



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: A Tribute to Dr. Lois Evans – Part 2

Guest(s): Dr. Tony Evans

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Dr. 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. Tony Evans: I told the folks on New Year's Eve that the three most difficult words I heard and all I could do was cry like a baby. That's when she leaned over to me and said, "Let me go," those three words, "Let me go." Then she emphasized it, "You have to let me go. It's time." Months before it wasn't time. Months before there was a different perspective. But as earth grew dimmer and heaven grew brighter, she said, "Let me go."

Dr. Dobson: Well, those were heartbreaking words from Dr. Tony Evans as he talked about the passing of his beloved wife, Lois. I'm Dr. James Dobson and today on Family Talk you're going to hear the rest of this moving message given at his church following her death. I was so blessed by the lovely memories he shared of their time together and the full life she lived. If you missed that first part of Dr. Evan's message yesterday, you can hear it again on drjamesdobson.org or you can also order a CD copy of this full presentation as well.

In a moment, Dr. Tony Evans will share how his wife was so supportive in every aspect of their relationship. He also reveals the somber and spiritually encouraging last few days of her life. To get started, we're going to roll back just a little bit so you can hear some of yesterday's content to better understand where we're going today. As we rejoin this message, Dr. Evans takes us back into second Timothy, chapter four.

Dr. Tony Evans: I wish I could come here and tell you, "Following Jesus, there will be no battles." I wish it was that simple, "Following Jesus, there'll be no trials or troubles or difficulties," but the only reason you've got to fight is something is fighting you. He just says, "If you gonna fight, make it a good one." I fought a good fight. Too many couples here are fighting bad fights, because you're fighting over stuff that is non-beneficial and doesn't matter. When you hit times like this and you look back at the stuff you argued about, and fought about, and fussed about,

and cussed each other about, you look back and say, "That was a bad fight," because that had absolutely no benefit to it. It was non beneficial.

Church members fight over seats, like that's a good fight. Folk fight over skin color, like that's a good fight. Cultures fight, genders fight, they fight over stuff that doesn't matter. If you, at your time of departure, want to be able to connect with heaven, you better choose your fights wisely. I look at some of the stuff Sister Evans and I disagreed over. Most of the time it wasn't huge stuff, but when I look back, even the non-huge stuff wasn't worth the disagreement or not talking for a day or whatever the result was. Why? Because it wasn't beneficial. So when you look at your battles in life, you must ask the question, not, "Am I fighting?" But, "Is it worth the battle?"

He says, "I fought a good fight." I fought in the realm of that which was beneficial. He says in 1 Corinthians 9, "and I didn't box the air. I didn't shadow box. If it was a good fight, I went for the knockout punch." Because if it's a good fight, if it's beneficial, if it's helpful, if it's life changing, if it's impactful, if it will make a difference, you go for the knockout. Yes, you fight for that relationship. You fight for those kids so that they don't go astray. That's a good fight. You fight for your wellbeing. You fight so that other people's lives are better. You fight for your best self, because that's a good fight. He said, "I fought a good fight."

Over this last year, it's a two year process, but the last year's been a doozy and it's been a fight. It's been a fight, fight with prayer, your prayers, our prayers, a fight. Every day we went to this treatment, every day we fought, we fought. It's a good fight. Make sure what you're getting divorced over is not something stupid, not a bad fight. Or that broken relationship between mother and child, or aunt and uncle, or coworker and you, is it a good fight?

The second thing he says is, "I finished my course." I finished my course. It's good to know when your time is up that you're finished. Sister Evans' words were not, "I'm finished." She said, "I'm done." Same thing, "I'm done." I'm finished. Paul was saying, "I completed what I was put here to do." Don't waste your life so that when you are finished, you weren't finished, that you never got around to what God created and redeemed you to do, that there was nothing eternal about your life where the course that God had for you, and he has a course for every believer to serve his kingdom, to serve their Lord. Don't end your life wondering why you lived.

I learned a little bit more even than I knew previously about my wife. She got saved at nine. At nine her mother led her to Christ, her and her older sister. She got on her knees with the two of them and lead them in the process of trusting Christ as their savior. At 15 she went to a camp and was challenged there to surrender her life to Jesus Christ fully and in service to him. As the story was told to me, she got on her knees at the camp at 15 and told the Lord, "You can have all of my life for any of your purposes. I surrender to you even if that means I will never marry or have children." So, this was a serious moment where she

gave up everything over to Jesus Christ. This would lead to us meeting, us marrying, but it would also lead to her fingerprints being all over my life. You would not maybe know all of that, but there's no place that you go or that I go that has not been touched by her fingerprints.

I made it through school because she typed the papers and reviewed them. When we started the church with 10 people, she was the secretary, she was the hospitality person and she was the music leader, she was the pianist, while at the same time raising the kids. When the urban alternative started, she would make the tapes, reduplicate the tapes, put them in a bag, take them to the post office, mail them. Then, she would manage things so that we got on the radio. So, anybody who knows me anywhere in the world only know me because her fingerprints are on it. And her motivation was something her mother told her as she grew up, all she would say regularly is, "It's for His glory," or, "for His name's sake." So everything had the mark of God associated with it.

Paul says, "I finished my course. I did all that I was designed to do." When it comes time for God to transition me and you and us, you want to be able to say, "I'm finished." Paul thirdly says, "I kept the faith. I didn't walk away from my faith. When times got hard I didn't give up on Jesus."

Our bedroom looks like a hospital room, with the wheelchair and a walker and all of the things that come with hospice. But at any time she could be conscious, you would hear a calling on Jesus, or asking me or the kids to read scripture, or playing scripture on a CD, or listening to music on Christmas. She had very little consciousness on Christmas. We would gather her in the wheelchair. She wasn't able to walk. She wasn't able to talk in any clear, meaningful way. We'd gather the children and the grandchildren, the great grandchildren around. We just sang, sang carols about Jesus. She just would move her lips, trying to mouth the words ... about Jesus.

The night before she passed away, a friend came over and just sang to her songs about the Lord. She would grab her hand and lift it up, and grab her hands. The lady would put her hand down. She'd grab it and pull it back up. Put it down, she'd grab it and pull it back up. When she stopped singing, she would pat her on the leg. She couldn't talk, but that meant, "Keep going, keep going." The lady wanted to make sure she was getting through and so she said, "If you are hearing me and if you are worshiping with me, blink your eyes," and she would blink her eyes.

In other words, things got closed out with Jesus, never gave up on the faith, never walked away from God. I don't care how bad things get. You don't walk out on Jesus. You keep the faith. You stay with the Lord. Paul says, "I didn't give up. I kept when I wanted to give up, when I wanted to throw in the towel, when I got too tired, I kept the faith."

I remember, this was a little early on when we were doing chemo and radiation, and we'd go every day for chemo. She said, "I want to give my radiation guy a

gift." I said, "Well, what do you want to give him?" She said, "Give me a gospel track so I can witness to him about Jesus." She's there trying to save her life but wanting a track so she could tell the radiation technician about Jesus. Don't you give up on the faith, because when your time comes you want to be able to hear heaven. Paul said, "I kept the faith." I didn't walk away from my belief system just because being a Christian became hard or because trials come, because difficulties are there.

Then he comes to his final verse, verse eight. Paul says, "Now there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. But not for me only, but for all those who love His appearing. Now there is laid up for me a crown of glory." Before he left, he knew that that was going to be an award waiting. Last week or so, Sister Evans rung out in the room, "Award, award, they're calling me for an award." She kept saying, "Award, award, they're just waiting for the song." There was anticipation about an award before she was gone. But Paul had an anticipation about an award before he was gone. He said, "Now there is laid up for me."

When I came by the office yesterday, there was a plaque with a resolution on it. The resolution had a quote on it from Sister Evans that I've never remember ever reading, taken from a magazine article that she had written or they had interviewed her, and they included it on their resolution. Let me read what she wrote in 2012.

"As a woman that heard the voice of God and stayed on track as much as she could, and with the plan that He ordained and preordained for her life, I want to hear, 'Well done.' I might not please all the people here, but I want to hear, 'Well done.' Because what he foreknew about me and predestined for me, I took time in my life to really accomplish that. I want to leave a legacy and heritage for my children and grandchildren and for any woman that the Lord brought my way. I want to leave some inspiration and some encouragement for them. Foremost in my mind is I want to hear, 'Well done.'"

That must be from this point on the goal of everybody, to hear, "Well done," to hear God say, "You fought a good fight. You kept the faith and you finished the course." Give me another moment. He says, "Now there is laid up for me," which means that death wasn't the end. It wasn't a period. It was a conjunction.

Sister Evans asked me, she said, "How long is it going to take my soul and spirit to leave my body and go to heaven? How long is it going to take?" I was able to explain, "It's like a balloon with air. When you prick it, it goes pop and the air escapes and the rubber falls down to the ground. The rubber, once you pop the balloon, is useless, but the air that left it is still there. When that pop occurs and you close your eyes for the last time, the life escapes. The body is dormant because it has no air, but the air is still there. You're very much alive. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." When you have that assurance that you don't get to stay dead when you die, when you have that confidence in the Lord, ah.

So, if you are here today and you are a Christian, if you are here today and you love the Lord, then you follow Him because this life is your dress rehearsal for eternity. You say, "But it's hard, but it's tough." But if I told you that if I got you to eat squash for a year and you didn't like squash, but if you ate it for a year I would pay all of your bills for the rest of your life, it would change your view of squash. Your life may have squash in it, but God says, "If you'll fight a good fight, finish the cost and keep the faith, I got you covered for your eternal destiny." So you keep on fighting.

When a football player retires, when it's over, he moves off the scene. His teammates will miss him if he gets cut or if he gets too injured to play because he's no longer playing by his side, but his teammate has still got to keep playing even though he misses his teammate. My teammate is gone, but I'm going to keep playing. My teammate is gone, but I'm gonna keep blocking and tackling. I'll miss my teammate, but the game of God's kingdom goes on. So you keep going. If something were to happen to me, the teammate may be gone, but you keep playing because God has still got you in the game.

Dr. Dobson: Well, what a passionate conclusion at the end of that memorial service delivered by my friend, Dr. Tony Evans. I'm Dr. James Dobson and you've been listening to his powerful message following the death of his wife, Lois. I was inspired by Tony's words and his heavenly perspective. I want to end this radio program by praying for Dr. Evans and for his family. I hope you'll join me in prayer now.

Lord, I thank you for the faith and the passion and the ministry of Dr. Tony Evans. Thank you for his wonderful wife that you blessed him with all those years. We're so grateful also for the godly woman, and the mom, and the wife, and the friend that she was. Comfort their four children, Anthony and Jonathan, Priscilla and Crystal, as they mourn their mother's passing. I would also ask that you strengthen Tony as he follows your calling on his life without his partner and friend. Surround him with the support and encouragement that he needs in this difficult time. In your name we pray, amen.

Well, these two programs have been deeply meaningful to me and I hope they were for you as well. Thank you for listening to us today. Tune in next time for another edition of Family Talk. I'm Dr. James Dobson. God's blessings on you all.

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

Dr. Clinton: This is Dr. Tim Clinton, executive director of the James Dobson Family Institute. Thanks for listening today. We hope you found this program helpful and encouraging. Please remember that our ministry is here to serve you and your family. For more information about our programs and resources or to learn how you can support us, go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org, or call us toll free, (877)-732-6825. I pray that God will bless you in 2020. We're so grateful for your partnership. We ask you to stand with us and to continue to defend the Christian values in an ever changing culture. Thanks again for joining

us. We hope you join us again on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Roger Marsh:

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