



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Franklin Graham: Addressing the Crisis in Ukraine

Guest(s): Rev. Franklin Graham

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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.

Roger Marsh: Hello, and thank you for listening to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. And did you know that this Thursday, May the 5th is the National Day of Prayer? Well, it is. And here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we make a great effort to promote and participate in this special day each year and every year. The National Day of Prayer is an annual day of observance held on the first Thursday of May. It's designated by the United States Congress when people are asked to turn to God in prayer and meditation. The President is required by law to sign a proclamation each year, encouraging every American to pray on this day.

The modern law formalizing its annual observance was enacted in 1952 under President Dwight Eisenhower. To honor the National Day of Prayer here at Family Talk, we are making prayer our theme this entire week. As we prepare as citizens and communities and as one nation under God to bring our petitions before the Lord, we ask you to join with us in praying for this country. And on Thursday, please join us on our website or on our Facebook page to view the live National Day of Prayer broadcast. Go to drjamesdobson.org, or find us on Facebook by going to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and then searching for "Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk."

Well, we have a very special interview to share with you today here on Family Talk. Our guest is Franklin Graham, the son of the man known as "America's Preacher," the late evangelist, Reverend Billy Graham. Franklin serves as the president and CEO of Samaritan's Purse and also the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Samaritan's Purse is a Christian organization that provides spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world. Under Franklin Graham's leadership Samaritan's Purse has met the needs of poor, sick, and suffering people in more than 100 countries. When Russia invaded Ukraine in late February, Samaritan's Purse leapt into action. Their team had an emergency field hospital on the ground in Ukraine by March 6th. They are now operating multiple medical facilities in various parts of Ukraine, as well as providing food and non-food relief items through church partners with Ukraine and Moldova.

To date Franklin Graham has made two trips to Ukraine since the conflict began. The day after he returned to the US from his first visit, he was gracious enough to give us a few moments of his time and that is the interview that you're about to hear. The tragedy and need in Ukraine were very fresh in Franklin Graham's mind. You'll be able to hear the sadness in his voice as he relays some of the things that he witnessed firsthand during his time in that country. But you'll also be able to detect his hope.

Leading today's interview is our co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton. Dr. Clinton is the president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and serves at the resident authority on mental health and relationships here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. He is also a licensed professional counselor and a licensed marriage and family therapist. Here now is Dr. Tim Clinton and his guest Franklin Graham, on this special edition of Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Welcome in to a special edition of Family Talk, a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host of Family Talk and president of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Today is May 2nd as we kick off the National Day of Prayer week, and we are recording this broadcast the day before Good Friday, as Franklin Graham just got off a plane from Ukraine. He has devoted his life to meeting the needs of people around the world and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. The eldest son of Billy Graham and Ruth Bell Graham, he serves as president and CEO and of Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Under his leadership Samaritan's Purse has met the needs of the poor, sick, and suffering in more than 100 countries. As an evangelist for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Franklin has led crusades around the world. He's one of my favorites. He's a longtime friend of Dr. Dobson and the ministry. Franklin, welcome back to Family Talk. Thank you for joining us.

Franklin Graham: Thank you. It's good to be with you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Dobson sends his regards, Franklin, wishes he could be with us. He wanted you to know that he's praying for and with you.

Franklin Graham: Well, I certainly love Dr. Dobson, and he is one of the great conservative voice for our country, and not many people like him, and his emphasis on family and God's Word is just incredible.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It is. And he's got a lot of vinegar in him still. So, we're praying that God will continue to strengthen him and use him, especially in this hour. Franklin, let's go straight to Ukraine. I know that you just came back from there. We continue you to hear and see the horrific stories and images of what's happening there. Tell us a little bit about what you saw and the work of Samaritan's Purse and BGEA right now going on.

Franklin Graham: Well, it's just as bad as what you see on television. The atrocities that have taken place, it's incredible. The people there. This is the most church-ed nation in Europe, more churches in Ukraine than any place else in Europe. On Sunday, the churches are full. They're not just buildings sitting there. They're full and Samaritan's Purse, over the years, we have had a relationship with about 3,200 churches that help us with Operation Christmas Child. And in the last 20 years, we've distributed over 12 million shoebox gifts in the Ukraine. And it's had an impact. This year we took in 600,000, and 400,000 were distributed before the invasion. So we're hoping that we can get the other 200,000 out sometime, not later this spring.

Our work in the Ukraine is focused on medical work. And again, we've got this incredible network of churches and pastors. We've got two what we call tier two hospitals. These are hospitals that are able to do surgery. We've got two of those functioning. And then we've got six clinics. And the six clinics can do minor surgery, but not major surgery. We're distributing food. We've already done, I think it's about 95 metric tons of food. It might be more than that as of today. We've got, again, this network of churches and we give it to the churches and they do the distribution. We help them with the finances. We help them with cars and trucks so that they can do this.

And most of the food that comes in is going right up to the Eastern area of the country, which is where the conflict is between Russia and Ukraine.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: And that's where the need is the greatest. I was there, I've been there twice in the last few weeks, and it's a place that it just breaks your heart when you see what the people are going through. I don't think I've ever been in a country where the people were so committed and united and standing up enough for their country.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: The crisis there is huge, but the answer is God. And there's billboards around the country. God is the answer. A big billboard. And it just says, "God is the answer," in Ukrainian. And the people in Ukraine realize that it's only God that can solve this problem.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We were seeing reports that millions of people had fled the country and that about, what six million in total, are "on the run," displaced, and how horrible it must be to be in that kind of a situation. I can't imagine the impact on the children there. Franklin, do you have any special God stories in the midst of all this? I know that you and Cissie and a few others were over there, but anything that just really resonated with your heart?

Franklin Graham: There is 11, it may be as much as 13 million right now, people that are displaced.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Wow.

Franklin Graham: There is about six million that have fled the country, and there's another six to seven million that are inside the country, they've gone to do Western part of the country which is more safe, around Lviv, in that area. And it's more safe, but it's not safe. When I was there, we had a discussion with a team if the air raid sirens go off in the middle of the night, what are we going to do? Are we going to go down to the bunker or are we going to stay in our rooms? And I just decided, I'm going to stay in my room. And if a bomb hits the hotel and I go to Heaven, amen. But the last thing I want to do is be buried in the rubble in the bottom of a basement and not be able to breathe or get out.

Dr. Tim Clinton: No.

Franklin Graham: So it's just a fact of life, and you don't know what's coming, and it's a very sobering sound when that air raid siren goes off. It gets your attention.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: And especially in the middle of the night when everything's dark. But the people live like this day in and day out. And of course the people in the east where they're being bombarded all day long by the Russians, all day, every day. And they haven't given up and they haven't quit. Churches that we work with, pastors, have taken their churches and they've turned them into distribution centers. We send them food and medicine and people come to the church and they get food and medicine.

We put people in the bed, at the church, they give them a place to sleep. And so the church becomes a hotel. It becomes a ministry center. They feed people and they distribute food, medicines. And it's not just one church. I mean, it's hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of churches that are doing this. And I'm just so proud of these pastors and the stand that they're taking. And they're just fearless, just not afraid. We've got some pastors that have been able to use their cars that take food in behind the Russian lines. And I was talking to the head of the Pentecostal Church and they have had four of their staff that was doing food distribution, food that Samaritan's Purse had given them, four that had been killed so far. And one man had 12 children, one had six children, another man had four, another man wasn't married, but that's the price that's paid.

And they weren't complaining. They were just, it's a fact of life. These men gave their life to try to help save life. And this is happening here in the 21st Century. We thought this stuff happened under Stalin. We thought this happened under Hitler. But here we are in Europe and the human heart hasn't changed.

Dr. Tim Clinton: No.

Franklin Graham: That's it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: It's the human heart is wicked and evil.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's breathtaking.

Franklin Graham: And only God can save it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Franklin, President Zelenskyy I know had appealed to the United Nations for help. You met with some key leaders while you were over there. I saw online on social media, your daughter Cissie in with you and other members of your team. What are you hearing from the leadership in Ukraine?

Franklin Graham: No question, the leadership, the church leadership, are requesting prayer. And I'm asking people, this Good Friday, if they would pray and make it a focus prayer, Good Friday through the following week to Sunday, which is the Orthodox Easter. This coming Sunday is Protestant Easter, but the following Sunday is Orthodox Easter. Of course, much of the Ukraine is Orthodox. Now, I'm asking people just to make it a focused prayer for those 10 days, for just every day, if they would just meet and pray for God's will to be done, that this bloodshed, this destruction, would come to an end.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I saw an interview piece you did with Griff Jenkins. In it, he was talking to you about Ukraine. And you said that what you see is a sin problem and only God can change it. Can you elaborate on that, Franklin?

Franklin Graham: Well, it is sin. The human heart is wicked. And who can know it, the Bible says. And what we have is murder. We have rape. We have destruction of entire cities, genocide. This is just the wickedness of the human heart. And again, these billboards across Ukraine where they recognize that God is the only hope for Ukraine. And it's true. Money's not going to solve the problem.

Dr. Tim Clinton: No.

Franklin Graham: You could give the Ukrainians billions of dollars and that's not going to solve the problem. You can give them more weapons, which they need, but that's not going to solve the problem. It's a sin problem. And we just need to pray this, that God would bless the Ukrainian people and that this fighting would come to an end and He can change the hearts of Putin. He can change the hearts of the generals and the leaders. He can do that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: He can.

Franklin Graham: And I just pray that if the nation prays for Putin and I'm not praying that we pray for him to succeed. I'm just praying that God would move in his heart for him to change course. And it could happen if we pray.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, we join with you in that prayer. We do. Franklin, I'd like to turn our attention for a moment back to America. You know since COVID hit it's been a tough go for people everywhere, with the COVID lockdowns, the loss, the loneliness, the racial trauma, the tension, the rioting. I wrote election mess, the partial birth abortion battles, infanticide, the struggle with parental rights. It's only intuitive too that there would be a mental health spike. I know we're seeing a lot of stress and anxiety, depression, even suicidality. I think people are confused. They're angry. They're frustrated. They're emotionally shot. Franklin, the American Psychological Association just came out with a report that said stress in America is peaking right now because of inflation, money stress, and catch this, the war in Ukraine. What do you say to people who are just living in fear? Who are just traumatized? People are now talking about collective trauma, here and around the globe.

Franklin Graham: Well, I mean, I get it. I understand that. And if you take the pandemic, all we heard night after night on the news was how many people were dying from the pandemic. And we have got to have lockdowns. And I'm not sure the lockdowns work. I mean, it's the first time in history that we locked down a healthy population, and we've always locked down people that were sick, but we've never locked down healthy people. And this is something that has never been done before. And the whole world adopted that. The entire world adopted lockdowns. And it's just strange to me that this has happened and the depression that people have, the fear that people have. And now the war in Ukraine, people are afraid is this going to spill into something bigger?

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know.

Franklin Graham: Are the Russian's going to use nuclear weapons?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Franklin Graham: And that's a good question and it could happen. But if we pray, then we know God is in control and we know that, I mean, we use the word "God is sovereign" a lot. And I think people use it too much. He is sovereign of course, no question. But we have to pray believing that God can change things and He can change. He can change His mind. He can change things. He can change hearts. And we are in a mess in this world.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: And the only hope is the gospel and the gospel message has power. That God so loved the world that He gave has only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus Christ came down from

Heaven. We celebrate this on Easter, just in a few days. He came down from Heaven to this earth to take our sin. He died and shed His blood on a cross for our sins. He was buried for our sins. And on the third day, God raised His Son to life. Jesus is alive. And if we're willing to confess and repent, turn from our sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we can be saved. We can have that hope of eternal life. And no matter what happens in the world, we can have that assurance, knowing that we are safe and secure in the hands of God.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I think that's why they call it the good news. You're listening to Family Talk, a division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, your host today. And our special guest is Franklin Graham. Franklin, I wanted to ask you this. Do you see a stirring? I think a lot of people are just done with everything. They're emotionally shot. They're crying out to God and there's something going on deep down inside and people realize that this attempt to silence and shame and stigmatized people, this censorship, the suppression stuff and more, they're done with it. It's time to step up and into this moment. What do you say to people who are just at that edge and they just need some hope and encouragement?

Franklin Graham: Well, first of all, I say, God bless the Canadian truckers. And you say, what's that got to do a thing? They brought attention and got the attention of the world. And I think a lot of these restrictions began to lift after they saw how mad these Canadians were getting. And they realized it could happen in their country. And, yes, people are fed up. They're just sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Franklin Graham: And well, again, the hope is God. That's the only hope is God.

Dr. Tim Clinton: This is the National Day of Prayer week. And I wanted to move to a close here, we're fighting time. But why is National Day of Prayer significant to you, Franklin? A lot of people are going to turn their attention to that this coming Thursday and more. And what should it look like in our personal lives? And what should it look like as we gather as a nation?

Franklin Graham: Well, I hope there's a recommitment in all of us to pray more, not less, but more. And God hears prayer. He does. And I believe in prayer. And so I would encourage people, this National Day of Prayer this week, that they get involved and they get together with their friends and family and church and other members of their community, and that they just cry out to Almighty God that He would protect this nation and that we would be faithful to Him in all that we do and say.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It reminds me of 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If My people who are called by My name, humble themselves and pray and seek My face, turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from Heaven. I'll forgive their sins." And I love this. "I'll heal their land." Dr. Dobson wanted me to make sure, Franklin, and ask how we could be

praying for you and the work of Samaritans Purse in Ukraine and around the world. Anything special that you'd like us to remember?

Franklin Graham: Well, I just pray that we'll be faithful to God in everything. What we say, what we do as an organization, as individuals, that we will lift up the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to be faithful to Him. And this world is coming to an end. Our life is, I'm going to be 70 this year. How many more years do I have? I have no clue, but I want to be faithful to the end.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Franklin, this seems to be a long-term project. I'm assuming your organizations are going to stay there in Ukraine for quite some time.

Franklin Graham: We will. The need is huge. The destruction that has taken place is incredible. The broken lives. We're going to be... We've been working in the Ukraine since 1992, and we're going to continue working in Ukraine for years to come.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Dobson also wanted me to be sure and tell our listeners how they could support you and the work of Samaritan's Purse. Can they just go right up onto samaritanspurse.org and give or make a contribution?

Franklin Graham: Absolutely. Plus there's all kinds of information about the things that we're doing in the Ukraine, things we've been talking about. So you'll see a lot of pictures and people that we're helping. And so absolutely, go there.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Franklin, as we wrap up today's broadcast, I was thinking maybe best way to close out the program would be just simply to ask you if wouldn't mind praying for our listeners and praying for what's happening around the world.

Franklin Graham: Absolutely. Our father and our God, we come to you and we confess our sins. And we ask that You would forgive us of our sins and cleanse our hearts and that we would be faithful to You in what we say and do. Father, help us to use every opportunity to reach a dying and lost world with the truth of the gospel. Father, we thank You for Dr. Dobson. We thank You for his leadership all these years. We thank You for his clear voice. Father, we just pray that you will bless him and strengthen him in everything. We thank You for this ministry. Father, we just ask that You would go before us and lead us, and it's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amen. Hey, on behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley, the entire team, Franklin, know of our love and our prayers for you and the good work God's doing in and through you. May God embolden you and strengthen you for such a time as this. Thank you for joining us.

Franklin Graham: Thank you. God bless.

Roger Marsh: A passionate prayer from Franklin Graham, and a personal update detailing one of his recent trips to Ukraine to visit some of the relief sites that Samaritan's

Purse is operating there. As Franklin just mentioned, Samaritan's Purse currently has multiple medical facilities in various parts of Ukraine. They are also providing food and non-food relief items to those in need through church partners in Ukraine and Moldova. Because of their ministry through Operation Christmas Child, Samaritan's Purse has a strong partner work of over 3000 churches in Ukraine and Moldova, so they were able to quickly spring into action when the conflict began. As is their practice anytime aid is needed, Samaritan's Purse is being the hands and feet of Jesus regardless of the danger or cost. Please join us in praying for Franklin Graham and Samaritan's Purse, and to stay updated on their work, just visit samaritanspurse.org.

Now, if you missed any part of today's program, or if you'd like to share it with your friends or family, remember you can listen to it when you visit our website at drjamesdobson.org, and then select the "broadcasts" tab. That's drjamesdobson.org, and then find the tab that says the word "broadcasts."

As mentioned at the top of today's program this Thursday, May the 5th is the National Day of Prayer here in the US. As such, we are dedicating this week of programming to talking about the power of prayer. Please join us in lifting up our nation over these next few days. Pray that the United States would turn away from evil and turn back to the Lord. And then plan to join us on our Facebook page or our website on Thursday, May the 5th at 8:00 PM Eastern time to watch the official National Day of Prayer broadcast. It's going to be a special and powerful event that you won't want to miss. That's coming up this Thursday, May the 5th, 8:00 PM Eastern time. Just go to facebook.com and search for Dr. Dobson's Family Talk. Or you can also watch us by going to our website at drjamesdobson.org.

Thanks so much for joining us today here on Family Talk, and please be with us again tomorrow for another special episode dedicated to the power and importance of prayer. I'm Roger Marsh. And this is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Thanks for listening.

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