



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Moms in Prayer– Part 1

Guest(s): Fern Nichols, Sally Burke, and Panel

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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 Family Talk, the broadcast ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh and today is the National Day of Prayer. If you're a parent or a grandparent, you know how important it is to pray for those kids and grandkids in your life. And yet we also understand the weight of sending our kids out into the world each day, wondering who is influencing them and what they're being taught and whether they will hold onto their faith as they grow older. Well, on today's edition of Family Talk, we commemorate the National Day of Prayer by airing a program Dr. Dobson recorded many years ago with Fern Nichols, the founder of an organization called Moms in Prayer. Fern was joined by her successor, Sally Burke, along with 25 other women from all across Colorado who represent this incredible ministry. Now, Fern's story begins with one desperate prayer for her children, and it sparked a movement that is now active in, are you ready for this, 145 countries. Here now is Dr. James Dobson with more.
- Dr. James Dobson: I need to let our listeners know what's going on here in this studio at this moment, because this is a very exciting moment for me for more reasons than one. I am surrounded by 27 beautiful ladies who are moms and who care about prayer and especially prayer for their children. And we're going to talk about that today. Now, Fern Nichols is also here and some of our listeners will remember her because she's worked with me.... my goodness, I don't know how many programs we've done, Fern, do you recall?
- Fern Nichols: A lot of wonderful programs.
- Dr. James Dobson: And the first time was in 1988.
- Fern Nichols: Yes.
- Dr. James Dobson: And you brought 13 with you last time.
- Fern Nichols: Yeah. It was a 12 or 13 in a nice group, but Colorado really came out in full force.
- Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Right. Well, you have 27.

Fern Nichols: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Actually, 25 with you and your successor who's here, Sally Burke, we're going to meet her today. You are the founder of Moms in Touch. You don't call it that anymore. You call it Moms in Prayer.

Fern Nichols: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And the first time I met you, you came to the ministry and we got acquainted and you had this gang of ladies with me. And you didn't really have an organization at that time.

Fern Nichols: No.

Dr. James Dobson: You all just got together to pray. You didn't have a name. It wasn't Mom's in Touch at that early stage.

Fern Nichols: Well, it actually was. It was Moms in Touch. And we used the word touch.

Dr. James Dobson: You mean when you came to the... I'm talking about when you first began praying.

Fern Nichols: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. No. No, we just got together and prayed. And then we had to tell other moms. So it was like this grassroots telling other moms. It actually started in British Columbia, Canada.

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Fern Nichols: Yeah. And then they were saying, "Oh, we need this for our school. Can you come to my house? I'll bring some moms." So I'd go to their house and share. We don't talk the hour. There's no gossiping. This is a time of prayer and seeking God.

Dr. James Dobson: You weren't there for cookies and all kinds of other things. You went there to pray for your kids in their schools.

Fern Nichols: We were in a tense battle.

Dr. James Dobson: You are today too. That has not changed.

Fern Nichols: And boy, I tell everything. Oh, boy and that's why I'm very excited to see what God's going to do. The next 30 years, if He tarries. So we got together and just prayed our little hearts out and other moms wanted it for their schools. I shared with them what we did the hour, how we prayed the four steps of prayer.

Dr. James Dobson: It was breathtaking, wasn't it, Fern?

Fern Nichols: It was breathtaking, but it was so exciting because you know what? I was so blessed to be able to give these moms hope. Hope that prayer was the answer that we cried out to an almighty God in the powerful authoritative name of Jesus using the Word of God and things changed.

Dr. James Dobson: Rapidly.

Fern Nichols: Rapidly.

Dr. James Dobson: It just spread across the United States and then went international, didn't it?

Fern Nichols: Yes, but God so used you, Dr. Dobson. And what a privilege for me to be able this day to thank you in front of tens of thousands that are in this ministry, that you caught the vision and had us on your program.

Dr. James Dobson: Repeatedly, didn't we?

Fern Nichols: Repeatedly. And after that first program, over 20,000 responses, it was meeting a need that moms had in their hearts in wanting to protect their children.

Dr. James Dobson: Fern, why were you so anxious to be on our program at that time? You were doing a lot of praying about that. And I didn't yet know you, but I'd heard good things about you, but you came there with expectations, didn't you?

Fern Nichols: Well, this is how God did it. There were 35 of us in the hills with this little Moms in Touch retreat at that time. And we said, "How can we keep this to ourselves? Every woman in California needs to know about this ministry." Then we started praying all across the United States. Every woman that loves Jesus needs to know about this ministry. But what about our sisters in Russia? So then we started praying for the whole world, and then it was silent. And one mom said, "Who can tell the women of the world?" There was silence. One woman said, "Dr. Dobson can tell the women of the world about this ministry." And it was like a big hurrah. "Yes, Dr. Dobson. Oh God, raise up Dr. Dobson to tell every woman in the world about this ministry."

Dr. James Dobson: Imagine the thrill of being able to be on the ground floor of a prayer movement for something so important as our children. Even then they were in trouble and the schools were in trouble. And today, again, it just takes your breath away.

Fern Nichols: And you know there are so many things and we can just list it all the things that bring fear to a mom's heart about our children and what's happening in the schools and the laws that are being passed and things that are going on. But what I love about our ministry is we don't stay there. This is hope. Prayer is hope. We have a mighty God and it says when we cry out to Him, the tide of battle turns. Yep. Satan is out to steal and to kill and destroy our children. But moms are saying, "No, you cannot have my child in the name of Jesus. And through your word, we ask God that they will not be Christians sitting on the

fence, but they will be mighty women and men of God, Jesus lovers pouring out truth to their generation."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, our listeners are beginning to get an idea of why I'm so excited to have you here. Describe how the ministry operates. How does a mom in Oshkosh or someplace organize and get started on gathering together to pray? First of all, do you have to ask the school for permission?

Fern Nichols: No, I so appreciate you asking that. We don't pray in the school. We pray for the school. Now, if you pray for a Christian school, then that's a different situation. But what I love about this ministry, and this is God's ministry, I had no idea I was starting anything. I was just desperate for my four children. And really all I did is I asked one other mom and I called her on the phone and I said, "Linda, will you take time out of your busy schedule to come pray with me for our kids at that junior high school?" God had already prepared her heart. We thought of a few other moms and that next week there were five of us in my home and that was truly the humble, desperate, crying out vision of this ministry. It's His. He is raising up all these women in 145 countries and what's-

Dr. James Dobson: Are they really functioning? You have women who are gathering together regularly. What is it, weekly?

Fern Nichols: Yes. Many weekly or as often as they can possibly meet, because like in Moldova, they have to go by the seasons because they have to plant and harvest. So sometimes they will stay all day after their church service and pray once a month, but they'll pray three or four hours. So it kind of works different with the different countries, but some countries have maybe five groups, some may have 5,000. So it's just what God is doing and how He is reaching the hearts of these women to gather together to pray. The multiplied prayer when in agreement before the throne is so powerful, Dr. Dobson. He's in the midst. His presence is there when we come together. The body of Christ is praying. And when I hear that other mom pray for my child, well, we have Kleenexes all the time because it's like, how did she know I needed that prayer for my child because my faith is weak right now and hers is strong. But you know what, Dr. Dobson? She's not living with that boy. So she can pray in faith.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the reason I captured this vision is because I've always felt that if you could ever mobilize women, women of faith, Christian women who care about their families, if you could ever get that organized, there's no stopping it. And that's what you did, Fern, and I've always appreciated you for it.

Fern Nichols: Well, I give all the glory to God because like I said, this is His ministry. If I or even Sally died today, it would continue because He is the one that started it. And what's so, I want to just give Him so much honor and glory is that He has brought people like you in my life to spread this news. He has brought me so many women giftings that I did not have that were needed in what an organizational ministry would look like, and He has done that.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we're going to introduce Sally in a moment, but tell me who all these women are. Are they just prayer, not just. Are they prayer warriors or are they leaders or are they area coordinators? What are these women doing?

Fern Nichols: These women, first of all, are in a Moms in Prayer group and they would not miss it for anything because they know the seriousness of what is happening today. And so they are in a group. Some are leaders of the group. God has called them to lead the group. Some women have said, "Oh my goodness, there's nobody to lead the group." And then the other lady will say, "Well, why don't you lead it?" And she said, "I've never led anything in my whole life." But what's so wonderful about our little Moms in Prayer booklet is step by step, it tells her how to do that. Then some get a bigger vision like for their area and they say, "Oh my goodness, we have to have a Moms in Prayer group in every school in our area." So she then becomes an area coordinator. Then maybe that area coordinator gets the bigger vision.

She could be then a regional coordinator over many schools. And then there's a woman that God raises up to actually have such a desire and passion and vision that every school in her state would have a Moms in Prayer group where moms were reading to pray for every child, every teacher, every coach. And I think today we have what, 32 state coordinators? Then we have a national director, we have country coordinators, but it's God, the Holy Spirit that's calling them. And when they are called, they are dynamite.

Roger Marsh: Great conversation today here on this National Day of Prayer edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, Dr. Dobson's guest, Fern Nichols and Sally Burke, and a panel of 25 other ladies who represent Moms in Prayer from the state of Colorado. We'll take a quick break and when we come back, we'll hear the conclusion of today's edition of Family Talk.

Here's today's Dr. Dobson Minute with Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: Many women these days report feeling anxious and insecure about the task of raising their sons. Well, a friend of mine, the late Jean Lush, wrote a wonderful book on this subject appropriately called *Mothers and Sons*. First, she said that mothers should recognize that it's very normal for little boys to be difficult. Emerging masculinity can be a boisterous and destructive force. Mothers should also learn to anticipate their son's energy level and look for ways to channel that force into competition, football, basketball, soccer, or other physical activity, because boys need this outlet for the testosterone that surges within. Also, mothers should keep in mind that their little boys are still under construction. Someone referred to them as wet cement, which I think says it very well.

Roger Marsh: For more information, visit drdobsonminute.org.

Moms are so very, very important in the lives of their children, and today's edition to Family Talk is no exception as we underscore the need for Moms in Prayer. Here now is the conclusion of today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, how did you get them all here today? Where are they from? Call out your state. Where are you from? Nearly all of them local? Or in the state of Colorado?

Fern Nichols: In the state of Colorado.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, that means people drove to get here today.

Fern Nichols: Yeah, because they wanted to see you.

Dr. James Dobson: You're a flatterer is what you are, Fern. All right.

Fern Nichols: I wanted to see you.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you've been here once before, and then of course you were with me at Family Talk. Fern, you have been at this, as I calculate, for 27 years?

Fern Nichols: 30 years.

Dr. James Dobson: 30 years.

Fern Nichols: 30 years.

Dr. James Dobson: My goodness.

Fern Nichols: I know. I have old kids. So they must have an older mom.

Dr. James Dobson: How have they made it? Are they doing okay?

Fern Nichols: Oh my goodness, Dr. Dobson. I can't even tell you the gratefulness in my heart of God's faithfully answering prayers for them. A couple of them went their own little direction for a while. The story I could tell you about my oldest son, who actually you aired his testimony as a prodigal and coming back to the Lord. I mean, just full-fledged to the Lord. He's a godly daddy and husband and is really a Jesus coach to kids on his team, is studying at a seminary right now. I mean, and to think of where he was, but the power of God through prayer, and I just want to encourage moms, I tell you, love them and pray for them.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Yeah. There are undoubtedly many, many thousands of moms who are listening to us right now who have prodigals at home and they have no idea what to do because there's such anger and there's such rebellion. They go to their knees, don't they?

Fern Nichols: They go to their knees and we have this wonderful mat illustration in Mark 2, when the four friends put their paralytic friend on the mat and took him to Jesus and the house was so crowded, they couldn't squeeze through, but they were audacious. They didn't say to the poor little man, "Oh, so sorry. Jesus is busy today. We just can't get through no." They dug a hole in this man's roof and lowered their friend down. And I can just imagine, Dr. Dobson, them peeking down, expecting a miracle. And this is what we do every single week. We are expecting a miracle as we together pray the Word and the will of God, and that's what gives us confidence and hope in our prayers.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my. That brings tears to my eyes. That is such a worthy ministry and calling. We were in the conference room before coming in here and we talked a little bit and you all quoted a Scripture that I love. And in fact, I was looking for it and had trouble finding it just recently. And then you all come here and minister to me by quoting that Scripture. It's Revelation 5, starting with ...

Fern Nichols: Verse eight.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. Read it for us.

Fern Nichols: It says, "And when he had taken it from the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the lamb, each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." So can you imagine tens of thousands of little groups of moms and the incense rising to the very throne of God on behalf of this generation of children?

Dr. James Dobson: Doesn't it say it's a sweet smelling savor?

Fern Nichols: Oh, I think that's according to your ... No.

Dr. James Dobson: That's in there. I've got to find it.

Fern Nichols: Okay. Girls find it.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, just think about that. Think about what the Lord has offered to us here. Yes. He is saying that you have loved ones who are away from the Lord, away from the faith. You can put a prayer in those golden bowls and they will be there. Whether you found it in the Scripture or not, I'm telling you that becomes a sweet, smelling sweet.

Fern Nichols: I believe you. I believe you.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. But what an opportunity.

Fern Nichols: I kind of imagine it like this. So here's my golden piece, my golden bowl for Ty. And I am praying for this boy to give his heart back to Jesus and love Him with all his heart. And then another mom comes and she starts pouring her prayer in

that same bowl. And then another mom comes and the incense, can you imagine for just that one child coming before the Lord? And it drips over the side. And I'm saying, "Bring me another bowl."

Dr. James Dobson: And you've filled a lot of them through the years.

Fern Nichols: Oh, with a lot of tears too.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. Now, let's go back to what we were just talking about. 30 years that you've been doing this work and you're going to step back or step down?

Fern Nichols: I'm stepping back. And what I'm so excited about is, again, the providential work of the Lord in this ministry. It's His ministry. He began it and I've seen His faithfulness for 30 years and He's continuing to do so. About six years ago, the Lord laid upon my heart that I really needed to seriously pray about succession in light of not only touching the next generation, but what God had for me. And what's so exciting is the Holy Spirit does speak, right? In June, it was like the Holy Spirit said it, now's the time. And the reason why now is the time is God had raised up Sally Burke 25 years ago, and you're going to hear a powerful testimony from her. And she was just-

Dr. James Dobson: And she's sitting here.

Fern Nichols: She's sitting here, right here. And she, as a young area coordinator, did a Moms in Prayer event and asked me to come speak. So I expected maybe 50 to 100 women or something. We come to this church and they're like 500 women. And she did amazing things through the power of the Holy Spirit as she just in that whole valley, all of the schools that were covered. Six years ago, we needed a director for international ministry because it was just exploding. The Holy Spirit laid upon my heart, Sally. No other name came to my mind. And so she has been actually on staff working at headquarters for six years. I got to see her up, close and personal. She is a servant leader. She loves God with all of her heart and she is so passionate about this ministry that I knew that I knew that I knew. I didn't tell my board who God had laid upon my heart because I wanted God to speak to them so that the confirmation would truly have been, this is God's chosen woman.

Dr. James Dobson: All right. You have also changed the name of Moms in Touch.

Fern Nichols: Yes. We changed the name of Moms in Touch. It wasn't translating touch very well. And so-

Dr. James Dobson: You mean internationally?

Fern Nichols: Internationally. It wasn't translating. And we thought, well, why don't we just say what we do? Moms in Touch, people would say, "Well, what's that?"

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Fern Nichols: When we say Moms in Prayer-

Dr. James Dobson: That communicates.

Fern Nichols: That definitely communicates.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay, Sally, welcome. Thank you. And how long have you been in this responsibility now?

Sally Burke: Just about a month and a half.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. And you're the president now?

Sally Burke: Yes. I am.

Dr. James Dobson: And now let's talk a little bit about your background, because I think it's really interesting. You have been a space engineer for the space shuttle.

Sally Burke: That's correct.

Dr. James Dobson: How in the world did you get from there to here?

Sally Burke: When I had my second ... I guess when I had my first child, I was just a burden to raise my child and come home from work. Anybody could put a space shuttle up, but not anybody can raise my child. And so I just desired to come home and put my children first.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you miss the hubbub and the excitement of this space program?

Sally Burke: Oh, Mom's in Prayer has so much more than you could ever imagine. I got to tell you.

Dr. James Dobson: You really mean that?

Sally Burke: Oh, with all my heart. Lives are so transformed through these four powerful steps. In my kid's elementary school, I have to share this with you. God placed on a burden for us to pray for our kids. Well, then He expanded our heartbeat for every child on that campus. And it was so sweet of Him because it was like, may every child hear the good news.

Well, I didn't know that there were Good News Clubs. I was pretty new to the faith when I came to Moms in Prayer. And so we just kept praying. Every child made they hear the good news. Pretty soon we had a yearbook, so we got to pray for them by name. Well, within a couple years, God brought us a Good News Club on this public school campus. Over a hundred kids would come

there. They would hear the good news and I got the great privilege of volunteering. And at first I was handing out snacks. Well, so many kids wanted to receive Jesus. They said, "We need you over here." And so I'd look at one of these little faces that I had prayed for and I would ask them, "What do you want? I want Jesus." It's so exciting. And I said, "Nobody can snatch you out of the Father's hand." I see them today and they are now graduating from college.

They're in ministry. Their hearts are still so excited for Jesus and they know it's because of answer to prayer. They still stay connected with me. One young lady, it was my son's best friend and she went on to college not knowing Jesus. And she writes me this letter, "You are my spiritual mommy. I know you prayed. This is why I receive Jesus." Now, that is something that's far greater than anything you can imagine.

Roger Marsh:

You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a conversation Dr. Dobson had with Fern Nichols and Sally Burke of Moms in Prayer International. Be sure to join us again next time for part two of this inspiring discussion, go to jdfi.net. And speaking of moms and prayers, remember that today is the National Day of Prayer. It's a day when millions of Americans come together to seek God's face on behalf of our great nation. This day also holds a special place in the heart of our ministry here at the JDFI. Dr. Dobson's beloved wife, Shirley Dobson, served as the chair of the National Day of Prayer Task Force for 25 years. Through her leadership, she mobilized tens of thousands of prayer gatherings from coast to coast, and her decades of faithful leadership help remind our country that no challenge is too great when we bring it before the Lord. We invite you to join us today, go to jdfi.net. You'll find special resources there, including an interview featuring Shirley Dobson, also a special booklet on how to purposefully pray for the United States of America. So you'll find all that information at jdfi.net.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. On behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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