



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Being a Godly Wife and Mom: Mentoring the Next Generation

Guest(s): Betty Huizenga and Panel

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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.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and today you're going to hear from a godly woman who's accomplishing something truly beautiful, passing down wisdom about marriage and parenting to the next generation. Her name is Betty Huizenga, and she's the creator of a ministry program called Apples of Gold. The concept is simple but powerful. Older women meeting with younger women to discuss a biblical topic while cooking together and then sharing that meal around the table. It's not held at a church or in an office, but in someone's home. Betty started Apples of Gold at her church in Holland, Michigan and it has since spread all across the country and literally all over the world. During today's conversation, Dr. Dobson will sit down with Betty and a panel of women who have completed an Apples of Gold program. You'll hear testimonies of transformation, restored hope, and the kind of mentoring relationships that many women long for but rarely find. That's coming up right now on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: The room is just fairly brimming with estrogen today. Let's begin by asking all of you as our guest today, to say hello to the folks back home, wherever back home is. Would you do that? Sounds like a mob to me, doesn't it? Well, how many of you all think I'm the greatest thing since sliced bread? If Shirley could see me now, right? We're here to talk about a wonderful program today called Apples of Gold. Betty, you're the source of this information. God laid this on your heart. Don't you feel that way?

Betty Huizenga: Absolutely. God laid it on my heart. I am so aware that he called me to do it and that it would never have been my own idea. Apples of Gold is a program I think that combines both the spiritual part that God says to do from Titus with a real practical application of it. We don't talk about just how to be kind according to what the Scriptures say, but how to practically be kind to one another and we aren't naturally kind. If we were, God wouldn't say in Titus 2 to teach to be kind. And same with the six week program is kindness, loving your husband, loving your children, purity, submission, and hospitality.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, this is not the first mentoring program to come along. What makes unique?

Betty Huizenga: This is unique for several reasons. First of all, Apples of Gold is held in homes. It's not a church-based program. I mean it's sponsored by a lot of churches, although it has been held in neighborhoods as well, but it's held in a home.

Dr. James Dobson: There's a strategy then in having it in a home.

Betty Huizenga: There is.

Dr. James Dobson: Someone said, we have these beautiful houses and there's nobody in them.

Betty Huizenga: Kitchens that never operate.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Yeah.

Betty Huizenga: And the other thing about Apples of Gold is that it isn't a one-on-one assignment. We have six women who have agreed to teach one lesson. It's a six week program is nice because it has a beginning and an ending and it's easier to get mentors to commit to teaching one lesson for one week, although they come to all of the classes. So every week we have three hours and it's segmented. The first hour we cook and that makes Apples of Gold different from other mentoring programs. So when we talk about food safety and nutrition and how to prepare meals for your family, how to set the table. There are women today who don't know those things and their children don't eat meals around the table. And so we're trying to encourage that. We get back to that. The second hour is our lesson. Each week a different lesson and the third hour we eat the food that we prepare the first hour and we have table talk questions that are really geared toward that lesson where the young women share among each other.

Dr. James Dobson: There used to be homemaking classes that taught a lot of this, and most schools discontinued that in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the rise of the feminist movement. For some reason, all of a sudden it was not politically correct to teach those principles. And so as you say, a lot of young women have no idea of the things that their mothers and grandmothers and great-grandmothers almost took for granted.

Betty Huizenga: And they also don't have the memories that we had that happened in our grandparents' home, in our homes when they were young. I have wonderful memories of being in my grandmother's home with her lady friends and all, and I think we've just skipped that in the generation of women who went to work either by design or because of necessity, it changed everything. And we need to I think, get back to knowing what it's like to sit around the dinner table and have a wonderful discussion with our family.

Dr. James Dobson: Key in on the title, Apples of Gold. Where's that come from?

Betty Huizenga: That comes from Proverbs 25:11. "Let every word be fitly spoken like apples of gold in a setting of silver." A beautiful picture, the gold apples in the silver basket. And I think to me it means a couple of things. One of the things that means is when we do give advice or give our words that they should be spoken in a way that is godly, loving and beautiful. And another thing is what we do. The way we have our classes and how we do that should be the very best we can do for the Lord.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Now the Apples of Gold, the apples are young women and the silver basket is represented by the more mature women. I don't want to say older but... More mature. Is that better? Coming right out of Titus 2, which instructs the mature women to teach the younger women.

Betty Huizenga: I think that we have to make that more of a mandate in our churches. We've kind of let that go and it doesn't say, it would be nice if you did this. God just said do it. And He didn't say you had to be perfect. He didn't say you had to be experienced. He just said, do it. And so we need to obey that.

Dr. James Dobson: So you're not looking for women who look like the Proverbs 31 woman who gets it all done. I mean they don't absolutely have to be perfect.

Betty Huizenga: It might even be better if there's some flaws that are visible because I think...

Dr. James Dobson: Guess what? There will be.

Betty Huizenga: Young women have learned... that's right. And I've had cooking failures in the class and we have a good, it's been good. And I think that the young girls can really see from our hearts when we talk about loving our husband, we can share the failures we've had, things we've done wrong or in submission, how hard it might've been for us to submit at one point. And that's good that they see we had to work through that.

Dr. James Dobson: So let's talk about the mechanics of Apples of Gold, how it happens. Somebody says, "Betty, I've read your book. I've heard this program. I've really been interested in this. This is what I've been looking for. I've never been able to find a mentor." I dunno, what do you, you go up to somebody at church and say, "surprise, you're going to mentor me." That's kind of difficult to pull off. How does a person go from there to here? How do they get an Apples of Gold program started and what can they anticipate?

Betty Huizenga: Well, one thing, there's a lot of prayer involved in every class that starts, it is just key. A woman shared with me that they had been praying for some time and as the Lord put someone on her heart, she would write that woman's name down as a mentor. And then they had a meeting and there were a couple of women

who came who were really a little bit contrary to the ideas in principles. And the woman said, I realized that God had not put those women on my prayer list.

So prayer is key to the beginning of all of it. And I think if you're a younger woman, you need to go to a woman you really respect and ask them if they would consider doing this. You can go to your pastor or your women's ministry head at your church and ask them to do it. My friend in Minneapolis moved into a new neighborhood and didn't know anyone in her neighborhood and she gathered some of her mentoring kind of friends and started it in her neighborhood. And they have done three years of classes there in Minnesota.

Dr. James Dobson: Alright, let's turn to the other ladies who are here, some apples and some silver baskets. Let us hear from you. Why did you get, what have you learned? What would you recommend to others? Yeah, and Kate, I kind of thought you'd be the first at the microphone.

Katie: Well, every week. I mean the women are so loving, they just hug you. I mean, I don't think I'm ever not touching someone while I'm there. They just surround you with love and hugs and I maybe go through a day without no one touching me. And then I go there and I get so much love and affection and it's just been such an incredible life-changing experience. And I want to in turn mentor younger women, 13 year olds or 10 year olds so they can grow up and be my age and be apples someday.

Dr. James Dobson: If there's one characteristic of our culture is that it is that high tech environment where we don't touch each other, not only physically but emotionally as well. And many people are isolated. People who long for one another don't even know anybody else's out there who also feels the same way. This is a program apparently, Katie, in your case, who has made that contribution to you.

Katie: Right, and I lost my mom in many ways, but I've gained six now. They all call me their daughter and I have six moms.

Dr. James Dobson: Would it be too personal to ask about that?

Katie: My mom just separated from my dad. He had an anger problem and was abusive emotionally and physically. And when she kind of separated herself from my dad, she separated herself from the whole family and she in turn left us children as well. And so we just kind of felt abandoned.

Dr. James Dobson: So this is vacuum in your life that this program is...

Katie: Right. And it's not over now. I mean we just finished our last night, but this relationships I think will go on for years and years and years.

Dr. James Dobson: And you have a mentor from that group?

Katie: Her name's Nancy.

Dr. James Dobson: Well what a pleasure. Okay. Anybody else over here? Give us your name, why don't we keep it to first names. People are not going to remember 15 names. Anyway, go ahead.

SeanMarie: My name is SeanMarie and I think for me, I remember desiring a mentor desiring to have godly Christian career, women or otherwise, and not knowing how to put those pieces together. We've all grown up in a culture of feminism where our mothers worked.

Dr. James Dobso...: Are you condemning or criticizing working women?

SeanMarie: Not so much that because I think that in our society, it's part of our society that we live in. It's something that we've come to accept just because of whether it's financial conditions or otherwise. But I think that we miss out because of that. We miss out on the time and I feel like what these women have done, if they've filled in a gap in my life and that's available, I don't have grandparents where a lot of children can go back to their grandparents and say, "Tell me what it was like. Tell me how to bake an apple pie." I learned so many of those things on my own and I have a good mother. It's not that she was wrong or something for working, but if you don't have the time to put in with your children, you're just going to miss out.

Dr. James Dobson: Betty, there are many, many people listening to us who have to work. They absolutely have to for financial reasons. Your purpose is not to disparage them or make their life more difficult through this program.

Betty Huizenga: Hopefully it's to help them because a lot of the women who are in our classes are working women and sometimes classes are held on Saturdays or in the evening just to have classes of Apples of Gold. We're not denying that that's a fact of life. But even if you are working mom and you're a mom, you still have children who need you and you still have things that they need to learn. And I think it goes way back to teaching your children even around the table how to set the table properly, how to help you in the kitchen and especially if you're a working mom, get your kids in the kitchen with you and then you don't feel that you're... there I am alone working after a long day. Get them in there helping you and then you're having fun together.

Dr. James Dobson: Betty, these testimonials must thrill you to death to see what's happening.

Betty Huizenga: They do. And I think what you said, we do need to realize that whatever home we have, whatever God's given us, it's the right home and He still wants us to open it. So we don't need everything to be perfect, but things happen in a home that cannot happen in a restaurant or in a church building. A home is a special place. And I would love to know that these women feel that they can make a home where the very best place to be is home. So that at the end of the day, if

they are moms and wives, the most desired place to be is at home. So your husband cannot wait to get there because it's a wonderful safe haven and where your children cannot wait to get home because they know they're going to have a wonderful happiness there. So I think one of the things we want to learn is how to be joyful in our homes, how to have fun.

We have a lot of fun in Apples of Gold. We have a lot of fun. We have serious subjects, but we really have fun and women love this and the men benefit. I was talking with a friend on the phone this morning and she said that they had just finished their class in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, and one of the husbands was heard in the church hallway talking about "you will not believe the things that are happening in our marriage because of this thing called Apples of Gold." So I think the whole family benefits, probably the nicest letters I get are from men.

Dr. James Dobson: I bet you do.

Betty Huizenga: Who say this has changed our home. And Apples of Gold is not a program in which we get together and we talk about in loving your husband, how to change your husband or in any of those aspects. We're talking about how can we change ourselves? How can we become the women that God wants? And when we do that, it affects our whole family, everything we do.

Dr. James Dobson: Kate, let's hear from you.

Kate: My name is Kate and I think the one thing that I've benefited from most or longed for most was my mom and I are very close and she's always been able to be there to teach me about a lot of cooking things. And I've had my grandmother nearby; I just called her the other day to teach me how to cook a roast because I had no idea. And so I've had that benefit, but what I haven't had is my mom's been divorced since I was eight, and so I've not ever really been able to see a relationship. I think I'm going to start crying. I haven't been able to see that relationship and how a husband and wife are supposed to be able to interact. And so it's been so neat to be able to talk to the women, especially during the table talk time while we're eating, to be able to get their perspective on what a marriage is supposed to be.

I haven't had a clue. My mom has told me as much as she can and what she's learned from two divorces, she's learned so much about what not to do and she's been able to tell me that and it's been so wonderful. But that's my greatest fear is that then I'm going to repeat what she's done not knowing. And so that's my biggest fear is that I will get a divorce and so I want to learn as much as I can about how not to have that happen so that I will know how to treat my husband with the respect and honor that he'll deserve.

Dr. James Dobson: Kate, what a beautiful statement you've made. Thank you for those tears. I trust that the Lord will lead you into that understanding. There's so many people out there today who have never experienced a strong family, they've never seen it.

I've talked to college presidents who have said that the freshmen coming in really don't have a clue, many of 'em, what a family's supposed to be like. They don't even know what the target is. You can't hit the target if you don't know where it is. And Betty, that's part of what led you to form this program, isn't it?

Betty Huizenga: That's really true. I love that. I would really love to hear from some of the mentors too, because these women really get in our hearts. Unless you think this is a program for the young women, I want to tell you that when you begin to mentor, it is wonderfully beneficial to you as a mentor. We are not only the friendships we make among the mentors, but with the younger women. And I feel like in our churches today, we have missed the mark with the generations. So if we don't understand the younger generations, we tend to make judgements about them. And when you love someone from that generation, you listen to them in a different way. And I think this can be very beneficial to a church that we have these programs between the older and younger.

Dr. James Dobson: Alright, we're going to go to one of the mentors. Elaine?

Elaine: Hi, I'm Elaine and I guess I am the new kid on the block. My husband and I arrived in Colorado in June of this year, and the move from California necessitated my releasing of women's ministry that I was involved in in California. I was on my way to Colorado praying for opportunities to exercise the gifts and to fulfill the calling and passion, which I share with Betty. And as God orchestrated it, I've had the privilege of being one of the mentors here.

Dr. James Dobson: Explain what messages you want to give to younger women. What do you come with in those meetings? What is it that God has laid on your heart to say to them?

Elaine: I believe women of today, the women of the new millennium are bombarded with a message that is in direct opposition to the Word of God. And so I believe as a Christian woman and as an older woman, and it's all right to call me older, the Word of God does. I believe we must be proactive in lovingly imparting to these beautiful young women, God's will and God's ways. And in Titus 2, the Lord has clearly spelled out the criteria for being the older woman and the curriculum that we are to teach them. And I've been very privileged to have been a part of the Apples of Gold program and to be teaching them these biblical principles of loving their husbands, loving their children, being keepers at home and so forth.

SeanMarie: Julie and she just mentioned this to me, that the feeling that we have now after having gone through this program and feeling the warmth, just that incredible warmth when you walk into the house and the house smells good, they've prepared this for you. It's a beautiful experience that you want to go out and in turn pour yourself out into other young women. And there are so many just broken people in this world that crave to be known to have you pay attention to them. And whether it's other women or other just people, it's so fulfilling as a

woman to have that opportunity and to have to say that Elaine taught me about hospitality, now I can come and serve you and turn serve the Lord through that.

Dr. James Dobson: Thank you, SeanMarie. And our last question or comment,

Serena: I'm Serena and I was not a mentor and I was not an apple. I was the one that opened my home. But I wanted to say that it really blessed me the book that you wrote, Betty, because the women that are mentors actually have a heart like Elaine for hospitality instead of a Bible study where one woman is trying to teach all of us, all these really neat things and may struggle in a couple of areas. In this case, six different women come in and they have a heart for loving their husband or they have a heart for loving their children. They can really convey that to us. And I really felt that the whole time and that really blessed me. So that's one thing that made that special.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes. And matter of fact, that's one of the unique characteristics of Apples of Gold, isn't it? Because in other cases, one person carries the load and it may be that a lot of people have something to say.

Betty Huizenga: Well, even in the class when we're sitting around talking, the person who's facilitating the lesson may have a stop gap moment, but there are other mentors who can pop in. If someone asks a question and maybe you're having a struggle with that answer, there will be another mentor there maybe who has struggled in an area with a child on that same issue and they can jump in. And so we help one another. We're really, it's needed that we're together.

Dr. James Dobson: What a great idea, Betty. This had to come from the Lord.

Betty Huizenga: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: And it's popping up everywhere.

Betty Huizenga: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: That must really excite you.

Betty Huizenga: It's very exciting.

Dr. James Dobson: And you don't even know all the places where it's operating.

Betty Huizenga: I wish I did. I hear about many of them, but I know I don't know about all of them.

Dr. James Dobson: Your curriculum comes out of Scripture, doesn't it?

Betty Huizenga: Yes, it does.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. Give us the headings now. Again, there's six.

Betty Huizenga: There are six. Kindness. Loving your husband, loving your children, submission, purity, and hospitality.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, our time has gone. It's been a pleasure talking to you all and sharing the individual stories because there is something there. There's a need. And Betty, that's why you got into this in the first place, isn't it?

Betty Huizenga: I think we're going to see a big response to this because I do know that this is what young women want in their lives, and I think that older women need it too.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, thanks for being our guest and to all of the ladies here in the studio, appreciate you coming by to be with us.

Betty Huizenga: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: There's something truly special about women gathering in a home, cooking together and sharing life around the table. It's the kind of mentoring that Titus 2 calls women to pursue. And on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we heard a conversation featuring Dr. Dobson and his guest, Betty Huizenga and a panel of women who are involved in the Apples of Gold ministry. Now, if you missed any portion of today's broadcast or if you'd like to share it with someone who might benefit from this program, visit jdfi.net. And if you're a mom looking for encouragement in your parenting journey, I want to share with you about a free resource from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. It's simply called "Empowering Moms." It's an email series created, especially for mothers raising kids, running a home, juggling responsibilities. Let's face it, a mom's work never ends well. This email series offers time-tested truths and practical advice to help you be the best mom you can be. You'll receive guidance to renew and inspire you all along the way, and it's easy to sign up. For this free email series, go to jdfi.net and search for empowering moms. Just put that in the search box jdfi.net for the "Empowering Moms" free email series.

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Here's a thought from one grandparent to another. How many grandchildren do you have? Think about how valuable their lives are to you, and then think about their value to the Lord. Now, think about how your support of our ministry is helping other parents and grandparents invest in the lives of their children and grandchildren, and use that as kind of a barometer for how much you will choose to support the ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Remember, you can always make a secure donation at jdfi.net. You can also speak with a member of our constituent care team when you call 877-732-6825. Or you can write to us. Our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Once again, our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, or just use those initials JDFI for short. P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. 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 trust for the family you love.

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