



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Kyle West: Look What God Has Done – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Bob and Kyle West

**Air Date:** August 7, 2023

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk and I have something delightful to share with you today. It features a recording made with a seven-year-old boy named Kyle West, some of you may remember him, who was my guest in the studio in 1999. What happened that day became my favorite radio program out of the 8,000 that we have aired through the years. Kyle West is now 31 years old, and I want to bring you up to date with this very delightful, intelligent, creative man. I really love this guy and God has His hand on his life. At the end of the program today, I want to bring you up to date on what he's doing now because this is a man worth knowing. So stay tuned for a charming conversation with a unique individual whom God continues to bless.

**Roger Marsh:** Yes, you are right Dr. Dobson. And before we go there, we want our listeners to know that 13 years ago, you had a conversation with Kyle and his dad, a retrospective back in 2010, when Kyle was 18 years of age. That was an update on his progress and his faith walk, and that will be the first part of what we listened to before we revisit the original conversation you had with him when he was a little boy of just seven years of age in your first interview. So let's go there right now.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Let me take our listeners back to the time when a boy named Kyle West was attending a staff picnic, and so was I. There were 2000 people there, and I was walking along and I heard this little voice behind me. And I turned around and it was, I found out later, Kyle, Kyle West. And he was addressing me. So I walked over to him and I leaned down and we had an absolutely delightful conversation. I found that this is one of the brightest and most interesting and intelligent young men that I had ever met. He wasn't a young man at that time, he was just a boy, but he just captivated me.

And so just sitting there spontaneously, I said, "Kyle, I would love for you to come see me in my office sometime." And he said, "Well, I'll ask my dad and maybe he'll bring me." And I thought that would be the end of it. But he actually came. And Bob, you and Sue, brought Kyle. I asked you to bring Kyle directly to the studio, not to my office. And we came in and sat down and the recorders were rolling. Kyle didn't know it. I mean, it was kind of a mean trick, right Kyle? You had no idea you were being recorded.

Kyle West: Well, I don't resent you for that. Let me just clear the air.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, as a result of that conversation, I think millions of people have heard your remarks as a seven-year-old boy. Kyle has a wonderful sense of humor, and it came out in that interchange. Bob, I referred to you a minute ago, but I haven't introduced you. I'm talking not only to Kyle West, but to his dad, Bob West. And we're delighted to have you here and I want to talk to you next time about something the Lord has laid on your heart. But we'll get into that later. For now, tell me about that occasion when you brought Kyle to talk with me in the studio.

Bob West: Well, Doctor, it was a very interesting time for us because I was new. I had never met you, so to have all of this going on and Kyle was really driving us, he's saying, "Call him, call him, call him. Get me in there." So to have us go into the studio, I was sitting in the corner on a little chair as you were talking to Kyle and I'm thinking, "I don't know what we're doing here, why is my son talking to him at seven years old?"

Kyle West: Remember that when you tell me I'm not motivated, dad.

Dr. James Dobson: Nobody's going to question that.

Bob West: And it really did start a series of events for us that has really been amazing.

Kyle West: And if I can kind of chime in on that same subject real quick, the thing that really, I think through the years, just that whole experience has been one of the key anchor points for my faith. That was a time in my life where absolutely beyond question, God showed up. There is absolutely no room for denial or refusal of the fact that God's hand was on that.

Dr. James Dobson: And it's on you today. If we talk anymore, we're not going to hear the recording that was made on that day, and I know our listeners will want to hear it and then we'll talk about it. So with that, let's hear a portion at least of what Kyle and I had to say to each other.

Tell me why you wanted to talk to me.

Kyle West: You're really strong in faith, as almost everybody in this city knows. And, since you like to learn more and more about God, I thought you might like to hear this story about how God helped me through a surgery.

Dr. James Dobson: I really would like to know that. First of all, Kyle, you have cerebral palsy, don't you?

Kyle West: It's pronounced cerebral palsy.

Dr. James Dobson: Cerebral, yeah, that's right.

Kyle West: Oh.

Dr. James Dobson: Can you say that? Cerebral palsy?

Kyle West: Yes. Cerebral palsy.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Kyle West: It's kind of a difficult word.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay, explain to me what that is.

Kyle West: Well, cerebral palsy, as I call it, is a disability.

Dr. James Dobson: Right.

Kyle West: Like blindness and stuff, only this time it's a problem with the legs. You see cerebral palsy that makes the leg bones weaker than everybody else. So yes, have trouble walking in your life.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let's tell everybody where you and I met. We had a picnic at Focus on the Family about a week ago, and I came to the picnic with my wife, Shirley, and you were there and you said some things to me. Talk to me about what you said.

Kyle West: Well, what I basically said was that I was wondering if you would like to hear a story about how God helped me through a surgery.

Dr. James Dobson: I want to know that story, Kyle, and that's why I invited you here. I wanted you to tell me about it.

Kyle West: Well, you know how special these kids always have to have surgery this and surgery that.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Kyle West: Heel chords. And well, this was heel chords, and I was a little scared of that happening. And one night I couldn't get to sleep because I was too frightened about the surgery. And then my mom walked into the room, how moms and dads walk into the room in the night a couple of times to...

Dr. James Dobson: Just check on you.

Kyle West: Yeah. When she came into the room and I asked if we could pray for courage for the surgery. So she walked over to my bedside and we prayed. And the next day, it was the day of the surgery, we drove to the hospital and well, I wasn't so scared anymore. We sat down in a waiting room like most doctor appointments

and surgeries and medication and things. After a few minutes, they put me on one of those pushable beds.

Dr. James Dobson.: A gurney.

Kyle West: And rolled me into the operation room or whatever it was called. And they tried to give me this medicine and they said it would taste like orange and strawberry and stuff. But you know how doctors are, always say it's going to taste like this and it's going to taste real good. And then the medicine turns out to be tasting yucky as a marker in your mouth. Well, I guess after they put me to sleep, they probably put the medicine on unknown to me. And then it seemed like the second I fell asleep, I was awoken by one of the nurses.

Dr. James Dobson: It was all over.

Kyle West: I knew that when I had fallen asleep, my legs were free, uncasted. And then I saw that one of my legs, the one they did the heel cords on, was casted in a cast. The nurse or whatever gave me some instructions about what to eat. My mom and dad had said we were going to go to Burger King for dinner, because that's one of my favorite hamburger places, and we got into the car and drove away to Burger King. And that's the end of my story.

Dr. James Dobson: The Lord was right there with you, Kyle, even when you were asleep. How many surgeries have you had so far?

Kyle West: Well, I'd say about four different surgeries.

Dr. James Dobson: Four surgeries? Yeah. Are you going to have to have any more?

Kyle West: Well, it's hard to say for sure. You never know what Jesus...

Dr. James Dobson: Tell me, Kyle, when you became a Christian, when did you give your heart to Jesus?

Kyle West: Well, the whole family was at grandma's and well, we were sitting down at the dinner table, any together family about to have dinner. And when I heard my grandma's prayer for the blessing for the food we always have, I had this feeling it had to happen. So the minute grandma was done with her prayer, I folded my hands again. My face fell half into the air like this, and I asked God to come into my heart.

Dr. James Dobson: And what did he say?

Kyle West: You can never actually hear Jesus saying, "Okay, Kyle, I'm coming in."

Dr. James Dobson: No, but you know that he heard you. Yeah. Don't you?

Kyle West: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Well, how about a little later when you were baptized?

Kyle West: Well, my dad was the dunker in the water and my mom was the person with the towels. And after my testimony was said by one of my favorite Sunday School teachers, my dad chatted a few words to the microphone and I was dunked.

Dr. James Dobson: At the picnic when I gave you a hug and got acquainted with you and asked you to come down and see us here at Focus on the Family, you thanked me for something. Do you remember what? The first thing you said to me?

Kyle West: All right. All right. For sponsoring the My Favorite radio program, Adventures and Odyssey.

Dr. James Dobson: Who's your favorite character in Odyssey?

Kyle West: Well, I'd say I like all of them. Especially John Avery Whitaker, though. Yeah, I was counting on meeting the guy in the costume of him at the picnic because I could never seem to see him when I go to the visitor center just across from this building. I've never laid eyes on that character. And at the picnic, I was just dying to see him.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you get a chance to see him?

Kyle West: No, I didn't. I guess he wasn't there, but I wanted to see him so much. I told my dad and mom, keep your eyes peeled for a giant John Avery.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I tell you what, your mom is sitting over there listening to us right now and she's hearing me say this. And when Mr. Whitaker is here in that big costume and you can come down, I'll make sure that you get a chance to talk to him and meet him. Is that all right?

Kyle West: You mean it?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, I mean it. Sure. I would love that. And I know-

Kyle West: Thank you, Dr. Dobson. You will not regret this.

Dr. James Dobson: I don't really think I'm going to. Kyle, tell me what else I need to know about you. I want to know who you are. If I'm going to be friends with you, I need to know something about you and I need to know what you think and I need to know what you're scared of.

Kyle West: Are you sure we have time to explain all that in five minutes? I'm sure you're tied up in like, "Oh, oh, oh. I got to do my radio program. Oh, oh, I forgotten my important meeting with the Focus chancellor."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you see, if I was too busy to talk to you, I wouldn't have invited you here, but I invited you here because this is your time, because I wanted to know you. I wanted know more about you. What are your main wishes? What would you really like?

Kyle West: Main wishes? Well, after dinner time, if I've eaten my dinner good, I would like a 10 ton bowl of ice cream.

Dr. James Dobson: 10 tons. You like ice cream?

Kyle West: Yeah, especially chocolate chip cookie dough. Me and my dad cannot get enough of that flavored ice cream.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you have brothers and sisters?

Kyle West: One brother, one sister. My brother, he's number one annoying in this family. He's like, five times in my life he's used me for a trampoline.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, goodness. Is he older than you?

Kyle West: No, actually I'm the oldest.

Dr. James Dobson: You're the oldest in the family?

Kyle West: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Kyle West: Seven, four, and two.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, tell me about your sister.

Kyle West: Well, she is the two-year-old and she doesn't bother me as much as Jonathan. Sometimes, it's really actually... Mostly when she bothers me, it's usually wanting something that I have.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that's the way two year olds are. Yeah. What's your favorite toy?

Kyle West: My favorite toy? Well, actually toys aren't really my thing. It's mostly television.

Dr. James Dobson: And what television programs do you like?

Kyle West: Winnie the Pooh and oh, I have one Adventures and Odyssey video at home. But I would sure like to have more, but I could never seem to find any in a video store.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, my goodness.

Kyle West: If I ever do find any, we don't have any extra money at this point, so we usually don't have enough cash to pay for it.

Dr. James Dobson: Listen, Kyle, I'm going to send you home with a bunch of videos and some Odyssey audio tapes, too. How old are you?

Kyle West: Seven.

Dr. James Dobson: Seven. Have you learned to read yet?

Kyle West: Well, in second grade and second grade is kind of that goal. You know what I mean?

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Kyle West: Learning to solve math problems that fast and learning how to read.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Well, Kyle, I'm glad you came to see us today. I was really looking forward to you being here.

Kyle West: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: And it is neat to get acquainted with you.

Kyle West: I just don't know how much I can thank you for sending me home with a mountain of Odyssey videos.

Dr. James Dobson: We're going to do that.

Kyle West: I didn't even ask.

Dr. James Dobson: No, you didn't yet.

Kyle West: Yet you generously donated like a 10 ton package of Odyssey videos.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, allow me to explain.

Kyle West: When I said 10 ton package, I meant just an expression.

Dr. James Dobson: I understand. That's right, Kyle. You're a neat kid. Anything else you want to say to us?

Kyle West: Well, actually that was about it, but if there's anything you want to say to me, I'd be happy to listen.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, there's several things. One is to stay close to Jesus. Don't ever forget that.

Kyle West: I am going to do that as much as possible, Dr. James.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you think God has a purpose for your life, Kyle?

Kyle West: Well, I know God has a purpose for my life, but I know it's not going to be anything too important.

Dr. James Dobson: How do you know that? You don't know what God has for you?

Kyle West: Well, what would God want with a... What could Go do with a boy with cerebral palsy?

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, Kyle, he can do wonderful things with you.

Kyle West: I know, it's just there are billions of other kids out there. Why would he want to use me?

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you ought to go home and get your mom to read a scripture to you in Philippians 4:13 that says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Kyle West: I've heard that scripture before, and I guess you're right, Dr. Dobson. No matter what disability we have or what thing or whatever sin we commit, God is always going to use us somehow.

Dr. James Dobson: And he's going to use you, and I think he's going to use you for great things.

Kyle West: I might even become a missionary.

Dr. James Dobson: Wouldn't that be something?

Kyle West: I might be a missionary to converted an entire company to Jesus. I could be a famous history missionary when this age is over.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. I like the way you're thinking. I don't like what you said first, where you said that God couldn't use you. Now, you're saying he can win a whole company for Jesus. Okay, Kyle, you going to give me another hug? Will you do that?

Kyle West: Sure. Dr. Dobson, what are new friends for?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, what are new friends for? I'm coming over. Okay.

Kyle West: And I so much want to thank you for giving me five whole minutes of your time.

Dr. James Dobson: It's a little more than that.

Kyle West: It brings my heart great... You mean we went over our amount of time?



Dr. James Dobson: No, no. This is the amount of time I expected. It brings great, what did you say?

Kyle West: It brings great joy to my heart. I mean, at the picnic, I may have been dying to meet John Avery Whitaker, but I was twice as dying to meet you.

Dr. James Dobson: Twice as dying to meet me. Okay.

Kyle West: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: All right. Here we go.

Kyle West: You know how kids are so excited about meeting the head honcho of the company.

Roger Marsh: Oh, my. I'm Roger Marsh jumping back in for a brief moment once again with the head honcho to let you know that we are going to make a time shift now and we'll return to an 18-year-old Kyle speaking with Dr. Dobson about his progress right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Kyle, there was magic in our interaction there. We've been sitting here laughing as we listen to it again. What is your reaction going back?

Kyle West: Well, first of all, I noticed how squeaky I sound on the tape. Oh my goodness. But it really does just overwhelm me the way that God used that moment. Because I remember honestly being embarrassed that I'd made that comment. I had no idea where that came from.

Dr. James Dobson: Which comment?

Kyle West: How can God use a boy with cerebral palsy? As I remember pretty distinctly, a lot of my comments subsequent to that were trying to go back and cover up, compensate for my pretty not very Christian sounding comment right there, but just the way that God took what I considered a moment of my weakness and turned it into something that impacted so many people. I mean, it really is almost a textbook example of what the scriptures says, that my power is made perfect in weakness, and it just really is overwhelming that way.

Dr. James Dobson: I have heard that a number of people have found the Lord because of hearing the interview with me and a seven-year-old boy.

Bob West: Well, it truly was amazing that after that broadcast, we started receiving letters. People just started writing to Kyle and to us and just letting us know how it affected them, people with disabilities, grandparents whose grandchildren had disabilities, one letter from a gentleman who said he gave his life to Christ. He pulled over on the side of the road and gave his life to Christ because of Kyle. And I thought, "That is something." How amazing for a parent to have their child that's seven years old, used by God in such a mighty way, it really blew us away.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we want to talk more about that next time, but the clock has gotten away from us. I do want to take a second to let our listeners know what God has done with you, Kyle. I predicted it. I was right because I know that the Lord loves every one of us and He loves you. Here are some of Kyle's accomplishments. He participated eloquently in the Truth Project, Dell Tackett's program that's been seen by millions of people. He is a member of the Colorado Springs Mayor's 100 teens. That was actually 2007, 2008. He's a member of the Colorado Springs Gazette's Top 20 Best and Brightest. He's been a speech and debate team captain and a national tournament qualifier. He was the editor of the school newspaper, copy editor. He was the Liberty High School Distinguished Scholar, and he was the president of the 4-H Club. He participated in high school theater and on and on it goes. Kyle, you were a superstar and you still are, and you're now off to college.

Kyle West: Yeah, I'm excited. College is going to be a new experience and a new frontier, but I cannot wait to see what the opportunities are that the Lord has for me and also just the people He's going to bring into my life. I still have a lot of growing up to do, I guess, in a lot of ways. And I think it's going to be an opportunity for that.

Dr. James Dobson: You know what, I do too. Don't we all. All right, we're going to finish this conversation tomorrow. Bob, thanks for being with us.

Bob West: Well, thank you, Doctor.

Dr. James Dobson: And Kyle, it's good to have you back here.

Kyle West: It's great to be back. We will pick up right here next time.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson again and you're listening to an interview I conducted with a seven-year-old boy named Kyle West. You also heard the voice of his father, Bob West, who was an executive with Focus on the Family at the time. Now about Kyle. He was born with cerebral palsy and was confined to a wheelchair and had had many surgeries. He's indomitable, but as you heard, I met him in 1999, but let me bring you up to date on this remarkable child. After graduating from high school, he went on to Patrick Henry College and earned a degree in the classics, after which he earned a master's degree in Greek and Roman history at the University of Colorado Boulder.

But he still wasn't through with his education. He went to the University of Pennsylvania, which is a Ivy League school. And there he earned a PhD in the classics and now he's teaching Greek Mythology at Patrick Henry College. So we're very proud of this man. He's dedicated his life to the Lord. So we congratulate Kyle for what he's done with his life. And if you would like to have a copy of this recording, just write me and I'll be happy to send it to you. Hope

you enjoyed the program today. We're going to air part two tomorrow, so be sure you are there.

Announcer:

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