frictions that so often lead to divorces in contemporary life.

Dr. James Dobson:

Okay, George, I want to turn a corner and talk to you about another aspect of your book, *Men and Marriage* that fascinates me. And that is the cultural attempt now to feminize men and masculinize women. And as a matter of fact in my book, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*, page 140, I described the attempt of the media to masculinize women and feminize men. And see what you think about this paragraph. "The image of women now being depicted by the media is a ridiculous combination of wide-eyed fantasy and feminist propaganda. Today's woman is always shown as gorgeous of course, but she's more, much more. She roars around the countryside in a racy sports car while her male companion sits on the other side of the front seat anxiously biting his nails.

She exudes self-confidence from the very tips of her fingers, and for good reason, she could dismantle any man alive with her karate chops and flying kicks to the teeth. She is deadly accurate with a pistol and she plays tennis or football like a pro. She speaks in perfectly organized sentences as though her spontaneous remarks were being planned and written by a team of tiny English professors sitting in the back of her pretty head. She's a sexual gourmet to be sure, but she wouldn't be caught dead in a wedding ceremony. She has the grand good fortune of being perpetually young. She never becomes ill, nor does she ever make a mistake or appear foolish. In short, she is virtually omniscient except for a curious inability to do anything traditionally feminine such as cook, sow or raise children. Truly today's screen heroine is a remarkable specimen, standing proud and uncompromising with a wide stance and hands-on hips. Oh

yeah, this baby has come a long, long way, no doubt about that." Have you seen that trend in the media?

George Gilder: Pure media fantasy. It's even more of a fantasy than similar male fantasies that are found throughout the media. And it's more destructive because it implicitly says that women can only be really fulfilled if they become men. And this is the paradox of the woman's movement. Nothing makes them more angry in my book than my assertion that women are sexually superior and that their role in the family is central to all civilized life. They're enraged when I say women are sexually superior because they've devoted all their lives to becoming men and emulating men. But of course they never can become men. And since they never can become men, they end up bitter and frustrated in this pursuit. And so by pursuing a false ideal conveyed by the media, they betray their inner natures as women and end up often being very unhappy in their lives.

Dr. James Dobson: What happens when men try to become like women? There's a great emphasis now on men being able to cry. You hear both sides of the political spectrum talking about that one, and there is a place for it. And I have a tender side to me and often when Shirley and I pray together, especially about our children, the tears come to my eyes. They do it this moment. So there's nothing wrong with men crying. But there is something wrong it seems to me with the attempt to make men so sensitive that the strength associated with masculinity is watered down. Boy, I'm going to get in trouble for that. Do you understand what I mean?

George Gilder: Absolutely. So you're certainly right. The society depends on having two sexes, and men will play the more disciplinary forceful role which accords with their very biological and psychological natures. And the woman will play a more nurturant role with regard to children, and will tend to uphold the moral order which originates with a woman with the child at her breast. That is the essential image at the foundation of the moral order. It's the value of the particular individual child. The really sacred and inviolable nature of human life is understood instinctively by women with children. And men have to be taught it by women. Men don't have this kind of spontaneous response to infants that women do and-

Dr. James Dobson: Now they should become nurturing to children. Children need nurturing fathers. You're not opposed to that?

George Gilder: Yes I am. Children need fathers who are fathers and who play the male role in the household, who offer the tough love that you've long celebrated. They need real fathers. They don't need two mothers.

Dr. James Dobson: They need you to be nurtured without being a mother though.

George Gilder: That's right. Except what happens is that the feminist confused the language to such an extent that it's impossible to really differentiate roles anymore. And you end up by using their terminology, you implicitly sort of accept their values.

There aren't fathers and mothers, there's just parenting. There's not a difference between the two sexes in their relation to children. They're the same. And in effect, the whole family turns into a bowl of mush and pretty soon both sexes try to get out of the mush and you have a divorce. And that's what happens with these families where the roles disappear, you have enormous incidents of divorces.

Dr. James Dobson: There has long been a dream of feminists that men would share the child-rearing responsibilities equally and stay home with children as much as women do. It has not happened. You would take the position, I'm sure that it will never happen because it contradicts something deep within that aggressive spirit that sends a man out to conquer the world.

George Gilder: Right. I think it never will happen. And it's insulting to both men and women because the real implication is that the work of the world can be done part-time. And that the work of the family is also sort of a part-time job and the man's role is very difficult. The provider, protector role is hard and it requires tough love. And the mother's role is also very difficult and requires full-time commitment. So this idea that you can raise children part-time and move in and out of the workforce as you wish is just a complete illusion. It leads to economic failure and family breakdown. And that's indeed what we find when this kind of pattern is pursued.

Dr. James Dobson: What would you say, George, to the men who are listening to us? We have a surprising number of men who do listen to us on the way to work in the morning or whenever. What advice do you have to them in role identity, in especially a Christian context of caring for their families, being sensitive to their wives and their children, wanting to give their children of themselves more than provision and protection? I believe we're called upon for spiritual leadership and other things. So how do they find that masculinity that you're talking about that's different in every context from the feminine role, and yet keep themselves sensitive to that other side of themselves?

George Gilder: Well, I don't think there's a great conflict. I think men who are confident in their roles as men, as fathers will spontaneously be loving to their children. They will respond to their children sensitively. They will respond to their wives needs. When problems arise is when they get all ambivalent and conflicted about being men. And they have to understand their first role is to support the family and to lead the family. And this is biblical and it's practical and the woman really wants it even when she denies it. She really wants the man to provide for the family and in some sense lead it, in all societies. You often hear people talk about matriarchal societies, well, there's never been a matriarchal society. It's a pure myth. There are some societies which are matrilineal as they say, that means that things are inherited through the woman's line.

But in general, all societies are patriarchal, that is authority is associated with the man in male, female relations. This ideal of complete equality in this domain just can never be fulfilled. And for men to try to fulfill it is to betray their very

nature as men, and also to betray the real desires of their wives because their wives are necessarily dominant in the home. They are sexually superior. The woman's role with the children is indispensable, crucial, and undeniable. So the man who gives up his role as external leader of the family, as essential supporter of the family, ends up becoming contemptible in a way. His wife doesn't really respect him, even though she may say that that's what she wants. It just is not true that men can give up the provider role. It's necessary for men to really work hard to commit their lives to very hard toil.

And it's very gratifying when in exchange for this toil, they gain access to this special circle of moral and spiritual peace and prosperity that the family can be when it's working and which the mother necessarily maintains. She will necessarily be the central figure in maintaining this home environment.

Dr. James Dobson: And your apprehensions about the future of the family as spelled out in *Sexual Suicide* in 1973, and *Men and Marriage* now is pretty ominous.

George Gilder: That is very ominous. But I also see a counter movement led by people like yourself across this country to reestablish the family in the center of American life. And I think that movement will prevail because it's based on God's truth and God's truth will triumph.

Dr. James Dobson: George, anytime you're within 500 miles of here, you come by and see us. Will you?

George Gilder: I'd love to.

Dr. James Dobson: I'll work you half to death. God bless you friend.

George Gilder: Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

Roger Marsh: And this concludes our two-part conversation featuring our own Dr. James Dobson and his guest George Gilder here on Family Talk. This discussion featuring these two godly men was recorded several years ago, and yet it still remains relevant even today. And with prayer and a closer relationship with the Lord, there can be God-led men and women who will pave the way for supporting marriages and families to benefit the next generation. If you'd like to learn more about George Gilder or if you'd like to share this program with a friend or family member, all you have to do is visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. As we've been hearing over the past couple of days here on the broadcast, men can definitely use some support and encouragement as they have a big role to play as leaders of their families. A God-led dad is so fundamentally important to his sons and daughters.

And if you are a father who could use a spiritual boost right now, be sure to sign up for our free five-day email series called "Dads, It's Time to Step Up." Each day you'll receive an email containing some thought-provoking words to help you

become a better father for your kids. Kids are only children for such a short time and that time seems to go by in a blink of an eye, doesn't it? Don't hesitate. Sign up today for the free five-day email series called "Dads, It's Time to Step Up." To start receiving yours, click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. This is a great resource to help you invest in your sons and your daughters. And if you're a dad who's looking for a better way to connect with your son, you will love the brand new devotional from our friends at Trail Life USA.

It's a book called *Trail Ready, 101 Devotions for Dads with Boys*. We'll be happy to send you a copy as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute today. So to reserve yours, simply go online to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk and then click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page. Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and you've been listening to Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love. Have a blessed and peaceful weekend and join us again Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.