



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Moms in Prayer – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Fern Nichols, Sally Burke and Panel

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**Dr. James Dobson:** You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

**Roger Marsh:** Welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and Family Talk is the listener-supported radio program of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Well, it's the middle of August now, and you know what that means. Schools all over the country are beginning to open up this month for another school year, filled with hope and anticipation from parents and teachers, and perhaps a few jitters and anxieties from our young children and precious students as well.

Maybe you're the grandparent who's doing drop-off or pickup duty, or perhaps you're the mom or dad who has taken on the noble calling of homeschooling your kids this year. Well, no matter who you are, we ask you to be in prayer for everyone invested in the education of our youth. We join you in those prayers and have dedicated this entire week of Family Talk programming to "back-to-school."

On that note, today, we are bringing you a classic conversation that Dr. Dobson recorded in 2015 with Fern Nichols, Sally Burke, and 25 other women who represented the ministry of Moms in Prayer. What a special organization with a perfect name. These ladies support, equip, and encourage mothers to be in prayer for their children as well as their children's schools.

Today, we are going to hear primarily from founder, Fern Nichols, about the humble beginnings of Moms in Prayer, because we all know that God loves to use the humble. We'll also hear a little bit from Sally Burke who has served as the president of Moms in Prayer since 2015. Let's join Dr. Dobson right now as he introduces his guests on today's edition of Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** I need to let our listeners know what's going on here in this studio at this moment because this is a very exciting moment for me for more reasons than one. I am surrounded by 27 beautiful ladies who are moms and who care about prayer, and especially prayer for their children. We are going to talk about that today. Now, Fern Nichols is also here, and some of our listeners will remember

her because she's worked with me... My goodness. I don't know how many programs we've done, Fern. Do you recall?

Fern Nichols: A lot of wonderful programs.

Dr. James Dobson: The first time was in 1988.

Fern Nichols: 19... Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You brought 13 with you last time.

Fern Nichols: Yeah, it was 12 or 13 and a nice group, but Colorado really came out in full force.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, right. Well, you have 27. Actually, 25, with you and your successor who's here, Sally Burke. We're going to meet her today. You are the founder of Moms in Touch. You don't call it that anymore. You call it Moms in Prayer.

The first time I met you, you came to the ministry, and we got acquainted. You had this gang of ladies with me. You didn't really have an organization at that time.

Fern Nichols: No.

Dr. James Dobson: You all just got together to pray.

Fern Nichols: Well-

Dr. James Dobson: You didn't have a name. It wasn't Moms in Touch at that early date.

Fern Nichols: Well, it actually was.

Dr. James Dobson: Ah.

Fern Nichols: It was Moms in Touch. We used the word, touch.

Dr. James Dobson: You mean when you came to the-

Fern Nichols: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm talking about when you first began praying.

Fern Nichols: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. No, we just got together and prayed, and then we had to tell other moms. It was like this grassroots telling other moms. It actually started in British Columbia, Canada.

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Fern Nichols: Yeah. Then they were saying, "Oh, we need this for our school. Can you come to my house? I'll bring some moms." I'd go to their house and share. We don't talk the hour. There's no gossiping. This is a time of prayer and seeking God.

Dr. James Dobson: You weren't there for cookies and all kinds of other things.

Fern Nichols: No.

Dr. James Dobson: You went there to pray for your kids and their schools.

Fern Nichols: We were in intense battle.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you are today too.

Fern Nichols: Boy, I tell you, after-

Dr. James Dobson: That has not changed.

Fern Nichols: Oh boy. That's why I'm very excited to see what God's going to do the next 30 years, if He tarries. We got together and just prayed our little hearts out. Other moms wanted it for their schools. I shared with them what we did the hour, how we prayed the four steps of prayer.

Dr. James Dobson: It was breathtaking, wasn't it, Fern?

Fern Nichols: It was breathtaking, but it was so exciting because, you know what? I was so blessed to be able to give these moms hope, hope that prayer was the answer, that we cried out to an Almighty God in the powerful, authoritative name of Jesus, using the Word of God, and things changed.

Dr. James Dobson: Rapidly.

Fern Nichols: Rapidly.

Dr. James Dobson: It just spread across the United States and then went international, didn't it?

Fern Nichols: Yes. But God so used you, Dr. Dobson. What a privilege for me to be able, this day, to thank you in front of tens of thousands that are in this ministry, that you caught the vision and had us on your program.

Dr. James Dobson: Repeatedly, didn't we?

Fern Nichols: Repeatedly. After that first program, over 20,000 responses, it was meeting a need that moms had in their hearts in wanting to protect their children.

Dr. James Dobson: Fern, why were you so anxious to be on our program at that time? You were doing a lot of praying about that.

Fern Nichols: Yes, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I didn't yet know you, but I'd heard good things about you. You came there with expectations, didn't you?

Fern Nichols: Well, this is how God did it. There were 35 of us in the hills with this little Moms in Touch retreat at that time. We said, "How can we keep this to ourselves? Every woman in California needs to know about this ministry."

Then we started praying all across the United States. Every woman that loves Jesus needs to know about this ministry, but what about our sisters in Russia? Then we started praying for the whole world, and then it was silent.

One mom said, "Who can tell the women of the world?" There was silence. One woman said, "Dr. Dobson can tell the women of the world about this ministry." It was like a big hurrah. "Yes, Dr. Dobson. Oh, God, raise up Dr. Dobson to tell every woman in the world about this ministry."

Dr. James Dobson: Imagine the thrill of being able to be on the ground floor of a prayer movement for something so important as our children. Even then, they were in trouble, and the schools were in trouble. Today, again, it just takes your breath away.

Fern Nichols: There are so many things. We can just list it all, the things that bring fear to a mom's heart about our children, and what's happening in the schools, and the laws that are being passed, and things that are going on, but what I love about our ministry is we don't stay there.

This is hope. Prayer is hope. We have a mighty God. It says, "When we cry out to Him, the tide of battle turns." Yeah, Satan is out to steal, and to kill, and destroy our children, but moms are saying, "No, you cannot have my child in the name of Jesus. Through your Word, we ask, God, that they will not be Christians sitting on the fence, but they will be mighty women and men of God, Jesus-lovers pouring out truth to their generation."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, our listeners are beginning to get an idea of why I'm so excited to have you here. Describe how the ministry operates. How does a mom in Oshkosh or someplace organize and get started on gathering together to pray? First of all, do you have to ask the school for permission?

Fern Nichols: No, I so appreciate you asking that. We don't pray in the school. We pray for the school. Now if you pray a Christian school, then that's a different situation. What I love about this ministry... This is God's ministry. I had no idea I was starting anything. I was just desperate for my four children.

Really, all I did is I asked one other mom. I called her on the phone. I said, "Linda, will you take time out of your busy schedule to come pray with me for our kids at that junior high school?"

God had already prepared her heart. We thought of a few other moms. That next week, there were five of us in my home. That was truly the humble, desperate, crying-out vision of this ministry. It's His. He is raising up all these women in 145 countries.

Dr. James Dobson: Are they really functioning? You have women who are gathering together regularly. What is it, weekly?

Fern Nichols: Yes. Many weekly or as often as they can possibly meet because, in Moldova, they have to go by the seasons because they have to plant and harvest. Sometimes they will stay all day after their church service and pray once a month, but they'll pray three or four hours. It kind of works different with the different countries. Some countries have maybe five groups. Some may have 5,000.

It's just what God is doing and how He is reaching the hearts of these women to gather together, to pray. The multiplied prayer, when in agreement before the throne, is so powerful, Dr. Dobson. He's in the midst. His presence is there when we come together. The body of Christ is praying.

When I hear that other mom pray for my child... Well, we have Kleenexes all the time because it's like, how did she know I needed that prayer for my child because my faith is weak right now, and hers is strong. You know what, Dr. Dobson? She's not living with that boy, so she can pray in faith.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the reason I captured this vision is because I've always felt that if you could ever mobilize women, women of faith, Christian women who care about their families, if you could ever get that organized, there's no stopping it. That's what you did, Fern, and I've always appreciated you for it.

Fern Nichols: Well, I give all the glory to God because, like I said, this is His ministry. If I or even Sally died today, it would continue because He is the one that started it. What, so, I want to just give him so much honor and glory is that He has brought people like you in my life to spread this news. He has brought me so many women, giftings that I did not have that were needed in what an organizational ministry would look like. He has done that.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we're going to introduce Sally in a moment, but tell me who all these women are. Are they just prayer... not just. Are they prayer warriors, or are they leaders? Are they area coordinators? What are these women doing?

Fern Nichols: These women, first of all, are in a Moms in Prayer group. They would not miss it for anything because they know the seriousness of what is happening today. They are in a group. Some are leaders of the group. God has called them to lead the group.

Some women have said, "Oh my goodness. There's nobody to lead the group." Then the other lady will say, "Well, why don't you lead it?" She said, "I've never led anything in my whole life."

What's so wonderful about our little Moms in Prayer booklet is, step by step, it tells her how to do that. Then some get a bigger vision for their area. They say, "Oh my goodness, we have to have a Moms in Prayer group in every school in our area." She then becomes an area coordinator. Then maybe that area coordinator gets the bigger vision. She could be than a regional coordinator over many schools. Then there's a woman that God raises up to actually have such desire, and passion, and vision that every school in her state would have a Moms in Prayer group where moms were meeting to pray for every child, every teacher, every coach.

Dr. James Dobson: My goodness.

Fern Nichols: I think, today, we have, what, 32 state coordinators. Then we have a national director. We have country coordinators. But it's God, the Holy Spirit, that's calling them. When they are called, they are dynamite.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, how did you get them all here today?

Fern Nichols: Well.

Dr. James Dobson: Where are they from? Call out your state. Where are you from?

Panel: We're all from Colorado.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, nearly all of them local or in the state of Colorado.

Fern Nichols: In the state of Colorado.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, that means people drove to get here today.

Fern Nichols: Yeah, because they wanted to see you.

Dr. James Dobson: You're a flatterer is what you are, Fern. All right.

Fern Nichols: I wanted to see you.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you've been here once before. Then, of course, you were with me at Focus on the Family a number of times and now at Family Talk. Fern, you have been at this, as I calculate, for 27 years.

Fern Nichols: 30 years.

Dr. James Dobson: 30 years.

Fern Nichols: 30 years.

Dr. James Dobson: My goodness.

Fern Nichols: I know. I have old kids, so they must have an older mom.

Dr. James Dobson: How have they made it? Are they doing okay?

Fern Nichols: Oh my goodness, Dr. Dobson. I can't even tell you the gratefulness in my heart of God's faithfully answering prayers for them. A couple of them went their own little direction for a while. The story I could tell you about my oldest son, who... Actually, you aired his testimony as a prodigal and coming back to the Lord. I mean, just full-fledged to the Lord.

He's a godly daddy and husband, and is really a Jesus coach to kids on his team, is studying at a seminary right now. I mean, to think of where he was, but the power of God through prayer... I just want to encourage moms. I tell you, love them and pray for them.

Dr. James Dobson: There are undoubtedly many, many thousands of moms who are listening to us right now who have prodigals at home. They have no idea what to do because there's such anger, and there's such rebellion. They go to their knees, don't they?

Fern Nichols: They go to their knees. We have this wonderful mat illustration in Mark 2 when the four friends put their paralytic friend on the mat and took him to Jesus. The house was so crowded. They couldn't squeeze through, but they were audacious. They didn't say to the poor little man, "Oh, so sorry. Jesus is busy today. We just can't get through."

No, they dug a hole in this man's roof and lowered their friend down. I can just imagine, Dr. Dobson, them peeking down, expecting a miracle. This is what we do every single week. We are expecting a miracle as we, together, pray the Word and the will of God. That's what gives us confidence and hope in our prayers.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my. That brings tears to my eyes. That is such a worthy ministry and calling. We were in the conference room before coming in here, and we talked a little bit. You all quoted a Scripture that I love. In fact, I was looking for it and had trouble finding it just recently. Then you all come here and minister to me by quoting that Scripture. It's Revelation 5, starting with-

Fern Nichols: Verse 8.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. Read it for us.

Fern Nichols: It says, "And when he had taken it from the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, each one had a harp, and they were holding golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints." Can you imagine tens of thousands of little groups of moms and the incense rising to the very throne of God on behalf of this generation of children?

Dr. James Dobson: Doesn't it say... It says, "Sweet-smelling savor?"

Fern Nichols: Oh, I think that's according to your... No.

Dr. James Dobson: That's in there. I've got to find it.

Fern Nichols: Girls, find it.

Dr. James Dobson: Right. Well, just think about that. Think about what the Lord has offered to us here. He is saying that you have loved ones who are away from the Lord, away from the faith. You can put a prayer in those golden bowls, and they will be there. Whether you found it in the Scripture or not, I'm telling you, that becomes a sweet-smelling savor.

Fern Nichols: I believe you. I believe you.

Dr. James Dobson: What an opportunity.

Fern Nichols: I kind of imagine it like this. Here's my golden vase, my golden bowl for Ty. I am praying for this boy to give his heart back to Jesus and love Him with all his heart. Then another mom comes, and she starts pouring her prayer in that same bowl. Then another mom comes. The incense... Can you imagine for just that one child coming before the Lord? It drips over the side, and I'm saying, "Bring me another bowl."

Dr. James Dobson: You've filled a lot of them during the years.

Fern Nichols: Oh, with a lot of tears too.

Dr. James Dobson: Now let's go back to what we were just talking about, 30 years that you've been doing this work. You are going to step back or step down?

Fern Nichols: I'm stepping back. What I'm so excited about is, again, the providential work of the Lord in this ministry. It's His ministry. He began it, and I've seen His faithfulness for 30 years and He's continuing to do so.

About six years ago, the Lord laid upon my heart that I really needed to seriously pray about succession in light of not only touching the next generation but what God had for me. What's so exciting is the Holy Spirit does speak, right?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Fern Nichols: In June, it was like the Holy Spirit said it. Now is the time. The reason why now is the time is God had raised up Sally Burke 25 years ago. You're going to hear a powerful testimony from her. She was just-

Dr. James Dobson: She's sitting here.

Fern Nichols: She's sitting here, right here. She, as a young area coordinator, did a Moms in Prayer event and asked me to come speak. I expected maybe 50 to 100 women or something. We come to this church, and they're 500 women. She did amazing things through the power of the Holy Spirit as she just... In that whole valley, all of the schools that were covered.

Six years ago, we needed a director for our international ministry because it was just exploding. The Holy Spirit laid upon my heart, Sally. No other name came to my mind. She has been, actually, on staff, working at headquarters for six years. I got to see her up close and personal.

She is a servant leader. She loves God with all of her heart. She is so passionate about this ministry that I knew, that I knew that I knew. I didn't tell my board who God had laid upon my heart because I wanted God to speak to them so that the confirmation would truly have been, this is God's chosen woman.

Dr. James Dobson: All right. You have also changed the name of Moms in Touch.

Fern Nichols: Yes. We changed the name of Moms in Touch. It wasn't translating touch very well.

Dr. James Dobson: You mean internationally.

Fern Nichols: Internationally, it wasn't translating. We thought, "Well, why don't we just say what we do?" Moms in Touch... People would say, "Well, what's that?" When we say Moms in Prayer-

Dr. James Dobson: That communicates.

Fern Nichols: That definitely communicates.

Dr. James Dobson: Sally, welcome.

Sally Burke: Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: How long have you been in this responsibility now?

Sally Burke: Just about a month and a half.

Dr. James Dobson: You're the president now?

Sally Burke: Yes. Yes, I am.

Dr. James Dobson: Now let's talk a little bit about your background because I think it's really interesting. You have been a space engineer for this space shuttle.

Sally Burke: That's correct.

Dr. James Dobson: How in the world did you get from there to here?

Sally Burke: When I had my second... I guess when I had my first child, I was just a burden to raise my child and come home from work. Anybody can put a space shuttle up, but not anybody can raise my child. I just desired to come home and put my children first.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you miss the hubbub and the excitement of this space program?

Sally Burke: Oh, Moms in Prayer has so much more than you could ever imagine. I got to tell you.

Dr. James Dobson: You really mean that?

Sally Burke: Oh, with all my heart. Lives are so transformed through these four powerful steps. When a woman gets to know who God is by name, by attribute, by character, not only according to the scripture, but she witnesses it answered. She sees that her God is all-sufficient God.

These dear, precious women in Uganda were living in garbage dumps. One of our Moms-in-Prayer mommy shared the four steps with them. The next year, she went there. They were living in apartments. She goes, "Oh my goodness. How'd that happen?" They said, "We believed that God could provide for us."

They learned Jehovah Jireh, that He provided for them. Each one of our four steps forever changes a life. That woman is changed. Then her school has changed. Her culture has changed.

In my kids' elementary school... I'll have to share this with you. God placed on a burden for us to pray for our kids. Well then, He expanded our heartbeat for every child on that campus. It was so sweet of Him because it was like every child, hear the Good News.

Fern Nichols: Wow.

Sally Burke: Well, I didn't know that there were Good News clubs. I was pretty new to the faith when I came to Moms in Prayer. We just kept praying, "Every child, may they hear the Good News." Pretty soon, we had a yearbook. We got to pray for them by name.

Well, within a couple years, God brought us a Good News club on this public school campus. Over 100 kids would come there. They would hear the Good News. I got the great privilege of volunteering.

At first, I was handing out snacks. Well, so many kids want to receive Jesus. They said, "We need you over here." I'd look at one of these little faces that I had prayed for. I would ask them, "What do you want?" "I want Jesus." Then I got to take my little ring and put it in my hand.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, that's thrilling.

Sally Burke: Isn't that? I mean, it is so exciting. I said, "Nobody can snatch you out of the Father's hand." I see them today, and they are now graduating from college. They're in ministry. Their hearts are still so excited for Jesus. They know it's because of answer to prayer. They still stay connected with me.

One young lady... It was my son's best friend. She went on to college, not knowing Jesus. She writes me this letter, "You are my spiritual mommy. I know you prayed. This is why I received Jesus." Now, that is something that's far greater than anything you can imagine.

Roger Marsh: Well, that concludes today's program, which was the first half of Dr. Dobson's conversation with Fern Nichols and Sally Burke, discussing the founding and the impact of the group that they lead called Moms in Prayer International.

It was in 1984 that Fern Nichols began intentionally praying for her junior-high-aged kids. Over 30 years later, her little prayer group has actually become a global ministry. Moms in Prayer is now under the leadership of Sally Burke who has been president since this interview was first aired in 2015.

If you were encouraged by what you heard today, won't you consider joining a Moms in Prayer group near you? Or, if there isn't one near you, maybe even think about starting one. There is nothing that we can't do that's more impactful for our kids than praying for them and asking God to lead them during their time here on earth.

You can find more information about Moms in Prayer at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk), or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Thank you again so much for listening today. It is back-to-school week here on Family Talk, so please tune in again tomorrow to hear the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's interview with Fern Nichols and Sally Burke of Moms in Prayer. Moms, and dads, and students everywhere, be encouraged. Until tomorrow, may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow in relationship with Him.

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