



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Children at Risk: An Update with Gary Bauer - Part 1

**Guest(s):** Gary Bauer

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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:** Hello, and thanks for listening to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Today on the broadcast, we are bringing you another program from our 2021 "Best of Broadcast" collection. Our show today features Dr. Dobson and his longtime colleague and collaborator, Mr. Gary Bauer. Now, you may recall that Dr. Dobson and Mr. Bauer co-wrote the prophetic book that some say was way ahead of its time, called *Children at Risk*. That will be the basis for this two-day conversation, originally recorded in the summer of 2021.

Now, we're going to get right into the program, but first though, I'd like to remind you about a special offer from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, and that is our 2021 "Best of" CD collection. This six CD set has 18 of Family Talk's most popular broadcast from this past year and it's available to you for a suggested donation of \$50. This collection includes interviews with author and Bible teacher, Dee Brestin, conservative radio and TV host, Mark Levin, and many more special guests. To request your copy, visit [drjamesdobson.org/bestof2021](http://drjamesdobson.org/bestof2021), or call us at (877) 732-6825.

Well, with that said, here now is part one of Dr. Dobson's conversation with his good friend Gary Bauer.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Today, I have the privilege of talking to one of my closest friends and a colleague that I've been working with in the battle to protect and preserve the family for many, many years. You know him, at least you know him by name and voice, he is Gary Bauer. He's the president of two organizations, American Values and the Campaign for Working Families, which is a PAC, a political action committee. He writes a daily report that you really should receive, if you don't get it already. There's no cost and I'll tell you how to sign up for it before we're done today, because this is very important information that comes almost every day.

Gary has been one of the frontline generals in the culture war that still rages today. In the 1980s, he was Under Secretary of the Department of Education

with Secretary Bill Bennett when they were in the Reagan administration. Bauer was also in the Reagan White House in the mid 1980s, when he sat at the table every week with the president and his cabinet.

Gary's on the phone with us now. Gary, do you remember that day when we met so long ago?

Gary Bauer: Oh my goodness, Dr. Dobson, in some ways it seems like yesterday, in other ways it seems like it was about a hundred years ago. We've done a lot of these shows over the years, although there's been a little bit of a gap here in recent years. I think the thing I remember the most is you would come into Washington and we would go up on Capitol Hill and go visit members of Congress or go listen to a debate on the floor of the House or Senate. We would hear something that we thought the American people needed to know and we would go off to a corner and just tape a radio show by of the seat of our pants. I've listened to some of those over the years, re-listened to them, and Dr. Dobson, they came out pretty darn good.

Dr. James Dobson: It was so much fun. We felt like we were making a difference in those days, we still do. I just appreciate so much what you're doing. We've been at this a long time and we fought many battles in defense of conservative values in those days. You went on to be president of the Family Research Council, I believe that was in 1989, where you were also vice president of Focus on the Family. These were very meaningful years for us, weren't they?

Gary Bauer: They were Dr. Dobson. I think we had already been doing some work together, because in the Reagan administration, periodically, I would get into trouble, even in that administration, for speaking up about the sanctity of life or family values or whatever. You were good enough to bring me onto your radio show even during the Reagan years. We used to reminisce about the fact that it made me unfireable. There were people in the Reagan White House that were more moderate, and I think they would've liked to have gotten rid of me, but you helped me develop a following by so generously sharing my voice with the millions of people that followed you.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, there will be people who will be surprised to hear that you had opposition, even in the Reagan administration. There you were in the center of conservatism, in a very conservative presidency, and yet there were people there who were dragging their heels and were in opposition even to what President Reagan was trying to do.

Gary Bauer: Well, that's the key point, Jim. I never had any disagreements with President Reagan. If I could get to him with the facts on a particular issue, he always came down on the right side. But yes, you're also right that there were moderates in the White House, people that wanted Reagan to be something other than what he was. You may remember that our side took the mantra of, "Let Reagan be Reagan." Your shows during those Reagan years helped that happen, because time after time, because of those shows, the White House would be inundated

with phone calls and letters. The president would find out about that and it helped him almost always make the right decisions.

Dr. James Dobson: Isn't it interesting that even when conservatives win at the ballot box, there's still a war and there's still a battle that has to be waged. You and I were on one side of it and we still are today. I haven't changed a whole lot, have you?

Gary Bauer: I haven't, Jim. Well, I have changed in the ways that we all changed with the years. I used to get up way back then in the morning and do something at our house that Carol, my wife, started calling the morning rant. It was just me saying what you and I would say when we were together. I don't know if Carol's happy about it, but I'm happy to say that when I get up in the morning now, I'm still doing that morning rant.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, that takes us to the central theme of what we're going to talk about today, because you and I were often on the phone talking about what was going on in the culture and in the government and in the family and things that we cared about. We did rant together. We saw trends then that were deeply alarming to us. As a matter of fact, it led eventually for us to write a book together, which was published in 1990. It was entitled *Children at Risk*. It's out of print now, and I regret the fact that it is. It sold over 400,000 copies and it struck a nerve with parents especially. It dealt with what we called the civil war of values.

About four years later, 1994, you were my guest again on the radio and we talked about that book. Like I say, it was four years old by that time. I have a recording of that interview with you that was first aired that year, 1994. I want to let our listeners hear you and me talking for about four minutes about the book and about what was going on in the culture. We sounded a whole lot younger then. I'm going to let you and everybody else hear this, is that okay? We're going to air that right now.

Gary Bauer: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: We have gone to some effort to bring that book up to date. It's been four years, a lot has changed. I don't want to break my arm patting us on the back, Gary, and be too congratulatory here, but that book was really almost prophetic in terms of what we now see happening in the world of children, wasn't it?

Gary Bauer: Jim, it really was. As we were working on the revision of it, I think we were both struck by the fact as we reread it that the things that we pointed out four years ago and that we warned people about four years ago, unfortunately, have been all too true in recent years. I think as we redid the book, we could see where we're going four more years from now if these trends stay in place. It was, in many ways, a prophetic book.

Dr. James Dobson: Why don't you start by expressing the philosophy, the ideas that you were trying to write in your half of that book, Gary, as a way of bringing people up to speed who haven't read it or haven't heard us discuss it before.

Gary Bauer: Yes. Well, Jim, you and I had talked many, many hours about the concept behind the book, and I think we both felt that something unusual was happening in the country. It wasn't the typical political disagreements and so forth that you always have in a democracy over whether one program or another ought to be made into law, rather, there was something much more basic happening. There was a drift away from reliable standards of right and wrong, something was happening with the educational system, we saw a breakdown of the family that was unparalleled in American history. When you looked at all various things, it was clear that children were the ones who were going to be impacted the most by these trends. I think we both felt that there was just this tremendous need to get to our fellow citizens about these trends and to tell them what they could do to stop them.

Dr. James Dobson: Abraham Lincoln said "The philosophy of the classroom in one generation is the philosophy of the government in the next." I think it was recognized, especially by those who come from the secular humanistic perspective, that if they could capture the hearts and minds of a generation of children, if they could control the textbooks and what was in them, if they could control the relationship of those children to their parents and began to seal them off, drive a wedge between generations, then it would be possible to build into those children who didn't have the roots or even the understanding to recognize what was happening, to build in that new philosophical idea, which one generation later would rule the country.

I don't like conspiracy theories, but I really believe that there are those on the other side of this civil war of values who recognize very clearly that children are the prize to the winner of this battle and they are the keys to victory. You get ahold of their minds and you can change the country in one generation.

Gary Bauer: Jim, there is absolutely no doubt about it. I think that's why we see the whole area of education being one of the big battlegrounds in the country today. Every time in America that a parent dares go to a school board meeting and speak up or goes to the local school and insists on talking to a teacher or to the principal and raises questions about the curriculum or about values or whatever, the other side screams bloody murder, because they want the ability to mold our children's value system without any interference from parents. I think that as you predicted in *Children at Risk*, when you said that the battlefield would be the schools, that's come to pass us. We haven't seen anything yet, wait till we go through the rest of this decade and see even more of these themes come up.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, that recording was made 27 years ago and it could very well be said today. The book is now 31 years old, and yet it's still right on target. If anything, it has verified the accuracy of what we were trying to say then, because we're still worrying about how children are being manipulated in the schools. It's far worse

now, in fact, and *Children at Risk* has turned out to be remarkably prophetic, hasn't it?

Gary Bauer:

Well, Jim, it really has. I mean, as I was listening to that, you're absolutely right. Some of our listeners may think we actually recorded that yesterday. Your references to school board meetings and when a parent shows up, how important that is. One of the arguments we made in the book, Jim, was that no society is neutral on values. If we continue to take Judeo-Christian values out of our culture and out of our schools and our families and our neighborhoods, it would be replaced by something. I think the one thing that's happened since we wrote the book is that what it's been replaced with is becoming more and more evident. It's not only a radical secularist philosophy, but I think increasingly its socialism and Marxism.

In the book, we referred to the Marxism that was springing up in the university campuses, but now we're seeing socialism and Marxism springing up everywhere in our society. Usually, it's talked about in economic terms, but I know you know this, but I'm not sure all of our listeners do, the central thing about Marxism is that it's godless, it hates God. That is what we see motivating not only our enemies abroad, countries like communist China, but we see that motivating a lot of what we're dealing with in the United States right now.

Dr. James Dobson:

Well, I find myself lying awake at night worrying about what's happening today's kids. We did have a perspective on it then that's very relevant today. Let me take a run at explaining the theme of the book from my point of view and in my portion of the book. We said that America was involved in a second great civil war. This one was not being fought by guns and bombs, but with values and ideas, where Americans were locked in a life and death struggle for cultural influence. That's what was going on then and I want to bring that perspective up to date a little bit today.

But on one side of this great divide as a belief that God is. From that understanding came very far-reaching beliefs that touched every dimension of public and private life. It was based on the belief that there are biblical standards of right and wrong that determine really how we're supposed to live and how children are supposed to be taught. But because God is, the majority of Americans at that time supported the sanctity of human life, the traditional marriage consisting of one man and one woman bonded together by fidelity and sexual purity. There were many other biblical truths that held sway and had been since the foundation. Not everyone was Christian, of course, but the Judeo-Christian system of values was dominated in the culture at that time, but it was changing.

America then began to drift toward a notion that God isn't. That changes everything. It happened slowly at first, but with the influence and the decisions of the liberal courts and political influences, the Christian system of values began to wane and there was this shift where what was right was determined by how it seemed or thought, not on biblical values. Everything emanating from

Scripture began to sound out of date and even oppressive and great anger was attached to it. Life was cheap and then a sexual revolution took center stage.

You and I, in this book, warned in our writings that civil wars don't last forever, one side eventually wins and the other loses. This is the key phrase, you said it just a minute ago in that recording, children become the prize to the victor. Well, I'm here to tell you that we have largely lost that civil war of values and children are now in the clutches of those who believe God isn't. It has what you referred to a minute ago as a Marxist, godless perspective on life that's being transmitted to children. That's what keeps me awake at night. Does that summarize what we were trying to say?

Gary Bauer:

Jim, it's an excellent summary. As always, you got right to the heart of the question and said it in a way that I think every mother listening, every father listening will understand completely what we're trying to get at.

One of the things we discussed in the book is the uniqueness of the United States. Unlike any other country in the world, the central idea of the United States can be found in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. In that second paragraph, there's about 23 words right in the middle of the paragraph, we all know them, "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men," it means all mankind, "That all men are created equal." And endowed by their government? No.

Dr. James Dobson:

No.

Gary Bauer:

There's plenty of places built on the idea that liberty comes from government. Our founders believed, and it says, "Endowed by their creator." That's the God of Abraham, that's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God that sent His son to die on the cross for our sins. When we get to a point in the country, which I think, Jim, you and I both believe we're at, where more and more young people don't even believe there is a God, then I think we're in the middle of an existential threat. How can America be preserved as America if a rising generation is rejecting the very idea that there is a God that was the author of our liberty. We're facing really tough challenges.

The other thing that came to my mind, Jim, is when we wrote the book, the Soviet Union was unraveling. We had problems 30 years ago, but our challenge from a foreign enemy was actually easing. But right now, we've got a rising communist China, a godless communist China, and that country believes their day is coming. When our young people are waning in our faith, when they're waning in a love of our country, Chinese youth are on fire for their country.

The irony of that, Jim, that's what keeps me awake at night. Here are our young people living in a country that is the freest, most decent country in the history of the world, we've done more to advance the cause of liberty than any country in history, and our youth are being taught that we're evil, that we've never lived

up to our goals, that we were built on evil from the very beginning. Then you've got communist China, a country engaged in genocide, a country that makes Christian churches take down their crosses and put up photos or pictures of Chairman Xi instead, and the youth in that country are on fire believing that their day has come. That's a witch's brew, Jim.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, Gary, going back to the book, the kids that we were talking about and being concerned about at the time we wrote this have gone on to be parents. The generation that we have seen, they've actually been called millennials, but many of them grew up without that understanding of right and wrong that God is. I saw recently polls showing and only 6% of millennials believe in a Christian worldview. That means 94% do not believe that, and therefore, the next generation, the one that's coming up now, is getting some other godless perspective because it is not consistent with what has been taught for generations and a couple of hundred years. That is what worries me now, because we've already lost essentially one generation and now we're losing another and where does it go? This is a spiritual issue, not a political issue. Do you agree with that?

Gary Bauer: Oh, I definitely agree with that, Jim. I mean, obviously some of these battles are fought out in the political arena. I tend to think, and I think you probably do too, that some of the worst things are coming out of what we would call the political left or the cultural left, but it's permeated everything. I mean, there are people on the right who think the only thing that matters are free markets and the free flow of capital and the most important issues are marginal tax rates and government regulations. Look, I'm a conservative on all those things, but we can have marginal tax rates as low as you can possibly imagine them, and if our children at the same time no longer believe that this is a country built on the idea that our liberty comes from God, then the country's doomed, no matter how low our taxes might be.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, we're going to have to wrap this up. Do you have time to give us another program?

Gary Bauer: Oh, I'd love to.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay.

Roger Marsh: Important and timely words from Dr. Dobson and his friend, Gary Bauer, today here on Family Talk. These two honorable men are just getting started. I'm Roger Marsh, and you've just heard part one of an important conversation about *Children at Risk* on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. More than 30 years ago, Dr. Dobson and Gary Bauer co-authored the seminal book called *Children at Risk*. Today, it's clear that back then they really had a finger on the pulse of cultural trends as evidenced by today's activities. Many of their predictions about where America would be if anti-God cultural Marxism continued to gain popularity have unfortunately come true. One of the most concerning elements of this "civil war of ideas" is that the hearts and minds of

children are the prize to the victors. As Dr. Dobson pointed out, economic principles and conservative values are important, but this is a spiritual battle, not a political issue.

Now, Dr. Dobson and Gary Bauer will be continuing their conversation on the topic of *Children at Risk* on tomorrow's broadcast. Make sure you join us again for that, another installment in our 2021 "Best Of" series. But before we go, I have some exciting news to share with you. For the entire month of December, any donation made to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute will be matched. That's right, this whole month, thanks to some generous friends of our ministry, any gift that you make in support of Family Talk will be doubled. Your \$50 gift will become \$100, \$100 becomes \$200, \$1,000 becomes \$2,000, you get the idea. Now, to strengthen marriages and families today, make your donation at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), that's [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), or call us at (877) 732-6825.

From all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I'm Roger Marsh. God's richest blessings to you and yours during the Christmas season, and always.

Announcer:

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