



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Importance of Christian Citizenship – Part 2

Guest(s): Tony Perkins

Air Date: April 16, 2024

[Listen to the broadcast](#)

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: Well, welcome back to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we are joined once again by Gary Bauer and his special guest, Tony Perkins. Yesterday, they discussed what Christian citizenship is all about and why it's so important for us as believers to understand that definition. On today's program, Tony and Gary will be talking about what children are facing in today's culture and why we need to lean into God's Truth.

Tony Perkins is the president of the Family Research Council. He's a former member of the Louisiana Legislature and host of the daily syndicated radio program called "Washington Watch with Tony Perkins." Tony is an author, has proudly served in the United States Marine Corps, and is also a former police officer. He earned his master's degree in public administration from Louisiana State University and has also received an honorary doctorate of divinity from Liberty University. Tony Perkins is married to his lovely wife, Lawana, and together they have five grown children.

Now, as we open today's broadcast, we'll begin with a bit of recap from the end of yesterday's conversation. Here now is Gary Bauer and his guest, Tony Perkins, right here on Family Talk.

Gary Bauer: I'm Gary Bauer, the senior vice president of public policy here at the James Dobson Family Institute. Thank you for joining us today on Family Talk. Back in 1980 at a White House conference on families, Dr. James Dobson met and prayed with eight Christian leaders. One of those folks was Jerry Regier, who became the first president of the Family Research Council. What a legacy that honors God's kingdom. And today I'm joined by the current president of FRC, Tony Perkins. We're continuing our discussion about what it means to be a Christian citizen. Tony, thanks for being here with me again today on Family Talk. Let's get right into it.

Tony Perkins: Thank you, Gary. Great to be with you.

Gary Bauer: Tony, you've worked with a lot of pastors around the country. JDFI, Dr. Dobson have been doing that too. In the middle of what seems to be a lot of confusion in the church, there are some pastors out there ... there's one right here in northern Virginia that we've had on the program, there's people like Jack Hibbs out in California ... all of these pastors seem to get it exactly right. If you go to one of their services, their message is biblically based. They're not giving you a political sermon. They're talking about the Bible and God's Word, and it naturally leads into then what we as Christian citizens should do. So I'm assuming you're encouraged by the fact that there are men rising up in the church right now doing that.

Tony Perkins: Yeah. It goes back to what I mentioned earlier, Gary. The evil is becoming more pronounced. The darkness is becoming more intense, but so is the light. The light is becoming brighter and those that are willing to stand are becoming bolder. Yes, there's a clear line of separation, but yes, there are pastors who are standing up and speaking the truth, and many of them are close friends of mine. And what's happening, their churches are exploding because people are hungry for truth, because the pablum that is coming from many, the social feel-good messages, will not sustain you in your day of challenge, but the Word of God will and its application to your life. And that's what these Bible-preaching pastors are doing.

Gary Bauer: Tony, I know FRC did this for a number of years, but do you think it's a good idea even for some pastors to run for office themselves or does that get more complicated?

Tony Perkins: I think it's a little more difficult for them to run for national office, for Congress, because oftentimes they have to give up their church, but there's so many other ways to get involved. I was just talking with a pastor in my home state of Louisiana who is serving on a small commission overseeing the recreational aspects of the parish in which I live, which is the equivalent of a county.

And you would think, "Well, what's a big deal about that?" Well, they were trying to bring in drag queens. I mean, every aspect of society is under attack, so it is so easy to take a stand and pastors, they're used to standing alone. They're used to having to oftentimes face opposition, and so they're great. I think they're great in the state legislature, city councils, so yes, absolutely encouraging pastors to get more engaged and to encourage their people to run for office, to go into ... I don't think we should have our children in public education, quite honestly. I believe we need to get them out, but I do think we need to be sending teachers into the public education system as missionaries because our public schools are as ripe under harvest as many foreign nations are, and we need to be sending missionaries and praying over these young people that would go into the field of education. Look, we've got all kinds of opportunities if we will engage.

Gary Bauer: Tony, all the way back when I was president of the Family Research Council, Dr. Dobson would say on the air, and he said this many times, that if you're a

Christian family and you can get the financial resources to do it, get your kids out of those public schools, homeschool them if that's an option or get them into a Christian school or whatever, and when he first started broaching this a number of decades ago, man, the roof caved in on us. I mean, we get letters from Christian teachers in the school saying, "You're undercutting me. I'm in there as a Christian teaching and you're telling Christians to leave," and it made you think twice about all of that, but it's pretty clear now that the classroom has been lost.

When you have serious educators ... I put serious in quotes ... making an argument that somehow kids in the first, second and third grade need to be introduced to drag queens, have to know about 52 genders, even, and this is even more horrendous, should be able to tell their teachers secrets that they and the teacher will hide from their parents about things like gender identity and all the rest of it, I mean, we're at a critical moment in the country when that's what most kids or many kids are facing in the country's 16,000 school districts.

Tony Perkins:

Yeah. When you look at what's happening in our public schools, it is really like ... I just remember from when we were thinking through this, I looked through all my friends who had kids in daycare and they would go and they would come home with all these different viruses and stuff. It was like a germ pool. And that's really what our public school system, where every bad idea now has become a contagion.

And I'm not being facetious. When you look at the social media being reinforced by the public schools in this gender, it's been identified as a contagion because it's spreading inexplicably, especially among young girls, who are now questioning their gender as female and they're wanting to become male and they're taking, of course, that's being, as you said, literally. We've got the court cases on this, where the schools have hidden this from the parents and the kids even start gender transition. This is serious stuff.

I say this all the time in my program as a Christian. For Christians, we should be listening. It's true for every parent. God has given us both the authority and the responsibility to teach our children. That's our role. You can read that throughout Scripture. Talk with them as you walk in the way, as you sit down. We're to teach our children.

Now, we can delegate the authority. That's what happens when you send your kid to a public school or to a private school. You can delegate the authority, but you can never delegate the responsibility. The public school is not going to stand before God and give an account for what happened to your child. You will. And each of us as parents will give an account for what we did with our children.

I think of the Scripture, I know it has a little bit of a different application, but what if you gain the whole world and lose your soul? And now that my children are almost grown ... I've got one 16-year-old, the other four are grown, I have

one grandchild and one on the way, and you've got a few more. You're ahead of me.

Gary Bauer: We just had our 8th.

Tony Perkins: Yeah, you're well ahead of me. But I think about people who are so focused on career, and I'm not against that. I'm not against that. But at the end of your life, you're not thinking about one more business deal or do I have room on the wall for one more award. You're really thinking about what did you invest in that which really matters in your children, your grandchildren. What legacy of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ did you leave for them?

Gary Bauer: Well said, Tony. When we used to be on that tour 20 years ago that you referenced, I had a similar thing in my speech where I talked about how wonderful it was for me to work for Ronald Reagan, but when I was in a hotel somewhere trying to go to sleep to get a couple hours before the next event, my last thoughts weren't of flying on Air Force One or having lunch with Reagan. It was what it was going to sound like at my house when I opened the front door when I got home, and the first thing I would hear is our son Zach saying, "Dad, let's wrestle," right? I mean, it's those things, those underappreciated things of family life that we are so blessed by God to be able to experience that at the end of the day. Makes all the difference.

Tony Perkins: But you've got to be intentional, and that's really what I want to communicate to those that might be listening is that you've got to be intentional about that. It doesn't just happen and it's never too late to become intentional. Even if you missed it with your kids, you've got the grandkids. It's never too late to be intentional about relationships in investing in that which will live on beyond you.

Gary Bauer: Tony, as we're talking, there's a lot of news about Israel and the ongoing war. I believe you were there recently. This is another one of these issues where you have the foreign policy establishment in the United States and they try to analyze all of what's going on in the Middle East, but they leave religion out of it because our foreign policy establishment, even our Pentagon, they're secular.

You and I know the spiritual part of this and why as Christians, we have been called because of the covenant that was made between Abram and God in the desert, "He who blesses Israel, I will bless. He who curses Israel, I will curse." It looks like the president, the Biden administration, has turned on Israel and is actually threatening to withhold weapons from them. I'd like to hear what you saw in your recent trip to Israel and what do you think this moment could mean for the United States, because my view is the Bible's pretty clear, if we abandon Israel as a nation, we're going to pay a price for that.

Tony Perkins: Gary, I don't think you and I have a bit of difference of opinion on that. I think you're absolutely right. I think America's ... I actually said, I had a meeting when I was in Israel. I was sandwiched between President Biden's State of the Union

in his hot mic moment and Chuck Schumer making his comments about basically dissolving the government in Israel.

And while I was in Israel, I met with the Prime Minister, had about an hour-long meeting with him, had an opportunity to pray with him. It was a little comical. After I prayed with him, there was a tense moment there as I prayed. As a believer, as a follower of Jesus Christ, I prayed in the name of Jesus and then there was this tense moment of silence and then he said, "Well, Joe Biden said I needed a come to Jesus moment. Maybe this was it."

Gary Bauer: Oh, that's great. That is great.

Tony Perkins: His staff got a kick out of that. They were laughing. But I communicated to him that as we were talking, and there's a real sense, Gary, that everyone's abandoned Israel and the only ones left standing are evangelical Bible-believing Christians. And so I expressed to him, I said, "Look, I love Israel, love the Israeli people, but it's about more than that," and it's what you quoted from Genesis chapter 12. I said, "You know, Mr. Prime Minister, we're people of the book, and we're told those who bless Israel will be blessed and we want that blessing."

I see America's future intertwined with that of Israel because as a nation, America has departed from God and His ways. And earlier that day that I met with the Prime Minister, I was standing on the Mount of Blessing looking over at the Mount of Cursing, and the curse came when we departed from, the people departed from the Word and the ways of God, and that's where we are as a nation. We have departed from the Word and the ways of God, and I believe the only reason that America is still standing is because we have stood with Israel and we serve a purpose for God's greater glory, and if we leave that behind and depart from that, I'm very, very concerned about America's future.

Gary Bauer: I'm with you completely. You know, a lot of people don't know, that our founding fathers were what was then called Restorationists, which meant they believed that God's plan for mankind could not be fulfilled until the Jewish people were restored, thus Restorationists were restored to their homeland.

The national seal of the United States, there was a debate about it, but we almost selected as our symbol Moses leading the Jewish people to the promised land. I think the first commencement addresses at Harvard were delivered in Hebrew because at that time in America, a lot of people believed, learned people believed you needed to know English and Hebrew if you were going to defend Judeo-Christian civilization.

So there's so much here, Truman being the first world leader to recognize Israel. I was talking to a friend there today and he said the same thing you just said, that at this time when they're feeling abandoned, more and more Israelis are coming to understand that it's followers of Jesus Christ in America that at this point are stronger in support of them than many secular Jewish Americans are.

Tony Perkins:

No question. No question. In fact, I had a meeting with Ron, you know Ron Derham, former ambassador, who's now a part of the Prime Minister's cabinet, and he said, "You're not going wobbly on me, are you?" I said, "No, we're not going wobbly. We're standing on firm foundation."

And it was very interesting, Gary, as I was about to leave the country, I was doing an interview with Newsmax there on a street corner with Daniel Cohen, and it started to gather a crowd. It was kind of interesting. People said, "Who is that?" And they stayed around. It was a number of elderly Jewish women, and they came up to me after the interview was over and literally, I'm not making this up at all, not even adding to it, they were weeping, thanking me for being there, "Thank you for coming and caring for Israel." I mean, literally weeping. They feel so alone in their ... I mean, I was walking in one of the kibbutz where the attack had taken place and talking to one of the survivors and as you know, we've come from all over the world because of persecution to this place that was the last safe place for Jews. And now that sense of security has been shattered.

This is such a significant moment that I believe it goes beyond the political and the military, to what you said earlier, Gary. This is a spiritual moment in that this is way beyond one political administration. It's beyond even the extent of America's existence. I believe this moment is one of those moments, one of those rare moments that maybe each generation may get, maybe not. This is ours though, and that is a moment that literally stretches into eternity based upon how we respond.

Gary Bauer:

Well, that's powerful stuff, Tony, and I agree completely. Some will argue that, "Well, why does the United States have to keep bailing out Israel?" Well, I actually think it's almost the other way around, that if there wasn't an Israel, we would be in bad shape. And our two countries, the United States and Israel, are the pillars of Judeo-Christian civilization.

You mentioned Schumer earlier. This top dog Democrat goes to the floor of the Senate in the wake of what happened in Israel in October, this brutal massacre, and in the wake of that Schumer says, "We need to carve a Palestinian state out of Israel. That's the only path to peace." That's the only path to destruction. I mean, taking the land of Israel to give it to these death worshippers, that would be a disaster.

Tony Perkins:

Well, Gary, you remember this because we were in the same meeting. This was one of my early meetings at the Family Research Council back in 2004, maybe early 2005, where we were gathered together. There was a group of evangelicals where the Bush administration had brought in some leaders from Israel to convince us that it was a good idea to pull all the Jewish people out of Gaza and turn that over to the Palestinians. Do you remember that meeting?

Gary Bauer:

I do. I do. It was one of the few times I got angry at the Israeli government.

Tony Perkins:

I know, because they were basically going along with what the Bush administration wanted them to do, and I think it was me and you were the only two that expressed opposition to this whole idea, and guess what? That was in 2005 when they pulled out all the settlers, bulldozed their houses, and in 2007, Hamas was elected as the leadership and has been there ever since developing a terrorist state.

And so we've had experience with this so-called two-state solution. The only thing different is that we would actually empower them to create their own army to do so much more damage if we give them that ability by imposing this on Israel. This is a very, very bad idea and a very dangerous idea.

Gary Bauer:

Well, you know that pullout from Gaza where they had to evacuate all the Jews in Gaza, I mean, that tells you something right there. If a new area has to be Jew-free, that's not going to be an area that's going to live in peace next to Jews. But Tony, you probably remember this. They had to dig up the dead Jews and take them out of Gaza because if they left the dead Jews behind, the graves would've been desecrated by these radical Islamists.

Tony, as we're running down here, we're talking international issues and there's a lot of international stuff happening. It all gets to this battle we're in, and one of them is this effort right now to give power to the World Health Organization. Our good friend Michele Bachmann has talked about this eloquently here on the air, and I believe with you, but can you fill us in a little bit on that? Because I think that continues to move forward that our own government would give to this UN-controlled agency and Chinese communist agency the right to tell us what to do in the next pandemic, God forbid that that's happening anytime soon.

Tony Perkins:

Yeah, if you like the way the pandemic turned out and the government response to it, standby because it's only going to multiply under the World Health Organization and this global pandemic accord, which is essentially a global power grab. They would take all of the bad ideas, the mask mandates, the lockdowns, the forced vaccinations, the censorship of so-called disinformation, which we now know that the Biden administration was pretty good at just leaning on the social media platforms to censor dissenting voices, which they called disinformation.

Well, now we know it was actually the government putting out disinformation. But under this pandemic accord, which is really a treaty, they're just saying it's an accord so they don't have to get Senate confirmation or Senate approval of it, this would give all member states the responsibility and the power to crack down on citizens whenever the World Health Organization declares an emergency. This is a very dangerous piece of legislation. Not only is it censorship, but it's an attack on national sovereignty.

The extent of this we're still exploring because they're still writing it. It's a very elusive process, but they're on track to finalize this in May of this year, and so

we're doing everything we can to try to derail it, but ultimately it's going to take an administration that will pull the United States out of the World Health Organization.

Gary Bauer: Well, Tony, we're coming to a close here. This has been great to spend a couple of days talking with you on these issues. Could you give us an encouraging word?

Tony Perkins: I can, Gary. When we look at Scripture, the Lord makes very clear in these moments where we're not quite sure the way out, "It's not by power, not by might, but by my spirit," says the Lord. We've never been in the majority. We've never had the access to everything that the left or those promoting a godless agenda has had access to, but we have access to the powerful spirit of God.

And so I would challenge people to do these three things, Gary. Number one, pray. We need to be people who are going before God, crying out for this nation, crying out for our communities, crying out for our states and our families, praying over them, asking the Lord to use us.

Secondly, we need to vote. We need to vote. Every opportunity we have, need to vote for men and women who are most clearly aligned with Scripture and they're not going to be perfect. And sometimes the choices are really hard, but we've got to go and vote because not to vote is to abdicate our responsibility.

And then third, we need to stand. We need to stand for biblical truth no matter who else is standing or not standing. We need to stand for and proclaim the truth of God to this generation.

Gary Bauer: Well said, Tony. Really a pleasure to have this time to have this conversation with you here on Family Talk and we thank all of you tuning in to listen and ask you to be back to be with us again.

Roger Marsh: Pray, vote, and stand for Biblical truth. Wise words indeed to conclude today's edition of Family Talk. You've been listening to Gary Bauer, Senior Vice President of Public Policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, and his guest Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council. And remember, Gary Bauer also hosts the outstanding podcast called *Defending Faith, Family, and Freedom*. You can find that as well when you go to drjamesdobbson.org.

Well, today on the broadcast we heard a little bit about what families and children are facing in today's culture, and if you're looking for something to help you and your family navigate today's obstacles, consider picking up a copy of a helpful book from the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. It's called *The Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide*, and it's written by our very own Dr. James Dobson. It's truly a go-to guide for families at every stage of life.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening to Family Talk today, the voice you trust for the family you love. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper in your relationship with Him.

Announcer:

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