



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Pro-Life America - Part 1

**Guest(s):** Marjorie Dannenfelser

**Air Date:** August 21, 2023

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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:** Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Hope you had a restful weekend. Perhaps by now your kids or grandkids are back in school and the fall season will soon be upon us. Well, as we get back into our regular routines, for most of us it's a time to turn our attention back to matters of major importance as Christian citizens. Maybe you are planning to attend your kids' school open house and meet their teachers, or perhaps you'll attend a school board meeting. And then there's also the upcoming election cycle. These are all things that matter. As Dr. Dobson likes to say, public policy impacts the family, so you need to be aware of what's going on. And one issue that is at the forefront here at the JDFI is the sanctity of all human life.

And I want to remind you that even though Roe versus Wade has been overturned at the Supreme Court level, the fight for life is far from over. And that's why we have a very special guest on the program over the next couple of days. Her name is Marjorie Dannenfelser. Marjorie is president of Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. This is a nonprofit organization that is working to protect life by supporting pro-life politicians. She'll be discussing with our co-host, Gary Bauer, how far we've come in the fight to defend innocent babies in the womb, and what we still have yet to do to protect the pre-born. Gary Bauer is senior vice president of public policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, and he will tell you more now about Marjorie Dannenfelser. So let's join them right here on Family Talk.

**Gary Bauer:** Hello, friends. I'm Gary Bauer, senior vice president of public policy here at the

James Dobson Family Institute. I'm also the host of Defending Faith, Family and Freedom, the podcast here at JDFI. I am honored to serve alongside my good friend, Dr. James Dobson. Our guest on the program today is a strong voice in this nation in the fight for the sanctity of life. Her name's Marjorie Dannenfelser. Marjorie's president of the Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, which is America's largest grassroots pro-life political organization. In the 2020 election cycle, their efforts helped elect the largest incoming class of pro-life congresswomen with 19 new pro-life women, making now a total of 30 serving in the US House of Representatives. Wow. Her writings have been published in Time, The Wall Street Journal, and even The Washington Post. Marjorie has also been profiled by New York Magazine, The New Yorker and The Washington Post.

In 2016, and again in 2020, she was named as the national co-chair of the Pro-Life Voices for the Trump Coalition. In 2017, she was appointed to the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission by US Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell. In 2020, Marjorie served on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. She also served on the Life Perspectives Task Force. Marjorie and her husband, Marty, have five children. You know, I've been looking forward to doing this. Dr. Dobson sends his best to you. He's a great admirer of you, as I am. And you're very well-known here in Washington, DC. You're well-known for anybody that wants to run for office and get the pro-family or pro-life vote. But tell our listeners, many of them, they're not marinating in the world of pro-life politics every day. What does Susan B. Anthony do? What does your group do? And why did you start this organization? I think it goes all the way back to, what is it, 1992?

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Yeah. I believe in 1992 I came into your office and had this idea, along with a group of women, that there needed to be a strong voice for women in pro-life politics. And we needed to really grow that muscle in the middle of the electoral arena for pro-life. That too many candidates said, "Yeah, I'm with you." And then they pat you on the back, put you at the back of the bus, and you never hear from them again. So that was in my living room in 1992. And when I came to talk to you, you helped me tremendously. And I'll never forget that. Sometimes it just takes a handful of people to be encouragers and concrete supporters, and you were that.

We are the largest political pro-life organization in the country. We get in the middle of especially federal in the beginning races. We have elected a lot of pro-life women in those federal races. But of course, the overall strategy for getting to overturning Roe versus Wade and beyond has been the goal and now continues to be the goal. And now governors are obviously very central. So we have about a \$78 million election cycle budget by God's grace, because when I

talked to you, I think we probably had about \$5,000 and a lot of prayers and not a whole lot of concrete leads. So thank you for that help.

Gary Bauer:

Well, you're welcome. But this has always been a challenge for the pro-life movement. Sadly, the pro-abortion side, they have a lot of money, a lot of big special interest groups with them. Planned Parenthood just seems to have their own cash printing press, even today, although I think they're probably hurting a little bit now branching out into other fields since Roe was overturned. But over the years, Marjorie, did you ever think that you would see, I know in my speeches I used to tell people, "Sooner than you think you're going to open the newspaper one day and see a headline, Roe versus Wade has been overturned." But did you ever really feel we were going to get there and get there as quickly as we did?

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Well, I think I did what you did. You act like you're going to win. You plan like you're going to win. You make all the strategic steps for winning while going back into your prayer place and saying, "Please, Lord, please push this ahead. There's so many lives at stake." But in those prayers, if it be your will that it be long after I'm dead, okay, your will is supreme. If it's during this time, I promise you, Lord, that we will do every single thing we can when those doors are knocked wide open when Roe versus Wade is overturned to concretely save those children and serve those mothers when and if that moment comes. And so that's where we sit right now.

Gary Bauer:

One of the things over the years that really struck me was this is a city of special interest groups. And it's a city where people come to lobby 99% of the time for a benefit for themselves. They want their taxes to be lowered, their social security to go up, or whatever it is. And there's nothing wrong with that. I mean, that's the nature of life and a constitutional republic with free men and women. We get to petition our government. And of course, people act in their own self-interests.

But one of the reasons very early on as I was forming my own views on the sanctity of life, I was so impressed by the fact that there were millions of people who would come here in the winter, in the middle of horrible weather, and demonstrate for life and do all these other things and with the work that you do. And it wasn't for the benefit of yourself. When we prevailed ultimately in the Supreme Court, nobody's taxes went down. Your benefits didn't go up. This whole movement hasn't been for ourselves. It's been for a group of human beings that have no ability to lobby for their own lives. It's up to us to do that for them.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: It's been the movement of a spirit. And so if you have joined that, which I did only after being very pro-choice, I was attracted by the same thing. It was that movement of the spirit, that self-sacrifice, that living for something greater than yourself, meaning the lives of other people. That is what's so riveting and so attractive. And that, unlike any other issue, has been the power at the center of this lobby, if you want to call it that, the power at the center of this machine to elect people. All the things that are secular and sound kind of dirty on other issues for the pro-life issue are transformative. That you would have such good people, the best people that you'll ever meet, millions of them behind this issue and leverageable in the middle of some of the most important races that we've ever had, including the Senate, the presidency, the lobbying to get the right Supreme Court nominees on the bench, then to get a law that would test Roe versus wade. All that seemed impossible just a short while ago.

Gary Bauer: Yeah. I was deeply involved in the confirmation efforts for Clarence Thomas a gazillion years ago. And I still look back on that and feel really good when I reflect on what was accomplished. But the three latest, well, the three Supreme Court vacancies that were filled during the Trump-Pence administration, those were huge victories. And I know JDFI was really involved, and Susan B. Anthony was involved in all three of those. Talk about a bitter fight. Can you describe a little bit on what you all went through during that time?

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Yeah. I mean, you know through the Clarence Thomas hearings how bad it can get. And we were both around for Bork. And so you'd think you'd be prepared, but I cannot say that I was prepared for the pure whirling dervish of evil that really was so palpable in the middle of those hearings, in the grassroots, in those confrontations in the right states to lobby the right senators to vote the right way so that we had, quote, "Pro-life." And they are pro-life, but justices that would honor the Constitution as written, not how they want it. Anyway, during that first nomination by President Trump walking into the White House when no one knew who that nominee was going to be, just like us. Nobody knew who that nominee was going to be. And it was at night, we had worked so hard to elect Trump, we didn't know what to expect. We were lobbying for the right things.

And here it was with the perfect nominee. And we were all jubilant because there were all the justices. So it was just this, okay, the springtime of pro-life politics and where we saw such incredible hope. Then with the Kavanaugh hearings, no one will ever forget those. And I was sitting in that room for those hearings. And that's where I would say would be... Having lived through that, I don't think I can compare it to anything else. The anger and the attacks in the hallways. Lindsey Graham's just mountaintop moments speaking for what these

hearings were about and what they weren't was so important, all by the grace of God. There is no way that that could have happened without him and the timing of it all.

Gary Bauer:

Yes. Somewhere in all that, God's hand had to be there to provide that opportunity. This is one of these things, Marjorie, that drives me crazy when I run into some pastors and church leaders and they're just not in the battle. Now, obviously, a lot of pastors and priests and other religious leaders speak up for the sanctity of life. But there are so many evangelical churches that think that somehow getting involved in the Supreme Court confirmation battles and all that, well, Gary, that's got nothing to do with the scripture. When everything we believe in, the idea that we're all made in the image of God, the whole idea of religious liberty, which is what the country was built on, it all depends on who's on the Supreme Court, who interprets the Constitution. And when you think and saw as we did what happened to Justice Kavanaugh when he was nominated and what happened to his family and the smears he had to sit there and hear, that he was a serial gang rapist.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: I happened to be sitting not far behind him and next to a lot of Hollywood people that were out there for that moment. And it was so apparent the lies that they were creating in the moment and then whispering them to the media that was actually standing in the room. It was really witnessing the lie, the big lie. And if you didn't believe it was everything that you just said about how important these hearings are, how important these confirmations are from our own side, you'd see it by looking in the eye of the other side because they knew everything was at stake. And the gift that our founders gave us was the tools to fight, the tools to fight for the principles that are in those founding documents, and that we would be able to do that.

Not a king is going to correct it. We're there to fight for these ideas which are bigger than kings and principalities. And what a privilege that is. So when you see your country going south, take heart because you have the power. And what better example at this time in history when everyone has been so bereft and downhearted to see what we working together, working through the system, have seen Roe versus Wade overturned, literal children, actual children are living now that would not be living before had we not taken up those tools of democracy and gotten to work.

Gary Bauer:

There's a lot of polling data on this and research about a lot of Americans, majority of Americans, but particularly Christians, feel that the country's been headed in the wrong direction. We could spend hours talking about how our country's been headed in the wrong direction. We could spend hours talking

about the breakdown of the American family, the breakdown of reliable standards of right and wrong, increasing violence, drug addiction, the coursing of our culture. The list goes on and on. But when you look at the last couple of decades, really, the big victories were those three confirmation battles because of what they did, or the significance or relevance of those nominations and confirmations to the sanctity of life and also to religious liberty.

And then also, the tremendous victory on June 24th of last year when the court finally admitted there was never a constitutional right to abortion. As you know, Marjorie, the word abortion is not in the Constitution. It was the lie that somehow in that sacred document there was a right to abort. The court finally corrected that lie. So on that day, do you remember where you were when you first heard? Now, previously there was a leak of the draft opinion. But we were all worried that maybe that leak wasn't accurate or one of the justices would change their mind. But where were you on the 24th?

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Yeah, it seemed like such an impossible dream no matter what.

Gary Bauer: Yes.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: While there was a leak and there was an idea that that leak would be reflective of the actual position of the court. Or it could have been some sort of trial balloon that caused a correction in the court, but no. So we were waiting, as I'm sure you were, and we watched it every day come down. It was also a lesson in how things get done in the Supreme Court. We waited as these decisions were coming down the week of June the 20th and the previous week. Kept coming, we'd gather on the phone. But the one day that we actually have basically almost a hundred employees upstairs. We're almost all there that day. And we all gathered in the big conference room. And it came down to the, of course-

Gary Bauer: Yes.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: ... the very last decision in the whole during that court's gathering. And as soon as it got to that last one, the wifi went down. So we're all gathered there, we're all have our eyes, we're all praying on the verge of tears, because whichever way it was going to go. And the wifi went down. It was Billy Valentine in our office who's in charge of saying, reading what those things are. Went down, and then the last hire of that whole group of a hundred, Andy, said, "Roe was overturned." And everyone is like, "Who are you?" Oh my gosh, Andy. And it just erupted in prayer. We're on our knees thanking God. And just what an incredible, beautiful day. Such a hopeful day. Confirmation of everything that

we've been told about our power and God's grace in the middle of a great country and what can happen.

Gary Bauer: I probably will say I was in the office with you. I remember the buildup too and how frustrating it was every time there was a decision day and the case just didn't come out. And I remember thinking maybe somebody's lost their nerve and it's a split decision, a tie or whatever. But fortunately, it wasn't. And I'll tell you, Marjorie, that date, we ought to commemorate that every year. For anybody in America that cares about the sanctity of life, I've been asking people, and I don't know if you've thought about this. Did your church, I've been asking folks, did your church celebrate the following Sunday?

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Let me just say this, June 24th, it was 10:10 in the morning. So John 10:10 is, "The liar comes to cheat and steal, but I have come so that you may have life and have it abundantly." So should it be on June 24th and literally at 10:10 in the morning that we celebrate every year? Absolutely, we should. And there was a small celebration this year in DC, but I think that's just the beginning. We were happy to attend. But I think it should be in every church. The bell should be ringing at 10:10 in the morning on June 24th, and that- that could be a good rallying point for the thing that needs to be done right now.

Gary Bauer: I think that's a fantastic idea. I remember within 24 hours Dr. Dobson and I talking about what had happened and just the joy in his voice. We've been dealing with this issue for so long. And abortion by its very nature is an act of violence. Every abortion is an act of violence. A woman has been psychologically exploited and harmed and a human life's been ended. And so I guess, when you think about that, when you think of the violence of abortion, it probably shouldn't surprise any of us that when the decision was announced and the weeks and months that followed, and even up to right now while we're talking, the pro-abortion side seems naturally to have engaged in violence that is a reflection of the violence inherent in every abortion.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: That's exactly right. And if you can't win, you try to win by force. Let me just back up a little bit because I'm sure everybody listening knows, but if you don't know, you should know that Dr. Dobson and Gary Bauer for many, many years could shut down the Capitol switchboard in a second when they brought up the violence of abortion and then a love that a mother naturally has for her child, and that your congressmen and senators are not doing the right thing right now, give them a call. It took about 15 minutes for them to be so jammed up. That's a model of what citizen activism is, and that's what we need more of. So yes, in terms of now the other side, seeing that success and not winning in the public forum, knowing that they are behind in the polls when it comes to passing laws

that save lives and serving women in the way that they deserve, they seek to shut us down in other ways.

Through violence at our pregnancy centers all over the country, at churches, pro-life leaders who have been outspoken, like me and others, trying to shut down states in their ability to pass laws that save lives through referendums, and then ultimately, a national law that they have a lot of momentum for because there is a lot of fury right now at the center of their movement. A national law that would wipe out any laws in the country that now protect the unborn.

Almost half the country has acted, as you know. It would wipe out all of those laws and it would wipe out anything that might come. It would preclude any national protections whatsoever, even the most modest ones. So they are ginned up, their generals are aligned. Their strategies, as always, are as good as humans can come up with. Nobody is better at strategy than that side. They don't have the power of the Holy Spirit. But one thing that I know is that we should never think that our job is done. Our job is beginning. We just kicked that door wide open. And now every single pro-life person, every single believer needs to walk through that door.

Gary Bauer:

What a wonderful thought. Marjorie, when the final history is written by the only historian that matters, which of course is God our Father, I believe you will be in the hall of heroes and heroines on this issue. And that what you've done and what the organization has done, I have absolutely no doubt that you and everybody at Susan B. Anthony will hear the words we all long to hear, which is, "Well done, good and faithful servant." God bless you for all your work, for the sanctity of life. I appreciate you. I value our friendship. And I look forward to many victories ahead that Dr. Dobson and you and I can celebrate along with the JDFI team as we try to make America that shining city on a hill that our Founding Fathers were so committed to giving us.

Marjorie Dannenfelser: Thank you, Gary.

Roger Marsh:

Be sure to join us again tomorrow as Marjorie Dannenfelser and our own Gary Bauer will pick up right where they left off. They'll be discussing what the fight for life is facing in terms of opposition in our nation. They'll also look at what allied support and lobbying challenges are still ahead for the Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America organization.

In listening to this discussion today, I'm reminded of those words from Isaiah chapter 64:8, "Yet you Lord are our Father, we are the clay, you are the potter. We are all the work of your hand." Friend, we must always remember that every



life has value. I for one never thought that I would see the evil of bad law reversed in my lifetime. But, the Lord moved in a mighty way! And on June 24th, of 2022, justice was served and Roe versus Wade was overturned at the Supreme Court.

Now, another issue that is hurting our children is the unthinkable attack on gender. So how can Christians effectively engage with and address the rising tide of transgenderism? Dr. Owen Strachan has written a book entitled What Does The Bible Teach About Transgenderism? He has a unique understanding of the complexities involved, and his insights can help deepen your perspective on this crucial issue. Now, in collaboration with Dr. Strachan, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has compiled a wide range of helpful resources for you on this topic. You can access them right now by visiting a special website, [drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism](http://drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism). That's [drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism](http://drjamesdobson.org/transgenderism).

I'm Roger Marsh. Family Talk is a listener-supported broadcast outreach. And from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for your continued prayers and faithful financial support. To request resources or to make a donation, remember, you can do so online at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you continue to grow deeper in 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.

Dr. James Dobson: This is James Dobson again, as we close today's program. I just want to thank so many of you out there who make this broadcast possible with your contributions. And I want to tell you how much your generosity is appreciated.