



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Storming the Beach: Remembering the Sacrifice of D-Day – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Lt. Gen (Ret.) Jerry Boykin

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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: Welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. On June the 6th, 1944, allied forces launched one of the most daring military operations in human history, storming the beaches of Normandy, France in a battle that would ultimately break the grip of Nazi Germany on occupied Europe. The men who fought and died that day left a legacy that still echoes across generations. On today's edition of Family Talk, we are continuing airing a special conversation that Dr. James Dobson recorded several years ago to commemorate the 75th anniversary of that invasion. In the recording, he's joined once again by retired Lieutenant General Jerry Boykin, decorated war hero, original Delta Force member and the son of a sailor who was wounded driving a Higgins boat ashore at Omaha Beach. In the second installment, they'll dig into what made that generation so remarkable and what their sacrifice still means for America today. So sit back and enjoy this powerful conversation featuring Dr. James Dobson and the panel talking about storming the beach, remembering the sacrifice of D-Day on today's edition of Family Talk.
- Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone and welcome to this Friday edition of Family Talk. I'm your host, Dr. James Dobson, and I thank you for being with us again today. Yesterday we talked the whole program about the D-Day invasion in Normandy. We're going to do it again today because it was a crucial turning point that eventually ended World War II. Our program was dedicated to honoring the countless men who sacrificed their lives on that day for the cause of freedom. My guest then was my good friend, retired Lieutenant General Jerry Boykin. He's a highly decorated and seasoned war hero who now serves as the executive vice president of the Family Research Council. General Boykin is with us again today and I'm delighted about that. Jerry, we were talking last time about the greatest generation. I think that's where we ended our conversation. Talk about that. What made them great and have we seen the likes of that generation since?
- Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: We have not seen a generation like them since for the reasons that we've talked about. And you talked about the generation of the '60s, which were the baby boomers. It was the dependence of these men that came across that beach that day. And these men, they went to war. Some of them came home with deep

physical as well as emotional scars and they just went right back to the farms, the factories, the industries, and they restarted their lives and they didn't ask for anything. That makes them, in my view, the greatest generation because they changed the course of world events. They conquered not only the Nazi Germany, but they defeated Imperial Japan and you stop and think about it. The Japanese today, had we not won in World War II, would control the entire Pacific Rim. And the Germans would control the entire continent of Europe, probably all the way down to Central Asia. And I think that's a significant accomplishment for the greatest generation.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Somebody said we could all be speaking German today if we'd lost the European War. General, let me share a thought with you that I don't think that I've tried to express before, may not be able to today. But I had to go through a continuing education course some years ago and that was to maintain my psychologist's license. And most of those courses were helpful and they were interesting. But on one occasion, the topic was particularly boring and the speaker had a monotone voice and I was bored out of my mind. And so I was looking for a way to entertain myself and I picked up a pen and began calculating the years that a male baby might be born without later being required to fight when he came of age. And I started with my own life. I was born in 1936. So I was just a boy when World War II was waged and I was also too young for Korea that occurred afterwards, but I was too old for Desert Shield and Desert Storm or the campaigns that you led.

So I continued to calculate and I considered every year from 1925 to 1995 to indicate which of those years produced babies that would later have to fight in a war. And would you believe there are only eight years like that?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Wow.

Dr. James Dobson: I was born in one of them, but only eight years where a baby was able to grow up and not be involved in combat. The inspirational thing is that in all of those situations when the men were called upon to serve, they did it and most of them did it admirably and you're proud of them, aren't you?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I am indeed. And you keep in mind we've got an army today that has been at war for what, 18 years? You stop and think about that. These people are two years away from retiring and they've known nothing but war.

Dr. James Dobson: They volunteered for it. They weren't drafted.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Absolutely. There was no draft. We haven't had a draft since 1973. These are all volunteers that came into our military and many of them, Dr. Dobson, came in post 9/11. They came in knowing that America was at war and wanting to be part of it. And that generation and the generation today, they came in knowing they were going to war, not hoping they wouldn't have to, but knowing they were going to.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's go back to your father. His name was Cecil, right? But he didn't like that name as I understand.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: No, Cecil did not like Cecil. His name was Cecil Gerald Boykin. So when he came in the Navy, it was a lot easier to do this in his day, but he changed it to Gerald Cecil so they would call him Gerald or Jerry.

Dr. James Dobson: So you were named after him?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I was. I was indeed.

Dr. James Dobson: Can you remember some of the most profound lessons that you learned from him?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I sure can. A lot of people say, "I learned my work ethic from my dad." Well, no, I really did. I mean, my dad worked hard and when I was growing up because he worked for the Marine Corps, he was gone a lot. But the other thing that I learned from him, even though he was gone a lot working for the Marine Corps, when he was home, he spent quality time with me and I knew when he was home every weekend I was going to be with my dad and that got a little problematic when I started courting a little bit, Doctor, because I knew it was a priority he would have to go to my dad, but he spent a lot of time with me hunting and fishing and camping and doing those kinds of things because he understood the importance of having a man to mentor a boy.

You may be aware when this was Eastern North Carolina and after my brother and sister and I were out of the home and had our own families, he adopted a little boy. His name was Shakif and I say he adopted. He never had any adoption papers or anything, but everybody knew that Shakif was Gerald Boykin's boy. He helped him to grow into being a good baseball player. That was my dad's big sport. That's what he loved. He was known as Mr. Baseball and he got Shakif all the equipment. He told my brother and sister and I, now Shakif's your brother, treat him like your brother. So we did. And my dad, when people would say something about the fact that this young boy was black, my dad would say with pretty directly, he would tell them to mind their own business, but he might have added an expletive or something in there to make sure they understood how serious he was about it. But that was him. He knew that a boy needed the mentoring of a man and if Shakif didn't have a father in the home, he was going to fill that void.

Dr. James Dobson: You said that was North Carolina. That was not a time of racial tolerance, was it?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: No, it was not. It absolutely was not. It's different today to some extent, but it was a racially charged environment there in this little town that we grew up in. I think they've gone to great lengths to overcome all of that, that racial past and all. But what he did drew a lot of scorn from many of the people he considered friends because you just didn't do that. But to him, there was a far more

important principle and that was a boy needs to grow up under the mentorship and leadership of a man. He needs somebody to teach him.

Dr. James Dobson: Still true today.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Your father sounds a whole lot like my dad. My dad was an evangelist and as such, he was gone a lot and he had a profound impact on my life and who would have believed it given how much he was gone. My mother actually raised me, but when he came home he was mine and we hunted and fished together and made things in the garage and he found a way to connect with me even though he had to be gone a lot of the time and he also had a profound love for the Lord. Your father was not a Christian until later in life. At least that's what I've read.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Yeah. Doctor, he knew the Bible and it just was the most bizarre thing. He knew the Bible and he read the Bible all the time. I think that he thought maybe because he was a Mason that he had confessed Christ as His Savior. I'm not sure exactly what was going through his mind, but in the last probably 10 years of his life, he came to Christ and Doctor, when he did, he was a fanatic and he was such a fanatic that when he was in the hospital in the last year of his life, the chaplain wouldn't even come in his room anymore because he was trying to lead the chaplain to Christ.

He was just a very, very happy, joyful guy. Even though he knew he was in the last months of his life, he was very joyful. And my mom actually, and I was there too, but my mom said my dad was just laying in bed in a semi-conscious state. He was more like in a coma, but he was babbling and he was saying, "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord." And my mom said, "That reminds me of Peter when God said, "Loveth thou Me?" and he said, Yes, Lord. "And he kept asking him and he finally said, " Yes, Lord. "What do I have to do to convince you that I ... Well, that's what my dad was talking to the Lord. Some listeners may say, " Oh, that's silly." No, it's not silly. And not when you have a relationship with God, you do talk to God and he was talking to God in a semi-conscious state. So I don't know what God was saying, but I know he was saying, " Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. "So he came in a big way and it was wonderful.

Dr. James Dobson: When did you find the Lord?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I found the Lord in 1971, January of 1971. I had just come in the army. I came in the day after Christmas of 1970 and I got to Fort Benning on the 3rd of January and all through college I'd run from the Lord and I just simply did not want to submit myself because I wanted to live the life the way I wanted to live it, not be encumbered by a relationship with God. I grew up in the church. My mother was the most godly woman you've ever seen, but I was in my quarters one day at Fort Benning, Georgia as a brand new second lieutenant and the Holy Spirit just in that still small voice said to me, "I have a plan for your life, but it will

never be fulfilled if you do not submit yourself to me. "And right by myself, I knew what I had to do. I knelt down and I just said," Lord, I'm tired of running from you." I said," Take my life and do with it as You please. "And from that point on, I have not turned back. Now like everybody else, I've had my own struggles and so forth, but I've never, never turned back. Never turned away from that and certainly never regretted that decision to pray a prayer or repentance and people say," Well, how can that be? " Well, I don't know, but I can't explain grace. It's not a human concept.

Dr. James Dobson: The army is an unlikely place to find the Lord, is it not?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: I was in the army. I just remember the environment was hardly conducive to at least the beginning of a spiritual walk.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: And it's very interesting that you say that too, because one of the things that being in combat has actually done is it has actually reinforced the spiritual climate in the military in my view. And you can find photographs of men and women that were getting ready to cross the line of demarcation into Iraq and the first Gulf War as well as right after 9/11. And you'll see them out there that they've built a makeshift baptismal and they're baptizing people before they go across that line and confronted Saddam Hussein's troops. And it's very heartwarming to see these people wanting to make sure they're right with God before they go across.

One of the things that really hurt the spiritual climate in the military was what I consider to be an all-out assault by the previous administration on religious liberty and they really in many ways tried to just erase all vestiges of Christianity in the military, but look, it survived. You can't put that light out and it has survived. And now quite frankly, under Donald Trump, the support that he is giving to the whole concept of religious freedom, not only in the military, but throughout our society has been phenomenal. And I think we're seeing, certainly in the military, we're seeing much greater freedom now to worship and live your faith and be able to talk about it and live it.

Dr. James Dobson: That's been exciting to me to see how the president has defended religious liberty. There were people before he was elected that never would have believed that he would keep the kind of promises that he has. I don't want to turn this into a political statement, but I've watched the man up close and personal and I'm impressed by the values that he has tried to enforce and implement.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I agree with you. And one of the things that did occur, Doctor, before he got elected, Tony Perkins and I hosted an event out near Dulles Airport and we brought in veterans and we brought in I think 139 veterans. Half of them were generals and admirals and the other half were all ranks and we just flat ask

him," If you become president, would you support the religious freedom in the military for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and coast guardsmen?" And he said, "Absolutely." I mean, it was not equivocal. He said, "Absolutely. I'll support it in the military, but I'll also support it throughout this nation." And then Doctor, the funniest thing happened, he said, "In fact, I just read a story about a football coach out in Bremerton, Washington who was praying after the football game, and they fired him because he was praying on the sideline after the game. And we said, Mr. Trump, that is exactly what happened and he is sitting right in front of you in the front row.

Dr. James Dobson: Is that right?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I said, "He was a retired Marine, Coach Kennedy." So he stood up and it was sort of like the president at that time, the candidate Trump, did not know whether we were serious or not, but Coach Kennedy stood up. But I mean, here's an example of a guy that in a difficult environment really stood for what he believed in.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let me tell you about my first encounter with him. There was an event in June before the election that occurred in New York City and it was at the Marriott Hotel in downtown New York City and there were a thousand religious leaders there, mostly pastors and they came in very skeptical of him because of his past and being a gambling kingpin and all the other things, three families and so on. There was skepticism but also a desire to know who he really was. As it turned out with these thousand people there, I was asked to ask the first question for a Q&A with him and I said, "Mr. Trump, we have fought a battle for religious liberty for many years and we've lost most of those and the things that we hold most valuable to us have been under attack. Are we going to have to fight that again with you if you're elected president?"

And he stood up and he made promises that day that I will never forget. He talked about assault on people of faith who were associated with non-profit organizations and they weren't allowed to speak about the things that matter most, especially if it had any kind of political leanings. And he said, "If I am elected president, I will change that." At the end of that day, there was a shift. You could feel it throughout the room. There was a sense of saying, "This man is not perfect. This man is not even coming from perhaps our theological perspectives, but I think I can believe that he will do what he says he's going to do." By the end of that day I think it shifted and as you remember, 82% of evangelicals voted for him in the election. I believe it goes back to that day and the things that were said.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I remember that day I was there in that audience and when you stood up and asked the first question, I was very proud of you by the way.

Dr. James Dobson: I didn't know you were there.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I was there. Yes, sir. And in the big picture of things, those young men that crossed that beach, these freedoms are what they were fighting for in many ways, not only that America might have these freedoms, but they were fighting to liberate the continent of Europe so that they would have at least the opportunity to have these freedoms. I think that Mr. Trump, he has appreciation of history and he loves America and I think that that is why that he has been forward leaning in terms of helping us to break through this ceiling of religious liberty that seemed to have been imposed previously.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, let me ask you a final question. How has the legacy of your dad been passed down through you to your kids? Have you tried to implement some of the things your dad taught you?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Oh, yes. I mean, I am who I am largely because of my dad. But let me tell you, Doctor, it's amazing that when my three sons and I and my brother and I, we do a lot of family stuff, hunting trips, fishing trips to Alaska and we always sit around a campfire at night. Inevitably, one of the topics of discussion that night will be reliving things that we observed in his life and things that he said. We laugh a lot, we cry a little bit. We honor his memory and I think that honoring the memory of those that went ahead of us, particularly our forebears, is an important piece of maintaining a strong healthy climate in the society. And so we do that with my dad and we every single time if you sit by the fire five nights in a row, you're going to tell stories about Pop.

Dr. James Dobson: How many of your children are in the military or have been?

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Two of my boys were in the military. The third one tried to go into the military but had taken Adderall when he was like 12 years old and they wouldn't take him at that time. So two of them served in the military, one as an officer and one as a non-commissioned officer.

Dr. James Dobson: And you're proud of them.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I'm very proud of them.

Dr. James Dobson: All of them.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: All of them. Absolutely. I'm proud of all of them and I'm particularly proud of those that have served.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we've been talking to Lieutenant General Jerry Boykin, a great friend of mine, a great patriot about a number of things, but particularly memories of his father who was involved in the D-Day landings, was piloting or driving a Higgins boat, was seriously injured, lost an eye, woke up in Virginia after being unconscious for a period of time. He paid a price along with thousands of others. As I said earlier, I think yesterday, 9,000 men were wounded or killed during those D-Day landings and we owe them a debt of gratitude that we will

never be able to pay. Lieutenant General Boykin, thank you for being with us. I have great love and respect for you and I appreciate your giving us the time today.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: Doctor, thank you for letting me share this day with you. It's a great privilege and I love you and you've just got to stay in the battle because we need you.

Dr. James Dobson: It beats sitting on a front porch someplace.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Give my regards to your team at Family Research Council.

Lt. Gen Jerry Boykin: I will do that.

Dr. James Dobson: All right.

Roger Marsh: Well, General Boykin said it quite well, didn't he? We owe these men a debt of gratitude we will never be able to pay. You're listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, part two of a moving conversation Dr. Dobson had with retired Lieutenant General Jerry Boykin. Now, if you missed any part of today's program or if you'd like to go back and listen to part one, you'll find all of the audio at [jdfi.net](http://jdfi.net). Those men cross that beach fighting for freedom, the freedom to raise families, to worship God and to live by truth and principle. And those are the same things that we stand for every day here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. If today's broadcast stirred something in your heart for the next generation, we urge you to stand with us. Your donation of any amount helps us keep broadcasting messages of faith, family and freedom to millions of homes all across America. To make a secure gift online, visit [jdfi.net](http://jdfi.net). If you prefer, you can also make that donation over the phone. A member of our constituent care team will be happy to take your call when you dial 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825.

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 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.

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