



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Unlikely Fighter – Part 2

Guest(s): Greg Stier

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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 Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and I'm so glad that you're here with us today. You're about to hear the conclusion of a conversation that our co-host Dr. Tim Clinton had with author and evangelist, Greg Stier. Now on yesterday's program, Greg told Dr. Clinton a little bit about his upbringing and his conversion to Christ. If you missed day one, by the way, you can listen to it right now by going to drjamesdobson.org/broadcast.

Greg Stier, as I mentioned, is an evangelist, an author, a speaker, and a founder of Dare 2 Share Ministries. Over the last quarter century, Greg has spoken over one million teens and youth leaders across the nation. He's the author of over 20 books, including his autobiography *entitled Unlikely Fighter: The Story of How a Fatherless Street Kid Overcame Violence, Chaos, and Confusion to Become a Christ Follower*. In fact, that book is the main focus of today's program. Greg and his wife, Debbie, have two children and make their home in Colorado. Here now is our co-host Dr. Tim Clinton to introduce today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Greg, welcome back. So great to have you on Family Talk.

Greg Stier: So glad to be here. And again, it's an honor to be on the show, was on with Dr. Dobson a few years ago, and what an icon, what a man of God. And it's great to be on with you today.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Greg, as we get started, take us back to Denver. Growing up as a boy, you witnessed a lot of violence. You lived in a lot of confusion. Insanity, people would call it. Take us back, wire us into what's inside a little boy growing up in the midst of that wildness.

Greg Stier: Yeah, so my family, my uncles, three competitive body builders, the fourth one was a bouncer at the toughest bar in Denver, fifth one, Golden Gloves boxer, judo champion, war hero. The Denver mafia, the Smaldones nicknamed my

uncles the crazy brothers. So they were like a gang and they ruled the streets of north Denver in the sixties and early seventies. And I'm just a terrified little kid trying to figure out, how did I get stuck in this family? And why is my family so filled with rage?

Dr. Tim Clinton: And the narrative that flows through your book, Greg, is that of the gospel. The power of the gospel to transform lives, even lives in the midst of that craziness. But that seed of hope started to lodge deep down in your heart. I want to go back to that scene with your mother, when your mother's telling you there's no way God could forgive her. Take us there as we begin today's broadcast.

Greg Stier: So when I came to Christ and then I got trained to share the gospel. When I was about 11 or 12 years old, I began right away to share the gospel of my mom. And she would say, you don't know the things I've done wrong. Well, I knew them all. I knew, my grandma told me everything, that she drove from Denver to Boston to abort me when she found out she was pregnant, changed her mind last minute, came back and she was a partier and a wild, wild person and a lot of violence and a lot of shame, sexual sin, all sorts of stuff. And she didn't know that I knew all that, but I just kept sharing the gospel with her. And it took three years, and I'll never forget sitting her down at the kitchen table and saying, "Ma, I don't want you to go to hell."

And that's the kind of way you got to talk to my family. You got to kind come right at them. She goes, "All right. Tell me one more time." She's smoking a cigarette. And I said, "Jesus died on the cross, paid the price for all your sin." She goes, "Wait a minute. What about the really bad sins?" I go, "They're all bad to God." She goes, "You mean to tell me, all I got to do is put my faith in Christ and He forgives me?" And I go, "Yeah. She goes, "I'm in." She put her faith in Christ and I'll never forget that moment she trusted in Jesus. For the first time, I saw hope in her eyes and I disciplined my ma. I helped her grow in her faith. And so, it was really, really powerful to watch one by one by one. And I know in the last show, we talked about all my family coming to Christ and all the stories.

There was one holdout though, one holdout. Uncle Richard. So Uncle Richard was the one uncle that moved out of Denver to Phoenix, to Scottsdale. And he actually made a fortune there. He came back, all of his brothers, his sister converted to Christ now. And he thought the family went nuts. He goes, "You're a bunch of Jesus freaks." Well, my grandfather dies of a massive heart attack. Before he died, he was in the hospital for two weeks and I would go there every day to do my homework. We're all kind of waiting for him to die. My uncles were there. My Uncle Richard flew in. And while he was there, my other uncles tried to share the gospel with him and he just shut him down.

Finally, he went back and my uncles were talking and they're all looking at me in the waiting room. My grandmother joined them. They're all looking at me. They walk over. And I think, what is going on? I'm 15 years old. They go, "Hey, when dad dies, we want you to do the sermon at his funeral." I go, "Hey, I'm 15 years old, guys. Come on." Because I'd done some preaching and stuff for a little

Christian school, but they were like, no, we know you'll give it clear. And then my Uncle Dave goes, "Are you chicken?" I go, "No, I ain't chicken." So I did. When my grandfather died, I remember walking to that pulpit, 500 people in the room and preaching a 30-minute sermon and giving the gospel and feeling the power of that. I gave an invitation and many trusted Christ. My Uncle Richard, he wouldn't even bow his head and close his eyes. He had his arms crossed, just looking at me.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I could see him. I'm looking right at him right now, I'm sure.

Greg Stier: He's like you ain't getting me, boy. But in that moment, a couple things happened. One is, I got my calling right there. This is what I'm called to do, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The other thing was a renewed determination to see my Uncle Richard come to Christ. So after that, my uncles tried to get him before he flew back to Scottsdale. He was again, shucking and jiving. He would not listen to the gospel. 12 years later, he's coming back into Denver for another funeral, his own. He had stage four cancer. He was saying goodbye. My uncles desperately tried to share the gospel with him. He still refused. They finally talked him into going into the church where I was a pastor at the time. And one last time, I preached the sermon and I gave the gospel. I had everybody bow their heads and close their eyes. This time, all my uncles, they're lined up in a row, my aunts, cousins. They all bow their heads and close their eyes, including Uncle Richard. And I said, if you're trusted in Jesus is right now, would you raise up your hand? Boom. He raised up his hand. Boom, all my uncles start crying. And in the three months he lived after that, he shared Christ with more people than the average Christian will share their entire lives.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's the dunamis of God. The power of God. Greg, there are probably a lot of people listening right now who may even have some tears in their eyes because they have a Richard in their family. Maybe it's their brother. Maybe it's a sister. Maybe it's a mom or a dad, someone close. And they've been praying for him. They're a little timid though in sharing the gospel. And they may be feeling a little bit of weight of guilt right now thinking, you know what, I need to do that. Greg, what is it that keeps us from being bold? What keeps us from sharing?

Greg Stier: I think some of it is we don't really stop to recognize how urgent the need is. I mean, I think we need to stop and think about Hell sometimes, that people that die without Christ will be forever. And I think we need to remember Heaven and Hell literally hang in the balance. If we had the cure to cancer or COVID, we would not hesitate to share the cure with everybody. We have the cure to something infinitely worse than cancer or COVID and we need to do what it takes to get them the cure. And the cure is Jesus, the cure is the gospel message. And so I would just challenge them to ask the Holy Spirit, to fill them, empower them with that dunamis, the power and to be unleashed with the good news of the gospel, to share it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Greg, God called you to be a pastor. He went to school by the way, Colorado Christian University. Go back, you met a little gal that kind of changed a few

things for you, but share your journey to the development of the ministry, how God led you. And then I want to talk a lot about today's generations. And I want those listening because we're burdened about the future generations, where they're at and what they're believing about God and how we can reach them for Christ.

Greg Stier:

Yeah. So I met Debbie at CCU, Colorado Christian University. She was a freshman, I was a junior. And was able to, after she graduated, we got married and we've been married 31 years. Thankful for her because she's very relational and very relentless. And so that's a good teeter totter mix, balance each other out. Planted a church and then started Dare 2 Share soon after, kind of on the side. And I was pastoring a church as well as doing Dare 2 Share. And then April 20th, 1999, the Columbine High School shooting took place just down the road. And I was rattled along with everyone else.

I knew a lot of the kids at Columbine High School. And the question that kept me up at night is where were all the Christian kids to reach out to these two shooters with the gospel before this all took place. And God used that to call me out from being a pastor to do Dare 2 Share full time. And so for the last 30 years, we've been training, equipping, and mobilizing teenagers across the nation, around the world to share the good news of the gospel. We mobilized teenagers as missionaries to their campuses to reach their friends. And so even four weeks ago, we did Dare 2 Share live.

This is going to be encouraging to the listeners because we had 1,338 churches from 47 states and four countries simultaneously trained, equipped, and mobilized for the gospel over seven hours on a Saturday. And so we do that every year and we provide curriculum and tools and apps and resources. And I believe God's raising up a revival generation and I think it's needed now more than ever, because we are losing teenagers. Barna calls this the first post-Christian generation in the history of the United States. So we have to start playing offense and stop playing defense. We need to start making disciples.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

So, Dare 2 Share, again, it's all about peer to peer evangelism. You're training that generation to reach that generation, right, Greg?

Greg Stier:

That's it. That's it. We train them. We inspire them. We tell teenagers, every teen needs a king, a cause, and a crew. King Jesus said all authority in Heaven and earth has been given to me. Your cause, go and make disciples. Your crew, you're doing this together with a small group of disciples and Jesus is a part of that crew. So we're seeing that happen. God is raising up these core of students around the world to share the gospel.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Yeah, there are a lot of programs out there. People talking about today's generations that they're lost like a ball in high weeds. They don't have a lot of confidence in them. But Greg, that's not you. You've got a lot of faith in today's generations. Tell us about that and why and what you're seeing on the front lines and why you have such boldness about them.

Greg Stier: Well, I have such boldness because Yankee, I really unpack this in the book, *Unlikely Fighter*. Yankee is a nickname. He's a hillbilly preacher from the deep south whose dad nicknamed him Yankee. Yankee had a youth group of 800 students and only had 300 adults in his church because he believed the fastest way to reach a city was through the young people. He used to say, "Teens come to Christ quicker, they spread the gospel faster." So I was trained and equipped to share the gospel when I was a teen. All but one of my neighborhood friends came to Christ and I disciplined them when I was in middle school. And I wasn't the exceptional kid. I was one of many. So, he believed in me and you'll know this as a counselor, as a therapist, is when you are believed in as a teenager and somebody said, "Man, you can do this. God's got a purpose for your life."

All of a sudden, this scared, scarred little kid from north Denver, I got a purpose and that is to make and multiply disciples. Well, that's what Dare 2 Share does. We empower teenagers. We don't tell them you're the church of tomorrow. We say you're the church of today. Every major spiritual awakening has had teenagers in the leading edge. Jesus was a youth leader. Matthew 17:24 through 27. Peter, Jesus, and the disciples go into Capernaum but only Peter and Jesus paid a temple tax. Exodus 30:14 says that temple tax was only for those 20 years old and older, him. Jesus was a youth leader with one adult sponsor and one rotten kid named Judas. And with that small youth group, he changed the world. So I believe we have everything we need to mobilize this next generation. And it's necessary. Pinetops Foundation that came out with a report called "The Great Opportunity" in 2018, says that 1 million evangelical teenagers are leaving, not just the church, but their faith every single year. Think about that, 1 million abandoning their faith every single year.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know a lot of parents get worried about kids going off to college, et cetera. And then it's just like fades fast. Greg, what are we going to do? I wanted to ask you this too, is it true, I heard through the years, about 80% of people who actually come to Christ do so before the age of 21. Is that still true?

Greg Stier: Yeah, actually it's 77% that come to Christ do it by the time they're 18 years of age.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Wow.

Greg Stier: So think about this. Teens come to Christ quicker, they can spread the gospel faster and farther than adults, but we put 80% of our money into reaching other adults.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Greg Stier: And I think adults need reach, but if we really want to change the trajectory, we have to have a strategic shift to move toward mobilizing teens to reach their own peers. And so I think it's time to play offense. I think we play a lot of defense, but we need to mobilize our teens to love God and love others and

share the gospel. Because when you do that, they're going to realize in and of themselves, hey, what I watch matters. I need to be careful with my social media and make sure it's a witness for the Lord, Jesus Christ. So what we do is we play offense. We're like, hey, let's mobilize this generation to reach their generation with the gospel.

Dr. Tim Clinton: A lot of people say that today's generations are cause-oriented. They love to get involved in a project. Greg, you know that, and I know you guys, you kind of work under that umbrella, don't you? The cause?

Greg Stier: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's your evangelism thrust, isn't it?

Greg Stier: Yeah. We call it the Great Commission, the cause. To a teenager, the Great Commission doesn't really click, but the Great Cause does. And so we call the Great Commission, the Greatest Cause of making disciples. And oftentimes young generations, they're passionate about stopping human trafficking. We'll say, great, stop human trafficking and stop soul-trafficking because Satan is the ultimate trafficker. Give the hungry, bread, and the bread of life. Give the thirsty, water, and the living water. Build a homeless, a house on earth, and one in Heaven. And so when you reframe the Great Commission as the Great Cause, students get it and they want to be a part of it. And that's what we do at Dare 2 Share is really mobilize young people for the greatest cause ever, the cause of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I think you got a lot of adults who look at their kids. They want to have conversations with them about Christ. Maybe their life isn't that representative of it. They think their kids look at them, they see through them, and I want to share the gospel with them but I just don't feel comfortable or I feel lost. I don't have the words. Greg, where do we start? What do we do? How do we talk to our kids? I want to this turn this up. You hear what I'm saying?

Greg Stier: Yeah. I think what students want more than anything is authenticity. So, I always say teenagers ask three questions: do you love Jesus, do you love me and are you for real? I think just having real conversations with them and say listen, I need to talk to you about something. I know I have failed this mark myself but I want to tell you what has given me hope. And just get to the gospel message. Get to the cross of Christ. We have a saying at Dare 2 Share, "awkward is awesome" because it is in the crucible of awkward where lives are changed.

When Jesus told the woman at the well, "Go get your husband." She said, "I don't have a husband." "Yeah, you've had five and the dude you're shacking up with now is not your husband." That's what we call awkward. He was the King of Kings and the Prince of awkward, right? But it's in that crucible of awkward where lives are changed. So, lean into it with your teens. Talk about it and share the Good News of the gospel with them.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You always have an audience of one. Your kids are watching everything you do or don't do. Talk to the mom or dad, Greg, right now, who again, yeah, awkward could be the word that they would say. Yeah, that describes my family, our situation here. But I am burdened about my kids.

Greg Stier: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You know that. I see it. I can see it in their eyes. I pray for them. I want them to come home. I want them to come to God. Greg, mom or dad listening right now, maybe there's a lot of brokenness and pain in their life. And they're tripping all over the place here. Speak into their heart for a moment.

Greg Stier: Well, let me just say this. So when I first became a dad and my wife became a mom, I had gone to with one of those classes that made it sound like parenting was bowling. You just follow the lines and you'll get a strike or a spare every time. Just follow these rules, follow these lines. And I tried. My philosophy now is what I call pinball parenting. I just push buttons and pray. Lord, help. I'm having conversations. I'm kneeling into the awkward. I'm bringing it up. I'm praying all the time. Love covers a multitude of sins. Grace covers a multitude of mistakes. And whatever you've done messed up, do not let Satan whisper in your ear saying, "You did this, you traumatized your kids. They'll never recover." Listen, the whole story of humanity is a story of how God's grace can shine through, can break through. So just start now. Love your kids. Pray for them. Bring it up, share the gospel and do not give up.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I remember when Julie and I were in college, my wife, Julie, Greg, a guy named Jay Harold Smith came to preach in convocation, chapel, preached this message. I think it was called God's three deadlines. His upfront line was, I'm here to scare Hell out of you. And then he did. By the time we walked out of there, it was like, what if this is it for me? What if this would be my last day on this earth? I remember going home, Julie and I got in the apartment together. We're just young college students, newly married. And I looked at her and I said, "Honey, you've got to say something to me. Tell me, do you know, Christ? Are you sure? 1000%?" And I remember her looking me back in the eyes and saying, Tim, I want to make sure I know that you know that you're saved. And we had a moment there.

And I think a lot of people miss this, Greg, it's a beautiful way. We get the love and limits piece as parents, we really do. But the gospel message is at the heart of all of it. Dr. Dobson is notorious for saying, be there. It's about that day in Heaven when you greet each other. Greg, that's the most precious gift you can give to your children. And it's the greatest gift of love that there is. Close us out, all of us, on the significance and the importance of all this. And then I want to ask you about how we can get involved in Dare 2 Share.

Greg Stier: So, Heaven and Hell do hang in the balance. There are deadlines and there's a day where we will die and we will stand before God. And we'll either be for the judgment seat of Christ as believers to be rewarded or the great white throne of

judgment as unbelievers. Our names will not be found in the last book of life. 35 years ago, I wrote a dramatic piece called "The Letter From Hell." What if you were to get a letter from a friend that died without Christ that you had never told about Jesus. What would they write to you? And the letter ends as he is being carried to the flames of hell and he's thrown in fire, pain, hell. Why, why didn't you have to tell me about Jesus? Signed, your friend. PS: wish you were here. And it was one of those pieces that brought me to tears as I wrote it and brought students to tears as I read it.

The next year, I wrote a "Letter from Heaven," from a friend that you had led to Christ. How would that glory, joy, peace, thank you so much. Thank you for telling me about Jesus. Signed, your friend. PS: wish you were here. And so, Heaven and Hell do hang in the balance. And we have an urgency and I know God, I have a thing called Three Dot Theology. Dot number one, it's God's responsibility to save. Dot number two, it's our responsibility to share the gospel. How would they hear without a preacher? Dot number three, it's their responsibility to believe. But here's the key, don't connect the dots, just own your dot. And your dot is to share the good news of the gospel of Christ with your kids, with your grandkids, with your neighbors, with your coworkers.

God has placed you there to reach them. And one of the reasons I wrote *Unlikely Fighter* is to be an encouragement to believers. But my wife made me bring home 15 books, because she gave one to all of her co-teachers because she wants them, she's a public school teacher, she wants every one of them to know the hope of Christ. So it's a great and simple way to share the gospel with others as well.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Now, we know why Dare 2 Share is so vibrant and so active and what a mission to reach today's generations. Greg, for more information about Dare 2 Share and your ministry, where can our listeners go?

Greg Stier: Just go to our website, dare2share.org. It's a number two. dare2share.org. And there's all the information you'll need.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You're going to want to make sure and get a copy of *Unlikely Fighter: The Story of How a Fatherless Street Kid Overcame Violence, Chaos, Confusion to Become a Radical Christ Follower*. What a story it is and what a work of God. Greg, such a delight to have you. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, and the entire team at Family Talk, we're honored to have you on the broadcast. Thank you for joining us.

Greg Stier: Thank you so much for the opportunity.

Roger Marsh: Well, that was the conclusion of Dr. Tim. Clinton's incredibly powerful conversation with evangelist, speaker, and author, Greg Stier. Is there anyone in your life who you've been wanting to share the gospel with, but you just haven't had that conversation yet? Well, I think that Greg Stier would tell you to not

wait, Heaven and Hell really do hang in the balance. And if you need help in knowing how to share the good news, visit Greg's website dare2share.org. That's the word dare, the number two, and the word share dot org. You can visit drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. We have a link for Greg's website along with information about his book, *Unlikely Fighter* and more. That's drjamesdobson.org/broadcast.

Well, today is February 1st and all this month here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we're offering a special resource for every mom and dad who listens to our broadcast. I know first-hand that being a parent can be tough. Do you ever have days when you wish you could just sit down with a parenting expert, somebody who really understands what you're going through and knows just what advice and counsel to give? Well, good news. The parenting wisdom that you need is here in one complete volume. It's Dr. James Dobson's parenting collection. In this collection, you'll find three of Dr. Dobson's bestselling books, including the new *Dare to Discipline*, *The New Strong-willed Child*, and *Parenting Isn't for Cowards*.

Each of these works contain the straightforward, practical, biblical truths that you need to bring up the next generation of Christ followers. And Dr. James Dobson's parenting collection is yours as our way of thanking you a gift to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute of any amount. So request your copy today. Visit drjamesdobson.org/parentingcollection. That's drjamesdobson.org/ the word, parenting and the word, collection, or call us at (877) 732-6825. Well, that's all the time we have for today. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Join us again next time.

Announcer:

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