



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Stepping Away from the Common Life – Part 2

Guest(s): Tony Dungy

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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 Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. In Proverbs 16 verse three, we read, "Commit to the Lord, whatever you do, and He will establish your plans." And ever since he was a young man, our guest today here on Dr. Dobson's Family Talk has been trying to live by the words of that proverb. Today you'll hear the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's encouraging conversation with beloved retired pro football coach, Tony Dungy. Tony Dungy is a *New York Times* best-selling author and former NFL head coach for both the Indianapolis Colts and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In 2007, he became the first African-American coach to lead his team to a Super Bowl victory. Then in 2016, Coach Dungy was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Tony Dungy is widely considered by NFL players, both current and retired as one of the most knowledgeable, well-liked and respected coaches to ever walk the sidelines. Outside of football, Coach Dungy is heavily involved in numerous organizations including the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, All Pro Dad and the Prison Crusade Ministry. On today's edition of Family Talk, Dr. Dobson and Tony Dungy will discuss what it really means to be a man, and what true biblical masculinity looks like. You'll definitely want to listen closely to what they have to say about those topics. So let's go there right now.
- Dr. James Dobson: We had a great visit with Tony Dungy on our last broadcast. He's a man that I have great admiration for. He's a gentleman and a great role model for men. He's written a new book now called *Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance*, and we're going to talk about what it means to take an uncommon path through life with our visit today. Tony was the head coach of the Indianapolis Colts for a number of years. They won the Super Bowl in 2007 and in fact, Tony was here shortly after that. And upon his retirement, he was the winningest coach in the team's history and he was a very successful coach in Tampa Bay before that. His teams almost always reached the playoffs. Well, coach, we're delighted to have you back and we talked quite a bit almost through the whole program last time about football because I'm kind of a rabid....
- Tony Dungy: You like football

Dr. James Dobson: Football fan, and the teams that you fielded in the last few years there in Indianapolis are just models of how I think the game ought to be played. But let's turn the corner and talk today a little bit about your family and about your father. You talk a lot about your dad in here and what he did for you. What was his profession and how was that impact made?

Tony Dungy: My dad was a school teacher and he taught actually junior college science and he was a tremendous man.

Dr. James Dobson: It was physiology.

Tony Dungy: Physiology. He had a Ph.D., but he never introduced himself as Dr. Dungy. Most people that met him, Lovey Smith, the coach of the Bears knew him for eight years and he said, I never knew your dad had a Ph.D., but he would just come in and have conversations because he enjoyed people, but he was special. And he told me early on that his joy was seeing students do well. And I always, as I was growing up, I knew I wanted to be in some profession that helped people because that's what I saw my dad do. He started out teaching in the separate but equal in the early 1950s. So he taught in segregated schools and his motto was that you don't worry about the problem so much as you were about the solution. And he was just a great role model. And I learned stuff from him very early on. And when I was 48 years old coaching for the Colts, I would still ask him questions about, Hey, this situation, how would you handle it? What do you think?

Dr. James Dobson: He has gone on to be with the Lord? Was he a Christian?

Tony Dungy: Passed away from leukemia. It was just kind of unbelievable circumstance where healthy 78 years old swimming six miles a day and just the Lord let me know that you can't take anything for granted. Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: But he did have a deep committed faith.

Tony Dungy: Yes. Yeah. Actually his dad was the minister in our family.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that right?

Tony Dungy: Yeah, my grandfather. And that's where I kind of got my background from. My grandfather was the Baptist minister and my mom ended up teaching Sunday school.

Dr. James Dobson: What kind of mother was she?

Tony Dungy: My mother was great. She was a teacher also and she taught public speaking and Shakespeare and they were elective courses, so anybody in the school system could have Mrs. Dungy if they wanted to. And I still get letters from people that say, I had your mom for public speaking and if I hadn't had her in

10th grade, I wouldn't be at the job I'm at now standing up in front of people and things. She had a tremendous impact on her students. She was an encourager. She was very, very special.

Dr. James Dobson: How many children were there?

Tony Dungy: There were four children. My oldest sister is a nurse and then I have younger brother and sister who are twins. My younger sister's a doctor who does high risk pregnancies and my younger brother's dentist. So they all kind of took the science background from my dad.

Dr. James Dobson: There was a boy? One boy. Did he play football?

Tony Dungy: Yeah, one younger brother. He did. He played football, enjoyed it, but his passion again was helping people and he ended up going on to become a dentist and is fabulous.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you a superstar in high school?

Tony Dungy: Other people would say that, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You're too humble to admit it.

Tony Dungy: As a matter of fact, I grew up in Michigan and I was recruited by your favorite school, USC, so...

Dr. James Dobson: That's the only thing you've said so far, I disagree with. You didn't take it. I did not. You had an opportunity to be a Trojan.

Tony Dungy: I had a chance to be a Trojan.

Dr. James Dobson: You went to Minnesota?

Tony Dungy: I went to Minnesota.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my, I wish I could have talked to you.

Tony Dungy: Well, it's a different era now. You can get back and forth a lot. The West Coast seemed so far at that time, but Coach McKay was an icon at the time and they were winning championships and I had fantasies of going there, but ended up staying a little closer to home.

Dr. James Dobson: So the character that you admire, so and others really began at home in what you were taught and the modeling of your parents?

Tony Dungy: It really did. And I think the biggest blessing that the Lord gave me was those two parents and teaching us respect at a very early age, teaching us about the

Lord, teaching us that you could do whatever you wanted, not to let anything stand in your way of chasing your dreams, but more than anything that respect for the Lord. And that came very, very early in our lives.

Dr. James Dobson: How early did you give your heart to the Lord?

Tony Dungy: I accepted Christ as a very little boy. Everyone around my house did. And you thought that was the right thing to do And they said, if you want to go to Heaven, you have to accept Christ. So as the Savior I did early, but then I got to the Pittsburgh Steelers. I was 21 years old and there were a group of guys who were dynamic Christian guys who really, their Christianity permeated everything that they did on the field, off the field, at home every day. And I said, wow, this is what this is all about. And they kind of encouraged me to get involved in the Bible studies and the chapel services. And the more I read, the more I began to understand that it's putting the Lord first. It's letting him direct you in everything. And so I think that's when I really began growing as a Christian at 21.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the name of your book is *Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance*, and you write about a lot of family related subjects in here and one of 'em is parenting and you speak on that subject. What do you tell parents?

Tony Dungy: Well, I tell parents number one is you just have to be involved. So many of the young men that I talk to now, my dad wasn't there, so my mom had to work a couple of jobs. She was working hard. She did as well as she could, but they really didn't have that involvement that our parents had. And kids don't need all the best things. We always want to give them better than what we had, but what they need is our availability, us being there and us showing them the right way to go and kids are looking for that and we've got to do a better job of providing that direction.

Dr. James Dobson: What does it mean to be a man? You talked about it here. What is a man? I suppose I'm 21 years of age now and I'm looking to you for leadership in my life and influence. You've become a mentor to me and I say, I really don't know what a man is. How do I find masculinity?

Tony Dungy: Masculinity I think has been really hasn't been shown the right way in our media, in our movies, in our television. It hasn't necessarily been shown the right way, even by our men. Masculinity is standing up for what you know is right. It's guiding your family and your community the right way and being a person who follows the Lord but not following the crowd. That's probably the biggest message in this book *Uncommon* that I wanted to get across to young men. It's easy to just follow the crowd and do what everybody else is doing, but that doesn't make you a man.

Dr. James Dobson: One of the things that irritates me as much as anything I can think of is the way maleness is represented in the popular culture. If you just look at the sitcoms night after night, the men are bumbling fools, they're adolescent crazies, and

the women are the ones that are in positions of leadership and the women are respectful and the women are beautiful and it just makes me sick to see 'em tear down what it means to be a man. I think you're absolutely right in this book. Young men are struggling with this. They don't know what they're supposed to be.

Tony Dungy: We don't. And because those male figures aren't always there, then it becomes a thing. Well, outward toughness is how you become a man and you're not a man if you show emotion. You're not a man if you have feelings, you're not a man if you're afraid of anything, you've got to be the roughest, toughest guy. And so if you're not the roughest toughest, then you better get some type of weapon that that can be tough for you and be a substitute toughness. And that's what we're teaching guys, instead of saying, you know what? Being part of a family, loving a woman, taking care of her. Yes, sometimes being afraid, there's nothing wrong with that.

Dr. James Dobson: I would like to give an example of a man who knew what it meant to be manly, and I've got his voice on a CD. Now, I'm not going to tell you who he is. I'm going to see if you recognize it. I'm going to put you on the spot here. This is tough because it could be anybody, but let's hear the first clip from this individual

Tom Landry: Because I think life really, Dr. Dobson is really a matter of priorities. I mean, what you consider most real and valuable in your life is your religion. It doesn't necessarily have to be God. It can be your job, it can be your family, it can be anything. And so I knew that football was my whole priority up until that point. But once I accepted Christ, then football took actually God and football switched places because God became first. My family was always in my life too. And of course the football took the last port and I think Saint Augustine said it so well. And he says, "Hearts are restless. Oh God, until we find our rest in thee." What a great quote because it speaks to me. That spoke to me at that time.

Dr. James Dobson: Coach, when we were listening to that clip, you muttered Joe Gibbs, the former NFL football coach for the Redskins, but it's not.

Tony Dungy: It is Tom Landry and two men up...

Dr. James Dobson: It was Tom Landry. We both got fooled.

Tony Dungy: Yeah, two men of the same character and Coach Landry, both of them. Coach Landry and Coach Gibbs were role models for me. But Tom Landry, I think very early on, let people know that you could be successful and follow the Lord. And those type of men are so important. As we were talking about what true manhood is, what a coach is. That was Coach Landry.

Dr. James Dobson: You remind me a lot of him.

Tony Dungy: A lot of people say that.

Dr. James Dobson: You do because the demeanor, the softness, yet the strength. In fact your first book was called *Quiet Strength* and that is very well named. But Tom Landry had it too, didn't he?

Tony Dungy: He had it. Yes he did. And he demonstrated it and was very, very important I think for a lot of people of my age to be able to see that.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's hear the other clip also by Tom Landry.

Tom Landry: I think that sometimes it's hard for us in a secular world to realize that there is a secular society and there is a Christian society, which God says we're not of this world. Jesus said it. We're not of this world as Christian. And what I've seen and what I feel is made America great is that it has God and country in mind. The family was a hallmark of America. That's what made America what it is today. It had a value system and that's what we lack today, that we don't have value in. Our youngsters aren't learning the value system and they don't have self-esteem, have a family around them and that's where you gain it. A family and a church is where you gain the values of made America great.

Dr. James Dobson: Coach Landry has been gone for many years now, but what he's saying there is why I'm concerned about this country because those things are breaking down.

Tony Dungy: I agree. And it's so funny because people ask me all the time, are the guys that you coach, are they different? Are they different? This is Coach Landry from a generation ago saying the same things that we're saying today and somehow we've got to stop this momentum. We've got to get back to the values. We've got to teach that as much as we're teaching athleticism and football.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the family is under attack. Even its very definition is being changed. And then you mentioned last time that three out of four players that come into the NFL as rookies did not have fathers at home. And so this no longer characterizes this country.

Tony Dungy: I would agree with that. And somehow we've got to fix that and we've got to be that role model for the young men that don't have it and encourage them.

Dr. James Dobson: Another subject that you dealt with in the book is how to treat a woman. Tell us about it.

Tony Dungy: Well, because of the lack of family structure, I think we have a generation of young men that really have never seen that. They haven't seen how their father treated their mother, how you're supposed to, so they don't have a basis for it.

Dr. James Dobson: How'd your dad treat your mother?

Tony Dungy: My dad treated my mother with great respect and my dad made sure that as kids we never raised our voice at our mom. We didn't disrespect our mom. That

was important to him. And I think that's the first lesson that you have to learn. And I think my dad being there was very important to me to see how to treat a woman. It was very important to my sisters to see what type of man they were going to look for as husbands.

Dr. James Dobson: After I was grown, in fact, I was 30 years of age, I got mildly irritated at my mother one day and I was riding in the car with my dad and I was complaining about what she'd done and my gentle dad looked at me with those steely blue eyes and he said, "Listen bud, she is the best friend you ever had and don't you forget it." And when my dad called me bud, it was time to back off. I don't care what age I was.

Tony Dungy: Absolutely. You got those cold words. And my dad was the same way that hey, there are just certain things that we don't do and disrespecting your mom or talking back to your mom, that's unacceptable. And you learned that early on.

Dr. James Dobson: Now a lot of the kids that you dealt with on the football field are newly married or will be newly married and I don't know how they have a clue as to what it means to be a husband and father because they have never seen it.

Tony Dungy: Right. That was one of the reasons I used to take my wife, Lauren, to every away game and she would ride on the plane with us and she was a big football fan and she enjoyed it. But part of my idea, I wanted to model that behavior that here's your coach and here's his wife and we are a unit and we're together because so many of those guys had not seen that or experienced it. And I wanted to show them how important that was.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, what do you say to young men about marriage itself?

Tony Dungy: Try to talk to them about how important it is, about what commitment is all about and it is easy to talk to them in football terms. Hey, you make a commitment to your team. We're going to stick together no matter what. No matter how many games we lose, we're in this together and we're never going to turn our back on our teammates. You've got to have that same type of commitment with the young lady that you're dating, that is your fiancé and who you're going to be married to.

Dr. James Dobson: You have five children; you lost your son.

Tony Dungy: Lost one. We had six, five still living and prospering and growing from 24 years old to two and a half.

Dr. James Dobson: If you don't mind, I would like to ask you about the son that you lost. He committed suicide at 17, 18 years of age. What did that do to you and how did it come? You mind talking about that? Cause that's got to be a painful subject.

Tony Dungy: It is a painful subject. I think I'd probably like to talk more about because of that, what is my message to young men? We lost a son at 18 and what it made me conscious of was that young men in this country do need direction. They do need guidance, they need help. And it probably made me more aware of reaching out to other young men to help them because I think they are getting the wrong messages of what it means to be a man. What you have to do, what it's all about, and can you really find love? Can you find happiness by making yourself vulnerable? And I think we've got to get that message to our young men that you can.

Dr. James Dobson: I think you said here that his sister said about him, if he could have lived two more years till he was 20, a lot of the things that agitated him would've started to come together and he would've understood better.

Tony Dungy: Yeah. Our oldest daughter's 24 now and she went through a period of time where she thought her parents were the worst people in the world, that they just infringed on her rights. She knew a lot of people and dated boys who were struggling with where they were going. And it just seems like after they got through college and got to that age that things started making a little more sense.

Dr. James Dobson: Daddy gets real smart.

Tony Dungy: Daddy gets a little smarter. The world makes a little more sense. And some of those values that you try to teach, they see the logic behind it as they get out into the real world.

Dr. James Dobson: Tony, are you enjoying your retirement, so to speak? I know you've got all you can handle on your plate and that's why I appreciate so much you coming here and letting us talk to you about *Uncommon*. But yeah, you haven't looked back.

Tony Dungy: I not looked back. I am enjoying it. It gives me a chance to do little projects that I would have never have gotten to do if I was coaching, going and speaking in prison, speaking in high schools, doing projects with young people. It's rewarding and it's a different kind of reward than coaching in the National Football League, but it's one that I think the Lord's directing me to right now at this time in my life.

Dr. James Dobson: How much speaking are you doing?

Tony Dungy: Probably too much, but when you get a chance to go out and talk to people and talk to young people especially, it is really been a lot of fun for me.

Dr. James Dobson: Coach Tony Dungy, I want to give you the greatest respect in a sentence that I can give you. If I had a son who played football, I would want him to play for you. I would want him under the influence of a person who had his values

straight and who had really thought through the meaning of life and what it means to be a man especially.

Tony Dungy: Well, thank you. That's a great compliment because that's the way I always coached. I coached the way I would want my son to be coached and try to coach him on the field, but coach him into manhood off the field as well.

Dr. James Dobson: Consider yourself a friend and always, always know that the carpet, the red carpet, is down for you here.

Tony Dungy: Well, thank you. We feel it every time we come and it's just been a real, real pleasure to be here these two days

Dr. James Dobson: And give my regards to Lauren.

Tony Dungy: Thank you. I will.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay.

Roger Marsh: Don't just follow the crowd. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to a different standard, one that sometimes means standing alone for what's right. You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a truly remarkable conversation Dr. Dobson had with Coach Tony Dungy about Coach's book, *Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance*. By the way, to learn more about Tony Dungy's ministry and his books, or to share today's program with a friend, visit us online at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Well, conversations like today's remind us why the work of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute matters so much. Every day we see the same challenges facing families everywhere that concern Tony Dungy during his coaching career. Parents struggling to raise children with strong moral foundations in a culture that often undermines what they're trying to teach. That's where JDFI steps in. We provide the biblical guidance and practical wisdom that families need to thrive.

It's no secret that we are living in times when biblical principles about manhood, family and character are under constant attack. And here at the JDFI, we are committed to preserving and promoting the institution of the family and the biblical principles upon which it is based. Right now, you have an opportunity to partner with us financially to help that mission, the dynamic legacy of Dr. James Dobson lives on even though he has now received his eternal reward. And when you make a donation in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, you're helping families that are looking for hope, young people who need godly role models, and fathers seeking biblical guidance get just that. Now, to make a donation online, go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also make a donation over the phone when you call 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Please remember that your support helps us continue bringing these life-changing conversations to families all across the country.

It enables us to stand firm on biblical truth about marriage, parenting, and what it means to be a follower of Christ in today's culture. Every donation, large or small, makes a difference in preserving these foundational principles for the next generation. So please make your best donation online at drjamesdobson.org. Call our constituent care team at 877-732-6825, or you can send your check by mail to our ministry mailing address, which is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Once again, our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Or you can just use the initials JDFI for short, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. On behalf of all of us here at the James Dobson Family Institute and the radio broadcast, Family Talk, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to tune in again next time for another 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.