



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: I Am Rahab: Touched by God, Fully Restored

Guest(s): Autumn Miles

Air Date: March 17, 2025

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 Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Now today's program takes on a very serious subject; addressing the troubling issue of domestic abuse. It's a problem that affects nearly 10 million people each year in America alone. Think about that. That's 20 victims every minute who suffer at the hands of someone who once claimed to have loved them. Well our guest today here on Family Talk is Autumn Miles, an author and a podcaster who's courageously sharing her journey about surviving an abusive marriage and ultimately finding hope and healing through her faith in Jesus Christ. Her story is chronicled in her book called *I Am Rahab: Touched by God, Fully Restored*, and it offers a powerful testimony of God's redemptive love. Now after escaping her own abusive relationship, Autumn now reaches millions of people through her speaking ministry and also her weekly podcast. You'll find more information on that when you go to her website which is linked to drjamesdobson.org.

Whether you've experienced abuse personally or you know someone who has or possibly even is, today's conversation offers a beacon of hope and reminder of God's unfailing love even when we feel unlovable. Here now is Dr. James Dobson with our guest, Autumn Miles, to begin today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, welcome everyone to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm your host, Dr. James Dobson, and we're delighted to have you with us today. Our program is going to focus on the troubling issue of domestic abuse and we're going to talk especially with a guest who's here who struggled to escape from domestic abuse, and we're going to tell her story and what God has done in her life.

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence says that nearly 10 million people per year are physically abused by their husband or wife or partner. That is 20 people per minute. Every 60 seconds, 20 people become a victim of domestic abuse by someone who at one time or another claimed to love them. That's the typical situation. Those numbers are staggering in their implications, and I hope this broadcast today will serve as a beacon of hope and a reminder

of God's pure love for us even when we feel unlovable and abused people often do feel unlovable. I'm joined in studio, I mentioned her a minute ago. Her name is Autumn Miles and she was delivered from an abusive relationship. She's a prominent author, a speaker with a ministry that reaches millions of people around the country. Autumn Miles, welcome to Family Talk.

Autumn Miles: Thank you for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we're pleased to have you and you've written a book with a strange title, *I Am Rahab*. I've never seen a book that identifies with Rahab, but you have, *Touched By God, Fully Restored*. Are you Rahab?

Autumn Miles: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you see yourself that way?

Autumn Miles: Yes sir, I am Rahab. I really identified with Rahab in the Scripture.

Dr. James Dobson: In what way? She was a prostitute.

Autumn Miles: I know, I know. But coming from a background of domestic violence and taking it before my church and the church kicking me out, that leaves just a stain in your mind. And so when I got my life trying to put it back together, I started searching the Scriptures for someone to identify with and I found Mary in the Scripture. And the Bible never says she did anything wrong, so I'm like, "I don't identify with her." I found Esther, started looking up these women figures of the Scripture, and then I found Rahab the harlot. And I thought to myself, "If God can use and chooses to use Rahab the harlot and to change her life, He can use me Autumn the divorcee, Autumn the abused." So that's why I titled the book *I Am Rahab* because I found myself in her and found great hope from her story.

Dr. James Dobson: Boy, there is real hope for people here at that point because Rahab, many people don't know this, was in the bloodline for Christ.

Autumn Miles: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: This flawed individual who really got into grievous sin was rescued and restored and God put her in the bloodline. That is amazing to me. What's that woman doing here? It must be because God loved her despite the flaws and sin. Grievous sin in her life.

Autumn Miles: Yeah. I found it fascinating as I studied her life and I studied the excavations of Jericho, how God would choose to use and does choose on a daily basis to use us and to pull us out of a lifestyle and place us and give us His inheritance, adopt us as His kids. I also found it fascinating that she was Boaz's mother and it's just amazing how God will fully redeem our story.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's go back to your childhood. You had a happy childhood as I understand it.

Autumn Miles: Amazing childhood.

Dr. James Dobson: You have a wonderful father who was a minister. Is he still?

Autumn Miles: Still a minister, yes sir.

Dr. James Dobson: Still a minister. And a good mother.

Autumn Miles: Wonderful mom.

Dr. James Dobson: Then it was not a troubling childhood that set you up for an abusive relationship with your husband.

Autumn Miles: No. But I will tell you, growing up, I always wanted to be smarter. I always wanted to be better than I was and internally I just wanted someone to validate that. And as my parents were great parents, when you get a teenager, you look to boys to validate that. That's when I met my ex-husband and he came in like a knight in shining armor, telling me all these things I was great at.

Dr. James Dobson: How old were you?

Autumn Miles: 15.

Dr. James Dobson: 15.

Autumn Miles: 15 when I met him. He told me everything I wanted to hear as most abusers do. They will tell you what you want to hear, and I bought it, hook, line and sinker. I fell in love and that's when things started to crumble.

Dr. James Dobson: How long were you married before this abuse showed up?

Autumn Miles: It started early and I would say after we became sexually active. I noticed-

Dr. James Dobson: You were not married.

Autumn Miles: We were not married, no.

Dr. James Dobson: There's your first mistake.

Autumn Miles: I know. I should have listened. I noticed that he would look at me and he would be like, "Wow, you're ugly, you're fat." And I would kind of sit there and be like, "Wow, maybe-"

Dr. James Dobson: It's the opposite of what he offered to you in the beginning.

Autumn Miles: In the beginning, and I would sit there, "Well, maybe I am. Well, maybe I've gained some weight." And those words progressed into emotions in me that started to need his approval on my life. I became addicted to making sure he approved of what I was doing. And that verbal abuse turned to emotional, turned to spiritual, turned to isolation. After we were married, I wasn't allowed to really talk to my parents without getting in trouble. So it started very small, but it grows definitely as the years go by.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, usually works the other way. You had a good relationship with your father.

Autumn Miles: Yes, I did.

Dr. James Dobson: And it's often when the needs are not met of a girl by her father that she looks for solutions to meet that need somewhere else. And it's often with some guy whose motives are not all that pure, but you had a good father and a good relationship and yet you still fell for his line.

Autumn Miles: I think one of the things is what was going on inside of me. I was feeding these insecurities that I had and needed them to be met. And I look back now as a Christian for 20-plus years, saying that I was looking for the Lord. I was looking for the Lord to fill those voids, but I filled them with the first thing that came by.

Dr. James Dobson: So how old were you when you got married?

Autumn Miles: A week before my 19th birthday.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you have any apprehension that you were about to make the biggest mistake of your life?

Autumn Miles: God is so good that He told me multiple times not to do it. But let me tell you something. What I experienced with an abusive situation, anyone can tell you anything but you are allegiant to your abuser and his opinion, or in some cases her opinion if you're a man, is the only one that matters. And that's an idea that people don't understand unless they are in that kind of a relationship and have been almost brainwashed by the toxicity of it. I think I struggled a lot with the shame that it brought on my family because my dad was eventually fired from that church because he stood by me. I struggled with the decisions that I made and put myself first rather than thinking about how it would affect the people around me.

Dr. James Dobson: Can you tell us a little more about what kind of abuse you were going through? Was it verbal? Was it physical? Was it both?

Autumn Miles: It was all of it. It was all of it. It's not just... I think the misconception is that it's just when a man is hitting a woman. It is I would say the mental abuse and just the mind games that an abuser plays on you. I would rather be hit any day of

the week than deal with guilt and the threat of what he will do if you tell anyone. I would rather be hit. So in some cases, and if you talk to any other abuse victim, they will tell you it's the brainwashing that is hard because they'll say, "If you tell someone that I'm doing this to you, I will hurt our kids, I will hurt myself, I will kill you." And because you see the anger coming from that person, it's a very real threat. This is the reality that as we're sitting here and having this conversation, millions of women are experiencing right now, they're terrified. That's why women don't leave because-

Dr. James Dobson: Were you afraid?

Autumn Miles: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Did he threaten you physically?

Autumn Miles: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Did he say he would kill you?

Autumn Miles: I don't remember if he said he would kill me. He threatened multiple times to kill himself. So that was kind of the lingering threat that I had. And I didn't want to be... I didn't want someone to commit suicide because of me. So it's a brainwashing, it's a mind game that you are bought into because I was in it for seven years. You believe it. It is your truth. It's the truth that you live on a daily basis.

Dr. James Dobson: In fact, you contemplated suicide yourself, didn't you?

Autumn Miles: I did. Actually, when I wrote the book, I put "suicide was my fair weather friend" and the editor came back and they said, "Fair weather, that means when things are good." I said, "That's exactly what I meant. Fair weather." You don't understand unless you walk through it what kind of a bondage that you are living in on a daily basis. You can't do anything. You have to ask permission. Just for what I wore, I had to ask permission for it. I couldn't take my makeup off at night because I was ugly if I had it off so I had to sleep in it. You don't understand that this controls every part of you, so death seems like hope. And that's where I was one night at 3:00 AM in the morning and I couldn't do it anymore.

At this point I had pushed God so far away from my life. I thought my husband was going to kill me. And one night at 3:00 AM in the morning, I had had enough. There is a point where you have enough, and we don't talk about that enough. These abused women, they deal with so much that suicide seems hopeful when in fact it's not.

I remember when I was sort of planning my own death and walking through, "How am I going to do this?" The Spirit of God spoke to me and he said,

"Autumn, do you remember me?" And when the Spirit of God speaks, my soul stands at attention. I knew even though I wasn't a Christian yet, I thought I was a believer. I knew that He was telling me, "Listen, I'm fighting for you." I could almost feel the hordes of Hell and Him fighting for my life. I got up, walked across the room, offered the most authentic prayer I've ever prayed. "I do not believe in you God right now. How could you let this happen to me? But if you are real, you've got to speak to me." Flipped open my Bible to Psalm 91 and one of the verses in there says, "The righteous will have long life." And I looked down at that verse and immediately I knew the Spirit of God was bringing me hope because He's the only one that knew I was about to take my life.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm sure this is clear, but let me say it anyway that I want our listeners to understand the process that's taking place. What's actually occurring is a form of self-hatred. It often starts in adolescence and it can get worse and worse. If you look at the behaviors that occur or associated with it, drug abuse is one of them. Alcoholism is another. Cutting, damaging the body in any way, it's all an expression of self-hatred. "I am so worthless." And it's anger at yourself. And especially in the teen years for a girl associated with PMS, there are times where it just seems like there's no way out and no one loves me and no one cares and God doesn't even care. It's amazing that Satan whispers to you at a time like that. Well, tell us about your relationship with the Lord. How did you come back to Him and how did He rescue you?

Autumn Miles: Well, that night at 3:00 AM in the morning was the first time I will say I knew God was real. I fell down on my face, 3:00 AM, repented. I had a good old-fashioned repentant session. Just surrendered it all. "Okay, God, I know you're real. I know you're here. So while I've got your attention, I need your help." My circumstances didn't change for a year. I lived in it, but I had this new hope in my soul and I wanted to explore that without upsetting, I guess, the comfort of my life of what-

Dr. James Dobson: Did your husband know that you'd had this?

Autumn Miles: Absolutely not.

Dr. James Dobson: You didn't tell him.

Autumn Miles: He figured it out quickly after that because the abuse wasn't as effective, because for the first time, I found my stability in the Word of God. I would go every day and spend like three hours a day on my face asking God for help and asked Him to build my faith. 20 years pastor's daughter, and I'm embarrassed to say I was a baby Christian. So I said, "Okay, God, let's build it one step at a time." He built my faith and then the abuse wasn't as effective. I started standing up for myself. He noticed the change, which made the abuse worse and harder, but my confidence was no longer in what he was telling me. It was what God has said about me and what He told me. My identity changed.

Dr. James Dobson: So you found a little measure of self-worth in the midst of that. That God loved you in spite of everything.

Autumn Miles: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You are Rahab, and we remember that God used Rahab who went on to have a great future in the kingdom.

Autumn Miles: Yeah. He found me right there and it was that night that I became a champion. I said, "Whatever you want, whatever you want to do with my life. Put it back together. I'm listening to you. I'm watching you. I'm going to learn who you are for the first time." And that's exactly what He did. Divorced, went to Liberty University, met my husband who is an angel, and started a ministry to minister to the other Autumns in the world, other people that have a past that didn't make all the right decisions. Domestic violence is a huge thing of what I do, giving hope to those women because I felt like there was a hole there that it wasn't being filled quite correctly in the church and I felt like God shaped me for that hole.

Dr. James Dobson: We're talking to Autumn Miles. She has written a book called *I Am Rahab: Touched By God, Fully Restored*. I told you there's the entire chapter in here that's entitled, "I am Flawed." And my goodness, aren't we all? We are born in sin. David said, "In sin my mother conceived me." So we have that within us, but you found a new life in Him and that's what we preach. That's what we believe.

You mentioned earlier that the 91st Psalm meant a lot to you. That means a lot to me too.

Autumn Miles: Really?

Dr. James Dobson: Would you like to close the program today by reading the 91st Psalm? And we're going to aim this directly at the woman particularly, maybe a man, but probably a woman who has resonated with what we've had to say today, who's gone through misery, who is fearful, who is being horribly abused, and there are a lot of them out there. Who is looking for solace and hope and it's in that Psalm. Would you read it here in closing?

Autumn Miles: Yes, sir. Psalm 91, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge...'" Sorry.

Dr. James Dobson: I know this is hard for you.

Autumn Miles: "I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust!" For it is he who delivers you from the snare of the trapper and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you may seek refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. You will not be afraid of the

terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day or the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.

"A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not approach you. You will only look on with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. For you have made the Lord your refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place. No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your tent for he will give his angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands that you do not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and cobra, the young lion and the serpent you'll trample down. Because he has loved me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him."

And here's my verse.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes.

Autumn Miles: "With a long life, I will satisfy him and let him see my salvation.

Dr. James Dobson: Autumn, that's phenomenal. That's one of the most precious Scriptures in the Bible, and it is spoken by David, but to that woman out there who has found herself in this conversation today, get that Scripture. If you don't read the Bible regularly, get that Psalm, Psalm 91. Read it and meditate on each of the promises that are within it and God is the rescuer.

Autumn Miles: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my. Well, thank you for coming and being with us and for sharing your pain and your heart. You're speaking all around the country.

Autumn Miles: Speaking all around and loving it.

Dr. James Dobson: And when you finish speaking, people gather around you, don't they?

Autumn Miles: Yes, sir.

Dr. James Dobson: And what about the one who has tears in her eyes but doesn't say anything? She's just standing back there in the crowd. That's the one you're most concerned about, isn't it?

Autumn Miles: That's right. I get a lot of those. I get a lot of those, but it's one of my callings and I know exactly what to say to her. I know exactly. I can look at her dead in the eye and I always call her. I'm like, "You're one of my soul sisters, aren't you?" And she'll sob and she'll shake her head because she knows exactly what I'm saying. We are soul sisters those of us that have come forth and gotten out,

and those of us that have dealt with domestic violence. I'm just here to help people get hope in Jesus.

Dr. Dobson, if I could add one more thing. If anyone is in imminent danger, as in needs help right now, I would call 1-800-799-SAFE or 911. They will assist you. If you would like to talk to me further, you can reach out to our ministry, direct message any of our social media accounts. We answer every single message that we get. Or you can email us at hello@autumnmiles.com and we will help you as well. You do not have to live like this any longer.

Dr. James Dobson: We've been talking to Autumn Miles and she's an author and a speaker. I appreciate you being with us today.

Autumn Miles: I'm so honored to be here. Thank you so much.

Roger Marsh: Well you've been listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk featuring a powerful conversation with Dr. Dobson and his special guest, Autumn Miles. They were discussing finding hope and healing after domestic abuse. I wanted to take a moment to repeat that contact information. For those in an abusive relationship seeking guidance, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The number is 1-800-799-7233. That's 1-800-799 and then the word SAFE. Now if you're in immediate danger, of course call 911. And as Autumn mentioned you can also reach out to her ministry directly at hello@autumnmiles.com.

Now to hear this program again or to share it with someone who needs this message of hope and encouragement, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk or you can also find this broadcast on the Family Talk app. We've uploaded the complete broadcast along with the information about Autumn's book called *Am Rahab: Touched by God, Fully Restored*.

Well I'm Roger Marsh inviting you 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.