



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Redeeming Your Time – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Jordan Raynor

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome, everyone, to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute, supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Welcome in to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, your co-host here at Family Talk.

How would you like to manage your time the way that Jesus managed His? Well, our guest today is dedicated to helping Christians understand and live by the fact that our work matters for eternity, and so does our time. In fact, that's the premise of his new book, *Redeeming Your Time: Seven Biblical Principles for Being Purposeful, Present, and Wildly Productive*. His name, Jordan Raynor.

Jordan is the author of three books, *Called to Create*, *Master of One*, and his latest, *Redeeming Your Time*. That's our subject today. He's a best-selling author, podcast host, and writer. He serves as executive chairman of Threshold 360. It's a venture-backed tech startup which Jordan previously ran as CEO following a string of successful ventures of his own. Jordan has twice been selected as Google Fellow and served in the White House under President George W. Bush.

He's a sixth-generation Floridian. Jordan lives in Tampa, not a bad place to live, with his wife and their three young daughters. The Raynors are proud members of The Church at Odessa.

Jordan, what a delight to have you. Thank you for joining us.

Jordan Raynor: Dr. Clinton, it's my joy. As somebody who is raising my daughters on the backs of Dr. Dobson's work, it is truly a joy to be with you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hey, Jordan, as we step into this, I guess maybe the first question is, what's happening to us? It seems like everybody is swamped, everybody is buried, we don't have much time. I was talking to Julie. She said, "Tim, our schedule is just insane." Our digital devices have taken all of that craziness to another level. From home to work, it's just wild, isn't it?

Jordan Raynor:

It's wild. The systems of this world are at war with our time, and this is not new. It may be particularly difficult in our modern context, but this is true in the first century. It's why the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5 that part of our response to the gospel is to "redeem the time because the days are evil." In other words, the world is at war with us because we Christ-followers are not here just to sit back and wait for Jesus to return; we are called to co-labor with Him, doing the good works that He prepared in advance for us to do to renew every square inch of creation.

Because of that, of course the world is going to fight back. Of course social media apps are going to thwart our ability to be purposeful, present, and wildly productive. But there is an antidote, and I believe the antidote in the way that we approach this topic is found in the model of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

When I think about it, Jordan, I go back to a story of my son, Zach. When he was a little guy, I remember coming home one evening and pulled into the garage and got out of the car. I was a little late and came in through the door that led into the kitchen. Here comes this bundle of energy 100 mile an hour coming at me, "Dad, Dad, Dad, Dad!" He was just putting his first words together.

He stopped in his tracks, Jordan, looked down at my feet, put two words together I will never forget. He said, "Shoes off. Shoes off, Dada." What it meant was, "Take your shoes off and stay home. Be here with me. Be present with me." I think this battle that we're in, Jordan, we're losing our capacity to be present, and you're right, it affects everything around us.

Jordan, I love where you're going in *Redeeming Your Time*. Oh, by the way, everybody saying, "We don't need another time management book. Good night. This is another list of something else we've got to do or something else we need to check off to make sure we're going in the right direction," but Jordan, there's something about, and I love this, what you did in the book, the life of Christ and how He lived His life and how He accomplished so much.

You talk about upfront... I just want to set this context. Whether you're a mom at home taking care of kids, or you're a dad out on the road in a truck and you're trying to figure out how to get back home, grace-based productivity. Jordan, you're not here just to beat up people. You're here to help develop a strategy, a plan for the road forward.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. Here's the deal. There are 60,000 time management books on Amazon right now, literally. I didn't make up that number. The question, of course, is why does the world need another one? Dr. Tim, you're alluding to it already. I would argue we need another one for two reasons.

Number one, every time management book I've ever read, and trust me, I've read a lot of them, are based on this idea of works-based productivity. The message is, "Hey, you're feeling swamped and overwhelmed? Follow the

author's system, do it all, and oh, by the way, you have to do it perfectly. Then at the end of this road, you will find peace."

As Christ-followers, we can totally reject this thinking. Because of Jesus' work, I have secure peace, regardless of how productive I am. I don't do time management exercises in this wild goose chase to get peace; I do them as a worshipful response to the secure peace that is secured through Christ Jesus. That's the first reason why I think the world needs this particular book.

Secondly, as you alluded to, out of all the time management books I've read, I've never read a single one that accounts for how the Author of Time managed His time when He came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. We believe that, for 33 years, God became incarnate and had to steward the same exact 24-hour day that you and I steward, so why aren't we looking to the gospels for these time management principles?

I think it's because we look to the gospels exclusively for their theology and their ethics, and we can forget that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are biographies of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. They don't show Him with a to-do list, but they do show Him dealing with distractions at work and fighting for solitude and seeking to be busy without being hurried. They show Him dealing with the exact same things we're struggling with today, and because He was Jesus, because He was God, we can know that He managed His time perfectly.

That's why I wrote *Redeeming Your Time*. It's these seven principles, timeless principles from the life of Christ of how He stewarded His time, mapped to 32 wicked practical practices to help us live out those principles in our modern context.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Before we go to those seven principles, Jordan, let's go to Ephesians 5 for a moment. When the Scripture says, and we've heard it a million times, redeem your time, and that's the title of your book, *Redeeming Your Time*, Jordan, what does the word 'redeem' mean, or what should it mean to all of us?

Jordan Raynor: Yeah, so I've read a lot of commentaries on this verse, and the-

Dr. Tim Clinton: I have too. Yes.

Jordan Raynor: The consistent theme is to buy back, to ransom. Think about the redemption of Jesus Christ, coming back and redeeming and buying back humanity and the whole world. That's the idea here.

Paul spends the first four chapters of Ephesians expounding upon the gospel, that we are saved by grace, not by works. Then, as he always does, he's anticipating his readers' questions. His readers are asking, "Okay, Paul, I get it. What am I supposed to do with this grace I have been given? What's my response to the gospel? He says, "Redeem the time because the days are evil."

Buy back every minute you can, every hour you can, not for your own fame and fortune, but in the service of the glory of God and the good of others. I think that's what Paul is saying there.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What I saw also, Jordan, in that verse in my mind is it's because we are to do the will of the Lord. It's not about us. It's about what God is doing. Others have said this, that you could also say it's because there are obstacles in the way. There are a lot of things that want to deter us or take us away from staying on task, on focus, on that mission right there. Jordan, there are a million distractions in life.

Jordan Raynor: Yes. It's why we have to be proactive about this. I think you're absolutely right, Dr. Tim. I think this is implicit in this section of Scripture in Ephesians 5. This is what Paul is saying when he says the days are evil. He says the days are fighting back against us. The time, social media, whatever it is in our present context, is fighting against our ability to redeem our time and be purposeful for the work of the Lord that's still left to do in this world.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jordan, before we go into the seven principles, again, what I love about your work is you want to be very intentional. You're teaching people in your subtitle, and it comes through every page of your book, how to be purposeful, how to be present, which I think is a really important word for today's culture, and how to be wildly productive in light of that kind of demand on us. But what happens when we don't get it under control?

When we look at the world we live in, Jordan, let's just talk about relationships currently. I think time together as couples, that meaningful spouse-to-spouse time, is tanking, some say as low as four minutes a day. Think about, really, the amount of time we spend together as a couple. Think about parent-child time. How much time are we really spending with our kids?

Jordan, we know this. In helping kids overcome defiance, helping kids deal with ADHD and other related disorders, a lot of the preeminent scholars, workers in the mental health-related field, relationships, are saying there's a key central piece that makes a radical difference, and it's about special time. Russell Barkley, others have talked about special time, in other words, spending 20 minutes a day in command-free special time with your kids. They say that what happens during those 20 minutes when you step into their world is revolutionary in how you relate to your children. It even impacts your discipline strategies and more.

The number one challenge we have in helping parents do that? "I don't have 20 minutes," or listen to this, "What am I going to do in those 20 minutes?" It's crazy.

Jordan Raynor: Yeah. I would argue, part of the reason why we feel like we don't have 20 uninterrupted minutes is because our digital devices are pulling us away every 30 to 60 seconds during that 20-minute block. If we want to do deep work at

the office and the deep work of cultivating relationships with our kids and our spouses at home, we have to wrestle these external distractions to the ground. We can go there and give our listeners really practical tips if you want to, but this is a prerequisite for living a deep life, being fully focused on one important personal thing at a time.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Dobson, years ago, had a formula that he would often walk people through, Jordan. It's something I wrote down early in my professional life, as well as being a dad. It was this. "Crowded lives lead to fatigue." Who isn't tired, by the way? "Fatigue leads to insensitivity or irritability." Think about how easy it is to get irritable. "And that leads to isolation." Nobody wants to be around a grouch. "Hey, you're just being a big, old bear."

What happens is then everybody drifts off into their own rooms. Kids go up, close their doors, lock themselves down, jump on their phones. Nobody is talking, but everybody is dying, because what are we made for? Relationships with God and each other. When our time management stuff is out of control, that's the fruit of it.

Jordan Raynor: 100%. There's a lot of culprits here, but I really think in this modern context, the number one culprit is that digital device. We've got to learn how to parent our phones because right now our phones are parenting us. They control us. They're commanding us around, and we're letting it happen. It's insanity.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jordan, the journey toward redeeming your time like Jesus starts out with, you said, "Listen, start with the Word. Anchor yourself there." Take us there. What do we need to be doing?

Jordan Raynor: Yeah. When you look at the gospel biographies, it's clear that Jesus prioritized time with the Father above eating, above sleep, above everything. If we want to redeem our time for things that last, for eternal things, we've got to know the Word. We've got to be in the Word on a daily basis. I don't care when it is. I don't think God cares. Beginning of the day, end of the day, whatever. What matters is that we know what God's mission for the world is. To know that, we've got to know Scripture really, really deeply.

For me, I love starting my day with Martin Luther's method of Bible study. I take a passage of Scripture and then I respond to it and apply it to my life and my to-do list by praying for things in response to the text. Number one, what's the passage instructing me to do today? Number two, what in the passage can I praise God for? What's it revealing about who He is that I can praise Him for? Number three, where do I need to confess falling short of this command? Then, finally, number four, asking for the Lord's help in living out that command as I prioritize and execute my to-do list for the day.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Don't you think a danger, Jordan, is to turn it into an exercise, a religious responsibility?

Jordan Raynor: Oh yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's almost like we put it on the list and we check it off, and we're not really abiding in Him. We're not getting our strength from Christ, our relationship with God.

Jordan, how do you break through that? How do you get to really making that the anchor? If I don't, then I really turn away from it because I feel shame that I didn't accomplish or do that very thing that I think gives me life. How many times have we heard John, "I am the vine and you are the branches. Without me, you can do nothing"? We know that, but yet we don't go there.

Jordan Raynor: Yeah. No, we don't. I think there's a world of difference in doing our work for God and doing our work with God. We are clearly called to do work for God. This is Ephesians 2:10; we've been created for good works that God prepared in advance for us to do. But I think a lot of us, and this can be my temptation sometimes, is to do it apart from Him, not communing with Him, not abiding with Him.

Time in the Word is one way to do that, but it can't just be reading the Word. It's got to be sitting in silence and stillness after we've read the Word and allowing the Holy Spirit to connect the Word to our lives, and so that we can feel and experience sonship or daughtership to the King. I think this is lost in a lot of believers today. We think we are God's worker bees, and yes, we are, but first and foremost, we are His children. I love my children when they do productive things for me, but I love them when they don't do productive things for me. I love them just because they are my daughters. The same is true of you and me with the God of the universe.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You're listening to Family Talk, a division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, your co-host here. Our special guest today is Jordan Raynor. He is a serial entrepreneur and national best-selling author who has helped millions of Christians around the world connect the gospel to their work through his podcast, devotionals, and other books. This book we're talking about today, *Redeeming Your Time*, I can't think of a more important subject in this culture than really getting a hold of this in our everyday lives. People are just out of control.

Jordan, coming back to these seven principles for a moment, I've got to stay here with this piece of abiding in Christ for a moment because, for me, if you don't get this piece right, the rest of it really doesn't fall into play. Jordan, what I've loved about your writing, and I've listened to a couple of your podcasts, your interaction, Jordan, I really believe in my heart that you have a sincere faith. You really believe that God has to be at the core of who you are and what you do with your family, your calling in life, and more.

I think a lot of people out there, they see God as like, "He loves everybody, but I'm not really sure He loves me. I'm not really sure that I can anchor myself there and that God will lead me or go before me." Virtually every man I've ever met doesn't really believe, Jordan, that God loves him. If we can't get that piece right, all the rest of it is just really activity.

Jordan Raynor:

Totally. I think it's hard for us to get this because we operate, again, we mentioned this at the top of the interview, in such a works-based culture. We feel loved and valued by the world when we do productive things. We're such a utilitarian-obsessed culture. But the good news of the gospel is that the God of the universe died for you when you were His enemy. If you can latch onto that, surely you can believe that God loves you whether you finish everything on your to-do list today, or get that promotion, or whatever, or if you get nothing done on your to-do list today.

I'm trying really hard to instill this message into my girls really early in life. I got a seven, five, and a two-year-old. The last thing I tell them before I leave their rooms every single night without fail, "Girls, you know Daddy loves you no matter how many bad things you do?" They say, "Yes."

This is the important part. I say, "You know I also love you no matter how many good things you do, no matter how many As you get, no matter how many home runs you hit, no matter what you do in your future careers?" They say, "Yes." I say, "Who else loves you like that?" They say, "Jesus."

If we want to get time management right, we have to bask in the truth of that message over our work. God loves you regardless of how productive or unproductive you are. Rest in that love. Ironically, when we rest in that love and rest in that message, that's what enables us to be wildly productive. It's what enables us to be wildly ambitious because now I don't need to get anything from my work or my to-do list. I can do those things as a worshipful response to the love and security and peace that is secure by Jesus Christ.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

That's what changes a home. I really believe that. That's what brings peace to a home. Everything else then flows in a different direction. We're not working so hard anymore. Matter of fact, it's kind of a natural thing.

Let's go to the second piece. You talk about, let your yes be yes. When I think of life, I think of stress and anxiety because we constantly are having to do more, be more, consume more, et cetera. When I look at the world around me, and by the way, when I look inside, Jordan, I can see that very thing, we start getting driven by everything in our everyday life. What I loved about when you began to talk about this, you talk about open loopholes and its effect on us. Take us there.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. I define open loops as anything big or small, personal or professional, urgent or distant, that you have any level of internal commitment to do. For

example, I told my kids this morning I'm going to make them Minnie Mouse pancakes on Saturday.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Love it.

Jordan Raynor: Another one would be, I've got to send a proposal to a client by the end of the week. The neuroscience here is fascinating. Your brain makes zero distinction between the size of these commitments. It treats them all equally. They're all commitments.

The reason why these things create so much anxiety and stress is because, for most of us, we're keeping them in our brains alone, and our brains know that we can't keep track of it all. We know we're going to drop the ball and break Jesus' command that our yes be yes. Jesus said, "Let your yes be yes. Let your no be no. Anything more is from the evil one."

Let's make this real practical. To say on your voicemail greeting that if you leave a message, you're going to return to their call as soon as you can, and not do it, that's from the evil one. That's sounds small, but these are all commitments.

We as a whole, I believe most people are not very good keepers of our word. If we're not good keepers of our word, more importantly, we're not very good keepers of the Word, Jesus Christ, who we can assume did what He said He was going to do every single time. Before we set goals, before we add anything new to our plates, we've got to get control over everything we've already said yes to, so that our yes is yes more times than not.

Dr. Tim Clinton: How many times have you been asleep at 2:00, 3:00 in the morning and things start going off in your brain, and you think, "Man, I've got to write that down. How am I going to remember that, so I don't forget it in the morning?" But when you're able to get it down, then it's like it's released from you.

Jordan Raynor: Yeah. This is what's fascinating about the neuroscience. You don't have to do all of your open loops in order for your brain to forget about them. You just have to get them outside of your head onto a piece of paper or some other to-do list.

I use the analogy in the book, I think people have experienced this a week before their wedding or a couple of days before they went out of the office for vacation, they had so much to do, they simply had to make a to-do list. They wrote everything down, they got to the end of the list, and even though they didn't do a single thing on the list, they felt relief. I'm teaching readers how to feel like that every hour of the day by building, in the book, what I call a commitment tracking system that helps ensure our yes is yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jordan, there's so much to talk about. This book is fascinating to me, *Redeeming Your Time*. It reminds me of a work by Richard Swenson years ago called



*Margin*, very parallel, a real challenge for individuals, families, perfect for each and every one of us to get control of the insanity of the world around us.

Jordan, there are other principles, like dealing with this kingdom of noise, prioritizing your yeses, making sure that we have productive rests, how to get rid of hurry in our life, that we want to talk about. Jordan, I want to go through those and a little bit more on this subject tomorrow in the broadcast because I think these are gifts to each and every one of us. At the end of the day, the real winner in my mind is that little guy or that little girl with their nose pressed up against the window pane waiting for us to come home and to prioritize what really matters in life, our relationship with God and our relationships with each other. Jordan, tease us just a little bit of where we're going to go tomorrow.

Jordan Raynor: Yeah. Tomorrow, we're going to talk about a few things. We'll probably touch on dissenting from the kingdom of noise. How do we turn down the noise of our digital devices, et cetera? How do we be unipresent, fully focused on our loved ones when we're home and fully focused on our work when we're at the office? And who knows, maybe we'll have time to dig into how rest is, counterintuitively, one of the most productive things that we can do.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hey, Jordan, if people want to learn more about you and how to get this book, *Redeeming Your Time*, where do they go?

Jordan Raynor: You can get the book wherever books are sold, but at [jordanrainer.com](http://jordanrainer.com), we've got tons of free resources for you to help you redeem your time and connect the gospel to every other aspect of your work. Again, that's J-O-R-D-A-N-R-A-Y-N-O-R.com.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Our guest today, again, has been Jordan Raynor. He's the author of a brand-new book out there called *Redeeming Your Time: Seven Biblical Principles for Being, I love this, Purposeful, Present, and Wildly Productive*.

Jordan, fascinating conversation. Can't wait to get into more of this tomorrow. Thank you again for joining us.

Jordan Raynor: Thank you, Dr. Tim.

Roger Marsh: Extremely practical advice for anyone who finds themselves wishing that they had more time on their hands, and I think that's probably all of us, here on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and you just heard the first half of Dr. Tim Clinton's conversation with best-selling Christian author Jordan Raynor on the topic of Jordan's book *Redeeming Your Time*.

Now, if you'd like to learn more about Jordan Raynor or his book, please visit [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk), or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for part two of Dr. Tim Clinton's encouraging and practical conversation with Jordan Raynor. From all of us here at the Dr. James

Dobson Family Institute, thanks for making Family Talk a part of your day today and every day. God's richest blessings to you and your family.

Announcer:

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