



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Election Reaction with Dr. James Dobson

**Guest(s):** Gary Bauer

**Air Date:** November 18, 2022

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

**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:** I'm Roger Marsh, and welcome to this edition of Family Talk. Now, last week, our host, Dr. James Dobson, spoke with JDFI senior vice president of public policy, Gary Bauer. It was just a few days after election day, and they broke down the midterm elections together.

A quick bit about Gary Bauer. He is the president of American Values, which is an educational nonprofit organization. He's also the chairman of Campaign for Working Families political action committee, and the Washington director emeritus of the Christians United for Israel Action Fund. As I mentioned, Gary also serves as senior vice president of public policy, here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Let's join the conversation right now.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Today, our guest is my colleague, my associate, my friend, Gary Bauer, who is our vice president of public policy here at Family Talk. He's going to give us his take on the national elections, which occurred November 8th and thereabouts. It's probably still going on, as a matter of fact. It's good to have you, Gary. Welcome.

**Gary Bauer:** Well, Jim, it's great to be with you. We've done a lot of radio shows over the years, but doing a radio show when we're officially on the same team, fighting the good fight. Well, that was the case many years ago when I was head of FRC, but to come back around and do that again at such a critical time for the country and to be alongside of you, it is a real blessing for me. And hopefully, together, we're going to be able to do some great work in the months and years ahead.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Gary, you're making reference to how long this has been. I think it was in the mid-'80s that we started working together in the studio. That's a long time ago.

**Gary Bauer:** Yes, I was 12 years old and-

**Dr. James Dobson:** And I was 14.

Gary Bauer: Right.

Dr. James Dobson: Well-

Gary Bauer: Yeah, that was the middle of the Reagan years. We had some big battles in those years too, Jim. And just as you are now, you were, all the way back then, an incredible voice for family, faith, and freedom. And many times encouraged the Reagan administration to do even more than they were inclined to do anyway, but you get to Washington and it gets hard, and your voice urging us on was a really big deal.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, I was delighted to find you in the White House. That was an interesting era. Tell me your title with Ronald Reagan.

Gary Bauer: Early on, I was just a policy analyst, and then he nominated me to be undersecretary of education, which was incredible to be able to do that.

Dr. James Dobson: That was with Bill Bennett.

Gary Bauer: Yes, under Bill Bennett. That's exactly right. But then they brought me back to the White House those last two years to be head of the Office of Policy Development. In all of those roles, time and time again, you had me on your radio show and told people to pray for me and other Christians in the administration. It was a major factor in all the things that we were able to do.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, it went both ways, Gary. It was a delight to find somebody who saw the world pretty much the way I did. And all the way along, we had been surprised, really, by how much we have in common in terms of policy, and we're going to see that represented today.

Gary, this is the first time we've had a chance to talk about what happened in the election a few days ago. In fact, it's still going on because they haven't finished counting as we speak now. Many conservative Christians are shocked and disappointed by the outcome. The pollsters and most of the media and the political leaders seem to expect a big wave on election day. It didn't happen. Some people have called it the big trickle. I don't know. Are you surprised by it all, or did it not take you by surprise?

Gary Bauer: I have to confess, I am somewhat surprised. We have all this polling data out there that tells us that three-quarters of the American people, 75% of the American people think the country's headed in the wrong direction. And then we have all this really challenging economic news, sky high inflation and increasing interest rates, which most of the experts think that by January are going to have us in a recession. I think it's no secret that President Biden sometimes seems not to be fully grasping the moment he's in. He'll lose his train of thought. He'll bungle words and so forth. So it seemed to be a setup for some significant gains for pro-family, pro-life types of candidates.

The one thing I did worry about though, Jim, is that a lot of Republican leaders were bragging, long before the election day, that it was going to be this red tsunami, this tidal wave of victories, and that the left was just going to get really beaten up.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, if I can interrupt you, you never hear a big time football player, maybe the Big 10 or the SEC, you never hear the coach stand out there before the game started and say, "We're going to blow them away. This is going to be fantastic." It's just stupid to do that.

Gary Bauer: Yeah. The other team's coach puts that up in the locker room and uses it to inspire their players.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, they're energized by it.

Gary Bauer: Yes, yes. So it's fallen far short of what everybody expected. Now, on the other hand, it's not like it was a landslide for the political left. Really, it ended up being a status quo election.

Jim, the thing that jumps out at me, it is a narrowly divided country. I'm depressed that it's a narrowly divided country, but it is. And the upside of that is that if the Church can find its voice, and if Christians can stop sort of ignoring politics and government and get more involved, we can make the difference in getting America on the right road.

That means that for the James Dobson Family Institute and for the work that we are doing and so many other groups are doing, we have it, with God's blessings, to really save the country at a moment where I think everybody understands that we're headed toward a cliff, whether it's the crime that's sweeping the nation, the things that are happening in our schools, the breakdown of reliable standards in right and wrong, the corruption we see in Washington and on Wall Street and in the popular culture. If Christians get involved, we can make the country, keep the country what it was supposed to be when the founders founded it, which was a shining city on a hill, a country that understood that its liberty came from God, not from government. That should be our goal to preserve that, to restore that. I think we still have a chance to do it, but the hour is late.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, I heard a commentator say on election day, that if there ever was a time when conservatives had reason to expect a big win, this was it. You've already mentioned that 75% of the American people say the country's on the wrong track. And we're dealing with a horrible crime wave and a murder rate and lawlessness that are frightening to everybody. And inflation that's the highest it's been in decades. Many people are struggling to feed their families. And gas prices are sky high and millions of illegal immigrants are flooding unchecked across the border. We have an unpopular president who seems, to many, to be incompetent, as you said, and he's talking openly now, I'm sure you picked up

on this, about the possibility of nuclear war with Russia. In the past, that's been unthinkable and unmentionable, and yet he's almost matter of fact about it. The public schools are fighting with parents for control of the children. The government is spending trillions of dollars that we don't have. I think we're close to \$35 trillion in debt.

Where is it going if Christians don't step up and be heard from, for the electorate to say enough is enough? When are they going to do that? Or maybe they already are. We're not the only two, obviously.

Gary Bauer:

That's a great summary, Jim. And you're right to point out that there are pastors out there. I know a couple in Northern Virginia that are really on fire around the concept of Christian citizenship. But there are so many others that think that somehow it's harming the gospel if you talk about these problems facing our country from the pulpit. Well, most of the things that you just listed are moral issues. They're issues that the Bible speaks to.

If you look at racial reconciliation, the need to do that in America, well, Christians have the answer to that. There's a biblical answer to racial reconciliation, and the answer is that race is the least important thing about all of us. The most important thing about us is that we're made in God's image, and because we're made in God's image, we have dignity, and value, and worth. Whether we're a newborn with down syndrome or a 99-year-old with senility, we still have dignity, value, and worth. Well, if Christians aren't in the public square, talking about that, how in the world is America going to be able to solve the problem of racism and racial reconciliation? And you can just go down the whole list, the things happening in our schools, the breakdown of moral values in the classroom.

I was thinking about this the other day, Jim, if somebody gave you a really incredible gift, a new car, or gave you a house, would you turn around and let that house be damaged and the foundation undermined by other people? Would you let people dent your car? I mean, that would be a terrible thing. You were given that as a gift by someone. You want to take care of it. Well, the fact that each of us was born in America or was able to come to America legally and be part of the American family, that was a gift from God. Do we think that God didn't know we were going to be born here? He made it possible for us to be born here. We could have been born in communist China. We could have been born in some country that's built on radical Islam and where it's almost impossible for us to practice our faith.

So we've gotten this wonderful gift that God gave us. We sort of won the lottery when we were born here. And yet, we have pastors that are saying, "Well, we don't have any responsibility to save our country, to save America, to protect it from some of the forces." Many of those forces, really, quite frankly, very evil forces. We have an obligation to protect this gift.

Dr. James Dobson: Not only did those gifts come from God, but they came from our Founding Fathers who gave us the Constitution, a marvelous document that's survived all these years, and yet we're not even respecting it in some circles.

Gary, before we talk ourselves into a depression, let's finish up quickly with some of the worst disappointments from Tuesday week, but also talk about some of the positives. Because there was a lot of good news that came out of that election, and I fear that we would miss that if we don't give attention to it.

Gary Bauer: Well, there were five referenda on the ballots around the country that were related to abortion. Three of those were pro-abortion referendum that put a right to abortion in state constitutions. And unfortunately, all three of those passed. One passed in Vermont, one passed in Michigan, and the third one was in California.

Now, those are all states that are fairly liberal, and so the fact that those referenda passed wasn't a complete surprise, but nonetheless, it was disappointing. But there are two very conservative states, Montana and my home state of Kentucky, that had pro-life referenda on the ballot, and those were both defeated. In fact, in Montana, the referendum said that if a baby was born alive during an abortion, that once that baby was out of the womb and born alive, there was a legal obligation to protect that child's life and to take care of the child, provide medical care and so forth. That referendum lost, which I'm still shaking my head about.

But Jim, I found myself reminding myself that something else happened this year, and that was the Supreme Court making it very clear that there was no constitutional right to abortion. That's the result of 30, 35, 40 years of work by you and many others to get pro-life senators elected, get pro-life presidents elected that would appoint pro-life justices, and we should not overlook that victory. I mean, in fact, some of the election difficulties we had this November was sort of a backlash to that. So be it. I mean, we won a big battle when we got abortion out of the Constitution, where it never was to begin with.

Dr. James Dobson: Along the line of the positives, there were many governors that won their seats this year that are pro-life. In the interest of time, let me just name the states where there is a governor that's elected. Some of them are reelected and some of them were elected for the first time. But these are the states, Texas, Florida, Ohio, Wyoming, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Idaho, South Carolina, South Dakota, Iowa, and Oklahoma. These are the states where they now have a pro-life governor. That's a pretty good lineup of governors, and I'm proud about that. We really ought to celebrate it.

Gary Bauer: Yes, absolutely. It reminds me, when we're done, Jim, we probably ought to send them a letter of congratulations, because in every case, those governors were under really incredible attack this year. They stuck to their pro-life views. Their state legislatures passed laws on abortion. Some of those laws basically

banned it except in cases like rape and incest. Others limited it to only before there's a heartbeat or only before 15 weeks.

But in each case, those state legislators and those governors didn't back off. They said, "Yes, I'm pro-life, and we want to pass this bill, and we don't care how much we're going to be criticized." I think there was a real lesson in that, because some of the pro-life people that lost their races seemed to be running away from the life issue once the heat got turned up.

So I think the lesson here is if you're pro-life, you believe all of our children ought to be welcomed into the world, be protected by the law, have a seat at the table, be part of the American family. There's nothing to be ashamed or embarrassed of. And if you will just proudly stand by that position and articulate it, don't look embarrassed or ashamed of it, I still think, in addition to being morally right, it's a winning political issue.

Dr. James Dobson: A lot of people lost their seats because they were wimpy on that issue, and I think it's a winning issue, like you say. Gary, let's assume that the votes have all been counted and the Republicans, conservatives, take over the House of Representatives. What are the implications of that that we ought to celebrate?

Gary Bauer: It is very important because the house leads in investigations. So if conservatives have a majority in the House, every House committee will have a new chairman. And from what I can tell looking at the list, a hundred percent of those chairmen are going to be pro-life, pro-family, pro-religious liberty. And in addition to that, they're going to be doing oversight investigations. Investigations about the corruption we see here in Washington, DC, the influence buying that's happened with adversaries of the United States buying influence that reaches all the way into the White House. So it is a big deal if the House is in conservative hands, and in this case, Republican hands, it will mean that a lot of things we need to get to the bottom of we'll be able to do.

Dr. James Dobson: Are there any other very positive things that come out of the election?

Gary Bauer: Jim, there are some things that might not seem like that big of a deal, but they will over time. In North Carolina, two liberal Supreme Court justices were defeated. That means the North Carolina Supreme Court is now in conservative hands and will uphold pro-life laws. In Ohio, there were a number of pro-life justices elected to that state's supreme court, which means that pro-life laws in that state will be upheld.

And I guess one final thing, Jim, and we've touched on it a little bit, but in a narrowly divided country, which is what we've got, if you and I and others can come up with a plan, and I know you're working on it, and I am too, where we can get in every precinct in America, every little city, little town in America, a couple more pastors willing to speak the truth, and in each precinct, just register 10 or 15 or 20 more Christians of all races and ethnic backgrounds, we

have it, with God's blessings, the power, the ability to turn America around so that the country our children and grandchildren grow up in will be that same freedom-loving country that you and I, Jim, had the great blessing of living our lives in.

Dr. James Dobson: Gary, let's conclude by expressing appreciation to all those pastors who have done what was right. We maybe err on the side of irritation or disappointment that many pastors who didn't, but there are a lot of others that took the heat and lost some members and really paid the price for standing up for righteousness. Let's congratulate them and thank them for their courage.

Gary Bauer: Absolutely. God bless them. If you're a pastor today and you speak the truth, you're going to get criticism. You know what? And if you're a pastor and you're not getting any criticism, maybe you're doing something wrong. I mean, because we're supposed to be salt and light. But you're absolutely right. God bless those pastors of all denominations that have stood for the idea of ordered liberty under God, for the American founding and what that was supposed to be about, for the sanctity of life, for family values, for all these things that our country desperately needs to get right.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we're out of time, Gary. Wrap it up by telling us how do you feel about where the country is and where it's going.

Gary Bauer: Well, I guess if I was summarizing it, Jim, I would say that like a lot of other Christians, I was hoping for more. I thought we had a real opportunity. But we did score some significant victories. I think that the country knows something's wrong, but we don't have as many people today that are daily reading the Bible. Church attendance has declined. So we need a revival. That's certainly true. But I still have hope that if we speak the truth, and nobody does it better, Jim, than you do, that we can wake up America in time for other opportunities coming down the road, including what will be a very big and important presidential election in 2024. I think if we can keep working, keep praying, keep voting, increase our numbers, that America's best days could still be ahead.

Dr. James Dobson: As usual, Gary, your observations are insightful. It's always a pleasure working with you. We're going to be working right here together at JDFI, and I'm so delighted to have you on our team. And you'll be back. You can count on that. Thank you for this overview.

Gary Bauer: Thank you, Jim. It's a blessing to be on your team.

Roger Marsh: Let's all be in prayer as God moves through our reelected or newly elected officials. I'm Roger Marsh, and we want you to know that here at Family Talk, we are grateful for your friendship and your support. If you'd like to reach us, remember, you can visit our website at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), or give us a call at 877-732-6825. Trained support staff members are standing by to speak with you.

Well, we hope you have benefited from today's program and that you have a great weekend as well. Remember, as we all prepare for Thanksgiving next week, let's begin giving thanks right now this weekend. Why wait? On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, and the entire team here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper and stronger in your relationship with Him.

Announcer:

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