



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Legacy Life

Guest(s): David Green and Bill High

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

Gary Bauer: Welcome to Family Talk to broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Gary Bauer, senior vice president of public policy here at the JDFI. As parents and grandparents, we have the incredible opportunity to leave behind a legacy for our children and grandchildren and even in some cases if we're fortunate, our great-grandchildren. Now look, when I say the word legacy, I'm sure a lot of you are thinking, "oh, this is going to be a radio program about what I should do with all my wealth and I don't have any wealth, so I'm going to move on." Don't touch that dial. We're talking about legacy in a much deeper, and I think much more important way, it's the legacy of values and our Christian faith that matters the most when we're thinking about future generations. Now, if you have followed Dr. Dobson over the years, it wouldn't have taken you long to know that legacy for him is a really big deal.

It's of great importance. He even wrote his own book about this called *Your Legacy: The Greatest Gift*. But we have a couple of guests on the program today who are also leading the charge on legacy building. They are David Green and Bill High. Now, I don't know, maybe you have heard the name David Green or about the Green Family. He's the founder and CEO of a struggling little chain of stores that is called Hobby Lobby, but they're not struggling at all. This is an incredible company. It employs 50,000 people at over a thousand stores nationwide. I hope David, we can get you to talk about that a little bit. I believe, if I recollect correctly at all, started with a loan, so it's an interesting story for sure, an inspirational story. David and his wife Barbara have three adult children, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Bill High is the CEO of Legacy Stone, a nonprofit ministry whose aim is to raise family foundations for generational impact.

Bill and his wife Brooke, have four adult children and several grandchildren. David and Bill have co-authored a new book entitled *The Legacy Life: Leading Your Family to Make a Difference For Eternity*. And again, I want to repeat, this is not a business book, although certainly these are two men that know about business and how to be successful. This is a book about family and about faith and how that can be passed on from generation to generation. Dave and Bill, welcome to Family Talk.

David Green: Thank you.

Bill High: Thanks for having us on.

Gary Bauer: Well, let's get right into it. David, as an opening to the program, I would like you to talk about the founding of Hobby Lobby because going through the book I was reminded, I mean it really was a leap of faith and a lot of folks try to do what you did, but only a few can accomplish what you've accomplished. I want to stress to our audience, it wasn't without its bumps in the road, but tell us a little bit about how you started Hobby Lobby and brought you to where you are today.

David Green: Sure. I started with my wife and by the way, when I started Hobby Lobby, I was working for a company called TGNy, okay. So they've left the scene since I left them. I tell people they left the scene right after I left, but that's not quite true, but it sounds good anyway. So anyway, during the time I was working for TGNy, Barbara and I borrowed \$600 to start making little frames in our garage. So that's what we did with the \$600. Our kids were seven and nine and they would glue these frames together, and my wife would ship them to these little arts and craft stores. So that happened. In fact, my wife worked five years without a pay and my kids were paid 7 cents apiece to glue these little frames together. So I usually don't like Barbara telling how the company started because it's all about her, but when she's not around, the story's a little bit different than when I tell it.

But I do say that she started the company, it was five years after it started that I left TGNy and came over to work for Hobby Lobby. And Hobby Lobby started in '72, 2 years after we started making frames in our garage. So our first store was here in Oklahoma City and it was about 600 square feet. So it was just like a size of a living room was our first store. And so that's how we started. And of course now we have 1100 stores. That's where God has brought us. We have about 50,000 employees and our office is still here in Oklahoma City. So we thank God for all He's done. And by the way, as you said, there's a lot of bumps in the road in the meantime.

Gary Bauer: Anybody that thinks when you do your own business, that's a way for an easier life instead of working for someone, has actually started the business and I'm sure we could spend the whole time we have together talking about how you survived COVID, for example. But let's stay on the topic because it's such an important topic. Tell us about your enterprise and what it does and why it is you came alongside of David to write this book.

Bill High: Yeah, just a little bit of history, Gary. I've actually known David for about 25 years and I met his oldest son. He was actually the first guy I met. His oldest son brought me down to meet David. And then over the years we've worked together not only with being practically helping them with some of their charitable giving, but David and I together have hosted leadership events over probably some 20 years and six, eight events a year. So we've worked together

for a long time. We also helped work with family little bit on helping them establish vision, mission, values that they now continue to implement inside their family that ultimately led to our ministry called Legacy Stones. So we develop small group curriculum for the church that really is resetting the theology around family, Gary. So the big idea is we want families to reflect their Creator. Our God is a God who thinks and plans in generations, not just for a short term. So that's our big goal is how do we help families think differently and to thrive differently and give them a clear plan, a map by which they can effectively govern their family from generation to generation.

Gary Bauer: Wow, that's right up Dr. Dobson's alley as you know. Family has been such a key motivator for him, and our own vision statement has been over the years, faith, family, and freedom. And you both write in a very articulate way about having a vision statement if you want to stay focused on what building a legacy is about. David, your upbringing had a big impact on what you ended up doing, not only I think in your successful business, but also with this focus on legacy and what is a real legacy. And the story that jumped out at me was something that your mother, I believe her name was Marie, is that right?

David Green: Yes, that's right.

Gary Bauer: Yeah. That Marie used to say to you every time you came home having just reached a new milestone in your life, she had a question she wanted to ask you. Talk to us about that.

David Green: Yeah. I would come home after I first made a store manager when I was 21. I was so excited about it. I came home, my mother and dad were pastors of churches and I'd say, "Hey mom, I'm now a store manager, one of the youngest." And my mom would say, "Well, what are you doing for the Lord?" Okay. And then I would come back a few years later, "Hey mom, I'm a supervisor of all the stories in Oklahoma, TGNy stories." And she'd say, "Yes, what are you doing for the Lord?" And so I tell people, I think if I came home and said, "Hey mom, I'm president of the United States," I think that she would have the same answer, "What are you doing for the Lord?" And really when you think about it, that's a good question to ask someone is what are you doing for the Lord?

That's how your life matters. God has given us all a purpose. We all have a purpose and what is your purpose? It's different than my purpose, but God has got a purpose and our goal is to find out what God's purpose is in our family. And by the way, our families now with our grandkids and our great grandkids are 46 of us. And so we think they're all unique and God has some purpose for every one of their lives. And it's not for me to tell them. I'm there to promote whatever God has for them. But we're in hope, and I know that the ministry you're involved is all about the family and we're all about the family as well.

Bill High: And they're all here in Oklahoma City.

David Green: And one thing strange about it as all 46 is right here in Oklahoma City, and I don't know how that all happened, but anyway, it's neat that your grandkids and your great-grandkids are all right here, so it's really an asset to us to have them here close by.

Gary Bauer: David, there are people all over the country that are green with envy right now with much smaller families that can't get eight people together or 10 people together. The fact that they're all there, that is a tremendous blessing.

David Green: We're excited about it.

Gary Bauer: Bill, is there anything in your upbringing and specifically something your parents did with you that sort of led you into this legacy idea defined? Obviously there's an element here of financial planning, but defined in a more important way because money comes and goes, but our Christian heritage, our Christian values, the family is God's institution most likely to bring men and women happiness and most efficient at raising and effective raising future husbands and wives, et cetera. What would you like to share with us that stands out in your own mind?

Bill High: Yeah, so David and I will sometimes joke about who grew up more poor, and I think I won. But I grew up in one of those home environments, Gary, where it wasn't great. My dad died when I was 12. He was an alcoholic. It was a very dysfunctional background. But at the end of the day, anytime you grow up in that environment, one of my great passions early on in life was to have a great family: to be part of a great family, to raise a great family. And so since 12 years old, I've been on this great journey on how do we be part of great families? And so part of the invitation of being able to work with the Green family has continued that. I really love to study the Scriptures, and so I continue to study what really was God's design and purpose for the family. And so sometimes, again, you've heard me say it, we really just think we're about resetting this theology of family. And so it's that personal journey that's led me here so we can see families that really would thrive if they would start earlier. And oftentimes our target family, if you will, is that young family, maybe little kids or no kids at all. And if they can craft out their vision, mission, values, even with David's family, you might want to show them that David, what we worked on. But this idea of writing down, hey, what's your vision, your mission, your values, that's really the start of a great legacy because it reflects what the Scriptures teach.

Gary Bauer: Well, David, let's do talk about that because there's a chapter in the book where you write about the importance of writing things down and posting it and reminding yourself because it's easy to get off the track. And certainly for a lot of families today, the popular culture measures success in ways that, to put it mildly, are not biblical. It's easy to get caught up in that. So tell us what the vision statement is that has guided you and sort of directed your decisions.

David Green:

Sure. Bill helped our family. We knew what we believe, but it wasn't written down. And I think he helped us to say, we need to write this down. What is your mission, your vision, and your values as a family? And so we came together, gen one and gen two, myself and my three children and their spouses. And we put together a and I have it here with me, a document that we use. And in this it tells you what our values are, what our vision is, what our mission is, and what our values are. So this document is very, very important to us. And once a year we have a celebration and we bring this with us and this is what we're about. So this is who our family is. There's 46 of us and this is who we're about. So once we put this together, gen one, gen two, we took it to gen three.

Can you accept this? Is this something you can accept? They accepted it. They changed a few verses on it or wanted some different verses, but at least it brings something together. And then we talk about different stories because storytelling and your family history is very, very important. So you become one. So how do you get 46 people to become one? And it's not easy, but you at least do the very best you can to bring the family together. And we do it once a year and then once a month, they also are welcome to a meeting that we have in terms of where we're giving whatever God has given us. We are not owners, we're stewards. And so in stewarding what God owns, the family comes together once a month and we come together and they see how we're thinking, what we think God is leading us because it's not ours even after it's earned. It's God's and we want to find out what He would have us to do with it. So it's been really exciting for us to bring the family together by having a document that this is who we want to be and it was very important for us to get something written down in a hard copy.

Gary Bauer:

I guess this is a question to both of you. We're all painfully aware of what's happened to the American family. I mean, first of all, you had the divorce rate that started going up in the sixties and seventies, a lot of children being born out of wedlock. You've got abortion on demand. Now we're seeing these figures about the marriage rate is way below what it should be, and people aren't having children. There are a lot of things going that are opposite to what I think God hopes for us and wants for us. What do we say to those folks that are listening today that haven't even been able to find somebody that loves them enough that they would want to marry them, or if they're married just can't see their way clear, to take a leap of faith and have that first child?

Gary Bauer:

One of the things that I do, because you've got it all correct, and that's the culture that we're living in. So one of the things that I do is all of our future managers, we call 'em co-managers. They're not a manager yet, but every single one of them, there's over a thousand of them that are in the stores. From month to month, we bring them all here. And what we do, and I do because plenty of people to talk to them about business. So I need to talk to them just about their families. And that's what I think is most important on my heart to talk to these men and women that come in here. And what I tell them, which I think is very, very true, is I would rather them, I'm not that concerned about the

company as I am their family. If I'm concerned about my family, I ought to be concerned about the families of those that work for me.

And because of that, we try to make it as family friendly as possible. We're closed on Sunday, we're closed early at night. We want our guys and gals that run stores, all of them to work a five day work week. And so I said more important than Hobby Lobby. Now you're not supposed to say this as a Hobby Lobby CEO, but this is the right thing to say. More important than Hobby Lobby is your family. So what you've said is all true. We just need to commit ourselves to our families; the amount of time that we spend with our wives. That was one of the first things Barbara and I did when we got together. We said, we have a few things that we want in life. This is our goals in life, and that is to have a life, a marriage that lasts us for life, that our children serve the Lord. And whatever that God has given us to do will be successful at it.

Bill High:

So he's given this very practical thing that he does, which is family is more important than business. And I would just add to the people listening, we are the rise and fall of nations. As a nation rises, it reaches prosperity, which leads to this hyper individualistic state that we're in, which is why would you have kids? I'd rather be skiing or snowboarding in the mountains rather than trying to take care of a kid. But the only way that that gets reversed is when we return to this idea of family because family's the first institution. It's that idea that the community is more important than my needs. Now, maybe the fun side of this too, sometimes that I'll say to families is we are in the midst of a demographic crisis and the birth rate, the replacement rate is 2.1. So I tell some of these families I'm working with, it's like, "Hey, if you've got two kids, we need the third because otherwise we don't continue as a nation". And this is just reality and it's a global reality that we're in right now.

Gary Bauer:

No, it's very true. I mean, western civilization, particularly Europe, some of these countries will literally disappear if something doesn't change. And broadly speaking, western civilization is Judeo-Christian civilization. So it would be helpful, I think for people to remember that command be fruitful and multiply. I know we're here to talk to you, but I couldn't help but recall something that happened in my life. After my wife and I, Carol got married. We'd been married for a couple years and we hadn't started a family yet. And one night everybody had turned in. It was just Carol's father and me sitting in the den of his house. And he looked over at me and he said, "Gary, when are you and Carol going to give me some grandchildren?" And I said, "Well, dad, we thought we'd save a little money first before we do that." And he kind of shook his head and I said, "Did I say something wrong?" And he goes, "Well, Gary, I thought you of all people would've known that having a child doesn't have anything to do with money. It's a leap of faith." And then he turned in. I think he was disgusted with me. Carol and I joke about it because she delivered about nine months later. So I think what he said was very inspirational to us, but it really is a leap of faith and it takes faith to raise them up the way the Lord would have you raised them up. As we close out, we've all seen the statistics, lower church attendance, and fewer people professing to be Christian. But I see a lot of things out there that

indicate maybe hint at that God may be getting ready to bless us with a revival. And David, you've been around for a while, and what do you think your ears to the ground with all those stores and all the investments you make in the Lord's work.

David Green:

Right. I think things are going to turn around. I think that if you saw the numbers, we had Barna give us some numbers that in the year 2000, 65% of the people said that God, Jesus was very important in their life in the year 2025 years ago. And just three years ago, it went from 65 to 55, where 55% of the people said that God, Christ, that was important in their lives. But in the last three, it's gone to 66%, 1% higher than in the year 2000. So what's happened in the last two years, Barna says it's things like Chosen, things like He Gets Us, things like what's happening in our universities at Gen Z are changing things. I think we're headed in the right direction. We're going in the right direction I think now with our culture, and that's something that's very concerning to all of us, but I am optimistic that we can do things to change the culture, and that's what God would have us to do. And I think it is going to change, and I think it is changing. Barnes says it's changing. Barna says 66. 25 years, it was 65, so we are better than we have been. Gen Z is the bigger part of that. The younger people are the bigger part of that. And that's okay. We'll take whatever God gives us.

Bill High:

We're living in the greatest time in the history of the world, Gary. I don't think we've ever seen a time like this where it's the greatest wealth transfer ever and that wealth transfer is putting pressure on the families to ask a question, which is how much should go to my kids and how much should go to ministry? But it's a minimally \$70 trillion. If one percent's given, it's \$700 billion. We could fund virtually every Christian college and university in the country with a billion dollar endowment and still have money left over. So the amount of wealth is incredible. The amount of technological resources, we could complete Bible translation by the year 2033. We know who the last unreached people groups are. We can get the job done. The end is in sight. And at the same time, all these questions are putting pressure back on the family to say, how are we going to govern or are we just going to waste it? So I think it's a great time. I don't think I sometimes say that I think the saints of old are going to come up to people like you and I in Heaven say, "Hey, Gary, what was it like to live in the greatest time in the history of the world?"

Gary Bauer:

What a wonderful note to end our conversation. This is a fantastic book: *The Legacy Life* written by David Green with the assistance of Bill High. The country needs it. American families need it. If we devote our lives to just accumulating things, it ends up tasting like sand in your mouth and there's closing years that God gives us. The way we've really become wealthy is through the lives of those that we've touched directly and hopefully with guiding our steps. The legacy we leave will be much more important than a CD or a bank account or a vacation home. It'll be something that really, really lasts.

Bill High:

Yeah. Amen.

David Green: Believe it. Yeah.

David Green: Fantastic. God bless you both.

Bill High: Bless you.

David Green: Thank you very much.

Roger Marsh : We are living in the greatest time in the history of the world. Now, that's not something you hear very often these days, but when you consider the unprecedented opportunity we have to impact eternity through our families and our generosity, it really does put things in perspective. You're listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, featuring our own Gary Bauer, senior vice president of public policy here at the JDPI, and his inspiring conversation with David Green and Bill High about building a legacy that lasts for generations. Now, if you missed any portion of today's broadcast or if you want to share it with someone you love, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And while you're there, you'll find the complete program along with information about David and Bill's new book. It's called *The Legacy Life: Leading Your Family to Make a Difference for Eternity*. And speaking of legacy, one of the most important gifts we can give our families is a rock solid faith that endures through life's toughest seasons.

And that's why we've created a powerful 10 day email series based on Dr. James Dobson's book, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. Life brings heartaches and trials that can really shake us to the core. Moments when God's plan seems impossible to understand. Well, this new email series will explore those deep valleys and show how they can actually draw us closer to Christ again. To sign up for the brand new 10 day email series based on Dr. Dobson's book called "When God Doesn't Make Sense," go to drJamesdobson.org. Through daily broadcast like this one, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is committed to equipping parents and grandparents to build faith-filled homes that honor God and impact future generations. Programs like today's conversation about legacy are only possible because of friends like you who pray for us and partner with this ministry. Your gift today of any amount will help us continue sharing God's truth with families all across America. Now, you can make a secure donation at drjamesdobson.org, or you can make a contribution over the phone when you call 877-732-6825.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at Family Talk and the James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another 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.