



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Bill Edwards: An 'Everyday Hero' for the Kingdom

**Guest(s):** Bill Edwards

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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 a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, sitting in the co-host seat today, and we are joined in studio by a man who's become a very special friend of the Dobsons and the James Dobson Family Institute and Family Talk for many, many years. His name is Bill Edwards. Now, Bill may not exactly be a household name to you yet, but he is a man that we think of as an everyday hero. As a matter of fact, this is a new feature that we're introducing to the Family Talk broadcast, giving you an opportunity to meet some of the everyday heroes who are really having a huge impact in kingdom service and doing so through the platform, if you will, of the broadcast ministry of Family Talk. Now, for the past 45 years, Bill Edwards has been a financial advisor for Edward Jones.

He's also a farmer. He's also successfully operated his family's 6,000 acre farmland in North and South Dakota, he's been a staunch ally for Christian schools, has provided much needed support for many of them in his region in South Dakota and all across the country. But Bill also has a heart for ministry as well and we're gonna get into one of the ways that he uses Christian radio and Christian television to spread the good news through a ministry that he's been a part of since he was a very young, I want to say a young man, but actually a young boy, and then also a new video project that has taken the country by storm. Bill and his wife, Karen, are the proud parents of three adult children. They have eight grandchildren and four of those grandchildren are two sets of twins, which I just think is amazing. We'll get into that in just a moment. So with that kind of a setup, let's get right to it, Bill Edwards. Welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and as we've shared with you previously in conversations, Dr. and Mrs. Dobson send their warmest regards. We're so glad you're here today.

Bill Edwards: It's a great pleasure to join you, Roger, for our dear, dear friends, Jim and Shirley Dobson.

Roger Marsh: You have a very special affinity to two men in your life, one of them your pastor from childhood, and the other, of course, the guy who sits in the host seat here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Let's take the faith component first. Pastor



Harold Salem played a huge role in your life, and that goes back to boyhood, doesn't it?

Bill Edwards: It does. In fact, one quick preceding step to that, Roger, I believe my innate spiritual longings developed from my mother. At an early age, she made sure I got to Sunday school and I had some wonderful teachers and at a young age and had a mother that has guided me in that respect. She is now 100 years old, by the way and still has an impact on my life. But a very significant event happened in 1958 when Pastor Harold Salem came to our church. I was seven years old at the time. And Pastor, he led me to the Lord. He baptized me. He married Karen and I in 1970. He dedicated baptized and married all three of our children and then another very significant event is in 1979, we initiated the Christian Worship Hour, which is a television program That has been in existence for over 45 years now and continues to this day.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, that's remarkable. Pastor Salem's legacy carries on. And for those, I love to hear the stories of people who hit the later years in life where you'd expect them to be done. You know, I'm 60, I'm 70, you know, whatever it is that we think about retiring. Pastor Harold Salem was literally winning souls right up until the very end.

Bill Edwards: Absolutely. He had the joke that he always would say when he was asked when he was going to retire. He said, "I'm going to retire three days before my funeral. Well, it wasn't three days, but he preached for a television broadcast three weeks before he passed away.

Roger Marsh: Wow.

Bill Edwards: So he was truly a legend. He pastored for 76 years. He was 99 and a half years old-

Roger Marsh: Love it.

Bill Edwards: ...when he passed away in December of 2020.

Roger Marsh: Wow. He slept with his fathers and old and full of years is what I'm hearing, you know, you know, to hear the way those great men of faith are described in the Old Testament, and then you see a guy like Pastor Harold Salem who had that right in your lifetime. What an impact.

Bill Edwards: A tremendous impact on my life as a role model, as a spiritual leader, as a friend, as a confidant. It was an absolute privilege to have been under the tutelage of this man for all of these years, And I still miss him pretty much every day. He passed away in December of 2020 but the ministry goes on and he continues to have an impact for the kingdom.



Roger Marsh: Well, the Christian Worship Hour continues largely because of your leadership. And we'll get into that a little bit more as we get further in the story. I'm curious before we talk about that other mentor of yours, the one who sits in the studio here. When it came to the marriage component, I mean, a lot of people today would say, well, teenagers. I mean, you were 19/18. I mean, who gets married at that, such a young age. If one of my kids came to me at that age and said, I want to get married. I'd want to take him for counseling or something like that. But when you and Karen met with Pastor Salem, what was the initial conversation like? Because you were teenagers who'd met and dated for just a couple of months. I mean, and yet he saw something in your marriage that said, "Not only will I bless this, but I'll perform the ceremony."

Bill Edwards: It was an interesting conversation, but Pastor knew me pretty well at the time and had graduated from high school and was in college at the time. In my first year, Karen was still in high school when we first dated and married of the summer after she graduated. But I knew exactly this was the girl. And it was a marriage made in Heaven and guided by principles that have been espoused by Pastor Salem and Dr. James Dobson that has been a guiding light for all these years because biblical principles are the most astounding things you can imagine. If you can learn biblical principles, that is the guide for a great marriage and a great family.

Roger Marsh: We talk about the need for good education and parental involvement, and now these days even more grandparental involvement. And I would be remiss if I didn't mention the fact that you have two books in the studio with us right now. The first is a well-worn and well-used copy of your personal Bible, and the other is a book that Dr. Dobson wrote many years ago called *Solid Answers*. That book has now been updated. It's now in its third printing and by the way, it's available in our resource center under its new title: *The Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide*.

You know, it's interesting, in the culture that we're in right now, movies are designed to confuse, education's designed to confuse. It seems like that the world, I've heard this from many educators; you go to college and come out four, five six, seven years later and you're more confused than you were when you started. It used to be, you went to a place like that to have your knowledge affirmed, mind stretched, but now when it comes to the solid answers and the components and the different platforms, the different ways that you're going about this, Bill Edwards, talk about why it's important that we understand that what Dr. Dobson's been preaching for the last 45 years is still relevant, different platforms. We couldn't have imagined these streaming services and things like that, but the same biblical truth and biblical wisdom presented practically is still so vital today. Talk about that if you would.

Bill Edwards: Well, the reason I brought this book along, Roger, is because it is such a broad description of what Jim Dobson has been espousing over the decades of his tenure as the leading psychologist or leading family psychologist in America. As we all know, Dr. Dobson has been advisors to presidents, the Bushes, Reagans,



Donald Trump. He's just involved in so many ways. And I am so convinced that if people can access the information, the solid answers that Jim Dobson has presented over the years and that are available at your fingertips through the website of Family Talk and James Dobson Family Institute. And those are the types of things that we'd like to see in education. We sponsor some scholarships for people attending both Christian schools, Christian colleges, as well as our local university that are involved in Christian aspects of college life, because we know it's so easy for young people to get derailed in their Christian walk as in higher education, and we just want to do everything we can to encourage them to stay on track. And this book, this Bible, that's got all the answers. And Jim has just helped explain it in ways that can be implemented easily and effectively.

Roger Marsh:

We were talking earlier about some of the resourcing that we have here at the James Dobson Family Institute. And you and Karen mentioned the Dr. Dobson Minute has been something that's been very impactful for you. Talk about that because we released that a little over a year ago and it has really taken radio by storm. It's one of the fastest moving short features in American Christian radio right now and I think there's good reason for that. Talk about how you're using it, knowing that you are the parents of three successful, well-adjusted grown adults who then have these eight grandchildren that are being taught in some of the same ways James Dobson was a benefit to young and recently married Bill and Karen Edwards all those years ago.

Now the legacy is being continued and these Dr. Dobson minutes are perfect for this generation.

Bill Edwards:

I believe they are perfect. They're very concise. Listener's attention spans sometimes aren't particularly long. However, they are so on point in 60 seconds. It's remarkable. They can relay concepts that you can grasp easily and quickly. I know they've been very successful, and we're going to do everything we can to make sure they continue.

Roger Marsh:

As we look to the future, we have what we call here a dynamic legacy here at the James Dobson Family Institute, as Dr. continues to provide material that has been written and repurposed and re-platformed, as they say, I'm using all the industry terms now. Talk about the impact of this ministry moving forward, the way you see it, 'cause you see a very bright future, I see a very bright future for JDFI with the right support and the right placement. As you're being strategic with United In Purpose, we want to be strategic with James Dobson Family Institute.

Bill Edwards:

I think there's a parallel between the two men that have been so impactful in my life, being Pastor Salem and Dr. Dobson, because the principles that they discuss and explain and teach are timeless. The answers to the questions were appropriate 40 years ago when Jim Dobson started them on the radio, they were appropriate 2,000 years ago when the Bible was written and everywhere in between. And they will be just as applicable in the future. And so all of this



wisdom that is so helpful for families to keep us focused on the true North, on Jesus Christ as our Savior, that is what it is all about.

Roger Marsh: Yes, well, you have been quite impactful in your world simply because of the fact that you are still married. You have a thriving, flourishing marriage after 55 years now, and congratulations to you a little early, and for your children, and your children's children. The fact that you're saying that the legacy that's most important isn't the amount of money that's left behind. It's not the real estate or the property or the family heirlooms or whatever. It's what those things that you will take with you on into eternity. And that's the kind of legacy that you're working to build.

Bill Edwards: Amen.

Roger Marsh: We love that. Well. what was it like the first time you met Dr?

Bill Edwards: It was at a conference and he was so genuine and so caring. In fact, the very first time I met him, he said, "Can I give you a hug?" And I was so overwhelmed. And he just loves people very much like Pastor Salem. He just loves people, wants the best for people, desperately wants them to lead lives that are biblically responsible. But moreover, in order to experience the very best in life, you need to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior. And that is what both of these men focused on, absolutely, top priority. And that's our priority as well.

Roger Marsh: Amen. Well, what a blessing. I know that we hear from so many people who say, "Dr.'s been a radio mentor to me," or a friend who calls him a paper mentor because of all the books, you know, although it's like I haven't had the chance to meet him, but you feel like you've met him to the point where the first time you met him, you had that feeling as if you were seeing a friend you hadn't seen in a while as opposed to meeting someone for the first time. And that's part of the huge legacy of the James Dobson Family Institute is that warmth, that connectivity.

Bill Edwards: And it just grew from there, from that first exposure and to the video series. They were meaningful, but then it graduated to an even more intimate level as we attended gatherings and visited Dr. in his office and just experience and dined with them from time to time and it just been a pleasure and a privilege to have been a part of everything that the Dobsons stand for and the ways that they have impacted the world.

Roger Marsh: Well, we appreciate that component of your relationship and we're grateful that you're here and looking to the future with us because we see a bright future.

Bill Edwards: Amen.

Roger Marsh: Well, Bill Edwards, you have seen tremendous success in your business ventures. And I know a lot of people would say, well, I guess that's great. Your



daughter's going into the family business, so you had a family business, but when you started out, you weren't there yet. I guess as the case may be. I know you've identified a few principles, the reasons that you believe that God has led to the success of your business ventures. Talk about those if you would.

Bill Edwards: That's very true, Roger. I believe there are three reasons that God has given us a modest degree of success. One is that I'm not sure that I could personally, truly and deeply understand that contentment and satisfaction in life don't come through success and money and notoriety. I believe I needed to experience it firsthand, and it's true. Contentment in life is not associated with fame or money or success or achievement. It comes through the saving grace of Jesus Christ and a connection to our Creator. That is one reason. The second reason I believe He gave us some success is that we love supporting ministries. We cherish the idea of helping others spread the good news. And the third reason was, I always thought someday I would be in full-time ministry. And whereas I have never had a full-time job as a minister or a missionary, I do believe at this stage of life my primary goal is glorifying God and advancing the kingdom. So in a way, I feel like I am a full-time proponent of Jesus Christ as Savior, glorify God, advance the kingdom.

Roger Marsh: I love that. I love that sentiment. Back in, you remember church bulletin days? Maybe your church still does bulletins. I know a lot of them do, but many of them have gone to swipe right and apps and things like that. The church that I spent probably half my life in, Bill used to, in the back page of the bulletin, he would list the staff. And the final entry was he would put the list of ministers and it would say ministers and then hash mark, you. And he just wanted to remind everybody that we were all had a mission ministerial role to play in the kingdom.

And I love when you were saying that, I was thinking of Pastor Bill Bartlett saying, that's right, even though you didn't go to seminary and didn't stand in front of the congregation and you weren't baptizing children and that type of stuff, you played a huge role in the ministry, you and Karen and both.

Bill Edwards: Amen.

Roger Marsh: And I think that's wonderful that you recognize that. And I appreciate you sharing that. You used a phrase not too long ago when we were having a conversation, talking about the complementary relationship between stewardship and generosity. And I'd love for you to kind of expand on what you mean by that because this is now Bill the minister, Bill the United in Purpose guy, but also Bill the financial analyst, Bill the farmer who's successfully farmed land for years, and now your youngest son is running that operation. But talk about that balance.

Bill Edwards: Roger, I believe the most foundational concept or premise behind generosity is understanding really whose it is. Whose land is it? Whose stock is it? Whose business is it? Whose talent? Everything I've received, every good thing that I've



experienced from a precious wife to a wonderful family to kids that continue in these directions to even a great-grandchild now. Everything we've been given is a gift of God's. Nothing of it is ours, not our talent, not our time, not our treasure. Fundamentally, understanding who's it is, is the foundation of generosity, and it's all God's, and it's all going to be His. It was His before I was on this earth, it's going to be His afterward. And so, when you understand that, you become much more generous.

Roger Marsh: What is it like? How do you describe it, you and Karen, what it's like for... you knew that when you first dated, courted, got married, you weren't sure that this world was a safe place to bring children into. And then this guy on the radio named Dr. James Dobson gave you the courage under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to say yeah maybe God has that blessing in store for us and two sons and a daughter came along. Then grandchildren, then great-grandchildren. What's it like for you to see that domino effect of God provided the principles, Dr. Dobson provided the teaching, you and Karen ran with that and instilled those values in your children who are then instilling them in their children. And now, in your little great grandson, how fun is that?

Bill Edwards: It is glorious. It is absolutely glorious, Roger, and to think that we've set this ball in motion and that it can go on for generations. And you know what? We have to understand, we're not going to be successful 100 % in every one of these ventures. I have these goals and these objectives, but the fallibility of human nature, we're not going to be successful. We're going to make mistakes, but we've got to have a goal. We've got to have an aim, and we want to still in the generations to follow and we're so thankful that that is being instilled in following generations and hopefully for many generations to come.

Roger Marsh: Yes. Well, amen to that. And congratulations on the blessings that God has bestowed upon you, because you realize that they are blessings from Him. They're gifts. You are stewards of them, not owners, which I think is just a wonderful attitude and mindset to have. And I know you've inspired thousands of people today listening to this broadcast with that same wisdom, that biblical truth. So, Bill Edwards, Karen, thank you so much for your friendship and partnership with our ministry and for letting us recognize and honor you as one of the first everyday heroes here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. It's been a pleasure.

Bill Edwards: Roger, I really don't feel like a hero. But I would like to convey this to our listeners. Every one of us can be an everyday hero. Every one of us can affect our circle, whether it's a very small circle, or whether it's a national audience. We can all be heroes of the faith. And secondly, I just implore folks that are listening. Take advantage of Dr. Dobson's wisdom as he has explained it for years. The resources are there. They're available to you.

Roger Marsh: Bill Edwards, thank you so much for being with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.



Bill Edwards: Thank you so much, Roger.

Roger Marsh: True success isn't measured by financial achievements, but by the legacy we leave behind. You're listening to a very special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and we are honored to be joined by a true everyday hero here in the studio today, our dear friend Bill Edwards. Bill's inspiring story shows us what's possible when we trust God's design for marriage and parenting. Now if you missed any portion of today's conversation, or if you'd like to share this broadcast with a friend or family member, you can do so when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

Now, earlier in the broadcast, I mentioned that Bill brought two books with him into the studio. The first of course, a copy of his Bible, the well-worn edition of the Holy Bible that Bill has been using for many, many years. And then also, another book, a book Dr. Dobson wrote many years ago called *Solid Answers*. That book has been updated now and it is in its third printing and it's available under its new title, *The Complete Marriage and Parenting Home Reference Guide*. Yes, that is a long title, but it's packed with all sorts of information that will be definitely helpful for you and your family for years to come. Bill, in fact, called it one of the most comprehensive resources he's ever encountered for raising children according to biblical principles. Those solid answers have been a guiding light for his family for decades, and that same wisdom that helped to shape Bill and Karen's marriage and parenting journey and it's available right now on our website. Again, you'll find complete ordering information for Dr. James Dobson's book called *The Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide*, when you go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we are committed to helping families like yours discover God's design for marriage, parenting and child-development. When you support our ministry, you're not just funding radio programs, you're investing in the next generation and the one after that. You are helping us share the gospel of Jesus Christ with families who desperately need hope. Your partnership makes it possible for us to reach millions of families each and every month through the Family Talk and you can help further our mission by making a secure donation online at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). You can also make a donation over the phone when you call our toll-free number: 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825

Or if you'd prefer, send your tax-deductible donation through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of Dr. James Dobson and all of us here at 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.

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