



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: God's Way or My Way – Part 2

Guest(s): Frank Peretti

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Dr. Dobson: Hello everyone. I'm James Dobson, and you're listening to another edition of Family Talk, which is a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. We began a two day program yesterday with a presentation by Frank Peretti, who is a riveting speaker. He's written more than 20 books, most of them bestsellers. Two of them I think many of you will remember, *Piercing the Darkness* and *This Present Darkness*. Those were at the top of the charts for a long time.

But it's fun listening to Frank talk, because he has his own style. He talks sometimes too rapidly. He makes funny noises. You just have to get used to who Frank Peretti is and how he communicates. On the second half of this program that began last time, we're going to hear about pride, and what it does to us, and how Satan uses it to distort our own relationships. I hope you enjoy this message. If you do, give us a call or write us a note and let us know, because I think is going to be meaningful to you.

Frank Peretti: I was on the radio some time ago. It was a really dumb radio thing. It was a five minute interview during the commute hour. Here's Chris [Breccia 00:01:30]. She's the DJ. She's doing the news, the sports, the weather, the traffic report. She's going a mile a minute, and she says, "Well, we have Frank Peretti with us here. He's an author. He's written a book called *This Present Darkness* or something like that, and it's here. I haven't read the book. I don't know anything about the book. I don't know anything about him, but he's here for an interview, so let's talk to him. Frank, what's the book about?"

I said, "Well, it's about-" "Five minutes." "Ah, Whoa, whoa, whoa. The book is about angels and demons, and spiritual warfare, and good and evil, and the saints of God caught in the middle." She says, "You don't really believe that, do you?"

She was a good interviewer. Really made you feel comfortable. I said, "Well, as a matter of fact, I do. I do believe that, because the Bible says that there are angels and demons, and good and evil, and spiritual warfare." And she says ...

Are you ready? Listen to this. She says, "Well, how do I know that what you're saying is true?" I had beautiful answer for her, two days later.

I did all right. I answered the question pretty well, but this is the way I should have answered it. I should have said, "Chris, there's no way for you to know whether what I'm telling you is true unless you know what the truth is, and there's no way for you to know what the truth is unless there is a truth that you can know. Now digest that for a while."

People are out there saying, the New Agers are out there calling themselves, "I'm searching for truth." What do you mean you're searching for truth? There is no truth, and you say you're searching for truth. What are you looking for? It doesn't exist.

You've got to have a truth that is true whether you believe it or not. Boom. It's true whether you like it or not. Boom. It's true whether you even know about it or not. Boom. It's just true. Objective, external truth that stands in and of itself.

The Bible talks all about that. From cover the cover, it talks about the truth, and the Lord says, "I am the Lord thy God. I declare what is true. I declare what is right." Jesus said he is the way, the truth, and the life. As a matter of fact, he told Pilate, "I came to bear witness of the truth," and Pilate came back and said, "What is truth? I don't know what truth is. What are you talking about?"

Well, let's go to the next one. Truth is relative. That's the first one, the idea, "Well, you know, I'll make up my own universe." You can't do it, people. There is a truth you're going to run smack dab into and you're going to get a busted nose sooner or later.

Let's go to the second one though. The second one is God is impersonal. God is impersonal. That's the idea that, "Well, boy, I don't want a God who's a person. If God were a person, then that means he probably has a moral value system. He probably expects his whole creation to abide by his moral value system, and that means ... No, no, no. I don't want God to be a person. I'd rather ... But you know, it'd be neat to have all that power though. It'd be neat to have all that force, that vibration, that ... It'd be nice to be able to tap into that universal energy without it really having any personality. That way I get to pull the strings. I can tap into this energy, and I can make it do what I want it to do by meditation, by incantations, by chanting, by all kinds of interesting things."

Instead of believing in a personal God, they believe in a force, an energy, a vibration, a consciousness, a power. You've got this whole idea out there. The New Age movement and secularism and so forth are experience oriented. We used to say, "If it feels good, do it." Now we say, "if it feels good, believe it."

Whether or not something makes you feel good. is no criterion for determining whether or not it is true, but that gets us back into the first one. I'm talking

about the force, right? The universal consciousness, the energy. You know the crystals. That's what that's all about. The New Agers wear crystals as jewelry or earrings, or they hang them from their rear view mirrors or in their living rooms, or they have these big hunks of quartz that they put on the coffee table. You know, you used to be able to go down to the rock shop and buy one of these hunks of quartz here for about, oh, \$3 or \$4 I suppose, and now you can go down to the New Age store and you could buy one for \$2,000 or \$3,000. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

But they believe that these crystals are antennae that draw psychic energy. If you have these crystals in your car or in your home, all this stuff is focused in. That's why they wear it on their person, because they believe they're going to draw this psychic energy.

Shirley MacLaine... a lot of New Agers are moving up to the Pacific Northwest, and one of the reasons is that they believe that Mount Rainier is a conduit of psychic energy. They want to be under the spout where the oompah comes out. Shirley MacLaine says, "Well it's because of the silicon content and the evergreen trees. The needles have silicon in them, and it's crystalline, and so the trees are drawing psychic energy." You want crystalline silicon, you can go to the Mojave Desert, but nobody's moving down there to get it, are they? It's nicer.

You've probably seen the people meditating. They've got the transcendental meditation. They're like this, and they hum, or they chant, or recite the name of a Hindu god over and over and over again, things like that. Well, they believe that there is this life force that courses through their body along lines called meridians, and it's centered in chakra centers and all of this, and the juice flows down their arm and comes through their finger and back through their thumb. It makes a loop there, see? So they've got to keep their fingers closed to keep the juice running as they're meditating. If you open your fingers, it's kind of like unplugging yourself, and so they ...

God is impersonal. There's no personal God. There's just this energy. That takes many, many forms, many different ideas.

Let's go to the third one, and that is "all is one." Now, the first one was truth is relative. The second one is God isn't personal. The third one is all is one. The Bible says that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God is God, and the creation is the creation. They're two separate things.

I'm awfully glad for that, because this universe is in trouble. It's corrupt. It's given over to sin. It's stumbling over its own feet. It needs help from the outside. I'm glad there is an eternal, transcendent, personal God who can reach in from the outside and pull us out of our predicament. That's called salvation.

But you know, if you don't want to serve God, if you don't want to believe that there is a God to whom you are accountable, there are two ways you can get rid of him. Number one, you can make everything god, or number two, you can make nothing god. In other words, in secularism and naturalism and materialism, they just believe the cosmos is all that there is and all that ever will be, the idea that there is no God at all.

But in this religious sense, they take God and they make God everything that is. That way God isn't separate from his creation. God is the creation. The mountains are God. The skies are God. The wind is God. The sun is God. The platform is God. The podium is God. I'm God. You're God. Everything is God. That was easy, wasn't it? You didn't know you were God, did you? Oh, that's right. You forgot. Yeah.

But that's why Shirley MacLaine stands on the seashore there and she's saying, "I am God!" and she's trying to convince herself, "I am God!" and her teacher is sitting there and saying, "Come on. You've got to really believe it. You've got to just shout it out." She says, "I am God!"

I can imagine the infinite, eternal God of the universe looking down on this. Compared to the size of God and the size of his universe, Shirley MacLaine isn't really that much bigger than the grains of sand that she's standing on. Here's God listening to this voice down there, "I'm God! I am God." "Hey, Gabriel, Michael, come look at this here." Kind of puts things in perspective, doesn't it?

Psalm 2 talks about how the Lord sits in heaven and laughs at the vain practices of the heathen down there. It's a pitiful thing, but it just goes to show how far man will go because he wants to run his own show. "I want to be God, therefore everything is God."

Well, we've got to keep moving. Let's go to the next one. Number four, there is no death. The whole reincarnation bag. You know, Satan said that to even the Garden of Eden. "You shall not surely die." We don't die. You get recycled. You come back in life after life after life.

Now, why do we want to believe in reincarnation? Well, there are a lot of reasons, but they all boil down into two basic reasons. Number one, we don't ever want to stand before God and give account of our lives. We'd rather think, "We get chance after chance after chance till we finally get it right." Oh, I love that line. Shirley MacLaine puts it that way. She says, "Well, one lifetime isn't long enough to learn all the lessons we need to learn, so we have to have all these experiences and learn all these lessons in all these different lifetimes until we finally get it right."

"Get it right. Get it right." That's the part I can't stand. They're the ones that say, "Ah, there's not truth. You make up your own truth. You have your own universe. What's true for you may not be true for me. But what's true for you

may not be true for me." If there is no ultimate truth. then how do you even have a standard by which you can measure when it is you finally get it right?

Well, the second reason that people want to believe in reincarnation is because they hope that through many reincarnations, they will finally become so perfected that they will evolve upward into godhood. They want to become God, you see. There you go. There's the same doctrine again, "I want to be God."

Let me tell you about the kissing cousin of reincarnation, and that is karma. It's one of the filthiest jokes that Satan ever played on the human race. You know, it flies right in the face of God's grace. The Lord Jesus came to this earth and he died for those sins of yours, those sins of mine. He gave you a way out of your predicament. It's just like Satan to say, "No. You have to work it off, and one lifetime isn't long enough. You've got to come back again and again and work it all off." It's this whole idea, the immutable law of cause and effect. In other words, if you're a bad person in this life, you're going to be really bad off in this life. You're going to have to suffer in this life to work off all the bad stuff you did in this one.

But let's go to the streets of Calcutta and look at all those little children that starve in the gutters by the hundreds and thousands over there, that die of starvation, of exposure, of total neglect, and the people who live in India who have the money, and the food, and the shelter. They have everything they need to take care of those kids, walk right by them. Don't even do a thing to help them. Why? Because of karma.

"Oh, they must've done something bad in their prior life. They're just going to have to work it off now. Me, I'm doing pretty well. I must've been a good boy in my prior life. I'm going to enjoy it. This is my karma. That's their karma. They're just going to have to work it off. If I help them, if I alleviate their suffering, they're just going to have to suffer again in their next life because they need to work off all that bad karma. I don't want to interfere with their karmic evolution. Therefore, they must suffer."

That's why in India you have the caste system, the idea that that's your karma. If you are born a beggar, that's your karma. You're meant to be a beggar. A beggar is all you'll ever be. You may as well be the best beggar you can be. That's why the parents will often sever the fingers of their children, break their arm, cut off an arm, to make their children look more pitiful so people will feel sorry for them so they will be better beggars, and all because of karma.

Who feeds those kids over there? The Christians do. Who builds the hospitals and the orphanages? Christians do. Who puts clothes on their backs? The Christians do. It amazes me that even a New Ager will just say wonderful things about Mother Teresa because she's helping all these starving children in Calcutta, but they don't seem to realize that it is their belief system that is causing that starvation in India. It amazes me, you get all these rock groups and

movie stars and so forth going to India because they want to learn great spiritual wisdom, but for some reason they don't see India and what that belief system has done to those people over there. Karma.

The Bible says that the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, already paid the debt for all of your sins, and if you have faith in him, he will wash your sins away and you can escape the penalty of sin. Now, you see that is a totally different viewpoint. A lot of organizations, and churches, and cults within the New Age are trying to somehow bring together Christianity and Hindu, Buddhist occultism, and they're talking about the Christ consciousness and all this other stuff, and they're trying to say, "Well, we embrace all religions." No, they don't.

There is a glaring difference between biblical Christianity and all this other stuff, and that's what I'm just telling you about. I hope you'll be aware of it.

All right, let's move on to the last one. That's cosmic consciousness. Now, truth is relative. God is impersonal. All is one. There is no death. Cosmic consciousness is the last one. That is the basic belief ... Well, it's the practice actually. It's an altered state of consciousness. It's a trance state. You can achieve it through drugs, meditation, yoga, hypnosis, biofeedback, sensory deprivation, all kinds of different ways to achieve it. It is basically you go into a trance, into a relaxed state of mind, and finally you turn your whole being over to an outside force, an outside entity.

This is where all these weird psychic phenomena come from, because your brain is basically... it's like a computer. You, your spirit happens to be the one in charge of that computer working the keyboard, all right? Now, in an altered state of consciousness, you're basically getting up from the keyboard and you're allowing a demon to sit down there. The demon begins to tweak off all the neurons in your brain. He creates entire universes of illusion in your mind. He gives you past life experiences. He gives you whatever you want if it can convince you that you can believe the fire doctrines and buy the idea that you are God, that you have infinite wisdom within yourself, and there are people that believe it today. What did Satan tell Eve? "When you eat the fruit, Eve, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God."

The Bible says in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 that because they did not love the truth, God gave them over to a lie, and we are seeing people believing the most outlandish lies. Why? To preserve their own arrogance, their own pride, their own self will, their own godhood.

What's the answer? Hallelujah. It's what I started out with. There's a savior. There is a champion. His name is Jesus, and he already was God. He didn't have to work up to it. He didn't have to reincarnate to get there. He didn't have to earn brownie points to get there. He was God. He is God. He always will be God. But he did the incredible, totally backward thing to our natures. He became man. Even worse than that, he put himself at our mercy because he came to pay off a debt. He came to pay off a sin.

But don't you know, don't you know that Satan saw him coming? Remember, Satan went into the arena with Adam. "Ha ha, come on, Adam. Ha ha ha ha. Yeah, there's the representative. There's the representative of the whole human race, and I'm going to get him. I'm going to make him buy into the lie. Come on, Adam. You want to be God? Hey, come on. You want to do your own thing? Have your own way, huh? Make your own rules? I'll hand it to you, man. You can have it," and Adam went for it. He fell. He stumbled. He got into that thing, and here we all are because of that.

Jesus came and went into the same arena, and Satan gave him the same lines, and Jesus was our representative again, and woo, am I glad he won this time. Round 15 of this match was in the Garden of Gethsemane. That's where Jesus really began to feel the pain. That's where Satan really began to pour it on, because Jesus was coming right up to the cross. In his humanity, he began to feel the terror of what was coming upon him. You can see it as he told his disciples, "My soul is vexed unto death." Jesus was grappling with the terror, and the pain, and the agony that he knew he was going to undergo, knowing that all the sin, and the degradation, and the filth, and the horror, and the pain of all humanity was going to be dumped upon him, that he was going to suffer every imaginable kind of wound, that he was going to be separated from God, humiliated, mocked, spit upon, beaten.

He was afraid, and he was struggling with this, and I can just see Satan coming after him. "Come on, Jesus. Come on. Give it up, won't you? Come on. You don't have to go through this. Look at all those disciples sleeping over there. They don't care about you. You don't care about the human race. Why don't you do something for yourself for a change? Why don't you get up off of your knees? You're God, aren't you? What about the 10,000 angels you can call to get you out of this? You don't need to go through with this thing. Come on. Take care of yourself. Do something for yourself. Make up your own rules. Do your own thing."

Jesus was struggling against that. He had you in mind, he had me in mind, and he stuck it out to the point where he was sweating blood, but he won. He won that victory, and you can see it in the final line of his prayer. "Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done." He made a statement. He made a decision. He made a concrete declaration of what he was going to do, and he never failed throughout his ministry.

Satan was rebuffed. I can almost hear Satan say, "Okay, Son of God. All right, Son of God. You want to suffer? You've got it." Jesus went to that cross, and I know that Satan had all the evil of the world behind him and he unleashed everything he had on the Son of God.

He paid the ultimate price, and he took it all out of obedience to God. He was a servant. That's the point. He took it all, and he didn't give it back. Instead of giving it back, he paid it off.

Look at it this way. Here's a family on vacation. They're driving in their car. Sunny day, windows are rolled down, breeze is pulling in the car. They're having a good time. This big old black bee comes in the window, starts buzzing around in the car. The little girl sitting in the back seat, she's allergic to bee stings. If she gets stung, she could die within an hour. "Help, daddy. It's a bee. It's going to sting me."

The father, he's trying to pull the car over. He's trying to stop. He's trying to catch the bee. He comes around. He gets up against the windshield. Finally catches it, gets the bee in his fist. It's in there, and he hangs on, and he waits for the inevitable. Finally it happens. Let's the bee go. "Daddy, daddy, it's going to sting me." "No, honey. He's not going to sting you now. Look what I have in my hand." There's the bee's stinger in his hand.

Look what Jesus has in his hand: Satan's sting, the sting of death, the sting of sin, the sting of degradation, the sting of defeat. Jesus took it all. It's in his hand. When you see that nail scar, realize he took it all. He paid it off. He reduced Satan to a big black bee, and all Satan can do is buzz. That's the victory that Jesus won for you. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Praise Jesus.

Roger Marsh:

Wow. What a great reminder of the incredible sacrifice Jesus made for you and for me. Today on Family Talk, you've been listening to an exciting and interesting presentation from author and speaker Frank Peretti.

Now, as you've heard over the past couple of days, it's no secret that Frank is a pretty eccentric guy. However, the truth woven into his presentations are so powerful and still so applicable today. Those eccentricities really helped drive those points home.

Visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org and you can learn more about Frank Peretti and the many books that he has written. Once you're there, you can also request a physical copy of this entire message to enjoy later. Simply click onto the "order a CD" button on today's broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org.

Thanks so much for being with us today, and be sure to join us again tomorrow when you'll hear Dr. Tim Clinton's conversation with licensed family therapist Dr. Sheri Keffer. They will tackle the tough subject of marital infidelity and how unfaithfulness destroys relationships. It's a genuine discussion and you will not want to miss it, coming up on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for listening.

Announcer:

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

Dr. Dobson:

This is James Dobson again. Before we go, I'd like to remind you that Family Talk is a listener supported program. If you've enjoyed this broadcast, we'd appreciate your helping to keep us on the air. As you know, we talk about

everything from religious liberty to the sanctity of human life and raising boys and girls, among others. These are the passions of our hearts, and I hope they are for you too. Thank you so much for listening and for being part of this ministry. For more information, go to drjamesdobson.org.