



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Make Your Voice Heard in Heaven – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Rev. Barry Black

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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, hello and welcome back to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh with a personal question for you. I want to ask you to think about the last time you actually spoke with your heavenly Father. Has it been a while since you've actually had a conversation with the Lord in prayer? Think about how much time you're spending with Him each and every day. Prayer is a very intimate relationship that we have with the Lord. In fact, it's how we develop a deeper connection with Him and how He develops a deeper connection with each and every one of us. Isn't it amazing that the creator of all there ever was and ever will be cares about our worries, our fears, and our joys? Well, in today's edition of Family Talk, we're going to learn more about the power of prayer. And we'll do so by hearing the second part of a classic conversation from the Family Talk archives.

Back in 2018, Dr. Dobson spoke with the Reverend Barry C. Black, who is currently the chaplain of the United States Senate. They discussed his book called *Make Your Voice Heard in Heaven: How to Pray With Power*. The book was based on a keynote message that Reverend Black delivered at the 2017 National Prayer Breakfast. Reverend Black is a retired U.S. Navy rear admiral, and after retiring from active duty in 2003, he then became the 62nd chaplain of the United States Senate. Today, Dr. Dobson and Reverend Black will continue highlighting the importance of prayer. Now, I'd like to mention that Dr. Dobson was in fact bouncing back from a slight cold when this broadcast was recorded. So you might hear just a little bit of congestion in his voice, but the content is still very powerful and very practical even for today. So let's now listen in to the remainder of Dr. James Dobson's conversation with U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry C. Black, right here on Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Tell us about your personal conversion and your call to the ministry.

**Rev. Barry Black:** Well, my call to the ministry felt almost from my earliest memories, and I think that was an answer to my mother's prayer when she was pregnant with me. But all of the preachers I knew were financially challenged, and so I ran from having

grown up in poverty. I was evicted, my family and I, evicted three times before my 12th birthday. I did not want poverty, and so I ran from it. And I knew I was supposed to be a minister but I ran from it. And it's interesting because it was an English teacher, not a theological professor who exposed me to the writings of Francis Thompson. And I read his poem, Hound of Heaven, and the Holy Spirit convicted me that I was running from God. "I fled Him down the nights and down the days." Wrote Thompson. "I fled Him down the arches of the years. I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways of my own mind, and in the midst of tears I hid from Him. And under running laughter of this state, hopes I spared." Et cetera.

I was running from Him and God used that poem to draw me in and I was a reluctant minister. I said, I spat it out, "I'll be a poor preacher." And something in my spirit said, "Who said anything about poor?" And so I've discovered and so many people of faith have discovered that when you follow in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ, 84th Psalm verse 11, "No good thing will he withhold from the upright. He's got your back." "His plan for us..." Ephesians 3:20, "Is more than we can ask or imagine." So He drew me in and I have never regretted it. Never regretted it at all.

Dr. James Dobson: There's so many examples in Scripture of the great men, the prophets, and even those in the New Testament, who were called and ran from the call. My father ran for seven years until he was absolutely desperate and finally yielded to the call. And it led tens of thousands of people to the Lord and I was one of them. But I think of Moses and Gideon and Paul, there's so many like that. I had the privilege of speaking, I'm not a preacher, but I had the privilege of speaking at the funeral of Dr. Jim Kennedy and he was specifically called by the Lord. He ran and he refused the call. Moses before the burning bush, he didn't think he spoke eloquently enough. But you will not go wrong by following what He's calling you to do.

Rev. Barry Black: His plan for our lives is so much better than our plan.

Dr. James Dobson: It is my understanding that you feel that prayer is currently seen as a low priority in our churches. Do I have that correct?

Rev. Barry Black: I really believe that that is true, Dr. Dobson. We have prayer breakfasts where there's very little prayer. I don't know why we even still call it prayer meeting because very often there's very little prayer. And we underestimate the power of prayer and then we pray anemic prayers. We pray prayers asking God to do things that we can do ourselves. And so I really believe that if we took prayer as seriously as God intends for us to do, we could do what the early believers did. Turn the world upside down. Look at the promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, just my folk, called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from evil..." God says, "Then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sins and heal their land." People who can make their voices heard in Heaven are the most influential people on the planet. They can move the arm of God.

James 5 says, Elijah was a human being like us, one man, and yet he shut up the Heavens. He stopped the rain for three and a half years. Acts chapter 12, women praying in the house of Mary when Peter is scheduled for execution and their prayers extricate him from his predicament. Oh, what peace we often forfeit wrote to hymn writer, oh, what needless pains we bear? All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's go back to the Lord's prayer, there's a phrase that indicates that when we pray we ask for our daily bread. You talk about that in your book?

Rev. Barry Black: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: What is our daily bread?

Rev. Barry Black: Daily bread is anything we need. So many people say, "I don't know what to pray for. I don't have enough things to say to God." You worried about anything you have anxiety about anything? Well, yes, I've got plenty of those. Make your anxiety less, make your worry less, your prayer less. Philippians 4, six and seven says, "Have no anxiety about anything but pray about everything with thanksgiving and the peace of God that passes understanding will guard..." And the Greek word is like a sentinel, standing guard. "...will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus." I love to get to the part when I can talk to God about my daily needs because I can unload and I can cast all of my burdens on Him. And trust me, if you're inhaling and exhaling in this world, you're going to have burdens. Our blessed Lord said in John 16:33, He says, "In this world you will have trouble." And if you're living right, 2 Timothy 3:12, "All those who live godly will suffer persecution."

I take those to the Lord in prayer. He lets know about some needs that I have forgotten about, that I need to take care of. So that is that gracious invitation that He gives us at this point in the prayer, cast all your cares upon me. I've got your back. And there's no need to worry once you've let Him have all your burdens. We used to sing a little song roll, roll your burdens away, but Jesus has promised to take them all. Roll, roll your burdens away.

Dr. James Dobson: You're really describing an intimacy with God, how could that be? The Creator of the entire universe, we can be intimate with Him?

Rev. Barry Black: Yes. Well, 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 20 says, "Your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in you." Doesn't get more intimate than that. And I would challenge those who are listening, pray and ask God for His Holy Spirit. I didn't know what I was asking for, but let me warn you, be careful what you ask for. It was an experience, a milestone moment that changed the trajectory of my life. I was in my late 20s when I started praying that and He, the Holy Spirit has been with me ever since. The miracles He has performed, the insights He has given me. Isaiah said, "You'll hear a voice behind you saying, this is the way, walk ye in it for me." It's more like text messaging, but He communicates with us.

Dr. James Dobson: You also indicated in another chapter to approach the throne of God without fear. Explain what you're getting at there.

Rev. Barry Black: We need reverential awe for God. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." So that's such a love that we have for Him that we don't want to hurt Him, but we don't need a cringing trepidation. We are invited in Hebrews 4 because of Jesus Christ to go boldly before the throne of grace because we know the password, Jesus. And so here we have already the Holy Spirit living in us, the Holy Spirit praying for us, Romans 8:26. Jesus... Hebrews 7:25, ever living to make intercession for us. Wow, it's pretty easy to boldly approach His throne because we know that God is our ally.

Dr. James Dobson: What do you say to the listener who has asked for a miracle from the Lord, healing from cancer and heart disease and other problems, and the Lord has to this point said not now, wait on the Lord, but has not chosen to give you the answer you desperately need? What do you say? People lose their faith that way.

Rev. Barry Black: I know. I lost my faith, I became a practical agnostic. I deal with that in chapter seven of my book, "Pray When God is Silent." It's one thing when God says yes, we can even deal with God saying no. We can even deal with when God says wait, but what do you do when God says nothing? And when my mother died, I had a simple question, why? That's all I wanted to know, why? She was young. It was a medical accident, we had anointed her. We had claimed the promise of James 5 if there'd be sick, call for the elders. We'd followed the blueprint. And I was so certain she would be raised to robust health that when the doctor told me she was dead, I didn't believe it. And I asked God and He answered me not a word. That's what it says in Matthew chapter 15 to the Syrophenician woman, "He answered her not a word."

So when God is silent, that is a difficult time and it derailed my faith. I was a young preacher but it derailed my faith. Well, I learned that when God is silent, first of all, you need to make sure that you are praying with purity because a lack of purity and I have a chapter on praying with purity, can block your prayer. Isaiah 59:1-2, "God's arms are not short that He cannot reach us. His ears are not heavy that He cannot hear us, but your iniquities have come between you and God." So asking for forgiveness of sin, clearing the slate, then you need to persevere in prayer. Like that Syrophenician woman, when Jesus answered not a word she kept crying out to Him. Even though I was a practical agnostic, at least I kept talking to God, sometimes taunting Him. You need to know that God can handle your anger.

God can handle your frustration. You might as well be transparent with Him because He knows your heart anyway. 139 Psalm says, "He knows your thoughts from afar." And remember when God says nothing, Dr. Dobson, that even when He doesn't speak He is listening. Oh, yes, He is. And in His time, oh yeah, He brought me out of the fog. He brought me out of the funk. He brought me out of the despair miraculously. And I was able to use my pain to bless others. I was

able to use my pain. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, "The God of all comfort comforts us in all of our troubles that we may comfort others with the comfort wherewith we have been comforted." And He answered that woman with the demon-possessed daughter whom He answered her not a word, eventually He answered her. It sounded like he was insulting her.

First He said to the disciples, "I'm only sent to the lost sheep of the household of Israel. This woman is a Gentile, she's of another..." She kept on worshiping Him. And then he said to her, "It is not right for me to take the children's food and give it to the dogs." All in Matthew chapter 15. And she smiled, the Greek word puppy's, family pet. And she says, "Yes Lord, I may be a puppy, but even the puppies are permitted to eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table." And our blessed Lord healed her daughter that very hour. He may be silent but He is listening. And if you persevere in prayer, He will eventually speak. You can count on it.

Dr. James Dobson: He may not give you the answer you seek,

Rev. Barry Black: But He'll give you the answer you need.

Dr. James Dobson: That's correct.

Rev. Barry Black: He will give you the answer you need. He's trying to grow you up. His answer to me was when He finally got it together, He said to me, "Barry..." He never calls me Admiral and He never calls me doctor. He says, "Barry..." He says, "There are places that I want to take you that require a more robust faith than you currently possess." And my career took off after that. He took me places where I needed a much sturdier faith than I had had before He took me through that dark night of the soul.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you may know I wrote a book called *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. And as a psychologist, I had dealt so many times with people's frustration and not having an answer to the why question. God will not be accountable to man and He frequently does not answer the why. Jesus asked that question on the cross. He said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And to my knowledge, the Lord didn't answer that question to Him on the cross. And the Scripture that is so meaningful to me is the Book of Job where that man lost absolutely everything, not only his health but his family and his wealth and every good thing that God had given him was taken away. And it was interesting to me that job never complained about the loss of those wonderful gifts. But the one thing that got to him was that God wouldn't talk to him. He said, "I look for Him in the north place and I look for Him in the South. If I could go to His throne, I could explain my circumstances and He would understand, but He's silent to me."

I believe that is common in the Christian faith. Like you said, He doesn't say yes or no or maybe or wait. He doesn't say anything for a time.

Rev. Barry Black: But the interesting thing in the job story is God eventually speaks. And so he went to God and God began to cross-examine Job. And he says, "Job, since you are about to ask me questions, let me ask you a few since you're smarter than I am, where were you when I made the foundation of the deep? You should have been where I was and I should have been where you were." And then he goes on with all of those beautiful questions. "Why is the horse that's courageous will ride headlong into danger? Its mane curled around the powerful arch of its neck while the rider on its back is scared to death. Why is that, Job?" "That's the way I made the horse." "Why is the ostrich stupid? Lay an egg and then step on, on and on." He asked these questions. "Have you considered the mysteries of the snow light enough to fall into your hands and melt and yet paralyze" And He said, "Why Job?"

And finally, Job did what I eventually learned to do. And that is he said, "I put my hands over your mouth." Because God has given us enough evidence of His love, of His might, of His power, of His majesty, that it is enough. It is enough to trust Him even when we can't trace Him. And that's what Job learned, and God gave him as He will give all of those to whom He is silent if not in this life and the world to come, double for your trouble. He does it. And I praise His name.

Dr. James Dobson: What a beautiful thought that is, especially for the person that I referred to in the first broadcast that we did yesterday talking about the woman or the man who is discouraged and absolutely depressed and thank God is not there, but he is there. And He is doing what's best for us even when it doesn't feel like it or seem like it. The title of your book is *Make Your Voice Heard in Heaven* by Chaplain Barry Black. I guess you're always an admiral, but you're retired and enjoying responsibility as chaplain of the Senate having been selected there. Do you enjoy the work today?

Rev. Barry Black: I love it. When you are doing what God created you to do and you're in your area of giftedness and you find a venue in which you can use the gift for the glory of Jesus Christ, you never work another day in your life. This has just been idyllic. My 27 years in the military had the same experience, a protracted honeymoon. It's been a great blessing.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, thank you so much for being a guest on these two broadcasts. I love you like a brother in Christ. You are my brother in Christ. Shirley and I have appreciated you so much and we have the recorded messages that you've given at the National Day of Prayer. I'm going to go back to our archives and re-air some of those because the Lord has given you real insight, wonderful knowledge of how to help people cope with life. And even those who don't know Christ can maybe because of these broadcasts find a relationship with Him and nothing would please you or me more, would it?

Rev. Barry Black: Well, I consider you and Shirley my siblings by another mother. And I have been blessed by your ministry through the years. My sons grew up at Whit's End and all of the other great things. We'd travel for hours. We used to drive from Rhode Island to Florida each year because my wife is from Florida and it was Mr.

Whitaker all the way down. So God continue to bless and keep you and Shirley and do for you and her immeasurably, abundantly above all that you can ask or imagine.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I look forward to seeing you again in Washington. And I wish you'd give our regards, mine and Shirley's to your wife Brenda and your three sons.

Rev. Barry Black: I shall.

Dr. James Dobson: And Barry Jr, I guess Barry, the second Brendan and

Rev. Barry Black: Barry the second and Bradford.

Dr. James Dobson: Bradford. Well, keep up the good work sir. And I ask our listeners to pray for you. It's a heavy responsibility as you deal with people who are literally holding the future of the country in their hands by the decisions that are made in the Senate.

Rev. Barry Black: Well, Paul said in Philippians 4, there're saints in Caesar's house. So trust me, there are saints on Capitol Hill who know how to make their voices heard in Heaven.

Dr. James Dobson: God's blessings be with you.

Rev. Barry Black: Same to you.

Roger Marsh: Well, what a dynamic conversation featuring our own Dr. James Dobson and U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry Black on today's edition of Family Talk. We hope you've been encouraged by Chaplain Barry Black's raw testimony. Now to learn more about Chaplain Black, his ministry, or to hear any part of the program that you might've missed yesterday or even today, please visit our broadcast page at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). That's [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). And remember, you can also hear our archival program each and every day on demand when you use the Family Talk app on your smartphone. Oftentimes our prayer life grows deeper and a little more urgent when we're going through a tough time in life. Perhaps you might be coming to God with a question of why something has been allowed to happen in the first place. If you are facing a season like that right now, I really encourage you to get a copy of Dr. Dobson's classic book called *When God Doesn't Make Sense*.

Oftentimes, we're going through a hard season, our faith comes crashing down around us and it feels like we can no longer trust God because He hasn't "met our expectations." Or maybe He said no or wait when we wanted to hear, yes. The Christian life certainly can be filled with difficulty at times, and we may never fully understand the tragic circumstances that God allows this side of eternity. But reading a book like *When God Doesn't Make Sense* will help you put your faith in proper perspective. And we'd love to send you a copy as our

way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute today. So reserve your copy of *When God Doesn't Make Sense* by Dr. James Dobson, when you click the link at the bottom of today's broadcast page when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

And if you'd like a little more free encouragement for a season when God isn't making sense, you definitely want to sign up for the free 10-day email series from Dr. Dobson. It's also titled, *When God Doesn't Make Sense* and it explores the depths of hardship and examines the purpose of pain in your life. After you spend a few minutes a day reading the wisdom of Dr. Dobson on this subject, you'll be uplifted and strengthened in your faith as you learn why dark valleys can bring life's greatest blessing, which is ultimately a closer walk with the Lord. To sign up to start receiving our free 10-day email series called "When God Doesn't Make Sense," just visit [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) and then click the link to sign up. Well, I'm Roger Marsh thanking you for listening to Family Talk today and encouraging you to join us again tomorrow. And from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, have a blessed rest of your day.

Announcer:

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