



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Family Talk Covenant: The First Ever Family Talk Broadcast

Guest(s): Ryan Dobson and LuAnne Crane

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and as we're starting off a brand new year, the first full week of broadcast here in 2026, we think back to the moment that every ministry has. I mean, every ministry has a beginning, right? A first broadcast, a first program, a moment when everything gets underway. And on today's edition of Family Talk, we're going to set the wayback machine for Monday, May the 3rd, 2010. That was the very first day that the very first Family Talk broadcast aired. Now, this special program that you're about to hear features our own Dr. James Dobson alongside the original broadcast team for Family Talk, and that was Dr. Dobson's son, Ryan, along with his longtime producing friend, LuAnne Crane. Now, what we're going to hear is Dr. Dobson and Ryan and LuAnne kind of setting the table for the Family Talk ministry.

Give you a chance to look back into the archives and see how far we've come. But what you're also going to hear is Dr. Dobson's heart for this ministry as he will be sharing the covenant and vision for the Family Talk ministry. The ministry was called Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk when we first started. It has since grown into the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Now, interesting to note, this program has only ever aired once before. It was on that very first day, 15 and a half years ago. So let's set that way back machine, step back in time a little bit, and relive this historic moment as we kick off our 2026 broadcast year with the very first edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I think as you all can guess, I'm awash in memories and nostalgia today. This takes me back to March 26th, 1977 when I had just resigned from my position at USC School of Medicine and I opened a little two room office in Arcadia, California and called it Focus on the Family. I had no clue; I had no idea where the Lord was taking me at that time. And if I had known it would have scared me half to death.

People have often asked me if I planned everything that occurred with Focus on the Family over the next 33 years and the answer is no. I didn't know where the Lord was taking it. And honestly, I didn't ask because I just felt that the Lord wanted me to start a radio program and it just exploded. And that work has

been a labor of love for me and for Shirley because she shared in everything that I've tried to do and we've enjoyed every minute of it. And nevertheless, I began to feel about a year ago or a little longer than that, that the time was coming for me to lay that burden down and to pass it on to the next generation that would take it into the future for whatever God has in mind for it, and that He had something else for me. And that's been kind of an unfolding story where I just became increasingly aware that what He has in mind is a new ministry called Family Talk, and that's where we are.

Now, I think I ought to pause here to introduce the other players here because I'm not doing this alone. And I'm just delighted to have two colleagues who are going to be joining me on the program. And our listeners are very quickly going to become acquainted with the two of you and your heart and your passion for the Lord and the things that I have tried to share for more than three decades. First, let me introduce my beloved son, Ryan, in whom I'm well pleased. Ryan has his own radio program. It's an internet radio program called KoreCast with a K. That's also heard around the world and has a large number of listeners through the internet. What, Ryan, I suppose you get email from all around the world. Many countries.

Ryan Dobson: Yeah. We've got all 50 states, 112 countries, doing about a quarter million listeners a month.

Dr. James Dobson: And you're going to continue doing that.

Ryan Dobson Absolutely. Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: And you deal with a different demographic. You deal with younger people. Now, is that why you joined us? Is that why you agreed to do this?

Ryan Dobson: It is. You know what? I want to do it because I wanted to help. I saw where you were going and just said anything I can do to help would be good because I want to be a part of something great. And the things you do are of excellence. And I think anybody knows at the end of the day, you want to look back on your work and think, "Man, I did something good today." And I feel that way every time I leave.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it is sure going to be fun working with you and with Luanne. LuAnne Crane was a producer for Focus on the Family for 25 years.

LuAnne Crane: 25 years.

Dr. James Dobson: You never expected to stay there that long, did you?

LuAnne Crane: No, I sure didn't. I'd been there longer than I'd been married, and that just seemed unusual.

Dr. James Dobson: And you were on the other side of the glass for me. You were in the control room.

LuAnne Crane: I was.

Dr. James Dobson: And I was doing what I do. And I heard that you might be interested in joining us and called you and you took a weekend to think and pray about it and talk to your husband, Steve, about it, and then decided to join us.

LuAnne Crane: But it wasn't a terribly difficult decision, Doctor. I mean, like Ryan, if there was anything I could do to help you continue, that was my heart. And it kind of cracks me up listening to Ryan here with Sven from Sweden. I don't really have that, but in my mind is like Stephanie in sixth grade. I mean, right now I have a sixth grader. I have a 10th grader. I have one in college and I have one that's married and my world is a little more domestic than his, but my heart is those children in that next generation that has changed so rapidly. In the 25 years I've been at Focus, I've seen that change. And I'm passionate about continuing the message that you've preached so well.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you've loved Focus on the Family.

LuAnne Crane: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: You committed to it, and so have I. And yet we feel called to something new and something different, and that brings us to this moment. Why did you walk away from that big organization? It's on 83 acres, it's multiple buildings, it's all that's going on there and we're just a little outfit here.

LuAnne Crane: We are. Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: We're in a leased building also in Colorado Springs, and we're putting together just a fantastic staff, largely young staff.

LuAnne Crane: Are you including me in that young staff? Can we say that? Good.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, compared with... Why did you come?

LuAnne Crane: Well, even my time at Focus, I was never there for the career. I have been a working mom. I have been an at-home mom. I've been full-time, I've been part-time, but it's never been career driven. It's been heart-driven. And so when this opportunity arose, my husband was really the one that caused me to really challenge it and said, "LuAnne, look at the context of the culture right now. And I thank the Lord's tapping you on the shoulder too. And if there's something our family can do with all of us allowing you to do this, we need to move that direction." So it was very clear to me.

Dr. James Dobson: So you and Steve have brought up four children. The youngest is 12.

LuAnne Crane: He's 12. He'll be 13 this summer. In fact, we just got the notice from the school that we're supposed to go to the rising seventh grade orientation next week, which means he's officially on the other side of the building. My days in elementary school are done.

Dr. James Dobson: You have a lump in your throat about that.

LuAnne Crane: I have a lump in my throat about that, that's for sure.

Dr. James Dobson: And yet here comes adolescence again.

LuAnne Crane: Yeah, but I love it. These folks that say dread it, no. There's challenges, but there are so many more delights in the teen years and we'll be talking about that.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, one of the unique factors that we're representing here is that we cover the entire demographic. I mean, Ryan, you have a child three years of age, my first and only grandchild. I just can't imagine you're celebrating your three-year-old being accepted into school.

LuAnne Crane: I don't know if you're celebrating. I think you're mourning it.

Ryan Dobson: I think mommy might be celebrating a little more than daddy is.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I remember the day Danae went off to kindergarten and I walked back to the house and I had a huge lump in my throat and a tear in my eye. I can tell you, we prayed together that day. And then I took a picture of her standing on the first step of the bus and backed up and watched her as the bus drove away. And I'm telling you, I was sentimental about everything that happened in your life, Ryan, and in Danae's life as well.

LuAnne Crane: And Doctor, you've asked us, Ryan and I, why we were part of this broadcast, but I'd really like to hear what you think the Lord was doing calling you to start this new broadcast.

Dr. James Dobson: In 1977, the Lord gave me a very clear mission and a very clear message. I knew what I wanted to say. I knew who I wanted to say it to. And I had been writing books. I had three best-selling books by that time, and I was really enjoying what I was doing at USC. I was doing research and I felt accepted there. I felt fulfilled there, but I just became aware that the institution of the family was falling apart. Honestly, I foresaw what we're seeing today. I don't mean to sound like father time here, but I recognized that we were going to be in a period when families would get very little support from the culture and felt like I ought to do something to help if I could. So I did one of the scariest things I've ever done. I resigned, I walked out of there and Shirley was not real sure that that's what we needed to do and the Lord blessed it.

LuAnne Crane: He did.

Dr. James Dobson: And that's the good news. The message and the mission are still there. So what am I going to do? Am I going to set it down? Am I going to refuse to carry that burden that I've carried for all these years? Am I going to retire and just read a paper and sit around? That's not a biblical concept. Retirement is not in the Scripture to my knowledge. And the Lord has just been saying to me, "That would be nice. And maybe someday you'll have time to do that, but this is not what I want of you now." The family is still going through the same struggles. In fact, it's much worse now than it was then. And the culture is sinking into moral chaos. And so I want to defend righteousness in the culture. Most importantly, I want to bring people to Jesus Christ.

And so that's what God has asked me to do and I'm going to do it to the best of my ability. And I'm so glad that there's some folks out there who want to be part of what we're doing.

LuAnne Crane: Well, Ryan, I think I can hear thousands of people cheering on the other side right now.

Ryan Dobson: It's really true. When it was first announced you were leaving Focus, I just got inundated with, "No, no, no. Well, what are we going to listen to? We listen to him every day. Where's your dad going?" And I said, "No, no, listen, we're just going somewhere else. We're going to come back on." But I mean, I get constant, constant updates online and messages from people saying, "Where is he going to be? When is he going to be on?" And I think this day will be a big sigh of relief for a lot of people going, "Oh, he's back. He's back."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it'll be a great disappointment to some in the media, for sure. The way I see it, it's like getting off one bus and getting on another. God also has a purpose for what we're doing here at Family Talk and we're going to get after it. So as we start Family Talk and have been thinking and praying about this, Shirley and I have been asking the Lord to assure us that He is with us in this new venture, that He is here, that this is something that He wants us to do. And I'll tell you personally that we have expressed to the Lord that we don't want to do this if it's not something He will bless. If He is not going to go with us, we don't want to make this journey because it's frankly too very difficult. And yet since then, there have been green flags everywhere and it's been so obvious.

It's just been a dramatic confirmation that what was going on in 1977 is happening again. And that's where my confidence and that's where my encouragement and the moxie to do this comes from because we are again starting from ground zero. And if I can say it again, I don't want to get ahead of the Lord, but I don't want to get behind Him either. If the Lord is going to bless what we do here, that implies a responsibility for us. And I listed eight areas where we need to be mindful of what He would have us do. And I don't have time to go into the entire devotional, but just very quickly, the first was to be diligent in handling the details of what he's entrusted to us. There is no room for slovenliness or sloppiness in what we do here. We have to do the job with excellence.

And I've always tried to do that. Sometimes I've been successful and sometimes not, but that's been my goal and I believe we need to do it again. The second is to be frugal in handling the resources that his people give to us. I mean, the money that's contributed is what I call blood money. People who send us contributions are sacrificing to do that. No one has more money than they think they need. And to share it with us says they are trusting us to spend it wisely and to spend it very carefully. And I think we have an obligation to do that. If you're wasting paper and you're wasting pens, you're wasting somebody's money.

Ryan Dobson: I can remember the time where the televangelists were getting exposed and they were doing flyovers of homes with cars out front and boats in the back and air conditioned doghouses. And I was in your study. I was pretty young at the time and I was just kind of sitting in your couch and the TV was on that and you were kind of looking at it while working. And you turned to me and you said, "Ryan, I promise you, you will never see me on something like this. It is a sin to waste God's people's money." I never forgot that.

Dr. James Dobson: I can't believe you recall that.

Ryan Dobson: I'll never forget it because I remember thinking, "Man, these people have a lot of stuff." And you turned around and you said, "Never will I be on something like this." And I've never forgotten it. And you've lived your life that way. You've made decisions and every now and then I think, "Man, really? You're really going to let it affect you that much, but it does."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I'm not a perfect man, but accountability means a lot to me. Accountability to God, that's what I'm talking about here. We're running out of time.

LuAnne Crane: Oh man, we are. We've got to keep moving.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. Number three is to always be faithful to Scriptural principles. That's the foundation. That's the ground floor for everything we teach and everything that we believe. And one of the ways to honor biblical truth is to begin each day with a devotional time where we read a passage of Scripture and then pray for one another. And sometimes we pray for the folks who have written to us or emailed us to tell us about a difficult problem that they're facing and they ask for our prayer. And when they do, we're faithful to respond, to take that concern to the Lord. I hope we never forget that this is the essence of who we are and what we believe and what we teach. And number four is to be courageous and defending unpopular truth. We know it. We're going to be criticized. I have been for many years and it's going to continue.

People who stand up for righteousness in the culture are going to be criticized and hated, ridiculed. Many of you, speaking to members of our staff here, are going to be subjected to disparagement because you're associated with me and

with Family Talk. You just began to discuss the issue of the definition of marriage for example, you will be subjected to some pretty vicious stuff. It's going to happen. And yet Jesus said, "In this world, you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world." That's the attitude with which we have to approach what we do. We are not attempting to irritate people, but there is a standard of righteousness that we're trying to uphold. Number five, we have to be caring and loving for people that bring their needs to us. If we don't return phone calls, then somebody will say, "You're a hypocrite. You say you care for people, but you don't respond." We don't want to ignore the people who are out there who reach out to us.

Ryan Dobson: Well, a different medium. You were trying to ask me, how are we going to answer the people on Facebook? They're commenting on the things I'm writing and they're saying all these nice things. How do we give back to these people? And we want to let them know we are hearing you. We do see it and we appreciate it so much. It keeps us going every day.

LuAnne Crane: It will be a priority.

Dr. James Dobson: It keeps me awake at night. So number six is to be holy in our personal lives and worthy of representing Him. So I was trying to say to our staff that we need to be worthy of the blessing that seems to be coming upon this ministry. Number seven is to be thoughtful of one another. The Scripture says, "Behold how they loved one another." Let's don't fuss with each other. Let's don't be in conflict with each other. Let's try not to irritate each other. We're all under stress. I got to tell you, getting this ministry started is one of the toughest things I've done. And it's a whole lot more difficult than it was in 1977 because the laws have changed and because the internet and it's just more complex. And in the midst of that stress, we can't forget who we are and who we are to one another.

And number eight, remember why we are here. It is not to build an empire. It's not to aggrandize ourselves. It's not to sell books. It's not to get the acclaim that comes with doing something well. None of those things matter, but our job is to be salt and light in a dark world. Every broadcast, every word we speak is relevant to somebody out there, even if we don't know those people. And that's what we're here to do. But we've seen it happen over and over where the Lord divides the word and applies it to individual needs. I closed that devotional time with the scripture. And Ryan, I believe you've got it in front of you.

Ryan Dobson: I do.

Dr. James Dobson: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5.

Ryan Dobson: Yep. It says, "Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may be spread rapidly and be honored just as it was with you and pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men for not everyone has faith, but the Lord is faithful and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have

confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts unto God's love and Christ's perseverance." You also closed with one more.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay.

Ryan Dobson: Can I give the other one?

Dr. James Dobson: Sure.

Ryan Dobson: It's Psalm 69:6

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Ryan Dobson: And you gave this in a devotion in a tent in Northern Colorado on a hunting trip. And I heard it then and I've never forgotten it. It's Psalm 69:6 and it says, "May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me, O Lord, the Lord Almighty. May those who seek you not be put to shame because of me, oh God, of Israel." Don't let what I do mess it up for the rest of the believers.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my. Well, that's the essence of what we're going to try to do on this broadcast. And relevant to that Scripture, Ryan and LuAnne, is to ask our listeners out there to pray for us. We're ordinary people. We're not superstars. We're not perfect. We're not on a pedestal out there telling everybody else how to do it right when we make a mess out of our own lives. We are simply trying to serve the Lord. That's what He's called us to do. That's what we're going to do on this program. And I am thrilled by the opportunity to work with our team here at Family Talk. And let's see where the Lord's going to take us.

LuAnne Crane: And I know I speak for the 10 or 12 other people here. We are all committed to that Doctor down to every single person who's answering a phone, looking at a piece of mail on the website. We are pulling with you.

Dr. James Dobson: That's why we invited you to join us because I know that and that's the essence of your own passion and heart. I can hardly wait for tomorrow.

LuAnne Crane: All right Let's do.

Roger Marsh: Well, isn't it delightful to hear Dr. Dobson's voice yet again, remembering that what you just heard was the first-ever Family Talk broadcast that aired on Monday, May the 3rd, 2010, and 15 and a half years later, isn't it delightful to see how far our ministry has come since that very first program? I'm Roger Marsh, your in-studio co-host for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. And of course, Dr. Dobson went on to lead Family Talk to produce more than 4,000 radio broadcasts. He also oversaw our expansion into podcasting and into digital broadcasting. And now the ministry that is known as the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is poised to continue ministering to parents and families, to

married couples and singles, to children and grandparents well into 2026 and beyond. And your prayers and your support make this all possible.

Now, during the month of December, you heard me talk about our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection and what made this year's Best of Broadcast Collection so special, it's a six-CD collection that features 18 of the most popular programs, not only from the past 12 months, but actually going all the way back to year one, day one of the ministry of Family Talk. And the program you just heard is included in that Best of Broadcast Collection. Now, many people reached out to us during the month of December, and we're grateful to have heard from everyone who offered a gift of any amount in support of our ministry. And as our way of thanking you for that gift, we sent you a copy of our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection. Well, rest assured, we still have extra copies, and if you missed out on getting yours reserved, then go right ahead and reach out to us today. You can request a copy when you call a member of our constituent care team. That number is 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825.

Or you can go online. We have streamlined our web process for you. Now all you have to do is type in jdfi.net and you'll go right to our homepage of drjamesdobson.org. So go to jdfi.net and bookmark it either on your laptop or on your mobile device, and then you'll go right to our homepage where you can request your copy of our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection. It features among other things, the very first Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk broadcast that we aired back in May of 2010 that you just heard on today's program. It also features classic works from Dr. Dobson. His interviews with people like Joni Eareckson Tada, Victor Marx, Chuck Colson, the visit to Normandy is in there. Also, the final interview that Dr. Dobson recorded here in the Family Talk studios, as well as the last recorded memento that Dr. Dobson left for us right before he went home to be with the Lord.

So to reserve your copy of our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection, we still have a few copies left and would love to send you one if you haven't requested yours already. We'll thank you for a gift of any amount when you go to jdfi.net. That's J-D-F-I for jdfi.net. Or call a member of our constituent care team at 877-732-6825. Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for joining us today. Be sure to be with us again next time as we're going to hear another first for the James Dobson Family Talk ministries, a program you've never heard on Family Talk before. A classic look at the conversation about how babies are saved through ultrasound technology. That's coming up right here on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you can still trust, for the family you love.

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

This is Roger Marsh from Family Talk. The freedoms we enjoy today were hard-won by those who came before us, and it's up to all of us to protect them. Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we're committed to defending religious liberty and the timeless values that shaped our nation. Through our broadcasts, articles, and resources, we equip you to stand for godly principles in

your own community. So thank you for partnering with us to protect faith, family, and freedom for future generations.