



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Friends for Life: Bill Gaither and Dr. James Dobson

**Guest(s):** Bill Gaither

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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 Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of everyone here at the JDFI, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thank you for making us a part of your day each and every day. Now, if you like what you hear on this program, please tell a friend. In fact, tell more than one. We exist and remain here on the air because of your prayers and faithful financial support. If you'd like to learn more about how you can support us financially and to receive more resources, simply go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). Remember, you can also call us at 877-732-6825. A member of our customer care team is standing by right now, ready to speak with you, to pray with and for you. So give them a call. Again, 877-732-6825. You can also drop us a line through the U.S. Postal Service. Write to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949.

Well, on today's broadcast, we have a program that was recorded recently at a special gathering of Friends of the Dobson Institute here in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The event was organized by our own Dr. James Dobson and it included some noteworthy speakers and other performers. One of those in attendance was the gospel music group known as the Gaither Vocal Band. Their leader, Bill Gaither, is legendary in Christian music circles, and he sat down with our own Dr. Dobson before a live audience to reminisce a little bit, to laugh and to stroll down memory lane in a time of joy and fellowship.

Now, before we hear that conversation, let me tell you a little bit about our guest for today's program. Bill Gaither has been a singer and songwriter of Southern gospel and contemporary Christian music since before there really was a contemporary Christian music genre that dates all the way back to the 1960s. He's best known for performing as part of the Bill Gaither Trio, as well as the Gaither Vocal Band. The musical collaborations of Bill and his wife, Gloria, have resulted in more than... Are you ready for this? More than 700 popular gospel songs. These include hymnal standards like "He Touched Me" and one that we all know, "Because He lives." I remember being part of a congregation that used to sing "Because He Lives" as our sending song each and every Easter Sunday.

Bill and Gloria Gaither's collaborations have garnered eight Grammy Awards, as well as over 40 Gospel Music Association Dove Awards. The Gaithers are also members of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, as well as the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame. Throughout his career, Bill Gaither has performed in front of hundreds of thousands of fans at world-renowned venues like Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House and the Kennedy Center, just to name a few. Bill Gaither and his wife, Gloria, have three adult children and they make their home in Alexandria, Indiana.

Now, Bill Gaither and Dr. Dobson have known each other for almost 50 years, and they forged a lifelong friendship with shared experiences. As you will hear, there's a lot of chemistry and mutual respect between these two Godly men and their families. Now, one small note, Dr. Dobson and Bill Gaither were joined on stage for this interview by JDFI senior vice president of public policy, Gary Bauer. You'll hear Gary as part of this conversation for just a moment as well. Well, we have much to learn and model from these two godly gentlemen who have uniquely devoted their lives to serving the Lord. So let's join them right now in a time of celebration here on this special edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: This man and I have had a long history together. I bet you don't remember where we met.

Bill Gaither: Where was it?

Dr. James Dobson: I don't think I'm going to tell you. You were singing at an event and I was the keynote speaker. It was the Christian Book Seller's Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and we were there that night and we had dinner together. That was the beginning of the friendship, and on that occasion, you invited us on the way home because we were driving to come by and spend the night with you guys, and to be with you and get better acquainted. That was the beginning. You don't remember a thing about it.

Bill Gaither: I do remember the night at our house. Gloria and I were newly married. I suppose we were in our 20s, so we were newly married, and she said, "Whatever you do," and she cleaned the house and everything was fine, great dinner and everything. She said, "Whatever you do, don't take him to the basement." And that night we had a storm, and we have lived in that same house for the last 55 years. The only night we ever had water in the basement was the night that Jim and Shirley Dobson came to eat with us.

Dr. James Dobson: You had told me that Gloria would not even let you go to the bathroom upstairs because she didn't want to get it dirty and wanted it to be-

Bill Gaither: Absolutely. We were going to have Jim and Shirley Dobson in our home. He had just written *Hide and Seek* and you were up at Black Hawk Baptist Church speaking, I think.

Dr. James Dobson: I was.

Bill Gaither: With David Jeremiah. So we were so excited about it and my son, Benji, came up and said, "Dad, there's a frog in our basement." The four of us ended up that night, not only did Jim and Shirley see our basement, the four of us ended up in the basement with our pants up to our knees, with squeegees and brushes trying to get the water out of it. But it was a memorable night and it sealed our friendship forever.

Dr. James Dobson: That's a great story. I just remember we started out that evening formal, upstairs, getting acquainted, and Gloria had taken everything that didn't belong up there down to the basement. It was all in places around the basement and the next thing you know, we're down there with squeegees. And from that point on, we've been bonded.

Bill Gaither: That's a way to really get to know people. I don't recommend it, but it was a wonderful type of-

Dr. James Dobson: You've forgotten what Benji said when he came running up the stairs.

Bill Gaither: What did he say?

Dr. James Dobson: He said that, "The window well is filling up with waters and there are frogs in there that are drowning. Please save those frogs." So that was the next step.

Bill Gaither: But we have never met since then. I don't care where we are, until all four of us start grinning and saying, "Remember the night in the basement."

Dr. James Dobson: The day before, see if you remember this, Gloria had some favorite black swans and somebody had killed them.

Bill Gaither: Yes. Had killed one. We still have five black swans, they're beautiful, with red beaks. Yes, somebody had to... And that was tragic also for my son too and for us, for the family.

Dr. James Dobson: Bill, the fact that you're here says a whole lot about you. You could sing with your vocal band. You could sing anywhere in the country on a given night. I know that and I know how busy you are, and yet you canceled the plans you had for this night so you could be here, and I love you for it.

Bill Gaither: I love you too.

Dr. James Dobson: I'm still irked that Gloria didn't come. You want to make any excuse for her?

Bill Gaither: Gloria has been through two knee surgeries and a hip surgery, and the surgeries went well, but evidently, she is still experiencing a lot of pain. You're the doctor, so I'm practicing here without a license. And the other night, I said she was in

rehab and Kevin, who always corrects me on it, said, "No, she's in therapy. Bill, there's a difference. Gloria Gaither is not in rehab." So you can put your iPhones down, but we think we're getting to the bottom. We think it may be nerve-related, and so Monday morning, we're seeing a neurologist on it and I think we can get to the pain, but it was too much for her to come tonight. But she said, "Be sure to assure you and Shirley that she loves you." Shirley and she wrote a book together several years ago called *Let's Make a Memory*, the importance of family, spending time together.

Dr. James Dobson: And another one called *Let's Hide The Word*.

Bill Gaither: *Let's Hide the Word*. Yeah, it's been a long-term relationship. We grew up in the same church and I thank God for a church family that really believed that God still speaks today, that the Holy Spirit is real and that he can even work through musicians, and we tried to be careful with our theology and our psychology. I can remember when we first started, psychology was way over here. Theology was way over here, and you are responsible, I think, or one of the primary responsible people who brought good theology and good psychology together and say, "It makes a whole lot of sense." Thank you very much.

Dr. James Dobson: Thank you, Bill. The psychology is still way over there. Let me tell you.

Roger Marsh: Oh, you're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and I hope you're enjoying this special program as much as I am. Growing up in a home where my dad was a choir director for many, many years, we sang a lot of Bill and Gloria Gaither's music, and we are dropping into hear Dr. James Dobson and Bill Gaither recounting some of their memories of time spent together in fellowship. Definitely two lives well spent serving the Lord. Now, we're going to take a quick break and when we come back, we'll hear the conclusion of this conversation featuring Dr. James Dobson and Bill Gaither, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: One of the little frustrations in parenting is trying to compete with the world for the attention of your children.

Roger Marsh: With today's Dr. Dobson Minute, here's Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: Joe White tells an experience he had with his three-year-old daughter. Two of them were standing out in a field together after dark watching a 727 fly overhead. Its engines were roaring and its lights glowed brightly. Suddenly, a small firefly appeared just a few feet in front of them. Immediately, the little girl's attention was diverted. Joe watched her eyes as she followed the firefly dancing around in front of them.

Joe says that's when the thought hit him, "If I can be there when my kids need me, when they're crying, when they go to bed and when they're playing in the backyard, then my little light is going to be the one that they see." Parents,

remember, we can't always compete with the world in its many alluring lights and noises, but we can still be the most significant force in our children's life.

Roger Marsh: For more information, visit [drdobsonminute.org](http://drdobsonminute.org).

And now let's continue with the conclusion of today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk as Dr. Dobson is recounting and reminiscing some familiar stories and fond memories with his good friend, Bill Gaither. Doctor?

Dr. James Dobson: You mentioned Gloria's hip problems. I don't know how many of you all know that Shirley was in the kitchen and I was in the bedroom on May the 18th, I think it was, and she had coffee warming in the microwave and she took it out and turned quickly. And she caught her foot in a throw rug and went down hard. She flew through the air. I heard it from the bedroom, and I came running to her and she was crumpled up in a little ball and she was in such pain, I could not even move her. And I called 911 and they came and did a marvelous job of somehow getting her in the ambulance, and she had surgery two days later. I think I've seen the statistics that people who are elderly, who break a hip and are taken in for surgery have a 28% chance of dying there because of inflammation. I don't stutter till I get around you. How long have you stuttered?

Bill Gaither: Well, probably back in college, but I did something that helped cure it. I started selling Bibles and I became the number one Bible salesman in Indiana, and I had a wonderful technique, Jim. I would go up to the door and knock on the door and say, "Hi, my name is Bill Gaither and I'm selling Bibles. Would you like to buy a Bible or would you rather have me read it to you?" And she'd usually say, "I'll take two. Just get off the porch, would you please?" So to help me. You're right.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, to finish Shirley's story, she had surgery and has had no pain since the surgery. It's amazing. Would you all greet my beloved wife, Shirley, in whom I'm well pleased? Shirley, would you stand? As you all know, Shirley was chairman of the National Day of Prayer for 25 years and during the Bush administration, George W. Bush, we were invited to the White House by him eight times for the eight years that he was in the White House, and Shirley spoke at every one of those. And God blessed her and used her and she's now passed that responsibility onto others, but I watched her. She not only led the National Day of Prayer, but she's a prayer warrior and I love her like crazy.

Gary Bauer: You two gentlemen have seen a lot in America over the years. You've been central to revival with your music, and Jim, you've been the leader in getting men and women of faith to get in the public square. These are tough times. I'm wondering if either of you, on the basis of your experience, would want to offer some notes of encouragement that it's still possible to turn this country around if we turn back to God?

Dr. James Dobson: Well, if I didn't believe that the Lord could turn this country around, I'd be one depressed individual. But I do believe He cares for this country and there are an

awful lot of believers here who are praying about it, and that's the hope of glory for me.

Bill Gaither: Gloria and I are poets, and I'm happy and she's happy to have that title. Poets throw stuff out and let you fill in the blanks, and it's been a wonderful trip. I told you one time, Jim, I said, "God called you to be a prophet and I'm glad He called you to be a prophet because prophets get their heads cut off." And you have been daring and I have just respected it so much, and that's your spirit. When we see something, it makes itself into a song. And when I see the tough things happening, I'm coming from the left, there's a side of me, Gary, that says, "Bring it on. Bring it on." Because the darker the night, the brighter the light.

The darker the night, so we wrote a song about it, the darker the night, the brighter the light. And the bass goes, "Let it shine, let it shine. Let your little song," we learned in Sunday School, "This little light of mine," sing it, "I'm going to let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine." If there were ever a time for the followers of Jesus to let their little light shine, now is the hour because you know what happens when light begets light, begets light and there's more light all around it? The darkness can't take it, and I think this is our time. I think it's a wonderful opportunity. I think it's one of the best opportunities we've ever had. The darker the night, the brighter the light. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Dr. James Dobson: Bill, what I loved about the old hymns is that it was filled with theology straight out of Scripture. You could find the source for the writer, and we got away from that now. There's so much of Christian music is repetitive and I don't want to disparage anyone, but you have maintained and revitalized theology within the church. You and Gloria came to Focus on the Family many, many years ago, and you had just written a song that I never forgot. It was called, "We'll Be There," where you're assuring your kids, "We're not going anywhere. We'll be here when you come home," and you don't sing that anymore-

Bill Gaither: We should.

Dr. James Dobson: But I love that song.

Bill Gaither: We should, yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You try to get biblical truth into your songs, don't you?

Bill Gaither: Try to do our best, and it doesn't hurt marrying a lady who was the daughter of a minister. And she grew up around theology, with theologians around her table, missionaries, and I might've written a couple of songs. In fact, I kid her about "He Touched Me." That's a BG song, Before Gloria, but that's just one of the very... There wouldn't have been all the other songs had it not been for Gloria. And contrary to what Mark Lowry said, I didn't marry her just because

she was a lyricist. I married her because I loved her. She had a great heart. She loved Jesus and she loved poetry. She loved literature, and God honored it. I've been blessed and you have been blessed with a great, great mate. Makes all the difference in the world.

MUSIC: Praise God [inaudible 00:22:08].

Roger Marsh: Well, what an inspiring presentation from Bill Gaither and our own Dr. James Dobson, right here on Family Talk. To learn more about Bill Gaither, the Gaither Vocal Band, or to access any part of today's interview so you can share it with a friend or review it in its entirety, go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk), or visit us online on the Family Talk app. Our broadcast page, by the way, is filled with tons of valuable information and when you go there, you'll also find a directory of every program we have ever produced and aired here at Family Talk. So you'll definitely want to check that out. Again, go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) for more information.

Now, we are just a few days away from Decision 2024, as Americans go to the polls to vote for the 47th President of the United States and a variety of other issues on the state and local level. One of the most popular resources that we have produced recently has been the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute Voter Guide. This voting guide features our handicapping, if you will, for the 10 swing states that are most important in this year's election, and at the same time, also taking a look at a comparison of the presidential nominees and their platforms. If you're looking for the candidate who is going to stop the World Health Organization Pandemic Treaty, protect free speech and defend religious liberty, support Second Amendment rights and appoint judges who will respect the Constitution, you will definitely want to get our Countdown to Decision 2024 Presidential Voter Guide. You can do so online. It's very easy to do. Go to [drjamesdobson.org/2024voterguide](http://drjamesdobson.org/2024voterguide). And for more Countdown to decision 2024 resources, you can go to [drjamesdobson.org/countdown-to-decision-2024](http://drjamesdobson.org/countdown-to-decision-2024).

So many Christians are asking the question these days, "Why should I vote in the first place? I live in a blue state and I'm a conservative person, for example. Does my vote really matter?" Or, "I don't like both of the candidates, or I don't like the gubernatorial candidate in my state. Why does my vote even matter in the first place?" Well, this is an issue that Dr. Owen Strachan, our senior director of the Dobson Culture Center, tackles in a brand new e-book, and you can get this book for free today when you go to [drjamesdobson.org/engage](http://drjamesdobson.org/engage). The book is called *Voting and the Church: Why Christians Engage The Public Square*, by Dr. Owen Strachan. It's easy to read and easy to obtain as well. Go to [drjamesdobson.org/engage](http://drjamesdobson.org/engage) and click the link. All you have to do is hit your email address in and click the tab that says, "Submit," and you'll receive a link that will allow you and enable you to download this free and compelling e-book.

Pray about whom to vote for and which issues to support in this year's election. Vote. By all means, get out and exercise that right to vote as an act of stewardship, and then share in the conversation, let others know how you are

feeling, how God is leading you with regard to how you vote in this year's election. It's amazing how many Christians will just sit out. Altogether, nearly 50,000,000 Christians are not going to vote this year, either because it's too confusing or they don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. Don't be left on the sidelines. Make your voice heard and let your vote count.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for joining us today here on Family Talk. We appreciate you listening, praying for us, and for your faithful financial support. Join us again tomorrow right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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