



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Keep Your Love On – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Danny and Sheri Silk

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**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:** Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. We all may not have grown up in a home that displayed what a God-centered, love-filled marriage is supposed to look like. Going into marriage, we then can have unrealistic expectations, or not truly understand how two imperfect people can create a marriage that lasts a lifetime. But when you put God first and a husband and wife both do the work, you can have a beautiful and exciting marriage. That's the message from our guests on today's classic edition of Family Talk.

Danny and Sheri Silk will be joining Dr. Dobson to discuss how they've made their marriage work, and how they now use their story to help thousands around the world keep their love on. But before we begin, there's a very important issue which I must share with you. It has come to our attention that certain unscrupulous individuals have been using Dr. Dobson's image and likeness to falsely endorse online products.

This advertising is absolutely untrue and Dr. Dobson is in good health. He has not left the church, and most definitely has not left the ministry of Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I want to make it perfectly clear, Dr. Dobson has nothing to do with these scams. There's a reason they're called deep fakes. Nor has he ever endorsed any outside products or services, let alone any product or service that is not in line with biblical principles and values.

Dr. Dobson cherishes the trust and confidence that you have given him and his ministry through the years, and he will always seek to uphold that trust. Now let's join our guests, Danny and Sheri Silk with our own Dr. James Dobson. As Sheri explains a key longing in every woman's heart and how it is impacted by the father-daughter relationship.

**Sheri Silk:** Part of it's fantasy, but part of it is a reality in a woman's heart. She really does want to be just adored. We have this image in our head of this person that's just

radically in love with us, even it's not real all the time. But I even watched my daughter when she was in junior high or so. She came home one day and Danny was in the kitchen and I think she was 16, actually. She was in high school, and she said, "You know what daddy? You're the first man I ever fell in love with." She just kept going on to her room and Danny about choked on his sandwich. It was this reality of he is this living, breathing example of love to her, and she's going to go look for that love somewhere else.

I think in a lot of brokenness in homes nowadays, lots of hurt and pain and there's still these little girls looking for this love. They see it in their daddies first and how daddy treats mommy and all of that. Then when you get into marriage and it's really rough, you think, this isn't true. All these things I'd been hoping for, they're not true, when really they are just laying in there waiting to happen. You really are wanting to be desired and loved and he really does want to be your champion, your hero, and that's what it's supposed to be like. When it goes wrong, we think it went away when really we have to go find it.

Dr. James Dobson: Sheri, what I have observed is that that's not the way father-daughter relationships typically are. I mean, it's the way it needs to be and what the little girl wants. Her daddy is the first man to hold her and love her and kiss her and be her hero, but many daddies are so busy they don't even see their little girls. They see their sons because they know their job is to make a man out of the son. They don't know that their daughters need them as much as their sons do.

Sheri Silk: Yeah. This example of love comes first from a father if-

Dr. James Dobson: If it comes.

Sheri Silk: Yes, but the papa God, I mean, our Father in Heaven comes. The source is there and then it comes through this natural dad. Our heavenly Father put that in us to want that intimate love that just, you're my hero. You're my everything, then this little girl, she either gets it or she doesn't. We have that thing inside us that wants to be loved. Then we get married and sometimes the fantasy that we have in our head isn't matching the reality that we're living in, and then we're disappointed and we don't know what to do.

Dr. James Dobson: How long did you live in that fantasy that you were talking about, before you realized that that person you're describing is inside of you? When did all of that begin to become clear to you?

Sheri Silk: When he realized it was his job to protect me, then he became moving toward me in the middle of our conflict, and so I got to just be myself all of a sudden. I don't have to protect myself because he's understanding and loving and he's moving toward me. I got to be that vulnerable person that he wanted to see in our relationship. Then I started thinking, you know what? He is that person that radically loves me and I can give him my vulnerability and my whole heart.

I didn't have to hold back because I was afraid he was going to hurt me. In my life, everyone I had ever dated, cheated on me till Danny. My real, natural father left when I was one, so my experience is someone's going to leave you. I was afraid and when I-

Dr. James Dobson: You were a victim, weren't you?

Sheri Silk: I was, but I became angry. And so I mean, I think him bringing himself, overcoming his own fears because to move towards someone, that's scary. I was loud and mean and all those things. He had to overcome that fear and move toward me, and I think that was a key to knowing this is going to work.

Dr. James Dobson: Danny, add to that.

Danny Silk: She can't control me. She can't make me back away. She can't make me reject her. I'm blaming her for all these things I'm doing, but I'm the one who decided to do all these things I'm doing. She's not controlling me. She's handling herself poorly, it doesn't mean I have to. Oh my gosh, what am I going to do? And so-

Dr. James Dobson: Well, how did that insight come, Danny? How did you begin to realize that you had responsibility to Sheri that you had not been meeting?

Danny Silk: I think it was just watching the fruit of my behavior. In my head, I have a loving relationship with the woman who loves me. But what I'm sowing is rejection and punishment by silence and avoidance and disconnection. I'm sowing tons of fear into a relationship hoping to get love, and it just doesn't work that way.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you began talking last time about the first 10 years being so rocky. In fact, even your premarital period was characterized by temperaments that didn't fit. They were in conflict. You had 10 really tough years, and then you began to get a handle on what this thing called marriage is all about. You're committed to each other and love each other, and you've begun writing books for others because you're trying to keep them from making the same mistakes that the two of you made.

Danny Silk: Yeah. I think the hope that comes from facing an insurmountable obstacle and overcoming it, and seeing your life on the other side of what felt like was going to stop you. My whole childhood, all I ever wanted was a family. I wanted a whole family.

Dr. James Dobson: Describe that to us.

Danny Silk: Well, my parents, they had a tough time. My dad left when I was five. My little brother was one. My mom moved to a small town in Northern California. When I was going through my master's program, I had to sit down and do an autobiography to write 20 pages about my life, which really forces you to think about stuff you just pushed way far away. When I was eight-years-old until I was

12-years-old, those four years, my mom had moved us up north. She was 24-years-old. I stopped writing at 30, the names of the men who lived in our house in those four years.

Dr. James Dobson: In a sexual relationship.

Danny Silk: Yes. Lived in our house, some for a week and some for two months. I remembered 30 of their names. This was my childhood. This was before my first stepfather, which I had for three years, and then I had another stepfather after I left. I moved out of my house when I was 16-years-old, graduated high school, living with my girlfriend. We don't come from Christian families. We don't have a great set of skills. We have some tough, tough slopes to climb in figuring out how are we going to create a family that stays together for generations? How are we going to build a legacy that we want to live in?

Dr. James Dobson: We're talking to people who have the same experience or similar ones to what you went through. You, Danny, seem whole today, seem that you have come to terms with life. You're serving the Lord. You're trying to help other people avoid some of the pitfalls you got into. How in the world did you overcome a household like that, with a mom living with all those men?

Danny Silk: I have no doubt that I just would've replicated my parents' lives. That is the track that I was on, and it was the introduction of Jesus into my everything.

Dr. James Dobson: What a testimony that is.

Danny Silk: That changed how I see myself and how I see the future.

Dr. James Dobson: Sheri, when did you find the Lord?

Sheri Silk: I was 21. I was just a young girl partying, just living my life how I wanted, lots of different boyfriends and whatnot in my life. I was teaching aerobics in a gym, and I just was so depressed and so sad with my life. Earlier in my life when I was 12, I had gone to summer camp with a Christian friend of mine. She drug me to this camp. And so when I was so alone and sad when I was 21, I thought, well, maybe I should go to church. I didn't know where to go, so I went back to the church that this gal had taken me to camp with. I remember sitting through that sermon and listening and when they gave the call, "Does anyone want to get saved?" I knew I had to do it.

I was scared that if the Lord knew who I was, He wouldn't really want me. If He knew what I'd been up to and the way I'd been living my life, are you sure that it's possible that He died for my sins as well? I had to be convinced a little bit. Of course they did a wonderful job and I've been a Christian ever since, but I was on just a road of destruction. I could look at my brothers and where they were going. And I have no doubt had I not met Jesus when I was 21, I'd probably been

in multiple relationships, had children from multiple relationships. That would've been my life.

Dr. James Dobson: Jesus is really the key.

Sheri Silk: He is, absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: That's not Christian rhetoric, it is the truth.

Sheri Silk: Surrender. "I surrender. I'm doing a bad job. I need some help." Please fire me from this job and He took me in. The exact same time, of course, I felt adopted into the family of God. I felt like I've got mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters in the Lord that I had never seen people like this. I had never been in a house full of people that didn't yell at each other or try and hurt each other or sarcastic and mean to each other. I had not even seen that.

I thought I got to have this. This is what I want. I want this family that loves each other and takes care of each other. I didn't know how to reproduce it. It took years for Danny and I to figure that out. But those hard years of us working it out, they are the reason why we're so passionate about helping other people. Danny's book, *Keep Your Love On*, is written and forged from the years of us having to work it out and we carry hope.

Dr. James Dobson: In the last program, I told you we wanted to talk about that book, *Keep Your Love On*. Explain what the theme is all about.

Danny Silk: My goal is to help people realize how powerful they really are. I mentioned earlier, the revelation for me came when I took responsibility for me in the relationship instead of blaming her for how I was treating her. And so "keep your love on" is it's just a statement. It's just a phrase that really puts in front of you and me, the idea that you have a choice. You can keep your love on or you can turn it off. You decide but it's your decision. You're that powerful as a person. You're that responsible as a person.

If you're going to have a successful relationship with anyone, job one is that you keep your love on in each and every situation that you have. Because if you don't, you invite love's enemy, which is fear. Love and fear are in this eternal battle and love casts out fear and fear casts out love. Love is a wonderful counselor, and fear would love to be your counselor, so you have to decide who is going to be your counselor in each and every relational exchange. Whether it's with your spouse, whether it's your children, your employer, your coworkers, your neighbor, whoever it is, you have to decide who's going to be your counselor. Will it be love or will it be fear because that's going to determine the fruit of everything that you do.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you caught in that dilemma in your early marital life?

Danny Silk: Oh, terribly.

Dr. James Dobson: What were you afraid of?

Danny Silk: I was afraid of not being able to get my needs met by her being happy. See, I thought that it was my job to make her happy. As a child, somehow I had these magical powers to make my miserable, codependent mom happy. She was so proud of me. It was like I had this magic dust and I could just throw it on my mom and she'd get all happy. Well, I brought that bag of magic dust to my marriage and I threw it on Sheri and it didn't work. It didn't work. I couldn't make this lady happy. I was in a free fall of trying to protect myself because I really only felt safe when she was happy.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that interesting now because yesterday, Sheri, you talked about wanting a man that would keep you safe, would fight for you, believe in you, protect you. You are having some of the same feelings.

Danny Silk: I think it's basic to relationships is we chase the fear away. I think I was afraid of being rejected. I think I was afraid of failing. Failing in being a man. Failing in a marriage. I think I had a lot of expectations that life was going to be easy and it wasn't. It was really hard, so I was afraid I was failing.

Dr. James Dobson: Sheri, you mentioned that you got pregnant very soon in the relationship, so you had a baby to deal with. Did that help or did that hurt?

Sheri Silk: Back to that test we took. Our pastor didn't give us the results of that test at the time when we were in premarital counseling, and when I think-

Dr. James Dobson: The one that said, "Don't get married."

Sheri Silk: He said that, "Do not get married. Do whatever you can to stop this." I was thankful that he never showed that test result to us. I think it would've given me an excuse if I was looking for a way out, I would've been able to point to that. I was thankful to the Lord for hiding that from us. I think that having a baby and being responsible for this little person, added to the tenacity that I had to just make this thing work. I did not want to repeat my family failures of divorce.

I remember Danny sharing a story about when Brittany was born, she just fit in this little hand and he thought, "she's so beautiful. If I don't grow up, she's going to die." That feeling as a parent, I better grow up. I think having a baby for us was like, "Oh, we had to pull it together." But did it make it hard? Yeah, we had more to fight about. We definitely had more things to fight about, but we had more distractions as well.

I think part of our pattern was so I would pour myself out into these little children who reciprocate my love. And then it became another reason for us to

be disconnected, that I'm not pouring myself into him because hard. That would be another talk we had to have. I need you to lean toward me.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. There are very few people who are willing to be as honest about it as you are. A lot of people have gone through very similar things, as you know. There's nothing new in human experience, but you have opened yourselves in a way that I think has been helpful to a lot of people. You know what? I hope that folks who are listening to this program will write and tell us about their experience.

If they found things here that were helpful in these two days or they get a copy of your book, *Keep Your Love On* and want to talk about it, I wish that they would either call or write us because that's what we're here for. We're here to help families make it. What a wonderful blessing it is that God wasn't through with you when you were through with each other. Isn't that a beautiful thing?

Sheri Silk: Yes, amen.

Dr. James Dobson: He is not through with you yet.

Danny Silk: He is not.

Dr. James Dobson: The Lord is using you, Danny, in counseling and in seminars and conferences.

Danny Silk: Recently a lot of our attention has switched to our Loving on Purpose Life Academy, which is an online school. We're really trying to reach more people just by not trying to be everywhere all the time, but make a resource that people can access the "Keep Your Love On, the "Loving Your Kids on Purpose," the parenting material, and then the "Culture of Honor" material, which is really about leadership cultures.

And building an online community that we can spend time with, very much similar to this. Where we would be talking about a topic and giving people access to some of the best conversations I've ever had. Being in a room with people who are doing the stuff, you're keeping your love on. You're showing your kids the way that God parents us, I'm going to parent you. A culture of honor where we are working together with other powerful people in such a way that we're working out our conflicts. We're protecting relationships above issues, and we're bringing out the best in each other every day.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm going to close with an illustration you gave in your book about the racehorse, Secretariat. You want to share that?

Danny Silk: One of my favorite sports figures is Secretariat. I think it was because I was a little kid when that horse was tearing up the track. It just seemed like Secretariat was untouchable. That horse was so much faster and had surprised everyone at every turn.

Dr. James Dobson: There's a movie on that subject that really gets at this.

Danny Silk: I cry every time I watch it. I cry. I know what's going to happen. At the autopsy of Secretariat, they discovered that the average horse's heart is about nine pounds, and Secretariat's heart was about 22 pounds. It was just the answer to how that horse could be so outstanding is the size of its heart. I think that we as believers, we have the same setup. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, we have such a far greater capacity to love, to keep our love on than the people around us, so let's do it.

Dr. James Dobson: Is yours still beating?

Danny Silk: With all its might.

Dr. James Dobson: Danny and Sheri, it's a pleasure to have you here and a pleasure to get acquainted with you. I met you yesterday before the first program and liked you and I have enjoyed this conversation. It's brought back a lot of memories to me. I've had years of counseling experience too, and those principles are universal. I think they're built into the human temperament, the human personality. I pray that God will continue to bless your ministry. Continue to give you strength and wisdom, and knowing how to put broken marriages back together because that's where that big heart is, isn't it?

Danny Silk: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: Sheri, you going to make it?

Sheri Silk: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Are you still angry?

Sheri Silk: I'm going to cry. No.

Dr. James Dobson: You got a smile on your face.

Sheri Silk: Anger's just fake power, right? It doesn't work.

Dr. James Dobson: Blessings to you both.

Sheri Silk: Thank you.

Danny Silk: Thank you very much.

Roger Marsh: What a candid and encouraging conversation with Dr. Dobson and his guests, Danny and Sheri Silk over these past couple of days here on Family Talk. Now, if you'd like to listen to any part of these programs that you might've missed, or if you'd like to share the entire two-part broadcast with a friend or loved one,



remember you can do so easily when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). While you're there, you can find out more about Danny and Sheri Silk, their ministry called *Loving on Purpose*, and their book entitled *Keep Your Love On*.

Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we also have another valuable resource to share with you. It's a two-disc CD collection entitled "What Women Should Know About Men and What Men Should Know About Women." You'll find a link for this collection on our website. It's right below today's program information at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

Simply click that link and we'll send you this two-disc CD collection as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Again, go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) and click the link for "What Women Should Know About Men And What Men Should Know About Women."

Thanks for remembering that the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is a completely listener-supported ministry. We truly appreciate your prayers and financial support. I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at the JDFI, thank you for making Family Talk a part of your day. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Family Talk.

Announcer:

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