



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** The Measure of a Man – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Gene Getz

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Dr. Gene Getz: As men, we need accountability. We need encouragement, and we need to model for our sons and daughters what it means to be a godly man. And wherever we are in process, that's where we got to begin and move forward in our lives.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk with psychologist and best-selling author Dr. James Dobson. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we're continuing our conversation with Dr. Gene Getz. His landmark book, *The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man* has inspired readers worldwide since 1974. That's right. The 50th anniversary of that book was last year.

Dr. Getz founded the Fellowship Bible Church movement after spending two decades as a professor at Moody Bible Institute and Dallas Theological Seminary. He's the author of more than 60 books and hosted the Daily Renewal Radio program for 24 years. His crowning achievement, the Life Essential Study Bible features 1,500 principles to live by and over 250 hours of video teaching, making Scripture accessible for a new generation.

Last time on the program, Dr. Dobson and Dr. Getz began discussing what it means to be a godly man. And today we'll dive deeper into that conversation here on this special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Gene, I loved our time together yesterday. We've got so much in common, but I want to go back to something you said. You brought it up right at the end of the program last time, that as you look back on all your accomplishments and the things that the Lord has done through you, that the one thing that you wish you could have done better is spend more time at home.

Dr. Gene Getz: You're right.

Dr. James Dobson: I don't know very many people who are very successful in life, men in particular who don't feel that way. Billy Graham feels that way. Cliff Barrows told me he felt that way. Other great leaders in the church regret the fact that they let these years, they get away so quickly when your children are around your feet

and then you look back and say, "Man, as much as what I did was important and God led me to do it, I overdid it." Does that summarize what you were saying?

Dr. Gene Getz:

Yes, I think so. And I am just so thankful, Jim, for a wife, Elaine, love you. You're the best thing ever came into my life. But when I was working, for example, on that Ph.D. program, I was teaching at Moody and I was going out summers. I wrote a very lengthy dissertation, took me six years to do it, and that was every spare moment I had I was working on that. And Elaine would take those children and she would go to the parks and she'd do things. And even on 4th of Julys that I should have been out there, I was over in the office working on some stuff.

But she always interpreted my heart and my schedule. Doesn't excuse it, but she'd interpret that to the children. Dad wants to be here, but he can. And I'm so thankful for that. But there came a point in time where I had to come to grips, Jim, with even my relationship with Elaine because when we went to Dallas after being at Moody, boy, I just dug in and started over down there, boy, just a heavy schedule now teaching at the graduate level.

And I woke up one morning to go to work and to teach, and Elaine's lying in bed and she said, "Gene, I can't go on this way." She said, "I've been waiting all this time for you to be freed up." And she teases me. "You would say 'when then, when then.'" But she said, "It's not coming." And I faced the fact that she was really depressed about that. And boy, it got my attention. And I called the seminary and canceled all four classes that day. And I think that was the first time I've ever canceled any ministry like that. I said, I've got an emergency, I can't be there. And I spent that day listening to her feelings. And as a result of that, we began to work through some literature just learning how to communicate, learning how to share my understanding, prioritizing. And that was a great change point in my life and I'm so thankful for that moment.

Dr. James Dobson:

You just described the story of my life. I was a student, a graduate school like you. I was working on a Ph.D. It took the measure of me, talk about *The Measure of a Man*, which is the book you wrote, the pressures associated with that took to measure me. When I graduated, when I got the Ph.D., the world opened up to me. I mean all kind of things that it would sound like I'm bragging to tell you about it, but national radio and national television, my books were all best-sellers, *Dare to Discipline* was my first book and it sold 4 million copies. And I was running, man, I was running.

And I went 17 nights without being home on one occasion. And my daughter was three years old and my son was not yet born. And my dad, my good godly dad, who has always been a of righteousness for me. And he saw it happening and he wrote me a letter to change my life and he said, "I'm proud of what you're doing and it's wonderful to see the way God's using you. But I'll tell you that when you sit where I am today and you look back, all these accomplishments that mean so much to you today are going to be pale and washed out if you lose your kids. And I fear that your priorities are such that you're not giving the time necessary to your daughter who's growing up," this is

a quote "in a world much farther gone into moral decline than the world into which you were born."

And he said, "I have observed that in this kind of world that if you don't have time to pray for your kids, you run the risk of losing them."

Dr. Gene Getz: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Boy, it shook me, Gene, I could cry about it today. It shook me and it led to my leaving USC School of Medicine and a plumb of a position. I was doing research, I was loving it, but I was away from home too much. And we were doing this research in 15 major hospitals. I had to visit them twice a year. It just was not conducive to what I needed to do, and I walked out of there and that's why I started a radio program so I could stay home, but it was the same thing. But I almost made the biggest mistake of my life, but I didn't.

Dr. Gene Getz: We all need that. And when I think of Elaine and her faithfulness and her support and her encouragement behind the scenes, and I honor her as a pastor's wife because in all the pastoral situations, I don't ever remember her being criticized once. That's the kind of wise woman she was. But not too long ago, we were at breakfast and she was sharing some prayer needs and I was in a hurry to get to the office and she looked at me and she said, "Gene, I sense lately that you're not prioritizing prayer." And boy, I looked at her the first thought, I wrote a book on prayer. I said, "You're right." And I needed that because I was so busy doing... This had just happened six months ago.

Dr. James Dobson: I thank God for a woman like that. Shirley never let me lose sight of the priorities. She didn't nag me about it, but it was always there.

Dr. Gene Getz: God knew what He was doing when He said to Adam, you need somebody to help you.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that spelled in your book, *The Measure of a Man*?

Dr. Gene Getz: We sure talk a lot about that, particularly the chapter "Fathering God's Way." That's a powerful concept because Paul said, "If you can't manage your own family, how can you take care of the church of God?" That should be a priority. And so we deal with that and practical suggestions.

Dr. James Dobson: This book was published 42 years ago.

Dr. Gene Getz: At least.

James Dobson: And more than a million copies have sold. It's called *The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man*. And it's obviously become a classic best-seller. And I ask you to in all humility, explain what the explanation of this longevity is. Why is this book still out there on the bookshelves today?

Dr. Gene Getz: Well, as I said yesterday, I borrowed the outline from the Apostle Paul. Of course we know where he got it directly from the Holy Spirit, both in his letter to Timothy and in his letter to Titus.

James Dobson: Why don't you share those Scriptures and the specific attributes that you found in the Scripture and then wrote in the book *The Measure of a Man*?

Dr. Gene Getz: Well, let me just give you the 15 from 1 Timothy and there in Titus there are more. But above reproach, a man of good reputation. The husband and one wife, which really means morally pure. Self-controlled, which means balanced in words and actions. Sensible. Wise and humble. Respectable means a good role model. Hospitable, unselfish, generous. Able to teach, a capacity to communicate sensitively, not addicted to wine. That means really not addicted to any substance. Not a bully, not abusive, psychologically or physically.

Gentle, sensitive, loving, kind, not quarrelsome, not argumentative and divisive. Not greedy, which means not materialistic. Manages his own household competently, in other words, a good husband and a father. And of course if you're going to be a spiritual leader, not a new convert, because you can be lifted up in pride, but Satan will attack you. And then Paul says a good reputation among outsiders and others with non-Christians.

Dr. James Dobson: That's a boatload there.

Dr. Gene Getz: Those are 15 chapters. And then in Titus, you have some repetition, but you have some unique ones. And I pulled out five more from Titus to end the list. So they're a total of 20.

Dr. James Dobson: And you wrote a book right out of that?

Dr. Gene Getz: That's right. And it grew out of a study I had with a group of guys where we took one of these a week and we shared the responsibility. I led the first study, we looked at the Scriptures, then we discussed how we could apply it, and then other men led. And I kind of folded into the group even though I was their lead pastor, started taking notes. And that's when Bill Gregg walked into my office from Gospel Light. I showed him the outline and I showed him the notes I was taking. And that's when he said, "Gene, I want this as a book." I had no idea it would become a book. And then that's how I wrote *The Measure of a Man*.

Dr. James Dobson: Gene, none of us is perfect, not one of us. Only Jesus is perfect.

Dr. Gene Getz: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: And that list is formidable.

Dr. Gene Getz: It is formidable.

James Dobson: What are the advantages of doing the best you can to follow that path?

Dr. Gene Getz: Well, it's a process. And obviously one of the things, and I've gone over this list with many, many men, and one of the things I've said, don't be discouraged. Don't allow yourself to get down on yourself. I've had guys come up and say, "I'm a leader in the church, I think I ought to resign." And I've said, "Now wait a minute. Maybe you shouldn't resign. Maybe you should change. Let's take a look at where you are."

But when you look at this list though, Jim, you could pretty much give a yes or no, we're somewhere in process. But for example, if I say, "Do you have a good reputation?" Well, yes or no, you have a good reputation. Is there anything you'd like to do to build it? Are you morally pure? Well, I'm tempted, but I'm true to my wife. I've never cheated on her. Have I been tempted? Absolutely. But I want to be morally pure. That's my goal.

Are you self-controlled or temperate is another word that is used there? Does that mean are you balanced? Do you go on tangents? Do you keep your eyes on Jesus? Where are you in that process? Are you respectable? Respectable, I love that word by the way, in the Greek it's kosmias, from which we get our English word cosmetics and we use cosmetics to make ourselves look good. Well, the word kosmias means that our lives should be cosmetics to the gospel.

And so this is a lifetime process. Almost every one of these are goals you work at until Jesus takes us home. But in the meantime, we are to be transformed and not conform the world, but transformed into the image of Jesus. So this is a profile of Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: And we also have to understand that you don't do this alone.

Dr. Gene Getz: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: You do this in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Gene Getz: And with other members of the body. Because it's really interesting because in Ephesians 4, where Paul says, "God has gifted the church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, equipped the saints to do the work of the ministry, until we all come to the unity of faith, all and measure up to the stature of the fullness of Christ." And the word measure is used right there, we're to measure up as a body and as individuals. And by the way, the word for measure in Greek is metron from which we get metronome in music standard. And so Jesus Christ is our standard. And, through the power of the spirit of God and encouragement from the body of Christ, as Paul said, every joint supplying, every part doing its work, the body builds itself up in love. So it is a corporate experience.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you worry about where Western men are today? I mean, you and I have lived long enough to see culture ebb and flow and answering my own question, it feels to me like a lot of men are absolutely lost.

Dr. Gene Getz: It's going down a lot of it. Well, it's been around for centuries. Imagine these guys converted out of their heathen lifestyles and they're visiting prostitutes and they got slave girls in the back room. And yet these men eventually began to follow Jesus. It is incredible what Christ can do.

And I sometimes say, if these men could be converted out of that culture back there in the first century, can't we stay out of it. One of the greatest challenges today for men is pornography. It is prevalent, and the statistics are scary. I think about my grandsons and their cell phones.

Dr. James Dobson: It's everywhere.

Dr. Gene Getz: It's everywhere. And women are getting pulled into it. And some of the comments that are being made on public television right now by women is absolutely incredible. And here are my grandsons hearing this. Well, what's the hope? It's obviously in Jesus Christ, it's in our families. It's modeling godliness. The same power that existed in the first century exists today. Jesus is in our life, but as men, we need accountability. We need encouragement, and we need to model for our sons and daughters what it means to be a godly man.

And wherever we are in process, that's where we got to begin and move forward in our lives step by step. I often say, in fact, at the end of the book, I have a scale of these qualities, and I end up in my last video and I say, "Guys, as you look back over these, pick one or two where you want to improve." And I find if you can get a guy improving in one area, just one area, it spills over and encourages him, because these are all interrelated concepts really in terms of this profile maturity.

Dr. James Dobson: One of the cultural characteristics that gives me pause has to do with this bisexual trend, what the President of the United States has done to us by telling parents and telling the school superintendents that we are really not masculine and feminine. We're not male and female. We're sort of a blend of both, and therefore we ought to deny that there is a difference, that has the power to destroy the family in and of itself.

Dr. Gene Getz: Well, absolutely, and if you look at Romans 1, and if you go all the way back to the Old Testament statements by God himself, that basically God's design for man is male and female. And when you see the departure from that is in Romans 1, it's a departure from the design of God, and it becomes a learned experience, an experience that becomes preferential.

Now, I think there are exceptions. I think there are biological situations that are really difficult to understand and difficult to deal with. But by and large, if you

start teaching that people are born with that trend and you encourage experimentation with that trend when they're very small, you're going to create preferences and it's going to lead to sexual deviation.

And I think we have to deal with that. How does a church deal with it? Well come as you are, but be transformed. Be changed. Here's a place where you can come, feel safe, but we're going to come to know Christ and change and we'll help you to change. We've got to deal with that within our churches.

Dr. James Dobson: Can we join together and warn parents not to be carried along by this river of culture, especially as regard to this bisexuality and the effort to change our kids from what they're born to be, to what somebody else thinks they should be?

Dr. Gene Getz: Count me in on that one.

Dr. James Dobson: The courts are now deciding against parents in regard to their own children. I just read that this weekend. And we must resist it with everything we've got. Now, I'm not referring to those who are genetically wired differently, and in those cases-

Dr. Gene Getz: There are situations like that.

Dr. James Dobson: We must be compassionate and caring. But trying to reorder the whole culture is dangerous and is wicked.

Dr. Gene Getz: Absolutely. It's a violation of the will of God. But, Jim, I keep coming back to an encouraging thought to me, and it's true. I think from Scripture, the darker it gets, the brighter our light can shine. If indeed we take seriously what God can do in our lives, in our marriages, in our families, we don't have to succumb to this. And as I said earlier, if the New Testament Christians could come out of a culture that was totally degenerate, I mean absolutely, totally degenerate, can't we stay out of it?

Yes, we can. Look at the resources we have not only in the power of God, the armor of God, the Word of God, but the churches that we have, the Christians around us. We've just got to discipline ourselves as husbands and fathers to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ and be the men in this case, the men that God wants us to be. And with God's help, we can be those men.

Dr. James Dobson: This book, *The Measure of a Man* would be a great tool for a pastor to preach on, wouldn't it?

Dr. Gene Getz: Yes, I think so. I've preached on these, yes. And by the way, Jim, almost every one of these qualities except two, are repeated for women in the New Testament.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that right?

Dr. Gene Getz: The only two that are different are a husband of one wife, but in another place it says, a woman should be a woman of one man, and the other one is a father who manages well as household, but in another place it says, a woman should be a good manager or a household. So they all apply to women as well as men.

James Dobson: Well, then you ought to rename it the Measure of a Man and a Woman.

Dr. Gene Getz: Well, my wife and I did write a book called *The Measure of Woman*. It's still in print.

James Dobson: You also did a similar book with your son, didn't you?

Dr. Gene Getz: Yeah. *The Measure of a Young Man*. That's right. That's Paul's instructions to 1 Timothy 4:12, I believe it is. "Don't let anyone look down on you because you're young, but be an example in faith and purity and love" and so forth. We built a little book on that one too, but the one on women, we took Titus 2, the older women, and it lists the characteristics to teach the younger women, and there are 12 characteristics there that we develop uniquely for women.

James Dobson: We've been talking to Dr. Gene Getz, and he is the author of more than 60 books. Are a lot of those books still available today?

Dr. Gene Getz: Quite a few are, yes. I don't think I've caught up with you though, Jim,

James Dobson: *The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man*. Gene it's been great having you here these two days. You're a man of God, a man that I respect very highly, and I'm glad to call you my friend.

Dr. Gene Getz: Thank you, Jim. It's mutual.

James Dobson: Let's do it again.

Gene Getz: Thanks.

Roger Marsh: Well, you've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and I hope you've been enjoying this meaningful conversation featuring Dr. Dobson and his longtime friend Dr. Gene Getz, as they shared their insights on God's blueprint for masculinity.

Now, Dr. Getz offered powerful reminders about making family time and prayer our priorities, while also sharing the story behind his influential book, *The Measure of a Man*. By the way, that book celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, and Dr. Getz is still going and growing strong at 92 years young. By the way, if you'd like to learn more about Dr. Gene Getz's work, including his Life Essential Study Bible, visit [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk), that's also where you'll find complete program information, including part one of this interview as well.



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Announcer:

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