



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Encouraging Your Kids to Lead

**Guest(s):** Dr. Tim and Pam Elmore

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Hello everyone, you're listening to Family Talk, a radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson and thank you for joining us for this program.

**Roger Marsh:** Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Raising a family against today's culture can be quite a challenge. It can be a struggle for moms and dads to raise their kids to stand out and not follow the crowd. We often think peer pressure is something teens deal with, but children of all ages actually influence each other's behavior as well. Peer pressure sometimes can cause children to do something reckless and it may pull them further away from the Lord.

On today's classic program here on Family Talk, you're going to hear some helpful tips and receive some encouragement to guide parents and caregivers at every stage to teach their kids to become leaders and to stand up against peer pressure. We may not always consider how peer pressure can sneak into our children's lives or even to our own as adults. Peer pressure can be a pretty hair-raising topic for parents because no matter how responsible your child may be, you know and we know that they are susceptible to what their friends think and do. Everyone wants to be liked or to feel like they belong.

So in this episode, our own Dr., James Dobson sits down with Dr., Tim Elmore and Tim's wife Pam to talk about raising kids who make good choices even when it's difficult to do so. Dr. Tim Elmore is an author and the founder and CEO of Growing Leaders. He has written over 35 books, including his book entitled *Nurturing the Leader Within Your Child*, which you'll hear mentioned on today's program. Tim and his wife Pam have two grown children. And as we begin, Dr. Dobson will be reading from a short story called "Sheep Led to the Slaughter" from his book *Coming Home: Timeless Wisdom for Families*. So now let's join Dr. James Dobson and his guests Dr. Tim and Pam Elmore right now on Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** I once saw a dramatic documentary film that featured a packing house where sheep were. Huddled in pens where hundreds of nervous animals that seemed to sense danger in their unfamiliar surroundings. Then a gate was opened, leading to a ramp and through a door to the right. In order to get the sheep to walk up that ramp, the workers used what is known as a Judas goat. This is a

goat that's been trained to lead the sheep into the slaughterhouse. The goat confidently walked to the bottom of the ramp and looked back, then he took a few more steps and stopped again. The sheep looked at each other skittishly and began moving toward the ramp. Eventually they followed the confident goat to the top where he went through another gate that closed behind him. This forced the sheep directly into the slaughterhouse. It was a dramatic illustration of herd behavior with deadly consequences.

There's a striking similarity between the sheep following the Judas goat and teenagers who succumb to peer pressure. Those who are more confident and rebellious often lead the timid into trouble. Some inject themselves with heroin or get involved with cocaine. Others engage in dangerous practices such as driving while drinking and engaging in violent behavior. But why do they do such destructive things? Don't they care about their own lives and the future they're risking? Well, most of them do, but the pressure to conform, to follow the Judas goat is even stronger than the need for security and well-being.

Adults have a similar problem. The prophet Isaiah observed it when he wrote, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray." That's Isaiah 53:6. I think there is some wisdom here if I may say so for us in reference to what we're going to talk about today and my intention in sharing that story was to make the case for not following the crowd and for teaching children to make wise choices for themselves. These days, kids just absolutely cannot afford to stumble along with their peers. There are just too many harmful possibilities and movements out there that will beckon them from the outside world. So we need kids with strong character who know how to stand, and also those that know how to lead others.

So that's what we're going to be talking about today on our broadcast, and we have a delightful couple, new friends I just met with us here in the studio who will really help us zero in on this topic of leadership skills in children Dr. Tim Elmore is author of *Nurturing the Leader Within Your Child*. And I am pleased to say somewhat over her own objections that his wife Pam is with us today as well. She came to my office as we were getting acquainted and I invited her to come and join us, and her first answer was flat out, "No." Pam, thank you for coming to be with us.

Pam Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: You don't consider yourself to be the noisy one, do you?

Pam Elmore: Correct.

Dr. James Dobson: But you're raising two kids and you have concerns about this issue and how to teach leadership skills, don't you?

Pam Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. And give us the names and ages of your two children.

Pam Elmore: Okay, Bethany just turned 14, getting ready for high school, and Jonathan will be 10 this month and they're a delight to us.

Dr. James Dobson: And you're enjoying it?

Pam Elmore: Yes, absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Are you a full-time mom?

Pam Elmore: I am.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. Would you like to talk for about 20 minutes? We'll just sit here and listen.

Pam Elmore: Oh, thank you.

Dr. Tim Elmore: She'd love it, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Tim, it's a pleasure to have you here. The book that you have devoted yourself to, *Nurturing the Leader within Your Child*, is something that is very heavy on your heart because you deal with young people. First of all, tell me how you reacted to the story of the Judas goat. Have you seen that among the kids?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely. In fact, we are seeing it even with our two kids. It's so easy just to go with the crowd, the flow, and what we're attempting to do is teaching them to be the influencers rather than the influenced. Clearly we're going to be influenced by our culture, but we want to set them up into a posture of proactivity rather than reactivity. And so yeah, I think it happens all the time and especially in high school.

Dr. James Dobson: If that's true, then we need to make leaders out of our kids.

Dr. Tim Elmore: I believe so. In fact, I've been a real proponent of the fact that leaders are made, not born. Clearly there are some persons-

Dr. James Dobson: That's a reverse of the phrase ordinarily.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Yeah, absolutely. In fact, I think we have a natural inclination to think that they're born. There are certain personalities that are take-charge personalities. But I'm in front of about 30,000 students a year and I'm seeing now that regardless of the personality, if they're taught to be confident and they're given some values, they can take charge regardless of the personality. Some in a quiet way, some in a more boisterous way, but I believe it's possible. I believe there's leadership potential in every child.

Dr. James Dobson: Do they get it when you talk about having the courage to go your own way, regardless of the criticism of the group?

Dr. Tim Elmore: I think they like it generally speaking. I think even though we realize that they're often influenced, they like to think that they're the leader of the pack. But what I found, Jim, in the most recent generation and the millennial generation is these kids are postured to be very confident, they feel very special. I believe they love family, even though in your book, *Bringing up Boys*, you mentioned that there's a disparity between the time they're getting with family and the time they really need. I believe they love family. In one of the most recent surveys, Jim, I discovered that the number one hero that they listed was not an athlete for the first time in 20 years, it was mom and dad, and number two was grandma and grandpa. So there's a real love, even though they don't get enough family time.

Dr. James Dobson: That's still where their values are?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you a confident leader as a child?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Mom and dad say that I was pretty independent and pretty much found my own way, but I remember my junior high years being very much a follower, very much wanting to fit in and be okay and be popular. But I think it was when I began to get some, what I would call informal mentors and coaches in my high school years that I really began to take charge of my own life and say, "I want to follow Jesus and I'm not going to just follow the crowd." That made a world of difference.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, about 99% of junior-highers are followers. That's the problem. You don't have a Judas goat, all you have is sheep.

Dr. Tim Elmore: That's right. And who knows where they're going? Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Pam, your daughter just came through that. Did she make it okay?

Pam Elmore: She did. She's got a tender spirit and she's a pretty discerning young gal. So she read through a lot of what was going on with the dynamics of conversation and just watching people and we'd have conversations at the end of a day if there were issues or concerns that she wanted to discuss. I think she has a tendency, like probably most of us, to want to follow, it's more comfortable, but yet she was strong enough to make some good choices on her own.

Dr. James Dobson: Enough to stand on her own anyway-

Pam Elmore: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And not follow the crowd?

Pam Elmore: I was very pleased.

Dr. Tim Elmore: This past year Pam and I decided to do something pretty significant, not only because we felt like we weren't completely qualified to do all that we needed to do, but we really knew this junior high period was very significant. It's kind of the bar mitzvah time of a child's life.

Dr. James Dobson: It is, yeah.

Dr. Tim Elmore: We decided to select six women that we admired and that Bethany admired and respected, and we asked them to be one-day mentors throughout the year for her. And each of these ladies took her for a day and just poured into her, and we asked them to share their life message. And these ladies went beyond our wildest imaginations. Bethany, for instance, has thought about becoming a nurse when she gets older. She wants to be a midwife.

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Yes. Well, one of the ladies, Sarah is a nurse. And so she took Bethany in for the whole day into the maternity ward, and she saw mom give a C-section birth and natural birth, and then Bethany attended a class for unwed mothers that Sarah led. And at the end of the day, Sarah talked to her about sexual purity. Well, you can bet that went over way better than lecture 407 from dad.

Dr. James Dobson: Absolutely.

Dr. Tim Elmore: And what's really fun, Jim, is recently, Pam, I'm going to let you share this story, you and Bethany had a little talk after that and tell them what happened.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, what was her reaction?

Pam Elmore: Well, it was funny because just this last year, she came home one day and she said, "Mom, do you know what it means to go around the bases with the opposite sex?" And I said, "Yeah, Bethany, I think I remember what that means." And I was surprised it was something they even discussed anymore. But she said, "Well, mom, you'd be surprised at what some of these girls have done." And I said, "Or they say they've done." She said, "No, mom." And I'm like, "You're probably right." But anyway, they had this discussion, they went around trying to impress each other and I said, "Well, Bethany, did they ever ask you how far you've been?" And she said, "Yeah," and she said, "Mom, I just started laughing and I said I'm still in the dugout."

Dr. James Dobson: Did she really?

Pam Elmore: She did.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that's leadership.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Good for you, Bethany.

Pam Elmore: Well, not only that, I said, "Well, how did you feel about that? Were you embarrassed or did you feel pretty confident about what she had to say?" She said, "I wasn't embarrassed at all. In fact, it helped some of my other friends admit they were still in the dugout." So yeah, she did take a bit of leadership there.

Dr. Tim Elmore: And we attribute that, I think, we're trying to be good parents, but we attribute that to these ladies that have taken her under their wing and began to talk to her about the values.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that priceless?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that wonderful when other godly adults will step in and help you with your kids?

Dr. Tim Elmore: Yeah. Our plan is at the end of the year to bring all six of these ladies together and have Bethany read a specific thank you and, "Here's what I learned from you that day," and then have a time of blessing where they lay hands on her and just pray a blessing over here. And we feel like this is going to be a very pivotal year because of their input.

Dr. James Dobson: The sad thing is that many teenagers today have never heard a responsible adult, a teacher or anyone else, including their parents, say that virginity is of value. And in fact, the whole world seems to tell them they need to get rid of that as soon as possible, and certainly their peers do. So they get into trouble before they even mature enough to know-

Dr. Tim Elmore: What they're doing, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: What in the world they're doing, yeah.

Dr. Tim Elmore: You're right. Yeah, that's true.

Pam Elmore: This is a stage in adolescence where really the outside voices mean more than moms' and dads' voices, I think. These things that these women have spoken into her life about, they come back to her and when she has a tough decision to make, she sees their faces and there are single women and married women that have invested in her. And so she sees where she wants to go, what she wants to be, she's got value, self-esteem through all this. And it is, it's priceless, we could not afford something like this.

Dr. James Dobson: You're obviously practicing what you preach because your point, Tim, is that you can teach these principles and your book is filled with suggestions for how to go about doing that. You can't just sit around and wait for it to happen.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely. Yeah. In fact, in the book I have a section where I talk about not only capitalizing on moments, but also creating memories, finding those times and planning those kinds of memories. We try to go out fairly regularly to a safe house outreach and feed the homeless with our kids. And I know we're not the only family that does that, but they're learning to serve when it would be very easy just to be a consumer as a kid.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I think you have just given us the first principle, which is other-focused instead of selfishly-focused.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: And that you can't really lead others if you're not willing to give to them. Is that-

Dr. Tim Elmore: It does begin there. In fact, if I can do nothing else in these early years with the kids than to get them thinking beyond their own little world and their own allowance and what are they going to do with their own life, but thinking of others and how it influences others, I feel like we've taken an important first step.

Dr. James Dobson: Pam, were you a leader as a child?

Pam Elmore: I think no, I would have to say I was a follower. However, in given situations if somebody wasn't leading very well, then I would have a tendency to want to take over.

Dr. James Dobson: You'd step in?

Pam Elmore: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that right? Well, this book obviously comes from your heart. It's not only practical in your own lives, but you want to offer suggestions to others. Tim, you did something really risky, not physically risky but scary, when you visited with a rock group. You went to see Kiss. First of all, describe what Kiss is all about for those that don't know.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Well, Kiss is a band that's been around ever since Leviticus, I think. During the '70s and '80s, they were a big heavy metal band and they got quite popular. And what drove me to do this was I had become a youth pastor, and I watched them on television and they were just boasting about the influence they had with kids and the drugs they were doing, the money they were making.

Dr. James Dobson: They looked like Satan with the-

Dr. Tim Elmore: Painted faces, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Really the painted faces, yeah.

Dr. Tim Elmore: And I thought, "Somebody ought to do something about that." And it was one of my earliest ventures into leadership, but I felt like the Holy Spirit was saying, "How about you?" And so when I said, "Lord, what would you have me do? Pray for them?" And I distinctly felt like I needed to go and share Christ with these band members when I was in college. So to make a long story short-

Dr. James Dobson: You're a gutsy guy, man, I tell you.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Or stupid, either one. But I had the passion to at least show up at the hotel. And one of the maids, I think unknowingly said, "I'll tell you what room they're staying in, room 628." And so I showed up at the room and I waited in the hallway until the bouncer showed up in front of the door, and I knew I had to go through him to get to them. So I had my tracts and my Bibles in my pocket, I was bulletproof with tracts right here. But I walked up to him, looked him right in the kneecap, and I said, "Sir, can I talk to you a minute?" And he looked down and kind of grunted, and I said, "Sir, would you mind if I took a few minutes and talked to Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Paul Stanley and Peter Criss?" And he said it was his job to keep people like me away.

And I said, "Sir, I know you can do a fine job of that right now, but if you won't let me talk to him, could I at least give them some materials?" And I pulled out the Bibles and tracts, and immediately I had favor with this guy. He said, "Wow," he said, "What you want to talk to them about is pretty serious, isn't it?" And I said, "Yes, it's very serious." And he said, "I'll tell you what, I'll give this to them," and he said, "I'm not supposed to tell anybody this, but every night after their concerts, they go down to the bar for a little nightcap. If you want to meet us down there, you can talk to them as long as you want to."

So I waited for another two hours and I was shaking in my boots. I was imagining the worst. I was imagining being thrown across the room and so forth and so on. But when two o'clock rolled around, here they came, right on time, they walked into the bar, I followed them in, and we had about a 20-minute conversation. And at that point, I believe through the sovereign design of God, they weren't high or drunk or anything, and we talked about their own theology, what they'd concocted in their head about their beliefs about God. But I prayed with them, and ever since that time, I have continued to pray. I discovered a year later that one of the band members had become a Christian, and at the Olympics a while back they did a little concert there and I discovered from the photographer that they now join hands and pray before they do a concert and they give 10% of their money to charities.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm not real sure how to handle that theologically given what they do on stage.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Yes. Well, I'm sure they have far to go, but I think at least, you know what? It's just better to light a candle than the curse of darkness. And so I want to say, if we're going to get mad at them, let's also give them a chance to respond to the message. So that's what I was doing.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I'll tell you what, I admire you. And by that point in your life, you were showing signs of leadership, obviously.

Dr. Tim Elmore: I think a little bit. I feel like I've learned so much. And of course, John Maxwell has been a great mentor. But in the book I talk about four primary colors of a leader, and I've worked on these four fundamentals over and over and over. The first one is character. Character means I'm leading me really well before I try to lead anybody else. Second is perspective, I need to think differently than followers. I need to be not a consumer, but a contributor. Third is courage, and that's this point right here. I knew I needed to step out and take some risks if I was going to lead anybody. And then fourth is favor, the people element of leadership, how to be winsome and attract others and broker their gifts and talents. So in the book, I try to help parents get a game plan for how to build those four primary colors of a leader in their kids.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. And you have much more in this book. Tell me what else you want to say real quickly to our listeners.

Dr. Tim Elmore: I feel like the more parents I talk to, Jim, the more I realize they're saying, "I want to develop my kids, I want to mentor my kids, but I am out of time and I'm tired when I get home at the end of the day." I try to communicate in the book that there's some natural junctions in every day that you can mentor and coach your kids. In fact, Reggie Joyner, one of my great friends, first noticed these in Deuteronomy chapter six when Moses talked about training our kids. And remember he said, "As you lie down, as you walk along the road, as you sit down."

And basically I want to just encourage parents to know that there are four junctions all of you have in your day-to-day life, morning time when we're getting all getting ready, bedtime, drive times, travel time, and then meal time when you can fulfill the role of a teacher. We talk about values at that time. Bedtime, you're kind of a counselor, they get vulnerable with you. So I guess I want to just encourage parents to take advantage of the everyday junctions they already have, even if they have no more plans in the daily schedule.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, in my book, *Bringing Up Boys*, I discussed some very important research where the investigators wanted to see what is correlated within the home with either adolescent success and health and prosperity or failure, what seems to be linked. And of all the things that they investigated, the amazing thing is right in the camp of what you just talked about, that being together with your kids at four times of the day is critical. One is in the morning and eating together. The second is after school. The third is you said mealtime at night, and the fourth is bedtime. If you can be with your kids for even a few minutes during those four

times of the day, your youngsters have a much greater chance of making it through adolescence, and I would think of being a leader as well.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely, yeah, no doubt about it. It's exciting. We feel like Bethany and Jonathan are our challenges. They're our mentees that we have, that God has entrusted to us. And so we've tried to make it our goal, not just to survive the adolescent years, but to say, "Lord, help us to train them and equip them for what lies ahead in life and to ripple than when they leave the home."

Dr. James Dobson: There's no higher goal in living than that.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: The name of the book is *Nurturing the Leader Within Your Child: What Every Parent Needs To Know* By Dr. Tim Elmore. And the foreword is written by our friend John C. Maxwell, who's been a guest here many times. Much more in this book than we had time to talk about, thanks for being with us and for sharing your views with us and practical kind of things that brought you to this subject. And I trust that God's blessings would continue to be on you.

Pam Elmore: Thank you.

Dr. Tim Elmore: Thank you very much.

Roger Marsh: As parents, spending time with our kids can have such a positive impact on their whole wellbeing and the choices that they make when parents aren't nearby. You've been listening to Dr. Tim Elmore and his wife Pam today here on Family Talk and their conversation with our own Dr. James Dobson. If you heard a tip or encouraging word in today's program that you'd like to listen to again, remember you can easily do so simply by visiting our website at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). There you can also learn more about Tim and Pam as well.

Now, as Christians, we know that life is supposed to be wonderful, right? Aren't we promised great riches, peaceful relationships, and joy unending? Well, all kidding aside, with the circumstances in life don't add up. When it seems like God doesn't make any sense at all, our faith can really come crashing down. It might feel as though we can no longer trust him because he hasn't met our wants or expectations. Well, the truth is that the Christian life can be extremely difficult at times, and we may never understand the tragic circumstances that God allows.

So if you could use some encouragement right now to help you through a challenging time, be sure to sign up for the free 10-day email series from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute titled "When God Doesn't Make Sense." Once you sign up, you'll receive messages that explore the depths of hardship and examine its purpose. Our prayer for you is that after you spend a few minutes

each day reading the wisdom from Dr. Dobson on this topic, you'll be strengthened in your faith as you learn why dark valleys can often bring life's greatest blessings. And that, of course, starts with a closer walk with the Lord. Now to sign up for this special series, we have a special URL in place, [drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series](http://drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series). Again, that's [drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series](http://drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series), and please note there's no apostrophe there in the word doesn't. Also, if you'd like to receive a copy of Dr. Dobson's book featuring that same title, you'll find all the ordering information you need when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

Can you believe it? 2024 is already here. We are already halfway through the month of January. Here at the JDFI, we want to thank everyone who helped us with our matching grant last month. Because of generous listeners just like you, we met our matching grant, so I want to send out a thank you from the entire Family Talk staff to everyone who has made a contribution in the past, and perhaps it might've been the first time you've ever supported our ministry financially when you donated last month. By the way, you can always make a donation online at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), or you can make a contribution over the phone when you call 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for joining us today. Be sure to tune in again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Until then, may God continue to richly bless you and your family.

Announcer:

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