



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Workplace Grace: Your Spiritual Influence at Work – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Dr. Walt Larimore and Dr. Bill Peel

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, the 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 back to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. We all face our own struggles and personal challenges, and for some of us, the only other people we interact with on a daily basis are the ones we work with. Of course, God uses every opportunity to reach people and oftentimes, it is through other people that he accomplishes this task. Well, today you're going to hear part two of a classic conversation featuring Dr. Walt Larimore and Dr. Bill Peel discussing with our own Dr. James Dobson about a book that Walt and Bill co-authored. It's called *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence At Work*. Together, they will discuss how God can use you for evangelism at the workplace.

Now, if you're not familiar with our guests today, let me tell you a little bit about them. Dr. Walt Larimore recently retired from his career as a highly successful physician. He worked in the medical field for more than 40 years, and during that time he delivered over 1500 babies. Walt was an educator and is still an author as well. He has hosted a national cable television program called *Ask the Family Doctor* that reached millions of families each and every night.

Dr. Bill Peel is the founder and was formerly executive director of the Center for Faith and Work at LeTourneau University. Currently, Bill serves as president and founder of the Foundations for Living 24/7 Project. He has coached thousands of men and women to discover their calling and to follow God's calling to become a spiritual influence in the workplace as well.

Now, let's listen to part two of this classic conversation featuring Dr. Walt Larimore, Dr. Bill Peel and our own Dr. James Dobson, right here on Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Dr. Peel, we got to the end of the program last time and you were about to tell a story and I want to hear the rest of it. I had to interrupt you and say, come back tomorrow. Well, you're here. Tell me what you were going to say.

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, first of all, let me say this, a person coming to Christ, that's the Holy Spirit's business. And God is on His own time schedule with people and we can't rush His pace.

Dr. James Dobson: We're partners with Him, aren't we?

Dr. Bill Peel: Exactly. And so Walt and I, for the last 20 some odd years, have taught people, it's our job to find out what the Holy Spirit's doing and join Him at whatever place that is in the person's life. And so just like in medicine, the doctor needs to diagnose the person before he prescribes the treatment. We want people to stop and think about what this person might need at the particular moment of the conversation. And evangelism is this huge process where you start with somebody that's maybe very skeptical, and hopefully over time, through a lot of different interactions with a lot of different people, they come to have some interest in knowing more about Christ. Or God does something in their life where they're facing something that they just don't know how to face anymore and all of a sudden they're looking for answers.

Dr. James Dobson: Let me role-play with you.

Dr. Bill Peel: Okay.

Dr. James Dobson: All right. We're working in the same place of work and at an intimate moment I share something with you that I've never said before. And I say, "Bill, to be honest, this is a tough time in my life. Things have not gone well for me. I've had difficulties professionally. My wife has medical problems. It's been very difficult, so we got involved in a church a year or two ago and the people there turned out not to be loving and the pastor didn't seem to have any interest in us or any understanding of what we were going through. And we just flat out did not get anything there. Church is not where it is for me, but I still have a need. Can you help me?"

What do you say to that person? Have you ever had that conversation, by the way?

Dr. Bill Peel: Probably, yeah, in a lot of different ways. Here's what I think I would say in that situation. I'd probably begin with something like, "Jim, boy, there have been some times in my life when I have really been disappointed and I've been really hurt in my career. And I got to tell you, my relationship with God was the thing that got me through that. And it wasn't about going to church as much as it was coming to know this person who really loves me and cares for me personally. It's not so much about listening to a preacher as it is, I guess, getting into God's Word and listening to what He has personally to say to me."

Dr. James Dobson: Does the Bible have anything to say in highly specific situations like that?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, it depends what the situation is in some ways, but the Bible is full of stuff about what happens when you face disappointment, what happens when you face loss of a loved one, what happens when you're depressed? What happens when you lose your job, what happens when you're rejected by a friend or betrayed by a friend. There's so much there that we can offer to people by way of showing them what the Bible has to say, what God has said through His word.

Dr. James Dobson: And then you offered friendship. And then you say, "I've gone through tough times too, and there were people who prayed for me. Would it offend you if I prayed for you? If not here, where it might be embarrassing, my wife and I would really like to make a project out of just asking the Lord to reveal Himself to you, because we really do care about you. I've watched you. I've seen your life and I would really like to be of help if there's any I can."

Dr. Bill Peel: Jim, that's exactly what we teach people to say to people. And it is what we call raising a faith flag in front of people. And it can be done as quickly as 10 or 20 seconds. But what you just did there was to show, "Hey, I care about you. I'm a person of faith and I know God has some answers and I want you to discover that."

Dr. James Dobson: And I didn't throw you back on your heels to say, would you like to accept Christ?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, yes. And of course, before that you have to say, well, now you're a sinner and this...

Dr. James Dobson: Not a message you want to lead with.

Dr. Bill Peel: People do need to understand that. But that's part of the Holy Spirit's job. Jesus said, I'm going to send the helper and it's His job to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. And He is an expert at that and I'm not.

Dr. Walt Larimore: So for those of us listening in radio world, some remarkable things just happened that I want to kind of rewind the tape to. The first was, Jim, you, as a secular worker asked a question of Bill. And that reminds me of what I think is the most important evangelism verse in the Bible is written by Peter.

Dr. James Dobson: Nicodemus.

Dr. Walt Larimore: No. I think it's cooler than that. So Peter's no wilting violet. He's an outgoing spokesperson. He says this, "Be prepared always to make a defense for the faith that lies within you when asked, when asked, yet with gentleness and reverence."

So Jim, you asked Bill a question and when a non-Christian asks us a question, it's because they've seen something. They're attracted, they're curious, they're interested. And Peter says, that's the time to answer, when asked, yet with

gentleness and reverence as a mother or as a father, not to slam somebody, not to come on to them, but to realize that that's a holy moment. And then Bill shared a little faith flag. He shared a little faith story. He also shared a little faith prescription. These are things that we teach people in the book that they can consider responding, that they can have ready to salt a conversation, to be light in a conversation. And it's salt that is flavorful. You don't dump the whole salt shaker. Scott and I went to get a hamburger one day.

Dr. James Dobson: That's your son?

Dr. Walt Larimore: Yeah, Scott's my son and we had dates and we went to get a hamburger at Denny's and he takes off the bun and he's going to sprinkle a little salt on, and some fool had unscrewed the top and the whole salt shaker went on it. Well, is salt good? Yes, but too much salt can be poisonous. It can be dangerous. We have a pastor friend that says, "Salt's a great seasoning, but it's a terrible fertilizer." And so how do you be salt in the right concentration, light that's attractive, not a spotlight?

All three of us wear glasses and you remember going to the eye doctor and they dilate your eyes and then they shine that light and it's almost nauseating. You can be too much light. You can be too much salt. And so to be gentle and revertant. So what you guys played out and then, Jim, you came back and you did a little faith prescription. You said, "My wife and I pray. That's kind of a faith story that I'm telling you, Bill. Would you mind if we prayed for you?" What a gracious, loving thing to do for someone who's hurting and someone who has asked. And that's what *Workplace Grace* is about. It's about going to work intentionally in the power of the Holy Spirit, but leaving the results to God. It's His job, evangelism's His job. He calls His own. And Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father until the Father calls him."

Dr. James Dobson: The next conversation has been set up by the one before where you say, we are going to pray for you.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Exactly.

Dr. James Dobson: The next one is, we have been praying for you and we'd really like to know you. How are you doing? Are you still struggling? Is anything new we can pray about? And you begin a conversation-

Dr. Walt Larimore: And people know you care. They know you care.

Dr. James Dobson: You mention in this book that you have to earn the right to be in somebody's life and you have to earn a right to be asked the question in the first place, don't you?

Dr. Walt Larimore: I think it's kind of a diagnostic question that we give in the book and that we give when we teach conferences. And we don't do it in any way to condemn

people, but to say, are people asking about your faith? And if they're not, it may be an indication that either you're not salt and light, they don't even know to ask, or you're too salty or you're too bright and they don't want to ask because they're afraid of that salt or that light. And so to purposefully pray each day as I head into this holy mission field of the workplace of, God, what are you doing here and how can I join you? And what that did for me as a physician was, I would go from patient to patient asking the question, what's God doing? Not, what do I have to do? What should I do? What could I do? But God, what are you doing in this person's life and how can I join you in your work? Looking for those little sparks where the Holy Spirit has already begun the flame and I just fan it a bit. I join it.

Dr. James Dobson: Bill, you really have to do a lot of listening too, don't you? You can't over-talk an issue.

Dr. Bill Peel: That's exactly right. And so if you're not listening and you're talking, then you can't see where the Holy Spirit is at work. And you may come across somebody that is ready to trust Christ right now, but if you say something that pushes them away, then that could be a real problem. The story that I started to tell you at the end of the last-

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, we never got back to the story.

Dr. Bill Peel: At the end of the last broadcast was that I'd sat down in this airplane, very tired. I just actually spoke at this conference about evangelism in the workplace to doctors. And this lady came in and sat next to me and I could tell she was nervous, and I just wanted to be quiet and not talk to anybody, because I'm an introvert too actually. And so I always sit on the aisle seat so I interface with as few people as possible when I get on the airplane. And so this lady wanted to talk. And so before we took off, I found out what she did. She was an artist and she'd been in town and was flying back home. And as we're taking off, I'm feeling very guilty. I said, "Oh my, I guess I should raise a faith flag here. She's not going to say anything. I can tell she's a very secular woman." And so as we're taking off, I'm looking out at this beautiful sunset and I'm saying, "Wow, look at that. Isn't that magnificent?" And here's the faith flag. "And God paints us one of those every day."

And I would've left it there. In fact, I'd been happy to leave it there. But she, over the next hour and 30 minutes flight to Atlanta, actually pulled the gospel out of me. And she was always in control of that every step of the way. And if you look at Jesus's conversation with the Samaritan woman in John chapter four, that's exactly what He did. He throws something out, she responds and wants to know more, and she's in control of the conversation. And that conversation can go just as far as she wants it to, and then it stops and you're fine with that because the Holy Spirit's in control and He'll take it from there. He cares more about her salvation than I do, for sure.

Dr. James Dobson: Sometimes those critical conversations don't occur at a time that are convenient for you. Sometimes you're giving, sometimes it's not an easy thing to do what you guys are telling people to do.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Bill flew into town yesterday and I was in the middle of a busy clinic and I had told the staff, "I need to finish. I need to finish. We've got to go pick this guy up and we've got plans." And then the last patient comes in, it was just closing a case. He was done with his care, young guy. And so I was saying goodbye to him. And as we were standing up to walk out of the room, he said, "I sense that you are a praying man." And I said to him, "Yes." And to myself, "Oh no, where is this going?"

And he said, "Well, I was wondering if you would be willing to pray for me." And I said, "About what?" And he began to share a very difficult situation. And I said, "Let's sit." There's times where the moment is right that God has ordained the moment. And Scripture tells me, be prepared. Be prepared. Be prepared to defend the faith that lies within you when asked yet with gentleness and reverence. And we sat and we had a precious, not a long, but a precious conversation that ended in prayer, me praying for him and an appointment to meet again.

And I'm so thankful. I don't know where he picked that up. I'll be anxious to know. But I think when we approach our work in the power of the Holy Spirit, intentionally looking for God already at work, we will find pearls in the muck, I used to call it. You and I had our Louisiana days back when we were kids. And we know about the swamps and swamps are difficult to walk in. They can be smelly and muddy and mucky. And every step you take, the swamps trying to suck in a little more and a little more.

Dr. James Dobson: Alligators down there too.

Dr. Walt Larimore: And mosquitoes. But in the swamp are the pearls that are in the oysters. And so walking through that swamp of each day looking for what God is doing. And our listeners, Jim, as they start to do that will see, God has gone before them and He has prepared the mission field for them. They don't need great skill. They don't need great gifts apart from the gift of the Holy Spirit to begin to see Him use them in reaching out day by day by day.

Dr. James Dobson: You think it's a good idea, and I know you do, that in the morning before you go out, you're on the way to the workplace and you pause and say, "Lord, put somebody in my path who needs me today."

Dr. Bill Peel: We have told thousands of people that very same thing. If you didn't learn anything from this workshop, we just dare you, as your hand hits the handle of your place of work, just stop and say, "Lord, use me in the life of somebody today." We dare you to do that because something significant is going to

happen because God really does want to lead people to know Him and His Holy Spirit is at work everywhere to do that.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Jim, He's going to save His own even if He has to use the rocks. But He invites us to join Him in His process of evangelism. And it's freeing to do that because it's not up to us, it's not up to our gifts. It's not our way, it's Yahweh.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, there's nothing more exhilarating than leading someone to Christ. You talk about a blessing and you're the one that comes away having been uplifted.

Dr. Walt Larimore: And as you cultivate, you'll have opportunity to sow. And as you sow, you'll have opportunity to water. And that's what leads to the crop. So evangelism is that process that we can enter into every day, and it changes your life, it changes your work, it changes your marriage. It changes your prayer life to intentionally bring your faith to work.

Dr. James Dobson: We're talking about the book, *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence at Work* by Dr. Bill Peel and Dr. Walt Larimore. And this is a second edition. You have added to the original version, haven't you?

Dr. Bill Peel: Yes. Yeah, actually, Kathy Peel did a huge amount of editing on that to really bring it up to date.

Dr. James Dobson: Your wife's a good writer.

Dr. Bill Peel: She is.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell me if there are obstacles and pitfalls along the way. What are they if they exist there, and what drives people away?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, I think George Barna, who you mentioned earlier, did a survey a few years ago and found out that actually most Christians, when they picked out their characteristics, identified themselves more with Pharisees than with Jesus' character.

Dr. James Dobson: In what context?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, in anywhere, more judgmental, more angry, more distrustful. And so they actually labeled those things, they labeled themselves as more having more Pharisaic characteristics.

Dr. James Dobson: That's where love comes in, doesn't it?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, exactly. And so that can be a huge thing,. But people say, I don't want to become a Christian because of all the hypocrites. Well, that's a legitimate thing. And what we need to show people is that it's not about being perfect, obviously, because all of us are hypocrites somewhere. But when we are honest about our

mistakes, admit those, and then try to live lives of integrity and try to do good work and try to show Godly character, then that gets us over those barriers.

There are other barriers that non-Christians will throw up to us as well. There are huge arguments that non-Christians hold about the Christian faith. So for example, one of the things that our culture commonly believes just as common sense to them is that there can't only be one way to God, can they? And of course, Christ says, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father, but by me." And so arguments like that, it would be helpful-

Dr. James Dobson: It couldn't be more clear. How can you read that Scripture and not understand there is only one way?

Dr. Bill Peel: Well, exactly. But our culture doesn't like that, they want lots of ways. They want to make their own way to God. And so to be able to have some short answers to those things, not to be an apologist, but to be able to give a thoughtful response to that is important to know some of those things.

Dr. James Dobson: I was on the Larry King Show, for at least 20 years off and on, and he would ask me on every occasion it seemed, is there only one way? Do you really have to deal with Jesus? I gave him the same answer, similar answer every time. But he asks the same question of Billy Graham and of Anne Graham Lotz and all the other-

Dr. Walt Larimore: Joel Osteen.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Dr. Walt Larimore: The list goes on and on and on.

Dr. James Dobson: And then my answer to it was, "Larry, I didn't write the book. The only authority I have is what the Bible says, and it makes it very clear there." Larry didn't want to hear that though, and I can understand why, frankly, because if he had ever become a Christian, an outspoken Christian, he'd had to give up a whole lot in Hollywood.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Yeah. You ask about obstacles people have, and I think questions are scary to people. They say, "Well, what if I open this topic? Are they going to start asking me questions I don't know the answer to?" And I want to reframe that because if they're asking you a question, that means they trust you. That means they like you. They're stepping out on what they think may be thin ice even asking the question. And if you don't know the answer, if you can just recognize what a gift you've given me, thanks for asking. I'm delighted you would ask that question. I don't have a clue what the answer is. I don't know the answer.

Dr. James Dobson: Why not say that? Why not admit it?



Dr. Walt Larimore: Exactly. Let's look it up.

Dr. James Dobson: Nobody has all the answers, and I certainly don't, but let's talk about it.

Dr. Walt Larimore: And let's look into it, and then we begin to explore together. We don't have to have all the answers, but we're walking life with them one step at a time. We tell people that evangelism is a process of many mini steps, meaning M-A-N-Y M-I-N-I. Little step at a time, one step at a time. And walking with them in the power of the Holy Spirit, leaving the results to God. We don't have to be God's answer man, but we can be God's lover of them.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you guys have done a great job in these two programs to talk about how to share your faith with others in the workplace and how not to, and all of that's in this book, *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence at Work*. Dr. Walt Larimore, Dr. Bill Peel, what a pleasure to have two friends here to sit down and talk about something all three of us care passionately about. You've made that very clear, and it's been a pleasure having you here.

Dr. Bill Peel: This is our pleasure.

Dr. Walt Larimore: May God use this in His kingdom.

Roger Marsh: I love hearing that. And knowing this, you really can make a difference and become a spiritual influence at the workplace wherever you may work. Now, that was part two of a heartfelt and encouraging conversation featuring Dr. Walt Larimore, Dr. Bill Peel, and our own Dr. James Dobson here on Family Talk. If you'd like to learn more about Walt and Bill or their book called *Workplace Grace*, just visit our website at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). Again, that's [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). You can also listen to parts one and two of today's conversation on our website as well.

We all could use some support as we experience our own struggles in life, and our customer care team is here to help you if you're going through a tough time right now. They'll be happy to listen to you and to be there to pray with and for you. They can suggest some free resources as well that might be useful to you and to help guide you through a tough time. Just give us a call at 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Remember, you can also reach us through the U.S. Mail as well. Our ministry mailing address is The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code 80949.

Please send us your notes of encouragement, your thoughts, and your prayer requests as well. I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you for joining us for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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