

# Focus on the Family President Ministers Out of Tragedy

In his first visit to Liberty University, Jim Daly, president and CEO of Focus on the Family, shared with students at Wednesday's convocation about how God brought him from a tragic childhood to become the leader of a global Christian organization that ministers to families.

Daly, the youngest of five, was 5 years old when his mother left his father due to his father's alcoholism and abuse. When Daly was 8 his mother died of cancer and, during the funeral, his stepfather sold all of their furniture, then left.

"I did not have a **Christian family**, but my mom taught us the Golden Rule," Daly said. "My mom was my everything to me."

After his mother's death, Daly went into foster care. Overwhelmed by grief, hardship and dysfunction in that home, he said many times the school nurse would find him outside crying.

Daly eventually moved back in with his biological father, who continued heavy drinking. After some time he knew that this environment was too much for him, so when he was 12, he went to live with his older brother. His father died two years later.

It was during high school, when his football coach sponsored him to go to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes camp, that he began a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Daly said although he did not have trusting adults in his childhood, he learned his loving, Heavenly Father would always be there for him.

He said the Bible tells us: "God is close to the brokenhearted

and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18).

Eventually all his brothers and sisters came to know Christ; he learned later that his mother had received Christ just 24 hours before her death.

Daly worked in the private sector for a Fortune 500 company before joining Focus on the Family in 1989 as assistant to the president. In 1992 he was promoted to field director for Asia, Africa, and Australia in the International Division. He served as vice president of the division from 1997 until 2004, when he was appointed to chief operating officer.

In 2005, founder **Dr. James Dobson** named Daly as president.

Daly said originally he did not feel worthy of the position because he did not come from a "perfect family."

But after spending much time in prayer, he realized that by **God's grace**, what he had endured prepared him to lead one of the largest ministries that reaches out to families all over the world.

He said God told him, "I have given you every family type to experience."

Daly encouraged students to "yield to God" their will just as a child would go to their parents for help.

"I think children show us God's love in his heart for us, like a father for his child. He cares for you, He loves you and He wants you to succeed."

Daly lives with his wife, Jean, and two sons in Colorado Springs, Colo.

He is the host of Focus on the Family's popular daily radio broadcast, which has more than 2.9 million listeners tuning in on more than 1,000 radio stations nationwide. The program can be heard at 9 a.m. weekdays on Liberty's Victory FM.

Daly is the author of two books, *Finding Home* and *Stronger*. He has been a guest on several television programs, including *Larry King Live*, Fox News Channel's *America Live with Megyn Kelly* and **ABC World News Tonight**, and has been featured by *Newsweek* and *USA Today*. He is also a regular panelist for *The Washington Post/Newsweek* blog, "On Faith."