



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Bishop W.C. Martin and Donna Martin

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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 a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and today on the program, we're continuing an extraordinary conversation featuring Bishop W.C. Martin and his wife, Lady Donna Martin, from the small community of Possum Trot, Texas. Their story of faith and love has touched millions of hearts nationwide and even inspired a new movie that's just now out called, *Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot*.

When the Martins felt God calling them to adopt children from the foster care system, they never imagined their obedience would literally spark a movement. Their small, humble congregation at Bennett Chapel Baptist Church in Possum Trot ultimately adopted – are you ready for this – 77 of the most vulnerable children in the system. These are literally children that others had given up on. On today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, our own Michele Bachmann is sitting in the co-host's seat once again today, and I think you'll be amazed to hear how this rural Texas church answered God's call to care for the least of these. Let's get into part two of this fascinating discussion on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Michele Bachmann: Today, we're so excited. We have back with us for our second day, Bishop W.C. Martin and also Donna Martin from the Bennett Chapel in Possum Trot, Texas. They've told us the incredible story of how the Holy Spirit led them with foster care and adoption. So, we're excited for part two of this wonderful conversation.

Donna Martin: Absolutely, bless the Lord. We're so excited to be here again.

Michele Bachmann: So, you got started in this process. Did you immediately do foster care or did you immediately do adoption? Was it a process?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Yes, it was. We had to do six months foster, and then after six months that's when they placed the child permanently in your home.

Michele Bachmann: So, then you obviously were taking these children to church with you on Sunday morning and the congregation saw that you had these new children with you.

So, when did you get the idea to get the whole Bennett Chapel congregation involved in what you were doing with foster care and adoption?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Well, some of the members said that, they said they thought about doing this some time ago, but they... see we had to drive 120 miles round trip. They're taking Texas, what they call, pride classes. And with these classes, they teach you how to deal with children with multiple problems. And we're taking, I think, about 15 weeks or 15 or 16 weeks of it. And then they licensed you to do...but, and then when we brought the children to the church, some of the members said we would like to do that. But they couldn't drive at night like that. So, the woman said this, that when I went and asked them about it, they told me that...

Michele Bachmann: So, for the other people in the congregation, they also had to go through the training to be foster parents and adoptive parents, but this long, long drive to go for training was prohibitive?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Right, right. I went to the state and asked them about it, and they said if I could find eight families who would be willing to foster and adopt, they would do the classes at our church. And I think that first time around, we had, what, 13, 14 families?

Michele Bachmann: 14 families willing to look at this? Do you think that was remarkable to get that many people?

Bishop W.C. Martin: I didn't even have a clue, because number one, we were operating in an area that we had little or no knowledge about.

You think about adoption and foster. You got to look at, and this is biblically, and I had to look in the Bible and see that adoption and foster, well, not foster, but adoption itself was something that was started by God. This was not a man-made thing; it was a God thing. And the only way we was able to get back to God was through adoption, there was no other way.

And if you read in Ephesians 1, it will tell you it was God's good pleasure through Jesus Christ to adopt us back into the family. And then we got people in the Bible that was adopted. It was an informal adoption, but it went on like Moses and Esther. And a lot of people like Jesus, that people don't believe Jesus was an adopted child. I don't care how they look at Him.

He was an adopted child because when the angel went to Joseph, "Joseph, don't be afraid to take Mary as your lawful wedded wife. That she is carrying is the holy ghost." So, she was already pregnant and he told him to raise Him up. So, adoption ain't something that we just, just dropped out of the sky. Adoption's been around ever since Jesus, ever since Moses' days. So, it was something God planned to do in order to get us back into the royal family.

Michele Bachmann: The movie I thought did such a good job showing the difficulties for the children that came to your home, the difficulties for you as the parents, but you didn't give up on them and the difficulties for your biological children to adjust to foster care. But what was amazing to me is how quickly your congregation, the Bennett Chapel, took to this.

And I think what the listeners need to know is that yours is not a wealthy congregation. The people at Possum Trot, at Bennett Chapel were people who didn't have much materially. They were just holding body and soul together just to get through. And yet you opened up your home, you shared the food you had; you shared your heart and the roof over your head with these kids who came out of the worst of the worst, and you had to deal with some really hard problems.

But what I saw in this movie is that because so many in your congregation decided to take a leap of faith and take these children in for fostering and adopting, you had each other. You had probably the finest support group I've ever seen. Can you answer the question? Did that help you? Was that helpful that you were all struggling at the same time?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Yes, it was because the thing of it is, we was there to hold each other's arms up. We was up there; we were there to pray. Because a CPA at the Children's Protective Services, they are 60 miles away from here, and they would have to drive. Say if we had a problem, nine time out of ten we've solved that problem right there within that congregation.

And this is why I tell churches everywhere; the church itself has one of the most strongest and one of the most powerful and support group that any organization can ever have. You cannot and will not do this without the will and the power of God for you to accomplish this. But the power is already there because the church itself, God empowered the church to be able to take care of every situation that come along. So it is within the church.

That's why we was able to have such a powerful support group built. We had praying peoples and peoples who are seeking God and helping one another. This is what it was all about.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. So you had 22 families from the Bennett Chapel, right? 22 families adopted 77 children. That's just one church and a very poor congregation materially speaking. They couldn't keep the lights on, in some cases, in their homes. They were missing even the basics and yet they still said, "Yes Lord, use me. Here I am, I'll take a child." So, 22 families adopting 77 kids. That's a little over three kids per family, if you average it out. That's an incredible story of love and of a willingness to trust God to solve and handle a situation.

In one scene in the movie, Bishop Martin, you are on your way to town because you have people in your congregation that can't get the light on. Their sewer

system backs up. They just don't even have the basics. They have nothing materially. And you go to a wealthy congregation in town, and you had a relationship with this pastor and you told him what the needs were out where you were.

I thought that was a wonderful act of faith on your part that you were advocating for these children by advocating for their foster parents and their adoptive parents. And you went to where you thought there might be resources to come and help these families so that these adoptions wouldn't fail, so that the families could survive. I thought it was tremendous that you figured out a way to do whatever you had to do to help these families make it. Can you talk about that?

Bishop W.C. Martin: You know, I believe the word of God tell us that, "You have not because you ask not; all that ask they shall receive." So, I believe if there's a need, I believe in asking. And you talk about need, even right now, we still have a lot of needs. And we got people who in various places in state, they are supporting us and helping us to get some things we need down there. And which is a great thing. And I think something of this nature that everybody can be partakers of. And let me just add this little nugget in there. Everybody cannot adopt.

Michele Bachmann: That's right.

Bishop W.C. Martin: Everybody can't foster. But everybody can be part of the process of helping in some type of way, or supporting a family that is. And this is the situation that you see in this one. Somebody did ask us to do it, it was God. He told us to do it. And anytime God tell you to do something, you have to obey His will. That is the only way that you're gonna be successful in doing what God said to do is being obedient. So, as a result of that, we've done what we had to do.

Yes, there were multiple problems and people were struggling and hurting and pain all the time, but we had one key element among ourselves. That little word, that little four-letter word you call, L-O-V-E. We had that. And then we had another little word that was so powerful in with love, faith. You know, and we knew what the Bible said, "Faith is the substance of the thing to hope for, the evidence of things not seen." You can't see it, but you can be part of the results of faith. So, what we did, we exercised every biblical thing that God gave us and then the power of God kicked in, and we was able to accomplish the thing that God wanted us to do.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. It says in 1 Corinthians, "faith, hope, and love, these three. But the greatest of them are love." And I see on your face, Donna, you smiled when your husband was talking about faith and about love because what you knew from the time you were born, what the love of a beautiful loving mother was, and you wanted to give that love that your mother gave you. That's what I see on your face right now. You wanted to give your mother's love and demonstrate that to all these children because your mother was demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ who died for her. And that's what I see in you, both of you, you and

the people in your congregation, those 22 families who surrendered and said yes. That you were willing to do that. Is that what I'm seeing in your face, love?

Donna Martin: Absolutely. Every time I speak of it; it's like there's a refreshing of love. Sometimes my siblings and I, yet we still kid around and we said, "We think everybody should have been raised by Mertha Lee."

Michele Bachmann: If only, if only!

Donna Martin: Right, you know. And we know that others and going back to, you know, the church. We have the church peoples, we have the community peoples, you know, it's just this whole world.

Most of us has come from loving families. And I just think that in this time of this world that's in such a disarray, you know, that you see so much hurt and pain. And to me, I think that if we can continue to share the foundation that has been set before us. You know, Jesus, gave his son, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, and His son gave His life, that who should ever believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

There are so many people has the love of Christ. There are so many who demonstrate the love, and there are so many that started out with it that's been hurt and they cultivated, they covered up what through pain. But those of us who understand that no matter what we go through, we still have to generate the love of Jesus Christ and the love...it's is like loving those who are hurting. That's unconditional.

Because we can love those that love us, but would we get a reward for that? We got to love those that don't know love. We've got to show forth love to those that never heard of love.

Love is an action. Love is move to action. It's such a common word, but it's all about action and not reactive. You know, activate what? The love of Christ. And yes, if you want my face to light up, you just talk about love and you talk about mothers that had mothers like I had and you had and others, you know, and then you talk about the kids that did not have it. And my heart is going to drop and say, "I wish I could do more. And Lord, help me to do more."

And it's taken us as a community, as the church, to know that this miracle started in the rural area of East Texas, at Possum Trot, but there is peoples all over the world who can be affected by this and have the same kind of love and compassion that I have or more than what I have because look, I said if it was only about me and W.C., then it wouldn't be God.

No, God has thousands and thousands of people on this earth who's been moved to action, who's doing a great work. That we all have to, you know, it's a change link that we continue to hook up and we get this world back into the

order of Jesus Christ. Families first. What was the first thing he gave us before He gave us a building? Family.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. Amen. And for 20 years, you and W.C. and Bennett Chapel and the community demonstrated this line. It's one of the most powerful stories of redemption. *Sound of Hope*. This movie, you need to just show this movie in your church, to show the love of God shed abroad among the hearts of men. And, W.C., I just love this verse, in James 1:27...

Bishop W.C. Martin: ...twenty-seven, I was just thinking about it. Pure religion. "Pure religion is undefiled that God accept that we take care of the widows and the orphan."

Now, I want to just say this much. I want to say this much. And I feel that for the most part, God may have an indictment against the church 'cause we have not fulfilled James 1:27. There is no reason in the world. For we have churches on every corner and we have all of these children in a system that does not have the love of God. That was not God's will in the book because when you look at it, the power, the love is generated in the church. So, I believe to my soul is that we need to be very, very careful how we overlook the children. And we need to put the children under a microscope. I'm not saying for every pastor to do what I've done, but at least you can go out and encourage your congregation.

The way I feel about this thing, there should not being a child waiting on a home, that should be a home waiting on a child.

Michele Bachmann: Oh, I love that. Yes, sir, preach, yes.

Bishop W.C. Martin: You know, that's the way I feel about this, because the way this thing is settled right now, we are overlooking what a God, and you look at what an enemy is, is have launched just his attack on this young generation. More of our young children are dying and going to prison, going to the graveyard, going to be locked away. And it's time now for the church to come out of the walls of the church and get down in the hedges, in the byway, just like Jesus said and compel them to come. We got work to do.

This country's in such a disarray right now. It's unreal. But I tell you one thing. There is a God that we serve. And I believe to my soul it is God who's saying, "Look, I want the church that I ordained, that I sent into this world, and I want you to agree and declare the freedom for all church."

I think it's the time now that the pastors need to come out and really open up their eyes and look at the children, what God has given them. I'll tell you one thing, they may not be able to pay tithes today, but if you'll train them up in the church and teach them, you will have some of the most strongest people that you ever gonna have. So, I encourage all leaders, all pastors, look at these children out of the eyes of the Lord. And when you do, you're gonna find out

that we've been missing something all this time that we should have been working on years ago.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. What a success story. Well, would you both close us out in prayer now for the church of Jesus Christ? That we would take up this exhortation that you gave us on this show today, so that whether or not God is calling a person to take a child or whether God is calling a person to support other people through financial or other support, or churches to take this up, would you pray for us now as we close our time together?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Father God, we thank you so much for You our God, and we exalt Your name. You said, "If I be lifted up, I draw mens unto me." And right now, Father, we just want to glorify You because there is a need here. We ask that You press upon our hearts and the hearts of mankind to see that there's a child somewhere in a state, in a county, in a city that need help.

Lord, I pray right now that there will be a huge deliverance of children. If they listen to this broadcast, I pray Lord God, that there will be a huge deliverance. That everybody will begin to rise up and claim the children, and claim them out of the system. That we all work together to bring structure in their lives. That You will give us instruction on how to do it and give us the power to overcome it.

I thank You, Lord God, because I believe in my soul that this is gonna generate and it's gonna touch hearts and people everywhere. I pray even, Father, that the *Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot*, will move peoples to action, will cause them to come up and ask the question, "What can I do to support one another? What can I do? How can I help?" We need you, Lord God. We need Your anointing that destroys every yoke. We need Your anointing that will bind the hand of the enemy, that will help us to be able to carry out Your will.

Thank You, Lord God, for, for Bennett Chapel. Thank you for Possum Trot, who have demonstrated this world that it can be done. And thank You for showing up in Bennett Chapel and Possum Trot, and flicking Your muscle Lord and showing up that it can be done. We thank You now, Lord, and we bless You. We believe, Father, and by faith that hundreds and thousands of children all over this nation will be able to come out and find love, support, and caring home for their life. We bless You now, Father. We glorify You in Jesus' name. Amen. And thank God.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. Amen. Well, let me ask you a separate question. You've convinced us that the church of Jesus Christ can solve this problem if we do something. So practically, what are the first steps I need to take with myself, with my church? What should I do? I want to do something, but what can I do?

Bishop W.C. Martin: Well, I believe the first thing that should be done, we need to seek God's divine will to find out how. It's not a question of should I do it. We already know the

Bible said we should do it, but then we need to get God instruction on how we need to go about doing this. And by doing that, and because of the fact that you pray and then your faith will lead you to the place and thing that you need to be doing.

Cause I'll say again, everybody can't do the same thing, but we all can do something and that's what the church needs to come together now and just seek the will of God and say, "Hey, you know, I want to do something Lord, but what do You will have me to do? What is Your will?" That's what I think that need to be done.

Michele Bachmann: Amen. Well, Bishop W.C. Martin and Donna Martin, I want to thank you and Bennett Chapel of Possum Trot for your example to all of us. You have stimulated us to love and good works. Thank you for being on the program today.

Donna Martin: Thank you. Thank you for having us.

Bishop W.C. Martin: God bless you and God bless everybody that listened to it, that they will get moved and do something. Let's do it. We can do it. We can do it. We can do it. Thank you.

Michele Bachmann: Amen.

Bishop W.C. Martin: God bless you all here.

Roger Marsh: Well, the story of Possum Trot reminds us that God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.

You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and an inspiring conversation with Bishop W.C. Martin and his wife, Lady Donna Martin, about their remarkable adoption story. And our thanks again to the Honorable Michele Bachmann for sitting in the cohost's seat today.

Now, if you missed any portion of today's broadcast, or if you'd like to share it with a friend, you can go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) or access it on the Family Talk app. You'll find parts 1 and 2 of the conversation featuring the Martins and Michele Bachman talking about adoption. You will also find information about the Martins' ministry called Saving a Generation, and their powerful story documented in the film, *Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot*. Again, you'll find all that information and more when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

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Well, I'm Roger Marsh, be sure to join us again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. The voice you trust, for the family you love.

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

Dr. James Dobson: Does your home provide an emotional safe harbor for your children? A place where they feel protected and nurtured?

Roger Marsh: With today's Dr. Dobson Minute, here's Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: A classic study of child-rearing practices followed over 1,500 boys from pre-adolescence through young adulthood and produced three very interesting findings. First, when love and appreciation are communicated to children, their self-esteem grows. Now, that's not so surprising, perhaps, but the second finding was. The parents of the high self-esteem children were not only strict, but consistent in their discipline as well. If children find that rules at home are not being enforced, they often assume it's because no one cares enough to get involved. The third ingredient that marked the homes of the high self-esteem children was openness. Once the boundaries for behavior had been established, there was freedom for individual personalities to grow and develop.

Roger Marsh: For more information, visit [drdobsonminute.org](http://drdobsonminute.org).