



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Rebellious Teenagers – Part 1

Guest(s): Pastor Raul Ries, Rev. Franklin Graham, and Pastor Mike MacIntosh

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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 division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and if you're a parent who's been lying awake at night wondering if your rebellious child will ever come back to the Lord, I have good news. Today's program is for you. We are reaching back into our archives to bring you a powerful conversation from four decades ago when Dr. James Dobson sat down with three men who were once angry, defiant, and lost, but who each encountered Jesus Christ and went on to become pastors and ministry leaders. One grew up with an abusive alcoholic father and was literally holding a loaded gun waiting to kill his wife and children when he heard the gospel on television and surrendered his life to Jesus Christ. Another came from a broken home and endured the trauma of abuse, lost his brother in a car accident at the age of 15, and literally then spiraled into heavy drug use and that was before God pulled him back from the brink. And the third, well, he is the son of Billy Graham himself who rebelled not out of trauma, but simply because he wanted to live life on his own terms. The men in question are Franklin Graham, Raul Ries and Mike MacIntosh. Each took a different path into rebellion, but they all found the same way. Out here now is Dr. James Dobson to introduce our three guests on this classic edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: This program has a very interesting twist to it. I think it started with an idea. Most of our programs began with an idea that we think might be helpful to someone or useful in their family life or useful to the Lord. And I had an idea that I thought would make a good broadcast, but it occurred to me that there are now religious leaders, Christian leaders, who are very effective for the Lord who have large ministries and a great following, and yet they came the path of rebellion when they were teenagers. They were very difficult to get along with and their parents had all kinds of problems with them. And so I thought it would be interesting to bring these three men into the studio and ask them what were they thinking back there? What was the source of all that anger and all that rebellion and all that resistance against their parents?

Help us understand. What I was really trying to do is to get a fix on what goes on in the mind of a teenager and to give some encouragement to the parents who

have one who's going through that maybe your son or daughter could go on to become a great Christian minister. Don't despair too quickly on what's going on during those years of hormonal upheaval. And so that was the idea behind the program and we brought these three men in the studio. And the first voice that I want to identify is that of Franklin Graham, who now serves as the president and CEO of the international relief agency, Samaritan's Purse. But he remains equally committed to evangelism as his father was and is, Dr. Billy Graham. This year he is going to be speaking at several high energy revival festivals around the world, including one in Angola and the Ukraine, and even in my old neighborhood of Shreveport, Louisiana where I was born.

Many people have seen the *Time Magazine* earlier this year, which listed Franklin as one of the 25 most influential evangelicals in America. The second voice was that of Mike MacIntosh, who's been a pastor of a thriving congregation at Horizon Christian Fellowship in the San Diego area for the past 30 years. He's the founder and president of Horizon International and the evangelistic arm of his church, which ministers throughout the world in areas such as Poland, Romania, and China. Mike also serves as president of Youth Development International, an organization which provides assistance and counseling to thousands of young people across North America. And finally another friend of mine, Pastor Raul Ries, who has since 1979, led two different Calvary Chapel congregations in Southern California and is currently based in the city of Diamond Bar. He was born in Mexico City. Raul endured a very rough childhood and is now passionate to reach the lost for Christ. He has two purple hearts for his service in Vietnam and he has earned an eighth degree black belt in martial arts. So those are the three individuals, the three voices, and we brought 'em in the studio for over an hour and what we're going to hear now is that blast from the past from 1986.

It has been said, Raul, that you were perhaps the world's most unlikely individual to have become a minister. Explain what that means.

Pastor Raul Ries: Well, I was one of those rebellious teenagers, not only my teens but also my adulthood where I didn't really like anybody. My problem was never drugs. I just had a real hatefulness in my heart for people because of the things that I had seen when I was a kid, and I grew up with that real deep in my heart.

Dr. James Dobson: What was your early childhood like?

Pastor Raul Ries: My early childhood was I was born in Mexico City where my dad was an alcoholic. He was a businessman, but he had problems drinking, real bad. Abusing of my mom and the children coming home and beating up on my mom and not being able to really speak to us, but by pushing and shoving and breaking things and coming home with his hands bloody from fighting in the streets and doing people in.

Dr. James Dobson: Did he ever abuse you?

Pastor Raul Ries: He abused me a couple of times, but see, I was so uptight and so mad that I would always think in my mind of going into the kitchen and grabbing a knife and cutting his throat. That was my picture in my mind.

Dr. James Dobson: You really wanted to kill him?

Pastor Raul Ries: Yes. As a matter of fact, when I came back from Vietnam, one time I was just back and he shoved me, he pushed me and I went into the kitchen. I grabbed one of those big butcher knives and I said, next time you touch me, I'm going to cut your throat. And he knew then that he had to put a stop to because I would do it.

Dr. James Dobson: Would you have done it?

Roger Marsh: I would've done it in my heart.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you also rebellious against the school and against all forms of authority?

Pastor Raul Ries: Yes. I was mad at, I mean the police right here in Ball Park, they knew how I used to be because I would rebel against everything and anything. And the reason for that I believe in my heart is because I was angry at my mother and my father and I wasn't getting love. I was the guy that was always going to be the rejected one. I was never going to amount to anything and they would always praise my brother and my sisters, but they would never praise me.

Dr. James Dobson: How in the world did you come to know the Lord out of that atmosphere?

Pastor Raul Ries: Well, about 1972, I had gotten married to a Christian woman that was backslidden and had given her life back to the Lord and the Lord Jesus Christ had been really dealing with my life, but I wasn't aware of it where my wife was praying for me and I had come home to kill my wife that night, my kids, because she was getting ready to leave me after five and a half years of abuse.

Dr. James Dobson: You were sitting there in the living room with a gun waiting for them to come home.

Pastor Raul Ries: Right. And see, I did the same thing my dad did. I started abusing my wife and my children and I was tired. I was making all kinds of money in the martial arts and I was doing good secular wise, but not in the Lord. And that night I loaded my gun and waited for her to come home and she never did come home and Pastor Chuck Smith was on TV during the hippie movement and I turned the television on and they were given testimony and that night the Lord spoke to my heart and I accepted Jesus into my life.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that incredible?

Pastor Raul Ries: I had a total change.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you really a new creature?

Pastor Raul Ries: Oh yes. You know what? It was like a weight of blackness in my heart that was lifted up in my soul and I felt the Holy Spirit come into my life.

Dr. James Dobson: How old were you at that time?

Pastor Raul Ries: 24 years old.

Dr. James Dobson: Did your relationship with your wife then begin to tell me what happened?

Pastor Raul Ries: My wife didn't believe it. My wife, when she came home, she was at church and so I ran to this church to go to the altar call and I came back home. I knocked on the door and I said, "Honey, guess what? I am born again." And she closed the door right on my face. She didn't want to believe it, so she opened the door and it took about a year to really see the change in my life as she began to see me get into the Word and drive out to Chuck's church and begin to get rooted in grounded in God's Word.

Dr. James Dobson: And then you started your own ministry with seven or eight people.

Pastor Raul Ries: Right. The Lord gave me a calling to start, have a Bible study in my home to go back to my old high school and start ministering to the young kids, and we started with seven kids and for about four years we had about 25 people and then it just blew up afterwards. The Lord just really blessed us.

Dr. James Dobson: 5,000 people on Sunday now. That must be staggering to you given where you came from.

Pastor Raul Ries: I can't even believe I'm ministering the gospel, but it's really exciting.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, our second guest is Franklin Graham, who's president of Samaritan's Purse, which is an international ministry that provides assistance to missionaries and national pastors among other things. He's also president of World Medical Missions, which is a sister organization to Samaritan's Purse. Franklin, you also came through a time of rebellion, did you not?

Rev. Franklin Graham: Yes, sir. That's correct.

Dr. James Dobson: And it started very early or during the teen years?

Rev. Franklin Graham: I would have to say it probably starts early and develops more as you get into your teenage years. And really, I never rebelled against anything that my parents taught or what they stood for. I just decided I was going to live my own life and I was going to do those things that made me happy, those things that pleased me and I was going to taste and sample and take a bite of everything, whether my parents liked it or not.

Dr. James Dobson: There will be those who are listening to us who connect your last name, Graham, with your accent and will recognize who your father is. Of course, Dr. Billy Graham. Did you rebel against being his son and being in the limelight? What did that influence have on the rebellion that you later experienced?

Rev. Franklin Graham: Not as much as people would think. My father was a very wise and of course my mother. They raised us children, not in a country club type setting. We lived in a very rural area of Western North Carolina in the mountains, and so we were not under the glass, so to speak. We were just accepted for who we were. If I had lived in a city where we would've had a lot of contact, it would've been very difficult for me. I did rebel in some cases because people expected me to be something that I wasn't.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you resent the notoriety that your father had?

Rev. Franklin Graham: Sometimes I did. I can't explain it. Yes, you do resent it. You resent all of his attention going to other people. You resent the fact that he comes home and he's tired and you want to go play ball and he doesn't. You resent the fact that he gets on an airplane and then he's gone for six weeks or two months.

Dr. James Dobson: He traveled nine months out of the year when you were little, didn't he? I think I read that someplace.

Rev. Franklin Graham: That's correct. I remember there was one time he was gone for one period, six months straight when he had crusades in Australia, but God made up for it. God always sent another man to be in my life. A man that was a father type image who at that particular period of my life met a particular need. God used men at the right time. My father never deserted us. He loved us. And when he came home, he tried his best to make his time with his quality time and he would try his best to go camping and do the things that he didn't care about, but he would do 'em anyway with us children.

Dr. James Dobson: In an article I read, you said you always had access to him even when he was out of town.

Rev. Franklin Graham: Always had access. I can never remember a time where my father has ever locked the door and said that we couldn't see him. If I wanted to see him, I remember I was little. He sent me to a boarding school in New York. He was afraid that I was going to turn out to be a real hick, I guess there in the mountains of North Carolina. But I went to a boarding school in New York, which I really hated and really dreaded. I was leaving for school and I needed some money and he was having his board meetings there in Montreat and I wanted to go in and see him. I'd already said goodbye to him, but I was really wanting to get some more money from him. But I remember I went to the board meeting and T.W. Wilson, his assistant was there and I said, "Uncle T," which that's what we call him, "would you mind going in and asking Daddy if he could just come here for a moment?"

He said, "No, Franklin, you come on in the room." And I walked into the room and my father stopped the whole board meeting, introduced me to all of his board members, and then he took about to 30 or 40 minutes with me. And most of the time we were just a general conversation, but yet he took that time and that's all of his life. He's always done that. He's taken time with his children. I don't care if the President of the United States, and he took me to the White House when I was young where he and I would go spend the night with President Johnson and then later when President Nixon was in the White House, so he would do things with me.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, comparing your background with Raul's, he had something to rebel against. He was unloved, he was abused. He saw an awful lot that made him angry. You are saying your rebellion did not grow out of legitimate reasons. It was just there for some reason.

Rev. Franklin Graham: Well, I think it's legitimate reasons. I think it's just the evil nature of man's heart.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that's good.

Rev. Franklin Graham: And I was wanting all of those things in life that I thought would please me, that Christian parents are telling you not to have: the girlfriends, or whether it's the drinking or whether it was tobacco or marijuana, these are things that I was going to find out for myself and I wasn't going to take advice from my parents. So it was just the evil nature of heart of Franklin Graham.

Dr. James Dobson: Not all rebellion grows out of parental mistakes. Boy, I wish every Christian knew that. Some rebellion is just in the heart of men, Franklin, as you say. Some of it is just an independent desire for power and for selfishness, and I'll have my own way. And while your parents made a lot of mistakes Raul, and I'm sure yours did too, Franklin, nobody's perfect, but yours represented a free choice. And kids do have a free choice, and we have to recognize that. And it isn't appropriate in every context to say, where did I go wrong? When you've given the best you've got and it wasn't good enough, you found the Lord about 20, 22 years of age, I guess.

Rev. Franklin Graham: I was 22 years old when I really gave my heart to the Lord and made Him the Lord of my life. At the age of eight, I invited Christ into my heart. But be honest, I don't think I really made Him the Lord of my life. I don't think I knew what Lordship meant at eight years of age.

Dr. James Dobson: If you learned at 22, you did better than a lot of people do. Well, our third guest is Mike MacIntosh, who is the senior pastor of the Horizon Christian Fellowship in San Diego. Mike, I know that you experimented with drugs, Franklin, you mentioned marijuana. Is that as far into the drug lifestyle as you went?

Rev. Franklin Graham: Yes, sir. That is.

Dr. James Dobson: You got into heavier stuff, didn't you, Mike?

Pastor Mike MacIntosh: Right. Franklin, I'd like to touch on a couple of things he brought up. One is that he said that it wasn't when he was a teenager that the rebellion started. It started earlier than that. That's how it was with me too. It just really came to fruition my teenage years. And secondly though, his father traveled, he recognized the strong need for a father figure in his life, and I didn't have the father figure, and that always made me a little uptight.

Dr. James Dobson: Now you were from a broken home.

Pastor Mike MacIntosh: From a broken home, right. My father, who's still alive, is an alcoholic and a gambler at 78 years old, and I never knew my father. In fact, in the last four years is the most I've ever seen him in my life. And that was through him seeing me on television and preaching in the Portland Coliseum one night. But I had a stepfather and I thought my stepfather would be the answer, and it took me off the farm from a foster home. And then when he divorced my mother, my life began to fall apart at 10, 11, 12 years old. And by the time I got to high school, that's when all the hostility that was in me from the time I remember back to four or five years old just really came unglued.

Dr. James Dobson: You were abused when you were in that foster home, weren't you?

Pastor Mike MacIntosh: Well, later when I had my experience with LSD through psychotherapy, it came out that that was a big part of my problem that I had repressed over the years, that the man of that house had molested me a couple of times. I would never confront that issue in my life and I always wondered why I partied so much and chased so many girls, and I realized I was trying to identify my masculinity and to repress that, and I had so much bitterness and hatred and anger as a little guy from that having happened to me. And I was always a fight away from anybody that would light my fuse.

Dr. James Dobson: Mike, we played a trick on you and Raul, and I don't know if you all know it yet, this may come as a surprise to you, but we called your mothers and we talked to 'em. I called your mom, at least a member of our staff did and asked what she remembers about your rebellious adolescent years and so on. And she wasn't aware of a lot of it.

Pastor Mike MacIntosh : Oh, really?

Dr. James Dobson: You got away with it. But she said the worst rebellion occurred when your brother was killed in a car accident.

Pastor Mike MacIntosh: That devastated me When I was about 12, I made a commitment to Jesus. I said I wanted to accept him as my savior in a Baptist church and never followed that up, though I was the president of our youth group in high school at that time was the largest high school in western Mississippi. And I was trying to find Jesus,

but I had nobody guiding me to the Scriptures or discipling me. And that afternoon when a friend of my brother's pulled up beside me on the street and said, get in the car, and I said, what's the matter? And they said that we want to tell you that your brother was killed day in an auto accident. I was 15, and my life was never the same from that time until about 30 years old. Even after having been a Christian. The bitterness I had against life coming from the broken family, the alcoholism in the family, living in a foster home, having nobody to help me though I was always trying. I was given a real sharp mind by the Lord that made me so angry at life that I predetermined my heart, that I was going to push and push and push and push until I meant somebody big enough to set me down. And of course, that ended up being Jesus Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: If we had to characterize what you were feeling at that time by one particular emotion, would anger be the emotion. Raul, is that what you were feeling?

Pastor Raul Ries: That was what I was feeling, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You were mad, real mad. Who were you mad at?

Pastor Raul Ries: I was mad at everybody. My mom, my dad, my brothers, my sisters, the whole...

Dr. James Dobson: The police.

Pastor Raul Ries: The police, everybody.

Dr. James Dobson: School teachers.

Pastor Raul Ries: Everybody. I mean, they kicked me out of school so many times. I didn't even care.

Dr. James Dobson: Why were you so angry? I mean, you've told us about this stormy, troubled childhood, but is there anything else we can get a handle on here?

Pastor Raul Ries: You know what, Dr. Dobson, I think deep down in my life, looking at everything in my life, going to nightclubs with my dad and seeing my father getting drunk, and

Dr. James Dobson: That's still tender down there. Isn't that interesting? All those years later, you can still feel what you felt at that moment.

Pastor Raul Ries: It was a real hard part of my life.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you stand and watch him?

Pastor Raul Ries: Oh yeah. He would leave me outside while he got drunk.

Dr. James Dobson: Did it embarrass you?

Pastor Raul Ries: Yes, it did.

Dr. James Dobson: Franklin, how about you? Is there that kind of anger? Were you feeling the same things where you were just looking for life?

Rev. Franklin Graham: I was just looking for life and was on kind of a roll. I wanted to get all that I could get, and there were things that I was forced to do that I didn't want to do. I had to go to school to New York, and that's the last place I ever wanted to go was up north. I was a southern boy and to put me into that type of setting, and then I got into high school in the south, we were taught respect for our parents, for our teachers. And I went into a private school in New York where the children showed absolutely no respect for anybody or anything, total disrespect for authority. And I just have to say that that rubbed off on me. And as a result of that, going back south to finish my education, I had no respect and I just was going to get all I could.

Dr. James Dobson: That confirms a view of mine. I've watched that happen where you have a class that starts in kindergarten and the first grade and second grade, and a large number of those kids stay together throughout the elementary school years. And if they get four or five bad teachers, teachers who allow them to get away with the kind of thing you're talking about, or if the principal does not represent somebody that they respect, you can establish disrespect in their minds. You can give them a disdain for authority that follows them into adolescence and even into adult life. You can destroy kids that way. That's why I feel so strongly about discipline in the classroom, and I know you guys feel the same way about that. Raul, we passed over your emotion there pretty fast. But isn't it interesting that at your age and with the success God has given you in the ministry that He's placed you in, that there's still that tender spot there from childhood? Those years stay with us forever, don't they?

Pastor Raul Ries: You just never get away from, it's like I remembered the story where you could get a board and you can nail the nails, take the nails up, and the scars remained, and it's always there in my heart, but it's neat to see the Lord Jesus Christ work in my life and working in all these guys' life. I love these guys.

Dr. James Dobson: Have those experiences now made it possible for you to understand other people in your ministry who are going through those kind of hard times?

Pastor Raul Ries: Yes. It's really neat because he's given me a real compassion for those. I like working with these tough guys because I can really relate to them because deep inside, we really want to be humble by the Lord, deep.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, gentlemen, we're just getting started. We've just met you and there's a whole lot more that you can say to us, so let's just continue the conversation next time and raw appreciate your opening yourself in that way.

Roger Marsh: What a gift it is to hear from men who have literally walked through the fire and come out on the other side with a testimony that can strengthen someone else's faith. You're listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, featuring a classic conversation Dr. Dobson had with Franklin Graham, Raul Reese, and Mike MacIntosh. Now, Mike MacIntosh has since gone on to be with the Lord, but as we think about the vitality of these testimonies, it's just so amazing to see how God used all three of these men during their earthly existence to have an impact on the kingdom in such a powerful way. And now here once again is Dr. James Dobson with some closing thoughts.

Dr. James Dobson: We're talking to some parents today who I think needed to hear this and frankly to hear the rest of the interview next time. I know we all make mistakes and the Lord is wonderfully able to restore the years. The locusts they've eaten is evidenced by the testimonies that we heard today. But perhaps there's a mom or a dad listening out there who needs to be reminded of just how far reaching their impact is when they pursue a divorce or when they don't deal with a child's addictive behaviors or when the parent themselves is alcoholic or has other problems that aren't handled. Two of the men we heard from today still have the scars from what happened back there. Yes, the Lord can heal those wounds, but wouldn't it be better if they were prevented in the first place? Maybe that's one of the messages from this interview.

Roger Marsh: Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time for part two of this classic interview featuring Franklin Graham Raul Reese and Mike Macintosh that's coming up right here on the next 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.