



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: What God Is Saying During These Uncertain Times

Guest(s): N/A

Air Date: May 18, 2020

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

NOTE: This transcript may contain minor errors and/or discrepancies from the audio. This copy may be updated.

- Dr. 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.
- Dr. Clinton: Hi everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton, Executive Director of the James Dobson Family Institute and President of the American Association of Christian Counselors. What unique and unprecedented times these are. The simplicity and hope of the gospel seem a little sweeter, certainly a little more precious during these times of uncertainty. Our hope remains secure in Jesus Christ and that brings me comfort. Great comfort.
- Dr. Clinton: I wanted to take a moment to let you know that we here at the James Dobson Family Institute love you and we're praying for you. If you're struggling and need some encouragement, we'd be honored to pray with you. You can call us toll free at (877) 732-6825. That number again, (877) 732-6825 or simply go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. Thanks for inviting us to be a part of your day. We're going to get through this challenging time together. Let's go now to today's presentation.
- Roger Marsh: Hello everyone. I'm Roger Marsh and you're listening to Family Talk, a part of the James Dobson Family Institute. Thanks so much for tuning in today. All month long, we've been celebrating 10 years of this ministry with some of the best programs we've ever aired. I hope you've been enjoying looking back at this timeless broadcasts. Well today however, we are interrupting this retrospective to hear a special message from Dr. and Mrs. Dobson. A few weeks ago, the Dobsons recorded an inspiring video for the 2020 National Day of Prayer. We wanted you to hear their encouraging words, which really speak to the times that we're living in. So, here now is Dr. James Dobson on this edition of Family Talk.
- Dr. Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson, and I want to greet you all in Jesus' name on this 69th annual observance of the National Day of Prayer. I'm so appreciative of my wife Shirley sitting beside me today because in this occasion,

particularly because she was chairman of the National Day of Prayer for 25 years, Shirley this really is a very important day, isn't it?

Shirley Dobson:

Jim, this is a wonderful day and it goes back to 1952 when President Harry Truman, along with both houses of Congress, designated a National Day of Prayer. But nobody ever knew when it was going to be because it was at the whim of the president. If some national calamity happened in our nation, he'd call for prayer.

But in 1988, a wonderful thing happened under President Ronald Reagan. He designated that the first Thursday of May would be our National Day of Prayer. And that's what we're celebrating today. And by the way, you just mentioned that I was chairman of the National Day of Prayer for 25 years. Well, somebody else is celebrating a 25th National Day of Prayer event today, and that's the Chairman Donna Fisher, who resides in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. So congratulations, Donna. We're so proud of you.

Dr. Dobson:

Well, we honor you and Donna for your long service to the National Day of Prayer. It's been remarkable.

Welcome again, everyone. We hope you're safe and protected from the nasty virus that's plaguing the human family. As for the two of us, we're still sequestered in a little writing condo in California, in the desert, where I began working on a book in February. Then came the stay at home order and we've been huddled here ever since. This is a surreal time for us, and I'm sure for many of you.

Shirley and I sometimes walk the streets for exercise and there's almost no one outside. No other walkers, no cars, nothing but silence. And I feel at times like the rapture has occurred and we got left behind. I don't think there has ever been a time quite like this in American history. As you know, the entire nation has been paralyzed in an attempt to avoid this virus.

I put on a mask recently and went to the airport to rent a car and the terminal, which is usually crowded with passengers, was almost deserted. There were only four people in sight and two of them were employees. So, it did look like a ghost town. But I want to tell you you're in our prayers. We pray for those of you who have lost family members or friends and especially for children who have said goodbye to a parent or a grandparent. They're out there and our hearts go out to them.

I read recently that more people have succumbed to the coronavirus than died in the Vietnam war, and that says it all. This pandemic illustrates just how tenuous and impermanent everything is today. It seemed so invincible until two months ago, but we know that now, even if we didn't know it, then that we really do live by the grace of God every day and that raises a question that I've been thinking about, and it has awesome implications for us as believers.

It's this: What is God saying to us in this troubled time? Some of our Christian brothers and sisters have speculated that we're entering what is known as end time events, as Jesus described in Matthew 24. We know it's coming. We just don't know when. We're on the precipice of what is called the rapture, some people believe, and I pray that it is.

Several weeks ago, during one of the darkest days, I was watching the televised news and I spontaneously held up both arms and I said aloud, "Even so Lord Jesus, come quickly." And I meant it. He could be at the door. But the scripture tells us that no one knows the day or the hour of his coming. In fact, Jesus said that he would appear when we least expect him.

That may be now, it may be a hundred years from now. There is so much that we don't understand about God's timing, but there are some things that we do know as believers. And maybe today, it would help to be reminded of those things that are certainties, absolutes, in this crisis. So let's focus on three of those absolutes.

The first is we know that God is in control. The universe has a boss and he is omnipotent. This pandemic has not taken him by surprise. For those who are fearful and may even be in a state of panic, this is for you. Timothy assured us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

The second thing that we can be sure of is that God is up to something. I don't mean that in a disrespectful way, but he is. Whether we can discern it or not, he always intercedes in the affairs of man. Proverbs 21:1 says, "The King's heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord. He guides it wherever he pleases." Psalm 47:2 reads, "How awesome is the Lord most high, the great king over all the earth."

So, let's speculate on what the Lord might be doing at this time. I have a hunch, but I don't know. I do believe that we could be seeing the beginning of a spiritual awakening in this country. A surprising number of people have come to Christ in the past couple of months. We're hearing reports of that. Pastors and evangelical leaders are reporting a renewed soul hunger like nothing they have seen. Only time will tell, but this is my prayer, and I hope it is yours too.

Let's go back to the tragedy of 9/11 and see if there's anything from that experience that relates to today. It was a time like today when America was shaken to its foundation. I'm told that some Pentagon leaders actually thought the terrorist attack on New York city and Washington, DC could be the first wave of a wider war, and they didn't know who it would be with at that point. Some feared it could go nuclear.

I was at Focus on the Family at that time and it was a scary time. We gathered 1,000 staff members in our auditorium to pray for the country and for broken

families out there. People went to their knees in prayer during that time. And this is important to remember: Churches, the following Sunday, were filled to capacity. After 9/11, members of Congress actually stood together, both parties stood together on the steps of the Capitol building and sang God Bless America. Do you remember that? It was a first. I don't think that's ever occurred before. Bumper stickers carried the words "United We Stand." And I'll tell you, there was a sticker on the back of our car, too.

Now that occurred in September, 2001. Here's the point: despite the intensity of that time, the nation quickly seemed to forget. Within a year, this spiritual fervor ebbed and people gradually stopped talking about it. There were fewer people in church that following Sunday than had been there a year before. I heard a Congresswoman just the other day trying to describe what happened in 9/11. And she said "Someone did something to somebody." Is that it? Have we forgotten that much?

Most importantly, we went from national unity to political hatred in a few years. We have never been more divided than we are now, or at least until the virus, at any time since the Civil War. We were United then, but only for a short while. Have you thought about why the spiritual movement of that era didn't last? Perhaps it was because the emphasis in many churches was not on the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was primarily focused on national solidarity and patriotism.

Well, my time is almost gone, but the third absolute that we must remember during the crisis is that the God we serve is infinitely loving. Have you ever considered why that's true? Why does he care for us like he does? It's his ultimate gift to us, and David must have been thinking about that when he wrote, "What is man that you're mindful of him?" John 3:16 is another favorite verse of many generations. You know it. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

So, we're also told that he remembers our frame and he knows that we're dust. He hurts when we hurt. He knows our fears and he is close to the brokenhearted. How encouraging those words must be to those who are going through a great time of stress. The scriptures are replete with words of comfort. Here's one of my favorites: the 91st Psalm seems to have been written for such a time as this. I love what David wrote. And he says:

"He who dwells in the shelter of the most high will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust. Surely he will save you from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers and under his wing you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, or the plague that destroys at midday."

I love the imagery that David gives us there, where he wrote metaphorically about God covering his frightened children with his protective wings. That is for you and me. I'll close with this. I'm reminded of a song my mother used to sing when I was a kid. She had a beautiful, soft voice and she would often sing, "Why should I feel discouraged? Why should the shadows come? Why should my heart be lonely and long for heaven and home? When Jesus is my portion, my constant friend is he. For his eye is on the sparrow and I know he watches me. His eye is on the little sparrow, and I know he watches me."

And he is watching you, too. God be with you all. Shirley, pray a closing prayer for us.

Shirley Dobson: I'd be glad to. Heavenly father, we humbly come before you on this day of prayer. Oh Lord, we desperately need your touch on our nation. Lord, many people are ill today and some are struggling financially. Be very near to them we pray. And also Lord, we need a spiritual awakening in our country. America was birthed in prayer and was founded on the God of the Bible. And Lord, I pray that you would light a fire in millions of people and draw us back to the spiritual truth that founded this country.

Lord, we love you today and we know that many of us have strayed from you. We've turned our back on your word and gone our own way. But Lord corporately today, we ask you to forgive us for our sinful ways. And we ask for your mercy and your grace just to overflow our land. Lord, I pray that many people will realize that we're hopeless without you. Lord, you are our anchor. You're the one that holds us steady. So, we just put our great arms around our nation today and lift it to you and my request is God bless America, the land that we love, stand beside her and guide her through this night with your light from above. And we pray this prayer today in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

Dr. Dobson: Thank you, Shirley. And God's blessings to you all.

Roger Marsh: Well, what a thoughtful edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk that we're listening to. I'm Roger Marsh, and I hope that you were encouraged by hearing from Dr. And Mrs. Dobson And their very powerful words. Despite the uncertainty of our world, we can put our faith and trust in God. Now, before we wrap up today's program, we also want you to hear one last part from this year's National Day of Prayer celebration, Dr. Tim Clinton also observed this sacred day by recording a touching prayer.

Dr. Clinton: God, we live in a broken world, filled with a lot of hurt, pain, abuse, and sorrow. Meet us there in this moment. I pray earnestly for those who are discouraged, depressed, some so stressed that they feel hopeless. Father, I pray for those who are filled with fear and anxiety, for those who are frustrated and angry, maybe even filled with bitterness. God, for those who have experienced great loss, lost jobs, dreams, lost loved ones. God minister to them in their grief and sorrow. Lord, for those who are sick and need a fresh touch from you.

God, I pray for those struggling with addictions. Help those who are wanting to give up. Help us in our relationships with You and those we love. Help us to love one another, to be kind to one another, to forgive one another. For those, Lord, on the receiving end of someone's anger, abuse, or violence, God help them. Help us. Thank you for your grace and mercy, your steadfast love, and that we can cast all our cares upon you because you care for us.

God, we're humbled by Your grace in all that You do. Thank you. Give us an overwhelming sense of your presence and power. I pray for protection, for provision, for an outpouring of your spirit, help us to rest in your promises and not our problems, Lord. Our hope, our hope is in you, Lord. I pray all this, all of it Lord, in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.

Roger Marsh:

Well, I hope you've enjoyed today's Family Talk broadcast. You can visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org and request a physical copy of this presentation. Simply click on the "order a CD" button and a polished CD will be sent right to your door. We offer this resource so you can revisit this broadcast or pass it along to a loved one. You can order this timely presentation today by going to drjamesdobson.org and then tapping on the broadcast page.

We'd also love to hear your thoughts about this program on our Facebook page. You can find our profile by searching for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk when you go to facebook.com. Once you're there, you can comment on today's broadcast post. We enjoy hearing how all of our broadcasts are impacting you and your family. So again, search for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk on Facebook and then comment on the broadcast post. We can't wait to hear from you.

Finally, have you signed up for Dr. Dobson's valuable newsletter as yet? Every month, Dr. Dobson writes his personal thoughts on a variety of issues facing the family. It's an informative letter that we want you to have. Simply call (877) 732-6825 and a member of our team will be happy to mail you our latest publication. Again, that number is (877) 732-6825. Thanks so much for listening and thanks so much for your prayerful support of our ministry as well. Your faithful giving allows us to continue fighting for righteousness and preserving the institution of the family.

Learn how you can stand with us financially by going to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also reach us by phone when you call (877) 732-6825. That number again is (877) 732-6825. Well, that's all the time we have for today. Be sure to tune in again tomorrow as we dive back into Family Talk's 10 year anniversary retrospective. We'll hear Dr. Dobson's meaningful interview with bestselling author and evangelist Anne Graham Lotz. Their conversation will revolve around the power of prayer, which matches well with what we heard on today's program. So, don't miss that classic conversation coming up next time right here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Have a blessed day.

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

Roger Marsh: This is Roger Marsh. This year marks Family Talk's 10 year anniversary and to celebrate we've selected the most popular broadcasts over the past decade. We've put these shows on eight audio CDs and present them to you on Family Talk's 10th anniversary Broadcast Collection. These entertaining and informative programs are sure to become a cherished part of your family resource library.

You'll hear popular interviews that feature Eric Metaxas, Dennis Prager, Shaunti Feldhahn, and more in this compelling audio collection. These shows cover a variety of subjects that you care about, from marriage and parenting to culture and the family. This commemorative CD set is yours for a suggested gift of \$50 to support the work of Family Talk. Join Dr. Dobson in serving families by calling (877) 732-6825. Find out how you can have your own set with the most popular interviews from the first 10 years of Family Talk by calling (877) 732-6825, or you can visit our website at drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. Thanks for supporting Family Talk and celebrating our 10th anniversary.

Dr. Dobson: Do you want to see what kind of men and women your children will grow up to be? Take a look in the mirror.

Roger Marsh: For Family Talk, here's Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. Dobson: A wise man once said, "The footsteps a child follows are often those that the father thought he covered up." How true that is. Well, there are facts we can pass onto our children and skills we can teach. But how our children really learn is by watching us and observing our every move. By absorbing what we do and who we are. Someone said, "Values are not taught to kids, they're caught by them." They're picked up routinely through the subtle influences of simply being together through the day.

A poem by Herbert Parker sums it up best. He said: "To get his good night kiss he stood beside my chair one night and raised an eager face to me, a face with love a-light. And as I gathered in my arms the son God gave to me, I thanked the lad for being good and hoped he'd always be. His little arms crept round my neck and then I heard him say four simple words I can't forget four words that made me pray. They turned a mirror on my soul on secrets no one knew. They startled me. I hear them yet. He said, 'I'll be like you.'"

Do you still think what you do as a mother or father doesn't really matter? It does. Believe me, it does.

Roger Marsh: To hear more, visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org.

Dr. 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 leaving your family. Join us today at drjamesdobson.org. You're going to find helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. Dobson himself. And remember, your legacy matters.