



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Healing Rest – Part 1

Guest(s): Becky Thompson

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, sliding into the co-host's seat today. In Matthew chapter 11 verses 28 through 30, Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart. And you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." You know, for moms especially, rest can be somewhat elusive, amen? I mean, you to keep up with the demands of motherhood, make sure the family schedules are all aligned, and the shoes are tied, and the basketball jerseys are cleaned, and the lunches are made each and every day. It's quite a grind.

Our guest today here on Family Talk has written an important book on rest for moms. It's called *Healing Rest*, and the author is Becky Thompson. Now Becky Thompson is a very familiar face and voice here on the Family Talk broadcast. She's a speaker and the founder of the Midnight Mom devotional online community, where over two million moms gather nightly for prayer. Becky is the author of several books, including *Hope Unfolding*, *God So Close*, and the newest one I just mentioned, *Healing Rest: An Invitation for Mommas Who Carry So Much to Lean into the Arms of the One Who Holds It All*. Becky and her husband, Jared, have three children, and they make their home in Oklahoma. Becky, we welcome you back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Delighted to have you here. And of course, Dr. and Mrs. Dobson send their regards as well.

Becky Thompson: Roger, I'm so excited to have this conversation with you. It's always an honor to be on the show.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, well, we appreciate what you're doing for so many moms. And of course, the Midnight Mom community really started out of a sense of, dare I say, frustration for you. Or when you started posting these posts on social media, help us explain what you were going through in your mom journey.

Becky Thompson: Sure. Well, I was a mom of very little children up all hours of the night, and I was doing that thing that I think a lot of moms today understand, where in those lonely midnight hours I was up scrolling on my phone, and all I could find

were stories about all the things that could happen or were happening that were so outside of my control. And I already had an online audience because I had a blog and I really wanted a place for moms to land in the middle of the night that felt safe where they could be encouraged with the light of God's Word even in those midnight moments. And so I created this series called the Midnight Mom Devotional and I had what I called the "Midnight Mom Check-In." Moms would say why they were awake, where they were and what was going on in their life at that time when they were reading. And they had a sense of community there in the comment section, as they saw they weren't the only ones awake and they weren't the only ones who needed the truth in those midnight hours.

Roger Marsh:

You know, it's interesting as you talk about the late-night hours and especially after midnight and how many moms can relate to this. I can anecdotally say as a grandfather of we, Lisa and I have six grandkids, we've got four of them, age four and under. And whenever we've done the sleepover, we can totally get that, that whole midnight mom phenomenon, either because, you know, there's a concern, we're praying over the kids, or quite frankly, they're just wrestling us, you know, in the middle of the night because they just won't, they're having a hard time, you know, going back to sleep. And it's got to be such a challenge for moms today because you're dealing with the practical, I mean, the reality of the fact that if you've got little, little ones, especially, they're having a hard time getting through the night anyway. But then when you finally get them down and your mind begins to wander, you know, in your heart, because all those anxieties that you might have been carrying all day long, they kind of bubble to the surface. It really is a perfect time for this community, and my goodness, two million plus, and it sounds like it's growing continually. You don't do this on your own, though. This is kind of a joint venture, isn't it?

Becky Thompson:

That's exactly right. So in the very beginning, I wanted to make sure that those moms that commented felt seen, and they hadn't just shared their story or their need in the comment section and, you know, people scrolled past it. So I would comment underneath every single message and that was too many. It was too much. It was too many hours of the night. So I invited my mom, Susan Pitts, and now we get to run this ministry together. And it was actually my mom who said, you know, what if each night we just prayed for one specific need? Because that's really what the comment section was full of. Moms needing the Lord and needing prayer. So she began that very familiar "tonight we pray for the mama who," and then we just described a mom in her own little house and her own little life who needed the Lord to meet her.

And it's really grown from there. So we get to do this together. And for the last couple of years, she's really led the charge. She's our prayer community director. And it's so precious because we look at motherhood now from two different ends. You know, I'm still in the very middle of my youngest is 10 and I've got teenagers, but she's watched and she's walked with me through those early years of motherhood, but she has this unique perspective of getting to mother, a mother, you know? You never stop being a mama. And so now we get

to pray for adult children and we pray for grandmas and you never stop being a mom. And so it's a beautiful ministry to get to do it with my mom. But we have found this, Roger, that midnight can extend beyond those nighttime hours. There's moms that are walking through midnight and it's the middle of the day and they're just dealing with so much and so we speak into that space, the hard, heavy and hidden parts of a mama's heart.

Roger Marsh:

I love that and I appreciate the fact that you and your mom are working so closely together. For those who have listened to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk over the years, you've heard Dr. Dobson speak often about two things that you mentioned. One of them is that every mom's story is unique and it's amazing how many people have come up to Doctor over the years and just said "thank you for helping me in..." and then they'll specifically mention a certain area. But also, the fact too that a lot of people don't realize the role that his dad played. I mean not only praying over the ministry that became what we are looking at and experiencing right now but also even in his graduate work. I mean the fact that his dad was so actively involved and so when you talked about the mother who's being a mom to a mom, you know, that's such a vital role, you know, for dads, for dads and moms, for moms, that mentoring process is so very, very key. And yet we're talking about not just rest, because I think any mom would say, "Wouldn't it be great? Could someone take my kids for the night so my husband and I can just have a, you know, to do nothing, you know, just to veg out and whatever." But you're taking it a step further and implying that there needs to be a healing component to rest, talk about what you mean by that.

Becky Thomson:

Yeah, I think it's really easy to see that we need physical rest as moms. I mean, I don't know any mom that's like, "I'm good, I don't need any rest." I mean, and if I can find her, just pray for me. May she remember me and her prayers.

Roger Marsh:

Amen.

Becky Thompson:

'Cause there's so many of us that just aren't in that spot. And you know, I think there are women and they can say, "Yeah, I carry the mental load." "I need mental rest, and they can easily admit that they need that as well. But when it comes to spiritual rest, sometimes we think that's a one-time thing. You know, I come to the Lord and give my heart to Him and He gives me rest for my soul. And I'm no longer a stranger from the Lord, but I'm at rest with Him. And yet, so often in my ministry, I find these women and they're exhausted to their bones. And I think they're not just weary from the burdens of their daily lives or the mental weight of carrying the mental load for their family, but they're exhausted because they feel like they have to worry their family safer. They have to make the decisions for their family. They have to hold everybody they love in their arms, not just physically, but spiritually in a sense and cover their families. And I think when we get to that place where we know the Lord is with us and we trust that He is good, but we're still relying on our own strength in so many ways. Man, we need someone to point us back to the Word of God and say, "The Lord offers soul rest in His presence as we stay in step with Him."

What does that look like to continue to live that out, not just in the beginning of our walk with the Lord, but day after day.

Roger Marsh: You know you have a quote Becky in your book that I wanted to get your reaction to. It kind of dovetails on what you just said where you talk about the fact that "soul rest isn't realized as Jesus removes our labors. Instead, we find it as we accept the opportunity to co-labor with the one who holds all things together. We'll never find it trying to carry the weight of our own human strength" and that's tough for moms to do, isn't it? I mean to not only recognize that this is a partnership and that you're not letting somebody down by letting somebody in to help out.

Becky Thompson: That's exactly right. You know, when Jesus invites us in Matthew 11, verses 28 through 30, to come to Him and we'll find rest for our souls, He offers this picture of a yoke. And, you know, I want to find rest as the Lord invites me to His beach house, as He invites me to his cabin, as He invites me away. But there were even moments in Scripture where the Lord invited His disciples away 'cause they hadn't even had a chance to eat. I wish I had that reference that I could offer here, but He says, "come away with me" and when they get to where they're going, they end up feeding thousands of people. And they have to work alongside the Lord, but the Lord saw their need. And so when the Lord invites us in Matthew 11 to come to Him to find rest for our souls, He offers this picture of a yoke. And a yoke is a work tool. I mean, it's across the backs of two creatures working side by side to complete a hard task. But here's the thing that I think many of us moms or any other listener alike might overlook. And that doesn't mean that we point to the areas of our lives and we say, "Lord, pick up the other end of my yoke. Pick up the other end of my job, pick up the other end of what I'm trying to accomplish here." The invitation is for us to step up under the Lord's yoke.

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Becky Thompson: And the thing is with that, the stronger of the two sets the pace. The stronger of the two sets the direction. The stronger of the two carries the greater burden. And so to find rest, we co-labor with the Lord, but it actually begins with surrender.

Roger Marsh: That surrender is so important for us to recognize that we need to do. Becky Thompson is with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and we're talking about her brand-new book called *Healing Rest*. And lest we get too far into the conversation, Becky, and have this great dialogue back and forth, and someone would think, "Well, I'm glad you figured it all out, Becky Thompson. Thank you so much," which oftentimes we do, right? You see the blogs, you see the books, you see whatever the videos are, and you think, "Oh, well, you've got it nailed." But you had to walk through this dealing with your own anxieties and things like that. Talk about, if you would, what your journey was like because you're speaking from experience, not just saying, "Well, if I had this problem, this is what I would do." You walked this road.

Becky Thompson: That's exactly right. So, I always say that our testimony is the eyewitness account of God's character that we can testify to. And so we often think our testimony is really just how we come to the Lord. That's our first focus of what our testimony is, how He changed our life and how we came into a life-saving relationship with Him. But our testimony is who we've known the Lord to be in every season of our story. And I can only say that the Lord offers healing rest for the heart that's carrying so much because that's my life. I know Him as the one who offers to carry it and I know what it means to release and submit my control over to Him. That's my story. Man, I wanted rest, but I also wanted control. I also wanted to say in the outcome and I've lived with anxiety for so much of my life, the chemical processes in my brain and the hormones in my body, man, they make me spiral out and stress out and worry when everything is still good.

And I've had to know the Lord as peace and I've had to know the Lord as comforter. And I've walked through some really heavy, really, really hard seasons, but it's because of those places where I learned I can't trust the Lord only when life is good. I have to know that He is holding me safely, even when the world is unsafe. And I think that's really what I'm offering in the book. That's what our conversation is pointing to here today, that, man, the world around us, it is unsafe, but we are safely held by a good God who loves us and promises to never leave us, but we can't know that that's true until we really decide we're gonna live that for ourselves and that's where the heart of *Healing Rest* has come from for me.

Roger Marsh: Can we dive a little bit more you mentioned something about kind of the science if you will in terms of the way this all has come together for you and your understanding of it and I want to go on a limb and say you're not a medical doctor, right?

Becky Thompson: Right.

Roger Marsh: So I mean this is something that you've had to learn on your own in the same way, I'm not a thoracic surgeon, but I learned something about open heart surgery when I had it. So, I mean, I think we're kind of on similar planes.

Becky Thompson: Sure.

Roger Marsh: Help us understand, because there's a mom who says, "Okay, what if it's just all societal? Do I put away my phone? Do I no longer zombie or doomscroll all day long and that's gonna solve it?" I mean, there are some physical things that are happening too. Talk about that if you would.

Becky Thompson: Sure. Well, when the Lord led me, I like to say out of the forest of fear, back in 2018, I began this journey of really believing that maybe, maybe life wasn't always going to be the way it was in that season for me. Maybe I could learn about how my body was functioning and talk to doctors, counselors, therapists,

all of those people with all of those degrees that can help me in that way. And most importantly, follow the voice of the Lord as He led me to those people and led me to the truth of His work. And I found out so much in that season, learning about how our brains and our bodies work and that system, the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems in our body and how there's a whole system designed to watch for danger around us and respond when we face it. And you know, I had been told, pray more, read your Bible, listen to Christian music, and I believe those are incredible tools. I believe those are foundation for spiritual health with the Lord tuning in to what His word says is true. But I also know that Scripture reminds us that we can be transformed by the renewing of our mind.

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Becky Thompson: And that science backs that truth, that we have neural pathways in our brains that actually change patterns and shape as we think on certain thoughts. And so when I read my Bible, I'm actually strengthening certain areas of my thinking and I can learn to take captive those thoughts and influences of the world around me and replace them with the truth of God's Word.

Roger Marsh: Yes. Yes.

Becky Thompson: So if there's a mama and she's listening right now and she's like, man, there's so much messaging on social media. There's so much messaging from the news today and I am continually reminded of how unsafe the world is, then maybe the first step she can take is limiting the input of the world around her and increasing the input of the truth from the Word of God. And that's just such a simple and practical step. And it's not just a spiritual step, because the way we're settled with the Lord impacts our hearts and our bodies as well. It's all connected and I love that the Lord made us that way. And so we have to look at the healing that the Lord offers for heart, mind, soul, and body.

Roger Marsh: I think that's wonderful. Becky Thompson is with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, talking about her brand-new book called *Healing Rest*, which we have up at drjamesdobson.org. Becky, you have a chapter in the book. I love the title simply because of the fact that there are a lot of times there are people, I'm a guy if I hurt myself somewhere, I'm going to gut it out as much as I can until it really gets to the point where like my arms falling off and my wife will say, "Are you going to go have that checked? There's something wrong here." But the chapter on when all the alarms are sounding, I mean, there are some women who are wondering, "Okay, well, how bad is it for me? I mean, am I really, is this anxiety overwhelming me to the point where I can't experience healing rest or how do you help someone identify, yes, this is a serious issue and you need to move forward or yeah this is maybe momentary light affliction and it's going to pass a little quicker.

Becky Thompson: Well, I think we just have to start with telling the mom that she deserves to be whole. She deserves to have peace. She deserves to be healed. And that doesn't

mean that it has to get so bad before she begins that journey toward healing. So we can begin that journey toward healing with the Lord asking Him to guide us to the right professionals, asking Him to show us those places in our lives where maybe we're sabotaging our own peace. Maybe we're staying up late scrolling on our phones. Maybe we're not eating what we need to eat. Maybe we're not moving our bodies the way we need to move our bodies and getting exercise. Maybe all of the things that we know to do, they just feel like too much work and we're not even participating in our own journey. We're just wishing we were out of it. I just want to speak to that mom that's like, "it just seems too impossible." Maybe I'm snapping at my family and I want to have peace and patience, but I'm so angry and I feel so frustrated and I can't fix it. Or maybe I'm dealing with brain fog, you know? Maybe I can't remember where I put my car keys. And we pass a lot of these things off as just, well, that's just life as a mom.

You know, the encouragement I have for a mom in that space is it doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to be. And no matter how far gone you think you are, like, man, I've just been living in this survival sense for a decade. Or maybe I just thought this was the normal of the way it had to be or would always be. I feel like today's conversation is just this invitation to say you do so much for your family. You look and pay attention to all of the symptoms that your kids have. You know when their personalities are slightly altered even in just the least little bit because they didn't get what they needed in sleep the night before or they ate something that's wound them up and now they're struggling and you know, like we know when our kids are off, but we ignore ourselves. We cannot ignore ourselves just to the point of destruction. Our families need us to stop and say, "I cannot ignore this alarm any longer. I deserve to be whole and my family deserves a mama that's whole."

Roger Marsh:

Becky, can I underscore something that you just said and get you to dive a little deeper in on this one. I would appreciate hearing you say this because you said something about the destruction part. This is a revelation in my own spiritual life recently. The idea that there is no neutral, you know, in Heaven. There's no Switzerland, there's no, you know, you're either what did Jesus say, "you're either for me or against me," we're either growing stronger or there is something destructive happening in our soul. Give that mom who needs to hear that again, permission to say, "Hey, look, if you're not right, if things aren't moving in that direction," then that means something's being taken away. Something's being defeated, if you will, inside of you.

Becky Thompson:

Yeah. I think about when I was still pregnant with my youngest and I was put on bed rest. And man, I had already lost two babies before that. And I knew the importance of letting my body, have every chance it needed to have, to make sure my son was okay. And I know there's a mom somewhere and she just, it's going to be really hard for her to get it through her heart, from her mind all the way down into her heart, that it's okay for her to pursue healing. It's okay for her to begin that conversation with the counselor. It's okay for her to spend the money that it's going to take to talk to the therapist. It's okay to talk to the

church, you know, leadership. It's okay to talk to her doctor again, even if she's had a conversation years ago and didn't get the response that she needed.

It's hard for moms to do it for ourselves. It's really, really hard for us to do it for ourselves. Everybody gets our best before we think of ourselves. I've passed the last serving of the food, even when I've had a full plate myself, but wanted a little bit more onto my kiddos plate 'cause they asked for it. And we do that with our time, we do that with our love, we do that with our attention, we do that with our physical and mental strength. But if she will not go talk to those people for herself, if she won't begin that conversation or make the change in her schedule or ask for the help for herself, my encouragement for her today would be to do it for her children. Just like I went on bed rest for my baby and I did what I needed to do because he needed it, your kids need you whole. Your kids need you to take these steps. And so I think honestly, there's so much attack on the mama's heart that we have convinced ourself that it is against the best interest of our families for us to slow down because the wave of all there is to do will overtake us, will overtake our kids. If we stop, then we know all the things that will be dropped. But there's the heart of the father for the mama right now to say, "I need you to lean into Me. I need you to trust Me, and I need you to follow Me on this journey to healing rest."

Roger Marsh: Boy, that's a powerful way for us to kind of wrap up the first part of this conversation. There's so much more to this book and we're gonna need to get a second program in with Becky Thompson to discuss it. The book is called *Healing Rest: An Invitation for Mommas Who Carry So Much to Lean into the Arms of the One Who Holds It* and the link is up at drjamesdobson.org. Becky, thank you for writing this book. Thank you for the ministry that you and your mom continue to serve in to help so many millions of moms all across the country. Can you join us again next time as we continue this conversation?

Becky Thompson: Absolutely, I'd be honored to.

Roger Marsh: You know, motherhood could feel like a race without a finished line. Constant demands, endless worries, and precious little rest. And yet, as Becky Thompson reminded us today here on Family Talk, true rest isn't just about catching a few extra hours of sleep. It's about surrendering our need for control and stepping back under the yoke of the One who carries our heaviest burdens. You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a conversation featuring author Becky Thompson about finding healing rest as a mom. To hear this program again or to share it with a mom who needs encouragement, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And remember, that's where you'll also find the link for Becky's new book called *Healing Rest*. Drjamesdobson.org is where you'll find the audio and the information about the book.

Well, with Mother's Day coming up this Sunday, we have prepared something special for the incredible moms who listen to family talk on a regular basis, and that is the "Empowering Moms" email series. In just five minutes each day, you'll receive practical parenting advice grounded in timeless Scriptural truths,

along with a prayer to inspire both you and your family. You know, being a mom means carrying so much, which is why we've designed this email series to meet you right where you are. To receive yours, go to drjamesdobson.org and then simply enter your name and email address when you hit the link on the landing page. Again, that's drjamesdobson.org. And you know these resources of daily broadcasts are made possible through the generous support of friends like you who share our passion for strengthening families. If today's program has touched your heart, please consider partnering with us. Your tax-deductible donation of any amount helps us continue broadcasting biblical truth and practical wisdom to millions of listeners all across America. You can make a secure donation online at drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org, or you can give a gift over the phone when you call 877-732-6825.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of Dr. James Dobson and all of us here at the JDFI, thanks so much for listening today. Join us again next time when we continue our conversation with author Becky Thompson discussing healing rest. 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.

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

Dr. James Dobson: Well, thank you everyone for tuning in to our program today. You may know that Family Talk is a listener-supported program, and we remain on the air by your generosity, literally. If you can help us financially, we would certainly appreciate it. God's blessings to you all.