Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Have Walked with the Living God – Part 1
Guest(s): Pat Robertson
Air Date: November 5, 2026

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. You know, some lives are measured by accomplishments. Others are remembered for the way that one decision of faith changed everything that followed. Well, on today's Family Talk broadcast, we're looking back to a conversation featuring a couple of titans of Christian media, Dr. James Dobson and his longtime friend, Pat Robertson. Now, both Dr. Dobson and Pat Robertson are with the Lord, but you may remember that Pat was a Christian broadcaster and the longtime host of the 700 Club. But behind that public ministry was a journey that began long before the cameras ever turned on. During the next half hour, you're going to hear how a young man with a law degree, a military background, and different plans for his future encountered Jesus Christ. And you'll hear how that faith would eventually lead him to take enormous risks. to step into unfamiliar territory, and to trust God when the future seemed anything but certain. This is a conversation about calling, obedience, and learning to recognize God's hand through every season of life. Let's get to it right now. Here's Dr. James Dobson to introduce his friend Pat Robertson on today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Doboon: Pat, it's so good to have you here.

Pat Robertson: Well, Jim, it's good to be with you. We've been friends for so many years and I congratulate you on all the work you've been doing. So it's a joy to be with you today.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I was on your program many times and it's about time you were on mine.

Pat Robertson: Well, thanks for returning the favor. It's my pleasure.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, you're still going strong and we are very honored to have you join us. I want to start by reading just a portion of your bio from your book, and it is most impressive. Pat graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor in arts from Washington and Lee University. He has a juris doctorate from Yale Law School and a master of divinity from New York Theological Seminary. He's written 21 books, including *The Secret Kingdom*, which was the number one religious book

in America. Pat and his wife, Dede, have four children, 14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Pat, I'm going to start by asking you to name them all. You know I was kidding, don't you?

Pat Robertson: I know you were, and by the way, I'm up now to 17 great-grandchildren. Two more going, so I'll have 19 before the ones that are in the womb are born. So I'm getting there. 19 great-grandchildren.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's start with a health report. How are you doing these days?

Pat Robertson: I'm doing great. I've got an old car. I've got a pacemaker that keeps my heart going, and I had my prostate taken out and I don't have one of them, so I don't have cancer, and I had a fall off a horse. I broke eight ribs and I've had a bunch of stuff going on over the years, but I'm still going strong. And for that, I work out about three times a week and lift weights and do all that. So I'm very vigorous.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, praise the Lord. In 2011, I fell off a horse too. I grew up in Texas and so I was very, very familiar with horses and feel comfortable on them. The horse was just standing. We weren't even moving. And I had a $500 Texas hat on that somebody had given me, and I liked it. It was white and the wind blew and that hat blew off. And I reached over to get it and my foot came out of the stirrup and I went down and I landed on a six gun and I broke my scapula and my clavicle. I was in the hospital for 17 days so-

Pat Robertson: My goodness.

Dr. James Dobson: I've done what you've done.

Pat Robertson: Well, I really enjoy it. I was riding what they called dressage. I was into a high level dressage and I had some great horses, but this one horse spooked, a dog started chasing him and he took off and I lost the stirrup and he just was wild. I tried my best to control him and I couldn't do it. And finally I went off and oh boy, the rest they say is history. I was bleeding to death. My spleen was torn all to pieces. But anyhow, I'm all recovered, Jim. I'm good as gold.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, I just quoted a few of your accomplishments, but that wasn't even the beginning of it. Of course, I didn't even mention the *700 Club* and you're the founder of Regent University and so many other accomplishments. You have had a very full life, haven't you?

Pat Robertson: It's been amazing. I was coming out of seminary and I was asking God what to do, and he led me very clearly to come to Tidewater, Virginia and to buy an old television station. I only had $70. I didn't even own a television set and I didn't know anything about television. And God said, "Buy a station." And here this old station had been taken off the air and I came down and began that first ministry. It was a miracle. That was 1961. It's been quite a time since.

Dr. James Dobson: You talk about starting from scratch. You really had to begin putting it together from virtually nothing and look what the Lord has done with it. Pat, let's go back to your childhood. Your father was a U.S. senator, wasn't he?

Pat Robertson: He was a senator. He went to Congress when I was two years old, and he served for about 14 years in the House of Representatives. And then he was elevated to the United States Senate. He served 20 years in the Senate, so he was there about 34 years. And I laughingly say when I was two that I first learned mama, and then I learned daddy, and then I learned constituent. And all I heard about was, "Don't do that. What will the constituents think?" And so I grew up trying to behave myself in the public arena because of what the constituents would think.

Dr. James Dobson: So did you spend time hanging around the U.S. Capitol?

Pat Robertson: I worked up there for the appropriations committee when I was in law school. I had my first congressional campaign. It was crazy. I was in the 7th grade and we had something called Robertson for Congress and I was in that little committee and it was sort of a joke because I was just a kid, but I was involved in politics from the early get go. And so I ran for president and in my book is quite a story of how I got that going.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, I want to know more about that. Were your mom and dad both Christians?

Pat Robertson: My father was the son of a Baptist preacher. He kind of made a decision. He was a youngster. But at my mother's funeral, my father knelt down beside the bed where we were and I led him to Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: When did you first give your heart to the Lord?

Pat Robertson: I was about 23 years old I think. I'd told my mother that I had wanted to go into religious work and my mother was a deeply committed Christian and she said, "Son, you didn't quite sound right." And I knew why because I really hadn't come to the Lord. And she said, "Well, I know these people, this guy named Cornelius Vander Brien, he might talk to you."

So I said, "All right." I'm living in New York and I was in business and I took the train down to Philadelphia and we met in this fancy hotel and he brings out this great big black Bible and puts it on the table and I was just embarrassed out of my mind. I thought, "These people are going to throw us out for being religious fanatics." And I thought, "Oh my goodness." And then he said, "All right, Pat, you are here. Tell me about your experience." And I told him and he said, "Any mhamadan could have told me what you told me. Isn't there something more?" And at that time, something came out of me and I said, "Yes, I believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world and for my sins too."

And then it was like a voice in my ear repeating something I read from the Book of Romans, which said, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God had raised you from the dead, you'll be saved." And I knew at that moment that I had come to the Lord. Boy, I was transformed. I mean, it was amazing

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't it amazing how the Scriptures can reach out and talk to you when you didn't even know what you were looking for and there it was?

Pat Robertson: Exactly. I mean, my mother had prayed for me, my aunt had dedicated me when I was just a little baby to the Lord and I had this godly heritage and I couldn't get away from it.

Dr. James Dobson: I just read something about you that I didn't know. You were a lieutenant in the Marines in Korea, weren't you?

Pat Robertson: That's right. I was assistant adjutant of the 1st Marine Division. When we were engaged, we were in a place called the Punchbowl and Heartbreak Ridge in North Korea. It was a freezing cold winter and I was there with the Marines and I'm proud of that time of service.

Dr. James Dobson: Why did you get out of the military?

Pat Robertson: Well, I was a civilian. I joined the platoon leader class when I was in college. And when I graduated from college, I got a commission in the Marines and my parents gave me a trip to Europe for a summer. And so I was over there studying at the University of London, and I went to Paris and I was sitting in one of those Paris sidewalk cafes and I was reading a paper and it said, "[inaudible 00:11:39]." I didn't know what [inaudible 00:11:40] was, but it said a group called the [inaudible 00:11:42] were being called up. Well, the [inaudible 00:11:47] was what I was. I was a lieutenant in the Marine Corps. And when I got back to America from Europe, I had orders to report to Quantico and I went there for training. And then from training, I went on over to Korea.

Dr. James Dobson: I assume you were not in combat at that time because you were a lawyer, you were in the adjutant general's office?

Pat Robertson: Well, I was in a combat unit. I've been given three battle stars so-

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Pat Robertson: Marine Corps considered it combat. I mean, I was with a combat division, but I just wasn't in the front line, although my MOS is combat infantry, so I was trained in all the skills of how to shoot people.

Dr. James Dobson: I'll bet we've just told people something that they didn't know. And here's something else that I didn't know. When you became a civilian, you lived for a time in a hippie commune in Brooklyn, New York. What was that all about?

Pat Robertson: Yeah, like Ted Turner said, "I was country before country was cool." I lived in a commune before communes were cool. When I got through seminary, the Lord gave me a Scripture, Luke 12:33, and I said, "What am I doing next?" And the things said, "Sell what you have, give to the poor and come follow me." And so I put an ad in the paper, sold my furniture, and moved in with a friend who was living in Bedford-Stuyvesant, one of the worst slums in America. He had a parsonage there. And in the parsonage was a former madam of a house of prostitution, several other people.

One guy was a big fella, he was a little bit mentally disturbed. And we were all living together in this commune. And I had my wife and two little children at the time, and we were living in that environment. And you talk about rough, I remember, Jim, I was praying, "Lord, what do I do now?" And I told my wife, I said, "Are you willing if we buy the house next door that had been a house of prostitution and we make it a mission here in Bedford-Stuyvesant?" And she said, "Okay. If the Gods wants you to do it, I'll do it and I'll be with you." And I was sitting there in that old church with a little light on and the Lord said, "Read Jeremiah 16:2." And I said, "Okay, Lord." And I opened the Bible and it was the most beautiful Scripture I think I've ever seen. It said, "Thou shall not take a wife or have children in this place." And I said, "Praise God, I'm out of here."

Dr. James Dobson: That's called proof texting.

Pat Robertson: Yeah, I told my wife, "Honey, we're leaving and pack your bag." And I had an old '53 DeSoto and we had a U-Haul trailer and a few baby beds and some pots and pans, and I took off for Virginia and they say the rest is history.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you ever practice law?

Pat Robertson: I never did. I graduated from law school, but I never practiced. I went into business right out of law school. I was with WR Grace in New York, and then I was in business with a couple of friends from law school. But I never practiced law as such, but I've sure practiced it since. I was taught corporations, I was taught SEC, I was taught tax law, and my specialty was learning how to form corporations. And I've done a lot of that since.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, tell me about Dede. When did you get married? How did you meet her and tell me about your life together?

Pat Robertson: Well, while I was in law school, they had a nursing school at Yale and they had a mixer over in the law school. I went over there to see how these girls were doing and she was trying to get away from this guy and she went over to the punch bowl to try to get away from him. When she did, she got close to the

candles and her hair caught on fire. And I showed up, Sir Galahad, and put the fire out of her hair. And of course her wonderful thing, she said, "He put the fire out of my hair and he started a fire in my heart." And so from then on, we got married not too long after that.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let's talk about the *700 Club*. How did that come about?

Pat Robertson: I was praying. I came down to Virginia and I bought this little old TV station. My first year, I think our total income was $8,000 and the second year it was $20,000. And we were struggling. I mean, I had almost nothing. And it was so a great temptation to walk out of the thing, but I was saying, "God, what do you want me to do?" And I've been reading a book about a man named Charles Mueller. You remember the one over in England that had those orphans?

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Pat Robertson: And he never asked anybody anything. He never solicited money. He always trusted the Lord. So I thought I will do the same thing. And as I was praying, God basically said to me, "I didn't call you to be George Mueller. I called you to broadcast to the world."

And I said, "Okay, Lord." So I said, "Our total need is for 700 people to give $10 a month so that'd be $7,000." And I said, "That will take care of our budget. So I started something called the *700 Club*, and we had a telethon, and our first year we got 300 people to give $10 a month," and it wasn't exactly what we needed, but about the third year of doing that, God moved in a tremendous revival. He shook the area we were living in. It was unbelievable what God did and people were being healed and one woman said, "I'm walking softly in my home because of the power of God coming through the radio station."

It was just a fabulous time, and that was the *700 Club*. And so a couple of years later, we did the same thing and God moved again. And so I thought, "Well, we'll call a program the *700 Club* because it sounds like 007, it sounds like something kind of interesting," and that that's how it started, 700 people to give $10 a month.

Dr. James Dobson: You knew then that God's hand was on you, didn't you?

Pat Robertson: I did. I did. But I tell you, a lot of times you're just young. You have to test God and God tests you and you always question, "Am I doing the right thing? Have I got it right?"

Really when you're just starting out, you're not sure, but later on, I know for sure a lot of things, but in those days, the Lord was just teaching me little by little by little. This book I've written called *I've Walked With the Living God*, God has come out of the pages of the Bible and He's been real to me step by step by step I've seen His hand.

Dr. James Dobson: This is a book of stories about your life and they're really interesting. If I can share my own experience, I was at USC School of Medicine and I felt like God wanted me to leave there and start a radio program. And we started with nothing or very little. I got a grant from Tyndale House in exchange for a book that turned out to be *The Strong-Willed Child*, and they gave me $35,000 to start the ministry with, and two years later, I had run out of money.

If all of the bills had come in, we would've been $30,000 in debt. And so one day, a friend of mine knocked on the door and he's a godly man and I invited him to come in. My mother was there and my wife, and we went into the bedroom and got on our knees and I said, "Lord, I thought that this is what You wanted me to do. I thought, I felt You're leading and we have gone on that basis, but if I did hear You right, this would be a good time to hear from You." That was in October. And in November, $60,000 came in and from there, the Lord had just revealed Himself in so many ways. I couldn't miss it. It's wonderful when that happens, isn't it?

Pat Robertson: Well, this is so amazing parallel to what I've seen, because I got down here and I was living on faith and I was going to trust God. Somehow along the way, a man came to me and he said, "Okay, I want to help you a little bit." And the next thing I know, I had run up about, oh, I think $15,000 in debt or something like that. And I said, "I can't do this to the Lord." And I said, "God, there's a particular day. If I don't hear from you, I'm going to consider that You didn't want me to do this, and I'll pack it in and whatever's here in this television thing, I'll sell and try to liquidate these debts and quit." A friend I'd known in New York came down to Virginia and I didn't know anything about it and he didn't know that I needed the money. And he came into my living room and before another thing happened, he said, "God has sent me down from New York." He said, "I want to give you something." So he handed me a check and it looked like 80. And I thought, "Well, it's $80. That's kind of sweet, but it won't meet my need." And I looked on it. It was 8,000. It was $8,000.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Pat Robertson: And it paid the bills, and it was, honestly, it was God. The night before I was going to close it all down, God heard and sent it. It's just exactly what you were talking about. Isn't it amazing how these things parallel each other?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Well, I think the Lord has to let you know that He's the source of your strength, that you think you can do it on your own. You have a whole different perspective on who runs it and He lets you struggle. He just does. People think when you're Christian, everything just goes swimmingly. But yeah, He lets you go through some difficult times and you learn from that.

Pat Robertson: That's right. Well, it is that whole idea of the chicken and the egg. If that chicken doesn't peck on that egg, the little chick, he doesn't get strong enough to live. If you try to help him and crack that shell open, he dies. He can't live. And there was a time I had to trust him for $1000 and now I have to believe him for

several hundred million. And I'm used to it. I can believe God for all kinds of things now.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, He has blessed you in everything that you've done. The title of your book is, *I Have Walked With the Living God*.

Pat Robertson: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Pat, we're out of time, but if you don't mind, I'd like to just continue to talk to you and we'll let people hear this next time.

Pat Robertson: Okay. That'll be fine.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. It's a pleasure to have you on. I have respect for you and we want to talk about your presidential run and other things, so stay tight.

Pat Robertson: All right, I'll be here. All right.

Roger Marsh: Pat Robertson's story is a reminder that following God often requires trusting Him before we know exactly where He is leading, and sometimes it's through those uncertain seasons that we learn just how faithful He truly is. You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. We just heard part one of Dr. Dobson's conversation with his dear friend, Pat Robertson. Both men have gone on to be with the Lord now, but how grateful we are to have this recording to share with you and to reflect upon the great timeless truths that they shared during this discussion. By the way, if you'd like to hear today's program again or to share it with a friend, simply go to drjamesdobson.org and you'll find the audio right there. These daily broadcasts reach millions of families all across America and it's your prayers and financial support that help keep them on the air. The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is committed to strengthening marriages, to encouraging parents and sharing the hope of the gospel with everyone who tunes in and when you donate, you become part of that work helping us reach one more family with biblical truth. Your tax-deductible donation of any amount makes a real difference and you can make a secure donation online when you go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also send your contribution through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949. Once again, our ministry mailing address. The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Or you can use JDFI for short. P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949.

Also, before we leave the air for today, an announcement here about a special opportunity for you if you're a pastor, a church staff member, or a lay leader, and how you can help bring *The Chosen* to your church absolutely free. Season 6 of *The Chosen*. Season 6, Episode 1 will soon be streaming on Prime Video, but you can bring it to your congregation prior to that release date at no cost to

your church. To learn how, go to drjamesdobson.org, look for the link for *The Chosen*, and click onto it right there. That's drjamesdobson.org, and look for *The Chosen* link.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for joining us today. Be sure to tune in again next time right here for part two of Dr. Dobson's conversation with Pat Robertson discussing the topic, “I Have Walked with the Living God.” That's coming up right here on the next 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.