

Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Avoiding Monday Morning Atheism – Part 2

Guest(s): Doug Spada Air Date: January 10, 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 with your host, psychologist and best-selling

author, Dr. James Dobson. I'm Roger Marsh, and the weekend will soon be upon us. But if you've ever had that Monday morning feeling dreading the workday ahead, or maybe you've convinced yourself that your job is just a paycheck completely separate from your faith life, if either of those rings true, you'll want to stay tuned because for everyone who has such an uplifting experience on Sunday morning and then dreads going back to work the next day, our guest, Doug Spada, has some great biblical insights to share. He's the author of the book called *Monday Morning Atheist: Why We Switch God Off At Work*. He'll challenge us to see our jobs through a whole new lens, one that reveals God's greater purpose for our work lives. On our last edition of Family Talk, we heard Doug's personal story of losing a million dollars in business, but seeing God's redemption through that experience. Today, Doug will share how work itself can be a form of worship designed by God even before the fall of man. Let's join

that conversation right now on today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: How did you recover from this Monday morning atheist syndrome? You never

questioned God. He was always a reality in your life, but you didn't serve Him with great enthusiasm for a period of time. Either at work or at home. How did you start to get that together, because we're talking to a lot of people who are

right now where you were?

Doug Spada: Yes. First of all, I want to make the statement that I haven't fully recovered. And

what I mean by that is that I often tell people that I'm a recovering Monday morning atheist. And all I mean by that is that we all know what that ... We can love God, but there's just areas that we have to keep working on. We all have different sin propensities or sometimes different environments. You can walk into your workplace and have a new supervisor or something in a different department and not get along with them. So you're grappling with another

element of that.

Dr. James Dobson: Marital infidelity often begins right there in the workplace too.

Doug Spada: Yeah. Well that's-

Dr. James Dobson: You not only aren't working for the Lord or serving Him, but you are really

flirting with disaster.

Doug Spada: Yes. And a high percent of improper entanglements actually start where? Work.

So see, there's so many of these things that actually affect our families. It's very important to actually get our head around this because you're right, those are very critical. But yeah, I still recover. I think all of us have to stay on our game,

so we have to keep growing.

Dr. James Dobson: How is it manifested now?

Doug Spada: Do I want to answer this on the radio?

Dr. James Dobson: I knew that one was going to make you squirm.

Doug Spada: Sometimes discouragement and disillusionment, sometimes you're trying to

accomplish a mission. You know what this is like, and you're not seeing progress fast enough or the people you're trying to reach aren't maybe getting it or you're having to readjust it and stuff. So sometimes I catch myself not trusting God. I'm just using one little example here. Maybe not trusting God with my

work.

Dr. James Dobson: Somebody said it best, I think. Life is so daily.

Doug Spada: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: It's on and on and on and on.

Doug Spada: Yes. I don't think you've ever arrived, and I think ... I don't know. You could

probably tell us a lot about this. Dr. Dobson. Seems like the closer you get to Jesus, the more you see your junk. I thought about this Scripture in Acts 17, and Paul was on his second missionary journey and he just left Berea and he got stoned. They were throwing stones and he was high tailing it out of Berea. And in Acts 17 it says that he was coming into the city of Athens and it says that he saw that the city was given over to idols. You remember that part of Scripture? This is an interesting part. It says, so ... That means in the Bible, he took action. So he went into the synagogues with a Jew and the Gentile worshipers, and it says he was in the marketplace daily. And then verse 17 or 18, it says he was preaching Jesus in the resurrection. So I thought it was interesting that Paul actually modeled this. Paul was a tent maker, right? So yes, he was in the church, in the synagogue with the Jew and Gentile worshipers, but it says he

was in the marketplace daily.

Dr. James Dobson: And the Lord sent him there to minister there. Put him in contact with people

and allowed him to spread the good news of the gospel.

Doug Spada: He was even using those idols, remember to actually to preach and actually to

the unknown God. I'm going to tell you about this-

Dr. James Dobson: I'm going to tell you who that unknown God is.

Doug Spada: Yes. Exactly. So that was exciting. So yeah. This is a very critical thing for the

body of Christ, and I think that the main reason is because people are positioned in culture. How are we supposed to reach culture? We can't just stay in our houses, man. God sent us out. He sent us out. So we're out there all over the place in culture, and if we can't understand God's purpose for why we're there, then we're just going to do time. And that's not fun. Everybody knows what that

feels like just doing time.

Dr. James Dobson: The cover of your book *Monday Morning Atheist* has a switch. Looks like a light

switch.

Doug Spada: Yes. It is.

Dr. James Dobson: And the implication is that that's pretty easy. You just go over and hit the switch

and suddenly you're flooded with light. The truth of the matter is it's a lot of

hard work, isn't it?

Doug Spada: It is. It's hard work. And that switch came from my engineering background. I

was thinking about, wow, this is interesting ... If you've ever played with a light switch, you have a ground terminal on there, and then you have two power terminals on the other side. So in order to fight Monday morning atheism, you have to stay grounded to the truth, connected to the power, and you have to

keep your heart switched on out there where God has called you.

Dr. James Dobson: The analogy that you make is that you go to church perhaps on a Sunday

morning, and then you go into the workplace and that's where you put everything on hold until it's time to go back to church. The truth matter is the church is really designed to equip you to leave that place of worship and go into the byways and highways and encountering people. And there's where you do

the work of the church. And we're all ministers in that regard, right?

Doug Spada: Yeah. Yes. It is. Dr. Dobson, sometimes we don't define ministry in the right

context. If you say ministry to people, what do they generally think?

Dr. James Dobson: Pastor.

Doug Spada: They think pastor or they think going on mission trips or working at the soup

kitchen, something like that. So when you get into the Bible, and we'll get into that in a little bit, you'll actually see that actually God uses words for work

throughout the Bible. That work is ministry and ministry is work. So they're not separated. And so I think back to the church, I think sometimes we think that that is where it happens. That's the epicenter. But game time really starts on Monday. So that's why we're focused on Monday and we got to get in the game and stay switched on.

Dr. James Dobson: God, not only honors work, God worked. He did the work of creation for six

days. So He's very familiar with work and He wants us to take it seriously.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Quote Genesis 2.

Doug Spada: Yeah. Genesis 2:15 is the verse where it says God placed man in the garden to

actually tend it or to work.

Dr. James Dobson: He put him to work.

Doug Spada: Yeah. He put him to work. And that preceded sin that preceded the fall. So a lot

of times Christians think that Adam and Eve sinned, God got ticked off, so He cursed him with work and then we're all just kind of having to work the rest of

our life until we go off and-

Dr. James Dobson: He cursed the ground, didn't he?

Doug Spada: He cursed the ground. So work is hard. Obviously everybody knows that. Work

is hard, but it's a holy calling. So if you look at that word in Genesis 2:15 for work, it's actually the Hebrew word avodah, A-V-O-D-A-H. And so that's the same word that God uses throughout the Old Testament for the word worship. So work and worship are the same in God's eyes. So when you're singing at church or just however you worship God and stuff, God's looking at that as the same as when you are actually doing your job well with excellence in all the

things you just got done describing.

Dr. James Dobson: You've made the point, Doug, that Jesus lived for 33 years and for 30 of that he

was in the workforce. He was a carpenter.

Doug Spada: That's right. Yeah. I think some weird things sometimes Dr. Dobson. But

sometimes I think about Jesus in that carpenter shop. So He was fully God and fully man. Did He ever hit his finger, man, with a hammer or something? You know what I mean? What came out of his mouth? I was like, oh, it couldn't have been sin. Yeah. So your point though is He worked for 30 years and you often ask, why did our Heavenly Father have His son, Jesus, work for 30 years, cutting

things, taking orders, doing customer service?

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. He should have been in seminary or-

Doug Spada: Something. Practicing miracles or snapping his fingers and making-

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Learning to speak or something.

Doug Spada: And one time I thought, man, we know His Heavenly Father, and it says in

Scripture that Jesus never did anything unless He saw his father working. It's just amazing the way that Jesus modeled this. The things we're talking about. He sure wouldn't have had Jesus work for 30 years if He didn't honor and think that

work was a high calling. That just makes no sense.

Dr. James Dobson: God's economy is very different from ours.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: And it's strange. I think of David being chosen to be king. What an assignment.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: The Lord Himself said, "This is my man. This is the one that will lead Israel." And

what happens for the next 14 years?

Doug Spada: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: He's out on the mountaintops trying to stay alive with Saul chasing him. 14

years. Couldn't he have spent that time getting ready to be king, learning what it

means to be king?

Doug Spada: Or Moses out in the wilderness 40 years. It's like, whoa.

Dr. James Dobson: What a waste. And yet God's economy is different. Maybe this doesn't fit, but

we've just come through fall here in Colorado, which is so beautiful, and the Aspen trees become like gold for a period of time, very short period of time. I remember one tree in particular, huge aspen tree that was so beautiful in the morning sun that there is not an artist in the world, not an artist anywhere who could reproduce it. It would just be leaves of gold. And we took pictures of it and stood there. And the amazing thing as beautiful as that is, is that three days later, all those beautiful golden leaves are gone and there's just sticks there.

What a waste. And yet in God's economy, nothing goes to waste.

Doug Spada: No. You brought up David, just a minute ago. I was thinking about David and his

work. So you remember when David, where the Philistines and the Israelites, they camped out against each other in the Valley of Elah. And remember David came on the battle scene and I was thinking David spent all those years with that slingshot. That was an element of his work. He became obviously very good. I think said he killed lion, bear or whatever. He practiced that. So listen to this. Everybody was cowering down and Goliath and stuff, and David had this

courage. Do you remember when David was with Saul and Saul tried to give him

his armor and everything and you could see David ... It was really small-

Dr. James Dobson: Didn't fit.

Doug Spada: Didn't fit. He's like basically, listen, this is not my vocation. This is not me. He

goes down to the brook and he gets five smooth stones. God used his work to

actually slay the giant. Do you see what I'm saying?

Dr. James Dobson: I sure do.

Doug Spada: It's a very interesting thought that God uses our vocation, he uses our skills, our

talents to actually accomplish what it is that he's called us for. That's a very, very

interesting ... Think about that.

Dr. James Dobson: You and I were talking once before about Cyrus, the Persian king who defeated

Nebuchadnezzar. He was not a godly man.

Doug Spada: No.

Dr. James Dobson: He was not a man that would've had the characteristics that we would look to

for leadership. And yet God used him to release the Jews and send them back to

their homeland.

Doug Spada: Babylon. Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Into Jerusalem.

Doug Spada: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I think of that in the context of the recent election here in the United States

where Donald Trump obviously had the favor of the Lord or he would not have

been successful. And yet he was and is a flawed vessel.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Aren't we all?

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: But some Christians overlooked him because they said he's not good enough.

> He's not perfect enough. He's done sinful things, evil things. I said that about him. I opposed him in the beginning because he was a kingpin of the gambling

enterprise.

Doug Spada: That's right. Dr. James Dobson: And had three families. There were reasons why I would not have chosen them,

but God chose him apparently. We have to assume that.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: And so you don't know who God is going to use or how.

Doug Spada: Yeah. I think if the Apostle Paul would be here, we probably would've rejected

him with all his background.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't there someone else?

Doug Spada: Yeah. Or even David. Like you mentioned before, David had so much sin and so

much-

Dr. James Dobson: He's a murderer. Adulterer. And yet Nathan, the prophet, came and ministered

to David.

Doug Spada: That's right. That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: Maybe there's some Davids around us that we need to reach out to.

Doug Spada: That's right. How many pastors or priests did Jesus call to be His disciples? None.

They were workers, doctor, tax collector.

Dr. James Dobson: Fisherman.

Doug Spada: Fisherman. They were workers. Jesus called workers to be His disciples. It was

very interesting. He put Jesus in a carpenter's ... Just a blue collar kind of family.

That's an interesting point.

Dr. James Dobson: So the point of all this is that the workplace is a place of assignment. It is where

God sends you to do not the work of the company or the employer or whatever

it is, but to do God's work in that assignment.

Doug Spada: That's right. And we need to define workplace. I like to call it ... That's why it's

called work life. I like to call it work life because everybody has a work life. So let's not get so focused on the place that we do the work, right. Because then that takes the family away. All of a sudden that's not work or something. So the collage of where people do work in today's economy is just fascinating. People are in cars working in their home. They're all over the place. So we need to focus on the work itself. But you're right, it's an assignment from God and it's a holy calling. My pastor one time he got up and he asked the congregation, he says, "So how many of you are in full-time Christian ministry?" And I think one or two people raised ... And he just got done preaching. And he says, "You didn't hear anything I just got done saying. I'm going to give you one more chance. How many of you are in full-time Christian ministry?" And then the whole place

kind of ... But he says, "Hey, how would you like it if I came up here to preach and I hadn't prepared, prayed, all the things? A lot of you are just getting up and just going to work and treating it with disrespect. Like it's not a holy calling from God."

Dr. James Dobson:

I don't know if this is a bunny trail or not, but I've been at what I call ministry here. It's not classical ministry. I'm not a minister. But there's no question about the fact that the Lord has put me in this role for 39 years. And looking back over all that time, there's some things I did well, there's some things I'd like to have done over. There's some moments that I'm not proud of. And there are also some messages that I think were divinely ordered. And one of them goes back to the beginning of my ministry when the Women's Liberation Movement, as it was then called, was telling women that raising children was a waste of time. That that couldn't have been significant. And that they really needed to find some place to park their kids so they could get into the real world and do important things. And I took all that on and I became one of the passionate spokespersons for the woman at home. The woman who was raising children. The woman who was a wife to her husband. The woman who was doing God's calling in that situation. And I've had a lot of women tell me that they were out there and they were being influenced by the culture and they were wounded by it. And that a voice of somebody saying, this is important.

Doug Spada: That's right. Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: I get tears in my eyes right now after all these years saying that was God's

message for that time.

Doug Spada: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: And it still is.

Doug Spada: It is. That's synonymous with what we're talking about, that every person has

value in God's eyes. And so I do think that what you just described is a very important point because I think that those mothers sometimes feel left out from ... Because working for God has nothing to do with the economic benefit that

comes.

Dr. James Dobson: That's right.

Doug Spada: So that's a very important point. So sometimes people think, if I make this

amount or I make ... That has nothing to do with God's ... Now, is that a part of work and raising a family? Yes. But we should not take our value from that. And I think that a lot of times mothers or people that choose to actually serve or there's a lot of different scenarios. And it's not just mothers. There's men doing it now. There's different situations and things. I think we can't take our lead off of economic benefit. Yeah. I'm not sure how much Jesus was making in that.

Dr. James Dobson:

Imagine the privilege of taking a new little life, bringing him or her into the world and his brothers and sisters, and pouring your life into those children and giving everything you've got to them. Not only protecting them and feeding them and medicating and take care of them, but teaching them to serve God, to know Him and to understand, to comprehend who they are as children of God and to teach the Scriptures to them. And to make honorable men and women, especially in this context from my book, *Bringing up Boys*. Teaching boys what it means to lead a family and to be God's man and to be honorable and honest and disciplined, and not getting into addictions that would undermine everything they're trying to do. You have an opportunity to do that. And then those children grow up and they pass that along to their children. I'm telling you, there's no assignment, there's no work that can compete with that in my view.

Doug Spada:

No. No. I don't know if you've ever seen the figures of what it would take to replace a mother's work and what you would have to hire out and all that. It's astronomical. Actually really drops your jaw like, oh my goodness, we couldn't hire all this in. It's an amazing calling and privilege.

Dr. James Dobson:

Well, let me personalize it. To the woman out there that's listening to us today, and you have felt disrespected by the culture. The other women that you know around you, in your neighborhood and in your church are doing exciting things. They may be in medicine, they may be teaching. Who knows what they're doing. And you've begun to feel like your life doesn't count and that you're either stupid or you're exploited, or both. Don't you believe it.

Doug Spada: No.

Dr. James Dobson: That is that divine assignment that God has given you and we honor you here

today.

Doug Spada: Yes. We do. That's awesome.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, our guest has been Doug Spada. He's the author or co-author of a book

called *Monday Morning Atheists: Why We Switch God Off at Work and How You Can Fix It.* All about the workplace and the frustrations that are there and what God wants us to do. Doug, this is interesting stuff. This is unique information. I don't think we've ever talked about anything quite like this before. I don't want to be a Monday morning atheist. And I'm sure there are millions of people out there who feel the same way about it and yet they've had a bad attitude toward Monday morning. Thanks for coming all the way from Atlanta and being with us.

Doug Spada: Yes. Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: And I should say in conclusion, you're CEO of WorkLife Incorporated, right?

Doug Spada: Yes. CEO of WorkLife. You can find it at worklife.org.

Dr. James Dobson: God's blessings to you and your family.

Doug Spada: Yeah. Thank you, Dr. Dobson.

Roger Marsh: And that concludes part two of Dr. James Dobson's inspiring conversation with

Doug Spada here on Family Talk. They discussed discovering God's purpose for your life in the workplace. I trust that today's conversation has given you fresh perspective on how to approach your daily work with renewed spiritual focus.

Now remember, if you missed any part of today's broadcast or someone who would benefit from hearing it, visit drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. There you'll find the complete program along with the link for Doug's book, *Monday Morning Atheist*. And for more content from Dr. Dobson and the James Dobson Family Institute, make sure you download the official JDFI app available both for

Apple and for Android.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh for Dr. Dobson and all of us here at Family Talk, thanks so much for listening. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper in your relationship with Him. And 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: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.