



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Why Dads Matter: Dr. Dobson Speaks from the Heart

Guest(s): Pastor Ed Young

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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.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hello, and welcome to Family Talk. Thank you so much for listening and making our program a part of your day. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host here at Family Talk. I'm also President of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Now we have a very special pre-Father's Day edition of Family Talk to share with you today featuring Dr. Dobson and his good friend, Pastor Ed Young. Before we get into their conversation, though, I wanted to share some exciting news with you. Thanks to some generous friends of the ministry, this month, we've been blessed with a matching grant. To give today visit drjamesdobson.org or call us toll-free. Our number is (877) 732-6825. And when you reach out, make sure and request a copy of the new Celebrating Dad CD. This special CD contains three handpicked programs featuring myself, Dr. Dobson, and our good friend, Franklin Graham, and it's yours in exchange for a donation of any amount during the month of June. To request your copy, simply visit drjamesdobson.org or call toll-free (877) 732-6825.

Now on Father's Day in 2019, Dr. Dobson was invited to speak at Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas. The pastor there is Dr. Ed Young. He's been a friend of the Dobson's for many years. During this Sunday morning service, Pastor Young interviewed Dr. Dobson in front of a large congregation about the important role of dads. In addition to being a pastor, Dr. Ed Young host his own radio and television ministry called the *Winning Walk*. He served two terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He's authored many books, including, *The 10 Commandments of Marriage*, *The 10 Commandments of Parenting* and *Healing Broken America*. Let's join Pastor Young and Dr. Dobson now on this special edition of Family Talk.

Pastor Ed Young: Dr. Dobson, your wife's maiden name interests me. She was Shirley Deere, before you got married. Have you had any problems with that name?

Dr. James Dobson: She has, I can tell you. It's so good to have her with me today. I'm pleased that she could join me. It's not a perfect marriage. Really, it's not a perfect marriage, but it's a good marriage, but it's not perfect because Shirley's not perfect.

Pastor Ed Young: I understand. I understand.

Dr. James Dobson: Can I tell you a story about her?

Pastor Ed Young: Sure.

Dr. James Dobson: It's a place to start. Shirley is a very feisty lady. You wouldn't know that just meeting her, but she's a lot like her mother and we were flying long on a plane one day and there's a console between us and she ordered tomato juice and put it on the console. And I didn't know it was there and I was working on a computer or something and I hit it with my elbow and it went off and landed, half of it went on her lap and she was wearing a white suit. For some reason, I thought that was funny. And I was laughing with my eyes shut and she poured the other half of it in my lap. That is my Shirley.

Pastor Ed Young: Tell me, you were in academia for so long there, 14, 17 years. What led you to leave an atmosphere that you knew and loved and to move into another pursuit? What was behind all of that?

Dr. James Dobson: It's really interesting pastor because I loved academia. I love research. I love the medical community and the influence that it has, and I could easily have been happy there the rest of my life, but I saw something happening in the culture. I saw the family starting to unravel, the institution of the family, and I felt so strongly about it that I really thought I ought to resign and do what I could to try to help, because I'm not a prophet, but I saw today's world in what was taking place in 1977. And I just felt like that God was calling me to another world. So I was on two different tracks and the Lord really put his hand in my back and led me, I think, into a family ministry. And I started a little two room office, called it, Focus on the Family. And I was there 33 years before I left to start Family Talk.

Pastor Ed Young: What led you, not only to get there, but how did you have a Christian background? You were in a scientific world, intellectual world, a medical world. What is your Christian background? What is your home? And was Father's Day ... Tell me maybe about your dad. What was the influence there?

Dr. James Dobson: Well, that's where it started. My dad was a very godly man. He was six foot, four inches tall. He was my hero. My first memory of him, I was thinking about this, this morning. My first memory he had to remind me of. But when he did, I recalled it, even though I was only two years old. We started off in a very humble circumstance, very small church. And we lived in an apartment above a garage and there was no room for my crib and they had to put it in my parents' bedroom. And so my dad said later that it was not unusual in the middle of the night, when all was still to hear a little voice, say, "Daddy, daddy." And he would say, "What Jimmy?" And I would say, "Hold my hand." And he would reach within the darkness back and forth to find my little hand. And he said that when he grasped it with his big hand, my arm would become limp and my breathing

deep and regular. And it's obviously that I had gone back to sleep and that characterizes the relationship we had.

Pastor Ed Young: So your dad began to build the right stuff in your life from the very, very beginning. We used to hear that was a good dad. What is a good dad? What all does it take?

Dr. James Dobson: Well, my dad's a good model of it. He hunted and fished with me. One of my happiest memories is waking up at five o'clock in the morning, putting on hunting clothes, hunting boots, going out to the car, still dark, driving 20 miles outside of town and stopping at a place that was called, the Big Woods because the trees looked so big to me. We followed a little creek along the pathway and he was different out there. He was totally focused on me and he taught me a lot about being a man just by being with him. And I look back on those days as just being foundational. It made me want to be like him and made me wanted his God for my God, his values for my values. And I can't tell you what impact that had on me through the years.

Pastor Ed Young: So many times I've said, as we're talking about marriage as a family, that children spell love time. I thought that was original. I got it from you. I got it from you. I think that's-

Dr. James Dobson: Time, talk and touch. That's what a family needs.

Pastor Ed Young: All Right. Time talk and touch.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Pastor Ed Young: Boys and girls. Any difference in bringing up a girl than a boy? What's the difference? The same?

Dr. James Dobson: You know what, I appreciate that question because we're hearing some absolutely ridiculous stuff from the popular culture today. I mean, it is breathtaking that it's so foolish. It's saying that there's really no genetic differences between males and females. Gender's a matter of choice and they're telling kids as young as five or six or seven, you want to be a boy, that's fine. You want to be a girl, you can change. It's all a matter of choice. It's ridiculous that when a boy is in utero, he is bombarded by testosterone. It changes his entire brain. The structure of it is different. A girl is bombarded by estrogen. And from that point on they will be incredibly different. And the way fathers relate to boys is different from the way they relate to girls. And it's important for dads here to know the difference between the two, because a boy is born not knowing how to be a man.

He has to learn that. He has to see it modeled and he is totally bonded to his mother for the first 18 months. She is everything to him and will always play a role in his life. When a soldier falls on a battlefield and he's dying, often, often

the one word that he utters is mother, she has played such a role, but it has to change. At about 18 months of age, a boy begins to pull back from his mother and to bond with and reattach to his father. And that's where sexual identity as masculine behavior comes from. What I talked about, what my dad taught to me in the woods. It needs to take place. And for single mothers who are here, you are not equipped to teach your boy to be a boy or a man. It really requires a man who has been there and done that. I hope that doesn't insult anybody, but that's the way it is and if you-

Pastor Ed Young: A surrogate needs to come in. So a male image in the life of that boy.

Dr. James Dobson: ... If it's not a father, you need a male role model. When I was in the ninth grade, we had a coach. Haven't seen him since then, but a wonderful coach who was teaching us how to be boys. And I remember one day a whole class of us was sitting in the stands at a basketball court and a pretty girl walked by and she was wearing a sweater and you know how guys will respond. And we were all hooting and hollering and yelling and calling to her and whistling and everything. He jumped down our throats. He said, "Listen to me, you will not act like that. You're making fools of yourself. Don't you know, that a woman needs to be treated with respect. Don't you know, that she needs to be talked to in a civil way. What's all this yelling and hooting?"

And we were ashamed. We kind of slunk back into the benches there, but what he was doing was teaching us to be a man. That's what ought to occur in the childhood. And so between 18 months and five years of age, that detachment and reattachment needs to take place and mothers who are here need to know it. It's very hard for a mother to let go, because as he is everything to her, she is everything to him. And he sees this movement that this child is moving toward the father, that has to happen. And a lot of the confusion in sexual identity today in adults, is because that transformation didn't take place.

Pastor Ed Young: Now, the father to the son, but the father to the daughter also, that's a strategic relationship-

Dr. James Dobson: It's a different game, different game. A girl is also bonded to her mother and will be for the rest of her life. That will not change, but a girl needs something from her father that the boys typically don't look for. She needs affirmation. She needs a kind of love. She needs appreciation. She needs somebody to tell her that she's pretty, her self-esteem hangs precariously on a relationship with her father. He's the first male to cuddle her. He's the first male to kiss her. The first one to tell her that she's his little girl. And if that doesn't occur, then there is a vacuum within her. If she doesn't have that sense of identity and that love, and that affection from her dad, she may find it in somebody who has motives that are not so pure. It's really important that the dad be the daddy to that little girl, a different way. And I'm rattling on here. Is it okay?

Pastor Ed Young: That's perfect. We like it.

Dr. James Dobson: Something unusual happens when a girl goes into puberty, this is not always true, but fathers often get nervous about the development and if they hug their daughters, they lean backwards. They don't want to do anything inappropriate. And so they are very cautious and they quit touching their daughters. They quit hugging them at a time when they're most insecure and need to know that they are worthy as a woman, they're worthy as a girl. And I urge fathers at that time to hug your daughters and tell them that you love them, continue. She looks over at the boy and he's wrestling with his dad and he's physical with him. And the daughter feels something's missing. In the competition for dad's attention, the girl is third.

The mother, the wife has to be number one for his attention. And the boy is second in line because everybody knows that fathers need to be there for their boys. And boys need their dads. Many fathers don't know, in a different way those girls need their dads every bit as much and maybe more. And when it is missing, there is a certain kind of agony. I learned more about this from watching girls than I did in textbooks, but we had an Institute for college students who were in their junior and senior years and there were about 40 girls there and just on the edge of womanhood. And I invited those 40 girls to have lunch with me. We were in the boardroom and I brought them in, we served them a good lunch.

And then I said, "Let me tell you why you're here. I'm writing a book called *Bringing up Girls*." I also wrote *Bringing up Boys*. And then this one was about bringing up girls. And I said, "I want you to help me write this. I want you to tell me what I need to know about the female experience. I want you to tell me what you're thinking." They made a beeline for their fathers. They didn't say much about their mothers because that relationship is established and not threatened, but they began talking about their dads and they were not angry at them.

And they were not bitter, but they were hurt. And they began talking about the fact that, "Sometimes I think my dad doesn't even see me. Sometimes I think he does not know what I care about." They said, "We have come to this Institute and my father didn't even ask where I was going or what I was doing." And there's a longing. Then they started telling stories. This went all the way around the room and they were all crying. The entire room, about two thirds of those girls told me stories on that day, about their dad, about ...

Pastor Ed Young: For an illustration, what would be a story?

Dr. James Dobson: ... One of them talked about the fact that her dad never affirmed her, never told her that she was pretty and they were in the car on a trip. They were going to the beach and they were in the car and she was in the backseat. She took her shoe off and put her foot on the console between them and her father looked down at her foot and he touched her foot with his hand. And he said, "Honey, you have such beautiful feet." He'd never said anything like that and she cried. Who would understand that? Except there was a need there that she had met.

And there was a girl who talked about the fact that her dad would come down in the morning and whatever she was eating, he would say, "Do you know where that's going to go? That's going to go right to your hips and your legs." Comments like that, he would put his arm around her and kind of squeeze the fat a little bit. It wounded her, it hurt her.

And one girl told me about her father being an NCAA football coach. And he was so busy that he had absolutely no time for her. And she said, "The only way I could be with him was walk the sidelines with him to get some time with him." And she said through her tears, "There is no way to understand this. How could he love those boys on his football team more than he loved me?" They were just stories, which we did record them and I mentioned some of them, but there were others, about a third of them who had wonderful stories about their father.

One of them talked about going to bed at night. They were about four or five kids, and he would kneel down and talk to them and pray for them and tuck them in. And how precious that was to them. Everybody wanted a Kleenex because the girls did not know that one another felt this way until I asked the right question. And there was also a girl I'll never forget. She said that she would wake up sometimes at five o'clock in the morning and see the light was on in the family room. And she would get out of bed and she would come in there and her father would be sitting in his big chair with a Bible on his lap. And when he saw her, he would say, "Oh honey, I'm so glad you're awake. Would you come get on my lap? I want to show you something."

And she would snuggle up with him. And he said, "You see that scripture, I wrote your name there. That's for you. I'm praying for you." And that relationship is not casual for a girl coming through her childhood years in adolescent years. And we decided for Father's Day, one year, to invite women, to call and talk about their relationship with their fathers and more than 600 called and we recorded them. And one said her name was Kathy from Georgia. I'll never forget it. And she just talked about how, "Dad, I loved you so much. And I needed you so much. But somewhere along the line, I don't know where it went wrong, but the drugs and the prescriptions and the alcohol took its toll. And I could never reach you. I could never find you." And she said on Father's Day, I contacted my dad.

I wrote him a loving note and said, "It's not too late, dad. It's never too late as long there's life." And then call. And the line was busy. It was busy all day. And she got on a plane and flew to Portland and found the letter in the mailbox and went in the house. And her father was dead on the floor with the upturned phone beside him. She never had an opportunity to make that connection again. If it has not occurred, those of you who, your kids are older and you've had a bad relationship. It's not too late. You still need it.

Pastor Ed Young:

These are two tremendous books, folks. Dr. Dobson has a unusual gift of saying things medically, intellectually, deep, profound truths, but he applies it. So,

here's one *Bringing up Boys, Bringing up Girls*. He's had *New York Times* best-sellers. So you want to pick that up. It's well worth your time. Thank you Dr. Dobson. My, my, my.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm your co-host Dr. Tim Clinton and today's broadcast featured Pastor Ed Young's interview with Dr. Dobson. Pastor Young, senior pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, invited Dr. Dobson to share about the importance of dads from the stage at Second Baptist on Father's Day in 2019. What you just heard was their heartfelt conversation from that day. I hope you found it really encouraging. If you'd like to learn more about Dr. Ed Young or hear any part of the interview that you may have missed today, just simply go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Well today finished up three days of programming here on Family Talk, highlighting the vital role and responsibility of fatherhood. At the James Dobson Family Institute we love dads and to celebrate and honor fathers everywhere we've created a valuable, easy to use resource, just for dad.

It's called The Strong Dad's email series. To sign up, go to drjamesdobson.org. This 10-day email series will contain relevant resources from Dr. Dobson. There's truths and directions in there on how to equip you to step into your role and calling as a dad. And it's never too late to become a good dad. Sign up for our Strong Dad's email series today by visiting drjamesdobson.org.

This entire month is also a perfect time to give to the James Dobson Family Institute. Thanks to the gracious generosity of a number of friends of the ministry, we've been given a matching grant of \$300,000 for the month of June. To give today, visit drjamesdobson.org or call toll-free (877) 732-6825. Thanks again for listening to Family Talk. We're so grateful for your support, and please join again next time, but until then, may God richly bless you and your family. Happy Father's Day.

Announcer:

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