



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics that Confuse Kids and Scare Parents – Part 3

Guest(s): Dan Seaborn

Air Date: October 19, 2022

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Dr. James Dobson: Hello, everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, a radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love. I'm Roger Marsh and so grateful that you've joined us today. On behalf of everyone here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thank you for making us a part of your day.

Now, today we have the powerful conclusion to a conversation recently conducted featuring our own Dr. Tim Clinton and his special guest, author Dan Seaborn. They will continue their discussion on Dan's new book called *Winning at Home*. The information these two men provide is thought-provoking, practical, and could be a game changer for you and your family. We believe it is so valuable we have provided the conversation in three parts. Today, you'll hear part three. This short series is titled, "Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics That Confuse Kids and Scare Parents." You can access the entire interview in three parts by going to our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Well, there's so much to discover with this topic, so let's go there right now. Here is Dr. Tim Clinton picking up with his guest, Dan Seaborn, here on Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dan, I want to talk a little bit about cyberbullying. It's got my attention. Kids can be so hurtful, and this internet thing, you can, with the push of a button, just absolutely destroy somebody.

Dan Seaborn: Yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Dan, and our kids are on the receiving end often with this and they already struggle with who am I, how do I fit in, self-esteem issues and more, can you address that issue for us as parents?

Dan Seaborn: Yeah, and I want to start with helping parents understand something. Tim, I'm going to take you back to when me and you left school, let's be 14. We left school at 3:30, 4:00, got home, we were home for the night and we could get

away from some of the things that happened to us all day at school. If there was a bully, I remember a guy named Bill at my school that was a bully that scared me to death, he said things to me that made me fearful, et cetera, but at 3:30, when I got on the bus or my parents picked me up and I got home, I could get away from that at least till the next day.

Well, guess what? That doesn't stop at 3:30 now. At 3:30, it actually intensifies, what I felt actually begins to increase at 3:30 because I'm going home and he can get online and he can bring my name up. He can put me out there on social media and he can do this, that and the other, or him and his buddies can have a code name for me and he can use that code name to rip on me, put me down, and nobody even knows he's talking about me.

Parents, first of all, you need to understand, your children are living in a different world and growing up in a different time with some of the social bullying stuff. The social bullying, as Tim just said, can be even more intense because they're hiding behind the screen and they're able to say things that they wouldn't even say in person or say at school. Having the conversation with your children and just, again, everything, Tim, today goes back to relationships, doesn't it? Because ask your children, "Hey, is there anything you're dealing with? Is there anything that's coming your way socially that is putting you in a difficult situation?"

Tim, growing up, I would tell you that a person who maybe was same-sex attracted, et cetera, that person probably got some bullying. It was wrong, should not have been happening that way, got it, et cetera, but it's almost reversed course now. I had a teen tell me the other day, a 17-year-old girl told me if you're not trying out things that are same-sex, et cetera, you're kind of bullied now, you're thought of as, "What's wrong with you? Why are you not trying this?" et cetera.

What these kids are dealing with is really challenging. That's why the phone's ringing off the hook here, because kids are struggling with their identity and knowing where to go with the anxiety they're feeling about that.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Dan, it's hard to believe we're at a place now where that's become mainstream conversation, same-sex attraction, behavior, homosexuality, being gay, to drag queens in schools and are you trans and how do we go about this. It's like if you are not "sensitive", then you are a bully in this whole thing. How do we approach this when you have sincerely held religious faith beliefs, where you believe what God's Word says and how God, well, He's the creator, the one who made both male and female in the midst of this. God has an ethic, a sexual ethic, on how we are to conduct ourself and that sex and that relationship is to be confined to the relationship between a man and a woman in the bond of marriage.

Dan, where do we go? How do we begin to have conversations with our kids who are getting absolutely pounded, pounded, on this very issue?

Dan Seaborn:

First of all, I'm so thankful. That's one of the reasons I love to align with you here at Family Talk, Dr. Dobson, and also the AACC, because you have stood strong foundationally on what God's word teaches. I agree with what you just said.

Let's start with the fact that in the beginning, God created them male and female. Now, anytime you move away from that, we move away from peace and we move more toward chaos. What's happened, and I believe in our culture and I've listened to our counselors recently sit in a room and talk about the fact that now we base pretty much everything on feeling, not much is based on fact anymore. We base everything on how do you feel, what are you feeling, et cetera. We all know that that can get you into trouble really quick.

I want to say to parents today, if you have a child who comes to you and tells you that they are feeling same-sex attracted, are wanting to move forward in that sort of relationship, first of all, parents, what I'm about to say is going to shock a few of you, first thing I want to say to you is, wow, you must be a pretty awesome parent that your child, with this thing they're feeling inside, they're maybe anxious about, et cetera, that they would want to come and talk to you is a great gift to you. It tells me you've probably parented really well, that your child would trust you with that piece of information. What a great blessing, because it gives you the opportunity to speak truth into them.

I want to say something, one of our counselors here told me, "Dan, if I can give parents one piece of advice," she said, "First of all, tell them, their facial expression when their kid shares it, keep it calm. Show love, show kindness. Don't do what everything inside you is wanting to do, because you're probably going to freak out." She said, "As a parent, first of all, when a child tells you they're feeling something, your mind's going to go to the worst possible scenario." She said, "Don't do that, just listen. They're grappling with it, they're confused themselves. They're being told 15 different things and they need to be able to express what they're feeling on the inside. Allow them to share that."

Then secondly, have your homework done where you begin to ask them a few questions. "Well, what's making you think that? Where are those feelings coming from? Who's influencing you to maybe have those kind of thoughts? What's your foundational belief as a person? Asking your own teenager, "What do you think God's Word says about that? How do you think God would want you to move forward with that?" Now here, I'm going to tell you, a lot of kids are going to say, "God wants me happy." You're going to have to have a hard conversation with your kid about life's not about happiness, life's about purpose and finding their joy in the Lord.

I'm telling you, these conversations are coming. This is going to be a process, it's going to take time. I want to make sure we as parents are willing to do that with our children and continue to walk alongside them.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Dan, I know in the book you spent a lot of time challenging parents to understand Scripture. You want your kids to understand and know the truth.

We anchor ourself there. By the way, we don't just love, we speak truth in love, because that's the foundation of who we are. This is the way, walk ye in it. Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you, but go and sin no more."

Dan Seaborn: Correct.

Dr. Tim Clinton: He's saying there is a way that we live. There's a tension here, Dan, between accepting someone, loving them, and affirming them. Two different worlds, what does it mean to be created in the image of God, and what does it mean to bear that image in my life and so much more. There's a lot here that you've got to work through, and I think what you're addressing is it's very difficult and complicated because you find yourself in quagmire. You know that, and you're terrified as a parent on how to move forward and dealing with the fear that they may abandon you or never want a relationship with you anymore, or the grandkids, they're going to keep them from you and more.

Dan, that's a hard, difficult place to be. Dr. Dobson years ago worked on a series called *Life on the Edge* and just talked about the challenging issues of coming through those years and parenting and so much more, and how we need to understand them and be an anchor, a rudder in the middle of the storm, because it is a storm, Dan.

Dan, I want to stay with this for a moment. You want to maintain relationship, you want to be in there, you want to have opportunity to have influence, you want to teach them in the ways of the Lord and how to keep themselves going on. Dan, speak to how you and Jane pressed through some tough moments, when it wasn't easy for you guys, when you felt like were confused or lost or we failed, those moments when you cried yourself to sleep over your kids.

Dan Seaborn: Before you even said, Dan, talk about that, that was what was coming to my heart. As a parent, you're going to deal in these moments, in these situations with pain that is unfathomable. It is going to be so deep and so intense and so terrifying that you're not going to sleep well, you're going to do good to function. I remember days where literally to put one foot in front of the other was a great accomplishment. I want to say a few things to parents in this place. Knowing your anchor is going to be foundational. If you're anchored in anything other than the solid truth of God's word and what it teaches, you are not going to make it.

Tim, the Lord's been laying on my heart, in this last year, He's been putting on my heart more and more, "Say my name, Dan." Jesus. I've always preached about you. "Say my name, Dan. Let parents know they can come to me." I would tell you parents today, when you're in that situation and don't know exactly what to do, simply bow before Him and say, "God, I need your help here. I wasn't planning on this, I didn't make this choice. I didn't put myself in this spot. You gave me this child, you obviously trust me a lot. I want to do my best. I know they're your kid first, but I am responsible for them on this earth. Give me guidance, give me wisdom," and I believe He will.

I will tell you that Jane and I had some nights where I would look at her and I would go, "Babe, I don't know what to do. I'm going to go spend some time with the Lord." I would come back and I would say to her, "Babe, this is what I'm thinking. This is what the Lord's laying on my heart," and she would go, "I'm good with that. Let's take that step." Jesus said, John 15, "I'll leave the Holy Spirit with you, to lead and to guide you." You're going to need some of those moments. Jesus' own words were, "I'll give you what you need to say in that moment when you get there."

In your conversation with your child that you're having, it's incredibly difficult. Literally, I remember moments when I would say, "Lord, you've got to tell me what to say here because I don't know what to say. I want to burst into tears, I want to cry, I want to be done, I wish I didn't have this kid." Dan, you say that out loud? Yeah, yeah, I had moments when I had the thought, "Lord, why'd you give me this kid. You could give this kid to somebody else, I don't want this." It's going to be a normal feeling. You are not alone, you aren't the first parent who had that thought. I believe the Holy Spirit of the Lord will lead and guide you in some of those moments. Brad, our best counselor in this specific area we're talking about, he tells me all the time, "I'm in a meeting, I'm in a situation, and I just stop and say, 'Holy Spirit, guide my next word because I don't know what to say.'"

I will say this, ranting and raving and yelling and screaming will never accomplish anything. Jesus role modeled that for us. He never was in a spot where He lost his cool, He always had his control. As parents, you are the adult in the room. You are the one who's responsible to gain control of yourself and make sure you communicate with your child. A love and a grace from the Father, that's awesome. Tim's so right, it's nothing to do with affirming something that doesn't align with God's word. That's not what we're talking about. What we're talking about is having a peace, having an ability to see that God has some purpose going on here that's bigger than me.

You'll have people who are even people of faith look right at you and say, "Nope, God affirms this and this and this." I'm sorry, I've studied the Word pretty intensely, I've read it deeply, I've talked to the scholars of scholars. What God did in the beginning with male and female and have them married and married for a lifetime was God's best plan. I will always tell you, aligning with that plan is the best way to live life. Tim, it's not my opinion, it's not my and your opinion. That's God's word. My goal in life as a minister of the gospel, He called me to this, sometimes I wish I had a different job, but He called me to a life that says, "Teach my Word, teach it clearly, say my name and allow me to do my work." That's what I think we're responsible for as Christian leaders.

I am proud of you, because I know you do that and you do it well. It's not easy, you take some shots. I think what God is wanting us to do, carry on what Dr. Dobson's done, now it's my and your turn. I pray He'll raise some more people up who carries this message on, because the children, the children's children

who are coming behind us need to know the truth of God's Word. We need to teach it clearly and plainly.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Dan, we're again battling time here, but I want to go to a sentence from your book that really caught my attention. It says, "Just as you had to learn how to change diapers and sooth crying babies in the middle of the night, navigate teenage challenges and mood swings, and here it is, now you have to learn to let them go, to release them." Part of that is learning not to take the loss or the change or what's happening personally. It's the job where you are investing everything you can into letting it go, you launch them.

I think probably a theme for the broadcast is choose, mom and dad, to be involved in the lives of your kids for the rest of your life. But at the same time, there is a transition, Dan, and we have to let them launch, we've got to let them go. Dan, give us your thoughts on that and how have you navigated those waters as a dad, as a pastor, as a counselor, a coach. What are your words to parents in this journey?

Dan Seaborn:

Well, I learned that one the hard way, Tim, I wish you would've taught me differentiation and I would've just been able to sit with you in a classroom and you help me take those steps, but going through this with my daughter, when she almost died, drugs and all the things she got involved in, she came back to the Lord. Through that process, one of the things the Lord showed me very clearly was, "Anna's going to make her own decisions, Dan, and you need to pray for her and you need to trust her to me." That's a one little 30-second statement coming out of my mouth, but that was one of the greatest things the Lord taught me with that.

I have four children, four adult children now, but I have set with them on a Father's Day, Christmas day, et cetera, pretty standard for me to look at all my kids and say, "Hey, guys, dad loves you and I will always be here for you. I'm going to tell you that if you go back 10 years, I meddled in all of your adult lives way too much. I looked at things that you do and I tried to go, 'Oh, I need to fix that or change that.'" I said to them, "I'm changing that. Going through what I went through with Anna, having to release her fully to the Lord, taught me that I'm your father. I'm here for you, I will always be here for you, I will always love you."

This is the transition I made, Tim. I said to my kids, "Here's the deal, guys. If you want dad's advice, I'm not going to force it on you anymore. I want you to come to me and I want you to ask me. I'm always willing to talk, I'm always willing to share things I've learned. But I look back and my dad didn't do that. He tried to control me, tried to tell me everything in my adult life. Wow, I'm seeing I'm doing some of that too. I'm taking that off the plate. You guys want me, call me, text me. I'm always available."

Tim, I tell you, some of my sweetest moments in life right now is my girls. Oh, my son will call me sometimes and say, "Hey, Dad, you got a second?" I realized

that I'm doing that the right way. I'm not forcing them, they're wanting it. When they call you like that, oh man, they listen. It's your chance to unload, baby, because their hearts are open. The funny part of this whole story, I said to Anna one day, "Why'd you come back home?" and she said this, "Because you finally let me go."

I remember the night I said, "Lord, I'm not chasing her anymore. I'm not trying to figure out who she's texting, I'm not trying to figure anything out. She's in her twenties. What am I doing? I'm going to kill myself." I let her go. I said, "Lord, she may die, she may die, but I've got to go fulfill the purpose you have for me." In fully letting her go, I fully realized, oh my goodness gracious, this is what the Lord did for me. He fully let me go and then I chose to come back and follow Him. He loved me the whole time, but it's when I finally realized I am the lost sheep, I need to get back to the Shepherd, that's when I was fully found.

Your kids, if you can learn to trust them fully to the Lord, and then, as they become adults, give them the freedom to go and fulfill their own purpose, you say, "I don't agree with some of that," hey, that's between them and the Lord. When you stand on your day of accountability toward the Lord, in Hebrews it doesn't say you'll stand there and give accountability for your children, it says you'll stand and give accountability for yourself. Your children will be accountable for themselves. You model it, you show them love and grace be available for them, especially as they hit the adult ears, but don't try to control them, that's not scriptural. You just guide them and pray for them, and the Lord, I think, will give you some strength and guidance in that.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

In the story of the prodigal son, it says, "When he came to himself, he had squandered everything. He was away from home." Dan, I love that because in that moment he said, "You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to go back home." He had to have believed in his heart then that his dad just might take him back. In other words, he knew that his dad loved him.

Then the Scripture says this, "And while he was yet a far way off, Daddy was looking for him and he saw him coming. 'My son who was lost is found, put a ring on him, get him a robe, killed the fatted calf. My son who was lost is now found, he's home.'" Mom and dad, we want you to hear this, a bit of conversation not to beat in anybody up, a conversation that just speaks hopefully of love and of encouragement and an acknowledgement of the battle that's out there, and it's raging. The truth is, it seems like all Hell is against our families, against our kids, against our marriages and more.

Dan, we need a covering. I can't think of a more important thing to do right now, to pray for some moms and dads who are listening right now, who are on their knees crying out to God that He would intervene in their family, that their son or their daughter would come to themselves. Or, hey, if you're going to start changing our family, God, start it right here with me. Dan, I want to ask you, if you wouldn't mind just praying over the airwaves right now, just pray Heaven

into this moment and ask God to do something that only He could get the glory for. Would you do that?

Dan Seaborn:

I would be honored to. Lord it is with great internal joy that I commit this time of our talking, all this, and these parents, some who are wiping their eyes literally right now, I put them in your hands. I put their children, grandchildren, in your hands. I pray, God, today that you would speak clearly into the hearts of all of us, that you are the way, you're the hope. You're the one who can give guidance and directions.

I know, I know how this works. We're going to stop listening today, somebody's going to turn off the radio or click off of this website and they're going to go right back into dealing with the reality of the pain of their family. I ask today for a supernatural strengthen and guidance. Their heart has been touched and I pray their soul would be renewed. I thank you Lord for the challenges you allowed me to go through. It's not even a prayer I can believe I'm praying, but Lord, it was through the pain that you taught me how to be a better father and how to be a better man and how to be more like you.

None of us like pain, we run from it, we're scared of it, and yet it's through those times that you have molded us into the people we need to be. Today, take moms, take dads, take teens, take kids, do what only you can do in their heart. We want the name of Jesus to go out boldly. We pray, Lord, today, that we've presented you clearly as the hope for every situation. Give guidance, allow your Holy Spirit to give divine direction and use this to make a powerful impact for your kingdom. We love you today and a place all our kids and all our grandkids and ourself too.

Start with us, as Tim just said, start with me, Lord. Remove any wicked ways in me and any things in me that don't align with you. Help me as a parent to continue to work to honor and please you, because when I do that, I'll be the best father and person you need me to be. Bless and guide us, and thank you for this time together. In Jesus' name we say, amen.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Amen.

I just want to say to the moms and dads, to the grandpa, papa, grandma, Gigi out there listening, we want you to know that you're not alone. That's why we come to you every day here on this station, because we want to be a part of your life. We want you to know that God is in the midst of it all. You can cling to Him and He'll bring you hope and help.

Our special guest again today has been Dan Seaborn. Dan is the author of a brand new book in bookstores everywhere right now. Find it online, it's called *Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics That Confuse Kids and Scare Parents*. Dan, it's been a delightful conversation, my friend. Appreciate you and your heart, the wisdom that God's given to you, pray for your great ministry up there,

Winning at Home, that God would continue to expand your borders, if you will. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, the team here at Family Talk, we just want to say thank you and keep on keeping on.

Dan Seaborn: Thank you, Tim. Bless you, bless you and Julie, your family, Dr. Dobson and Shirley, so admire them and appreciate them. Just that you would allow me to partner with you today, I appreciate that. Again, I pray the Lord will use this to encourage parents, just as you said.

Dr. Tim Clinton: If people want to find out more about you, Dan, where do they go?

Dan Seaborn: Yeah, I simply go to our website, winningathome.com, spell the at out, winningathome.com. Check it out there and you'll see information, podcasts, different things you can get involved in. Check it out.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Thank you for joining us.

Dan Seaborn: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Well, what insightful and practical advice from Dr. Tim Clinton and Dan Seaborn today here on Family Talk. Hope you enjoyed their conversation as much as I did. Today we've concluded part three of a short series we've entitled "Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics That Confuse kids and Scare Parents." You can access the entire interview in three parts by going to our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

One final important announcement, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has created a 2022 midterm election voters guide. This handy info sheet is yours free to review online and to download and share. Just go to the homepage at drjamesdobson.org and sign up in the upper right hand box to receive a simple reference manual of the distinctions between your likely choices on the issues, policies, and positions that you will decide upon at the polls this November 8th.

Well, that's it for today. Until next time, I'm Roger Marsh. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, Dr. Tim Clinton and all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, God's richest blessings to you and yours.

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