



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** America's Forgotten History and Heroes

**Guest(s):** David Barton

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

**Roger Marsh:** Well, welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of everyone here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thank you for making us a part of your day. Now, today's program is a presentation that was given by our guest, David Barton. David is an evangelical Christian political activist and author. He's the founder of WallBuilders, the Texas-based nonprofit organization that promotes America's bygone stories of our nation's beginnings, and what you're about to hear is a presentation about American's forgotten history and its heroes.

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**David Barton:** I want to start this morning by going to the American Bible Society. The American Bible Society came out with a report this year. The American Bible Society was started in 1816 by founding fathers, signers of the Declaration, Constitution. You have presidents, Supreme Court justices, and so if you look at the American Bible Society report that came out in 2022, which they do every year, you'll find that on this report we lost another 26 million Americans last year who stopped reading the Bible, period. This is the lowest level of biblical literacy we have had in America.

Since our founding, we've kept polling for 120 years and this is the lowest it's ever been and consequently as a result, when you look at the issues we face today, and there's a bunch of them, and every one of these issues popping up on the screen is something that's been in the news in the past twenty-four

months. I chose them specifically because they've been in the news, but I also chose them because the Bible explicitly talks about them.

For example, free market system, real easy, 1 Timothy 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Matthew 25, Luke, 19, Matthew 20, due process clause. The right to confront your accusers is John 8:10, the right to compel witnesses on your behalf, Proverbs 18:17, the right to testify in your defense, Acts 22:1. These are all historically documented sources on this. The problem we have today is only 6% of Christians can put a Bible verse to these issues. Most Christians have become biblically illiterate. We know the Bible some, but not the way we used to, and we do a lot of work with George Barron and pastors, 384,000 pastors, senior pastors and churches in America calling 500 today, we find that only 2.8% of pastors deal with these issues.

So we don't deal with these issues on a regular basis. We don't help present a biblical view on them, and the result of that is that what you see in America since 2000. If you go back to the year 2000, 85% of Americans profess to be Christians. In 2020, it was down to 65%, that's a 20% drop in 20 years. How come? Polling those who left church, two out of three say they left church because they find that it has no relevancy. It doesn't deal with the issues I deal with. It doesn't give me answers that I need right now, and so this has been a problem that we've had with the church for the last several years, which is why a lot of people are saying, we really need a revival. We've got to have some kind of revival in America. We're praying for revival and that is a terrific, wonderful prayer, but I don't think it's going to be answered the way we expect it to be answered.

And the reason is that what we have right now, the major problem we're facing is we have an obsession on national focus, and let me see if I can put this in perspective. Here's the issue. If I talk to a group and I say, okay, guys, who's the President of the United States, they can all tell me. If I say, who's the president of your local school board, I get blank stares. If I say, name three federal legislators, easy. Name three legislators at the city level, give me three city council members, can't do it. We know so much more about what's going on nationally than we do locally and national is where we can have the least impact. We can have a whole lot more impact locally than we can nationally.

Look, I've been involved in national politics for a long time and there's a lot of things we can't get done. There's a lot of people, we can't change their minds, but it's real different at the local level. And so that obsession with the national focus has got to be replaced with the local focus, and this goes to revivals as well. If we're talking about having revivals, it's an interesting thing about revivals. There are no national revivals. Wait a minute. Surely there are, the Great Awakening? No, that's a local revival. The Great Awakening, we think it's a national revival, and the reason we think it's a national revival is we see what happened with George Whitefield. George Whitefield, amazing, amazing guy. What this guy did was he delivered about 34 years of preaching, 18,000

sermons, and grab this as a stat, 80% of all Americans physically heard him preach a sermon.

How is that possible? Real easy. He was the chaplain in Georgia. He got on his horse in Georgia and he rode to Maine, which was then part of Massachusetts, didn't become a state until 50 years later. He rode to Maine, as far north as you go in America, and he preached the gospel in every town he went through. Then he turned around and rode from Maine back to Georgia where he was chaplain, but he took a different route, preaching every town he went through. Then when he got to Georgia, he turned around and rode back to Maine. He did it seven times, 34 years, 18,000 sermons. The reason 80% of Americans physically heard him preach a sermon is because he's in 80% of the towns in America. I mean, that's where he went. And what happened was when a revival would break out in a local town, it would be the local pastors that would keep it going.

It was not a national revival. It was thousands of communities that had a revival, and so it's local revivals. And when you get a bunch of local revivals going, that's when you have a national revival. So they occur locally rather than nationally, and it's the same thing when you look at the American War for Independence. If you try to name the battles, we can come up with three or four usually. There's 137 battles in the American War for Independence. Just for safety, I'm going to say there's more than 120, but there's 137.

It's interesting, if you look at the names of these battles, most of them you've never heard, and that's because they were all local battles. We won so many local battles that we won the national war. But again, these were battles in every community. The British would come town to town and the people would rise up and say, "No, you're not going to do that here, and we're going to make sure you don't do it here."

The leader of the Battle of Lexington was Pastor Jonas Clark, who took 70 guys from his church out there to face the 700 British, the leader of the Battle of North Richard, Concourse Reverend William Emerson, who took 400 guys out there to stop the British coming over the bridge, the leader of the road to Boston, there were 4500 people that showed up, and they were led by pastors like Benjamin Voss and Payson Phillips. When you get to the battle of Bunker Hill's, there's Joseph Willard who said, "Well, I got two companies here in the church. Let's go get with the other churches. We'll defend Boston." It was all local, and that's where we win the American War for Independence because we won so many local battles.

So looking at what happens, that obsession with the national focus got to be replaced with much more of a local focus, and that also is voting. If I take you through the stats on voting, there's three requirements to be a voter in the United States. Two are constitutional, one's statutory. Constitutionally, if you're 18 years old and you're a legal citizen, you can vote. 100% of people who meet those two standards can vote. The third requirement is we want you to register vote. That way we make sure you don't vote seven times or somebody doesn't

vote seven times for you. This is where it breaks down, 65.3% of American adults are registered to vote. We have more than 100 million American adults who have said, I don't care what happens to the country, I ain't going to be part of it and you see that also breaks down to Christians. About 40 million professing evangelical Christians not even registered to vote. So they can't even be salt and light even if they wanted to.

And the culture would be very different if they were to get engaged, but when you look at the turnouts at the presidential level, the last 11 presidential elections, the average voter turnout is 54%, but that's 54% of registered voters, that's 54% of 65.3%, which means only 36% of adults vote for president and takes half of that to win 18%. Last 11 presidential elections, one out of five Americans has chosen the president, four out of five did not choose the president. When it comes to off-year elections, the last 21 off-year elections we've had, and that's where we choose our governors and U.S. senators, and that's where we choose our state and federal legislators, last 21 off-year elections, the voter turnout has been 38%, but that's 38% of 65%, which means 26% actually vote for governor and senator, et cetera.

It takes half that to win. So for the last 21 off-year elections, one out of eight Americans has chosen our governors and our senators and our congressmen, seven out of eight have not. And when you get to the local level, the average voter turnout at the local level is only 6%, but that's 6% is 65%, which is the registered voters, which means your actual voter turnout is only 4% of adults and it takes half of that to win, which is 2%.

Now, let me show you why this is important. If you'll take something like Los Angeles, the city of Los Angeles is the second-largest city in the United States. The city of Los Angeles is larger than the population of 23 separate individual states. So if you're Eric Garcetti, mayor of Los Angeles, that's like being governor in 23 states. Eric Garcetti brags about the fact that he was elected with 2.9% of the vote. He was extremely church hostile. Everything else is essential, but churches are not. Pot shops are essential, liquor shops, essential, big box stores, essential, churches, definitely not. There's enough churches in Los Angeles to have anybody they want for mayor, but not when you have a 2.9% voter turnout.

You have the same thing that happened in Houston and Houston, it's larger than 20 separate states. It's the fourth-largest city in the nation. They elected Annise Parker mayor with 3.3% of the vote. She was the first open lesbian mayor of Houston, and she passed a city law that says, "Well, if you say marriage is between a man and woman, that is now a hate crime and I'm going after you," and she did. She went after a bunch of Houston pastors, subpoenaed 17 different forms of communication. I want to see all your text messages, all your emails, everything. Houston's got enough churches to have anybody they want mayor and yet they had a really faith hostile mayor.

If I take you to Fort Worth, the 13th largest city in the United States, this is personal to me because I grew up right on the outskirts of Fort Worth in a little town that's still where we go for our groceries and everything else. And Fort Worth, six years ago, the school board there in Fort Worth, Board of Education said, "We've looked at this gender stuff and we just don't think that there's anything there. So we're going to let kids choose whatever bathroom they want, and kids can choose whatever locker room they want and they can choose whatever shower they want. We're just not going to do genders in Fort Worth schools anymore."

Now interestingly, that was picked up at the time by the Secretary of Education for President Obama, Arne Duncan. He said, I should have thought of that, what a brilliant idea. So they came out with a plan that says, any school that gets federal funding can't do gender, you're not going to do that anymore, and that's 97% of the public schools in America. This is where the gender stuff came in. Now, the reason this is disturbing to me is it came out of Fort Worth. And if you don't know the nickname of Fort Worth, we call it Cowtown USA. It is a cowboy town. That's how it was founded. That's still where it is. I looked in Fort Worth, we've got 918,000 there, we're the 13th largest city in the nation, and I looked to see the president of school board who came up with this silly idea. It turns out he was elected with less than 1200 votes, 1182 votes.

So I looked in the district where he ran, and I quickly found dozens of evangelical churches in that district. I found one church, a Bible-believing evangelical church that had more than 3000 registered adult voters in that church. That one church could have kept him from being on the school board, which would've saved the whole nation from six and a half years of gender nonsense that we've had since then. This is why we've got to have a local focus. This is where you start changing things and the people you elect for school board are going to run for city council, then mayor, then state rep, then state senator, then congressman, then senator. It's an up-ballot effect. We always talk about down-ballot effects. No, no, no. If you'll vote at the local level, you're going to vote at everything above that.

So the biblical literacy we have right now has affected us and we see it in a number of ways. If you're actively involved in the political arena, you see this. And I think most of us would acknowledge the three institutions, biblically, that God gave us. Family first? Easy. Genesis one, two, three, God made Adam, made Eve, they had children. God said, this is good. Got tons through the Bible on the family. The second institution God created was that of civil government. When Noah got off the flood in Genesis nine, God gave him seven civil laws, they're called the Noahide laws. Whether it's secular history or religious history, this is the first recorded instance of civil government being organized in human history. In those laws, God says, here's what you do with murderers, here's what you do with thieves, and it's civil law. So government came from God in Genesis nine.

Third area would be that of church, and we know that's God's institution. One of the easy examples is the book of Exodus. That's a type and shadow of the church. God organizes the people, the congregation, they worship together, they have a tabernacle, so all of that is type and shadow. We know those are God's three institutions. Today, as biblically illiterate as we are, most Christians know a lot about family and a lot about church, but not nearly as much about government, but that was not an issue back in the day.

If you go back to the time when we wrote the Declaration of Independence, our national birth certificate, political scientist at the University of Houston, in a study published by Louisiana State University, they documented that the single most cited source by the founding fathers in the time they were writing the Declaration declaring independence was a book by John Locke. It was called the Two Treatises of Government. It was printed first in 1690. This is the book that they used in writing the Declaration.

And it's interesting, Richard Henry Lee, who's the founding father who made the motion we should separate from Great Britain, that resulted in writing the Declaration, he said, "We copied the Declaration out of Locke's Two Treatises of Government." Locke's two Treatises of government and talking about how government's to work, he references the Bible more than 1500 times. For the last several months we've been doing pastor's briefings all over the nation. I can't get pastors to give me more than five or six or seven or eight verses that deal with the government. And it's not the Bible's silent, it's just that we don't know that anymore.

And so what's happened is we've really become two-thirds Christians. We have two of these arenas. We're good on family, we're good on church, but we're not as good on government, and leaving government out is not a biblical option. I mean, this is God's institution just like the other two institutions, and it's time for Christians to become three-thirds Christians. We got to get back in these areas and we're starting to see some of that. I think we're starting to re-grasp what founding fathers told us.

This is Dr. Benjamin Rush, and I can go through all the stuff they did, but he was called the father of public schools under the Constitution because of this piece that he did in 1790. In 1790, he said, okay guys, we've been 13 nations for a long time. Now we've become 13 states in one nation. Because we're no longer separate nations like Europe, what do we need to be teaching in our schools to make sure that we stay a unified nation? And this is where he laid out the purpose of public schools, and he said, the purpose of public schools are threefold. He said, the number one purpose of public schools is to teach students to love and serve God. He said, the number two purpose of public schools is to teach students to love and serve their country. He said, the number three purpose of public schools is to teach students to love and serve their family.

Now, if you look at that list in that order, I think most people I know would say, no, no, no, Benjamin, you got it wrong. It should be God, it should be family, it should be country. And Benjamin said, no, you're wrong. It should be God, it should be country, it should be family, because he pointed out that if you ever lose control of your country, it will become the great enemy of your family, and that's what we're seeing right now.

Here's a nice little state law that just got passed in the law. Gavin Newsom on Monday signed a law that says if any student wants to transgender transition and parents don't want them to, the state will remove those children from the parents and raise them. So the state is now saying, if parents disagree with what we think the kids need, we'll do it. See, this is what we're seeing in schools all over. It turns out that even in rural areas like where I live, I grew up in a town of 220 people outside of Fort Worth, we thought our schools are fine. And it turns out that there's a lot of cesspool stuff going there, and that's why we're seeing so many people start to focus on school boards, but that is where we're getting healthy.

As a matter of fact, just show you some local things, things that churches are doing that we haven't heard about much on the news, encouraging information in Virginia last election. Now they have the off-year elections, one of five states who have their elections, not the normal time when the rest of the states do. So Virginia, last year, if you remember the previous Governor Northam, they had a problem in Virginia and weren't sure what to do with it, and the problem was they had kids that were surviving abortions. Now what do you do with that? Well, we know what to do with that. You take care of the kids. They passed a law that says if a child survives an abortion, we're going to go ahead and let that child "die comfortably." A child that's already here?

Well, the governor of Maryland said, I can beat that. We're going to have abortions up to 28 days after a child is born and we'll still call them abortions. In California, it's already passed the first body. In California, they say, well, we'll abort babies up to 30 days after they're born and still called it an abortion. So this is crazy stuff going on that stirred up a lot of folks in Virginia and said, this is just wicked. So what happened was Virginia went in, found 312 churches in Virginia, there's tens of thousand churches. It doesn't take that many to make a difference, as I pointed out with these school board races.

So what happened with 312 churches who got the pastors engaged said, you find every single person in your church, make sure they are registered to vote and make sure they go vote biblical values. You don't have to tell them who to vote for. We don't want to tell them who to vote for. We want to tell them, examine the candidates, find out what they stand for and vote for the one that's closest to the biblical values that God sets forth. So they got 75,000 people registered who had never before participated in the elections, and it's an interesting thing. Youngkin got elected with a margin of 65,000. Oh, that seems to be the margin of victory right there. See, it doesn't take a whole lot. It just takes getting engaged.

And by the way, Youngkin, when he was up for his inauguration, one of the 312 pastors who was really distressed because Youngkin was close to Youngkin and Youngkin's now elected and he's seen the inauguration and there's no pastor praying at the inauguration. We thought you were a different kind of guy. Well, he didn't have a pastor pray at the inauguration because he prayed his own prayer at the inauguration in Jesus' name, very boldly and very openly on the steps of the Capitol. That's a whole different climate and we've already seen the policy reversals that are going there. So Virginia, that's a big place we're seeing. And by the way, 2 Timothy 2:5 says no one can be crowned unless they run according to the rules. What are the rules of elections? Most of us don't know. We just rely on someone else.

There were 1343 people in those 312 churches that we want to know. They became poll watchers, election judges, et cetera. They got access to the voting list. They started checking names on the voting list, and they found that 5.2% of the names were fraudulent. By the way, we've got that going right now. A number of states as in Michigan last week and in Michigan, they just found a guy who voted twice in 2020, which is not good, but the dude was born in 1850. He went through the Civil War and he voted twice in 2020. The first list they got of 200 names on the voter's role, the top 67 names on the voter's role, they found an obituary, the dude's dead. There's actually 35,000 names on Michigan's voter roll that are dead that have been voting in recent elections. See, you just need someone to go put eyes on that.

And look, we're told in Ephesians 4:13, Jesus tells us we're salt and light, where light is, it drives out the darkness. When these election volunteers got involved as poll watchers of Virginia, three of the county clerks quit just because someone was going to be in the room watching the election. Why would you quit for having someone watch the election? See, this is another way that churches are getting involved and we're having them really do that this year especially. These are some local headlines. In Minnesota, which is a crazy wacky blue state, churches got organized and they took school boards all over Minnesota. Same thing in Denver, Colorado Springs. Actually, 1500 churches got organized in Colorado and they took 87 school boards, including four school boards in Colorado Springs, including Denver. You have Christians sitting on school boards. Now that's a whole different philosophy for what's going on.

In Dallas, this is about six months ago, 51 churches came together and said, we think we can do better than what we've got on the school board. They recruited candidates among the churches. They won 15 out of 15 races on the Dallas School Board, and they won them all big. They were all 60-40 wins, and most of them were 70-30 wins. If you go down to Houston, same thing. Churches got organized in Houston. They won every seat on the school board in the election this year in Houston. Christians sit in every seat, that's 2.3 million people in Houston. In Fort Worth, they won 20 out of 21. Five weeks ago in Miami-Dade County, they won 25 out of 30 in Miami-Dade County. This is going on all over the nation.



So changes has happened, but it's going to get healthy from the bottom up, but we're looking for and recruiting biblical-minded people who can think biblically, and that's a hard thing to do in America today. So let me encourage you, if you don't read the Bible regularly, let me just point out to you that in early America it was practiced, everybody read the Bible through cover-to-cover once a year. We've got to get back to that individually. So closing this out, we need to be a three-thirds Christian, and I'll close with the challenge that comes from Charles Finney. Charles Finney was a revivalist in 2nd Great Awakening. It's estimated that in one year, 1857 to 1858, he led 100,000 people to Christ in just one year.

He believed that revival was a science, and he wrote a book on that in 1835, 1836, a book on how to have revivals. He believed that you didn't have to pray for revivals. He said, just look at the if-then verses the Bible. If you do what God said, he will do what he said. 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray." If we'll do that, then he will give a revival. You don't have to pray about a revival, you just have to do what he said. Humble yourself, turn from your ways he'll give a revival. So he points out you don't have to sit around waiting for revival to come. You can have a revival anytime you want to if you'll use the if-then verses.

And he went through all these verses in the Bible where God says, if you'll do this, I'll do this. He said, "The church must take right ground in regard to politics." Politics is part of a religion and a country is this, and Christians must do the duty of the country as part of their duty to God. It's because we're a stewardship nation. We don't have kings that tell us what to do. We tell them what to do and so God put the government in our hands and said, you guys take care of it until I get back, Luke 19:13, "Occupy until I come." So as he points out, this is a stewardship government, Christians have a responsibility. This is part of our faith here because it's a stewardship government.

He said, God will bless or curse this nation according to course that Christians take in politics. Now, that's a powerful statement, but why is that true? Because we know in Proverbs 14:34 "Righteousness exalts a nation, sin is a reproach to any people." We love to sing God Bless America, but if we want God to bless America, we got to give him something to work with. It takes righteousness that he can bless to exalt. So how do you get righteousness? Proverbs 29:2 says, "When the righteous rule, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people groan." How did the righteous rule in America? We have to elect them to office. So if we want righteous policies, we have to elect the righteous to office and then God can bless. And he said, that's what leads to revival. Interestingly, he said, if you don't want a revival to come, just stay out of politics and that'll keep a revival from coming. We want to see this thing change and we think it can change, but God's people are the answer for this. Thanks for letting us share.

Roger Marsh:

Well, what an inspiring presentation from David Barton of WallBuilders here on Family Talk. To find out more about David or to access any part of today's presentation, just go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). And remember, there are just a few days left here in the month of December to take advantage of a

special matching grant we have in place. Thanks to a number of generous friends of our ministry, every dollar you donate this week will be doubled. And as the month of December is almost over, today's the 26th, then you can do the math, there is still time to utilize this matching grant, but you'll need to act now. Go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), that's [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), and make your tax-deductible donation today. Or you can make a donation over the phone when you call 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Hope you'll join us again tomorrow for another edition of Family Talk. Until next time, I'm Roger Marsh. May God richly bless you and your family.

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