



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs

**Guest(s):** U.S. Sen. Josh Hawley

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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.

**Dr. Tim Clinton:** Friends, welcome to Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host of the broadcast here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm honored to serve alongside Dr. Dobson as resident authority on mental health and relationships here at the JDFI. Thank you for joining us today. The strength of our nation rests on the shoulders of families. As Dr. Dobson has famously said, the family is at the bedrock of the bottom of the super structure of our culture. All other institutions and things in our society rest upon it and come up out of it. Right now there is such a strong attack on the family and a real game changer for families are strong God led husbands and fathers, men that are really embracing their manhood with open arms to the Lord. That's what we need. Our guest today just wrote a book on that very subject.

He is U.S. Senator Josh Hawley and his book is entitled *Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs*. He's a Republican senator from the great state of Missouri. In 2017, Josh proudly served a two-year term as the 42nd Attorney General in Missouri. Josh earned his law degrees from Yale in 2006. As a leading constitutional lawyer, he was a lead attorney in the momentous and historic U.S. Supreme Court Hobby lobby religious freedom case. Josh and his wife Erin have three kids, I love that. Horse named Snap. I really like that. Welcome into Family Talk Senator Hawley. What a delight to have you. Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley send their regards.

**Sen. Josh Hawley:** Wonderful. It's great to be with you. And I just want to say thank you to Dr. Dobson and Shirley for years of faithful ministry that have benefited me and my family as a husband and a father. We've got Dr. Dobson's books everywhere, so thank you.

**Dr. Tim Clinton:** Indeed. As we begin Josh, D.C. don't even really know what to say. A lot of people are earnestly crying out to God. They're stunned I think in a lot of ways, confused, angry, frustrated with what they see going on. But are you hopeful? Are you encouraged and can you give us just a brief update on how you're doing?

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I'm doing great. Thank you for asking and my family is doing great and for me, those two things are intimately related. I'm the father of three and my wife and I have been married 13 years and I come home every night to my wife and kids and to me that is ground zero. That's what keeps me grounded. I've got a wife who loves the Lord, who constantly calls me to follow the Lord faithfully and that is just the linchpin of things for me. Am I hopeful about the future? I am and the reason for that is really what I write about in the book. I just believe that it is a biblical Scriptural truth that one person who follows the Lord, one person who answers the call, God's call in his life can change the destiny of families and neighborhoods and communities. And I've seen so many men who have done that in my own life. I see them doing that around this country and because of that I'm incredibly hopeful.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hey, in your spare time as a senator, you wrote a book recently, *Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs*. I went through every page of it. It's a moving read. It really is. Encouraged my heart. I have a real love for biblical masculinity and calling men back to that very thing. But talk to us about the word virtues, why you chose that and why it's so significant to the book.

Sen. Josh Hawley: I really think that if you look at what the Bible teaches about what it means to be a man, I mean ultimately of course it means to grow up into the pattern of Jesus Christ. What is it that Paul says? "That we hope to attain to the maturity after the stature of the fullness of Christ." It's a mouthful, but it's a great moving, powerful vision and that really begins with and centers on our character. So virtue is just another word for character and I think that for men, what's it look like to that journey to manhood? It's a journey to character. Having our character formed to become more like Jesus.

Dr. Tim Clinton: There is a war going on in America. People are seeing masculinity as toxic. Even boyishness is being, like we need to fix that. They need to be medicated or liberated from all this. Josh, what is it that's out there? Why is it so strong that kind of male strength is seen as dangerous, compatible with oppression, hateful, patriarchy, that kind of thing. It's just unbelievable.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I really think that this is a message that originates on the left and they've been preaching it now for decades. I mean back to the 1960s in this country at the very least, if not earlier, and it originates I think from their dislike of our Christian heritage and our Christian tradition. The attack on men is really an attack on the Christian heritage of this nation in my view. I mean it really is an attack on the biblical truth that there is such a thing as men and women. There are two genders, not 2000.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Sen. Josh Hawley: That it is good to be a man, that it is good to be a woman, that God has a purpose and a destiny for men and women as such, and the modern left has just decided they cannot abide that, they cannot abide that truth and they want men who are passive, men who are consumers, men who do as they are told

not men who will go out and be fathers and husbands and protect their families and take a stand. Those are not the kind of men they want and that is the struggle that we see going on right now in our culture.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Senator Hawley, early in the book you make a statement that I loved, "All is not well with men in America", and you did a lot of research and Josh, as you looked in, you talked about crime, you talked about fatherlessness, you talked about how especially that younger generation is struggling with work to our boys, struggling with performing in school and more, but what caught your attention? What kind of shocked you about what you're seeing with men in America?

Sen. Josh Hawley: I think the thing that really, out of all the statistics which are grim, the one that really, really stands out is the father crisis, the lack of fathers in America. We are living in an epidemic of fatherlessness. More Americans grow up now without a dad in the home than ever before in American history. More Americans grow up without a dad in the home than almost anywhere else in the world. I mean it's really, really striking and the consequences of that are immense. If you take a father out of the home, what happens? Poverty skyrockets, crime gets out of control, mental health issues metastasized. Conversely, if you put a dad back in the home, those things begin to resolve in ways that are really, really amazing. And I think the message of that is, is that we need fathers who are going to be responsible, who are going to be involved in their kids' lives and are going to be contributors to their wives. I mean men who will take responsibility for actually contributing to their marriages, contributing to their families and being the providers that we need them to be.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. What's scary too, Josh is as you referred, they're spending most of their time around screens, leisure, porn and more. And you're right, mental health issues like depression, drug use and abuse, suicide are soaring.

Sen. Josh Hawley: And it's really rooted, I believe in the message that men have been preached, which is that they are toxic, that masculinity is always cancerous and downright evil, and men are told that they need to be passive consumers, androgynous, passive consumers,

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes, for sure.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Don't be men, don't be masculine.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Just look at some stuff on the screen and entertain yourself. That's been the message to men and that is in itself a toxic message.

Dr. Tim Clinton: The idea that masculinity is toxic, the APA, the American Psychological Association and more came out with quote, "If you practice traditional or you're raising your kids in traditional masculinity, that's toxic and needs to be

corrected." Josh, in the midst of it's like, oh, toxic behavior is different. Masculinity is not toxic.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I think what we're seeing is that the lack of a healthy masculinity leads to toxic behavior. So it's really the other way around than what the left claims, the left claims that all masculinity is inherently toxic, not true. If you have a vision for your life that is about being responsible, taking on responsibility, if you have a vision for your life, it's about sacrificing for other people as a husband would, as a father would, as a builder does, then the way you live your life is going to be a credit to you. It's going to be a credit to your children. It's going to be a help and credit to your community.

But on the other hand, if you think life is all about you and it's really just about, "Hey, life is meaningless, I just got to get as much pleasure and enjoyment for me in this moment until I die," then the kind of behavior you're going to engage in will be truly toxic. That's what the left fundamentally misunderstands. The gospel of self that they are preaching to men and women in this country leads to toxic self, sometimes even violent behavior. You want to fix that, give men a vision of what it looks like to live in a self-sacrificial way.

Dr. Tim Clinton: In your book, *Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs*, which by the way, I think everyone listening needs to get a copy of this book, I think since *Wild at Heart*, this is the book you need to get your hands on. Josh, you quote anthropologist, David Gilmore in the book, and the statement is this, "Manhood is that social barrier that societies must erect against human enemies, forces of nature, time, all of human weakness." And you're right, we need men. Most of the women that we talk to, that I talk to, Josh, love the men in their lives. They love their dads, they love their brothers, they love their sons, they love grandpa and more, and they want men to be strong. And Josh, speak to that issue. I mean, what does it mean to you to quote, raise up a generation of men in America who would stand and be bold and take on these kind of virtues?

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I would put it this way. If you look at what the Lord called men to do, if you go all the way back, go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, look at the first man. Look at the charge that God gave to him. God makes the world, He pronounces it good, in the center of the world, He creates a garden. He puts Adam in it and Eve too, and then He gives Adam particular commands. What's He tell Adam? He said, this garden that I've made, Adam, you keep it, you tend to it, you expand it. The job of a man is to take what God has made what's beautiful and expand it into the wilderness, to go out where there is evil and confront it, to go out where there's chaos and bring order, to go out where there is wilderness and make it into a garden in a way that's pleasing to the Lord.

That is, I think, the basic pattern of manhood, and that's what we need to call men to do. That's why men have strength. Men want to create things. They want to bring order, they want to have adventure, they want to leave a legacy. That is put into them by God. They're supposed to do that. They're supposed to

use that strength and that energy and that ambition to go out into the world and to make gardens, to bring order, to bring peace and flourishing. That's written into us. I think we got to call men to that. Men who do that will change the destiny of their lives, of their family's life and they will be men who can change the destiny of this nation.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Josh, I love how you anchored your perspective in the Bible. Out of all that you build the character or the heart of this book, but in the midst of it, Josh, there's a tension that's going on. I think it was Henry David Thoreau said that, "The massive men lived quiet lives of desperation." That beat down that they face every day regardless of where they're at from social media and more that they're buffoons, they're distant, engaged, self-absorbed, lazy, porn addicts, bad husbands, terrible fathers and more, that message, it just keeps grinding on them.

Even in church, a lot of men just hate going to church because it's like coming at them. But at the same time, there is this stirring going inside that says, I have something to do. I need to step up and into this moment. And I think a lot of the younger fathers, for example, are stepping up to the plate. Josh, how do you help men and what do you say to them to help encourage them to press through that war so they aren't silent, they're not shamed, and there's not a stigma that they're walking around with?

Sen. Josh Hawley:

Well, I would just say this, that first of all, the Lord has a calling on your life. He's got a purpose for your life. He has a destiny on your life. So there are things that he has called you to do, people to influence, work to do, family to raise that is uniquely yours. He wants to partner with you. I think one of the biggest things that came to me that I realized with fresh eyes in writing this book is that the Lord wants to partner with us. He calls us into His work. Every father brings his son along into what he loves to do, right? That's part of what it means to be a father. That's how the God the Father is with us. He brings us into His work. What an incredible calling. You want to matter in life? Answer that invitation to come and join the Father in His work.

I think that's point number one. And then point number two is men go and be bold in the calling to which God has called you. Form that character, form character after the heart of God. What's that look like? Well form the character of a husband and a father, whether you're married now or not, be a man who can be counted on and depended on, be a man who can keep a commitment, be a man who can build something, be a builder, a contributor, and then be a man who can bring the presence of the Lord with him everywhere that he goes. That's how you leave a legacy. And I just think the message to men is you are meant to leave a legacy. You are meant to have a destiny and to change the lives and the destiny of people around you. That's God's calling on your life, and you don't have to do it perfectly.

I mean, that's the other thing I would just say is that listen, and I tell these stories in the book, we all make mistakes and we do things that we regret. I've

done that as a husband. I've done it as a father. I've done it throughout my life. The Lord doesn't demand perfection. What He asks for is your intention. What He asks for is your direction, where you will give your life to Him, follow His call, and His grace will more than supply all of the rest. If we'll do what He calls us to do, He'll do the rest and it will be powerful.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Josh, I know that when men get together, something begins to happen. We host an event called Ignite Men's Impact Weekend, and Senator you spoke recently at the Stronger Men Conference. When men start praising the Lord together, when they begin to receive from the Lord and feel safe, barriers begin to fade. We saw thousands of men come forward and fall on their face crying out to God, and so many who witnessed it and those around who heard about it were encouraged in their heart that yes, something's happening in and among men, and that's our prayer that God would do that.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That encouragement piece. In the book, you talk about Coach Tommy Hayes, I think he was your junior high coach. You talk about Coach Sev and more and what they did, how they spoke into your life, and then those godly examples that you had. You talked so much about your dad and your grandfather and what he meant to you. Take us into speaking words of life over men and life into men, especially for the time that we're in.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I just think those men that you've mentioned, my coaches, my dad, my grandfather, what they did to me is they said, "Josh, there's a purpose for your life. God has a call on your life, and if you will respond to that call, your life can have significance and meaning." And I just think for men today, there's something that is so powerful about owning our need. I think that a lot of times as men, we don't like to talk about our need. We don't like to talk about our failures, and we think as Christians, that's a barrier to what the Lord wants to do in our life. The truth is that our need is a gateway to our destiny. Our need is where the Lord opens our eyes to see that we need Him. And the whole key I think, to being a man and being the man God calls us to be is it is getting into that point, that relationship with the Lord where he can pour His life in us through us, out to the world.

And so to do that, we've got to acknowledge that, yeah, we have need, we can't do it alone. We need the Lord's life in ours. We need His spirit to fill us. We need His life to be poured in through ours, and we get to that place by coming to a place of need and humility. So I just would say to man, listen, your need is the gateway to your destiny. Your need is the gateway to where the Lord wants to take you, to make you a man of profound influence because not because you'll be perfect, but because He will pour His life out through yours, and that is the pattern of the Scripture. Who are the great men of the Scripture? Were they great in their own? No, they were great because they were humble men who surrendered their lives to the Lord and the Lord poured His life out through

theirs. That's the kind of man I want to be, and I think that's the kind of vision we want to call men to have.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Senator, you call men to be courageous and to be anchored in commitment because you know that's what it's going to take. In the midst of it, you know there's a battle and inside the book you tell a pretty tender story of a high school friend of yours named Jake. Do you mind sharing a little bit about that and how it impacted you and why you put it in the heart of the book?

Sen. Josh Hawley Yeah, absolutely. This is not a story when I wrote the book that I intended to tell, but I found myself telling it just grappling with the reality of evil in the world and really what it is that Jesus conquers. So in my case, Jake was my very best friend from the time we were 14 years old. We grew up together, played football together, were at each other's houses, part of each other's families, and then when I was 23 and he was just shy of his 23rd birthday, he committed suicide. He loved the Lord. I mean, this is a guy who loved the Lord, follow the Lord all of his life and yet became depressed and lost sight of where he was going and who he was and took his own life and it was a profound loss for me. Still is. I still miss him, profoundly disorienting because it really brought home to me the nature of sin and evil in the world.

That's not just a concept, that's not something that just exists in the social system, so to speak. No, it's real. It affects all of our lives, but the truth is that the Lord in Christ has conquered that. It doesn't mean that He takes us out of any hardship, that we never experienced that. That's not true at all. We know that in this world we will have trouble as the Lord said Himself, but He has overcome the world and so He is able to bring meaning, purpose, and redemption to our lives through our lives, through the most difficult of circumstances, the most unbelievable of circumstances. That's really what I went through and learned by losing my friend and that message of hope because of what the Lord has done and the deliverance He's been able to bring is for me an anchor.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. What a moving story just reminded me as a counselor, how real depression is and suicidality. There are men out there who are really struggling with issues and I just wanted to take a moment to share that if you or someone you love is in a serious crisis and they're considering harm, maybe even suicide, please reach out immediately to get help. Just call the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. It's a new number. You can dial 988, that's 988 on your phone anytime, anywhere 24/7, 988. It's free and it's confidential. Senator, we're fighting time. In the book, you talk about roles, husband, father, and then you go on warrior, builder, priest, king. Inside of those, you want to challenge men to understand a responsibility and the battle that's in the midst of it. Can you unpack what you mean by say being a modern day warrior?

Sen. Josh Hawley: Absolutely. I talked there about the story of Joshua, great character who means a lot to me since I'm named for him, and the vision is that God calls us as men to be individuals who will go out and confront evil in our lives, confront evil where

we see it in the world and put ourselves between danger and those that we love. I quote a scholar in the book who says that really to become a man is to make yourself expendable. It is to say that you know what? My life isn't the most important. My interests are not the most important. There are more important people like my wife, like my children, and so daily I'm going to put them ahead of me, daily I'm going to prioritize other people in my life, daily I'm going to confront hard things in my life so that I can serve others.

To me, that's what it means to be a warrior. It's also what it means to carry the gospel forward where there's darkness, we speak truth into that, where there's confusion, we bring the message of Christ. That is bringing the gospel into the darkness, into the wilderness.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Senator Hawley, I know we share this in common. We're praying that God would raise up a generation of men who would not bow the knee, who would stand boldly for truth, who would take on those roles and responsibilities and be courageous for such a time as this. Senator, you represent that. You haven't just written this book, *Manhood: The Masculine Virtues America Needs*. You represent that and we're grateful for that. How can our listeners pray for you? How can we in this moment for you, Erin, your children, and more, what are you asking God to do and in through you?

Sen. Josh Hawley: Well, I just hope that the Lord will use me to accomplish His purposes, to bring hope to other men out there, to bring encouragement and ultimately to bring His gospel message. So pray for me for wisdom and for boldness. He's called me to serve the people of Missouri in the United States Senate. Pray that I do that with integrity, but pray for boldness and courage in standing for the truth and standing for the Lord. That's ultimately what He calls all of us who follow Him to do, is to be obedient and faithful to Him. I say to my little boys who are 10 and eight, that following the Lord is the greatest adventure of your life. If you will follow Him, He will take you places you never dreamed of going. He will give you adventures you never dreamed you've had. And so our job is just to be faithful to Him and to love Him with everything that we've got. So you can just pray that I would do that and I would teach my boys and my little girl to do the same.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Josh, when you say you come home and kiss your kids and tuck them in at night, I mean, do you actually take your children with you to Washington?

Sen. Josh Hawley: Yes, absolutely. This is a commitment that Erin and I, my wife and I made when we first were praying to the Lord and asking Him, does He have us to run for the Senate? And we decided right then that the only way we would do that is if we kept our family together. And so when I'm in Washington, they're with me. When I'm at home, they're with me. So we go back and forth together, my three kids and my wife, and to me that is how I stay anchored and how we stay a family. I see them every night when I come home. I get to pray with them and read them a story, my boys every night, and we prioritized that time. And for me, I personally just couldn't do it any other way.



Dr. Tim Clinton: That's keeping the main thing, the main thing. You closed out the book with a moment with your grandfather and you wrote these words and your final words to him, "Thank you for being a good man." May God do that in and through our lives, and may those who come behind us find us faithful. Senator Hawley, what a delight. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, the entire team here at JDFI, the James Dobson Family Institute, we salute you and pray that God would strengthen your heart. Thank you for joining us.

Sen. Josh Hawley: Thank you so much for having me.

Roger Marsh: Well, that certainly was an encouraging and informative conversation with U.S. Senator Josh Hawley and our co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton today here on Family Talk. And it is undoubtedly time for men to step up to grow into manhood, to become the men that God has called us to be. Friend, if you'd like to share this program with someone you know who needs to hear it, maybe a friend or family member, you can easily do so from the official Family Talk JDFI app, and you can always listen to this program and many more on our website when you go online to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). That's [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). Thanks so much for listening to Family Talk today, the voice you trust for the family you love. I'm Roger Marsh and may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow closer to Him in your walk and relationship with Him.

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