Bart was born on January 24, 1949 in Murfreesboro, TN. His father and grandfathers were farmers, and his mother was a teacher in the Rutherford County schools.

Bart's grandfather, Robert Sr., helped to found several local rural organizations aimed at improving the community. It was from his grandfather's efforts that Bart learned the value of giving back to and improving one's community and decided to make it his life's goal.

After graduating from Central High School in 1967, Bart worked on John Bragg's unsuccessful 1968 congressional campaign. It was through this experience that Bart decided Congress was where he could best serve his community and the greater Middle Tennessee area.

Bart graduated from Middle Tennessee State University in 1971 with honors and from the University of Tennessee College of Law in Knoxville in 1973. He served in the Army Reserves from 1971-1972. From 1974 to 1983, Bart practiced law in Murfreesboro and worked for the Tennessee state Democratic Party.

In 1984, Bart was elected to Congress to help represent and improve the lives of Middle Tennesseans. Throughout his time in Congress, he has committed himself to finding 'solutions' that actually solve problems.

Bart currently serves as the Chairman of the House Science and Technology Committee, and he is also a senior member of House Energy and Commerce Committee. Bart is married to Leslie Peyton Gordon, who is a partner with Korn/Ferry International, and the two have one daughter.