



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Saving My Assassin – Part 1

Guest(s): Virginia Prodan

Air Date: November 6, 2024

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

- 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.
- Virginia Prodan: According to the laws, yes, you were allowed to have a Bible. But the government will lie and say to Romanian people because the law was not published, will say to Romanian people you cannot have the Bible, and I'm going to jail you for that.
- Roger Marsh: What would you do if it were illegal for you to own a Bible? Would you risk it? Would you stand up publicly for your faith? I'm Roger Marsh, and our guest today on Family Talk did just that and so much more. Here's your host, psychologist and author Dr. James Dobson to tell you more about it.
- Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone and welcome to Family Talk. I'm your host, Dr. James Dobson. And with me in the studio today is an amazing woman with an incredible story to tell. Her name is Virginia Prodan, and she was born in communist Romania under a brutal rule of Nicolae Ceaușescu. And she grew up with a strong desire for discovering and revealing truth. And as a matter of fact, I have her bio here in front of me. I'm not going to read it all, but she was charged with treason. She was kidnapped, beaten, tortured, placed under a house arrest, and came within seconds of her enemies killing her. We're going to hear the details of that. Virginia, you also grew up in an unstable family, didn't you? In Romania?
- Virginia Prodan: Yes.
- Dr. James Dobson: All right, let's start with the very beginning. Tell us about your childhood and what you experienced.
- Virginia Prodan: My childhood was really special because I always felt like I didn't belong because of my red hair, and freckles and the color of my skin that was very white compared with the family I grew up.
- Dr. James Dobson: Everybody else was olive colored?

Virginia Prodan: Olive skin and black hair. But not only that, but I was kept in the house and if I was allowed outside, I had to cover my hair. I was told all the time that I don't belong to that family and they wanted to find someone who will adopt me. I was told many times growing up that I was there only to serve them and that was the negative part. But the positive part is that out of that pain, God helped me to put on my heart the desire to find the truth about who I was.

Dr. James Dobson: How early do you remember that rejection?

Virginia Prodan: I believe that I was six, because around seven years old I was told that I have to go out of the family and start working.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever ask who your parents were, biological parents?

Virginia Prodan: No, because I live in a totalitarian regime kind of country.

Dr. James Dobson: So you wouldn't dare.

Virginia Prodan: I will not dare to ask those questions. They would have brought more punishment for me, so I had to-

Dr. James Dobson: Just for asking who am I?

Virginia Prodan: Yes. Well, you have to know and understand that I grew up in a communist country. I call the communist country the land of lies and a prison land where truth was nowhere to be found and everything was controlled by the government. And every question that you have about something that the government will do, it will be considered an anti-government statement and people will lose their job or will go to jail. Whatever the government establishes will reflect in the family. So the family-

Dr. James Dobson: It was absolutely brutal, wasn't it?

Virginia Prodan: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: And based on lies.

Virginia Prodan: Based on lies, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: How long was he dictator?

Virginia Prodan: He was dictator from 1965 to 1989.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, when he was executed.

Virginia Prodan: He was executed at Christmastime

Dr. James Dobson: By the people,

Virginia Prodan: By his own people.

Dr. James Dobson: They finally got enough.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, after so many years,

Dr. James Dobson: I have heard by the late Charles Colson who was there and other people that people of faith really played a role in bringing him down.

Virginia Prodan: Yes. First of all, if you are an active Christian, and after I accepted Christ, I was a very active Christian because I defended Christians and human rights cases against the government. And the government did not like Christians because when you're a Christian, you worship God. He required us to worship him.

Dr. James Dobson: And that was against the law?

Virginia Prodan: That was against the law, yes. And you had to make a choice and you had to pay for that. You go to church and you pay for going to church and not worshipping the dictator. I did more than that. I took him to court for persecuting churches and Christians. And that was something that he never expected for a tiny little woman like me. But that's what God does.

Dr. James Dobson: And you have become a lawyer, so that's what you mean by taking him to court. But we're way ahead. Let's go back now. You're in your elementary school years, what happened then?

Virginia Prodan: Well, like I said, I watched my parents at home being very obedient to the government outside and doing whatever was required. But inside of home I watched them several times whispering what they really thought about the government. And I was shocked as a kid, six, seven years old. And somewhere in my heart I said, I don't want to live this kind of life. And also I watched our family reunions having several lawyers coming to our family reunions, and some of my relatives will go and ask questions. And in my mind as a kid, I worked like this, well, I don't want to live like my parents. But those lawyers looked like they know the answer to some questions. So I decided I'm going to go to law school, I'm going to find out the truth and I'm going to speak up for the truth. But God had a better plan than this one.

Dr. James Dobson: You were a very good student, weren't you?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, because I never, never accepted my circumstances. I did not know the Lord, but I believe He put in my heart that I can rise above the circumstances.

Dr. James Dobson: What was your relationship with your siblings?

Virginia Prodan: They had power over me no matter the age they were, younger or older. I was a servant. I had to serve them and I never had the chance to question. If I questioned, I would have been punished.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you guess that you were adopted?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, somewhere in my heart.

Dr. James Dobson: What color hair did your parents have?

Virginia Prodan: Brown hair.

Dr. James Dobson: Both of them.

Virginia Prodan: Both of them, yeah. There was no person in the town where I live that had...

Dr. James Dobson: You know genetically that can't happen.

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You can't have a redheaded child from dark skin and dark hair?

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: But you didn't know that then?

Virginia Prodan: No, I did not know.

Dr. James Dobson: You just felt different.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, and I wanted so much to find the truth about myself. I wanted that.

Dr. James Dobson: Where did you begin to get information that maybe you were adopted and maybe you didn't belong in that family in that sense?

Virginia Prodan: Some people would say different things behind my back and I heard them. But somewhere deep in my heart, and like I said, even my mom, the parents that I grew up with for 18 years there, especially the mother, Elena, she told me several times that I don't belong, that I was there to serve them. What is something more clear than that you can have?

Dr. James Dobson: How did you cope with that as a little girl saying essentially, you're not loved, you don't belong here, you're here for our convenience and you really don't even belong in this family? What'd that do to you?

Virginia Prodan: It was painful, but I learned to read and connect and make friends out of characters in the book, Jane Eyre and other characters. And think about if they

were able to be victorious in their lives, I can be victorious. And I found role models.

Dr. James Dobson: So you did it with reading?

Virginia Prodan: Reading, yes. And dreaming even waking in the morning at seven o'clock, going to work. And having maybe a bad day before but seeing the sun shining and warming my body. I was looking up and saying, there is someone somewhere that loves me. And that was God, but I had no clue at that time.

Dr. James Dobson: You were reaching for Him and didn't know who He was.

Virginia Prodan: No. I did not know.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you know what's really interesting, Virginia? He knew you and was reaching for you at the same time. There's no way you would be sitting in that chair today with a testimony on your lips, given those circumstances, if the Lord had not reached out to you.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, He was always there for me. I just did not know Him.

Dr. James Dobson: After elementary school, you went on to high school and then you had to take tests to see if you could go to college. And you passed them.

Virginia Prodan: But it was more than that because on the communist or socialist regime, you do not decide your career. The government decides for you. And in order to be admitted to take the test for law school, my political file had to pass the government admission step.

Dr. James Dobson: There is no freedom there.

Virginia Prodan: No freedom. And from the time that you are born in communist or socialist to the time that you die, you have a secret file that the communist keeps struck on you. And in that file-

Dr. James Dobson: Is that still true?

Virginia Prodan: It is in every single country. Romania is not communist now anymore, but in every single country it is. And if we adopt this kind of system in America, that's what's going to happen to us.

Dr. James Dobson: We're toying with it, with socialism.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, we are. This is what I'm saying, we better pay attention to that and not doing-

Dr. James Dobson: Well, how did they come to approve you for law school after you graduate from college?

Virginia Prodan: Well, like I said, first the political file had to be accepted by the secret police. Inside there were three questions. First, my parents were never against the communists and were never arrested. My parents never spoke up against the communist system. And the third, my parents were not Christians, so I passed.

Dr. James Dobson: So Christianity was specifically outlawed?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, and the reason is because after you graduate from law school, you'll become the attorney general, the ambassador, the judge, the Supreme Court judge or attorney. And you, according to the communist system, you were supposed to be loyal to the government and fight against the people of Romania. I had no clue at that time. But that was the reason why the communist system had such a strict procedure for admission.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, they don't want anybody to get professional credentials who will then use that skill and that position in order to oppose the government.

Virginia Prodan: That's true. But they didn't know that God had another plan for me and my life.

Dr. James Dobson: Where did you become aware of that plan?

Virginia Prodan: Well, after years of finishing law school, I finished law school. I started to practice as a lawyer, and I was so full of enthusiasm and thinking every single morning today, everything that I read and learned in those law books I'm going to practice and I'm going to touch the truth. And after a few years, I came to my office and I said to my secretary, "I don't want to be a lawyer. I cannot find the truth. All my research is for nothing." And she looked up at me and-

Dr. James Dobson: Had you already started law school.

Virginia Prodan: I was done with law school and I was practicing.

Dr. James Dobson: And so your law professors did not tell you the truth. You knew they were lying to you.

Virginia Prodan: They were telling me what the law is, what you have to do and everything. But none of the law books told me about the truth, who the truth is.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever hear the word freedom?

Virginia Prodan: Not in Romania. The freedom was for the government and the secret police. That was their freedom to do whatever they wanted.

Dr. James Dobson: Ever heard the word liberty in reference to you?

Virginia Prodan: Not in reference to me or to the people of Romania.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you ever long for it?

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever long to make your own decisions and not be forced into what the government would've?

Virginia Prodan: That was why I went to law school. That was why I was searching for the truth, because that was my desire.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you know that many people were murdered by that regime?

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Was that common knowledge?

Virginia Prodan: It was very common knowledge. My next door neighbor, my classmates, just for saying that the price of the milk increased or some other small complaint, they disappear. I was very aware of that, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: So what they told you is that they'd gone to prison?

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: But in fact they never came back.

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: What an oppressive regime?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, that's communist. That's socialism.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. So you graduated from law school and you didn't like what you had heard. You didn't like what the government was doing, and yet you've got to practice within that system. You can't get up and talk about Christ, right?

Virginia Prodan: No, I didn't know at that time Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. And even if you knew Him, you couldn't tell it, right?

Virginia Prodan: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Dr. James Dobson: What next? You're roadblocked, so to speak.

Virginia Prodan: Like I said, every single day I was hoping that there will be the day when I will meet the truth face to face. I will touch it. Until one day after few years of practicing, I came to my office and I said, I don't want to be a lawyer. And my secretary, I said, "I don't want to be a lawyer because I can find the truth." My secretary looked at me like, "Oh, welcome to reality. Where have you been? You have a client in your office, take his file." So I went into my office and indeed it was a client there. I worked with him for at least a year, and he was one of those clients that really troubled me. In a land of hopelessness, he was always full of hope. When things around were devastating, he was joyful. He troubled me, but I was so busy I didn't have time to stop and ask.

But that day, inside of my mind I was so troubled, where is the truth? And while he was talking I just look at him and I pointed to him and I said, "I want to have in my life what you have in your life, peace, joy that you have." And he said, "Do you go to church?" And in my mind, I was thinking, "Oh brother, what in the world going to church has to do and finding the truth?" But I was polite and I respond, "Yes, at Christmas and Easter, it's a custom." But he insisted, "Would you like to go to my church?" And I said, "Yes." So he wrote the streets and address of the church. And the next Sunday I was at church. And I walk in the church and the choir was singing, sinner come home.

I heard come home sinner, did not have any knowledge. I didn't know what sinner was, but it was welcoming. I stood with my girls on the right side of the church, with other ladies. And the pastor came, opened the Bible and said, "I am the truth, the way and life." And I was glued.

Dr. James Dobson: You know that blesses me.

Virginia Prodan: Yes. And I was thinking finally somebody said He's the truth. And the pastor spoke to me, not to anyone, to me. And that day I found the truth, and that changed my life forever.

Dr. James Dobson: But you didn't have a Bible?

Virginia Prodan: No, I didn't have-

Dr. James Dobson: So you hadn't read the word?

Virginia Prodan: No. In fact, when I heard the word I am the truth and the life, I believed that. I even said loud. What? And the lady beside me put the Bible on my lap and showed me the Bible.

Dr. James Dobson: Was that legal?

Virginia Prodan: It was risky. It was legal to have the Bible in the church, but the communist government works in many deceitful ways. I will explain later.

Dr. James Dobson: Would they allow you to have a Bible at home?

Virginia Prodan: According to the laws, yes, you were allowed to have a Bible. But the government will lie and say to Romanian people because the law was not published, you cannot have the Bible, and I'm going to jail you for that. That's the way the system-

Dr. James Dobson: What'd you do with the Bible that the woman next to you put in your lap?

Virginia Prodan: I looked at the Bible and-

Dr. James Dobson: You brought it home?

Virginia Prodan: No, that day I accepted Christ and the pastor invited me in his office and he gave me a Bible. So I took the Bible home because I wanted to read, because I was thinking finally after years of my search, I know the truth. I want to know what's in this book. So I brought it home. Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that incredible? Looking back on it, can you believe what happened and how you got that truth almost incidentally from a client who invited you to come to church?

Virginia Prodan: Yeah, but God put that fire from the time that I was six years old.

Dr. James Dobson: We have a phrase that we use in the West and in other places around the world called repentance. Do you know what repentance is?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, when you admit that you are a sinner.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Virginia Prodan: You ask the Lord for forgiveness and you accept, Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and you live your life walking with Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you get that? Did you understand that?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, I understood perfectly from a pastor that later on I realized that he was not even formally educated like we educate. He educated himself and others because it was illegal under Communists to be a pastor.

Dr. James Dobson: Have you ever heard the word contrite?

Virginia Prodan: Mm-hmm. That you feel sorry.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, for-

Dr. James Dobson: Broken?

Virginia Prodan: Broken, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Awareness of sin and a turning away from it.

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You experienced all that as this young girl who had really never had much exposure.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, I had. But not only that, the church trained me for six months in who God is and who I am.

Dr. James Dobson: So what would you do in addition to Sunday morning? Did you go to classes?

Virginia Prodan: No, we didn't have classes. We didn't have Word or things that we have here.

Dr. James Dobson: No written material?

Virginia Prodan: No, there're no written material because the government will confiscate. I will just talk with the pastor, and the pastor will ask me questions and the pastor will respond to me. I will ask, how do I know that God hears my prayers? How do I know that I'm forgiven and so forth? So for six months, he really trained me. And he was so important for the job that I had to do, and for the pressure from the government to be under surveillance daily interrogating.

Dr. James Dobson: He had never been to seminary.

Virginia Prodan: He had never been to seminary, no.

Dr. James Dobson: And probably didn't have many theological books.

Virginia Prodan: Yeah, he did not. But he had-

Dr. James Dobson: But he got it. He understood it and conveyed it to you.

Virginia Prodan: Yes, he knew how to do it.

Dr. James Dobson: Many people scoff at Christians and say, "You are just doing what you were taught as a child. You were raised in a certain church, and therefore that's what you are." You didn't have any of those advantages and none of the kind of training that we give to children of Christians here in this country. You found it out almost incidentally, but the Lord put it in your hands.

Virginia Prodan: Yes. And you know what? Later on, I realized that this pastor because he didn't have training, many times he would make grammar mistakes and everything. When I accepted Christ, I did not hear any of those mistakes.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that right?

Virginia Prodan: The gospel was so clear. And then later on, even with his mistake, I had so much admiration like he was opening Heaven for me. Those grammar mistakes did not count for me. I was just so happy to spend time with him and other people from the church to teach me what they were supposed to teach me about Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: Virginia, we're out of time but we're going to talk to you again next time. And I should have said earlier, but I'll say it now, this is written in a book called *Saving My Assassin*. It's published by Tyndale. And you have laid all this out there in addition to what happened next, which we're going to talk about next time. Do you know what you do to me? You bless my life.

Virginia Prodan: Oh, thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: And I'm sure there are many other people listening to you today who have been blessed by what you've had to say, because you really do love the Lord, don't you?

Virginia Prodan: Yes, with all my heart. I walk with Him and I talk with Him like I talk with you every day. He is real to me more than I'm real to you.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, next time, I want you to explain to those who don't know Him and haven't experienced what you've experienced, I want you to tell them how they can find it too. Would you do that?

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: It's our secret.

Virginia Prodan: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Next time.

Virginia Prodan: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Well, friend, if you would like more information on how you can pray to receive Christ as your Lord and Savior, contact our Family Talk customer care team right now at 877-732-6825. A member of our staff will be happy to pray with and for you. Again, that's 877-732-6825. Our guest today here on Family Talk has been Virginia Prodan. She's the author of a book called *Saving My Assassin*, the remarkable story about how an assassin broke into her office, threatened to kill her, and she preached the gospel to him and he prayed to receive Christ. It's a

powerful story you won't be able to put down. You can find out how to get a copy of this book when you go to our web page at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for tuning into Family Talk today. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for part two of Dr. James Dobson's powerful conversation with Virginia Prodan, that's coming up here tomorrow right here on Family Talk.

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