



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Truth Changes Everything – Part 2

Guest(s): Jeff Myers

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome back to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. You know, at times the world can be a very confusing and chaotic place. Even from long ago, many followers of Jesus have faced very challenging problems and situations. Look, the enemy is always at the door, and when our thoughts wander, you take your eyes off of Jesus. Well, then Satan, who is very real, is right there waiting to distract you and tear you down.

In John chapter 14 verse six, Jesus once told the Apostle Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Those powerful words are a very strong reminder of how to seek the truth and live out our faith each and every day.

Now, returning to our program today here on Family Talk is Dr. Jeff Meyers. He's a ministry friend of ours, a voice of reason and biblical truth, who always provides wisdom and truth based upon his own conviction and years of study. Dr. Myers will be sharing with our co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton, a few stories about some very courageous Christians that are cataloged in his new book called *Truth Changes Everything: How People of Faith Can Transform the World in Times of Crisis*. Dr. Jeff Myers is president of Summit Ministries, a nonprofit organization equipping young leaders with leadership skills and a biblical worldview.

Let's join them right now, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, at the core of what you do, it's about anchoring them in their worldview, a biblical worldview, right? That's the heart of all this.

Jeff Myers: That is the heart of it. So when we say a biblical worldview, we don't mean just a Bible verse here or there. We mean the whole flow of history from God's perspective. This is the good news. History's going someplace, and it's going there on purpose. Our lives are not governed by fate. We are not victims. God has placed this here on this planet at this particular time to bring about His

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greater glory. To bring blessing and flourishing to the nations. And when young adults get ahold of that message and they know the truth, and they learn how to discern the counterfeit worldviews that would set them aside from the truth, such as the worldviews they might pick up on their college or university campus, incredible things happen in their lives.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, it sets a fire in them. Jeff, let's jump into this whole conversation around truth for a moment. We live in a day and age where evil is called good and good's called evil. People are all over the map. Hey, I don't want to step in your space. Your truth is your truth. My truth is my truth. But Jeff, get us back to the core for a moment, as we look at and try to understand truth anchored in our biblical worldview.

Jeff Myers: Well, 91% of people today say the best way to find yourself is to look within yourself. And the fact is, that's the worst way to find yourself. That's sort of like being out in the wilderness thinking you can navigate your way out by having the red needle of the compass point toward you at all times. You're not more found, you are more lost if you do that.

So people say, "Well, I'm going to turn inside myself," or, "Well, I'm going to look at social media." But what happens with this rising generation, Tim, is the more they do those kinds of things, the more they turn away from what we call a play-based childhood to a screen based childhood, the more insecure they become, even to the point where levels of self-hate are rising faster than at any point than the United States government has found in all of its surveys of young adults going back even more than 50 years.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, when you minister to, when you try to speak into the lives of today's generations, I wanted to ask you, is there a hunger for truth?

Jeff Myers: Tim, I don't know if there's a hunger for truth in the rising generation as much as there is a hunger for purpose. What does my life mean? And the recent studies of young adults have found that their answers to questions like, does my life even have purpose? Sometimes I don't even know why I'm here. Sometimes I don't think I can do anything right. They've begun to depreciate themselves, and begin to think that their lives have no meaning, high levels of anxiety, low levels of purpose.

When I say to a young person, "Would you like to hear about how you personally can understand your purpose in life, and as a result be the sort of person who serves others and makes a difference in the world, would that be of interest to you?" And the vast majority of young people say, "Absolutely. That's of interest. I'm not sure if I'm with you on all the facts and figures and so forth about a biblical worldview, but I'm definitely interested in that. Let's keep the conversation going."

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, I saw a CDC report come out not long ago this year, and it talked about our girls, our daughters, growing up in our country. They found that in 2021, 57% of our girls struggled with despair, depression, hopelessness. And they found that 30% of our daughters had seriously considered attempting suicide. Jeff, that's not a problem. That's an absolute disaster. And in the midst of it's like, you're right, they can't find their way. It's like they're not even sure who they are or why they exist. Jeff, that's what breaks my heart.

Jeff Myers: It breaks mine too, Tim, when I hear these statistics, because I work with so many thousands of young people, I put faces and names to those statistics. I know many of those young women and the struggles that they face. How much pressure it is to grow up in a world where you're not just comparing yourself to your peer group anymore, through social media you're comparing yourself to every single other person in the world. Through the highly sexualized culture, you begin to think that you are only valuable to other people for what you can do for them, what they can get out of you, than for who you are.

And it doesn't surprise me that so many young women would say, "I just don't know if my life is really worth living." And the beauty of starting with a biblical worldview is not just saying, "Here's a set of facts that will change your life." It's saying, "You personally are made in the image of a loving heavenly Father who designed you. And he does allow you to go through difficult things because he's shaping you into the image of his son." When young women get ahold of that, their confidence grows, their desire to try to compare themselves to everybody else in the world begins to diminish, and they come back outside of themselves with a mindset to serve and love others, rather than just to shrivel and try to protect themselves.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, I know in the book you wrote a piece about hopelessness and despair. You're not a stranger to pain. As a matter of fact, you had mentioned yesterday on the broadcast how you had a battle with cancer, and it did something to you. So when you were saying, "I put a name and a face to those kind of stories of brokenness, like our daughters," I believed you. Jeff, can you tell us what God did in your heart through that journey?

Jeff Myers: Tim, anybody who's been through cancer or other life-defining illnesses will be able to tell you that this is the case. Your timeframe gets very shortened. You realize that phone call you have with that person might be the last time you get to talk to them. That letter you write might be the last letter you get to write. For me as an author, I was also thinking, this book might be the last book I ever get to write. Is this what I want to spend my last days working on? And I decided, it is. Because if we can establish truth, if we can help people see that truth exists. Truth isn't just a set of logical propositions. It's not just a mathematical formula, it's a person. It's Jesus. And that fact changed the course of the world. If I can get people to see that, this will be worth it.

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Now, I'm pleased to say that I have been in remission from cancer for almost two years. But that same spirit that every day is a gift, let's just rest in the Lord, rest in His sovereignty and do everything we can and the energy and gifting that He's given to us, that spirit remains. It's changed the course of my life.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amen.

You're listening to Family Talk, a division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host. Our special guest today again is Dr. Jeff Myers. He's the president of Summit Ministries, focuses on transforming high school and college kids into tomorrow's leaders with a distinctively Christian worldview. He's written several books, but we're talking about a very important book today, something you need to read, *Truth Changes Everything: How People of Faith Can Transform the World, especially, in Times of Crisis*.

Jeff, in the middle of the book, you take us back on a journey, and you talk about the renaissance and the reclamation of truth. I found it fascinating because there's so much of a parallel. What people were going through in the Middle Ages, which was a very dark time, plagues were running rampant. People were feeling like giving up. It almost seemed like impossible to get away from the trajectory the world was on. That sounds very familiar to I think all of us. Then came the reclamation of truth. Take us there, Jeff,

Jeff Myers: Tim, my studies in school were in things like philosophy and history and politics, things like that. I went back to the year 1349 in this book, because that's when the plague, the Black Death, came to Europe. We try to imagine how devastating something like that might be. We can't even come close. A third to a half of the people in Europe died the most excruciating death imaginable. And you couldn't have blamed them, Tim, if at the end of all of that they would've said, "You know what? Clearly God has abandoned us. We're going to abandon him."

Strangely, that is not what happened. What people said is, "God has not abandoned us. He is here with us in the person of Jesus Christ. Right here suffering with us." And it changed... There's so many things that had changed. It changed the world of the arts.

My wife Stephanie and I were recently in Florence. We had saved up our money for a vacation for a long time and went to Italy. And while we were there, I asked our tour guide, "Is it true that there's a difference between the art before the Black Death and the art after the Black Death?" And he said, "Let me walk you through all of these paintings and show you the difference." He said, "It changed people's perspective. It brought art to life. It changed medical care."

Catherine of Siena was a young woman. People said, "Catherine, you need to get out of the city or you're going to die from the plague." She said, I'm staying in the city because I want to be with Jesus. People ask, "Why are you saying

that?" She said, "Well, Jesus sits with the suffering, and I want to be with Jesus." That became the inspiration for the development of medical care in hospitals. This has transformed the lives of billions of people since that time. All of it.

You go back and say, if your perspective is different about the difficult things that you're going through, if your perspective is that, I am going through this and God is strengthening me for some great cause, the same things may be happening to you, but how you understand them and what you're able to do as a result completely transforms.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What starts happening inside of us that begins to take us off the path? They say you're only a generation away from getting completely off track.

Jeff Myers: That's a fair statement. I think what happens to people individually and as a society is that we begin to believe that our experiences are the only way that we can ever know anything to be true. This is a postmodern mindset. It's the dominant perspective that is taught in American universities today.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's so true. That is.

Jeff Myers: People are told, "Well, if there is truth out there, we could never know it, so we can only know our own experiences." People stop saying things like, "I am seeking the truth," and they start saying things like, "I am speaking my truth." That's not just a small rhetorical shift. It's a change in mindset away from the idea that truth is something that's valuable, that we should look for, toward the idea that we personally are the center of reality and everyone else needs to adjust to us.

Dr. Tim Clinton: If you get truth sideways, if you will, everything begins to spin there, and it creates nothing but chaos and confusion.

Jeff Myers: Think about science for a minute. In the world of science, we are told, "Today the battle is science versus religion. Religious people are the unintelligent ones, scientists are the smart ones. Religious people are the superstitious ones, scientists are the rational ones. So it's a battle between science, religion, and science is going to win."

But if you look back in history, you realize exactly the opposite is true. Of the 52 individuals whose discoveries and inventions constituted the development of modern science, only one of them was an atheist. 50 of them were strong believing Christians. What did they know? What did they believe? Well, they believed that the world is rationally intelligible because it was made by someone who is rationally intelligent. That made science possible.

So if there is a battle between science and religion, it's between people who believe in God and therefore believe the world is actually knowable by us, and

people who have a religious superstition that only the material world exists and therefore atheism is a smarter view.

This is just one example, Tim, of how in the world that we live in, we have been given the wrong narrative about truth, and it's set us aside and it's made us feel like we can't do anything to make a difference.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Keeping our homes anchored, keeping our colleges and universities anchored, that's everything. Jeff, I saw where 80% of colleges back in the day were church related. C. S. Lewis, I think he revealed that concept of medieval synthesis. Take us back, help us understand how this whole church and state debate became front and center in our culture. And it's looking like all that the left, if you will, wants to do is completely obliterate anything related to that.

Jeff Myers: Yes. So there's a difference between the tradition that we inherited from our founding fathers and where we are today. I think a lot of people sense that that is the case. Where are we today? People believe that there's such a thing as a neutral worldview, and that if you're a Christian, you're biased. If you're a secular, then you're neutral. There's no such thing. Everybody is religious. A religion is any set of beliefs about the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe. An atheist is just as religious as a Christian. So we need to understand that there is no neutral here.

What did our founders believe? They believed that we could hold government accountable because we believe in God. Augustine in his book *City of God Against the Pagans* said, and I'm paraphrasing, "The citizens of the kingdom of God will always be the best citizens in the kingdom of man, because they can hold the government accountable." The government is not God. There is a God and you are not it.

And the founders of the United States of America, actually, Tim, they went back to a guy named Samuel Rutherford, who was one of the people they quoted from. Samuel Rutherford wrote a book called *Lex, Rex*, which in Latin means the law is the king. And this made the king really mad because the king wanted everybody to believe that the king is the law. Whatever the king decides is what is right. And he was saying, "Nope. The king responds to the..." So you would have the respect for the authority of the king, but you might say that the man who is the king is doing wrong things and he needs to be held accountable. In the same way that people today would say, "I may not like the President, but I salute the office." That tradition came from Samuel Rutherford.

The king at the time was very upset with old Sam. He sent his soldiers up to Scotland to arrest him, bring him back to Parliament, give him a fair trial, and hang him. That was his intention. And Samuel Rutherford passed away before the soldiers arrived, and on his deathbed he said, "I have been summoned by a higher authority."

The founders of the United States said, "That's a great example. We like that guy. We like John Locke. We like others." And so when they wrote the Declaration of Independence, they said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and, "that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men."

The government does not give you your rights. The government at best can secure the rights that are given to you by God. If you start with atheism, you're never going to get there. You're never going to end up with a country like the United States of America.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Inject the science issue. Follow the science. Follow the science and more. Talk to us about the compatibility factor here with science and truth, and where this can drift and how it drifts.

Jeff Myers: Well, science is generally thought of as the kind of knowledge that focuses on the discipline of what we think of as the scientific method. It goes all the way back to the Middle Ages to people like Robert Grosseteste, he was a professor at Oxford University, his student, Roger Bacon, all the way into what people now think of as the enlightenment, but people like Nicholas Copernicus, he said, "Every time I'm doing science, it's an act of worship to God."

So people have that belief that because the world is knowable by us, because it was made by someone who made it knowable, then if we do an experiment at time A, an experiment at time B, we are actually experimenting in the same world. That is not something that the ancient Greeks would have thought about.

But what ends up happening is that science becomes politicized. The word science, because people like it, they trust it, they think it represents authority, ends up getting used by politicians to try to add to their authority. That's why it's really important to look back. And be very humble about it, to be honest. When I went through cancer, I had to do a tremendous amount of research. My cancer team was led by a man who was the leading guy in treating this particular kind of cancer. We had to look at all kinds of different studies and so forth. Why? Because only 11% of major drug studies can be replicated by somebody outside of the lab that's organizing and trying to sell the drug.

We have to be very humble and recognize our knowledge as human beings is limited. The goal of science is not to be a political club that we can use to beat people over the head with whom we disagree. It is our basis of recognizing there is a God, He has made the world to be intelligible. I do science as an act of worship. In fact, I do everything in my life then as an act of worship,

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, when I go through the pages of the book, I think you're right. Truth impacts everything. How we treat each other, the music and the arts, you referenced

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that earlier, politics, our policies and people, the laws we govern, our workplace. How do we, Jeff, take that and disciple our children and help them to embrace the truth? Can you close us out on the broadcast today with that?

Jeff Myers: God's design is that we rest in His sovereignty. Do we work? Yes, we do. We are made in the image of a working God. God worked in creation, we work today. But we don't have to panic. We don't have to be anxious. We can rest in Him knowing that He is sovereign overall, and that He works through even the difficult things that happen to us.

Jesus, right after He was baptized, went into the desert to be tempted by the devil. We sometimes have desert experiences, don't we? But when we go in there, we realize God has us in the desert not because He's abandoned us, but because He wants to be with us. God hangs out in the deserts of life, equipping people, preparing us to be the ones who in our generation can do what these great heroes of history did in theirs.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, what a delightful conversation. Hey Jeff, before we go, yesterday we spent a lot of time talking about Summit Ministries, and I want to go back there. If our listeners out there want to connect their son or daughter, their high schooler, their college age student with Summit Ministries, tell us again a little bit more about Summit and how they could go about putting that together. And what it might do in their heart. How it'll impact the trajectory of their life. I believe that.

Jeff Myers: The two-week experience that Summit Ministries is historically known for has had a profound impact on the lives of tens of thousands of young people. Of course, we have curriculum courses and home schools and Christian schools in addition to that.

But in that program, Tim, what happens is young adults come with their big questions. They hear from the world leading experts on a biblical worldview. They get answers to their tough questions. They learn how to discern the counterfeit worldviews that would set them aside and make them feel hopeless and anxious in our day. And then they learn how to dialogue and talk about the truth with other people. It develops such a tremendous sense of confidence, that whereas only 1% of young adults who are Gen Z have a biblical worldview in our culture, by the time they finish two weeks at Summit, 85% have a biblical worldview. And they stay strong through time.

It is possible to help our kids, especially those in that tough transition period of 16 to 22 years of age, develop an unshakable faith.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That website again, Jeff?

Jeff Myers: It's summit.org. Come and plan for a summer of 2024. The programs are largely done for this year, but next summer could be the summer that helps your child

develop that unshakable faith, develop a strong confidence in a biblical worldview and a reliance on God's truth.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hey Jeff, it's August. It's the end of summer. Kids are going back to school, back to college. If they run into a professor who's dumping some stuff into their head, into their heart, and there's some confusion or what have you, you guys have a lot of resources up on your website and more that could be really of help to them, and maybe to parents.

Jeff Myers: We have the articles, videos, and other resources at summit.org, that can help you right now, especially if you end up with a radical history teacher, which is likely to happen. Or you end up in a situation where you think, I don't really know what I believe here. I need some equipping. Come to summit.org. We want to help you. We want families to be successful in preparing their kids to know the truth and to be prepared to stand for it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, what a joyful discussion together. Hey, on behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley, our entire team at Family Talk, at the James Dobson Family Institute, we salute you again. Pray that God would continue to do a mighty work, and then through Summit Ministries and in your heart, may God protect your family and embolden you with great courage on the road forward. Thank you so much for joining us.

Roger Marsh: Well, I hope you found this conversation with Dr. Jeff Myers and our co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton to be of benefit. Over the past couple of days, they've been discussing truth amidst a confused culture. Dr. Jeff Myers is the author of the brand new book called *Truth Changes Everything: How People of Faith Can Transform the World in Times of Crisis*. Now, if you'd like to listen again to either part one or part two of this conversation, or the entire program, you can easily find these programs on our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Now, a challenging topic that I'm sure you've been hearing about recently is that of gender. And you may have been wondering, how can Christians effectively engage with and address the rising tide of transgenderism? Dr. Owen Strachan is the author of the book called *What Does The Bible Teach about Transgenderism?* He has a unique understanding of the complexities involved in this topic, and his insights can help deepen your perspective on this crucial issue.

In collaboration with Dr. Strachan, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has compiled a wide range of helpful resources for you on this topic. You can access them right now when you visit drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Enter your email address and you'll be instantly connected to free downloads, podcasts, and useful articles.

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I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you for listening to our program today. Be sure to join us again next time for another edition of Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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