



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Mary Crowley's Journey of Faith – Part 1

Guest(s): Mary Crowley

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Roger Marsh: Hi, this is Roger Marsh. Before we begin today's edition of Family Talk, I want to jump in here with a special announcement about a wonderful opportunity you have to help stand with us financially and have your gift doubled. Thanks to some special friends of the ministry here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we have a \$300,000 matching gift in place right now all throughout the month of May. That means your gift will be doubled dollar for dollar. A \$100 donation becomes \$200, \$500 becomes \$1,000, you get the idea. For more information on how you can stand with us financially during the month of May, go to drjamesdobson.org. And now, here's today's program.

Welcome everyone to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, joined now by our host, psychologist and best-selling author, Dr. James Dobson. And Doctor, we are especially happy that the women in our audience have tuned in today because in just a moment, we're going to revisit a classic broadcast featuring the testimony of a wise woman of faith. And her story is encouraging and applicable for all women, young and old.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it's exactly what the Apostle Paul was recommending in Titus 2 where he told the mature women to teach those who were younger and to train them and help them. It wasn't exclusively with regard to single women, it was primarily about married women, showing them how to be a successful wife and mother and so on. That chapter has been very influential to many people. And today we are going to air a recording made by Mary Crowley, a godly woman, a very good friend of mine who just had an incredibly strong faith and any woman would be wise to pattern her life after Mary Crowley.

Roger Marsh: Yes. Well, she has been gone for over 40 years now, but her influence continues and if someone listening doesn't have that kind of mentor, well then, listening to Mary Crowley on today's broadcast is sure to inspire them. Doctor, take a moment if you would, to remind our listeners exactly who Mary Crowley was.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, she was the first woman elected to the board of directors of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Imagine that. In that day, she served on the boards of the American Red Cross and the Better Business Bureau and much more, and she was an author of many best-selling books and the founder and

president of her own organization, the multi-million dollar business, Home Interiors and Gifts.

Roger Marsh: Well, it's evident how godly Mary Crowley was and with a legacy that continues to reach younger generations, even today. Doctor, the message that we're going to hear on this broadcast has an evangelistic flavor to it, and it was given in California at the Arcadia Christian Celebrity series. In fact, your wife, Shirley, has a connection here. She was actually one of the organizers of that series and wasn't she the person that called Mrs. Crowley and invited her?

Dr. James Dobson: She extended the invitation, yes.

Roger Marsh: Well, we are still benefiting from that choice that Shirley made, even today. There were about 800 women in attendance there who were able to hear the gospel message in person. And now you can too. Here now, is the late Mary Crowley on the special edition of Dr. James Dobson's family Talk.

Mary Crowley: My goodness. I'm thrilled to be here. Wow, what a beautiful group of women. I love to work with women. I love to meet with women. I love to talk to women. I love to listen to women. I have my own version of creation. This is Genesis according to Mary. God made the world and He said, "That's good." Then He created man and He said, "Well, that's pretty good, but I believe I can beat that." Then He created woman. That's right. And aren't you thrilled and glad that He did? I speak from a full cup. I'm deeply glad to be a woman. Every once in a while in men's groups, 'cause I work with a lot of men and I'm on boards of directors of a lot of different things. And so somebody will tell me that I think like a man. Well, I always say, "Thank you, I know you mean that as a compliment, but I can't possibly think like a man because I think like Mary Crowley and I'm a woman." But I do bring a woman's perspective to a lot of things and I'm sure you do also.

Let me tell you just a little bit about where I'm coming from. My background, when I was a year and a half old, my mother died and I went to live with my grandparents. They were just dear, good godly people, lived on a farm in Missouri and something wonderful happened there in those five years that I lived with my grandparents because then later on my father remarried and I went to live with them, with a stepmother that was not quite like my grandmother. But anyway, when I lived there on the farm with my grandparents, they gave me a wonderful heritage. They taught me that the source of all beginnings, the source of all wisdom, the source of all love was God Himself and that He loved me.

What a wonderful heritage. Because you see, if you want to find wisdom, you have to go back to the beginnings. Whether you look at a table, a chair, a skyscraper or whatever, you realize that somebody made it. For somebody to make it, somebody had to plan it, somebody had to conceive it, and that meant that there was a mind that conceived it. So whether it's a mud pie a child is

making, a chocolate cake in the oven or something great in architecture, a mind conceived it and it was built.

Then we look at the universe around us, more complex than any understanding we could possibly have, and we have to choose our philosophy. And my grandparents, even at that young age, helped me choose and form my philosophy of life. Because we have to decide, we have to make a choice of whether the universe is personal or impersonal. And as we look at the things about us and we see the things that are made, then we have to think back, if we're a rational thinking person, that a mind conceived it. And a mind means that there was a personality and a personality means there was a person. And that means there was a Creator and wonder of wonders, I can know the Creator. And I, as His creature am subject to Him and loved by Him, and this was my wonderful heritage.

The earliest memory I have, is my grandparents kneeling by my bed praying for me. What kind of heritage are you giving your children? What are their earliest memories of you? Are you helping them form a philosophy of faith, if you will, that'll see them through the trials and tribulations of life? You see, in life, we have problems. We have difficulties. I heard Laura Dogleby say the other day, "Three things about problems. Everybody has some. If you haven't had some, you will have and wherever you work or live, there will be some problems there. And then, third thing, you might be somebody else's problem."

So as I was growing up there in those early years and they tell us that those early years are the most impressive. Come Sunday, it wasn't a matter of question, "Are we going to church?" It was natural as breathing. And before every meal we bowed our heads and thanked the Lord that out of His abundance, He had provided for us. Yes, I lived on the farm when it was the philosophy of farmers that when you had a good crop, you saved for the time when you didn't have a good crop and you didn't expect the government to subsidize you when you had a poor crop. And so that was the way I was taught and that was part of the basis of my philosophy of life, of sharing and of taking care of God's resources.

Well, when I was six and a half, my father had remarried and had moved to Portland, Oregon and I was picked up and taken rather unceremoniously across the country and dropped into a hostile atmosphere because my father had married a woman who didn't like kids, didn't want to learn about kids and didn't care. So for the next seven years it was pretty tough. But you know what I had? I would walk out in those tall piney woods there in the Pacific Northwest and I could talk to Jesus as if He were my friend 'cause He was. Sometimes He was the only friend I had because my grandparents had taught me, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." Do you know that God loves you? Once you get a hold of how much God loves you and what it cost Him to redeem you, you'll never have a problem with self-image. My self-worth is tied up in the character of God. He says that I am of great worth, never worthy but of great worth.

And so, those were difficult years. And it's not just childhood imagination because the court took us away from our stepmother and I got to go back and live with my grandmother a while.

So you see, in today's society we'd be called abused children. Why did I tell you that? I tell you that so that you'll know I don't care what your background is or what's happened to you, God is able to forgive you, to release you, to make you free indeed. Isn't that good news? So when I was 13, when I lived with my grandmother, I made a commitment of my life to Him. You see, commitment means that you've found something of value to commit your life to. And then commitment gives you identity. All of us seek identity, stimulation, security. As women, we really seek security probably more than men. As women, we wear our houses and we want them to look good on us. We want to feel safe in them. And that's something about what we do in our business. And men are not quite as concerned about security as women are, but they're very concerned about how much we as women admire them, approve of them and appreciate them. We'll talk more about that in a minute.

So I made a commitment of my life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps you do not know who I talk about, but He's a friend of mine and I hope that He becomes a friend of yours. I've always known that Jesus loved me. My grandmother, of course, taught me the little prayer that most of you have heard, our children have heard. "Now lay me down to sleep. Pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." Not in a morbid way, but just that I was in His care, whether I was awake or asleep or living or in His care. But she also taught me another one. "Now I wake me up to work. I pray the Lord I will not shirk. If I should die before tonight, I pray the Lord my work's all right."

So she gave me a commitment to excellence in work, a commitment to do my best, a commitment to be somebody. And these have sustained me through many, many years because I'm older than most of you here in this room. So you see, I can speak with a certain degree of authority. Isn't it neat? When you get older, you can be an authority. Some of the advantages, mm-hmm.

Well then, later on I had two children and lived through World War II and a lot of difficulties and a lot of things. And yes, I was a single parent for a while when their father died and then later I remarried and have been married to a wonderful guy for 37 years. See, because Jesus is your friend, doesn't always make everything easy, but He has promised that He'd go with you through the valleys and that He'd go with you through the waters and you'd not be overcome. You may get a little wet, but you won't be overwhelmed. And so I claimed those promises through all those years.

Well, as my children were grown then and building their own homes, I had got this idea of a business of serving women in their homes, American women, with decorative accessories that they could choose and mingle with the things they had and all within the framework of their budget and wouldn't have to call in an

interior decorator. The idea came after World War II. You can read it in the book. But anyway, so 28 years ago we started this business, Home Interiors and Gifts. And my daughter was in business with me a while, my son is still in business with me. But we had two goals. One was to honor God and the other was to bless and serve people. And everything had to go between these sort of goal posts.

I mentioned that in our home, we thanked the Lord daily. We were worshipping on Sunday, it was as natural as breathing. And we read the Bible. We didn't have television, so we talked, we had conversation and we talked a lot and we enjoyed it and I learned a lot. And in the Bible then I found two models to sort of fashion my life after. The first I found early in my life and a second one later.

The first one was from the Old Testament. You see, we all have to have models that we build after, that we copy after. But let me give you just one word of caution about models. Ruth Graham is a friend of mine. I'm fortunate enough to work with Mr. Graham and be a friend to Ruth. And she and Mr. Graham were in England last year where he had held some crusades and they were guests of people high in the government one evening at a dinner party. Ruth was seated across from the man who is in charge of Scotland Yard of all the counterfeit bills and seeing of all the counterfeit whole division. So in making conversation with him, Ruth looked over at him and she said, "Well, I guess you study a lot of counterfeit bills?" His answer was immediate, "No, I never study a counterfeit bill. I study only the perfect bills, then I recognize the counterfeit when I see them."

And so I would say to you that, yes, we have models, we have people we pattern after, but study the real. All the rest of us, at best, are just counterfeit compared to Jesus Christ. So study Him and His characteristics and His love and His principles and His way of treating people. Study Him. And we hope that there'll be some models that you can learn from and be with and enjoy, but study just the perfect. I often tell our people in Home Interiors, don't worship me, worship the God I serve. We all have to build our lives around something or someone that doesn't change. And God Himself is the only person that doesn't change.

But as I was growing up, I took one of the models from the Old Testament, tells us a story over there of the land of Israel. This was a young undeveloped land and as yet, had no king. In fact, they were slaves, slaves to the king of Canaan. God had allowed them to be slaves because they had disobeyed Him. Sometimes I shudder to think about what can happen in America if we don't come back to the recognition of the Sovereign God who made us a great nation. But in the process of their slavery, they were allowed to be judged by people wise and compassionate in the ways of Almighty God. And one of the judges was a woman. I asked a group of 1300 pastors one time, who was Mrs. Lappidoth in the Bible. They didn't know. You see, that's because God called her Deborah. You see, He knows your name. He doesn't call you Mrs. Husband's

wife. He calls you by name. He has a distinct plan for you. He knows you. He never misses you in the crowd. He never loses you. You're very dear to Him.

So as Deborah would listen to the people and they came up with their problems, and I can imagine, they had a whole lot of them. We have 36,000 women in Home Interiors. They have lots of joys, but they can have a few problems too. So she did what every godly woman does, she went to her God about it. What could she do? Her answer came in a rather startling way. So she called Barak, he was the commander in chief of the little ragtag army of Israel and she said to him, "Had not the Lord God commanded you to mobilize 10,000 men and go up to Mount Tabor and he would deliver Sisra," which was the commander in chief of the wicked army of Sisra, "into your hand?" And he said, "I will go if you will go with me."

You see, precious women, men need encouragement. Your husbands need encouragement. The mayor of your city needs encouragement. The President of the United States needs encouragement. The police chief needs encouragement. All the men around you need encouragement. God created women, I believe, that you be the inspiration for mankind. And precious dears, if we don't inspire those dears, they may not get inspired. Really. So we are to inspire them and to encourage them.

In the little blue book, don't look at it now, but you'll find later, where a young bride was meeting with a group of older, more experienced women, and she said, "I don't understand my husband. He wants me to come to him for decisions and he wants to be and he wants me to look up to him. And then other times why he really depends on me and he wants me to do this and I just can't figure him out." So that's when the phrase was coined, "But honey, you have to prop him up on one side and lean on him on the other."

And so that's what you have to do. You see, that's a unique distinctive of women. I've often said that the biggest enemy to men is ego. Biggest enemy to women is fatigue. I see you know what I mean. We've worked past the point where our disposition is charming. Ah so, yes. So we have to watch that, don't we? And incidentally, you have to pump his ego up every day. Now you can get tired of pumping and you can say, "I'm tired of this. Why doesn't he pump me up?" But honey, that's just the way it is. And the sooner you accept that, the better off you'll be. Because let me tell you, men want three things. They want admiration, approval, and appreciation. And every day when he leaves your house, honey, do you give him admiration before he goes? Appreciation and approval? Because honey, if you don't, the office or the place of business or wherever it is he's going, somebody there is going to give him admiration, approval and appreciation.

It is not easy. God calls women to a very special role. But let me tell you something, the rewards are great. They really are. They're great. God is, He blesses us with something special. He blesses us with that something that brings to every situation, every issue, a feeling of beauty, a feeling of excellence, a

feeling of joy, a feeling of the flowers and just everything special. That's the touch of a woman. They talk about a woman's place as though it had a limit. There's not a task to mankind given, there's not a place in earth or Heaven, there's not a blessing or a woe, there's not a whispered yes or no, there's not a life or death or birth that has a feather's weight of worth without a woman in it. You are very, very special.

Roger Marsh: Well, this is Roger Marsh once again, and you've been listening to the wise words of the late Mary Crowley here on this special edition of Family Talk. I do hope every woman listening to our broadcast today has felt encouraged by this special message. Dr. Dobson, I know that you and Mrs. Dobson feel blessed to have known Mary Crowley.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, Shirley and I loved her because she was such a delight to be around. She died decades ago and she was in the hospital for some weeks. She spread the gospel to everybody that she came in contact with on the floor of that ward, even though she was very, very ill obviously, and then went on to be with the Lord. She was quite a lady. And who knows how many people will be in Heaven because of the witnessing of Mary Crowley.

Roger Marsh: An absolutely incredible legacy that she did leave as she lived out her faith, indeed. A great testimony of Mary Crowley, our focus on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. We encourage you to join us again tomorrow for part two of this powerful classic conversation as we discuss what a godly woman really looks like in today's day and age. Of course, if you'd like to hear this program again, you can do so in its entirety when you go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And keep in mind, all throughout the month of May, we have a special opportunity for you as a supporter of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute to stand with us in prayer and also with your financial support. I'm excited to announce that during the month of May we have been blessed by some special friends of our ministry with a matching grant. Now this matching grant totals \$300,000 and that means every dollar we receive this month will be automatically doubled. Your gift of \$100 becomes \$200, your gift of 500 become \$1000. Your gift of \$10,000 becomes \$20,000. These resources will help us fight for the pre-born, to encourage marriages and support families. Now if you would like to make a donation online, all you have to do is visit drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also give us a call and make your donation over the phone when you call 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Or drop us a line through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute P.O. Box 39000 Colorado Springs, CO. The zip code, 80949. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for part two of Dr. Dobson's presentation with Mary Crowley right here on Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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