



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** A Nation Abandoned by God – Part 1

**Guest(s):** John MacArthur

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**Dr. James Dobson:** You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

**Roger Marsh:** Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and on today's classic presentation, we're going to hear from today's guest, Pastor John MacArthur, about what God does when we turn away from Him, especially as a nation. It's important to know that the Lord is always with us, but our God is a jealous God, and we shall not worship any other gods except for our Lord, the Alpha and the Omega. Now, before we begin today's program, there's a very important issue that I must share with you. It has recently been brought to our attention that certain unscrupulous individuals have been using Dr. James Dobson's image and likeness to falsely endorse online products. This advertising is absolutely untrue. Also, Dr. Dobson is in very good health and has not left the church and most definitely has not left the ministry of Family Talk.

I want to make it perfectly clear, Dr. James Dobson has nothing to do with these online scams, nor has he ever endorsed any outside products or services, let alone a product or service that is not in line with biblical principles and values. Dr. Dobson cherishes the trust and confidence you have given him in his ministry over the years, and he will always seek to uphold it. Here now to introduce today's guest speaker, Pastor John MacArthur, is our very own Dr. James Dobson, right here, right now on Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, greetings everyone and welcome to Family Talk, which is a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm James Dobson, and I thank you for listening to us today and for supporting this ministry. We are a listener-supported ministry, and we appreciate anything you can do to help us out financially. Some time ago, I heard an absolutely stunning presentation delivered by Dr. John MacArthur. It's actually delivered here in Colorado Springs, and it focused on the moral freefall of our nation. It was alarming to hear the warnings that he shared based on Scripture. Dr. MacArthur describes in this presentation how America is not only headed toward divine punishment, but it is continuing to slide into moral decay. I wholeheartedly agree with what Dr. MacArthur had to say. America has sunk much farther into moral decline now than even in that day, and that was not that long ago.

But we've continued to become more wicked as the days go on. I think of a holy God observing this country, legalizing the deaths, the killings of 60 million babies through abortion. And the U.S. Senate failed to pass a law that would have protected those who survive an abortion attempt. They limp into the world, they're wounded, they're hurt, they're frightened, and the decision is made to kill those babies. The mother and the physician can do that. How wicked and how evil is that? That wouldn't have happened five years ago. So I'm appalled by our politicians about those that are making decisions for us of what we're doing with regard to our children, beginning to teach them the principles of LGBTQ ideology. For these tiny kids who are barely out of toddlerhood, we're doing evil, wicked things every day. And Dr. MacArthur was warning us that there is a message within the Scripture, mainly Romans 1, which tells us that there's a point at which He will give them up to moral decay, give them up to their depravity.

That's the theme of the message, and I think all of America, every Christian should hear it. Before we let you hear that presentation, let me quickly introduce our guest. Dr. John MacArthur is the best-selling author and has pastored at Grace Community Church in California since 1969. He also started his own radio ministry called Grace to You, which can be heard on over 2,000 outlets. Here now is Dr. John MacArthur speaking at Woodman Valley Chapel here in Colorado Springs several years ago.

John MacArthur:

One of the most tragic scenes in the Bible, and yet one of the most familiar to us, is the scene of the strongest man who ever lived, a man by the name of Samson, finding out he had no strength. Judges chapter 16 records this. When Delilah saw that he had told her all that was in his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines saying, "Come up once more, for he's told me all that is in his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. And she made him sleep on her knees, called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his hair. Then she began to afflict him and his strength left him. And she said, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson.' And he woke from his sleep and said, 'I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.'"

And here's the telling line written by God the Holy Spirit, "but he did not know that the Lord had departed from him." So the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, bound him with bronze chains, and he became a grinder in the prison. Sad, he didn't know that the Lord had departed from him." I can't imagine anything worse than being abandoned by God. To the sons of Israel, earlier in the book of Judges in chapter 10, God said this, "You have forsaken me, you have served other gods, therefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen. Let them deliver you in the time of your distress." This was God saying to Israel, I'm done with you, abandoned by God. A haunting line is found tucked away in the little prophecy of Hosea, chapter 4 and verse 17.

And it refers to Israel by the name Ephraim. And it says this, "Ephraim is joined to idols," so says God. The next line, "Leave him alone." Sounds out of character for God, doesn't it? Ephraim is joined to idols, bring him back might sound a little more like God. Let him alone. People and nations, even the covenant nation Israel, can come to a point where they are abandoned by God. Jesus reiterated this in Matthew 15 when he confronted the Pharisees, and then described them to the disciples. He said this, "They're blind leaders of the blind, let them alone." When God lets you go, it's serious. When Jesus pronounces over you, abandonment, it's serious. Now I'm going to say something, you're going to have to hold onto your seat a little bit. I'm convinced beyond doubt that in the same sense, God has abandoned America.

I know that's a strong thing to say and I'm going to show you why I believe you can see that clearly in Scripture. Open your Bible to Romans 1. Here in Romans chapter 1, beginning in verse 18, running to the end of the chapter, you have the most clear presentation of God abandoning a nation, what that looks like, what happens and why he does it. This is the most graphic and the most detailed and the most comprehensive discussion of what it means for a people, a society to be abandoned by God. And it perfectly describes the moral chaos in our own nation today. It starts with very familiar words, verse 18, "for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven." Now let me stop you there for just a moment. We're talking about the wrath of God and I need to just let you know that in the Scripture and in reality there are five different manifestations of God's wrath, okay, and you will recognize them.

There is eternal wrath. That is that wrath which God unleashes on the unbelieving dead in Hell, eternal wrath, suffering forever, eternal punishment. That's eternal wrath. There is also in the Bible eschatological wrath. That is the unfolding of divine wrath at the end of the age described in detail, for example, in Revelation six through 19, the pouring out of God's wrath and the breaking of seven seals, the blowing of seven trumpets and the dumping of seven bowls of wrath. Eschatological wrath, that wrath is yet to come as is eternal wrath for all society and yet right now there are many experiencing eternal wrath. All the unbelieving who have left this world are experiencing it. Third kind of wrath is what I guess you could call calamitous wrath. That is that wrath of God which produces calamity in the world and the most notable illustration of that is the flood which drowned the entire world. Only eight people were saved. Massive wrath on the part of God against sinful men.

Fourthly, there is consequential wrath. That's sowing and reaping wrath. That's the natural end of patterns and choices of sin. Whatever a man sows, he what? He reaps. That's consequential wrath. But there's this other category of the wrath of abandonment. It is a form of God's wrath in which he lets go of a society and lets it catapult full speed without restraint in the direction of its own sinful desires and devices and choices. That's the wrath being described here. This is the cyclical reality of this wrath that has defined human history and will always until Jesus comes. As Paul said, "In all the generations gone by, God permitted the nations to go their own way." I don't believe we're waiting for

God's wrath in this society. We haven't heard massive calamity such as the destruction of an entire city. We certainly don't want that to happen. Pray that does not happen, but it could happen and God would be just in any calamity that he brought upon us.

We have not entered into eschatological wrath. That comes in the end times. We are experiencing, all of us do, consequential wrath of sin. But this massive concept of the wrath of abandonment, I'm convinced, is now at work in our society. We like to talk about the fact that America was founded on Christian principles and God was at the center of it and all of that. Whatever it might have been in our founding, it's no longer the way it is. And I want to show you how you know that has happened. Go down to verse 24. You see in verse 24, the first word, therefore. This means we're now going to see a description that connects to what has been said. If you go back to verse 18, "The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." And we can stop at that point.

The wrath of God is revealed. And then it goes on to talk about the wrath of God and the reasons for the wrath of God. And then in verse 24, it then describes the wrath of God and here's the description. "Therefore, God gave them over," or God gave them up, "in the lusts of their hearts to impurity that their bodies might be dishonored among them for they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural. In the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman, burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind to do the things that are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, envy, full of, or evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, haters of God, insolent, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful. And although they know the ordinance of God that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do them but also give hearty approval to those who practice them." Now let me break that down for you a little bit. Three times the verb "gave them over" is used. Three times. The wrath of abandonment is when God gives a nation over. This verb paradigm can have a judicial sense. It's used often in Greek literature in terms of law courts and criminal courts. It comes down to handing a prisoner over for punishment. It's even used in the case of Jesus being handed over for a crucifixion.

Each of these uses of the verb in this text express the fact that the wrath of God has acted to hand over a society to sentence, to hand them over. There comes a time in a nation when God has had enough and He literally lets go and turns them over to the sentence that they have passed upon themselves by their

incessant sinful choices. To see it another way, they are deprived of restraining grace. Now how do we know when this has happened? Note the progression. Verse 24, God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity that their bodies might be dishonored among them. Impurity speaks of sexual sin. The first thing that happens in a nation when it is abandoned by God is a sexual revolution. Moral sexual perversion, pornographic desire describes the general character of the culture.

You can't even count how many million pornographic websites there are. When a society is abandoned by God, it operates out of its own perverse sexual passion without restraint. You can go back to the 60s and the sexual revolution of the flower children or Hugh Hefner and the Playboy world and it has gone like a flood since then. It is characterized by, as you look at verse 24, lust coming from within side. As Jesus said, what comes out of the heart of a man is what defiles him. Leading to impurity, this means sexual impurity, and to the dishonoring of their bodies. The heart is wicked and the bodies demonstrate it. The body follows the heart. "Lust conceives in the heart," James says, "and brings forth sin, and sin brings forth death." So the first thing that you look for in a society, if you're trying to discern whether God has abandoned that society, is whether or not that society has gone through a sexual revolution so that illicit sex, adultery, every form of immorality is accepted as normal in that society. And we're there.

The second step in the progression, verse 26, God gave them over not just to passions that are explicable because they're men and women, but to inexplicable degrading passions for their women exchange the natural function for that which is unnatural. You know a society has been abandoned by God when it celebrates lesbian sex. God has given them over. Gross affections, unnatural, unthinkable. So you follow a sexual revolution with a homosexual revolution. And homosexuality becomes normalized. Verse 27 adds the male part in the same way the men abandoned the natural function of the women who burned in their desire toward one another. But interestingly enough, the Holy Spirit puts the women first here and the men after. Why? The Holy Spirit refers first to the degradation of women because they're usually the last to be affected in the decay of morals because their hearts are so naturally inclined toward a husband and toward the responsibility of nurturing children. But when they lead the parade, God has removed his restraint.

And the amazing thing of it is this, verse 27, the men abandoning the natural function of the women burning in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error, right into this wrath of abandonment comes the wrath, the consequential wrath. And even though it generates venereal disease and AIDS, they keep doing it. This is what step two looks like. And we know this has come like a flood, but it's not the final step. The final step comes in verse 28. In the middle of verse 28, "God gave them over to a depraved mind." Now the version of the Bible you may have, I'm reading the New American Standard, might have a different translation for depraved. So let me tell you what the

word means, nonfunctional. Doesn't work, useless, can't think, can't reason, can't comprehend.

And you look at this world and you say rampant sexual immorality, out of control, destroying people willy-nilly, even in the church, even in the leadership of the church. Homosexuality, same thing, rampant, out of control, demanding to be accepted as normal, and the society rushing to affirm that acceptance. Isn't there anybody in the system who would stand up and call this what it really is, a massive moral disaster? Can't they see it? Can't they figure it out? No. No. 1 Corinthians 1 says, "Man by wisdom knew not God." Human wisdom just on its own doesn't get there. Then you add that the God of this world has blinded the minds of them that do not believe, and you've got a compounding blindness. And then you add the fact that they are blinded by virtue of the sweeping, dominating elements of their culture, and you're just not going to get anybody to rise up and take that position and have people rally around it.

Roger Marsh:

Pastor John MacArthur is absolutely right. As Christians and fellow believers, we need to be willing to stand up for righteousness or we'll be washed away by the wickedness of this society. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for the conclusion of this thought-provoking presentation here on Family Talk. I pray what you've heard has opened up your eyes to proclaiming the name of Jesus wherever you go. Imagine the spiritual awakenings and revivals that could happen in your community if you are willing to take a stand for truth. So what does it mean to be a Christian citizen? Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we have a helpful resource that will encourage and inform you about being a faith-filled member of your community. It's a three-disc CD collection called "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Citizen?" To get yours, all you have to do is visit [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), select the resources tab, and then click on the store.

Once you're there, search for "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Citizen?" We'll be happy to send it to you as our thank you for your gift of any amount in support of our ministry today. You heard that right. This powerful three-disc CD collection will be yours as our way of thanking you for a gift of any amount in support of the JDFI today. Remember, we are a listener-supported broadcast ministry and we are grateful for your ongoing financial support and your prayer cover as well. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for the conclusion of Pastor John MacArthur's powerful message on what happens to a nation abandoned by God. That's coming up right here on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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

Dr. James Dobson:

Hello, everyone. This is James Dobson inviting you to join us for our next edition of Family Talk. Every day we come to these microphones with someone in mind, whether it's a busy mom looking for tips on discipline, or a husband who wants to learn more about connecting with his wife. We want to put an arm around your family in any way that we can. So join us next time for Family Talk, won't you?