



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Dr. James Dobson - His Family and Friends Pay Tribute – Part 1

Guest(s): Danae Dobson and The Hon. Michele Bachmann

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Today marks the beginning of a very special two day presentation here on Family Talk as we share with you highlights from the private memorial service held for Dr. James Dobson back on October the 4th. For nearly five decades, Dr. Dobson devoted his life to strengthening families and defending biblical truth. His voice became a source of wisdom and encouragement to millions all around the world. What you're about to hear are some audio presentations from an intimate gathering of family and very close friends of Dr. Dobson's, a time to reflect on his remarkable legacy of faith, integrity, and unwavering commitment to the gospel. On today's program, you're going to hear heartfelt tributes from a couple of women who knew him best, including his daughter Danae, and the Honorable Michelle Bachman. Now I want to mention that you have an extraordinary opportunity to carry forward Dr. Dobson's legacy through the Dr. James Dobson memorial matching grant. That will double the impact of your gift and I'll share more about that later in the program. But right now, let's begin with a word from Dr. Bart Brock, the president and chairman of the board of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. Bart Brock: Hello, I'm Dr. Bart Brock, president and chairman of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. As the only ministry chosen by Dr. Dobson to carry his legacy, we were honored on October 4th, 2025 to host his private family memorial. You'll see many tributes including from his daughter Danae, and his son Ryan, and many friends he made over the years. As a matter of fact, as my wife and I left the memorial, we both commented on the common theme of consistency and integrity Dr. Dobson showed as husband, father, and friend. In a world craving authenticity, there is Dr. Dobson.

Roger Marsh: And that was Dr. Bart Brock reminding us of the common theme that ran throughout Dr. Dobson's life: consistency and integrity. Next up on this special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, you're about to hear from Danae Dobson, Dr. Dobson's daughter. She'll share some childhood memories, reflect on her father's steadfast integrity and recount the many times that God miraculously spared his life. Here now is Danae Dobson.

Danae Dobson:

I want to thank every person here who came to honor my dad's life and his ministry. And to my mom, it means so much to me to see you sitting there. When I was four, five years of age before my dad became a public figure, I recognized that there was something uniquely special about him: his way of describing things, his humor, his intelligence, his creativity, his wisdom, talents, and most importantly, his relationship with the Lord. He told me that when he was a child, his great-grandmother said to somebody in the family, there's something very special about Jimmy's relationship with God.

I used to often repeat things that he would say and people would tend to agree with me because he had a special connection with the Lord, very distinct, and he also had a skilled biblical knowledge that he was not a theologian, and yet he had that gift. So I now realize that what I saw in him as a child all those years ago was an anointing from God, and it was an anointing that was going to catapult him into becoming a prominent Christian leader whom millions were going to look to for advice and valuable insights. My dad used to joke that he used God's ideas, but he got the credit.

Where my dad deserves credit, however, is in the hard work that he invested in his professional life and in his ministry. He said to me one time, I was made to work, that's how I'm wired. And those of us in the family saw him bring home boxes of stuff on the weekends from the office that he called his stack and he would sit at his desk all day on Saturdays going through his stack, and of course the TV would be on at the same time. And sometimes the radio too, all going at once. The TV was on most of the time in our house. I called it the Eternal Flame. Newsmax, Fox News, History Channel, USC game, tennis match. When dad was home, the TV was on and often there were two or three going at the same time in different rooms, right Mom?

Well, despite that and given the fact that he was so busy, he always made time for me. When I was very young, he and I used to go on Sunday afternoon bike rides and I had a little seat on the back of his bicycle and we would ride to the park and we would build sandcastles together and his sandcastles were just, I mean he had moats and drawbridges and we would pour water into the moat and he'd push me on the swing and then we would stop at our favorite taco place called Taco Lita, which is still there, and then head to the Tasty Freeze. Those are such special memories for me riding bikes down in the wash. Dad had a private phone line put in his office exclusively for my mom and Ryan and me so that if we had a need, we could contact him anytime that we wanted to. Regardless if he had a meeting going on or an important conference, he wanted us to know that we could interrupt him if we needed to, and he wanted to make sure that we knew that we had his attention and that we were his priority. For Father's Day one year, I gave him a little trinket dish and it shows a father bending down to hug his young daughter, and the words say always there, and my dad was always there for me.

On another Father's Day, I wrote on his card how much I appreciated his integrity, and I thanked him that I never had to lie in bed at night wondering

what he was up to and how it was going to affect our family and how it was going to affect his ministry. I never had to think those kind of thoughts. No one ever caught my dad in a lie. He was always faithful to my mom. He never cheated anyone, and in fact, he would go the extra mile to try to always be fair. A couple months ago I was reading an article about Jackie Kennedy Onassis's and JFK's sorted affairs, and I read in the article that she allegedly said to her mother, I could have married an honest man or a great man, and I chose to marry a great man. And I immediately thought of my dad. An honest man and a great man, a man of the utmost integrity.

When my dad was 54, he had a significant heart attack, and that began a whole series of life or death instances to the point where I nicknamed him Laz for Lazarus because he had so many close calls and he just kept coming back. Dr. Roy mentioned his stroke. For 24 hours, he couldn't talk and he made a 100% recovery. He almost bled to death one time. He had prostate cancer. One time when he was alone in the house, he slipped on snow on his shoe, fell backwards and hit the back of his head, knocked himself unconscious while on blood thinners.

And the doctor said, well, you bounced your brain around, but there's no sign of a hemorrhage. He was on two airplanes, two jets that filled up with smoke. The pilot turned to my dad and asked, I've heard that you're a praying man, and my dad said, yes, I am. And the pilot said, now's the time. We have an engine on fire. They managed to get the plane on the ground. There were fire trucks all over the runway, so he survived two of those instances. The cardiologist who treated my dad after his heart attack told him many years later, I would've given you no more than 10 years. Well, our times are in God's hands, and God gave him 35 more years and a lot of near misses in between. One time on the phone, my mom and dad and I tried to think of all the close calls he had had and count them, and we came up with about 25.

To his credit, my dad led a discipline life and he did what he could to stay alive. Somebody mentioned him walking on the treadmill. After his heart attack, he walked on the treadmill every day and he used to brag that he only missed five days in 25 years. That's how dedicated he was. If he was sick, he would walk anyway because he would think that he could sweat it out. And if he was on a trip, he would get up extra early to use the, or use the hotel gym or he would walk laps around the airport. He was so committed to never miss, and God was so gracious to give him those 35 extra years of life and ministry. I've expressed to the Lord many times that I will never complain, but not everyone is that fortunate, and we all went through that last month with great sadness. Not everyone is so fortunate to cheat death so many times. Many of you have heard my dad tell the story of Pete Maravich, but it's worth repeating today. Pete Maravich known as Pistol Pete was one of the greatest players in NBA history.

He retired from basketball and was desperately searching for meaning in his life, and he found it eventually through Jesus, and he and my dad got acquainted on the phone. And in 1988, my dad invited him to come to Focus on the Family and

record radio broadcast to share his amazing testimony. And Pete said, I'd really love to do that. And then my dad, by his own admission, he did one of the most ostentatious things he's ever done. He said, "Pete, a group of us play basketball three times a week at 7:00 AM at our church gymnasium. Would you like to come play with us before we do the broadcast interview?" And Pete said, "I'd really like to do that." And he came. He was wearing a T-shirt that day that said, "Looking Unto Jesus."

And he played with my dad and his friends for about 45 minutes. And then they all took a break and he and my dad stood on the sidelines talking and he told my dad that he hadn't played much in the past because his right shoulder was bothering him. And what was unbeknownst to him was that he had a undetected congenital heart defect. So my dad asked him, he said, well, how do you feel today? And Pete replied, "I'm feeling so much better. In fact, I feel great." And then he fell. He hit the ground hard, his face hit the floor. My dad saw that he was in a seizure, so my dad performed CPR and the other guys came running and they called 911 and they never got a heartbeat from him.

One of the greatest athletes in the history of the NBA died in my dad's arms at age 40, and my dad was shaken, understandably. And he came home that day and Ryan was there who was 17 at the time. And dad said to Ryan, come into my study. I want to talk to you. Do you remember this, Ryan? Vividly. Yeah. And Dad said, "Ryan, you never know when you're going to have your last conversation with somebody you love. I love and care about you and your sister, but I want to tell you what I care about most. I want you to accomplish a lot in your life. I want you to follow your dreams, to succeed."

But that's not what matters to me the most. When this moment comes for you, like it did for Pete Maravich's family today, when you receive the news of my passing, the only thing that I care about is that you be there. Be there. I will be looking for you. I will be searching for you in Heaven so that we can spend eternity together. Be there on that resurrection morning. It outranks everything else." Many years ago, I had the be there message framed for my dad, and it's in his office at the ministry. He was very proud of it. Well, that time that my dad spoke about came to pass on August 21st, his final moment. And I believe that he heard those words that he so very much long to hear, "Well done thou good and faithful servant it." Thank you, dad, for your love and dedication to God, to our family, and to your many friends. We will be there.

Roger Marsh:

Well, what a beautiful and heartfelt tribute from Danae Dobson. Her words remind us that Dr. Dobson was not only a great man, but he was an honest man, a man of integrity who lived the same in private as he did in public. On today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we're hearing selected highlights from Dr. James Dobson's private family memorial service that was held on October the 4th. And one final segment for today features Michele Bachmann, a longtime friend of the Dobson family and a member of the board of directors here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Michele offered a heartfelt prayer of gratitude for Dr. Dobson's life and ministry.

Michele Bachmann: My name is Michele Bachman. I'm privileged to serve on the board of directors of the James Dobson Family Institute. Would you bow your heads with me in reverence as we go before the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, we gather today with hearts filled with gratitude and sorrow as we remember the life of Dr. James Clayton Dobson. Thank you, father for the gift of his life, for the very profound way you use Jim to change the world of marriage, family, parenting, protecting human life for encouraging salvation and discipleship and public policy. As we mourn Jim's passing, we celebrate his legacy of love for his beloved bride of 65 years. Shirley Deere Dobson, his much loved children, Danae and Ryan and Laura and their children, Lincoln and Laci. Thank you, Father, for the guidance that Jim gave to generations and the remarkable inspiration and hope he gave to each one of us.

Lord, would you grant the Dobson family and millions of their worldwide friends, comfort in sorrow, peace in our grief, and the assurance of eternal life through faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We invite your holy presence here today, oh God, and we ask you for the strength as we press forward with Dr. Dobson's ministry through the lessons this consequential man so passionately shared. We loved this man. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. Dr. Dobson's favorite psalm was Psalms 103, and he asked that this would be read today during this service, please listen to the Word of the Lord. "Let all that I am praise the Lord. With my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let all that I am praise the Lord. May I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.

He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fill my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagles. The Lord gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly. Our days on earth are like grass. Like wildflowers, we bloom and die. The wind blows, and we are gone as though we had never been here. But the love of the Lord remains forever with those who fear him. His salvation extends to the children's children of those who are faithful to his covenant, of those who obey his commandments. The Lord has made the heavens his throne. From there, he rules over everything. Praise the Lord you angels you mighty ones who carry out his plans listening for each of his commands. Yes. Praise the Lord you armies of angels who serve him and do his will. Praise the Lord, everything he has created, everything in all His kingdom. Let all that I am praise the Lord." Amen.

Roger Marsh: Well Psalm 103 has always been a source of comfort and hope for believers and hearing Michele Bachmann read Dr. Dobson's favorite passage reminds us of the eternal perspective he carried throughout his life and ministry. Let all that I am praise the Lord. In fact, if you ever got any autographed by Dr. James Dobson, he would write his name and then include Psalm 103 with his signature. You're listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, a special presentation honoring the life and legacy of Dr. James C. Dobson, Jr. To view the memorial service in its entirety, go to drjamesdobson.org. And as we reflect on Dr. Dobson's incredible legacy today, I'm reminded that his work isn't finished. The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute exists to continue carry forward

his mission, reaching new generations with biblical truth, strengthening marriages, equipping parents and defending the sanctity of human life.

And right now, you have an extraordinary opportunity to be part of that mission and you do too. Thanks to a group of generous friends who deeply loved and respected Dr. Dobson, we've established the historic Dr. James Dobson Memorial Matching Grant. That means that every dollar you give will be doubled up to \$6 million, placing Dr. Dobson's timeless wisdom into the hands and homes of families for years to come. Your gift today honors his legacy and multiplies his impact, and you can make a secure donation by visiting drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also give a gift over the phone when you call a member of our constituent care team. That number is 877-732-6825. Or write to us at P.O. Box 39000 Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code, 80949.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. On behalf of all of us here at the JDFI, thanks so much for joining us today for this special tribute. Be with us again next time as we continue sharing the memorial service for Dr. James Dobson, right here on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you can still trust, for the family you love.

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