



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Can't Believe You Just Said That! Biblical Wisdom for Taming Your Child's Tongue- Part 1

Guest(s): Ginger Hubbard

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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: Hello everyone. Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and your host today. I have a question for all you parents out there. Do you ever find yourself asking your child, "I cannot believe you just said that," or "Why did you act that way?" Do you raise your voice, threaten, punish, but nothing ever seems to make them learn? Well, let me tell you, you're not alone. Ginger Hubbard is our guest today and she's written a book called *I Can't Believe You Just Said That, Biblical Wisdom for Taming Your Child's Tongue*. Ginger's the best-selling author, sought after speaker, podcast hosts. She has homeschooled her two children all the way through high school and is the wife of Ronnie and the step mom of two more young adult children. Ginger, welcome to Family Talk.
- Ginger Hubbard: Hi Tim. Thank you for having me. I'm excited to talk with you and hopefully encourage the listeners.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, I was excited to think about getting a few moments with you and I think you and I would both agree, every parent listening right now, every dad, every mom knows whether or not you're close with your kids. I think God's just wired it into us ... If you say their name, I could say Zach, I know whether or not I'm close with Zach. Megan, I know whether or not I'm close with her and they're adult children, but I know whether or not I'm close with them. Maybe another question you could ask an answer would be, how's it going then with your kids? Are you frustrated, exhausted that you're butting heads? Are you always correcting, disciplining? Every parent also knows in the midst of that, their child's behavior, if they're attuned to them, Ginger, when they're acting up, pushing buttons and when they need correction. Wouldn't you agree with all that?
- Ginger Hubbard: I do. God gives us that sense of discernment and also we can tell when they need correcting just by how they're acting, right?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes. Indeed. You know what I love about you, Ginger, your work is all centered around encouraging parents to reach, I love this, the hearts of their children for the glory of the Lord. Can you explain what you mean by that?

Ginger Hubbard: Yeah. I've just listened to so many parents over the years, express their heartache over their inability to get their children to obey and to speak respectfully. And I think that a lot of the problem is that they're only looking at that outward behavior because when I talk to them, they're only talking about that outward behavior and how they can address that with consequences. And so, so many parents have developed this philosophy that if they can get their children to act right, to behave, that they're raising them the right way, but there is so much more to parenting than getting our children to act right.

We have to get them to think right. And to be motivated out of a love for God, a love for virtue, a love of what's right instead of a fear of punishment. And so that is where I like to come in and encourage parents. And there's so many good parenting books out there that are full of scripture, but a lot of them fall a little bit short when it comes to how to practically apply those scriptures, to reach past that outward behavior and address the issues of the heart. Because God is not just concerned with the outward behavior. He is concerned with the heart. So that's where we want to follow the lead in that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes. I love stories. There's a lot of backwater on people who are making a difference. And for you, it goes back to being a young mom and you decided, were going to do something about this parenting journey. You're going to try to figure it out. And take us back to those early years, Ginger, and what you were thinking, what you were experiencing, maybe what was frustrating you.

Ginger Hubbard: Okay. First off I remember before I had children, looking at other people's children, whining and tattling and disobeying and throwing temper tantrums and thinking to myself, "When I have kids, they are not going to act like that." And then, you know what happened, I had two kids. But I was so determined to have these well-behaved little angels that gladly obeyed and always spoke respectfully that I read every single parenting book I could get my hands on. I mean, as avidly as I read those *What to Expect When You're Expecting* books before I was even pregnant, I was reading all the how to raise them now that you got them books before they could even crawl. I was just totally convinced that if I could just be ahead of the game and have a plan for everything that all would go well.

But nothing could have prepared me that like their parents before them, all kids are sinners and will manifest sinful behavior. Even children with agreeable hearts will occasionally show their sinful hearts. And so I just wanted to be able to get past that outward behavior. And, and I do remember being frustrated. I remember really being frustrated, especially with some of the things that would come out of my kids' mouths. And like so many parents, I would look at my kids and say, "Why do you act like that?" But after a closer look at the word of God, I began to realize that I was actually asking the wrong question. In Matthew 12:34, it says, "For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." In other words,

there's merit to that old saying "What's down in the well, comes up in the bucket." Our sin does not begin with our mouth. It begins with our hearts and it starts a whole lot sooner than we might think.

King David proclaimed, "Surely I was sinful at births. Sinful from the time my mother conceived me." And so, I believe that for me anyway, and for other parents that when we truly begin to grasp just the origin of sin and just the, I don't know, just the total human depravity in general, we no longer have to question why our children sin. So I slowly learned to stop asking why does my child sin? And instead I began to ask myself when my child sins, how might I point him to the fact that he is a sinner in need of a savior, just like I am? How might I help him really begin to understand and live in that transformational power of Christ?

Dr. Tim Clinton: You started working on your first piece called *Wise Words for Moms*. Tell us about that because you began to identify some of these common issues and then what practically you could do, not theoretically, what could moms do in everyday life to help their kids with these behaviors?

Ginger Hubbard: Okay, well, I actually read, and I know you're probably thinking, well, you're just saying that because you're on James Dobson's show, but it's not true. I started out reading *Dare to Discipline* and *Bringing Up Boys* and *The Strong-Willed Child*. And another one of my favorites was *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp. So those were really the books that shaped my parenting and really formed the backbone of how I wanted to raise my kids. And so I started leading a small mom's group in my church, and just based on the principles that I was learning from these books that I was reading and a lot of the moms would ask, "Well, what do we do about this? Or what do we do about that?"

Because there's so many great books out there that focus on how to reach the hearts of your kids. And so we would read these books and we would get so pumped up and so excited about reaching the hearts of our kids. But then we felt like that some of them weren't really telling us how to do it in the everyday struggles that our children were facing. So I took what I was learning from Dr. Dobson and what I was learning from Dr. Tripp. And I put together this little *Wise Words for Mom's* chart, where basically I just listed out the struggles that my children were having. And I just kind of did the homework ahead of time. I just figured out what kind of questions could I ask? What is the heart that is behind this outward behavior? And then what does the Bible say about these behaviors?

So, I really wanted to take what I was learning from Dr. Dobson and Tedd Tripp, and really put feet to it. How do we implement these principles in a practical way with these everyday struggles that our children are facing? So the chart started out with four or five behaviors that my kids were struggling with. And then I would take them to this moms group. And then the moms would say, "Well, what about whining? Well, what about tattling? But what about disobeying?" And so I wound up adding to that chart. And before I knew it, I had 22 different behaviors on that chart. It was pretty much everything that we

could think of. And it just kind of a cheat sheet for how to handle those from a heart oriented, biblical perspective. And I tell people I really shouldn't even have my name on that chart. I shouldn't take credit for it because all I did was sit down and do the homework and sort organize the word of God for moms.

Tedd Tripp, I found out that he was the pastor of a church in Pennsylvania. And so I mailed him a copy of the chart and just a little thank you note, and just said, this was put together based on some of the principles I learned from you and just wanted to thank you for all the work that you've done in helping parents learn how to reach the hearts of their kids. So, I don't expect to hear anything back, I thought maybe an autographed postcard with Tedd's picture or something, but instead I got a phone call from his son, Aaron, who runs Shepherd Press Publishing. And he said, "This is the tool that my dad Tedd has been looking for," because he had been hearing the same thing I'd been hearing in my mom's groups that we want to reach the hearts of our kids and we want to use the scriptures and we want to point them into the word of God, but how do we do that in accordance with the struggles they're facing? So Tedd kind of describes my chart as putting feet to some of his teaching. So they published it and he started carrying it with him at some of his conferences. And it kind of makes me think about the verse that says when we're faithful in the little things that God will put on us a little bit more. And so that's sort of a testimony to that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, it reminds me of 3 John 1:4, "I have no greater joy than to know my children are walking in the truth." Dr. Dobson, I've heard him say many times the greatest gift that any parent can give to his son or daughter, ultimately, most importantly, is to lead them into that personal relationship with God in Christ. And maybe a good question right here is Mom or Dad, how are you doing? I know we've been talking about our children for a moment, but how are you doing? That, I think is one of the most crucial pieces in how we do effective parenting, because it all starts and basically ends here with me as a mom or dad. Ginger, tell us a little bit about your journey. You begin exploding under the scene, you're speaking over the country in the midst of it, the wheels kind of come off of your bus and it stopped you for a little while.

Ginger Hubbard: Mm-hmm.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What happened?

Ginger Hubbard: Well, I had been married for 19 years and I was speaking and encouraging parents all over the country, homeschooling both of my children. And I found out that my husband of 19 years had been living a double life for the entirety of our marriage. And it just absolutely destroyed me and really snatched the rug out from under me and never in my life had to just really cry out to God the way that I did. It was definitely the darkest time in my life. And so I stepped down from public speaking and writing and I wanted to finish homeschooling my kids. They loved being homeschooled, they loved being home. And we had three restaurants that I was kind of thrown into running. So I couldn't do all of it. And I needed to take some time to heal myself and to be ministered to.

And so, I took that time and it was seven years before I actually stepped back into speaking and writing again. But the Lord is faithful. And one thing that I learned is that sometimes He allows us to plummet to the lowest possible place so that He can lift us to the highest point, which is knowing Him in a much deeper, intimate ways and having stronger dependency on Him. And so through all of that, that was one thing that I was very thankful for because I was just shattered. My heart was shattered into a million pieces and I never saw it coming. And, but God is faithful and He is there. And when we cry out to Him and we seek Him and our darkest moments, man, we experience Him in ways that we never have before.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

And sometimes what seemingly is meant for evil, God can take and turn it for good. And you're right, that refiner's fire. When you're going through those dark seasons, you feel lost, you wonder, but God is in the midst of it. And some of His greatest work in our lives could be happening in that very moment. Ginger, sometimes we don't understand, too, how we as parents and the stress we're going through begins to affect or infect our children. And all I want to do is as developed some imagery here just for a moment to make sure we're attuned to our kids in this journey called parenting.

70% of US mothers say that being a mom is incredibly stressful today. 96% feel far more stressed than their mothers were. Some people call it "mommy angst," whether it's money, insecurities or frustrations with kids, maybe a lack of support, time famine, relationship demands, all those things factor in here. And I don't want to spend a lot of time on it, but I want to hear from you, Ginger, to all of us about being sensitive to that and how it might impact or affect how we parent

Ginger Hubbard:

Well, for me, of course when I went through the betrayal and the divorce, it was really hard for me to continue parenting in the way that I needed to, because I mean, honestly, I was just so broken that I didn't really feel like I had a whole lot to offer and I can honestly say my kids pretty much homeschooled themselves for the next year. We all had to heal. It wasn't just about me and what I was going through. It was also very much about the hurt that they were going through. And so we just had to take time to do whatever we needed to do to heal. And so for us, that was not making school the absolute priority. They did what they needed to do. And I made sure that they did what they needed to do, but we did the bare minimum, because we needed to be focused more on the Lord healing our hearts.

And thankfully my parents, I have very godly, amazing parents that are super close to my children. And they actually moved in with us because we felt like that they both needed a very strong, fatherly figure. And so their Papa, my daddy, stepped in and my mom is also just so supportive. And so those are some of the things that was necessary for us. And so they lived with us for a year and I'm just thankful that I accepted their help. And so just, I think I would say to be willing to reach out to whoever you need to reach out to that you respect that you look up to, that you know is going to be a godly influence and whatever kind of help they offer to give you, be humble enough to accept that

help for you and your children, because God uses people to bring healing in our lives. And sometimes we try to walk those really tough roads and journeys by ourselves. And it's just not wise to do that. The Bible says that we need each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. So don't be ashamed to ask for help and to accept that help that you need.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Thank you for sharing that, Ginger, because I think that's a word of encouragement to some people who are in the river right now, and they're kind of getting washed over and it's just seems like there's no end. Being attuned to the situation, being attuned to yourself, being attuned to your children in the midst of that is what I think will help at least tone down the insanity that's going on. And when I was looking at stress and children, Arch Hart said, "Today's kids are reading and writing and rushing earlier than any other kids in history." He was even saying that we've got kids as young as five years of age developing ulcers. We've got a problem out there. It's just craziness. And with the pandemic and everything else that's happened from bullying to you name it. Here we go.

Now in light of all that God has given you pretty much a word, a unique word, I think, and voice to help us step into the lives of our children in ways that help move them more toward their creator God, and toward their parents. With that heart factor, your new book, *I Can't Believe You Just Said That, Biblical Wisdom for Taming Your Child's Tongue*. Now, kids, hey, the scripture says there's foolishness bound in the heart of children. There's all kinds of wildness and they're going to push pretty much every button. Some kids are easy, compliant. Others, not so much. Right?

Ginger Hubbard: That's right. But like I said, even children with agreeable dispositions, they're occasionally going to show their sinful hearts. And so, but they're all different. You know, I had one, my oldest, was pretty compliant outwardly and a little bit of an introvert. So it was a little harder to get to the heart issues with him. Whereas my daughter, Alex was very much an extrovert. So you always knew exactly what she was thinking and what she was feeling. And so she was a lot more blatantly, I guess, putting that toe across the line. So it was a little easier, I think, to deal with her because I always knew what I was dealing with. Whereas I really had to work hard to pull things out of the heart of my son who was a little bit more, I guess, conservative, or I guess introverted, just not quite as quick to want to share his heart. So they're all different. And that affects how we parent.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You bet. When you hear parents say, "I love my children the same." You can't really love them the same in this sense, they're different. They give and receive love differently. You have got to be uniquely dialed into your child.

Ginger Hubbard: Mm-hmm. That's right.

Dr. Tim Clinton: If you don't do that, you're going to miss some things.

Ginger Hubbard: That's right. They all have different personalities and temperaments. They're all so unique. And so we don't ... We can't parent them exactly the same way, but I

will say that I have found that the common goal, no matter what their personalities are, is that we always, always want to reach past that outward behavior, figure out what is going on in the heart, because then we're able to address it from a biblical perspective. Once we know the sin issue of the heart behind that outward behavior, that's driving that outward behavior, then we're able to address it from a biblical perspective because God is concerned with the issues of the heart. So, once we figure out what that issue is, you better believe God's word addresses it because He is not just concerned with outward behavior. He's always after the hearts of all of his children.

Dr. Tim Clinton: So Ginger, that's what you mean when early on when your kids would misbehave, you would automatically ask the question. "Why did you act like that?" And you came to realize that that's kind of the wrong question. What is the right question there?

Ginger Hubbard: Well, we know that we're all sinners, so we should not be surprised when our children sin because they are sinners, so when they sin, we don't want to ask, "Why did you act like that?" We want to ask ourselves when our children sin, what can we do to get to their hearts and to help them realize that they are sinners in need of a savior? How can we help them learn to live in the transformational power of Christ? Our ultimate goal in all of our parenting is to point them to their need for Jesus, and so God uses His word to convict His children. So that's why we, when our children mess up, we want to use His word in order that they might be convicted. A lot of times I hear parents say "Well, my kids don't really know the Lord yet, so I don't really see where it's beneficial to use the scriptures for training them."

But that's just it. It's God's law from God's word that teaches us our need for Jesus. And so it's beneficial to start teaching them the word of God, right out of the gate, because, really, even hypothetically say that we were the perfect parent, which none of us are going to be the perfect parents, but just say, hypothetically, we did everything right. Well, we cannot make our children righteous. Our children still have a choice. Really only God can truly reach their heart. So that is why in everything that we do, we want to point them to the word of God. We want to point them to their need for Jesus, just as we need Him.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, Ginger, you've written a book called *I Can't Believe You Just Said That, Biblical Wisdom for Taming, Your Child's Tongue*. Inside of it, you unpack a three-step plan for dealing with issues. And I want to talk about whining, I want to talk about lying and so many more. I know we're out of time here. I'm going to give you the closing word, but we want to have you back tomorrow to discuss more in detail, a real strategy for helping tame your child's tongue. But Ginger, set us up for tomorrow real quickly, where you see us going.

Ginger Hubbard: Okay. Well, I'm really excited to share this plan with you because it's not my plan. It's just where I studied the Word of God. And I've looked at the way that Jesus handled different situations and really wanted to put into play how parents can follow the example that Christ set by learning how to get past the

outward behavior, pull out what's going on in the heart, and then we're going to talk about how we can address those behaviors from a biblical standpoint, a very, very simple heart-oriented, biblical, three-step plan approach to getting to the hearts of our kids. I'm really excited to share that with your listeners tomorrow.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Ginger, before we go, how can listeners find out more about your ministry, where you're speaking, and your resource?

Ginger Hubbard: Probably the best place is through my website, which is gingerhubbard.com. I keep my speaking schedule updated so they could find out where I will be and my resources are available on there as well. I also really love to encourage parents through Instagram, to offer lots of encouragement and just practical advice on parenting there. And so on Instagram, I'm @Ginger.Hubbard. And then one of the most exciting things, I started a podcast with my sweet friend, Katy Morgan, called *Parenting with Ginger Hubbard*. And we have just gotten an amazing positive response from this of parents saying that it's bringing encouragement. Again, it's just the same sort of thing that you and I have talked about, Tim, just really encouraging those parents to get passed out where behavior, address the issues of the heart, and point their children to Christ. And from a practical standpoint, Katy and I are just super excited to help parents move past the frustrations of not knowing how to handle issues of disobedience and like whining and lying and tattling and all of those different things and into a heart-oriented, biblical approach to raising their kids. So, the *Parenting with Ginger Hubbard* podcast is a really great way for Katy and I to be able to encourage you each week. And we are just so passionate about doing that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, on behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, their family, the entire Family Talk team, Ginger, just want to say thank you for joining us, looking so forward to tomorrow's conversation.

Ginger Hubbard: Thank you, Tim. It was great being with you.

Roger Marsh: Well, you just heard part one of a two day conversation between our own Dr. Tim Clinton and author and speaker Ginger Hubbard here on Family Talk. You know, I love how Ginger encourages parents to get to the heart of their kid's behavior and always points them back to Jesus Christ. Parenting is no easy job. That's a fact, but raising our children up to know and love the Lord is one of the most important callings a person will ever have.

Now to learn more about Ginger Hubbard, her podcast, and her books, including *I Can't Believe You Just Said That, Biblical Wisdom for Taming Your Child's Tongue*, just visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/forward/broadcast. That's drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. Or you can give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Thanks again for listening to Family Talk today. Be sure to join us again tomorrow to hear the conclusion of Dr. Tim Clinton's two-part interview with Ginger Hubbard, author of the book *I Can't Believe You Just Said That*. From all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I'm Roger Marsh. God's blessings to you and your family.

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