



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** A Tribute to Dr. Lois Evans – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Dr. Tony Evans

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Dr. Dobson: Well, hello everyone. This is James Dobson, the host of James Dobson Family Institute, and you're listening to our program today, we call that division of James Dobson Family Institute, Family Talk. And today and tomorrow on our program, you're going to hear a very touching memorial tribute given by my great friend, Dr. Tony Evans. As many of you know, on December 30th, his wife Lois went home to be with Jesus. She was an incredible, God-fearing woman and Shirley and I were deeply, deeply grieved by her passing. We have known the Evans family for many, many years. In fact, I met Tony Evans in the late 1980s when he first began The Urban Alternative, and I had the pleasure of helping to launch that ministry.

Since then, he has been greatly used by God through his flourishing church and growing influential ministry as well. Through all of God's blessings and the toughest times of life, Lois was Tony's closest friend and confidant. I'm telling you, she was a beautiful and gracious woman and her passing is such a loss to us all. Dr. Evans speaks so lovingly of his wife of 49 years and the wonderful moments that they've had with their four children. Dr. Evans uses the apostle Paul's goodbye to Timothy as a framework for how we should view our limited time on earth. It's a very touching presentation and I know that it will speak to your heart.

Here now is Dr. Tony Evans' first Sunday morning message from his church following his wife's death.

Dr. Tony Evans: In baseball, the most fulfilling and successful thing that a batter can do is reach home plate. The whole goal is to be able to circle and get home and see the umpire go, "safe." To be able to get safely home is the goal of every baseball player who comes to the plate. He most certainly doesn't want to strike out, but even if he reaches first or second or third, his goal has not been met until he gets home. A few days ago, sister Evans went home. She went home. As I reflected on her home going and this passage, the principle that dawned on me was the best way to have a life worth lived is to have a death worth dying.

The best way to have a life worth living is to have a death worth dying. Paul is saying goodbye to Timothy, his son in the faith, and in his goodbyes to him, he has some very valuable lessons. Some of them, most of them I saw them lived out in the goodbyes that I just experienced. He begins in verse six by saying, "The time of my departure is at hand." He knew his life was coming to an end. He knew that his time on earth was closing and he wanted Timothy to know that it was okay. All of us have a time. The Bible says "it's appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment," all of us have a time to go home. The problem is we don't know the time. We really don't know today who the old people are in the church because how old you are is not determined by your birth date, but by your death date.

If you're 50 and only going to make it to 60, you're old. If you're 50 and going to live to be 100, you're still pretty young. But since you don't know whether you're going to make it to 50 or 100, you don't know who the old folks are here today. Many people think they're younger when they are older than they think because we don't know that time. But when that time begins to dawn as it did with Paul, he said, "The time of my departure is at hand." It became clear even though he made it out of a number of other scenarios that threatened his life, he wasn't going to make it out of this one.

One of the things I observed in life and in scripture is that when people walk with God and he doesn't take them suddenly, he will give them a glimpse of heaven while they're still transitioning from earth. He will let them know not only that it's time, but it's okay. Two years ago when we found out that this rare cancer had come upon sister Evans, we hoped, we had all these plans prior to that of when we turn 70, which we did this year, that things would change, things would be adjusted, more time to do this and that, and then we got the sudden shock of this rare disease, the disease that the doctor says has no cure. We did all that we knew to do, to see MD Anderson, Baylor, went online, was out of the country, all of the options we looked at hoping that this could be arrested.

We would get good news from the doctors, it seemed that things were not progressing as they predicted and life was not ending as quickly as they said it would. You were praying for us and we felt the prayers extending time and maybe, just maybe, God would cancel it altogether. But as time went on, particularly over the last month and a half or so, it became increasingly clear, slowly but surely the time of her departure was nearing. But simultaneous to the time of her departure were things taking place that were letting us know she was dealing with something outside of the earth's realm. For example, she said to some who were gathered in the room, "Do you see my mother? You see her? She's right over there by the fireplace. Do you see her? Why can't you see her?"

On another occasion she said, "My father, there's my father." And there was no one in the room physically, she was seeing something as the time of her departure got closer. A few days ago she said, "Two days, two days, take me up.

Two days, two days, take me up." Two and a half days she was gone. She heard something. She saw something as the time of her departure got nearer like Stephen in Acts chapter seven who when he was being stoned to death, he says he saw heaven open and Jesus standing on the right hand of the father giving him a standing ovation. When the time of your departure comes, you want to be close enough to God that you can hear things that other folk can't hear and see things that other folk can't see.

When pro football players enter the league, they enter the league planning for a long career, no draftee plans to only make it a year or two in the league. They want to play 10, 15 years. They want to make all the money they can make, be as successful as they can be. Make it to the hall of fame if possible. They have long-term vision and long-term goals. But those of you who watch sports long enough know that some of those goals are out of their hands. The coach may cut them, they may get injured, they may not reach the goals that they have because no matter how hard you plan, something's out of your hand. You don't know whether you're going to get sick. You don't know whether life is going to change, whether you'll be laid off.

You don't know all that's down the line. Therefore, it is absolutely critical since you and I don't know. Death has a way of surprising you. Death is the number one killer. It's the intruder that disrupts our wellbeing and gives us grief. Who would have thought that from a human standpoint, my greatest achievement, the commentary, would coincide with my greatest loss? Who would have predicted that? And yet the time of her departure got closer and closer and she began seeing more and more as the pain got greater and greater, there was greater spiritual clarity as she was moving from an earthly reality to a heavenly perspective. Paul said, "The time of my departure is at hand."

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 is 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." The thought even now of rehearsing those three words breaks my heart, but it became clearer and clearer it was time. Paul says, "The time of my departure is at hand." What was it about Paul that prepared him for this time? The time that you and I will at some point face, we faced it with other loved ones, but one day we will face this time ourselves.

It may hit suddenly, but for most people it comes progressively through illness. He says three things in verse seven as he talks about his departure, the word departure is a picture of an anchor being pulled up so that the ship can move from the dock to a new shore. The first thing he says in verse seven is, "I fought a good fight." "I fought a good fight." I hope you know all fights aren't worth fighting. Far too many of us spend far too much time with bad fights. The word good means that which is beneficial or helpful. He said, "I fought a good fight." The fights I had in life was to make things better. Paul had a lot of fights. He had

to run for his life. He had people chasing him. He had boats that were in storms where he was fighting for his very existence. But he said, "I fought a good fight."

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're going to 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 thought 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. Coaches 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 not 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."

Oh, this last year, it's a two year process, but the last year has been a doozy and it's been a fight. It's been a fight. A 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. Well, 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's 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 led 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.

Dr. Dobson: You've been listening to Dr. Tony Evans giving a touching tribute to his wife Lois, who went to be with the Lord on December 30th. She was wonderfully involved in every aspect of Tony's life. You'll hear more about her legacy tomorrow as we conclude this moving eulogy. In the meantime, I ask all of our listeners to be in prayer for the Evans family during this time. They've been through some tough experiences in the last few years and this one was heart wrenching. I was unable to attend Lois's funeral because on the same day she died, I lost another friend, Jim Jenkins, who I'd known for many years. He was the husband of our vice-president, Jenanne Jenkins, so I was speaking at Jim's funeral and was unable to attend Lois's service.

But the ceremony included tributes from friends, loved ones, and her four incredible children. What a life Dr. Lois Evans lived. This is a challenge to all of us to consider how we would like to be remembered when our time on earth is done. Now, next time on Family Talk, Dr. Evans will continue to share how Lois lived her life for Jesus and fought the good fight until the very end and that's coming up on tomorrow's broadcast. I hope you will be listening. I'm Dr. James Dobson. Thank you for listening and I do hope you will be with us then.

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

Roger Marsh: Hey everyone, Roger Marsh here. When you think about your family and where they will be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? Are you hopeful? What kind of legacy are you leaving for your children and their children? Here at Family Talk, we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving for your family. Join us today at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself and remember: your legacy matters.

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](http://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'll join us again on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.