



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Encouraging Enterprising Moms – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Carrie Wilkerson

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson and thank you for joining us for this program.

**Roger Marsh:** Balancing career and family has always been a challenge for mothers with young children at home, but a new generation of entrepreneurial moms is providing hope and encouragement to women who feel as though that the balance is too difficult to achieve. You're listening to Family Talk and I'm Roger Marsh. Family Talk is the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. On today's program, we're bringing you a classic conversation between Dr. Dobson, and author and speaker Carrie Wilkerson. Carrie is the author of the book, *The Barefoot Executive: The Ultimate Guide for Being Your Own Boss and Achieving Financial Freedom*. This conversation was originally recorded in 2017, but we know that you will find it to be relevant and encouraging for even today. So, here now is Dr. James Dobson to introduce today's guest here on Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, hello everyone. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and welcome to Family Talk. And if you have ever thought about starting a home based business or working for yourself, you're going to want to listen in today because this is going to be a very interesting program. This is what we call nuts, and bolts. This is not theoretical or theological. This is practical. And we have a guest today that you're going to want to hear from. I'm joined in the studio by Carrie Wilkerson. She's the author of the book, the provocative title, of which is *The Barefoot Executive: The Ultimate Guide for Being Your Own Boss and Achieving Financial Freedom*. How's that for a practical topic? She is also a speaker and a mentor. Carrie Wilkerson has a passion to, "Take you through the process of investigating your options and skill sets to create the financial freedom and work life that you've perhaps only dreamed of until now."

And you can imagine how many people there are out there who are slogging to work every day, and don't really like what they're doing, and don't feel fulfilled in that role. Not everybody feels that way, but some do. Is there an alternative? What is that alternative, and how do you go about making it a reality. And so, we are going to be investigating these options and skill sets to create financial freedom. And our guest today is married to Eddie. They have four children, two

of them are biological, and two of them are adopted. And tell me, the ages. They start in elementary school.

Carrie Wilkerson: Right. So, my youngest is about to turn 10, and my oldest is 21. So, they are 10, 13, 20, and 21.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm intrigued by the title of your book, Carrie. Let's start right there.

Carrie Wilkerson: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Barefoot Executive. You are wearing shoes today.

Carrie Wilkerson: I'm in Colorado, and it's cold. I am wearing shoes today. I'm also in public. The Barefoot Executive really was a nickname of mine, and my dad will tell you that even when I was a kid, I hated to wear shoes. He used to smack my feet off the dining room table because in the high chair, I would curl my toes around the table, and he would pop my toes. I just hated to wear them. But when I started working at home, I said, "There are men and women all around the world that are having to adhere to a dress code, that are having to adhere to a schedule, that are having to conform to somebody else's idea of success." And really, I think it's really good that I can work barefoot. I can be a CEO and be barefoot if I want to. But it's really not about the shoes. It's about creating what that looks like for you, creating how you work best, creating what fulfills you, what that income looks like.

Dr. James Dobson: What a great niche, Carrie, that you have found. Now, I want to take you back to high school. You sacked groceries?

Carrie Wilkerson: I did.

Dr. James Dobson: At an Air Force base?

Carrie Wilkerson: Yeah. My dad was military. He was Coast Guard for almost 30 years. So, we had military shopping privileges, and my two older brothers before me bagged groceries, at the military base. Now, what's unique about that is first of all, it was about 35 minutes from our house. It was a haul to get there, but also there was no salary. We worked for tips only.

Dr. James Dobson: They didn't pay you?

Carrie Wilkerson: No, only the end user paid us.

Dr. James Dobson: That's illegal now.

Carrie Wilkerson: We were paid based on our efforts. We were paid based on our customer service, based on our personality, based on finding officers and their families

that we had served before and building relationship with them. It, honestly, is the best training for life I've ever had.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, really?

Carrie Wilkerson: And so, we all did that.

Dr. James Dobson: How long were you doing that?

Carrie Wilkerson: I did that probably a total of three years, because I did that through high school, and part of the way through college, until I got married.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you make a decent living at it?

Carrie Wilkerson: Well, again, I think decent living is in the eye of the beholder. I helped pay for college applications, and dorm fees, and gas money, and insurance. Because at that point, we were then a preacher's family. We were no longer a military family. We were a pastor's family of a small country church. So, every dollar helped. But yeah, I made a nice living. I learned a lot.

Dr. James Dobson: So, you grew up in a Christian home?

Carrie Wilkerson: I did.

Dr. James Dobson: And your parents were deeply committed to Christ, I assume?

Carrie Wilkerson: Yes, they were.

Dr. James Dobson: And they passed that along to you?

Carrie Wilkerson: Now, I think I learned from you that we don't pass our faith from generation to generation. We have to own our own faith. We don't get to ride along the strings of our parents' faith.

Dr. James Dobson: You sure lay the foundation though.

Carrie Wilkerson: But they did absolutely lay a foundation, which is interesting, because they both came from non-deep Christian homes. My dad attended church with his grandparents some, but the reason he became a believer was because he met a pretty girl who couldn't date yet, and the only way he could see her, and that's my momma, was if he would go to church, to the youth group. And his conversion experience was during a revival there while he was there to see a pretty girl. My mom, her parents dropped her off at church, and were not opposed to her being at church, but they were not always very faithful themselves. So, my parents actually really grabbed onto that faith for themselves, and as a military family across the globe, jumped into ministry wherever they were, served, and spread the gospel wherever they were.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you've had a really interesting life so far, and you have ... I, in fact, accused you of being very ...

Carrie Wilkerson: Ambitious.

Dr. James Dobson: ... ambitious. I started to say aggressive, but ambitious. And how soon did you know you were kind of a creative person that could get in, and do things differently?

Carrie Wilkerson: Well, I'm the only girl in my family of four, three brothers, so I always knew I was different. I'm very verbal more so, and my family's laughing-

Dr. James Dobson: I noticed that.

Carrie Wilkerson: ... really loud right now as I say that. I was the most affectionate person in my family. They'll tell you that I taught them how to show affection, and how to be demonstrative. I was probably a peacemaker. If you study *The Birth Order* by Kevin Leman at all, I fit all the categories of what he says the youngest does. I was a singer. I was a performer from a very early age.

Dr. James Dobson: In fact, you began majoring in music in college.

Carrie Wilkerson: Yes. Yeah, I changed my major a year before I graduated because I was married, and distracted, and wanted to just finish. I wanted to be done. But I knew I looked at things a little differently. I knew I had a gift of making people laugh, and making people comfortable even though I was a little anxious or insecure myself. And so, I knew those were gifts of mine. I didn't know how the Lord would use them. I really didn't. I thought I was on the path of standard job, standard mom, standard life, which is its own calling. It really is. There's no shame in that. I was blessed to be called to do that, but I really just thought I would have a normal life. I did not have any aspirations of being an author, although my mom spoke that over me since I was little, "Carrie, I feel like you're going to write a book. You need to write a book."

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Carrie Wilkerson: And my dad spoke over me very early, "Baby, if you could find a way to get paid for talking, you'll just have it made."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, my 12-year-old wrote her first book that year on bedtime story about a dog named Woof, W-O-O-F. And it sold 40,000 copies at 12 years of age.

Carrie Wilkerson: Wow, that's amazing.

Dr. James Dobson: So, we knew she was a writer, too, very early.

Carrie Wilkerson: Love that. Well, I didn't have those dreams and ambitions. I would say my ambition is more in a place of being a Barnabas of sorts. Ever since I learned about Barnabas in the Bible, really, there's a calling for an encourager. "Really, there's that. Okay, I can do that." That really is so suited to who I am and how I'm wired. And we visited earlier a little bit about Zig Ziglar, and the influence he's had on so many people, and some of his last words he said to me was, "Carrie, encourage people. Encourage people. They need it. People are hurting and people need to be encouraged." And I said, "Okay, that's good enough for me. I can do that. It's in the Bible. Zig said it. Other people seem to think I can do this." And so now I've found a way to make it my life to encourage people.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you have spoken on the platform with him.

Carrie Wilkerson: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And also John Maxwell, you've had really some unique experience.

Carrie Wilkerson: I have. I have. Actually, John Maxwell came to an event to hear me speak. He spoke after me, and as I came off the stage, he said, "You have a gift for connecting. You are a unique speaker in that you talk with people instead of at people." He said, "I've not seen it quite done that way." And so that was high, high praise for me. I floated on that for weeks. I've now consulted his organization some on some marketing strategies, and I have several great friends in that organization. Ziglar, same way. I've now worked with their company, and given them some advice on marketing, and on trend things. And of course, I've been on their podcast, and their show several times. So, I've had some unique experiences, and I've just ... beyond what I could ever ask or imagine.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, you have not moved on from being a home executive, but you have added speaking and writing to it.

Carrie Wilkerson: Yes, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: So, your world has expanded.

Carrie Wilkerson: It has.

Dr. James Dobson: But you are still trying to help people with your book. And with your speaking start a home business.

Carrie Wilkerson: Right. So, for years I worked at home in my home-based business. I started because of my older two children are a brother and sister that we adopted through the Foster to Adopt program in Texas. And so, I instantly became a mom, and I didn't have any dreams ever of being a business woman. I didn't have a big idea. I didn't have any ambition in that area. I really just wanted to make sure that these kids knew who their mom was.

And now, let me back up, and say, I don't believe that's an edict. I think maybe if I had given birth first, I might've tried to still teach and do that. But I remember that these kids had been through such transition, and trauma ... It chokes me up still, and it's been 19 years ... I didn't want them wondering, "Where did that nice lady go, that was here earlier? Are we being moved again? Where do we belong? Where's our place?" And I said, "Okay, I chose this path, and I feel like I need to be steady for them. I need to be the first face they see, the last face they see, and the most constant thing they see in their life right now."

And so, I remember saying to my husband, "I know we intended for me to go back to teach, but I don't think I can." And he said, "We'll eat rice and beans. We'll do whatever it takes. We will figure it out." And I guess you said earlier, when did I know that I was creative? I think he and I both knew at that time I was a find-a-way, make-a-way kind of girl, and I was going to figure something out. I didn't know what it was, but it was going to be something to help bridge the gap between our bills and our income at that point. That was my whole desire for getting into business.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you enjoy being a stay-at-home mom?

Carrie Wilkerson: I love it. I can't imagine where else I would be. First of all, my corner office is beautiful. I get to decide what the view is, whether it's the pool, or the front yard, or the dog in my lap, and I get to be there for all of the important moments.

Dr. James Dobson: You know, I'm sure, that that role is still disparaged. I just read an article this morning written by some academic ... Whoever she is, I don't like her. She wrote this saying that the government should outlaw stay-at-home moms. Can you believe this, government telling you you can't stay at home with your children if you can pay the bills and make it work?

Carrie Wilkerson: Well, it seems ludicrous to me. I've not read this proposition. But what I'll say is that one thing that there is disparagement with right now is all the camps of women, the stay-at-home moms versus the work-at-home moms versus the go-to-work moms. And if I were on a mission of any sort, I would be to say, first of all, moms, being a mom is such a hard job anyway. Whether you're a single mom, a married mom, a widowed mom, whatever that looks like for you, being a mom is hard. First and foremost, we need to unify. We need to see what unifies us instead of splits us up. Being a stay-at-home mom is a hard, hard job that is unpaid. Being a work-at-home mom combines the stay-at-home mom stuff plus the work-at-home except I don't get to leave a clean house, and come home to a clean house, or go talk to adults during the day. I'm still at home with the kids, and that's my choice, and that's what I've chosen.

The work away from home moms, I cannot imagine what they juggle, and their time away, and how they must deal with what I call mom-flict. It's a word I coined several years ago. The conflict that every mom has. Am I making the right choices? Am I saying the right things? Am I feeding them the right foods?

Am I putting them in a safe enough car seat or stroller? We have all of these battles already as a mom. We don't need to add to it, too, by saying stay-at-home moms aren't worth anything. They are. My mom was a stay-at-home mom the majority of my life, and I cannot imagine our life any differently. It's an admirable thing.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever feel you were wasting your life? That's the usual complaint. I mean, you got all this talent as a woman, and you are hanging around the house, and they say it in disparaging ways, but they don't ever say I'm investing in the lives of my children who mean more to me than my life.

Carrie Wilkerson: Exactly. I have never felt like I was wasting my life or my kids' lives whether I was at home. Now, I will say I was a stay-at-home mom in the traditional definition of the sense, and I was the best stay-at-home mom for approximately seven weeks. The laundry was done, the dinner was on the table, the kids were clean when the husband came home for about seven weeks, and that's when I said, "I really want to be earning some income, but I also want to be here." So, how do I do both? I think I can do both. Why can't I do both?

The popular culture will say, "Yes, you can have it all. And that looks like going to be in corporate America," or, "Yes, you can have it all," and that looks like putting your career on hold. And I'm saying, "Yes, you can have it all," but here's the rub. You decide with your faith, and your family, and what I call your shareholders, the people in your life, the little people, the big people in your life, you decide what all looks like for you. And mamas, those of you that are listening, don't let anybody else define that for you. You, and your Lord, and your spouse, and your kids get to decide that. So, if I stay at home, but I also want to earn some money ... My mom taught piano lessons. My mom altered choir dresses. My mom did so many things modeling barefoot executive life for me that I didn't even recognize, but she was helping my dad's check stretch further. She was doing what needed to be done. And so I think we've had work at home moms forever.

My longing is this. If women want to be at home, if they really have that longing to be at home, I think there are ways. And if men and women or single moms want to find a way to supplement their full-time income to get out of debt ... I mean, debt is at an all-time high, student loan debt, an all-time high. There may be surprise medical bills. I mean you just never know. But if they want to get out of debt, there are so many things you can do from home in addition to your job. If there are men that want to transition out of something that they feel like they're selling their soul for or is not in alignment with their values, then I think there are things that we can do at home. I think there are ways we can take our income back.

You addressed this earlier. You said there are some people dredging to work, and not loving what they do. I also think, and this might be a little controversial, and you deal in controversy, so you'll be okay with this, but I would also say that we may also need an entitlement and reality check in a lot of ways. Your

attitude is something that you choose. I can do something that I don't enjoy, but enjoy who I'm doing it for, and enjoy what I'm paying off, and enjoy the fruits of that while I'm getting to a different place. We have very much a situation now where people want to get married, and have the same house their parents do now, and the same two cars. So, no problem. They just go lease those, and they say, "Well, we can't cut back, or change jobs, or have anybody quit, because our payments are too high." They wouldn't be willing to sell the red Volkswagen. They wouldn't be willing to give up one of the cell phones. They wouldn't be willing to downsize the house or go with used furniture.

And so I think, number one, we can adjust our attitude about what it is that we're doing. Find some joy elsewhere, maybe not in the job, maybe in who we serve with, or who we serve for, or what we're paying off, or what we're contributing to charity-wise. I've seen joyful janitors. I've seen joyful grocery clerks. I was one, right? So, I think attitude matters a lot, but I also think that no matter what your situation that ... We all saw the economy crash, and felt very powerless about it. Those of us that did not feel powerless were those of us that knew how to create some income, whether it was small income, whether it was large income, whatever it looked like.

So when I say, barefoot executive, I'm not trying to say you have to make six figures at home. I'm not saying, "In order to keep up with the Joneses." I'm not that girl. I drive a little Subaru, for Pete's sake. I'm not keeping up with anyone. I live on a cul-de-sac. I don't live in a mansion or any of those things. I think we have to decide what enough looks like for us. I think we have to decide where our joy comes from, and I think we have to decide too what we're willing to give up, and what we're willing to do in order to make some of those financial realities happen.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, Carrie, I want to do another program with you next time, because we have not yet talked about the how-to's of starting a home business, which is your stock and trade, and we will pick up with that next time. But we got a couple of minutes left. You once weighed 100 pounds more than you do today.

Carrie Wilkerson: 145 pounds more than I do today. I once weighed-

Dr. James Dobson: 145, and what do you weigh, if you don't mind?

Carrie Wilkerson: I don't mind telling you. I used to weigh 266 pounds, and I am 5'3", so that's a lot of weight for a little bit of a woman. So, I was much bigger than I am now. And now, I am as of today, which by the time we broadcast, and when you're listening in the future, this number may not be accurate, but as of today, I'm at 122.

Dr. James Dobson: Unbelievable.



Carrie Wilkerson: So, I've gone from a size 28 to a size 2, and that's even still with all this extra skin. So, we still need a little tailoring on the suit. But yeah, that's been a long journey. It's been a long journey.

Dr. James Dobson: You really are a creative, disciplined person. I mean, that takes a whole lot.

Carrie Wilkerson: I sense that you're trying not to say crazy and unpredictable.

Dr. James Dobson: No, I'm admiring you because of the way you stayed on that diet. You don't call it a diet,

Carrie Wilkerson: I don't call it a diet. Diets, we jump off of. Diets, we fail at. So, this has been a process of about 15 years. So, I would lose some, and I would gain some. Truth be told, Dr. Dobson, I've probably lost 572 pounds because some of that, I kept regaining. We gain, and lose, and gain, and lose. But I made a decision in 2002, I think it was, to just make some small changes, just because I was in a depressed state, and not just because of my weight. There was a lot. But I decided that I could become a victim or a victor. And so I said, "You know what? This week I'm just going to drink water. I'm going to drink water in addition to my normal food, water only. I'm going to drink more water." The next week, maybe I cut out sugar. I did these little changes, how the small almost imperceptible changes can lead to radical transformation.

Dr. James Dobson: And you took all the joy out of life when you did that.

Carrie Wilkerson: I did not. I'm the most joyful person you will ever spend time with. I have joy even without sugar.

Dr. James Dobson: We've been talking to Carrie Wilkerson. You're a delightful person, a great interview. And she's written a book called *The Barefoot Executive*, because she can go barefoot at home if she wants to. *The Ultimate Guide For Being Your Own Boss, and Achieving Financial Freedom*. And that is where we're going to pick up next time, because I want to get into the how-to's. There are a lot of women, particularly, who have an agony to be with their kids. They don't want to send them off to a babysitter or a state-sponsored childcare thing. They really do want to be there with them, and it's a very worthy goal. Not everybody has to do it. I admire women who are out in the workplace, but I especially admire those who did what my wife, Shirley, did, which is pour her life into those kids. And neither of us will regret one day that we invested in our kids. So, we're going to pick that up next time, but I want to talk to those people who say, "Where do I start?"

Carrie Wilkerson: Okay.

Dr. James Dobson: All right?

Carrie Wilkerson: We can do that.

Dr. James Dobson: You live in Fort Worth? I used to live there.

Carrie Wilkerson: Yeah. I live outside of Fort Worth in Arlington, Texas.

Dr. James Dobson: And you flew here to be with us today.

Carrie Wilkerson: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: And we are going to give you another day. Thank you for being with us.

Carrie Wilkerson: Thank you so much, Dr. Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: God bless you, friend.

Roger Marsh: Mom guilt, it really can be a struggle for many moms today. And if you're a mother or a caregiver, I hope you've been encouraged by today's Family Talk broadcast. Now, if you'd like to learn more about Carrie Wilkerson or her book, *The Barefoot Executive*, visit our broadcast page at [drjamesdobbson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobbson.org/familytalk). Moms really pour their whole lives into their families. They spend so much time investing in the lives of their children, especially right from the moment they first hold those precious little ones in their arms, and they do so all while balancing the managing of the household. Here at Family Talk, we want to embolden you as a mother along that journey of raising kids.

So many people consider being a mom an amazing privilege, and it really is, but they oftentimes don't take into consideration that it really is also the toughest job on the planet. That's why here at the James Dobson Family Institute, we've created the "Empowering Moms Series," five minutes of practical parenting advice packed with timeless scriptural truths, and an encouraging prayer to inspire you and your family each, and every day. And it only takes five minutes to go through these. You can sign up for free when you go to our broadcast page at [drjamesdobbson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobbson.org/familytalk), and then click the link at the bottom of the page.

Well, from all of us here at JDFI, we want to thank you for listening, and also for making us a part of your day. Family Talk is a completely listener-supported broadcast outreach. Now during these summer months, typically giving is down a little bit, and this summer has been particularly soft. So, if you would like to find out more about how you can support the JDFI financially, go online to [drjamesdobbson.org](http://drjamesdobbson.org) or give us a call at 877-732-6825. Our ministry mailing address is the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949. Well, be sure to join us again tomorrow as Dr. Dobson concludes this conversation with Carrie Wilkerson about encouraging enterprising moms. That's right here on Family Talk.

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