



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Messenger International: Revolutionizing Global Discipleship

Guest(s): Lisa Bevere

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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 into Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host. I also serve as president of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Thank you for joining us. Right now we're backstage at the Extraordinary Women Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It's been an incredible weekend here at the Mabee Center filled with worship, powerful speakers and more. Our guest today has a lot of zeal and passion for the Lord, His word and His people. Her name is Lisa Bevere. Together with her husband John, they founded Messenger International. It's a ministry that seeks to spread the word of God around the globe in any language, no matter where someone lives or what their economic status is.

Their ministry has provided over 50 million resources in 116 languages, the pastors and leaders in more than 228 countries. That's impressive. And the work isn't done yet. Lisa is a speaker, best-selling author of several books and devotionals, including *Without Rival*, *The Story of Marriage*, *Adamant*, *Godmothers* and *Fiercely Loved*. She and John have four grown boys, several grandchildren. I like that a lot. Lisa, we've welcomed your husband, John on the program back a few years. We're so excited to have you join us today. Welcome to Family Talk, Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley, send their regards.

Lisa Bevere: Oh, they are an amazing, amazing couple. They're an incredible example, pioneers. I have a really fun story about both Dr. Dobson and Shirley Dobson. One time there was a blizzard and there was a car lost. I used to live in Colorado Springs and my husband and I pulled over and we helped the people that were lost, and I come back and I was like, "That was Dr. Dobson." So I got to help them in a blizzard. And then another time Shirley was sitting in the back in coach and I went up and I upgraded her to first class and she was like, "I just got upgraded." I was like, "You did? That's amazing. I have no idea how that happened." I was like, "I got so many miles. I just need to share these."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Lisa, what a beautiful story. Lisa, we're together here on the campus of Oral Roberts University. We're at the Mabee Center for the Extraordinary Women

Conference. We got over 5,000 women out there, and it's wild. Lisa, God has given you quite an extensive ministry. You're speaking all over the country, around the world, really. But Lisa, you look into the eyes of women every day. What are you seeing? What has your heart?

Lisa Bevere: Tim, I'm seeing incredible hunger right now. I think I saw fear in a lot of years before, but I'm seeing a hunger right now. I think people are like, "I want to know God. I want to know Scripture like I know my kid's voice. I want to actually experience the Word of God. I want to experience the love of God." And there's a desperate hunger for truth. I'm watching what's happening with Jesus Revolution movie, people clapping, cheering.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Boy there's a stirring, isn't there?

Lisa Bevere: Oh, it's amazing. It's amazing. I got to be in a prayer meeting, Tim, the night before Jesus Revolution released, and we are all in Nashville, and this man comes in, he's got a beard and a baseball cap, and he said, "I think I've kicked over a hornet's nest." And I said, "Who is this man?" He's the producer of Jesus Revolution. He said, "There's been an attack on every single level." And I'm like, "Oh. The enemy realizes his time is short." God is pouring out His spirit in movie theaters, college campuses, and He's most willingly doing it with His daughters. I feel like women are finding their purpose in the presence of God and finding out who they are according to His identity of them, calling them daughter.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Lisa, I have chills. I mean, last night we were in here and Jennifer Rothschild, who we've had on the broadcast spoke, and I'll tell you, it was an amazing message. She talked about her brokenness, her journey and how God had been in that story. Brandon Lake did a concert, and I'm telling you, this place was upside down. I mean, they were on their feet the whole time, did not sit down and they were worshipping the Lord. And this morning, I mean this place, it's captivating to me. You're going to hit the stage in just a little bit. I know God's put something on your heart. What are you going to share with these women?

Lisa Bevere: So when I was getting ready, seeing what's happened with Asbury, seeing what's happened with Jesus Revolution, even seeing what's happened with John's book, John wrote a book called *The Awe of God*.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah, I saw that coming out.

Lisa Bevere: It's number nine on the Wall Street Journal list. People, they don't buy books called *The Awe of God: How a Healthy, Holy Fear will Transform Your Life*. That's not what's happening. So I asked God, I'm like, "Do I get to drive up to Asbury? What do I get to do?" And He said, "You need to talk to my people about breaking up their fallow ground." Because when God begins to pour out His spirit, when God begins to pour a refreshing of love and presence on His people, we want to have hearts that are tender because if we don't, that rain will run off

or there'll be erosion. I believe that God is doing a new thing and it doesn't look like the old thing.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I love that. Lisa, man, we look expectantly to God in this hour. I was talking with Dr. Dobson not long ago and we were talking about the culture that's out there. He said, "Tim, there's only one word that describes that in my mind," and he said, "It's evil and the only way you overcome evil is with good. And this is not a time to be silent. This is not a time to be complacent. This is a time to step up into the presence of power of God and ask Him to move in and through us for such a time as this."

Lisa Bevere: I love that you brought that up because I feel like there is this progressive movement and it's mean, but then there's the conservative movement that can be mean spirited too. But then there's a kingdom, and the kingdom movement is preaching the truth in love by living the truth in love. And I feel like you and I are alive in possibly the most exciting times that the clarity of what's going on, if you read Scripture, you're like, "Oh, wow, we're living in Romans 1." I mean, evil is called good. Good is called evil, right is wrong. I mean, everything is turned on its head, but we cannot actually write that or correct those wrongs through an election. We correct those wrongs by the elect returning, and when God's people return to Him, then He heals our land. And I feel like the healing has started. I feel like there's hope again in people's hearts. I have such a sense that God is pouring out love and truth on His people.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah and they go together. Yeah, I mean it is.

Lisa Bevere: They have to. You can't have truth without love or love without truth.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You bet. You said everybody's, "Oh, I just want to love people." No, no, no. I speak the truth in love. Speaking truth is loving. You know that and we're to do it in a loving manner. Lisa, let's go back and I want to introduce our listeners a little bit more to you and your upbringing and more, but Lisa, you and John, your husband, John, powerful in his own way. You guys have such an amazing ministry, but you guys had four boys. You raised four boys, you got some grandkids. I mean, you had a lot of testosterone around your home, not estrogen, testosterone.

Lisa Bevere: Yes. Yes it was on my furniture. It was everywhere. I started growing chin hairs. I was like, it was crazy. And now I have six grandkids, three grandsons and hallelujah, three granddaughters. So we now have balanced female with male in our household. But yeah, John is the one who led me the Lord through Campus Crusade when I was 21 years of age. I had never heard the gospel before. When I heard a gospel of something we keep coming back to, love. That a God who loved me would send somebody to me to tell me about His love for me.

When I heard that, I said, "I don't know what I have to do, but I want to receive this love." I also remember, Tim, you and I are probably the same age. We used

to hear that God had a plan for our life, and I was like, "Thank God, because I have no idea what's going on." So when I heard that God had a plan, I'm like, "I'm glad somebody knows what is happening." And so I surrendered my life and I said, "I'm giving my all to the one who gave His life for me." And that was the beginning of a wild adventure of over four decades of marriage. And my kids are better people than John and I and my grandkids of course are even better. It's exciting.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You and John have an organization called Messenger International. Tell us a little bit about how it came together. What's the heart of it?

Lisa Bevere: Yeah. So we are commissioned to go into all the world and make disciples, and so John just had this passion. He said, "Lisa, we have so much resource in the United States and there are people in other countries that have nothing." He said, "So I want to make it so that we can give away our resources for free." So up to date, we've given away 53 million individual discipleship resources in 123 languages. We have an app called Messenger X. It's totally free, and we've had over a million downloads, over 9,000 five star reviews. The only app that's close to us in languages is YouTube, and it is 40 languages behind us. So it's amazing, Tim. People don't inhabit lands, they inhabit languages. You can have somebody in the United States, but they're going to live around the people that have commonality of culture and language. And so we just found that being able to share gospel resource, discipleship resources in their language was one of the most powerful things we could do. And of course, that also has Bibles on it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You bet, Lisa. I love that. I mean, that is the calling of God in our lives, to go into all the world and preach the gospel. In the midst of that, you probably encountered people who are not free to worship God as they pleased. Religious liberty issues, freedom challenges. It's sad. As a matter of fact, I heard someone say recently that religious persecution was at an all-time high of Christians.

Lisa Bevere: In India right now, it is a nightmare. We are being told things where they're surrounding churches and burning people alive in the churches. Of course, Iran, it's very difficult to be a Christian in Iran. And there's just a lot of persecution of Christians where we're upset that someone might unfollow us on social media. So I think we need to toughen up a little bit.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. Messenger X, you mentioned the app. Tell us about that because it's fascinating to me what's happening in social media. Everybody's concerned and rightfully so about digital devices, about how much time we commit to or in front of a screen, but at the same time, it's an amazing way to get the gospel, if you will, to the outermost parts of the world. What is the app all about?

Lisa Bevere: So it's app and it's also a website. What's been so good, Tim, is there's people that don't have a house or a car, but they have a smartphone. And so if you can get the gospel through the smartphone to these people, it's like they're carrying a church in their hands. And so we have sermons, we put our marriage counselor on there because we know that not everybody can get those tools.

We have things for financial stewardship. We have things about sons and daughters, the next generation, we have some children's programming. We have a course on marriage that we did. We do things on calling, purpose, hearing the voice of God, how to study the Bible, meet with the Faithlife Logos people on that. And it's just been beautiful to give people a library that they can access. And so that's why we've done it. I have tons of books, but if I was a Christian in Iran, I couldn't have a book in my house, but I could get online late at night through a shadow site.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I was going to ask you, I mean, do you have some amazing stories? What are you seeing that's happening around the world?

Lisa Bevere: Yeah, so right now we are the number one resourcer of discipleship material in Farsi. So we have physically put over three million resources in, but now we have of course the downloads. And we heard from this one man, of course, face blacked out, voice distorted about how the religious police had been following him. So he had to stop going to the believers' meetings because he didn't want to lead them to it. He had to get rid of all of his material, and he and his wife felt like they were just living in a vacuum, just isolated, afraid, alone. And then he said one day she came home and she was all happy, and he's like, "What happened?" And she said, "Messenger X has everything in our language on it." And he said he stayed up from 11 o'clock at night till 4:00 AM in the morning, just feeding their spirit. He said, "I felt like I could breathe again."

I don't even understand that. I don't even understand. In America, we have people who barely read their Bible. We went to Armenia and some people had come over from Iran and they said, "Why would people give so that we could have, the people that we'll never know? Why would they do that for us?" And we said, "Because they love Jesus." Because everything that John and I do is supported by our partners. They've made it through generosity. And these people, I said, "They stood on chairs to fight for your projects." They said, "I want to do *Girls With Swords* in Farsi. I want to do *Bade of Satan* in Farsi." They fought over projects because they understand that to whom much is given, much is required. And that generosity is what drives their need to see discipleship resources come to lands that they never go to.

Dr. Tim Clinton: So breathtaking, really, when you think about it.

Lisa Bevere: It's incredible. I mean, I just weep every single time that we ever do any fundraising for Messenger X.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Lisa, I heard you speak, I think maybe a couple years ago, now we were at another Extraordinary Women Conference and you spoke, I think out of your devotional, *Fiercely Loved*, and you had a powerful message, and I want to break this down here for a moment. It's been a rough couple of years, real beat down on a lot of people. People are confused, they're angry, they're frustrated. The truth is at home and the quiet corners of a lot of hearts, people feel pretty

unloved and broken and broken and they show up and they can get in the presence of others and they can worship the Lord and feel really-

Lisa Bevere: Like a reprieve for a short time.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It is. And then they go back home. Lisa, there's some people listening right now who are in a dark place. They hearing all this and they're thinking, "Boy, that's amazing what God's doing. But does anybody have anything for me? Anything to say to me in this moment? I don't even know if God wants to use me anymore. I don't even know where I'm at." What do you say to her?

Lisa Bevere: Well, first and foremost, I get it that your feelings will lie to you. I get it that sometimes you feel like God is distant and He's not there. But I love that David had a revelation of a God that was constantly thinking about him, and it wasn't just because David was God's man. God says that He has good, treasured, precious thoughts towards you, and you think, "Well, yeah, I understand that for you, Lisa, and I understand that for Tim." I'm telling you right now that God has such treasured thoughts towards you that He couldn't even number them. You know what I did with the subtitle of that book was I wanted to arrest people's minds because it's not just like God's like, "Well, I like her because Jesus died for her." No, He is fiercely in love with you, and most of us feel fiercely judged, not fiercely loved, and God has wild thoughts about us.

He has thoughts of our future. He says, "I know the plans I have for you." Now, what we are is familiar with is the schemes that the enemy has. But God always had a plan before the enemy ever had a scheme. And I just want you to know, when I lived in the failures of my past, when I constantly repaid the failures of yesterday, the failures of years ago, all I did was live in the narrative of my bondage. But when I lifted my eyes and when I believed that Isaiah said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts and my ways are not your ways." I'm like, "I'm pretty sure I knew that God." He's like, "Think my thoughts." And I'm like, "How do I think your thoughts?" He's like, "My word is my thoughts." God has treasured good thoughts. You are alive in this moment on purpose for a purpose, and God wants to anoint your life. Do not allow the enemy to knock you out by using your history. God has a destiny for you and for your family, and I want you to start praying big, scary prayers.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I love that, Lisa. I know again, in just a few moments, you're going to hit the stage out there. We've been hearing a lot about Jesus lately.

Lisa Bevere: I love that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And they're singing and praising and worshiping Him, and they're wanting to believe that God really loves them, that He fiercely loves them. Now that you think it's the most important relationship in the world, we believe that. But there's a message behind that because you're saying you need to be wholly devoted to Him.

Lisa Bevere: Yeah. I remember Tim. You talk about people not feeling, they might be a Christian, but they're not living any kind of life of victory. You talked about that. And you know what? I was there and I got to the place where I was tired of pretending that I was free when I was bound. I was tired of pretending that I was strong when I was weak. Tim, a lot of people are just, they're tired. And Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden," who are just tired. They're burnout on religion. They're burned out on the media. They're burned out on comparison. They're burned out on everything.

And Jesus said, "Come, I'll give you rest. Come if you're hungry, come if you're thirsty, whatever you don't have, that's okay. I've got it all." And I just think too many people, they have this mindset, and I want to be careful with this and maybe you can help me with it. But again, I'm going back to the fact that we both have been married for almost 40 years, and you probably got to say before me, but I remember it was very much the thing to pray, God used me. And so I was like, "God used me to do this, use me to do this." And one day He said to me, "Who you are to me is more important than what you can do for me." He said, "You are first and foremost my daughter."

Dr. Tim Clinton: I have a tweet right here that you posted not long ago, said, "Your life will radically change when you stop making prayer a backup plan." I like that. In other words, this is the real deal stuff.

Lisa Bevere: Yeah. We're in an Ephesians 6 moment. Where God is strong and He wants you strong. I just love the message paraphrase of that. And He says, "So take all of the spiritual weapons." And then He said, "Pray hard. Pray strong. Pray for your brothers. Pray for your sisters." He said, "This is not an athletic contest that we walk away from, but this is for keeps." And I think too many people don't understand that we have this incredible privilege to come into the presence of God, make our petitions known, read his word.

And God will say, "You don't even have to figure this out." When we pray, our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done." That is an invitation for Heaven to invade our earth every single day. Now, forgive me my sins, because I mean, I'd love to say I never sin, but forgive me, and then as I forgive, oops, I don't like that part. But God says, "You got to sow some mercy, Lisa. Sow mercy." The longer I live, the longer I serve God, the more I know I need mercy, the more I'm willing to give it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: How about it?

Lisa Bevere: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. In sports, I know with my son, Zach, we used to get in the dugout when the game started happening, when some things started cooking, they'd start going uh-oh and everybody started chirping like that. And in my mind, I'm

thinking, when you're going out here in just a little bit, it's like an uh-oh. Something's happening.

Lisa Bevere: Something's shifted.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Lisa Bevere: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And it's shifting.

Lisa Bevere: People are, they're tired and they're hungry, but they're not angry. They're ready. They're hopeful.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, that is our prayer that God would be in this story. He's in this story. He's in the midst of it. Lisa, what a delightful conversation. If people want to learn more about you, John, your ministry or whatever, where can they go?

Lisa Bevere: Well, if they feel safe, they can go to Instagram or Facebook. Lisa Bevere, John Bevere, and then we have of course Messenger X, which is the app that's free for them to download, and it has resources, and it has sermons and all different courses on there.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, we're going to pray that God's going to use you mightily with these women out here today and continue to lead and direct them. Hey, on behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, the entire team here at Family Talk, we're going to pray that God would continue to strengthen you, encourage you and embolden your spirit for such a time as this. Thank you for joining us.

Lisa Bevere: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Well we definitely should carry our petitions to God through prayer. That was Lisa Bevere and our own Dr. Tim Clinton here on Family Talk. And remember, you can always reach out to us with your prayer requests, also your comments or your questions about the ministry. Simply call 877-732-6825. Again, that's 877-732-6825. And by the way, if you'd like to go back and listen to any part of today's program, simply visit us online at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And friends, as we conclude today's program, I have a very special need to share with you. The recession has hit many ministries very, very hard, and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has been experiencing a serious shortfall contributions as well. Many families are deeply concerned about what they see as a financial crisis that leaves them with few discretionary resources. We appreciate that.

We understand that, and we feel that as well. Just trying to keep a family fed and housed and clothed really is a challenge in today's day and age. No doubt this is due to historically high inflation rates and our current economic woes.

Well, if the Lord has positioned you to be able to assist us in ministry, we promise that we will steward the monies well and put them to good use. I also understand that you may be in a situation where you are unable to give and we understand. Please know that we are praying for you and trusting that God will meet all of your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.

We are in this together, so please know how much we appreciate your prayers as well as your ongoing financial support. You can give a gift online when you go to drjamesdobson.org or you can drop us a line. Give us a call at 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I want to thank you for making us a part of your day today and every day. Have a great weekend. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow in relationship with Him. And be sure to join us again on Monday for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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

Dr. James Dobson: Hello everyone. This is James Dobson, inviting you to join us for our next edition of Family Talk. Every day we come to these microphones with someone in mind, whether it's a busy mom looking for tips on discipline, or a husband who wants to learn more about connecting with his wife, we want to put an arm around your family in any way that we can. So join us next time for Family Talk, won't you?