



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Revival Rising – Part 1

Guest(s): Kim Meeder

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we're revisiting a classic conversation where Dr. Dobson sat down with his dear friend Kim Meeder, co-founder of Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch in central Oregon. Since 1995, Kim and her husband, Troy, have been pairing rescued horses with hurting children for the purpose of healing both horse and human. And today the ranch welcomes thousands of visitors each year and has inspired over 200 similar ministries all around the world. Kim is also an accomplished author whose books include *Hope Rising* and *Bridge called Hope*. They've been translated into five different languages by the way. Kim is also a sought after speaker who has shared the gospel everywhere from village gatherings in Eastern Europe to the United States Senate. Her interviews on Family Talk remain among our most requested programs and that's why we've included the program you're going to hear on today's edition and tomorrow's edition of Family Talk. They're included in our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection where we dig back into the archives and include all 15 years of the James Dobson Family Institute and the Family Talk program are represented in this year's 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection. By the way, if you'd like to receive a copy, there's still time to request yours. Be sure you're listing at the close of today's program and I'll tell you how you can get yours. But before we begin, I should share one important note. Kim Meeder will be discussing some details from her traumatic childhood and these are intended for mature audiences only. So listener discretion definitely advised. And now here is Dr. James Dobson to introduce Kim Meeder on this classic edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Nearly 20 years ago, a publisher told me about a ranch near Bend, Oregon that was using horse therapy to minister to hurting kids and vice versa. And I was intrigued. So I asked my team to book an interview with Kim and Troy Meeder and they are the people who founded and run this ranch. What we did that day continues to be one of the most popular interviews out of 8,000 programs that I've done through the years. The Meeders have been my guests many times since then and they remain close friends to Shirley and me. Their organization, Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch, has blossomed into a thriving place of hope and healing for both young people and abused horses. Now about 10 years ago,

Shirley and I flew to Oregon right near Bend to visit this ranch. We brought a camera crew and let me tell you, the Lord is doing incredible work through that ministry.

I've seen it firsthand and what an inspirational day that was to us. I wish all of you could visit it and see it because it would bless your soul. Well, Kim is with us today to give us an update on their ministry and to talk about her new book, *Revival Rising*. I'm excited about that and I can't think of a more important topic to discuss during these volatile and unprecedented times. I remember, I think when we started, they had a 10 acre ranch, which wasn't enough. They now have a ranch of over a hundred acres and good things are happening all over the place. Her first book was *Hope Rising*, which was so well received that the ranch was awarded the prestigious Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award. Kim and Troy have also helped start over 200 similar ranch ministries all over the world. And Kim, my friend, it is so good to see you again.

Kim Meeder: I'm crying already and we haven't even started yet.

Dr. James Dobson: Telling your story would take the whole program. It's amazing what God's done with you and Troy.

Kim Meeder: We serve an amazing God who can do amazing things through anyone who just says, "God, here I am. Will you send me," and look what He can do.

Dr. James Dobson: We've experienced much of the same thing. We didn't have the money to build a ministry either. That was 44 years ago when I started Focus on the Family and we got a \$35,000 grant from Tyndale House to get started. We ran out of money there, we were about to close, and we got together and had prayer, my mother, my wife and a friend, and we said, "Lord, we thought we were doing what You wanted us to do, but we're kind of in a hole now. So if we did hear You correctly, this would be a real good time to hear from You again." And the next month, nearly \$60,000 came in. It is amazing. So we've experienced God's blessing just by depending upon Him. How'd you get the money to buy that hundred acre ranch?

Kim Meeder: The ranch has expanded in a way that only Jesus Christ can do. We serve a God that can't be bound by what we think or our understanding or our logic or our education or our experiences. He's a wild God and He colors outside the lines of who we are. And so we were having a ranch fellowship where everyone who wishes to come, we all crowd into a little barn. We feed everyone who comes.

Dr. James Dobson: And you don't charge anybody anything.

Kim Meeder: No, we don't. And this year, on July 4th, the ranch celebrated our 25th year of doing ministry for children with horses that have been rescued. And in 25 years, no family has ever been charged to come to the ranch and experienced the love of Jesus Christ.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell us about the little girl that came up to you. You told me the story before you went on the air.

Kim Meeder: Yes. So it was right after a fellowship, and fellowships, they started for people who maybe have difficulty going to church or maybe they're afraid or have had an unfortunate experience or for whatever reason going to church is difficult. Coming to a barn seems to be okay. And what started out as a couple families is now up to 400 people that are being fed and gathering and worshiping God. And then we share just a really simple message with one point because even I can remember one thing. And so I happened to share this particular night and everyone was leaving the ranch in this great wave of humanity that was kind of siphoning down the driveway. And on that day, this little group of 4H girls had come down from Washington state and they said, "We had this bake sale and we wanted to earn some money for Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch and for other kids who need help. And so we wanted to come down and give this to you yourself and we wanted to volunteer at this place that means so much to us." I'm just so humbled by such kindness. And so they were asking me this shotgun question of all these horses and how come that one has one eye and this one's scar and what's that one's name? And finally I said, "You girls can't drive all the way home tonight. It's too far. Where are you going to spend the night?" And this little girl in the very front who is kind of short and kind of chubby and she hugs herself and she said, "We're going to be camping and it's going to be really cold." And I just laughed and I said, "You know what? I just think that a day is coming when we're going to have enough room so that when groups like you come, you can stay here with us. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

And in this sea of people, behind this little group of girls, an individual turned and looked right at my face and that individual called me the next day and they said, "I have to meet with you and Troy right away." And my first thought was, I'm going to go to the principal's office again and accountability, I'd spoken that night and that's such a good thing. And this is someone I know and love very much. And so we met in my husband's office and this blessed individual said, "When I heard you say you needed more space, that's when I heard God tell me 'and you are going to buy it for them.'" And this individual reached in their pocket and they pulled out a real estate flyer that I know well and they laid it down on Troy's desk and they tapped it and they said, "God has told me to buy this for you." And then they wrote a check for \$2 million.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my goodness.

Kim Meeder: And paid for everything. And in one moment...

Dr. James Dobson: And it's contiguous to the ranch that you had then.

Kim Meeder: Yes sir. Yes sir. It is.

Dr. James Dobson: It's just the piece of land you needed.

Kim Meeder: It was the piece of land we needed. Crystal Peaks existed in a rock pit for 17 years. A literal rock quarry, and this property is down the hill, across the street. The property lines are touching in the street and its farmland, it's bottom land. It has hay fields and pastures and arenas, indoor and outdoor and a two story home. And it has water rights. We have reservoirs that we pump the water out onto the fields. It has soil, it grows crops. We just planted 200 fruit trees and 500 blueberry bushes.

Dr. James Dobson: Kim, those kind of things don't happen. There had to be a divine presence involved in that. Hand you a check for \$2 million for what you desperately needed. I wonder if you remember a day at Focus on the Family when you were there and after we'd done the program, I said, "I want to tell you listeners something. I believe in this ministry."

Kim Meeder: I'll never forget that day.

Dr. James Dobson: "I know what they're doing and they need more land. Would you provide it for 'em?" Do you remember that day?

Kim Meeder: I will never forget that day. And what you need to know, Dr. Dobson, is that after 17 years, God answered your prayer and two years later He did it again and the ranch was increased again from someone who believes in the ministry of Jesus Christ in this place. And the ranch went from 8.9 acres of rock pit to about 110 acres of farmland.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't that amazing?

Kim Meeder: Only Jesus can do this.

Dr. James Dobson: I'd like you to, we want to talk about your book, I promise, but I'd like you to explain the science behind what you do because what is there between wounded, broken people, especially children and horses, what is the connection between them and how did you discover it?

Kim Meeder: That discovery came in my own life when I was nine and at nine years of age, that's when I would look at my parents and want to be just like them. My mom was the most beautiful woman I had ever met from the inside out and she was kind and gentle and loving and my dad was a wild child of the wilderness and in my mind, he wore a cape and flew and there was nothing that my parents couldn't do. And it was during that season in my young life that my dad's best friend picked me up at my little school and drove me to my grandparents' house with my two older sisters. And the house was full of all these grieving, wailing people and I was just shoved into the arms of a woman that I recognized but did not know. And she was crying so hard that she sounded like she was choking and she just kept going around and around in this horrible cycle of, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I don't know what to say. I don't know what to say. I don't know how to tell you. I'm so sorry, but your dad has just murdered your mother and taken

his own life and I'm so sorry." And I remember thinking, wait a minute, my dad loves me and he loves my mom and you're a liar. And I just popped off of her chest and I ran out the back door in this nine-year-old effort to outrun the unthinkable and just ran and ran and ran until I just fell down in the dirt. It was actually, it felt like miles and it was a very short distance and was inhaling dirt and choking and retching and crying and screaming. And I could hear my own voice saying "Jesus helped me." And I wasn't raised in the church. I didn't even know who Jesus Christ was. To my knowledge, I'd been to church twice at nine years of age, and all I knew about Jesus is I think He's the guy on the cross. And all I know is that He's the only one who can help me right now. I didn't know the power of Romans 10:13 that declares everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. All I knew in that moment was that there was a pop in my heart and an ignition of hope and a knowing you will get through this and you are no longer alone.

Dr. James Dobson: At nine years of age, you became an orphan out of a stable two parent family in one episode, one day. All of a sudden you have no family.

Kim Meeder: The world changed

Dr. James Dobson: How in the world you became the woman I see today. The Lord had to have done a miracle just to help you survive.

Kim Meeder: He has done many, many miracles in this life.

Dr. James Dobson: How did you come to know Jesus?

Kim Meeder: I met Jesus in that moment, but I came to know who He was through a woman who a mile down the road and this woman had nothing. And by the world standard, she was so poor and she lived in a falling down house and yet she had everything because she had Jesus. And every Friday, anyone who wanted to know about Jesus could get off the bus at her house and this woman who was so poor would just make cookies and punch up appear and we would play any Annie Annie Over. She would give us a rag and we'd throw it back and forth over the house and run like race horses until we were all worn out. And then we'd come bursting in the house, sweaty and filthy and we would just chug down all the cookies and Kool-Aid then we'd go, okay, now we're ready. And we'd all go in on her orange shag carpet. And I remember sitting on her carpet one day and she said, "Kimmy, do you truly know how much Jesus Christ loves you?" And my answer was just shaking my head that I don't. And she said "That He loves you so much that He gave His life so that you could live with Him forever. And He begins that process when you ask Him to come in your heart."

Dr. James Dobson: Now what's the connection with horses?

Kim Meeder: The connection with horses happen during that same season. My two older sisters and I moved in with my grandparents and my beloved tiny little

grandmother had the wisdom to buy a little horse for me. And between the friendship of a little wild horse and the love of Jesus Christ, this wild child's heart was redeemed. And that's how I came to know the power of God's Word was on the back of a horse. Everything that I was reading on the back of a horse is where I felt the most safe in all the world. And I didn't know that all those years of finding solace in the presence of a horse and understanding the power and freedom and love found in God's Word, were always meant to go together. Always. And I didn't know that those years of me learning that were like a figurehead of everything God had coming in store, I'm going to allow you to go through this valley of the shadow of darkness because I'm calling you to help others find their way through just like you did in the presence of a horse by the power of My word and My love for them.

Dr. James Dobson: So you were discovering something that already was, which is an emotional connection between a broken child and a wounded horse.

Kim Meeder: Only Jesus Christ could make that happen. Jesus loves horses in a way that we don't understand. When He returns, He is not coming on a dolphin. Of all the things, of all the animals that He has created, He has chosen a horse to carry Him into victory. And all those who are following Him are also riding horses. And so horses in a way that are not fully understood in this realm are very precious to the Lord. But I must tell you, and Dr. Dobson, I know you know this because you're a horseman as well, that when we are around them, their quiet strength and their willingness to carry us in our frailty and in our brokenness and to yield their power to carry our weakness changes us from the inside out.

Dr. James Dobson: They are magnificent animals. How you could look at a horse, the ways designed and the purpose that God had for him and humanity is no accident that did not evolve. That was a conscious design there, not only for the way they're built and structured to carry a man and woman or child, but the temperament of a horse. Why that big strong individual would yield his will to yours, I've never fully understood. They serve. They serve throughout their lives. I mean it is amazing. And somehow you have linked those two together in your ranch and you bring these kids in that are broken. How long does it take 'em to bond with a horse?

Kim Meeder: Every situation is unique and separate, but typically very, very short amount of time. A very short amount of time. Only Jesus could know that this bonding with a horse helps our heart find peace and relax so that we can receive His redemption and His salvation. The horse would tell you, this isn't about me, this is about the one who made me. Let's discover His love together. And that's the foundation of what the ranch does is pairing hurting children and hurting families with horses that have also been rescued from their own wreckage.

Dr. James Dobson: We're running out of time for today's program. Truncate a story that you told the very first time you were on my broadcast back in the Focus on the Family days about a little boy who was so utterly broken, shattered. He had been abused, terribly. And you introduced him... well, you tell the story. We got about three minutes. You think you can tell it?

Kim Meeder: I can do it. And so this young boy came up with a counselor and they were unannounced. All the horses were in use, but one. And the counselor said, can you help us? And I said, I think so. And so I told this little boy, I asked him first of all, "Hey Adam, have you ever ridden a horse before?" And he just looked down and shook his head and I said, "Well, would you like to today? And I have this pony of the ranch that would very much like to meet you." And he looked up at me and he flashed this little grin and he took off running. And from any other perspective, that would've looked wonderful. And from my perspective, I was horrified because all of his teeth were broken out by his own dad. His dad would get drunk and he would beat his son so badly that every tooth in his face was broken.

And then he would shoot at him as he ran away in his yard. And the counselor told me it's a miracle he's even alive. And so we brought the pony out and I helped this little boy do everything by himself by just putting my hands over his hands and giving him that victory of accomplishment. And then I stepped back and as he stepped toward this pony, this little blessed Hobbes reached his neck around so tightly that he held Adam in his neck so tight that he couldn't raise his arms and he was afraid. He just rolled back and looked at me and his eyes were so frightened and I had never seen this pony do that before since. And I just blurted out what I thought and that was that, "Oh my goodness, Adam, you must be so special. This pony's giving you a hug." And you could see his face relax and his eyes start to move back and forth as he's understanding. And he declares out loud, "He likes me. He really, really likes me." And those broken little teeth could have never been more beautiful in that moment.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my goodness.

Kim Meeder: And that's the foundation of what we do at the ranch every day.

Dr. James Dobson: You still cry over that story, don't you?

Kim Meeder: I do.

Dr. James Dobson: And so do I.

Kim Meeder: Someday...

Dr. James Dobson: Wish I could have been there. I wish I could have seen that.

Kim Meeder: Someday. I hope for a strapping young man to walk up my driveway and say, "You will not remember me, but I will never forget you. My name is Adam and I'm alive and I'm okay because you introduced me to the love of Jesus Christ in this place."

Dr. James Dobson: Oh my. Kim, you have flown here to Colorado Springs to be with us. Don't you dare move. We're going to close this program and we're going to keep talking and we'll let people here tomorrow what we're about to say.

Kim Meeder: Yes sir.

Dr. James Dobson: I appreciate you being here. You are a great lady.

Kim Meeder: Thank you, sir.

Dr. James Dobson: And you got a great husband named Troy. God be with you friend.

Kim Meeder: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Well, you've been listening to a special edition of Family Talk and as we close today's broadcast, I want to remind you that this ministry exists because of faithful listeners like you who believe in strengthening families through biblical wisdom. And right now you have an extraordinary opportunity to do just that. Now, as I mentioned at the start of the broadcast, the program you heard today is included in our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection. It features 18 programs that highlight the different seasons of the ministry of Family Talk throughout our 15 year history. It's a memorial tribute to Dr. James Dobson who went home to be with the Lord on August 21st of this year. Now thanks to the Dr. James Dobson Memorial Matching Grant, every gift you give to the ministry will be doubled now through December 31st. This remarkable grant honors Dr. Dobson's legacy and supports the only organization he entrusted to carry out his work and expand it to new generations and geographies.

So you have an opportunity right now to take advantage of this Memorial Matching Grant and to receive a copy of our 2025 Best of Broadcast Collection. We'll send you the six-CD set as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of our ministry. And because of the Dr. Dobson Memorial matching grant, that gift will be doubled. Whatever amount God leads you to give will have twice the impact in bringing hope and biblical truth to families all across the country. Now you can participate in the Memorial Matching Grant by giving a secure donation online at drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. You can also call a member of our constituent care team at 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Or if you'd prefer to write to us, address your envelope to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk P.O. Box 39000 Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. And if you're keeping track for your taxes as long as your envelope is postmarked by December 31st, your contribution will be counted toward your 2025 tax return.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the JDFI, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to tune in again next time right here for part two of Dr. Dobson's unforgettable conversation with Kim Meeder.

That's coming up on the next 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.