



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Nurturing Grandchildren Through Prayer

Guest(s): Boone and Peggy Powell

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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 another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. So glad you've tuned in today for a special conversation about the important role that grandparents play in the lives of their grandchildren. Now, we hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family. Maybe you got to spend it with the kids, grandkids, or possibly even your great-grandchildren. And if you had four generations together, you are very, very blessed. And if for some reason yesterday was maybe a day of sadness, tender reflection, because it was the first time this happens at every Thanksgiving table, there's always that first major holiday without grandma or grandpa or someone who has gone home to be with the Lord, we pray that God's comfort has wrapped you in His care and that you're feeling His presence in an even deeper way as you remember that loved one who is not going to be part of the holiday season with you and your family.

Now, before we get into today's broadcast, a reminder coming up this Tuesday, of course, today is what they call Black Friday and lots of people are doing a lot of shopping, but coming up Tuesday, December 3rd is a very special day in the online non-profit world and that is called Giving Tuesday. This is an opportunity after you've gone through all the Thanksgiving holiday shopping spree that happens on Thanksgiving weekend. The Tuesday after Thanksgiving has traditionally become a day when we give thanks and also show support for the non-profit organizations that mean the most to us. As you are a regular listener of James Dobson's, Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we encourage you to give a gift online at drjamesdobson.org, it's absolutely secure on Giving Tuesday. Now, the reason I'm telling you to make that contribution on Giving Tuesday is we have a very special matching grant in place for Tuesday, December 3rd only.

We have a \$100,000 match in place for Giving Tuesday, and when you make a donation, let's say you make a \$100 donation this coming Tuesday, it will be doubled. You make a \$250 donation, that becomes \$500, make a \$1,000 donation. That becomes \$2,000, but only for Tuesday, December 3rd, Giving

Tuesday. So think about how God would have you participate with us on Giving Tuesday, pray about what amount God would lead you to give and then give with a joyful heart, whether it's \$10 or \$10,000. Please know we appreciate every act of kindness and support shown to us through your stewardship in supporting the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Okay, let's get into today's broadcast now, the importance of praying for your grandchildren and a special conversation about nurturing grandchildren through prayer. Dr. Dobson's, guests today are Boone and Peggy Powell. Boone Powell Jr. served on the board for Young Life for more than two decades. Boone and Peggy celebrate decades of marriage. Together, they raised three grown children and seven grandchildren, and they spent time in studio with Dr. Dobson talking about the theme of nurturing grandchildren through prayer. Let's get into that conversation right here and right now on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: All right, now that we've had the introductions, I want to know the qualifications that the two of you have for being here. You raised how many children?

Peggy Powell: Three.

Dr. James Dobson: And from those three, you have-

Peggy Powell: Seven.

Dr. James Dobson: Seven grandchildren.

Peggy Powell: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that incredible? And you love them like crazy, don't you?

Peggy Powell: It's just the best.

Dr. James Dobson: I was told before Lincoln was born, everybody told me you won't believe how exciting it is and how much joy comes from having a grandchild. And I anticipated it for a long time and they were right. It is absolutely incredible. And you've got a head start on us. We still have six to go to catch up with you, but what are the ages of your kids?

Peggy Powell: They're 6 to 15, almost 15.

Boone Powell: Four girls and three boys, and they're just a blast to have.

Dr. James Dobson: When I said earlier that this was a passion for you and that it's almost an avocation or a profession for you because it takes an awful lot of your time and you love it, why is this role at that level, that passionate level that I talked about?

Peggy Powell: I suppose, Jim, that the purpose that we have of being involved with our grandchildren is that we want to echo what their parents are teaching. And we're so blessed to have all three of our adult children and their spouses loving the Lord and training our children in righteousness, our grandchildren. So we just want to echo what they're doing. We also wanted to have an opportunity to have extra amount of fun and an format that we call Cousins Camp. It's where our children let us have their children for a week every summer. By ourselves, I mean it is the most fun. You have to be four to come.

Dr. James Dobson: Four years old. And how many of them do you bring at a time?

Peggy Powell: Seven. They're all-

Dr. James Dobson: All seven of Them. We have them all.

Peggy Powell: Yeah, the youngest is now six.

Dr. James Dobson: Even with that age range?

Peggy Powell: Oh yes, absolutely. You don't have to give them sugar. They're already hyped. They just love each other and it's so much fun.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, what happens Boone? At Cousins Camp?

Boone Powell: It's chaotic. The chemistry of the cousins is just unbelievable to me. They just automatically bond together. And so we have a whole series of things during the week that are a lot of fun and also incorporate a lot of teaching about Christian faith and also about maybe a certain person that we focus on like David, or Moses or someone like that.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you do the teaching?

Boone Powell: My wife loves to teach, so I'm an assistant.

Dr. James Dobson: You have, and I started to say an ulterior motive. You have a motive in that you want to get those kids in the hands of Jesus Christ, don't you?

Peggy Powell: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: You want to get Him in their hearts?

Peggy Powell: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I think grandparenting has a little different responsibility and different feel to it, but grandparents are in the greatest position if they will think about it and accept it to teach Scripture, to teach kids to love the Lord. Parents are often so busy that they are running, racing and the years go by and the question is

whether they're getting that understanding into the hearts of the kids, but grandparents can be intentional about it. Elaborate on that.

Peggy Powell: Well, I think Jesus summed it up when He said, "The greatest commandment is to love God and to love people." And that's what we want to do at Cousins Camping. We want to have fun doing it. So fun is the central theme of whatever we do. For instance, the morning is started with, of course we have seven grandkids, so we're seven days in a week and it's easy for us to start in birth order with every child gets to be the hero of a day. So Madison's the first and then Cooper, and then Boone, then Grace, then Cassie, Katie and John Luke in order, birth order.

Dr. James Dobson: And what's hero get that day?

Peggy Powell: The hero gets to carry the flag when we pledge the flag to start out, we have a God and country theme. The hero also holds the Bible as we pledge the Bible, God's holy word. The hero then gets to sit on the blessing stool. He or she has already given different scriptural characteristics like for instance, faithful, patient wise, honest to the six other siblings, and she or he sits on the blessing stool and the other cousins come and put their hand on that child's shoulder and praise for that child. Boone today, I bless you with courage or whatever it is that he's chosen. I didn't know if that was going to work or not. I mean, you try things that some things really work and I was amazed. We were amazed that the children are so reverent when they come to this prayer time of praying for each other.

Dr. James Dobson: Together with the kids?

Peggy Powell: Absolutely. And they were expanding their prayer objects, and interest, and topics, and I'm just amazed at how much they enjoy that. It's fun.

Dr. James Dobson: You have emphasized the word fun several times. What other the fun things do you do? Because you have a whole list of-

Peggy Powell: How about trampoline lessons?

Dr. James Dobson: Trampoline?

Peggy Powell: Uh-huh? There's a gym here that has 19 trampolines. The coach agreed to take all of them at once. They just have the best time. The little ones just jump.

Dr. James Dobson: They're all jumping at the same time?

Peggy Powell: Oh yeah. The big ones learn to do tricks and things. It's just really a lot of fun. How about a flashlight bear hunt? When they were little.

Dr. James Dobson: I used to do that with Ryan.

Peggy Powell: Yeah, you hide bears and each little kid gets a flashlight or any kind of treasure hunt. Even the older ones just still love the treasure hunts that we have. It's just a part of Cousin's Camp that they love. This year we studied Noah because the granddaddy Boomer went on an expedition to Iran to search for Noah's Ark last year. So that was a real interest to the kids. And one of the things that we did is we had them to draw what they thought the ark looked like, and so they all drew little Viking ships.

Then we looked in the Scriptures to say, "What does the Scripture say?" Well, cubit is, I understand from Chronicles is about 18 inches. And if that's the measurement that was in Genesis, that means the ark was about 450 feet by 75 feet. Well, I just happened to have four strings, two really long ones and two short ones. And the two twelve-year-old boys, Cooper and Boomer were in charge of the measuring. We went over to the local high school football field. That's a long boat. And they were amazed at how narrow it was. Actually, we read that it's one to six, that's the way ocean liners are today. And as we walked around that entire measurement of all our four strings, the kids were stunned at how large it was. We talked about the fact that it probably was a flat barge. It wasn't made for sailing, it was made for floating.

We just had a great time with that little experiment, studied lots of other things.

Dr. James Dobson: Boone, have you had the privilege of leading any of your grandchildren to the Lord, or was that done by the parents?

Boone Powell: Six of them we know have accepted the Lord. Honey got a chance to lead one of them on Easter on an Easter Sunday.

Peggy Powell: That was Grace.

Boone Powell: That was Grace.

Peggy Powell: Sweet.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that a thrill?

Peggy Powell: Oh, oh boy.

Boone Powell: But most of them had come to know the Lord in their own families.

Dr. James Dobson: How did honey come about? Did you choose that for the kids?

Peggy Powell: Nope. My peers told me as we were expecting the first grandbaby, pick out your name, they'll just call you silly stuff if you don't. So I chose Grandmommy. That was an endearing name to me. So when this little toddler, this little brown-eyed girl began to try to talk, I would just pat myself and say, Grandmommy,

Grandmommy. And she'd just blink. She couldn't begin say it, but one day she heard my husband calling me honey, so she called me honey.

Dr. James Dobson: She caught that.

Peggy Powell: So that is what happened.

Dr. James Dobson: They're listening, aren't they?

Peggy Powell: That happened.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it is a thrill and you all not only have Cousins Camp, but there are other kinds of things that you do with your kids. You read a lot to them, don't you?

Peggy Powell: Yes, yes we do. But one of the exciting things, Jim, is watching the older children teach the younger children.

When the oldest grandchild was about nine years old, we had three seven-year-olds and a five-year-old at Cousin's Camp. And I got the idea that it would be good for her to be a part of the teaching process. And so I took a flip chart, which is pictures of a story, a five-part story, wonderful materials are available for grandparents and parents alike in teaching children with visuals. And I got two copies of that and put the script on one side. So as she turned the script, as she turned the spiral notebook, they could see the pictures and she could read the script. And she was a good reader at nine. Well, I introduced her as my junior assistant, and the children listened so intently to their cousin telling the story. And of course it happens that at the end of the first part of the story, she gets to a point that's so exciting and she says, "Come back tomorrow for the next part."

Well, the kids were so excited about that. I had three seven-year-olds saying, "Honey, we want to be junior assistants." And so the next year they were, and Madison became the deputy assistant. So all four of the big older children have an opportunity to do some teaching. It is fun.

Dr. James Dobson: So that's the way you handled the wide age range where you have to get very elementary stuff for the young kids. But the older ones read it?

Peggy Powell: Have to tell you the truth, Jim, when we had four children at Cousin's Camp, it was easy. Two each, but when we went to five, we were a little bit concerned, especially at the swimming pool. And so I hired a second grade school teacher to come and help us. And as it happened, she then began to take the non-readers and she would do something special with them while I was teaching or we were teaching the older children. So that's the way that happened. But almost all of them can read now and probably next year we'll figure it out.

Boone Powell: Jim, if you want to win Lincoln over, bring him to camp and give him ice cream for breakfast.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that what you do?

Boone Powell: That's what we do.

Dr. James Dobson: In fact, I think I read Eskimo pies?

Boone Powell: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: And the parents don't complain about that?

Peggy Powell: No. Well, of course they don't. That's my job.

Dr. James Dobson: I have understood that one of the reasons for the Cousin's Camp is that it allows you to understand what you need to pray about when the kids aren't there?

Peggy Powell: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Because you know them and you understand them.

Peggy Powell: Oh we get insights

Dr. James Dobson: You have a chance to listen to them.

Peggy Powell: Yes. We get insights into each of the children and specifically the cousin that is the hero of the day. That's a very special spot. And I have a lot of opportunity to hear their hearts and to hear their interest. And it's just fascinating to me. I do believe it's important that we pray for each of our grandchildren. I believe it's important that we tell them what we're praying for them. For instance, one day I remember Cooper was about seven, and I said, "Hey Coop, you know what today is?" He says, "Yes, Honey, it's my day. It's Tuesday." I said, "I prayed for you today. I prayed that you would have courage, that you would torch the darkness with the light of Christ's love. And I prayed for your grandchildren." Well, he looked so stunned. He said, "I don't have any grandchildren." I said, "Well, I know you don't." And then I kind of explained how if the Lord tarry that could happen, he'd get married, blah, blah, blah, so forth.

And he looked up at me, this is the little boy with the bright blue eyes and the freckles on his nose, and he says, "That's cool." So they love to know what you're praying. Today's Monday. It's Madison's day. And so I emailed her, she's 14 and a half, and I said, "Today, darling, I'm praying that you would have understanding." I explained to her a little bit about what that was, and I'd say, "I'm praying for you a lot because I love you a lot, Honey." And she usually writes back.

Dr. James Dobson: What an incredible thing it is to have grandparents that would love you like that and devote time to them. Again, grandparents are more likely to have the time to invest.

Boone Powell: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Because the younger people are trying to get started in life and start a business and they're teaching school and they're doing all this stuff. And the supporting role that you can play and the spiritual influence that you can have is just difficult to overstate. I've said this on the air before, I hope I won't bore anybody with it, but my mother and father were deeply committed to Christ. My father was a minister and I grew up hearing them pray. In fact, I learned to imitate the sounds of prayer before I knew the meaning of the words. So I learned to kneel and pray before I could actually express anything. And yet, and yet despite that influence, it was my grandmother and my great-grandmother that had the greatest impact on me spiritually. I do hope we will be able to do as well with our grandchildren starting with Lincoln.

Boone Powell: I iterate to my grandchildren that they're some of my best friends. And they are.

Dr. James Dobson: And they feel that way about you, don't they?

Boone Powell: I think they do. And we're going to test this out as the kiddos move into the teenage years. We'll have two more teenagers this month. And I remember raising our own children that as kids become teenagers, they strike out on their own quite a bit from the parents' influence. I'm hopeful that we can be a bridge with the kids to continue to reinforce the values and the principles their parents believe in. And they may accept it from us a little easier during that period of time than they do from their parents, but whatever way we can be used, we really want to invest in their lives.

Dr. James Dobson: And you live near your grandchildren, don't you?

Boone Powell: We do.

Dr. James Dobson: Which many people don't have the benefit of.

Boone Powell: That's right. That's right.

Peggy Powell: There's a bonus too. It gives the parents a break.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Peggy Powell: They have a week by themselves.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we have a gallery full of people, and I would like to invite you all to come and express your own views of grandparenting very, very briefly and perhaps

ask a question of our guests. If any of you have anything you'd like to say, please come to the microphone and let's hear from you.

- Denise: My name is Denise and I'm from Illinois. First time here to visit, just turned 50 yesterday and visiting. And in the next five years I anticipate being a grandmother, but my children, one is living in Arizona and will most likely stay there and the other one up near the Chicago area, so we will not be near our grandchildren. I wondered if you had any advice to us or of people that you have heard that have been long distance grandparents?
- Boone Powell: Love those.
- Peggy Powell: Yes, absolutely. You can start by calling, by writing, by email, by doing fun things like blowing up a balloon and putting a knock-knock joke on it or prayer on it or Scripture on it. Whatever you want to do. Deflate the balloon, mail it, do a lot with mail. They love to get letters and things in letters.
- Dr. James Dobson: Especially if every now and then you put a dollar in one of those. That's what my grandmother did for me.
- Peggy Powell: Oh, wow. That's a great idea.
- Dr. James Dobson: And I learned from that to tithe.
- Peggy Powell: Oh, really?
- Dr. James Dobson: Because I would get a dollar and then next Sunday morning, I'd put a dime in once I cashed the dollar and then put it in a plate and I was told what that means.
- Peggy Powell: Another idea is if your grandchildren do not live in your town, adopt somebody else's grandchildren whose grandparents do not live there. Spend some time at the local elementary school, especially K-2. The teachers will love you coming to volunteer, be involved in other children's lives. Love them. I mean, somebody may be loving yours in the town where they live.
- Boone Powell: I like to call my grandchildren. So I'm on the phone quite a bit. I'll call one of the boys tonight who had his first football game in Austin to see how it went, and I stay in touch with him that way.
- Dr. James Dobson: Peggy, I understand you have a specified Bible verse for each year for the cousins?
- Peggy Powell: Yes.
- Dr. James Dobson: What is the verse for this year?

Peggy Powell: This year, it was the fruit of the spirit from Galatians and it just turns out with seven grandkids and two grandparents, you have nine fruit. So we did it this way. The hero of the day could clap their hands anytime that the nine of us were together. Mostly it was at meals, they would clap their hands and Boomer would start love, and then the next person would say the next I would conclude with self-control. And we would do that several times a day. And the heroes seem to enjoy being the initiator of that, but they'll always remember their fruit. They'll always remember it in order. I do believe because they heard it so many times.

Dr. James Dobson: You know what you're demonstrating is that you don't have to spend an awful lot of money to do this. You don't have to pack up seven kids and go to Disney World.

Peggy Powell: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Children just love those kinds of activities that they can do together. And you have found a way to do that. Earlier in the program, Peggy, you mentioned that you make use of email?

Peggy Powell: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And you actually just write a little love note or what do you say to them?

Peggy Powell: Sometimes it's a fun love note. Sometimes it's a question, sometimes it's exclamation points of how excited I am about something going on in their lives.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell us about the river rocks.

Peggy Powell: One day I went to the Sand and Gravel company here in Colorado Springs, and I said to the lady, "I'd like to buy 66 smooth stones." And she said, "Mrs. Powell, that's not even in our computer. Just go pick them out." So I went to the bin that was appropriate and I chose 66 river rocks, pretty large ones. And I had two trays. One has 39 rocks and one has 27 rocks. And the oldest grandchild helped put all the names of the books of the Bible on those rocks. Well, that year that we had, the first year we had the rocks, little Cassie was just four years old and she loved with her little chubby hands to hold these rocks. I'd say, "Matthew, Mark, Luke, John." And I'd pick up Luke, Matthew, Mark, she'd say, "Luke and John." Then we'd keep going and keep going and pick up more rocks and pick up more rocks and she could save the whole 27 books of the New Testament.

Dr. James Dobson: What a great way to learn.

Peggy Powell: She just had fun. We didn't drill or anything. She wanted to play with the rocks. And so we had fun doing it.

Dr. James Dobson: I think you can make fun out of just about anything, Peggy. Peggy, what do you use for materials to help with the spiritual aspects of what you're teaching?

Peggy Powell: As I said, Jim, you start on your knees, you pray, you ask the Lord to give you good ideas, and He gives you people that have already written good ideas. You can borrow some of theirs. They're happy for you too because they've published them. Also Pray Magazine by the Navigators has a pullout called Pray Kids. And it is just wonderful how you can expand your grandchild's prayer life with a lot of these good ideas.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it's a pleasure to have you all here to share some of the thoughts, some of the things the Lord has laid on your heart. We appreciate you coming and being with us.

Peggy Powell: Thank you.

Boone Powell: Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: And we appreciate your friendship.

Peggy Powell: Thanks.

Roger Marsh: The great trip down memory lane Today here on this classic edition of Dr. James Dobson's, Family Talk, Dr. Dobson's classic conversation with his dear friends, Boone and Peggy Powell discussing nurturing grandchildren through prayer. You can hear this program again on the Family Talk app or by going to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And keep in mind as we head into this holiday weekend, of course, today being Black Friday, tomorrow being Small Business Saturday, mark your calendar for this coming Tuesday, December 3rd. It's Giving Tuesday an opportunity for you to go online. Of course, we'll take your phone calls too and make a donation in support at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. And when you do, that gift will be doubled. We have a \$100,000 match in place for Tuesday, December 3rd only. So please be in prayer about how you can stand with us financially and then be ready to call in at 877-732-6825 or go online to drjamesdobson.org with your best gift for Giving Tuesday, coming up December 3rd.

And now for Dr. James Dobson and the entire team here at the JDFI, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening. Have a great rest of your weekend and be sure to join us again Monday right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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