



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Joy of Good News – Part 1

Guest(s): Ken Davis

Air Date: December 21, 2023

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

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 friends and welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Christmas is almost here and to help put you in a jolly mood, on today's program, we're going to hear from Christian comedian, Ken Davis. Ken is the well-known author of 12 books, including *Fully Alive*. *Fully Alive* was made into a film and shown in theaters all across the country as well as on Netflix. Ken Davis is the president of Dynamic Communications International and the founder of Score Speaker Academy. He's also the host of the daily radio program called *Lighten Up!* Ken and his wife, Diane, have two grown daughters and six grandchildren.

Now on today's classic program, Ken Davis will use his timeless wit and humor to look at how we pursue happiness in our imperfect world, but we can find true joy with God's promise of redemption and an abundant life. First of all, I want to remind you that in these remaining days of December, we do have a matching grant in place, thanks to some very special friends of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Any amount you donate to the JDFI today will instantly be doubled. You can make your donation online when you visit drjamesdobson.org. Now, let's listen to Ken Davis right here, right now on Family Talk.

Ken Davis: Thank you. For those of you who have never heard me before, I think it's important to set the stage so that you understand what's going to happen. I'm not right. There is something basically wrong with me. God made me this way so that I would have something to do. I'm reminded of a little story that explains it for you. There was this little boy that was born and when he was born, his parents named him Odd, O-D-D. The doctor snickered and he went out into the hall and he told the nurses and the nurses began laughing in the hall and when the little boy started grade school, he got teased unmercifully. He couldn't even hold a job as a young man.

Finally, at the age of 58, he turned to his wife one night and he said, "I'm sick of this." He said, "When I die, I do not want my name on the tombstone. You put the date I was born and the date I died. That's it." About 10 years later, he

passed away and true to his wishes, his wife bought a beautiful tombstone and put out an only the day he was born and the day he died. Even to this day, as people walk through the graveyard, they look down and go, isn't that odd? Tonight, we're going to be talking about getting all you can get out of life, and there's still some people who try to convince me that travel is the ultimate test of joy. I'm here to tell you it is the ultimate test.

Things have changed dramatically. I have in many of my tapes talked about travel, but I'm here to tell you it has gotten almost unbearable. The other day I stood in line for two hours to take a 45-minute flight. Now I believe in security, I really do, but common sense would be a great part of it. Two hours for a 45-minute flight. Then I went through a portal of some kind and there was a little Darth Vader guy on the other side of the portal. He took a wand and went all over you. He said, "Put your luggage on that table." I'm not kidding about this, folks. He opened my luggage and he went through every tiny bit of my luggage. I have pills that I take. I have seven little compartments with five pills in each compartment. Then he opened each compartment. I'm not kidding you.

It's hard to be Christian in those moments. Then he opened each compartment, all seven compartments. Then he dug a little further and came up and you could see this look on his face. He had found a little pair of fingernail clippers and he said, "What are these?" I said, "Those would be fingernail clippers." He's, "What are you planning to do with them?" I said, "I was thinking that maybe after four or five hours I could work my way through the skin of the airplane with them." That's the wrong answer, by the way. He said, "Take off your shoes and I want you to go back and put your shoes through." That's a true story, I'm telling you. True. I had to go back after two hours and put my shoes through on the belt. He said, "Take off your coat. Go back and put your coat through."

I thought, I think I've offended this man. I put my coat on the belt and the coat went through. He said, "Come over here, sit down." He said, "I want you to roll your socks down." This is truth. He said, "Roll your pant legs up." Then he took his little wand, and on the bare flesh of my legs went. I held my composure. I leave here tomorrow at 7:00 in the morning. I'm going to the airport naked. I'm getting dressed on the other side of the portal. I guarantee you, I won't have to wait in any line. First person I tap on the shoulder is going to go, "No, just go ahead. You just go right on ahead." I was in a marathon this morning. I didn't want to be. They blocked off traffic completely around where I'm staying.

I watched 20,000 people running. Just running. You know where this came from. In 490 BC, before Christ. 490 years before Christ was born, a man by the name of Philippides, now this is the truth, was involved in the conflict between the Athenians and another bunch of people that hated them. I'm trying to think of who it was. Boy, they hated them. There was a big battle. Philippides, who later became known as Pheidippides. Philippides went to the Spartans to enlist their help in the battle. Then he came back and found out that the battle was already being won. They sent him from the little town of Marathon, this is the truth,

from Marathon to Athens, he ran, and delivered this message, "Rejoice." He said. "We conquered." Then he dropped dead.

How many of you know that what I'm telling you is absolute truth? This is absolute truth. He just dropped over dead. Throughout history, people have observed this and said, "That's a good idea." How messed up are we? There were 20,000 people running 26 miles without a message. Go to the finish line sometimes. As they stumble across the finish line, ask them, what's the message? Years ago, there was an ad on television. Some of you may remember it, some of you may not. It expressed what advertisers in today's age try so hard to express, to try and discover that one thing that'll bring joy and happiness and help you be everything that God created you to be. In this particular ad, there were four or five young people riding a catamaran. How many of you know what a catamaran is? It's two canoes tied together with a trampoline.

It has a big mast on it. Have you seen a catamaran? It's one of the fastest sailboats on the face of the earth. It goes faster than just about any other sailboat. These kids are riding the catamaran. This was the message. The older people may remember it. You younger people won't. This will make no sense to you to start with. They went like this. You only go around once. How many of you recognize that? You want to reach for all the gusto you can get. Do you remember that? You only go around once. You want all the gusto you can get. Now, I want to talk about those two things for just a second. They are true. They are true statements designed to get us to listen to the message that the advertiser was trying to get across. Every person sitting in this room, according to Scriptures, is appointed to live once and then to die and then to face God.

Deep down inside they know it's true. We have one shot at this life. There are insurance salesmen in this building who make an excellent living, a worthy living, helping people prepare for that, and their message is exactly the same. You got one shot at it. That's why the choices that young people make are so important. That's why the choices that we make each day are so important. It's why we need to live each day to the fullest for which God creates. Then the second half of the message is this. You want all the gusto you can get. It's our tendency to think, well, no. That's not a Christian thing. Gusto isn't a Christian thing. God never intended for this life to be a waiting room for eternal life. The blessings that God intended for us, some of them are available here for us today. Then someday we'll see what He really had in mind when he made us, when He created us.

The Bible says, Jesus said, "I came that you might have life and that you might have it in the most boring, mundane way that you can possibly imagine." Is that what it says? No. I grew up believing that. I grew up believing if it's fun, it's wrong. I thought God's job was to stand up in Heaven somewhere and go, "Behold." I knew He stood like that because I had seen the pictures. "Can Davis have his fun? No." There's a couple of you that still believe it. There's some of you that are unwilling to trust God because you think He wants to tear the joy out of your life. He said, "I have come that you might have life and that you

might have it more abundantly that you might know what abundant life is." He created you for great purpose, for great meaning in life. The advertisers grabbed a hold of two truths and they paraded them out in front so they could sell a product.

How many of you remember what the product was? It was beer. You only go around once and you want to get all of the gusto you can get out of life, so drink our beer. Give me a break. At 16 years old, I knew that was wrong. I was no idiot. Okay, I was an idiot, but I wasn't really an idiot. I knew that wasn't right because I had eyeballs and ears. I just observed what was going on around me. My lips never touched alcohol as a boy. You say, "Oh, you must've been a good little boy." No, I had a father. My dad used to say, "Come here." He'd get that far away from me, he'd say, "Breathe upon me." I would breathe on him. Then he would get up off the floor and he would say, "If I ever smell alcohol on your breath, that will be the last breath that you take." I believed my father.

I became what was known as the designated driver before the designated driver even existed. I was the guy, you drive. I watched what would go on. I had a friend one time sitting in the backseat. He drank a bunch of beer and then some hard liquor on top of it. We're driving home. He's on the football team and he's laying in the backseat doing this, calling out, "Mommy. Mommy." Then he yelled to us, "Oh, stop the car." We stopped the car. He leaned out and got sick. As sick as I've ever seen anybody. Shut the door, drove down the road, "Mommy. Oh, mommy. Stop the car. Stop the car. Open the door." He got sick. That happened five times. The fifth time I turned around to look because I knew he didn't have nothing left. I fully expected to see his tennis shoes come shooting out of his mouth.

On Monday morning, we used to hang out in the locker room. He comes into the locker room. His eyes looked like two burnt holes in a blanket. He goes, "Oh, you should've been with us Saturday night. Did we ever have a blast?" I was 16 and I figured it out. This is stupid. If that's fun, I got a cheaper way to do it. Sneak out behind the barn and go, "Oh." It isn't about beer. Then the question is, if it's not about beer, what is it? You don't get gusto out of life by drinking beer any more than you get gusto out of life by eating watermelon or sugar snap cookies or a banana. In fact, it has a potential to destroy your life. They tied two truths together. If it is true that we only go around once, and if it is true that we want to get all of the gusto out of life, that God created us for abundant living and we want to know how do I live to the fullest, then how do we do that?

I'd like to propose tonight that there are three biblical principles that we can live by. If we live by those principles, we will get a taste of what God intended for our lives. This is the first principle. The first principle is that we live with nothing to prove. I wonder sometimes, how many lives are wasted? How many young lives are wasted? How many teenagers waste their life desperately trying to prove their value to their friends? How many adults pass up opportunity for witness and opportunity for integrity because they want to prove their value to their friends? How much of our value is wrapped up in what people think of us?

We're so afraid to stand up for what is right because this group of people or that group of people may not accept us. I don't know how many teenagers are here, but I want to tell you something. Something that saddened me all the years I was in youth work and saddens me today.

That is that many times we will come up through grade school and at about the fifth grade we begin living our lives, not for what God intended, but for what those people around us want. Trying to prove to them that we have enough worth to be part of their group. Here's what I want to say to you, teenager, the day you graduate, the day your fingers touch that diploma, those people that you have lived for will disappear from your life. I don't care what's written in your yearbook. For the most part, you will never see them again. You have a choice now to either live to the potential God created you for or live down to expectations that don't even come close to what He intended. Live with nothing to prove. Most of you know my story. I grew up in an atmosphere where the athlete was the one who had the power, and I had no athletic ability.

I have the hand-eye coordination of a carp. Do you know what a carp is? It's a fish with lips. With human lips. Not fish lips. If you fall into a pool of carp, you will be hickey-ed to death. There's a young man back here going, "What's wrong with that?" I couldn't play football. Couldn't play basketball. I thought, "What do I have to offer? What is there that I have to offer?" I had a person point their finger at me, a substitute physical education teacher when I was a senior in high school after he did a hand-eye coordination contest. He said to me, "You will never amount to anything." Because I couldn't catch a football. I had curvature of the bone in both my arms. I couldn't bring my arms together to catch a football.

I remember vowing, I will be an athlete. I will be an athlete. I will be an athlete. It's never going to happen. It is never going to happen. What value do I have? I remember another moment, a moment when I was supposed to be kicked out of a class. I had to sit in front of the teacher for about 20 minutes while she corrected papers. When she finished correcting her papers, she folded her hands together and caught my eye and she said, "Kenneth Alpheus Davis." I had never had my full name pronounced like that, but what disaster didn't fall. I thought she was going to expel me. I deserved it. She said to me, "God has given you a gift." She said, "Now you're using this gift to destroy my class." She said, "That's going to change." She said, "I want you to go out for speech."

I said, "Speech? You've got to be kidding. All my friends are walking around with letter jackets that have macho symbols on them, hockey sticks, footballs. I will not walk around with a set of lips hanging off of my jacket." God has given you a gift. Instead of me living up to some short expectation, she pointed me to an expectation that God had. She saw that God didn't create me like I am for no reason. She made me go out for speech, humorous interpretation. They don't invite me here because I'm a great preacher, but God gave me a gift. The ability to make people see what nobody else can see. The ability to make people laugh, to plow that ground and then insert what I only know to be the truth, the only

thing that makes joy meaningful. That is this, I got nothing to prove. I know people that have spent the majority of their lives trying to prove to their business acquaintances, to a father or a mother, that they have value, that they have worth. I'm here to tell you that your value was established forever on the cross of Jesus Christ.

Roger Marsh:

Amen. God loves us so much that He gave His only son to pay the price for our sins and to give us value, indeed. You've been listening to the first part of a presentation from humorist, Ken Davis, here on Family Talk today. If you've enjoyed what you've heard so far, be sure to join us again tomorrow for the conclusion of his enlightening presentation. By the way, to listen to this program again, you can visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. As December starts to wind down, I want to remind you, there's still time to utilize that matching grant we have in place this month. For any amount you donate to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute today, it will be doubled, matched dollar for dollar.

We are a listener supported broadcast, and every donation we receive helps protect life, save marriages, and encourages someone to draw closer to God. Remember, you can make a donation very easily on the JDFI Family Talk app right on your smartphone, or you can visit drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. Now as for me personally, I prefer to use the phone, and that number is 877-732-6825. Thanks again so much for your prayers and your faithful financial support. I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you for tuning in to Family Talk today and may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you continue to grow stronger in your relationship with Him.

Announcer:

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