



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Training the Next Generation to Lead Like Christ

Guest(s): Jeff Hunt

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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: Thank you for listening to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and the program that you're about to hear was recorded in January 2022 at the National March for Life in Washington D.C. Enjoy.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Welcome into Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and co-host. Joining me on the program today is a man who is working out on the front lines, working hard to teach and build up and equip the next generation, I like this, of conservative Christian leaders. Sounds like a pretty tall order, but I can assure you that my guest, Mr. Jeff Hunt is a man for the job. Jeff is vice president of Public Policy at Colorado Christian University, director of the Centennial Institute there. It's a think tank out of CCU that works to enhance public understanding of the most important issues relating to faith, family, and freedom. Such a delight to have you, Jeff, joining us here on Family Talk.
- Jeff Hunt: Dr. Tim is wonderful to be with you.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Dobson has such an affection for Colorado Christian University.
- Jeff Hunt: Absolutely.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Dr. Bill Armstrong, their relationship, their kindred spirit. And I know respects the work that you're doing up there. Really a tip of the hat to you.
- Jeff Hunt: Oh, well, thanks. And Dr. Dobbs was actually, I believe, the 2017 William L. Armstrong Award winner. So we give that to someone for national conservative influence. That's gone to Dennis Prager. It's gone to Robert George, Ed Meese, but in '17 was Dr. James Dobson. He came out and gave a wonderful speech.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, we're in Washington, DC today for the annual March for Life event. It's great to see everybody gather. And a matter of fact, I was so impressed with the Mall and how packed it was. And Jeff, the young faces, I'm talking college

students, high school students, today's generations showing up en masse. What do you think's going on?

Jeff Hunt:

Huge, huge. Well, there was so much energy and joy. So we were right in the thick of it, so it's kind of hard to judge the numbers and what's going on, because we were right there. But we were around high school students and college students from all over the country. And I get a lot of questions. Why does the young generation seem more pro-life than previous generations? And I think it's really simple. They grew up seeing their brother's and sister's picture taped to the refrigerator door before they ever met them. They saw the sonograms, And so they reject the lie that it's just a couple of cells that you can get rid of. "I know it's my little brother. I saw him before he ever came out of my mom's womb." And so they've rejected the lie. They're excited. There's a sense of justice that's about to unfold. If we see Roe v. Wade going down and Dobbs case is successful, there's a real sense that they're on the pinnacle of kind of a sense of history-making justice for this country. We've fought through problems in this country in the past, the civil rights movement, slavery. This is one of those moments where people really get a sense that the direction of the country's going to change and they're excited to be a part of it.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

I felt that spirit too, while I was here. I think there is a sense that yeah, hey, the pro-life movement is winning. There's a lot of fire, a lot energy. Jeff, you think 49 years since that Roe versus Wade decision, 63 million abortions or more in this country alone. It's time that the abortion piece comes to an end.

Jeff Hunt:

That's exactly right. Well, it's a house built on lies and the lies have been falling apart and people are waking up to that. So first of all, it was without abortion, women can't be equal. That was kind of the big thing that drove it. So you have first wave feminism, which was, we want the right to vote. We want the right to be able to have careers just like men do. And then you had second wave feminism, which was, we can't be equal unless we kill babies because men don't have to deal with unplanned pregnancies. That was a lie because we're seeing all these wonderful, successful women that have children, raised families, are successful in their careers as well. So that kind of sense of lie went down. And then the idea that science has been successful on this, that our children that can live outside the womb earlier and earlier. They're seeing that life is successful, that the life begins at conception.

And so even science is helping prove and disprove all those lies out there. So the house of cards is falling and people are recognizing that life is sacred. I just wrote an op-ed on this. You really are dealing with two different worldviews. One that, I can go out there and live the life I want. And I don't want a child and I can have the career I want and travel the world and I can have multiple sexual partners. I never have to deal with anything like the at or any consequences with that. But I think what people are seeing is that you can build families and have very rich lives. You can have a good career, you can have children and they add to your life as well. It's not just one plus one plus one equals three in families. It's one plus one plus one equaling a lifetime of joy and happiness and

sacrificing commitment. And it's worth so much more than just three people in a room. It's a family. And that's what I always love about Dr. Dobson.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, it was interesting. We were walking down the street, a group of us here from Family Talk and there was a cluster of college students from the University of Pittsburgh and they had their banner, Pitt and the whole bit and they wanted us to take their picture. But again, I'm just so encouraged by what I see in the younger generation, which leads me to you. And I want to talk about what you're doing at Colorado Christian University. And I want our listeners to really tune into influencing the next generation. But Jeff, if you wouldn't mind, tell us a little bit about your background. Everybody has a little backwater story of why they do what they do, how the calling of God gets on their life. But your role, vice president of public policy, you lead the Centennial Institute at CCU. Tell us what it's all about and specifically about your role there.

Jeff Hunt: Well, thank you for that. So I didn't grow up really attending a church a lot. In fact, I came to faith through Young Life because my parents sent me there as punishment. They didn't know what to do with me. I had thrown this big party.

Dr. Tim Clinton: A lot of people raising their hand saying, I went to that same school.

Jeff Hunt: I threw this huge party. So my parents are like it's military school or this thing we heard of called Young Life. So they ship me off to Young Life. It was the first time ever really heard the gospel. And when I heard the gospel, it made perfect sense. Everything that I was looking for came through the gospel of Jesus Christ. So I committed my life there and had one of those instant turnarounds. Everything made sense now. The Holy Spirit came into my life, gave me a whole new heart. So then I went back to high school being the guy that was going to load everyone up in the Young Life cars and drive them to Young Life. So I took that same kind of passion. Went to Westmont, studied philosophy and religious studies there. Went to Fuller Seminary and got a master's of divinity there and was on staff at Bel Air Presbyterian church.

And that's where I kind of got the political bug, moved out to Washington, D.C. and Rick Santorum gave me a shot, let me work in his office. If y'all remember, Rick ran for, he was a senator from Pennsylvania, ran for president 2012, won 11 states. It was him and Mitt Romney kind of battling there. So I worked for Senator Santorum on his presidential campaign and then worked for Governor Romney when he ran for president and moved over there. So have a kind of campaign background and then moved back to Colorado and worked on a number of different campaigns. But ended up at the Centennial Institute, and the Centennial Institute's very unique. So Colorado Christian University has, as its strategic priority, to impact culture and support of traditional family values, the sanctity of life, compassion for the poor, biblical view of human nature, limited government, personal freedom, free markets, natural law, original intent of the Constitution and Western civilization. So it exists as a part of the mission of CCU.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's what makes it distinctive as a Christian university.

Jeff Hunt: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's its mission.

Jeff Hunt: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's why the school exists.

Jeff Hunt: And to impact culture. It doesn't just say, this is what I like to say. It doesn't just say train students. No, no, no. We got to go out there and make the culture more pro-life. We need to make the culture embrace traditional family values. And so we have work to do, and that's what the Centennial Institute does. We do involve students in the work that we do, but we're actually more public square facing. We're down at the capital lobbying on behalf of good bills and trying to stop bad bills. We host big events and bring in political speakers, elected officials, thought leaders, pastors, because we're not just student-focused, we're trying to impact culture.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's interesting because in Christianity, you're going to get some pushback here, Christians in politics issue. And Jeff, at the end of the day, it's about policies because policies are what impact families. They impact our faith. They impact our freedom and so much more. And to sidestep that is to ignore something that impacts our everyday life. That's why we engage, right?

Jeff Hunt: A hundred percent. So what, especially parents, who are waking up to is that somebody is writing the school curriculum that your kids are learning. Let's talk about just kind of government, and we don't even have to get the whole

Dr. Tim Clinton: Look at the whole parents issue going on right now.

Jeff Hunt: Right. We don't have to get into the high level politic stuff. Let's just talk about the fact that somebody who's writing the curriculum that is influencing what your kids learn. So for most of American history, it's been generally overwhelmingly Protestant. Well, since we've been becoming more and more godless, we're seeing elected officials now that have very different values than maybe what we grew up with. There are pretty big differences in worldview, in values. And that plays itself out in politics, including what your children are learning in schools. So I think parents are waking up to that. And so Christians need to be faithful stewards. It's really about a stewardship issue. It's about being a good steward in your community at the local level, all the way up to the national level so that our laws reflect, not only honor God, because we want our laws to do that, but there's a sense of common grace too, that when you implement Christian laws, you're going to have a better society.

Dr. Tim Clinton: If you don't think policies influence life, look at what's been going on right now in the public square and how it's coming down. And when power's taken you don't get that stuff back, or it's a fight to get it back. And so Jeff, if we don't figure out how to raise up the next generation of young conservative leaders, what in the world's going to happen?

Jeff Hunt: Well, it's going to continue to get worse. and the truth is, I was talking to President Sweeting about this. President Sweeting is the president of Colorado Christian University. We were talking just last night about this, that schools are actually getting more and more liberal. We think they're pretty liberal now. They're getting worse, especially higher education.

Dr. Tim Clinton: There's an intolerance toward conservative thought.

Jeff Hunt: And they're not afraid of it. So that's the thing is in the sense of, they're afraid of being called intolerant. They're very happy now to be intolerant.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's because they believe they're right. Period. And you don't have a right to exist.

Jeff Hunt: Exactly.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Your opinion, you can't have it. It used to be, I heard Dennis Prager, I think it was at the University of California, Irvine. He was doing a presentation on the issue of conservatives and liberals actually debating. They would go at each other, but they would figure out how to respect and have common ground and try to get somewhere. But now it's like conservatives against leftism, and there is no debate. This is like cut and dried. There's no discussion. There's no, let's come, let's reason together. It doesn't happen like that anymore. And that's the scary thing. And it's happening, like you said, on our college campuses everywhere.

Jeff Hunt: Yep. And I think there's a study that needs to be done. It hasn't been done yet, but the left and liberalism kind of sprouted out because of tolerance. And what's fascinating is they're not willing to respond and reflect tolerance back. And so really you only have tolerance that comes out of Christian nations. This is where I think there needs to be a larger study on this. You're not getting tolerance out of Muslim nations and you're not getting tolerance out of secular nations. It definitely didn't happen in the Russian Soviet Union. And it's not happening in China. It's not happening in North Korea. It's not happening to Muslim countries. And you're seeing now that type of intolerance creep its way into America. It's really only out of Christian nations that you, predominantly Christ nations, that you get a sense of tolerance. That's something that I think people need to wake up to.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, you brought a group of 50 students from Denver to D.C. for the March for Life. No doubt that puts a lot of joy in your heart. But when you reflect back on

the work you're doing there and how you're trying to raise up conservative Christian leaders, do you have a story or two or something that you could draw on that says, we know we're getting it done. This is really good stuff.

Jeff Hunt: Oh yeah. Well, we don't hide this. We plan to infiltrate all levels of politics with graduates from Colorado Christian University. And so, one alumni that we get really excited about is a guy named Jonathan Finer. So Jonathan came to CCU because he was interested in public policy and the Centennial Institute. He worked with us there. He went on to work for Senator Cory Gardner, and then in the administration. He was in the Office of Budget Management at the White House and is now Chief of Staff to the House Minority Leader in the state of Colorado. And that was just kind of as we're starting. So those are the types of leaders we get excited about, but the personal stories are wonderful. So we have students with us right here that came from adopted families. And so I've looked in their eyes and wondered and seen from them this sense that they feel like they almost shouldn't be here.

The other day I said, being born in this generation is the greatest privilege because we've lost 62 million. And when people go through either broken families or single moms or stuff like that, there's all this incentive to abort the child. And you do have a few children that came out and were adopted and they were raised in adopted families. And they almost have this sense of like, I feel really lucky to be here. My peers are aren't here, and I, therefore, have a mission from God to try to make this culture more pro-life. It is a really unique dynamic.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You can't stop that. When there's a sense of a calling on a life. You and I were talking about some of the leaders who are gone now who were bold that we grew up under. How they influenced us with their vision casting. And that's why I think we're seated at this table today because of people like Jerry Falwell and Bill Armstrong and D. James Kennedy and James Dobson, and so many more.

Jeff Hunt: Hundred percent.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, I wanted to ask you about another piece that you're doing. The Centennial Institute puts on the Western Conservative Summit held in Denver every year. Tell us a little bit about that and how that kind of coincides with everything that you're doing.

Jeff Hunt: Well, Bill Armstrong is, as we just mentioned, was a former two-term senator and president of CCU, really got CCU on track. Because we used to be kind of a center left school. We had problems in the eighties and nineties, but got us on track. Also started the Western Conservative Summit. So the Western Conservative Summit's the largest annual gathering of conservatives in the western United States. We've been going on for 13, I think, 14 years now. And it is a very unique event. So if you've been to CPAC before, if you've been to Values Voters Summit, if you've been to some of, have similar overtones, but we're very unique because we're connected with the University. So this is what

gets me really excited about the Summit. We have kind of two groups that are our main speakers.

You have your grassroots leaders, the Donald Trump Jr's, Donald Trump himself came one year. Diamond and Silk, Brigitte Gabriel, kind of fun, rah rah. We get excited and they get the whole crowd going. It's a lot of energy and a lot of fun and they sell the most tickets. But because we're connected with the University and because we believe that conservatism has a deep philosophy, believes in permanent things, we want to bring in academics, brilliant thinkers on conservatism, the Robert Georges of the world, the Al Mohlers, the Edwin Meeses, the people that can really explain the depths of the principles of conservatism.

So, at the Western Conservative Summit, you get both, some people may come because they love Donald Trump, Jr. and they want to see him, but they've never heard Robert George speak. And I've often said that those types of thinkers will speak for the decade. You can read their speech 10, 15 years from now and it's still really interesting and relevant. So that's what I love about the Summit. You're going to be excited and motivated, but you're going to learn about the deep things, the William F. Buckley's, the Edmond Burkes, the great conservative thinkers that laid the philosophical foundations for what the modern conservative movement is today. You're also going to learn about them. So, it'll be June 3rd and 4th. Now this is a big announcement, we haven't made this announcement public, breaking news here.

Dr. Tim Clinton: On Family Talk.

Jeff Hunt: That's right. You got to have like a sound effect. Breaking news coming in. We're going to be hosting at the Gaylord, just out near the Denver International Airport, Gaylord Rocky Mountain's beautiful facility, wonderful restaurants, great for families.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gorgeous place.

Jeff Hunt: So we hope you'll be a part of that. And if you have a young person, bring them to the summit. I'd really say anything about 16 and up. The Summit's are great opportunity for them to engage with the policy makers. So, June 3rd and 4th, if you go to westernconservativesummit.com, you can get all those details there.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jeff, I wonder what Dr. Bill Armstrong, a good friend, the kindred spirit of Dr. Dobson, former president, as you said, of CCU, Colorado Christian, senator from the great state of Colorado. I wonder what he would say if he were here, he was able to kind of peek in and see what's happening and wonder what kind of word he would offer up to those who are listening right now. You ever think about that?

Jeff Hunt: Dr. Tim, I will tell you exactly what Bill Armstrong would say because he said it all the time. We have a pathway to the solutions that we need in this country and it is one word and he would get the whole crowd going. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, in this big, deep, booming voice. My office was near his, but I could still hear him through three layers of drywall. And it's not meant to be lighthearted, but that was Bill. Here's something that's really important for our listeners to understand tonight. Bill Armstrong came to faith after he was already in office. One of the greatest Christian statesmen.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's rare by the way.

Jeff Hunt: It's very rare. Yeah. And it happened to Wilberforce too. Some of the greatest Christian statesmen, stateswomen we've ever had came to faith after they were already in office. And was because, in Bill's case, a dentist felt compelled by God to fly to Washington, D.C. He didn't even know Bill Armstrong, walked into his office, sat down with him and explained the gospel of Jesus Christ to him. It was someone with that boldness that created one of the greatest Christian statesmen this country's ever seen. So pray for elected officials. You never know. Every Sunday night when we lead a prayer gathering for the Centennial Institute, we do it via phone call, but we pray for elected officials. Even if you disagree with them, this is someone you didn't elect and you really don't like their policies. 1 Timothy 2:1-4, asks us to pray for those in positions of leadership that they may come to a knowledge of the truth.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Micah, 6:8, "He has shown you, o mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?" Good word for all of us, "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." A good way to close here, Jeff, would be, I'd like you to speak to parents out there who, they're raising, who knows, maybe the next Bill Armstrong, that they can see it. How would you encourage them as they're shaping their children? And maybe there's a young student or two in high school, someone in the early years of their college career, what would you say to them?

Jeff Hunt: Well, Dr. Tim, I'd give them a few areas of advice with regards to how to begin to shape your worldview. One of the things I say is that the easiest thing you can do to start to engage in public policy, civics, and that type of thing is just for five minutes, go sit in a school board meeting or in a county commissioner meeting and you will learn within five minutes that people you would never hire for any other aspect of your life are writing all the laws that affect every aspect of your life. So, one of it is you've just got to wake up and see that there are people that are influencing your life that you wouldn't have in any other aspect.

Dr. Tim Clinton: They're making decisions. And by the way, they're making policies that are going to influence how you, your children, your grandchildren are going to live out their everyday life.

Jeff Hunt: A hundred percent, a hundred percent. So that's step one. But two, we've got to get back to just the basics of civic engagement. We, as Christians, for too long,

have just ceded that ground to other people. And you need to have your kids involved. You can do that by taking your children with you to a school board meeting, by taking them to a county commissioner meeting, anything like that, but start to get your kids, building them a sense that they have a role and responsibility in stewarding their communities, and we can't just leave it to other people. So start small, get involved. When I was with the Santorums and Rick was running for president all over the state of Pennsylvania, Karen was homeschooling all the kids, so they had an RV and Rick would drive around and Rick would jump out of the RV, give a stump speech and then get back in off the family went.

But what I did notice is that every single one of those kids had a real sense of civics, of civic responsibility. You even see it in the Trump family, too. Their kids turned out all really, really well because I think he installed in them a sense of civic responsibility and engagement. And think that's important for any parents. I'm never going to run for office. My wife might. I like the job that I'm doing now, but still, we take our kids to pro-life rallies. We take them to hear speakers to understand that this is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. We are the ones that need to shape the government.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We need to pray that God would raise up today's generations to be radical. I like the word radical. Bold, willing to step up and into the moment and be real champions of light for such a time as this. Real, again, tip of the hat to you, Jeff, for the work you're doing up there. Jeff Hunt. He's vice president, again, of Public Policy and director of the Centennial Institute at Colorado Christian University. Now, on behalf of Dr. Dobson and his wife, Shirley, the team here at Family Talk, we salute you all. And thank you again for joining us.

Jeff Hunt: Thank you. And I do want to say, Dr. Dobson's influence continues to play out in our life as well. We read his books and paid close attention to the work that he did and our children are better as a result of it. So thank you. It really all goes back to the family. If we don't get the family right, nothing else that we're working on...

Dr. Tim Clinton: I get to interact with him quite a bit, Jeff, and I can promise you, he got a lot of fire in his belly still. Believe me. And he's ready to go every day. So we're out there, and again, I believe these are unprecedented times, but the good news, the great news is God is at work. Thank you again for joining us.

Jeff Hunt: Thank you so much, Dr. Tim.

Roger Marsh: A call to action for parents, students, and Christians everywhere to engage the culture. We've been listening to a very encouraging conversation featuring Dr. Tim Clinton and his guest Jeff Hunt, director of the Centennial Institute here on Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and you can learn more about Jeff, the Centennial Institute, and Colorado Christian University when you visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/broadcast, that's drjamesdobson.org/broadcast, or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Well, we're all out of time for this edition of the program.

We pray that you have been encouraged and maybe even inspired by what you've just heard. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another addition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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