



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Finding New Intimacy in Prayer – Part 2

Guest(s): Dr. Henry and Dr. Norman Blackaby

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Dr. James Dobson: Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, a radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we're continuing a powerful conversation about spiritual revival in America. Dr. James Dobson's guests are Dr. Henry Blackaby and his son, Dr. Norman Blackaby. Henry Blackaby, of course, the founder of Blackaby Ministries and Dr. Norman Blackaby, professor at East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas. Now, previously the Blackabys shared their hearts about prayer and salvation reminding us that anyone, no matter their past, is just one prayer away from transformation. Today you'll hear the Blackabys take us deeper into what true spiritual revival looks like, sharing powerful stories of how genuine repentance has transformed entire cities across America. From Charlotte to Cleveland to Pittsburgh, the Blackabys have witnessed how corporate prayer and deep repentance are bringing about dramatic social change, restored marriages and renewed commitment to God across denominational and cultural lines. So let's rejoin this inspiring conversation about finding new intimacy in prayer right here on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: To see God's people revived or to have a spiritual renewal, that is one of the passions of your heart. What does that mean? And what would it look like if it came?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Well, there's a need of revival when God's people are no longer seeing and experiencing the mighty works of God being done through them. Where all they see is what they're doing, but they don't see the activity of God. It means their heart has departed. And another way of expressing the need for revival is God's heart cried constantly to His people, return to me and I will return to you. How would you know if you have adequately returned to God or have repented saying, "O God, I'm not the person that you have wanted me to be. I have moved away from you and therefore you are refusing to do any work through my life and there's so much in eternity that's being affected when you can't. O Lord, would you show me my sin and cleanse me and return me to a relationship to you?"

You can tell when you have returned to God adequately when God returns to you. And in the great revivals, the heartbeat of revival is when God's people

come under incredible conviction of their sin and repent. They turn away from how they've been living and return to God. And that great revival of course in Wales under Evan Roberts and others.

Dr. James Dobson: When?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: In 1904 and '05. There were a hundred thousand people who were saved in six months. But if you go and look as I have, and I've preached in Evan Roberts' church, you will hardly ever find one message preached to lost people. The messages of revival are preached to God's people. For God's people to return to the kind of relationship which God has demanded all along. And once God's people return, then the lost people have an encounter with God which is incredible.

Dr. James Dobson: Now you are aware I'm sure, of exceptions to what I'm going to say, but for the most part you are not seeing that in the church at large today.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Not right across the board, but I am seeing a mighty move of God where God's people are repenting. I was just in a city in Georgia and almost every person in that large church had an encounter with God. They wept before God. The altars were filled with sobbing people including pastors from the area, and they were very clear about their sin and they were telling us that they met God and he literally convicted them of every sin that they had forgotten. And they had called on God to cleanse them and they were free. But at the end of that conference I asked for those who have had a deep encounter with God, I tried to make it very clear. If you have responded to God's encounter with you and you know that you're a different person, would you just stand? Almost every solitary person in that auditorium stood. Now, we think of revival as jumping and shouting, and I'd say, no, no, no, no, no, no. Revival is when God's people have a real encounter with God and are literally transformed by that encounter.

Dr. James Dobson: And if you're not seeing it, what does that mean?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: It means you have not returned to God, that sin still remains in your life. But I am seeing it and I'm seeing it in cities like Charlotte, North Carolina and Cleveland and Pittsburgh. There's a sudden movement of God calling His people to repent and it's crossing all kinds of lines, denominationally, culturally, ethnically, and they're coming together to pray. But they're coming together with a prayer commitment to be the people of God in their city. And I'm seeing crime decrease and social changes taking place, marriages restored, deep repentance coming from God's people, pastors repenting and I am seeing it, but it needs to be widespread.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Dr. Norman Blackaby: I think also with repentance, we put such a negative connotation with it towards God's people. But when you look in the Bible, the most positive word in the

Scriptures is repent because it always brings life. And when Jesus talked about it, He said, "Repent, for the entire kingdom of God stands right next to you." And so we may look at repentance maybe for the lost. I've often heard people say when a preacher starts even hinting towards repentance, "Well, the preacher's gone to meddling now", but yet that's the most positive thing that he can preach. He's saying if you would turn the direction you're going and go with God, the entire kingdom of God is waiting to be open up to your life. All the blessings, all that God has available is there for the person who'll repent.

Dr. James Dobson: It sounds judgmental today in a very negative way, of course.

Dr. Norman Blackaby: And so positive.

Dr. James Dobson: Judgment is a biblical concept. Quote 2 Chronicles 7:14 for us.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: 2 Chronicles 7:14 has to be seen in the light of verse 13 because it is an expression of God on the covenant that he made with a special people. These people were to be holy as God was holy so that the world could come to know him. So God says if you ever see me withhold the rain and you see that disease comes across the land, or I'm sending pestilence on my people, then make the connection. 'If my people immediately who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin and then heal their land.'

So the healing of America waits on the repentance of God's people. And if we will not repent and have God cleanse us, then the healing of the land is postponed. And that's my cry to God's people. If you hear that, make the connection between what you're seeing in the land and God withholding His mighty presence and power through you. Make the connection. The withholding is because you've broken a covenant relationship with me. But if you will immediately pray and humble yourself and seek my face and turn from your wicked ways, then I'll hear you and I will forgive your sin. And then the healing of America will get underway.

Dr. James Dobson: That is an if-then conditional promise.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: And to a special people.

Dr. James Dobson: The application of it is if you don't, what happens?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Well, He then says that. If you read on in that same chapter, He says, "If you do not, then I'll turn every blessing into a curse. And everyone who walks by will say, this disaster which their God has brought upon them is because they have sinned and would not repent." You read those verses that follow. He describes that. He says, here's what'll happen if you respond, but he is very clear. Here's what'll happen if you don't respond.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you think that's where we are as a nation? I'm not only speaking of America, but Western nations, Canada where you all lived. Are we in danger of that kind of consequence?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: I believe that's the key. That's the heart question. And I believe we're standing very close to the judgment of God. I don't know of a nation in history that has been blessed anymore. God has blessed this nation in incredible ways, including its Founding Fathers, the leaders He has given us, the freedom from invasion by others. God has blessed this nation and the nation has turned away from God. Now, no nation in biblical or history has ever received the blessing of God and turned away from God and avoided the judgment of God.

Dr. James Dobson: And you fear for...

Dr. Henry Blackaby: I am trembling Jim, I really am. I think we're very close to either revival or judgment. And if God's people will not make the connection between the condition of the nation and their sin and repent with brokenness before God. If we do not repent, then the nation will face judgment. All the way through the Bible God says I will protect you from your enemy. I will intervene. No enemy will ever win against you. If my people who are a covenant people with me will walk with me, I will intervene. It's very clear. And that's in the covenant found in Deuteronomy 28. He said, I will deal with your enemies and I'll stand between you and your enemies. Is that true today? I believe it is. And so with all my heart, with all my energy and all my time, I cry out to God's people, make the connection. You hold the future of America in your hand, and the future of disaster is coming very close to us.

Dr. James Dobson: When I think of the holiness of God and His righteousness, and then I look at the popular culture around us, and especially Hollywood and the internet and the pornography and the killing of a million babies a year. And when you see the way God's name is used in vain every day all around us. When you see the wickedness of spring break and what takes place sexually between young people. And knowing that even some sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth graders are already involved in casual sex, oral sex, things that I am embarrassed to even mention. When I see all of that, I say, "Lord, why hasn't your wrath occurred already?" I mean, we're just asking for it. If not, then I don't understand who God is because what I read in the Scripture says that the wages of sin is death.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Mercy. God extends His mercy but we are never to take that one for granted. God does not have to extend His mercy. Mercy is the withholding of what we really deserve for our sin. Grace is giving us what we don't deserve. But when David heard God's indictment and he had not repented for a whole year, he cried out to God, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the multitude of your tender mercies." The only reason why God does not judge us immediately is the mercy of God, which extends the opportunity for us to repent just a little longer.

Dr. James Dobson: There are people listening to us right now whose hearts have been pricked as we read in the Scripture, by the Word. What do they do? Where do they begin to say, "Lord, here I am, open my eyes. Let me see my own sin. Bring the conviction, bring repentance. I've been stone-cold dead. I want your pleasure in my life. I want your presence." Where does he go from there?

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Well, the moment that we repent, God does what He promised to do. He brings us fullness of life. It's like the woman at the well. The moment she repented, then the whole presence of God filled her life and she ran back into her city and they saw God's salvation. Her eyes were different, her voice was different, her walk was different, her talk was different. Everything about her was different. And God had done something to transform her life. And they all ran out to meet the one who had transformed her life. Our problem is we keep telling the world that we're Christian, but they don't see any radical transformation in our life that looks different than theirs. And so we try to talk our way with the unbeliever and I'd say, no, no, God intended that when he transforms a Christian's life, including one who's repented and returned like Peter, he repented. He was a different man after that.

Dr. James Dobson: He wept bitterly.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: He did. And he was then used of God to bring thousands to faith in Christ. So it begins with a solitary person saying, "Whatever anybody else does, I want my life to be right with God." And when you do, God then fills that life and your life becomes the center of God's activity in your family. I've watched parents get right with God and it turned their children around. They'd been concerned about their children, and the moment they got their lives right, the children began to return to God. And so one life that is totally transformed by an encounter with God, then God does what He promised to do. He fills their life with His presence and it affects everything and everybody around them. So I would say begin with one person wholly yielded to God, and that can begin a revival because everyone sees the impact of a transformed life.

Dr. James Dobson: You speak often at the Pentagon and you all have had a great burden for our military, for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere. You have felt the need to assist and to help and you have provided materials. Explain how that came about.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: I was speaking to some Protestant army chaplains and the chief of Army chaplains came up to me and said, "Henry, your little book, *Experiencing God Day by Day*, your daily devotional book, has changed my life and radically affected me. He said, "If there's any way you could get that put into a little paperback with a camouflage cover for the military, I'd like a hundred thousand copies." And then the chief of Air Force Chaplain said, "I'd like 50,000." So we immediately began to find out what it would cost, and we then asked God to help us to provide it and we could get them for a \$1.76. But then the math said that's \$176,000, which I didn't have 176 cents.

Dr. James Dobson: That's just for the first hundred thousand.

Dr. Norman Blackaby: That's right. And that doesn't include shipping, plus the shipping.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: But we have proceeded by faith and never asked for a cent, but let people know what God laid on our heart. And Jim, the people of America have a huge love for our troops and they want to know what can I do? Is there anything I can do for them? And when they heard that we were printing this in a military version and sending it to them, they said, "Can we help?" And it just came in and we've sent over 60,000 to Iraq. We've sent them to Afghanistan and 38 different locations including the medical centers in Washington, D.C. And one of the top CEOs said, "Could I go and distribute them with the chaplain to the medical center?" And he said it was incredible. They just went like hotcakes. Everyone wanted one.

Dr. James Dobson: And we need to be praying for our troops around the world too. This is a difficult time for them. In fact, Norm, you were telling me when we had lunch together that you're hearing from people who are reading the materials that you all are providing and they're studying it and you're getting a marvelous response from them, aren't you?

Dr. Norman Blackaby: And it is been amazing to see the response. We teach online courses and we have troops that are going through that, but we provide the material. But the responses we're getting from the troops in Iraq is breaking our hearts. And I think often we forget how young so many of those troops are and the stories and the emails. And I share with you one 20-year-old that had emailed and he said, "I'm a Christian and I have to protect my troops that were with me", his fellow soldiers. He said they ran out a little girl in front of him with an explosive strapped to her, and he had to run her over to save himself and the men. And that was his orders was to keep going so they wouldn't get attacked and they wouldn't get RPGs shot at them.

Dr. James Dobson: Let me make sure everybody understood just what you said. The insurgents or terrorists as I call them, had set up a roadblock and then because we would blast through it, they put a little girl right there.

Dr. Norman Blackaby: To have the troops stop because they knew that they wouldn't want to run her down.

Dr. James Dobson: And then they intended to hit them with...

Dr. Norman Blackaby: Yes. If you stop, then they hit you with the RPGs. And here is a Christian 20-year-old calling and emailing the ministry saying, "How do I deal with that?" And so our troops are hurting, and that's why our ministry has such a heart to try to get material and discipleship material and praying for our troops. Regardless of where you stand on political issues, we need to be praying and we need to be supporting them because they are seeing things that no 20-year-old ever should have to see.

Dr. James Dobson: If people have not yet prayed for this nation, this would be a real good place to start.

Dr. Norman Blackaby: It's a great place to start.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Yes. And I think we need to bring our little families together and pray as a family and in the workplaces. If you have the opportunity, bring your employees together. But under all the influence that you can have, bring them together. I spoke to judges and lawyers, about 800 of them. Every judge I spoke to had been through *Experiencing God*, but every judge was leading the course, *Experiencing God*, with the people in their courtroom. And I thought, judges ought to pull their court people together. Policemen ought to stop and get together. Firemen ought to get together, school teachers ought to do. I think we need to gather together and pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name in our nation, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in our nation, and we need to do it together as well as individually."

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we have reached the end of our time for the second day, and I think it's very appropriate that we ask Dr. Blackaby, Sr., Dr. Henry Blackaby, to pray for this country. Dr. Blackaby.

Dr. Henry Blackaby: Thank you. Father, there is indeed a trembling in our heart as we stand in Your presence because You have blessed this nation. You have put Your hand upon it for centuries, and You are guiding us even in this hour. And as life begins to unfold in our nation, would You in mercy extend Your protection and extend Your wisdom and Your discernment to the leaders of the nation, from the common person to the chief executive officers, to the government officials, to the military. Hear our cry and put your hand upon us one more time. We do not deserve it, but we are pleading with You to extend your mercy to us and give us time to return to You as a nation, and we'll be careful to be a catalyst in doing it and to give You the praise as You let us be a partner with You in seeing a nation return to You. And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Dr. James Dobson: Amen.

Roger Marsh: Well, Amen indeed. Friend, you've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a powerful conversation Dr. Dobson recorded with Drs. Henry and Norman Blackaby about experiencing deeper intimacy with God through prayer. Now, Dr. Henry Blackaby went home to be with the Lord early last year, but these insights still ring true today. A powerful reminder that prayer is not just talking to God, it's developing a real relationship with our heavenly Father. The powerful message we heard today and on the last program that revival starts in your own heart and spreads through faithful prayer, is exactly what our nation needs during these challenging times.

By the way, if you missed either part one or a portion of today's program and you want to share it with someone who needs to hear this message, visit drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Once you're online with this, you'll find program information in addition to information about Henry and Norman Blackaby's book called *Experiencing Prayer with Jesus*.

That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And keep in mind that Dr. James Dobson Family Institute offers several inspiring reading plans as well that are all available through the Bible app by YouVersion, covering everything from parenting wisdom to strengthening your marriage. Whether you have three minutes a day or thirty, these reading plans bring practical biblical insights right to your smartphone or mobile device. You'll find topics like "The Power of Forgiveness," "Being Students of Our Children" and more. Each of these plans are carefully crafted to help you build a stronger family on God's foundation.

So why not start today? Just open the Bible app on your phone or tablet, search for Dr. James Dobson, JDFI, and begin your first reading plan. It only takes a few minutes to get started, but the impact on your family could last a lifetime. Well, I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of Dr. Dobson and all of us here at Family Talk, thanks so much for listening. 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:

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