



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Measure of a Man – Part 1

Guest(s): Gene Getz

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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: Well, welcome to Family Talk with your host, psychologist and best-selling author, Dr. James Dobson. I'm Roger Marsh. And, today, we're tackling something very close to every man's heart, and that is what it truly means to be a godly man in today's world. Whether you're a husband, father or someone looking to make a real difference in the lives of other men, you will not want to miss the conversation you're about to hear.

Our special guest today is Dr. Gene Getz. His book, *The Measure of a Man*, has remained in print for over 40 years and continues to guide men along their spiritual journeys. As a former professor of both Moody Bible Institute and Dallas Theological Seminary, Dr. Getz brings a wealth of wisdom to today's discussion. So here now is Dr. James Dobson to begin this important conversation.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello, everyone, and welcome to Family Talk. I'm your host, Dr. James Dobson. And, today, I'm joined in the studio by a man that I admire greatly. He's Dr. Gene Getz. Dr. Getz has been busy doing the Lord's work for many, many years. He's the founding pastor of the Fellowship Bible Church Movement and, before that, he was a professor at Moody Bible Institute and Dallas Theological Seminary for 20 years. He's written over 60 books, many videos and, for 24 years, has hosted the daily Renewal Radio program. He's now a pastor emeritus at Chase Oak Church in Plano, Texas. And I have known him for a long time.

Gene, how long? When did we meet?

Gene Getz: Well, Jim, my memory goes back to a praise gathering with the Gaithers. And I don't remember the exact timeline, but I had a booth with some of my books, and I looked across, and you were over there hauling boxes.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, boy.

Gene Getz: You were, that goes way back, setting up your booth. We were there. And, by the way, those Gaither gatherings were really neat. I loved those times of praise and worship.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, they called them praise gatherings.

Gene Getz: Praise gathering, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: And that's really what it was.

Gene Getz: That's right.

Dr. James Dobson: People did a lot of crying at that event.

Gene Getz: They did. And Bill used to take us aside, those of us who were writers, and say, "Now, the musicians give us the emotion, and you guys come in and give us the content." I remember some of those briefing sessions.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I finished up that night when we apparently met, I barely remember it, and I caught a plane to Kansas City. I'm on my way home, and I stopped there and spent the night, and I went to the hospital to see my dad who had had a heart attack. And it was the last time I ever saw him because the next day I flew home and he died on December 4th. But that weekend there with the Gaithers was memorable to me. I mean, I was ministered to by the other speakers, and it was just a wonderful time.

Gene Getz: I love the tone that Bill and Gloria set a ministry, a real ministry. But talking about your dad, I remember you did some programs after that-

Dr. James Dobson: I did.

Gene Getz: ... on your dad, and I remember hearing those programs.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you have a close relationship with your dad?

Gene Getz: I did. I did. It's interesting, dad was a wonderful, godly man, never educated, sixth grade, hardworking farmer. Mom graduated eighth grade. They were just salt-of-the-earth people born in Illinois, Indiana. And I grew up on the farm and in a religious sect really. And my dad really came to understand grace back in the '30s listening to Moody Radio, Dr. Ironside, coming from Moody Church on an old battery-operated radio, and that's when my dad began to understand grace.

Dr. James Dobson: And you didn't understand grace for a long time, did you?

Gene Getz: I didn't for a long time. And, in fact, I didn't really understand it until I became a student at Moody. And that began a whole new journey for me.

Dr. James Dobson: And you went on to be a pastor at Moody, didn't you?

Gene Getz: Actually, no, a professor.

Dr. James Dobson: A professor.

Gene Getz: Yeah. I went on to Montana. I was in radio ministry there, in youth ministry, finished my college, came back to Wheaton, entered the graduate school and then began to teach part-time at Moody. And, believe it or not, I don't think I've ever said this publicly on radio, but I think I was the youngest person to ever join the faculty at Moody. I started teaching at Moody when I was 23 years old and-

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Gene Getz: ... teaching college students there and, boy, was I green. I just tried to stay out ahead of the students. But, Jim, I had a professor at Moody that believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. Because I came out of this background, my self-image was almost zero. And he took an interest in me, and he said, "Gene, you have talent. You have ability," and he believed in me. And then he said to me, he said, "Someday, I want you to come back and teach here." And that kind of went in one ear and out the other, but he kept after me, and I went on to finish college. He kept after me, encouraging me, which encouraged me to come back to Wheaton, then ultimately to go on to New York University to get my Ph.D., but, boy, this man believed in me when I didn't believe in myself.

Dr. James Dobson: I had a couple of those guys in my life, too. It's amazing what a great professor can do-

Gene Getz: Wow.

Dr. James Dobson: ... to a student. And I had a couple of them that really got a hold of me. You went to New York City University?

Gene Getz: New York University, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: New York University. That's where you got your Ph.D.

Gene Getz: Ph.D. Yeah, it was a nine-year process, and it was an exciting experience really for me because I was pretty grounded at that point and I was already teaching at Moody. And, because I'd had a lot of education courses, I chose a lot of psychology courses. And one of the things I was really interested in was integrating theology and psychology, so I'm sitting there listening to these professors who don't believe the Bible, don't believe in the sin nature, and I'm sitting there trying to integrate Freud with what God says about body, soul and spirit. So the challenge to me was, boy, what can I learn from these people that will help me? So it was a nice experience.

Dr. James Dobson: You went on to help found the Fellowship Bible Church, and there were 12 of those-

Gene Getz: In the Dallas area.

Dr. James Dobson: ... in the Dallas area.

Gene Getz: Well, basically, what happened is Dr. Howard Hendricks, bless his heart, he's with Jesus, invited me to come to Dallas in 1968 for Moody. I was at Moody for 13 years. Then I went to Dallas, and it was at Dallas that I really became challenged with Dr. Schaeffer's work like *The Church at the End of the 20th Century*, and I went into studying with the students what the church should really be. And that went on for about seven years, and I wrote a book called *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, which led me to start a church that they were planning to start, and then I became a full-time pastor about 1973. And, from that point forward, I've helped start churches, so I've been in the church planting ministry since about early mid-'70s, which really is the roots of the book-

Dr. James Dobson: ... that we're going to talk about today. Yeah. And that book is *The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man*, which is now celebrating, you are celebrating, 40 years.

Gene Getz: Over 40 years. It was actually published in 1974, so calculate-

Dr. James Dobson: No. More than that, about 42 years ago.

Gene Getz: More than 40 years. And I often say the reason that it didn't go out of print ever is because I borrowed the outline from the Apostle Paul, and we both know where he got it.

Dr. James Dobson: Can't go wrong, yeah.

Gene Getz: Yeah. Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Gene Getz: I just brought it into the 20th and, now, the 21st century. And this, of course, is the fourth revision that Baker has just completed so.

Dr. James Dobson: And it's still out there and still available.

Gene Getz: Jim, it's doing better now than when it first came out.

Dr. James Dobson: Really?

Gene Getz: And it's being used.

Dr. James Dobson: There've been 500,000 copies in print.

Gene Getz: Oh, over a million.

Dr. James Dobson: Over a million?

Gene Getz: Over a million and in 30 languages around the world. Yeah. It's because it's super cultural, Jim. I kind of kid and say, "The Lord... When we get to Heaven, Paul gets the rewards. I get penalized for plagiarism." But, basically, it's those 20 qualities of maturity in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. And the way that all happened was that, when I started the first church, I met with this group of guys. I invited them to study. About 25 men showed up, and I said, "Okay, guys, why don't we take these 20 qualities from 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1? I'll lead the first one. We'll spend a half hour in the Word, see what it means," Being above reproach was the first one, "and then let's have a discussion how we can apply it in our life." And then I said, "Jim, would you take next week? Bill, would you take next week?" So there were volunteers, guys that came up, and I began to take notes and journal because it was the most dynamic Bible study I'd ever been in.

And what happened was that Bill Greg, and you'll perhaps remember Bill Greg-

Dr. James Dobson: Of course.

Gene Getz: ... came to Dallas. He'd heard about the church, how it was growing. He said, "Gene, what's going on?" And I said, "Well, Bill, I'm in this Bible study, and here's this." I had a notebook and I had recorded what was going on, just journaling. And, of course, we'd end every discussion on how we could apply it in our lives. And he looked at it. I kid you not, I'm not exaggerating, maybe 10 seconds, and he said, "I want this as a book. Would you write a book?" and he pulled out a contract right there in the office, a writer's dream, and he said, "Would you do this as a book?" And so that was the birth of *The Measure of a Man*, and I had no idea what was going to happen from that point forward. And so God has just chosen to use it.

Dr. James Dobson: And, as you indicate, men need this information as much today or more than they did in the 1970s.

Gene Getz: Oh, absolutely, this is so foundational.

Dr. James Dobson: There's such confusion about what it means to be a man today, a godly man.

Gene Getz: Yeah, and it's really interesting because, in both of those passages, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and Paul is writing to Timothy in Ephesus, Titus is in Crete, and they're appointing leaders. But the thing that some people misinterpret is he's not saying these are qualities only for leaders. He's saying, "Look, Timothy, look, Titus, if they want to be a leader, great, but here's what a mature man looks like," and then he listed all these qualities. So these are goals for every Christian man, so, boy, we just dove into this. Guys' lives were being changed. It was just open discussion. And one of the exciting things while I was... This, of course, is a multimedia version with these QR codes and videos, but while I was preparing-

Dr. James Dobson: So you've actually done a DVD series where you talk about each one of those 20.

Gene Getz: That's right. They're actually QR codes. They're on the internet.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm not a techie, so I don't know what QR codes are.

Gene Getz: They're digital, and the QR code is... By the way, Jim, I often tell older people, "If you don't understand QR codes, ask your seven-year-old."

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, he probably knows.

Gene Getz: They'll tell you. But, basically, I've done 42 videos, one at the beginning of each chapter and one at the end of each chapter. The first one is addressed to the reader where I encourage them to get into the chapter, what to look for. At the end of the chapter, I give suggestions for group discussion. So there are 42 videos, and these are available just with your cell phone so you can take your cell phone and you can download them. And, by the way, about 90% of the men, 99% of men have cell phones today. And so it's always available. They can take and put it on a big-screen TV.

Dr. James Dobson: I want to read for our listeners the table of contents so they can really see what this book is all about. I hope I don't put anybody to sleep doing this, but it's helpful to be able to visualize where you're going.

Gene Getz: Right. These are 20 qualities, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm telling you, this book is a classic. And I'm saying this to our listeners, especially to the men who are out there. If you've struggled a bit with what God wants of you, this is a good place to find out why and what, and here's the list of chapters. Becoming a faithful man, building a good reputation, maintaining moral purity we were just talking about, living a balanced life, demonstrating wisdom, making God's truth attractive, sharing our resources, communicating sensitively, being moderate in all things, overcoming self-centeredness, handling anger appropriately, avoiding destructive behavior, treating others fairly, being a peacemaker, learning generosity, fathering God's way, loving God wholeheartedly, being just and upright, living a holy life, and becoming a disciplined man. And you have done this supplementary material to explain-

Gene Getz: The videos. Yes, the QR code-

Dr. James Dobson: ... the videos.

Gene Getz: ... videos.

Dr. James Dobson: And, of course, it's written in illustrations and detail in this book.

Gene Getz: Some of the illustrations of what God has done. And the exciting thing to me, Jim, is I travel a lot, and I speak, and I have guys in their 50s, 60s come up to me and they say, "Gene, that's the first book I read when I became a Christian. I was converted through a crusade or someplace." They are going back to the '70s, and they're telling me like a week ago, someone says, "This book changed my life."

While I was doing the first video on this just for this revision, I got a call from a friend of mine who had talked with Tommy Cox, who was a coach with a Texas Association. 40 years ago, he got a divorce. Someone gave him *The Measure of a Man*. He remarried his wife, and they've been happily married for 40 years. And he was just telling this friend of mine about *The Measure of a Man*. We had never met. And I included that story in this video. But that is so rewarding to see. And it's God's Word because, every one of those captions, it's a contemporary caption, but it represents a specific word from the Scriptures that is listed in those two columns, those qualities of maturity.

Dr. James Dobson: Let me take a run at describing who needs this book because of the culture that we live in today, and you help me with this. It is a man whose father was not much of a father, not much of a dad to you. He didn't model what it means to be a man. And you really don't have much of a clue as to how a Christian man approaches life. You have no idea, some of you, how really to be a dad yourself. You got these kids around your feet. They look up to you, and you're kind of lost in knowing how to relate to them. If you're fighting with your wife and you're not sure why, because you really don't want to do that, but it's just the way it comes down. Help me with it. With the culture as it is today, who needs this book?

Gene Getz: Well, I would say that most of us as men need it. We all need it because we're living in a world that is deteriorating and conforming to the world, and we battle that every day. But, picking up on your illustration, the concept that comes to me, Jim, is that a lot of men need re-parenting. Now, that simply means they haven't had a good father image themselves. And I believe that God has created a wonderful channel, a wonderful way, a wonderful means to re-parent. He created the family of God. And, if we function as a body of believers who love each other, and that includes us, narrow it to men, men who will put their arms around you, who will love you, who will demonstrate to you, who will show you, who'll be honest with you, who'll be vulnerable with you, we need to re-parent each other.

I had a man that came on my staff eventually. He was a pharmacist, was in the drug business on the side, came to Christ, came to seminary, came to our church with his wife, and she found out how he was dealing drugs on the side. That's how they lived in these big beautiful homes. And she had anger problems. He had no father image. But if he were here today, he would say, "Gene, you re-parented me as a pastor. You put your arms around me. You encourage me." But it wasn't just me. It was a group of guys around him, so he had a model. And we modeled that for each other. I think the re-parenting

concept is a very important thing. And I saw men re-parented as we went through this process because we were learning from each other. And we all brought baggage from this or that. And, by lifting each other up and encourage each other and building each other up and honoring one another, that's the process I think that God's designed whereby we can begin to really measure up to the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: I want to describe someone else who needs this book and these materials. There are a lot of guys who are in evangelical churches. They're in Sunday school classes perhaps. There are a lot of men around them. And you look around and you say, "Those men really need to be re-parented. They need this information. And this will help you start a Bible study in that setting that gives the kind of content that we live with every day and the kind of encounters we have with evil and what to do with it, what to do with the woman that flirts with you. And you know there's something behind that flirtation. You know the kind of problem, real-life problems, that people deal with today.

Gene Getz: Yeah. And, boy, we all need that. We need that encouragement. But another thing, Jim, is mentoring. It's really interesting, a story comes to mind. D. D. Lewis played with the Dallas Cowboys, middle linebacker, five Super Bowl rings, attended my church, retired from the Cowboys, dropped out. I talked to Landry. We were both concerned about him. He disappeared for two years. Marriage broke up, his family, isolated from his kids. One day he calls me. "This is D. D. I need help." He was addicted to drugs, alcohol and sex, failed in two businesses. I said, "D. D., I want to help you. Would you meet with me?" We met for 20 sessions in a motel and went through *The Measure of a Man* together. I'd written the book at that time, but I said, "D. D., you got to make a commitment. If you fall off the wagon, if you fall into sin, you got to tell me."

And he's very honest. And then I got him into a small group of guys. And, today, in fact, just a couple of weeks ago, I sat down and I interviewed D. D. after all those years and talked about that experience. In fact, he's in one of the videos where he shares his journey. But these men need other men in their lives. And there are a variety of ways to do that in small groups, but just mentoring fathers and sons. I have a father and son who went through this together. The son actually chose the book. And the father and son went through all these at Starbucks. And it just brought them together in a tremendous way. So there's so many ways in which all of this can be worked out.

Dr. James Dobson: You have children?

Gene Getz: I do. I have three wonderful kids. I have eight grandkids.

Dr. James Dobson: Do you?

Gene Getz: Oh, every time they came along, it's a new worship experience.

Dr. James Dobson: And they know the Lord?

Gene Getz: They know the Lord and they love the Lord. Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And when you look back on your life with all the things you've done, all the things you have written and pastored, all the churches you've pastored and everything, does that rise to the top of all of your accomplishments?

Gene Getz: It does, but I have to be vulnerable with you. You remember what Billy Graham said, "If you had to do life over again," and I'm not comparing myself with Billy, he said, "I'd spend more time with my family." So would I. In other words, I've got to be honest that there were times that I should have been at those football games that I wasn't there. I was so busy, feeling so dedicated to my work that I neglected my kids. And I thank God for my wife who would step in and say, "Hey, dad means to be here." But the fact is that, with my son particularly, we have a wonderful relationship, but there was a point in time where I had to sit down with Kenton and say, "Kenton, I feel like I missed some of those games. I should have been there. I could have been there."

And I said an interesting thing, because he was a racer up in Colorado at the time, and I said I asked the elders if I could spend a whole month with him up there. And I went up and I was skiing with him, and he was racing. And I said, "Kenton," I said, I wish I had been at some of those games." And I said, "I want to make it up to you." And he said something to me, Jim, that just punctured. He said, "Dad, you can't make it up. Just be here now. Just be here now," and I thought, wow, that, that is perceptive.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Gene Getz: That is perceptive. So we've developed a great relationship, but we all have stuff where we've neglected our kids, I think, where we make choices that we wish we could do over again, but, because you fail, you don't give up.

Dr. James Dobson: Gene, our time is gone. We've been talking to Dr. Gene Getz who is a pastor emeritus of Chase Oak Church in Plano, Texas, and has pastored many churches and been a professor on many occasions, Moody Bible Institute and others, and is still out there. You are in your 80s?

Gene Getz: Yeah, 84, Jim, believe it or not.

Dr. James Dobson: 84.

Gene Getz: I think I got four on you.

Dr. James Dobson: And you haven't slowed down a bit.

Gene Getz: Yeah, with God's grace and mama's genes.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Do you hear the echoes of the word retirement in your ears?

Gene Getz: I don't read it in the Bible.

Dr. James Dobson: I don't either.

Gene Getz: I don't either. As we were sharing over lunch, I think the most wonderful way in which we can stay healthy is, number one, keep that relationship with God what it should be, stay physically healthy, which I'm working on, and emotionally, psychologically healthy which relates to our spiritual life as well. And my desire is just to serve Jesus until He takes me home.

Dr. James Dobson: Will you do another program with us?

Gene Getz: I'd love to.

Dr. James Dobson: We will pick up right here. I appreciate you, Gene. I appreciate your love for the Lord.

Gene Getz: Well, thank you. I appreciate the invitation to be here.

Roger Marsh: You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and, today, we heard part one of a special conversation featuring Dr. Dobson and his longtime friend, Christian author and radio host, Dr. Gene Getz. They've been exploring God's blueprint for masculinity. And you know this year marks an incredible milestone. It's the 50th anniversary of Dr. Getz's seminal book called *The Measure of a Man*. To learn more about Dr. Gene Getz and his latest work called the Life Essential Study Bible, you'll find that information at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

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Well, I'm Roger Marsh thanking you for joining us today and inviting you to join us again next time for part two of this powerful conversation featuring Dr. James Dobson and Dr. Gene Getz right here on Family Talk.

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