



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: American Principles Project: Fighting for the Family – Part 1

Guest(s): Terry Schilling

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Gary Bauer: 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, the broadcast ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, fighting for biblical values in the public square for parents, grandparents, and for kids. By the way, your tax-deductible donation to JDFI today goes twice as far thanks to a special matching grant. First, though, some questions to consider, like why is it that we live in a world today where young children who are not old enough to drive are allowed to change their own gender? Or why do young girls who have pursued participating in sports now have to face the fact that they may have to compete with biological boys in their events? Moms and dads are getting less and less of a say in how their sons and daughters are being raised, especially when it comes to what's going on in the classroom. And imagine the unthinkable content that's available to children online and over the phone, through smartphones and tablets and computers simply with a click of a button.

If you've ever wondered who is standing up for families and all the issues that affect them, please know that all of us here at the JDFI do so each and every day. And we have identified a few groups in Washington, D.C. that are standing up for families in our nation's capital. One of them is the American Principles Project. This organization is committed to protecting families and making them the highest represented special interest group in the D.C. area here. Now to introduce today's guest here on Family Talk is our co-host, Gary Bauer.

Gary Bauer: Hello everyone. I'm Gary Bauer, the senior vice president of public policy here at the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm also the host of the "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom Podcast" here at JDFI, and I am honored to serve alongside my good friend, Dr. James Dobson, and the whole JDFI team. Now look, if you're listening to Family Talk, you know that the American family is under attack. There's evidence of it every day. It's pretty disturbing stuff, actually. It is been going on for decades. Parental rights, for example. Parental rights is being mocked. Parents are being told that they really don't have the final say about their children. We've got high level government officials that are not ashamed or embarrassed at all to publicly say, "Nope, these kids are under our direction,

not yours." We all know, of course, about the effort to rip America out of the rich soil of Judeo-Christian civilization. And Dr. James Dobson and Shirley, they have devoted their whole lives to fighting these and to defending the American family.

I know a lot of people out there, you don't have a high opinion of Washington, D.C. This is a city that revolves around the getting of power and keeping of power. There's all kinds of lobbyists in Washington that represent every special interest you can think of. But when it comes to the most special group in America, the family, the number of people in this town that actually get up every morning with the first thought in mind of, I've got to defend the American family, there are only a few folks that do that, and we have one of them with us today. Our guest is Terry Schilling, my good friend, who is also president of American Principles Project. APP is an organization dedicated to fighting for the American family and fighting to make America shining city on a hill that our founding fathers were so committed to. So Terry, it's great to have you here. You and I run into each other regularly in the hallway, and we finish each other's sentences because we have the same worldview. You're well known in this battle, but I think you're still getting known around the country.

So let's begin by you telling us a little bit about American Principles Project, how long it's been around, and why it was founded.

Terry Schilling:

Thank you so much, Gary, and it's an honor to be with you. You have been a really good friend, but more than that, you've been a good mentor and a good role model for a young man who came to this town 10, 11 years ago. There's a lot of bad guys out there, and you've been a really good example. So I'm really honored to be here and on such a prestigious network that's partnered with Dr. James Dobson. I grew up listening to him as a kid. My parents were devout listeners to him. American Principles Project was founded in 2009, and it was founded to preserve and protect the Republican Party. What Frank Cannon, our founding president, Jeff Bell, and Sean Fieler saw was after the 2008 election, the Republican Party was getting ready to capitulate on issues that were central and core to the success and the future success of the Republican Party.

And it's got a little bit different face now. When we were first founded, we were focused on religious liberty and marriage and monetary policy and Latino outreach. And some of those things are still true today, but after the 2016 election when Donald Trump won, we had some scalps that the left had collected. The LGBT movement specifically had been collecting scalps of our champions for almost a decade. They went after Jan Brewer, Mike Pence. But in 2016, they went after Pat McCrory in North Carolina, who was the governor at the time, and he signed a bathroom bill in the law. And this bathroom bill, it was not controversial, but the LGBT movement made it controversial.

Gary Bauer:

I know exactly what you're talking about, but what do you mean a bathroom bill? Just give me a little second on that.

Terry Schilling:

So this whole transgender industry came exploded on the scene. After we lost at the Supreme Court on gay marriage, this transgender movement really propped up and started making a big PR push of putting men into women's restrooms, into their locker rooms, into their showers, into their sports. And the only criteria was that these men had to claim to be women or say that they identified as women. And what happened was Pat McCrory got a bill sent to his desk that said, "Hey, businesses, they can't be punished for only having sex segregated bathrooms." If you only allow men to go into the men's room and women to go into the women's room, you can't be punished by the city of Charlotte, essentially. And what happened was the left went all out. Every single day in the newspapers and on TV, locally in North Carolina, they were running stories about the economic boycotts that were happening against North Carolina and how HB2...

They never called it a transgender rights bill or a transgender bathroom bill. They called it HB2 and how HB2 was costing the state of North Carolina \$3.5 billion. These were the headlines every single day. And so American Principles Project teamed up with Tammy Fitzgerald at North Carolina Family Values, and we ran campaign ads. We spent around \$300,000 to try and save McCrory. He came up short by about 10,000 votes in a razor thin margin. Donald Trump won that state pretty handily with 160,000 votes, but Pat McCrory lost by 10,000. And we went down to meet with Pat McCrory after he lost to say, "What happened? Why did you lose? We've heard a lot of different stories." Pat McCrory told us this incredible story about how the President of Human Rights Campaign, Chad Griffin, which is... Human rights campaign, is the largest LGBT group in the country. They're basically the Google for LGBT rights.

Gary Bauer:

Yes.

Terry Schilling:

Very powerful. They have a corporate equality index that all corporations go by, otherwise they get boycotts. They're very, very powerful. Chad Griffin comes into his office after he signs his bill into law. And Chad Griffin says, "We just want to let you know that we're coming down here. We're going to collect a scalp, we're going to unelect you. We're going to spend \$50 million against you, and we're going to make you the George Wallace of transgender rights so that no Republican ever tries to pass one of these laws ever again." And Pat looked at us and he said, at that point, I wasn't even mad at him. I wasn't mad at Chad Griffin. I was more mad at our side. I was mad at the guys on our side because there was no one on our side that does that. But what's been helpful to us is that when we started really producing campaign ads, especially around the women's sports issue, a lot more people started to pay attention. A lot more people started to understand the threats that the transgender industry, and really the entire LGBT movement poses to the American people.

But these issues in politics, I think the thing that really makes us stand out and what makes it compelling is we're engaged in elections, we're engaged in campaigns, we're helping turn out the vote into reclaim power. And what's been

really great about that is that politicians are very simple creatures. If there's a real punishment and a consequence to the voting-

Gary Bauer: They fear their own unemployment more than anything else, right?

Terry Schilling: More than anything else. And so if an issue is a winning issue or a talking point's a winning talking point, they won't ever stop talking about it. They won't ever stop pushing it. But as soon as it becomes a liability for them, they run from it. They won't touch it with a ten-foot pole. And so we've made an example of a few Republicans that got squishy on these issues to shore up the base, and we've been running campaign ads against Democrats that have been hurting us, and it's done wonders to passing legislation. We've gotten 24 states now to protect girls sports. 23 states are now protecting children from the transgender industry that's mutilating and sterilizing them. But the coolest thing, Gary, that I'm most proud of is the age verification fight.

Just today, we did the math. There have been a slate of states that have passed us. We're up to 16 states now that have passed age verification legislation to protect children from adult content online. The fighting online obscene content for so long wasn't even on the radar. We lost a few Supreme Court victories, but it was going nowhere. And once we started running campaign ads and attacking people on it, we've seen the sky open up. We can really get this done nationally, I think. And if I were to say what all the problems we have facing this country are, I think online obscene content is one of the top things.

Gary Bauer: No question about it. Now, Terry, as you know, JDFI is a ministry, and we're a non-profit and we don't get directly involved in campaigns. We help educate people about issues. So it's not... You all had a specific mission within the Republican party, but you also pointed out that when a Republican's wrong on these issues, you go after that Republican. Dr. Dobson, much to his credit, he has never been partisan in that sense. He's always been focused on the things that mattered the most to him, the sanctity of life, the family unit, raising children, educational choice, those sorts of issues. And he'll just call people out no matter who they are or which party they belong to, which made him a very important force in the national debate. So everything you're describing is exactly what we're trying to emphasize right now, that we want Christians to be good Christian citizens.

We want them to be informed about the issues, and we want them to take that set of values and faith they have into the voting booth. Terry, you and I have talked about this a lot, that there's a lot of polling out there where people will say, "I don't recognize the country I'm in anymore." And a lot of it gets back to, I think, to the LGBTQ movement, who a number of years ago made a very effective argument. It was almost a libertarian argument. It said, "Look, you can marry whoever you want. We just want to have the right to marry who we want. And who are you to judge our love?" And was, live and let live. A lot of people said, "Yeah, well that makes sense," including, by the way, a lot of young

Christians found that a very compelling argument. But as soon as they won that battle, that sort of libertarian argument became a clenched fist.

It was, "You will go along with this or else we will punish you." And you just described how it's that movement of punishing people and punishing government unless it bends to the agenda, how that's gotten stronger and stronger to the extent now that you've got the business community saying, "If you won't agree to let a boy go into your daughter's locker room or bathroom, then we're going to punish you. We will withdraw our investment from your state." Carol and I have three adult children. Two of them are daughters. We've got eight grandchildren and four of them are granddaughters. If I knew that a boy was going into my granddaughter's bathroom or locker room, somebody would need to restrain me, but yet we've got powerful forces, including the President of the United States, pushing that exact idea.

Terry Schilling:

And I don't want to minimize it because this is a major deal, but it's one aspect of their disordered nature and their disordered agenda, right? You're seeing Daniel Penny out of New York. There was a crazed homeless guy that was getting ready to kill and stab people, and Daniel Penny choked him out and accidentally ended his life, and Daniel Penny is the one being punished. We're now punishing brave and courageous men for standing up for innocent bystanders. We're throwing that guy in jail, but there's no punishment for the people committing these atrocities. We have complete and utter lawlessness all across our country. But here's where it gets back to what we're about. It's all related to the breakdown of the American family. And that wasn't by accident. It wasn't some passive decision that we made. These were policy decisions made at the highest levels of the federal government, and specifically, I mean the Supreme Court.

There was never any real popular movements behind no fault divorce, for example. There were never popular movements in the same way that we see popular movements for lower taxes or for gun rights, or for the tea party. There was never a tea party wave for contraception or no fault divorce or abortion. These were decisions that were forced upon us by the Supreme Court. They literally overrode the will of the American people by making completely irrational and illogical arguments about how the Fourth Amendment, which apparently protected your right to have an abortion and end the life of your unborn baby, but doesn't protect you from unlawful searches and seizures through FISA through the federal government, right? The Fourth Amendment, of course, says that you can't have unlawful searches and seizures against the American people. You can't station troops in American people's homes, but we have FISA, we have all these infringements against our civil liberties, but they forced all of this on us through the Supreme Court, and it's had major ramifications to where the family is no longer a meaningful institution anymore.

It's still important, but when you get married, it's essentially just a piece of paper. There's no legal protections for the children. I'm seeing stories now where fathers abandon their children to become transgender.

Gary Bauer: And those fathers are praised for their courage.

Terry Schilling: Right.

Gary Bauer: Instead of being condemned for their failure and their surrender

Terry Schilling: For living their truth, right?

Gary Bauer: Yes. Right.

Terry Schilling: The ultimate goal of this new regime that's secretly and quietly taken over all of our institutions, starting with academia, then moving on to the courts, then moving on to every... It's the mainstream media, it's Hollywood, it's corporate America, it's the finance sector. You name one aspect of our culture, and it's hard to see how they haven't been complete... The American Academy of Pediatrics advocates for sex changes for minors now, unbelievable. The American Medical Association advocates for health at all sizes where they're telling people that you can be morbidly obese but still be healthy. The whole system's broken down, and it's because we've created broken families. We have created single motherhood. We've incentivized that, right? That does not naturally happen in the wild at the rate that it does in America, and it's because our government incentivizes it, and it removed all the protections for children and for mothers, and for fathers, by the way, through our newly formed marriage laws over the past few decades.

Gary Bauer: Yes. For a number of years during the Reagan presidency, I was undersecretary of education, so I have an ongoing real interest in education and what it is we teach our children and so forth. And I remember when I was growing up, we learned great things about America, what a wonderful country it was, the revolutionary idea we were built on, that liberty doesn't come from government, that it comes from God, e cetera. The early schools in America leading up until really, I think at least the early 20th century, they had copy books where kids practiced their writing. The thing that was amazing about it was that when they were practicing their writing, they were writing down biblical truths. And so they were learning how to write, but they were also learning how to be good people, right? So we've gone from that to drag queen reading hour. I think it was a few months ago that we were talking somewhere, and we were both like, where did that come from?

Was there some new study that came out that showed that kids really learn how to read better if they're being taught how to read by men dressed garrulously as if they were a stereotype of some sort of a woman or whatever? What is behind all this? It just seems like an attack on normalcy and on anything that would be considered decent and good.

Terry Schilling: There's a lot of explanations for it, but I think at the end of the day, what's happened in America is it's become a self-centered society, and that's a natural

outgrowth, right? When you remove God from society and from the equation entirely, what you have is, on the left you have people that establish government as the new God, as the high... Because ultimately, what is God? What does God represent? Well, God represents the highest authority. That's ultimately what he serves as. And when God's no longer in the equation, well then what's the highest authority? Well, for the communist left, it's government. Government's the highest authority. You have to do what the government says every single time, regardless of how ridiculous it is. But on the libertarian side of things, and I put the libertarians on the left because they don't support order. They're progressive, and the definition of progressivism being the goal to progress beyond all barriers, laws, institutions, norms. What the progressives ultimately believe is that we need to get rid of all of these rules and laws. The family's bad because that inhibits you, that keeps you from being totally free.

Having a country is bad because if you have a country, then you have duties and obligations. We have to eliminate all this stuff. So the libertarians, I put on the progressive end of the equation because they don't believe that they have any duties to anyone else.

Gary Bauer: Interesting.

Terry Schilling: It's all about them. And so I think you have the Democrats or the Marxists, they want government to be God. And then on the libertarian side, individuals are their own God, right? It's the original sin. We have a society now where we are all our own gods. We all have our own truth. We all have ultimate authority. We can do whatever we want. We can even change our biological makeup to become the opposite sex. That's how it's all going. And that's I think, because we've destroyed the family, which has traditionally insulated people from bad cultural influences and really forced people into well forming the next generation, but we've also gotten God out of the equation, and that's led to disaster too.

Gary Bauer: That's really a good way to look at the battle that's raging in the country. Rather than looking at it as being essentially a battle between two political parties, it's a battle between two different ideas of what this place is all about. On one side, and Dr. Dobson and I wrote about this at length in our book, *Children At Risk*, on one side, there are people that believe that the definition of America is different strokes for different folks. If it feels good, do it. That's what it means to be an American. And on the other side are people like you and Dr. Dobson and myself and millions of others, I hope, that believe America is about ordered liberty under God. This is not the place where you get to do anything you want. The idea the founders had was you used your liberty to live virtuous lives because only a virtuous people could remain free.

Terry Schilling: That's right. And the founders were explicit in this, and they explained it. They wrote extensively about this. When liberties get abused, chaos is created and disorder ensues. And then guess what happens? Those liberties get removed. All

the liberties eventually get removed, and that's where we're at. We're about to lose all of our liberties because we've adopted a narcissistic self-centered mindset across the spectrum. And it is this mindset of us being our own gods and being the center of the universe that's infiltrated everywhere, including so many churches. I saw a video the other day of a pastor, apparently Christian, it doesn't sound like a very Christian gospel, of a pastor talking about maybe God worships us.

Gary Bauer: Oh my.

Terry Schilling: Have you ever thought about... Maybe that's why he died on the cross, because he worship... Which is absolutely preposterous.

Gary Bauer: Did a lightning bolt not come down? Because that should have been a lightning bolt moment right there.

Terry Schilling: No, that's exactly right. We all know that the example that Christ set on the cross force, it goes back to Corinthians where Paul writes about how Christianity is a stumbling block for the Jews because the Jews seek signs, the Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified. And what does that mean? Well, that means that we all have obligations. We all have duties. God made us for a specific purpose, and Christ embraced that painful and horrific death because that's why God created him.

We live by dying to ourselves and by living for God and doing his will, and that trips so many people up, and it should, right? It is a tough thing to believe, but through God's grace, he gives us the ability to have faith. I have friends, who... It's funny. When you have conversations with people that don't believe in God, there's all different types of reasons. They misunderstand the gospel. But in reality, I think there's a real problem with a lack of faith and the ability to even believe and think about the existence of God. And I think that that ultimately, faith is a grace that we've been rejecting from God.

Roger Marsh: Well, you've been listening to Gary Bauer and Terry Schilling here on Family Talk. Gary, of course, is the senior vice president of public policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, and Terry Schilling is the president of the American Principles Project. Now, if you liked what you heard today, you'll want to be sure to join us again tomorrow when Terry and Gary will be discussing more about some of the obstacles that moms and dads are facing raising Godly children in an ungodly culture. By the way, if you'd like to learn more about Terry Schilling or the American Principles Project, you'll find a link for their website at our homepage, drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And of course, be sure to check out the outstanding podcast hosted by Gary Bauer called "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom." You can find it on our webpage as well when you go to drjamesdobson.org. It's also now streaming at oneplace.com as well.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow closer in your relationship with Him. And be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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