



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Going Home for Christmas

**Guest(s):** Roger Marsh

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Dr. James Dobson: Irma Bombeck once wrote, "The family that plays together fights together", and I'm afraid she's right.

Roger Marsh: Here's Dr. James Dobson with Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Why is it that children are most obnoxious and irritating on vacations and other times when parents specifically try to please them? On those special days, you'd think the kids would tell themselves, "Wow, mom and dad are doing something nice for us, taking us on this great vacation. I'm going to give them a break and be a really good kid today". But children just don't think that way. In fact, many boys and girls misbehave even more at these times. Why is this? One reason is because children often feel compelled to re-examine the boundaries whenever they think they may have moved. In other words, when the normal routine is gone, kids often push the limits and see what they can get away with.

So how can parents preserve their own peace of mind and maintain harmony during car trips and family holidays? Well, sometimes it helps to redefine the boundaries at the beginnings of your time together. Let the kids know exactly what you'll be doing and what's expected of them, and if they still push the limits, maintain your boundaries with good loving discipline right from the start. No parent wants to be an ogre on vacation, but a little firmness at the outset can make the rest of the time fun for the entire family.

Roger Marsh: To get involved, go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Dr. Tim Clinton: Merry Christmas everyone and welcome to Family Talk as we get ready for Christmas Eve. Are you ready for Christmas? I sure am. I hope you get a chance to dial it in and spend time with your family and loved ones this weekend and make sure you give thanks and praise for the true reason for the season, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host here at Family Talk and the James Dobson Family Institute. My three-year-old granddaughter, Olivia, looked up into my eyes this week and said, "Papa, it's Christmastime", and I said, "Oh, you are just like your mama". But immediately my mind went back home, to my home in central Pennsylvania growing up in a large pastor's family and how I loved Christmas. We loved Christmas. Speaking of home, it's our most

favorite destination during the holidays. According to Statista, over a hundred million Americans will drive 50 or more miles over the holidays to go home.

No matter what's going on in your life, don't miss this Christmas. Go home or make that call. When you slow it down I bet if you listen closely, you'll hear the carols. Maybe the Christmas story. You may be able to smell the tree and hear the children's laughter. Ah, that's Christmas. Hear the Scriptures. Luke 2:11, "For unto you, is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, and this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us, a child is born. Unto us, a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders and He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace."

Oh, the wonder of Christmas. I give you now a very special presentation that Dr. Dobson, Roger Marsh, and all of us here at Family Talk have made just for you.

Roger Marsh:

Hi, this is Roger Marsh, wishing all of you a very merry Christmas. As we prepare for this most holy day, Dr. Dobson has asked me to read you his December newsletter. I consider this a great honor and a pleasure and privilege. I personally have enjoyed his heartfelt stories throughout the years, and so with that, let's begin.

Going Home for Christmas by Dr. James Dobson. Greetings to you at this wonderful time of year to help us celebrate the Yuletide season, I want to tell you a Christmas story as I lived it in 1958. Now, you might find it difficult to believe what you're about to read, but it is absolutely true. In April of that year, I had just turned 22 and graduated from college a month later. I was excited about the future and was anxious to be able to get on with my life.

I had been accepted as a graduate student at the University of Southern California and planned to begin working that fall on a PhD. That is how I would spend the next four years. I was also in love with a pretty homecoming queen named Shirley Deere who was in her senior year of college. We were not engaged yet, but that seemed to be where we were headed. Then something happened that turned my plans upside down. I received a letter from a colonel at the local draft board. He ordered me to come to a federal building in downtown Los Angeles three weeks later. There I would take a physical exam to determine my fitness for the draft. The colonel sounded like he meant business, so I decided I had better comply. When I arrived on the appointed morning, at least 400 men were already standing in line.

They had received the same letter. We were ordered to remove all of our clothes except for our shorts and shoes. We snaked along from station to station so technicians could test our eyes, ears, nose, heart, lungs, and feet. Finally, we were told to turn our heads to one side and cough and guys who have been in the military or played organized sports will know exactly what that means. We were then yelled at a lot, which was rather humiliating, and then we took something like an IQ test. Presently, a sergeant with a bad attitude came

out and told some of us to enter a big room. Well, I thought this must be good. I've been chosen for something. Then the sergeant walked to the front of the room and said, "You guys have been classified 1A. For the next two years, your A's will belong to the army."

He didn't ask if we had other plans. He just said, "Get your affairs in order. Within 10 days, you are going to be drafted". I thought there must be some way I could keep from being tied up for two years. Well, I quickly found it. I discovered that the National Guard had a program whereby enlistees could spend six months on active duty in the regular army and then they would serve for seven and a half more years in the reserves. That was an eight-year obligation, which seemed like forever, but at least I would be at home and I could go on with my graduate education. So the next day, I hurried down and joined the National Guard. I was ordered to come to Fort Ord on August 10th in Northern California. So I took an all-night Greyhound bus on August 9th and the next morning presented myself for induction into the army for basic training.

They shaved our heads bald as a billiard ball, and yelled at us for the next nine weeks. We marched and we fired rifles and pulled 12 hour KP duty and learned to fight. That brought us to the middle of December when we were given a 14-day pass. Most of the guys were excited about going home for Christmas, but unfortunately, I had no place to go. I graduated from college and couldn't go back there. I wanted to be with my parents in Bethany, Oklahoma, a suburb of Oklahoma City, but I had no money because privates like me were only paid \$78 a month and I certainly couldn't afford to fly. Well, then I heard about something called the MATS program, which stands for Military Air Transport Service. Anybody on active duty could go to a military airport and if you found a plane going your way, the captain might let you fly with him.

So that's what I did. I hung around an airport and finally a lieutenant showed up and announced that he was flying to Oklahoma City, which is exactly where I wanted to go. I asked him if I could fly with him and he said, "Yep, there's a plane on the runway. Just get on it". I picked up my gear and went out to the runway where an old DC3 was sitting. The DC3's were the workhorses of World War II, and this one looked like it was pretty much worn out. There were seven other guys who were already on board. I didn't know them. I didn't want to know them. I just wanted to get to Oklahoma City. So I climbed on this plane and it was primitive. The seats were down very close to the floor and they were made of steel and ice cold.

We all sat side by side with our knees up near our faces. Before long, the captain got on board and fired up the engines and we taxied down the runway and took off. We flew for a couple of hours and encountered an incredible blizzard that blew us all over the sky, and then something terrifying happened. The captain spoke to us on the intercom and said, "I have to tell you guys, we have a mechanical problem with one of the engines." It turned out to be an oil leak. Do you know what can happen when oil runs onto a hot engine? Fire was likely, and we all knew it. The captain minced no words. He said, "We're going to do what

we can, but we may have to jump from the plane". And then he said, "There's a stack of parachutes in the back. Get one and put it on".

When I ring this bell three times, you'll have several seconds to get out of this plane. So the cargo door was opened, and the blizzard seemed to blow through the fuselage. I had never worn a parachute and I didn't know how to buckle one, much less how to jump from a plane and in freezing weather. There was only one guy among the eight of us who had jumped before and he told us how to buckle ourselves into the chutes. By then, it was two o'clock in the morning and we were flying through snow, sleet, rain, and wind. We had no idea what laid below us. It could have been a lake or a church with a steeple. There could have been trees or a highway. Furthermore, each of us would probably be alone because when people jump from a plane, they inevitably get separated. You don't know where you are.

I didn't even know what state I was in, and so we buckled up and waited for the captain to ring. I don't mind telling you I was scared and I was doing some serious praying. Thankfully, the pilot was able to land at a military airfield somewhere in Oklahoma. The plane rolled to a stop and the other guys and I exited the DC3. Then I encountered a new set of problems. I stepped into blackness. There was no airport, no bus station, no lights. The whole town must have shut down hours before. I didn't even know which direction Oklahoma City was. The men I was flying with got off the plane and then basically disappeared. I never saw them or the lieutenant again.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Thanks for spending some time with us. You're listening to Family Talk, a radio broadcast of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host here at Family Talk, and we've come to the midpoint of today's broadcast. On behalf of Dr. Dobson and all of us here at JDFI, I want to thank you for listening today, and by the way, for your continued support. We're completely supported by you, our faithful listeners. We would not be able to bring programs to you like the one you're listening to today without your generous contributions. Learn how you can stand with us by visiting [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). Let's get back to today's broadcast right now here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Roger Marsh:

I encountered a guy standing under a streetlight and asked him if there was a highway that came through town, and if so, where was it? He mumbled something about a road that way, pointing at what I thought was south. Well, I finally found a lonely paved road, but there were very few cars on it. Those that came by were going at least 60 miles an hour and the drivers weren't about to pick up a shadowy guy standing in the rain at three o'clock in the morning with his thumb in the air. I wouldn't have stopped, would you? I began thinking about spending the night in a muddy field all alone and freezing, and I did some more praying. Then I saw an old car rumbling toward me. Unbelievably, the driver pulled over and waited for me to catch up with him. "Where you going"? He asked. "Oklahoma City", I answered. "Me too", he said. "Get in".

I threw my gear in the backseat and off we went. We drove about a mile and passed a big white sign in a field that read "Oklahoma State Prison. Do not pick up hitchhikers." We drove the rest of that night, arriving at dawn. The driver asked me where I wanted to be let out. I said, "I don't know". He said, "How about the bus station"? I replied, "That'll do". It was nine o'clock in the morning by then and I'd been up all night and had gone through a harrowing experience. My clothes were still damp. I picked up my gear and I went into the depot. It was nearly deserted. There was only one guy behind the counter. I spoke to him and he looked up as I said, "I need to get to Bethany, which is 15 miles west. Can you get me there"? "No", he said, "we don't go there. In fact, there's no bus service at all to Bethany".

What was I going to do then? Nobody in the whole world knew where I was. I had some change in my pocket and I went over to a phone booth and put in some coins. I called my parents, but no one answered. That figures, I thought. Everything else had gone wrong, so I picked up my stuff and started walking toward Bethany. Again, that was 15 miles away. It would've taken me at least five hours while carrying that heavy bag to get home. I was walking on the west side of the street and feeling totally alone. After an hour, I was very weary.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you are not going to believe this part of my story, but I can assure you it really happened. As I was walking along carrying this heavy pack, I looked ahead on the road and saw one lone car coming toward me. As it came closer, I couldn't believe my eyes. It was my mother. She was 12 miles from home driving on a road she rarely traveled. Can there be any doubt that the Lord led her to that time and place? In fact, it began to feel that despite my troubles, there was a divine presence traveling with me. If my timing had been off by even just a few seconds, where if my mother had taken a more familiar road, this exhausted soldier would've trudged for many hours on Route 66.

I recognized mom behind the steering wheel as she drew closer, but she didn't see me. I began waving my arms and shouting, "Mom", but she didn't look my way until she was parallel with me. Then suddenly, she turned and she saw me. My mother made a big U-turn at the next intersection and came rushing back. We greeted each other right there in the middle of the road. We were so excited to see each other as I tried to explain what I was doing alone on an Oklahoma City street at 10 o'clock in the morning. She thought I was still at Fort Ord. She took me home to the house that I'd grown up in and to the little bedroom where I'd spent my childhood. That was one of the happiest Christmases ever as I celebrated the birth of the Christ child with my mom and dad.

My mother was a fantastic southern cook and she prepared three delicious meals a day. We had such a wonderful time. We played table games and my dad and I watched NFL football. It wasn't the Super Bowl in those days, but it was a championship game, and just being with them after having been in a pretty hostile environment for quite a while, was a wonderful thing. My dad and I went

hunting for Bob White Quail. We brought the birds home and my mother cooked them up. It was just a marvelous time. When the leave time was over, I caught another MATS plane back to California. This DC3 had a heater and it stayed airborne. I made it to Los Angeles where I spent New Year's Day with Shirley. We were married two years later and that was 62 years ago and we are still enjoying every day together.

Thank you for letting me share my Christmas story with you. You're welcome to pass it on to others who might enjoy it. James C. Dobson, Founder and Chairman, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Well, this is Roger Marsh once again, having just read Dr. Dobson's December newsletter. You know Dr. Dobson pens a monthly newsletter that you can receive either through the mail or emailed as you wish. Just go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) to sign up if you haven't done so already. Go to our homepage at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), scroll down to the bottom and you'll see the signup link right there. And now, on behalf of everyone here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, have a wonderful weekend and we hope you'll join us again Monday. Have a blessed and very Merry Christmas from all of us here at Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Thanks, Roger. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton. I hope you enjoyed Roger's reading of Dr. Dobson's December newsletter as much as I did. Be sure to share it in print form or maybe this audio version with someone you know who might enjoy it or need it. There's just something about Christmas. In Luke 2:10, the Bible says, "And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not. For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, which is Christ the Lord, and this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger,' and suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God in saying, 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men.'"

Good tidings of joy, that my friends, is what Christmas is all about. "For God so loved the world," you know these words. I can imagine you saying them with me right now. John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Merry Christmas from all of us here at the James Dobson Family Institute. Be sure you don't miss this Christmas. Hope to see you again next week as we continue to celebrate the birth of Christ right here on Family Talk. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his dear wife Shirley and all of us here at the James Dobson Family Institute, Merry Christmas.

Announcer:

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

Dr. James Dobson:

It was on December 23rd, 1818 in the small Austrian village of Oberndorf that Father Joseph Moore had begun preparing the music for the Christmas Eve service at his local church. That evening he attended the town Christmas play and then he made his way up a nearby mountain overlooking the city. There he sat taking in the beauty of the evening darkness and the starlet sky overhead.

He reached his home around midnight and then sat down to pin a new song, one which could be played on the guitar because the church organ was broken.

With the freshness of the mountain evening still on his mind, he began to write. He visualized shepherds in a field with stars lighting up the sky around them. He imagined a small stable outside of Bethlehem and the cries of a newborn filling the night air, all the while the words flowed from his pen. Early the next morning, he brought the poem to his organist, Franz Gruber, and asked him to put a tune to it, something that could be played on a guitar. A few hours later, the task was accomplished, and so it was on Christmas Eve 1818 that Father Moore sang tenor and Franz Gruber sang bass as the tiny town of Oberndorf for the first time a simple new song, a song that is since touched millions of lives around the world. They called it Stille Nacht. You and I know it as Silent Night.

Roger Marsh: Hear more at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. Dr. Tim Clinton here. When you think about your family and where they'll be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? You hopeful? What kind of a legacy are you leaving for your children and their children right now? Here at Family Talk, we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leading your family. Join us today at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). You're going to find helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. Dobson himself, and remember, your legacy matters.

Roger Marsh: Hey everyone. Roger Marsh here for Family Talk. Where can you go to receive support and advice for you and your family? Family Talk interacts with millions of people every day with inspiring advice and tips from Dr. James Dobson on what matters to you the most. Whether it's marriage or parenting, you can be sure our Facebook page will keep you updated with how your family can succeed. Join us each day for the latest broadcast, resources and inspiration. Nowhere else can you hear a thought of the day from Dr. Dobson, as well as a special message before you say goodnight. Now, you can be sure that every post on our page is created with you and your family in mind, so please take the time to visit us and become part of our online community at [facebook.com/Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk](https://facebook.com/Dr.JamesDobsonsFamilyTalk). That's [facebook.com/ Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk](https://facebook.com/Dr.JamesDobsonsFamilyTalk).

Dr. James Dobson: Is there any way to avoid the blues during and after the Christmas season? It's a good question. Many people find themselves feeling mildly depressed this time of year, even though it brings happy times with friends and family. Some individuals even wonder if their depression is symptomatic of serious emotional problems, but most of them are quite normal. Holiday blues are rooted in a natural rhythm common in human beings. You see, anything that produces an emotional high will set the stage for a later low, and the cause for these ups and downs is largely physical in origin. Elation is driven by adrenaline and hormones which accelerate our internal systems.

Eventually, however, the body depletes its reserves and then begins to slow its pace and that adrenaline rebound is experienced as physical and emotional

fatigue. It occurs following a busy holiday or a new baby or a job promotion or even after a fast paced vacation. The bottom line is that we can and should brace ourselves for the blahs or the blues or whatever we call mild depression. It helps to be forewarned that we're likely to feel depleted for a few days when the excitement of the holidays is over. It also helps to know that when the depression has run its course, another high will take its place, such as the rhythm of the human experience.

Roger Marsh:

Hear more at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).