



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Celebrating Black History: One Family's Story – Part 1

Guest(s): Alveda King

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Dr. James Dobson: Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome friends to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you for joining us today. Today we begin our own celebration in honor of Black History Month, and we have a very special guest for you. You're going to want to stay tuned for sure. She's from a very well-known family and she has lived through literally being in the center of the Civil Rights Movement herself. She's an American activist, author, evangelist, and former state representative for the 28th District in the Georgia House of Representatives. Her name is Dr. Alveda King. You may know her as the niece of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She's also the daughter of his brother civil rights activist, the late Reverend Alfred Daniel Williams King.

Today she will share with us her story and stories of her late father and uncle. Her strong faith, even as she had faced adversity, is truly inspiring. As you are about to hear, Dr. Alveda King has walked the walk, and she talks the talk, with grace, humility, and tolerance. She is a living example of the biblical truth expressed in Acts 17:26.

"From one man, he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth, and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands."

Dr. Dobson and the JDFI are honored to call Dr. Alveda King, a friend and applaud her for her service, her life, and her family's history, which mirrors our shared American journey over the last 60 years, as we work to remain one nation under God, indivisible.

Let's join Dr. Alveda King right, now as she talks with our own Dr. Tim Clinton as we recognize Black History Month, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Welcome into Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host of the broadcast. I'm honored to serve alongside Dr. Dobson, as the resident authority on mental

health and relationships here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I also serve as President of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Thank you for joining us today on this very special broadcast.

February 1st marked the first day of Black History Month. It's an annual time of the calendar year here in America, recognizing and celebrating the achievements of Black Americans and their central role in US history. Notable figures include Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and more.

For those who may not know, the event grew out of Negro History Week, created by historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans in 1926. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling on the public to seize the opportunity to honor the two often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans, in every area of endeavor throughout our history.

And what better way to honor the significance of this month than with a visit from today's guest. She is from the well-known family that has been integral in the Civil Rights Movement. She's Christian-evangelist author, pro-life advocate, Dr. Alveda King. I'm honored to be with you Alveda. Thank you so much for joining us. Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, send their regards.

Alveda King: Well, I'm so glad to join Family Talk and the Dobsons. What a beautiful Christian relationship through the decades. It's just wonderful to stay connected. Hello, everybody.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know they love you. For the benefit of our listeners who may not know your background, Dr. Alveda King is the daughter of the late Reverend Alfred Daniels Williams King and the niece of the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She also serves as Chair of the American First Policy Institute's Center for the American Dream.

Dr. Alveda King is Founder and President of Speak for Life and Founder of Alveda King Ministries. She was elected to the Georgia State House, twice. You have seen her as a contributor on Fox News. Dr. King is the author of many books, including *We're Not Colorblind: Healing the Racial Divide*. She's a mom of six. Has a bunch of grandkids. Again, what a delight to have you.

How's the family doing?

Alveda King: Our family is fine and many people always ask because politically we have our differences, but in the spirit of the living God, we love each other, so our whole family is fine.

And my immediate family, my mom is 91 years old, which is amazing for me. Children, grandchildren, and a few pets in the family as well. So we are doing

fine. Thank you so much for asking and I really want to just say to any family right now, who's going through some trials and troubles, there's a lot of violence in the world and all of that, but God has not abandoned us. Try to hold on to your faith, even in your grief. Let's just try to comfort others.

Jesus was real good at showing at his peak times of duress, he said, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do." So be comforted in the Lord, no matter what is going on. I want to just say that. I just feel that in my heart for some who are grieving at this time,

Dr. Tim Clinton: Our hope, our strength is in the Lord, and we agree with you. Alveda again, what a delight. Hey, as we get going, we got so much we want to cover. Let's go all the way back to 1964, the Civil Rights Act. Since that historic act, there's been a lot of sacrifice to acknowledge, but still a lot of work to do.

Alveda, your take on where we're at and where we're going?

Alveda King: Dr. Tim, I found out something actually at the end of 2022, moving into 2023, and I was preparing not only for the March for Life, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, which was in January, then moving into February Black History Month. So, I began to look at calendar dates and events and I discovered something that I should have known all along.

Around America and around the world, Black History Month is unique because we deal with the ethnicity of the African American community that came here through slavery. But did you know there's an Irish American History Month, a Chinese American History Month, Caribbean American. It goes on and on. All of the communities, except out of Great Britain and the monarchy and stuff, you rarely hear people say, "I'm a British American," because we had in our history a war at some time and so people still support that.

So what I'm saying is Black History Month is unique. It is special. It's not the only time in America that ethnicities recognize their culture. So I think Black History Month is unique and important because sometimes we don't know our own history and I'm not just talking about the bad. There were many, many bad things, but there were many, many, many good things.

I did see a movie recently. I won't do a pitch for it, but in the movie it was revealed that the Africans sold other Africans to Caucasian slavers. So in my opinion, we all need to go to Jesus, together as brothers and sisters, like my uncle said, and say, "God, we messed up. Help. Help."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Alveda, you come from an historic celebrated family in the United States, the King family. Again, your father, the late Reverend Alfred Daniels Williams King, and your uncle, the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Alveda, now to take us back. What was it like growing up your childhood and your upbringing?

Alveda King:

Let's take a minute. Even as you call the name of my dad, Reverend Alfred Daniel Williams King. And it's a lot to wrap yourselves around because even with my children, they have three names and then the last name, we have so many names, and that is a family custom.

So, many of us will tie in previous generations to the child that has been born and moving forward you'll hear that same name repeated. Williams is the maiden name of my grandmother, Alberta Williams King. Alberta Christine Williams King. She married Martin Luther King, Sr.

Now, Daddy King's people came from Ireland. Granddaddy's grandfather, Nathan Branham King. So you have these two families, United. Freedom fighting Families, united in a blood line, and that has gone on throughout our family.

Jenny Celeste Parks, I think was my grandmama, Alberta's mother's name. And so I'm Alveda Celeste and Celeste is in my daughter's name, one of my granddaughter's names.

So historically, we have known our ancestry for many decades now. We've got this 23 and Me thing, so everybody is getting to know their ancestry now and they're finding out, "Well, I'm part this. I'm part that." It just shows Acts 17:26. We are human. We are absolutely human. Ancestry.com introduced me and my family to a little more of that.

So in our family though, historically the King family legacy, has nothing to do with our skin color. It has to do with our Christian hearts. We love the Lord. We worship God. There are preachers throughout our bloodlines. I'm a Christian evangelist today. I have a cousin Bernice, who's a preacher. My brother Derrick is a preacher. A couple of my children are ordained. So we love God. We do faith, hope and love. In Black History month, we encourage everybody to learn to live together as brothers and sisters, and not perish together as fools. Now, Martin Luther King said that, but I heard it from everybody in my family, all my life. My mother is still teaching me today. Love. Forgive. Heal on your feet.

This recent killing that happened a little while back of an African American man by five police officers who were also African Americans and his mother, comes on TV in the middle of her grief, asking others to be peaceful, to love each other. I've had to learn those hard lessons through many, many years. I'm 72 years old now, so whatever we are going through, regardless of skin color, we are not colorblind.

One blood, Acts 17:26. We celebrate ethnicity. This month we are celebrating Black history, but there's so much more to be celebrated in every ethnicity and the main thing that's going to keep us together is the love of God.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Alveda, you're the oldest of five, I think, right? And what was it like growing up in a segregated south, segregated church, as a girl?

Alveda King: I remember as a young girl, I'll give you one of the stories. I was out with my grandmother, Mama King, big mama, and we were shopping at a store called Rich's Department Store. It later became Macy's and all of that.

So while we were in the store, we would go by this restaurant. It was beautiful. It was a tea room, I think it was called the Magnolia Room. And the ladies and their little daughters and granddaughters and people were there and they were having tea and all of that and I wanted to go in. I was dressed up in my let's go shopping outfit. I wanted to go in. My grandmother was always shopped. Shopped for beautiful clothes. She was gorgeous. We were ready. But colored. That's what they call us. They're colored, which is crazy because everybody has skin color. Nobody looks like a piece of paper or charcoal without other colors in their skin, but colored.

So we couldn't go in the pretty restaurant. We had to go in the basement and eat with the employees. Pay good money. And I said, "Well, Big Mama, why?" And I didn't realize she had told her son Martin Luther King Jr., when he was a little boy. He says, "Why is it like this? Why can't I go with dad downtown and buy shoes and try them on at the store? Why can't I do things like that?"

And his mother said, "Well, ML." That's what she called him; ML. My daddy was AD. "ML, it won't always be like this and shouldn't be like this." And he said his mother, "One day, I'm going to turn this world upside down." Now, he was a young boy when he said that.

Here I am years later, "Why can't we shop in those stores Big Mama?" And she said, "It shouldn't be in one day, it'll be different." During her son, Martin Luther King Jr's lifetime, and my dad AD came, it did change. They changed laws. They this together. Daddy was a strategist. He was there with his brother all the time. Martin Luther King was shot in '68. Dad was choked and thrown in a swimming pool in '69. Big Mama shot in Ebenezer Baptist Church playing the organ in 1974. So we went through all of these things. I was aware.

Now let me give you if I have time, just a good story though. Martin and Alfred and Christine. Christine's the oldest, Martin the middle child, believe it or not, and daddy Alfred, the youngest. Aunt Christine got married in '63. She had gotten a beautiful wedding gown from that same store, I'm telling you about, Rich's. Her brothers decided to boycott the store. You could not go in the store and you could not shop unless they let you have the same rights as everybody else. She had already bought her wedding gown, had it fitted and tried on and everything before the boycott.

Now here's the dilemma. How's she going to get her wedding dress out of that store? She can't cross the picket line. So here's the solution. The people who

worked at the store were encouraged to keep their jobs and still go to work. A church member who worked at the store went in, got the dresses, was already paid for and everything, but they just couldn't cross the picket line. And so Daddy King walked Christine down the aisle in the dress, Alfred and Martin, AD and ML, did the wedding ceremony and I was a junior bridesmaid. Now how about that for a story. That time period

Dr. Tim Clinton: You know, Alveda, As we listen to you, my mind just is trying to go back into reflect on what it must have been like for you to see through your eyes and to experience what you experienced. You know that. And you've journeyed. By the way, you're such a strong voice in modern day culture. You're a voice of love and grace and forgiveness and so much more. But Alveda, you've got this backwater story stuff that you filter your way through. And I was thinking, I had read that when you were 12 years old, your family's home was bombed by opponents of the Civil Rights Movement and more. I mean, I can't even imagine.

Alveda King: Well, Dr. Tim, I'm going to share this. It's always hard. This and my abortion testimony. These are two testimonies that are very, very hard for me because there were some dark times in my life when I actually had abortions in the early 1970s; one legal, one illegal, and a miscarriage because of damage.

The other one was, there was a time I wanted to hate what I called white people. Now let me tell you, remember I just said there's no Black people or white people because people don't look like a sheet of paper charcoal. I didn't get Acts 17:26. My daddy did. My granddaddy did. My uncle did. My mom, my grandmother and all them. But I still thought I was a different race for a short period of time in my life.

So when my uncle Martin Luther King, Jr was shot, I wanted to hate white people. I said, "White people kill my uncle." I'm crying and mad. My dad is there at the home trying to leave to go get his brothers body, take his sister-in-law. "Daddy, I hate white people. They killed my uncle. They killed uncle." And he's rocking in his arms. I wrote about it in a little children's book and some other type things.

And he says, "Alveda, no, we cannot hate white people. White people march with us. White people pray with us. White people go to jail with us." White people die with us because there were Blacks and whites and everybody who was protesting in those days, people were losing their lives. Didn't matter about the skin color. Didn't matter about the religion. So he says, "We have to love. We have to forgive." Acts 17:26. "Of one blood, God, made all people."

It took me some years moving forward, born-again Christian experience in the eighties. And today I do see skin color. I'm not colorblind. I wrote that book with Ginger Howard. We can see ethnicity. We can see skin color. We can see the beauty of God's creation among each other, but we have to love each other as brothers and sisters, so that we don't perish together as fools. That's something

it was very hard for me to learn to love, to see people, to see people in grief, comforting others out of their own pain, which I've had to do many times. Lost some very special people during COVID. I did. But I didn't become a conspiracy theorist because if I become a bitter conspiracy theorist, I cannot share the gospel of Jesus Christ. You cannot do both at the same time.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Alveda, I marvel at the heart God's given to you and I want to make sure those words to you came from your daddy, when your uncle was murdered, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Alveda King: Yes, yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And your daddy, by the way later, was killed.

Alveda King: Uncle ML was shot in '68. In '69, my dad was found in our swimming pool at home, with bruises on his neck, on his upper torso, on his head. He was in a fetal position in the bottom of the pool. And when they pulled him out of the pool, pulled his body out, I heard the fire chief said, "There's no water in his lungs." He was dead when he hit the water.

Well, someone, you know, the rescue team that was there. And then I began to say, "Daddy. Daddy." I knelt by his body, touched his face, the bruises. I said, "Come back," and I felt like I heard a voice say, "Why do you want to come back to this?" But I wasn't screaming hollering. I was not hysterical.

But they said, "Take this woman away. She's hysterical." I was not. And I wasn't a girl. I was a married woman in '69. I got married in 1969. So to my mother, and she insisted on seeing his body and everything. And you can watch, there are documentaries on the King family and there are several now, not just about Martin Luther King, but the whole legacy. And my mother talks about the experience of seeing her husband's body, knowing that he had not drowned. But she still says, "You have to heal on your feet. You have to forgive. You have to love. You cannot hate." My mother, she tells me that now.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Those are the words that have gone deep into your heart. I was reflecting as you were sharing that story that you remember Coretta Scott King, who the day before the funeral of her husband, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., led a march that he was supposed to lead and how it had a deep impact on you and then your mother, in the midst of the loss of your dad, speak these words to you. And I marvel again at how God has strengthened and established your heart. And he's used that in a way to bring healing and peace and we'll talk a lot more about that.

But as we close out today's broadcast and we have so much more to talk about. We want to welcome you back tomorrow. I can't wait for our discussion because we're going to talk a lot about the issues, the tension, the trauma, the divide, hope for America and so much more. But bow tie for us again, what God

did in your heart as a young woman now, and how it was the seeds that he used to develop and cultivate the voice that God's given to you, for such a time as this.

Alveda King: And I believe when we come back again, we'll talk about granddaddy. He had to do same thing when my grandmother was shot. But I've always had an underlying message from my family, the King family legacy, to love to forgive and share the goodness of God with others.

And I guess that's why even today I still have joy and one of my brothers who passed away would sing, I still have my joy. So, peace and joy and love and righteousness, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. That's part of our legacy.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Our special guest again today has been Dr. Alveda King. She is a power voice in modern-day culture. Pro-life advocate. One of those champions bringing reconciliation and healing to our great nation. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, again and our entire team at Family Talk, we salute you. Pray that God will continue to strengthen your heart. Can't wait for tomorrow's discussion. We got a lot to talk about. Thank you for joining us.

Alveda King: Absolutely.

Roger Marsh: Wow. She truly has experienced a lot while she was young, and her message of forgiveness is so encouraging to all of us. That was part one of a conversation featuring Dr. Alveda King and our own Dr. Tim Clinton here on Family Talk. Be sure to listen again tomorrow for part two of this fascinating conversation.

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Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. We truly appreciate that you choose to spend part of your day with us. I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you so much for listening, encouraging you to join us again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Till then, may the light of God's blessing be upon you and your family.

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

Dr. James Dobson: Hello, everyone. This is James Dobson, inviting you to join us for our next edition of Family Talk. Every day we come to these microphones with someone in mind, whether it's a busy mom looking for tips on discipline, or a husband who wants to learn more about connecting with his wife. We want to put an arm around your family in any way that we can. So, join us next time for Family Talk, won't you?

Roger Marsh: Hey, everyone. Roger Marsh here for Family Talk. Where can you go to receive support and advice for you and your family?

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