



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: My Faith Votes

Guest(s): Jason Yates

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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.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Welcome into Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, co-host of Family Talk. As a licensed professional counselor and marriage and family therapist, I'm honored to serve alongside of Dr. Dobson. As the resident authority on mental health and relationships, here at JDFI, I also serve as president of the American Association of Christian Counselors, and executive director of the Global Center for Mental Health Addiction and Recovery at Liberty University. So glad you've joined us here for today's broadcast. Did you know that an average of 25 million Christians who are registered to vote, do not vote in presidential elections? Even more so for the smaller but also important local and statewide elections. As citizens of the United States, we have a unique opportunity to influence how we're governed, thanks to the way our founding fathers set up the Constitution, and the checks and balances within our republic.

As Christians, we should take advantage of the opportunity to influence politics and government. A friend of mine, Jenny Corn, recently said to me, "Tim, politics matter, because policies matter. Policies matter because people matter." That is what our guest, Jason Yates is here to talk about today. Jason is the CEO of My Faith Votes, a nonpartisan movement that motivates, equips and activates Christians in America to vote in every election. Transforming our communities and influencing our nation with biblical truth, Jason has over 25 years of proven leadership experience and strategy development, marketing and product development with Fortune 100 companies. Jason assumed his role as CEO of My Faith Votes in 2016. Under Jason's leadership, My Faith Votes made a measurable impact on the Christian voter turnout, in that year's election. He holds a BA from Carleton College and an MBA in strategic management and e-business from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. Jason, so great to have you. Thank you for joining us here on Family Talk.

Jason Yates: Tim, thanks for having me. You said people matter, and it's why we should vote. People matter, families matter. It's just such an honor to be here on this show

that has a legacy with Dr. Dobson, who has spent a lifetime caring so much about people and about families.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jason, probably safe to say there's a lot of energy, and I'll add concern, confusion, frustration, as we head full steam into the midterm elections this year. What are some of the kitchen table issues that you think will really drive people to the polls?

Jason Yates: Yeah. It's rather simple. I think the economy is a number one. The economy and how people's pocket books are feeling right now. What people are seeing when they go to the grocery store, the gas pumps, and how that's affecting their everyday lives and how they're trying to make ends meet. So, that's number one. You look at surveys, whether you're talking about the church community or not, that rises to the top. But I think there's some other issues, especially as a body of Christ that are rising to the top, and things we need to be concerned about, because it matters when we think about issues of religious freedom, when we think about issues of family, when we think about issues of life. There's a number of things that come to mind. For the first time ever, we are going into some midterms and electing legislators.

In fact, Tim, 84% of the seats on state legislative offices are up for election. For the very first time, legislators are going to be determining what abortion law looks like in their state, because of the *Dobbs* ruling. It just pushes the issue and the topic of life to the states. But of course, there's other issues like what's happening in our schools, parental rights. Do parents have the right to say, "No, I don't want my child to be indoctrinated by gender fluidity speech," and much less worse, transition methodologies if they feel that the children are confused.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's happening in our grade schools, Jason. It's unbelievable. It's unconscionable that that would happen. What's interesting to me though, if you look at the New York Times, even to Fox News, you're seeing an overwhelming majority of Americans do not want that to happen in our schools and stuff. So, I think you're right. Those are some of the bedrock issues that are going to drive people out to the polls. It's going to be interesting to see what turnout is all about. Jason, I'm going to stay with the turnout issue for a moment. Midterm elections, this is not a presidential election year. So, often the turnout is not very strong in these off years, which is a huge concern for you and your team. Especially when it relates to Christians. Tell us a little bit about what you're finding and what's a lot of what's behind My Faith Votes?

Jason Yates: Yeah. So, we got started because of the millions and millions of Christians who aren't voting. You gave some statistics at the opening. 25 million Christians not voting. Let me put that in perspective for you. If 25 million aren't voting, that's the equivalent of 207,000 churches in America. The entire congregation saying, "I'm out, I'm not going to vote." It's the equivalent of the voting population of 22 states not voting.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's sad, is what it is. It's unbelievable.

Jason Yates: It's unbelievable. If our values aren't represented at the polls, someone else's is. Policy regulation legislation will be impacted. Families, faith and government will be impacted.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, pretty much everyone lives up on social media anymore, Jason, and there's a lot of fire. There's a lot of stirring going on. Are you seeing that? It almost seems like it's unprecedented to me. Will it shift to voter turnout? We don't know yet. But, Jason, are you encouraged with what you're hearing out there on the front lines?

Jason Yates: Well, here's one of the things that I'm seeing, and especially let's talk about the issue of life. I know this is a motivating factor, but I would say I fear that it's a little bit more of a motivating factor for those who want abortion access. We're looking at some data that show us registration numbers, and for those that would support abortion access, the registration numbers have skyrocketed, and amongst females in the twenties and thirties. So, it is a motivating factor on that side of thing. I pray that it would be equally as motivating for those who value life and the sanctity of it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jason, take us back. I think your uncle, Sealey Yates, gave birth to this burden about what we were just talking about, how many Christians are not showing up at the poll. What's the heartbeat of My Faith Votes? Why does it exist?

Jason Yates: Yeah. I'm so thankful for my uncle who, Sealey Yates, an attorney, a literary agent who was working with Dr. Ben Carson, and learned that these millions of Christians aren't voting. One of the things I've come to really appreciate about my uncle, is that his faith is integrated into every area of his life. He doesn't leave it on the sidelines anywhere. I think this is why that statistic was so shocking to him, because he couldn't imagine a Christian who would say, "I'm going to live out my faith over here, but in this particular arena, especially this arena called politics that affects every single one of us, I'm just going to stay off the sidelines." It was incredibly motivating for him. Here's the mantra that was in his mind, and is motivating for My Faith Votes. "We can all do something. We all can do something to impact that."

His something was starting My Faith Votes. But we can all do something. So, what is the one thing that each of us can do to encourage and motivate others to be involved in the process? That's one of the heartbeats of My Faith Votes. We are just wanting this to be a movement of Christians who are encouraging others to be engaged in the process, sharing the tools and resources, but helping them to pray. Pray unceasingly for our nation, think biblically about the issues, and vote consistently in every election. Those are the heartbeats that our faith is integrated, we can all do something. Let's put our faith into action.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jason, you focus on helping people register to vote, and then also providing relevant voting information for every single election in America, to help Christians to act on their faith. Is that right?

Jason Yates: That's correct. I believe when you look at different reasons why Christians don't vote, I could get into all those. But one of them is simply people are not informed. They only know that an election is happening because they see a sign on the side of the road saying, vote for this person. "Oh, there must be an election coming up." What we want to do in part, is inform. Make sure that there isn't the excuse of, "I didn't know, I didn't know it was happening, I didn't know what they stood for. I didn't know any of these, the dates I needed to register." So, we've created My Voter Hub. I really believe it's the most comprehensive set of resources for the Christian when it's election time. So, at myfaithvotes.org, if you go there, you'll see My Voter Hub, and it will give you everything and help you plan to vote, including a voter guide that covers federal down to local elections. It's an online guide that is incredibly comprehensive for every zip code.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jason, I love that Governor Mike Huckabee, who by the way is a great friend of the James Dobson Family Institute, and the American Association of Christian Counselors. He serves as honorary national chairman of My Faith Votes. He's been there for about five years. Tell us about his role in the ministry.

Jason Yates: I couldn't think of anyone better than Governor Mike Huckabee, who's ordained as a Southern Baptist Pastor who served as a governor, ran for president of the United States, who is an active part of the media, and commenting on what's happening in our nation. He hosts The Huckabee Show on TBN. Mike Huckabee is just the most perfect representative of My Faith Votes because of his humility and his no nonsense approach to what's happening in our world. He's someone who just represents My Faith Votes, and speaks out about what we're doing, encourages others to be involved. It is an honorary role, he does it out of the graciousness of his heart. That's the other thing that I just appreciate about him so much, and his family. They don't do it for prestige, they do it because it's right.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. Jason, you have quite a resume yourself, working in corporate America. What helped you make a decision to leave that and to shift over and get engaged with My Faith Votes?

Jason Yates: It's a complex question. It's probably more than what we have time for, but I can tell you that some of just recognizing that life is more than a paycheck, and that we need to be committed to the purposes of our faith. It doesn't always mean going into ministry, but as opportunity presents itself, we need to respond. For me personally, that's what happened. Opportunity to have a significant role. This was challenging. I didn't know a thing. I was concerned about what was happening in politics, but I didn't have a background. I wasn't working on campaigns.

I wasn't focused on understanding the rules of elections and so forth. I've had to learn all of that and it's been an incredible journey. God has taught me a lot. But I think it's mostly about being responsive to the opportunities and the guiding of the Holy Spirit. I would say to you, that's what drove me to this. It goes to the

name of My Faith Votes, faith. In Hebrews 11:6 it says, "It is impossible to please God without faith." I think it's a desire to please Him in the opportunities He gives us. My hope and prayer from My Faith Votes is that we're faithful in that and pleasing God, honoring Him in all we do.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Jason, I wanted to go a little bit further because I'm thinking of utility value here for a moment. I want to make sure all of our listeners understand, what is up and available through myfaithvotes.org. Do you have details, Jason, on national and state issues? Do you provide information, say on county or local issues and candidates as well?

Jason Yates: Sure. Within the My Voter Hub, we provide all of that information when it comes to specific elections in helping you understand where candidates fall on certain issues. But one of the things we're really committed to is, when we think about our strategy of pray, think and vote, the think piece is really important. Thinking biblically about the issues. So, one of the great things on My Faith Votes is something we launched just recently called MFVTV. It's a number of interviews and video clips of influential leaders in the Christian community, just speaking into what's happening and how we should think about it.

One of the things I really want to encourage your audience to think about, so many of us are looking around and saying, "Man. The world is just going to pot. What can I do?" We're feeling a little bit alone. We don't know what to do and we're all alone because the media makes us feel that way. We created something called Action Partners, and Action Partners is just for that person, so that we can empower and equip them to do something. Not on behalf of us, but just in their communities. How can they make a difference in the public square and represent Christ well? So, if you become an Action Partner, we're going to equip you with tools and resources to be an effective ambassador of Christ in the public square.

Dr. Tim Clinton: At the end of the day, Jason, we don't believe by the way, our freedoms come from government. Our freedoms come from God. Then that takes you back to the Constitution and why this country, this republic, is where it's at. So, this is our opportunity. I can't believe that anyone out there wouldn't show up and say, "Listen, I want to vote because this stuff really, really matters." Jason, you guys recently had a National Voter Registration Sunday. What is that event, and why did you start hosting it? I think it's, what? The third Sunday of September, and how did it go this year?

Jason Yates: The third Sunday of September, I got approached actually by a number of liberal progressive groups that saw My Faith Votes and the impacts we're having, and they wanted to pull in and show to others that they were nonpartisan. They said to us, "Hey, would you help us promote National Voter Registration Day, which is the third Tuesday of every September?" I looked at who was part of that and what they were asking me to do, and I said, "No, thanks. But I will promote the third Sunday of every September," because that's when people of faith are getting together. So, we created, we declared that the third Sunday of every

September, we did this four years ago, is National Voter Registration Sunday. A day for churches across America to engage and encourage their congregations to be engaged civically, because it makes a difference. So, we're providing toolkits for voter registration to churches, helping them understand what they can do legally, and what they can't, and just equipping them with promotional materials, et cetera. Helping them register people to vote.

Dr. Tim Clinton: So, the question is, Jason, is it too late to register to vote right now?

Jason Yates: It's not too late. It's in fact, individuals in most states, many states, can register right up to election day. You might need a photo ID to do that, but most states you can do that. Each state is different. I encourage people.... You can go to myfaithvotes.org. You can find the rules for your state, and learn whether or not you still have that opportunity. But in, I would say, all 50 states right now, that's still an opportunity for you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Online, Jason, there's a lot of censorship, suppression going on. Some are getting pounded or broad brushed as Christian nationalists. In a lot of ways, it's just an attempt to silence, shame, stigmatize, keep Conservatives from going to the poll. What's your take on all that?

Jason Yates: Yeah. I believe that it is an attempt to keep Conservatives, keep Christians away from the polls. Religious freedom is something that has been a pillar of our society. It's been something that we have, whether it's been the Revolutionary War, whether it's been the issue of slavery, whether it's been civil right, people of faith exercising their faith have been at the center of that. But yet lately, there's been an attempt to stigmatize and say, "No, you can't bring your faith into this arena, that the secular needs to be whitewashed of everything faith based." That's just not what the intention of the First Amendment was, but yet it's being weaponized against us, to shame and stigmatize us and make us think that no, we should separate our faith from our civic engagement and from politics. That's not at all what our nation was built on. It's not at all what the founders intended, in how they developed the First Amendment and our nation's documents.

Dr. Tim Clinton: When we opened the broadcast, Jason, we talked a lot about the economy, meaning the inflation, money stress that people are under. I think people are really worried about the lawlessness they're seeing, the open borders, parental rights, transgender ideology. But I want to camp for a moment, Jason, just on religious liberty. I'm really concerned that people are not aware of the religious liberty infringement that's going on. What are you seeing? What's your comments? I know we're fighting time here, Jason.

Jason Yates: Well, you're absolutely right. We are seeing that, and we've developed actually six stages of losing religious freedom, and we're entering stage five where people are suffering from litigation just for adhering to their beliefs. That's happening. Next, stage six, is where people are terrorized and removed from public view. I pray we never, never get there, but we are deepening, getting

further into losing our religious freedoms. Just think about the football coach, Joe Kennedy up in Washington, who was told by the school district and the lower court that he couldn't pray on his own on the football field. Thank goodness the Supreme Court overrode that, and said that, "No. People of faith have the right to live out their faith in the public square."

Dr. Tim Clinton:

George Barna recently came out with a piece; he called it or defined it as SAGE Cons. That SAGE Cons have a big role here, and I love what he said. A SAGE Con is someone who is spiritually active, governance engaged and conservative. Boy, do we need that right now? Jason, what a delightful conversation, and more importantly, a tip of the hat to you and your entire team there at My Faith Votes for what you're doing, for such a time as this. We pray that God will continue to give you strength and courage to stay on the front lines, and engage people in the public square. Also, I wanted to say to all of our listeners, don't miss this month's October newsletter from Dr. Dobson. There are three critical issues to consider when you select candidates that you will vote for this year in the midterms.

One, pro-life versus abortion. It'll be crystal clear when you look at the candidates. Number two is religious liberty. We were just talking about that. It's under siege, whether you know it or not. Number three, protecting our kids from the radical leftist agenda that is already in play. That's it. You've got to go out and vote your faith. If you have any questions or concerns, you want more information, go to myfaithvotes.org. What they're doing up there, I can't help but believe that if we band together and stand strong and have courage, that maybe God will look on us with great favor. Jason, thank you so much. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, the entire team at Family Talk, we thank you for joining us. God be with you.

Jason Yates:

Thanks, Tim. For all you do.

Roger Marsh:

Well, what a timely and informative interview at such a crucial season in American history, and what an important call to action for each of us. Now, if you would like to learn more about Jason Yates or the governmental engagement voting advocacy group that he leads, which is called My Faith Votes, just go to our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. As always, thank you so much for your prayers and your faithful financial support of our ministry. It is because of you that we remain here on the air, and it's because of your generosity that we can continue to help families and fight for life. You can make a contribution to the JDFI securely online, when you go to drjamesdobson.org. Or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. You'll reach a member of our constituent services team, where you'll be able to be immediately connected to someone who can speak with you, to listen to you, to answer your questions about our ministry, and to even pray with and for you.

That number once again is (877) 732-6825. Keep in mind, you can always send your tax deductible donation through the mail. Our ministry mailing address is,

The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949. Again, the place to write is, The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949. I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of Dr. Clinton and Dr. James Dobson, thanks so much for listening to Family Talk today. God's richest blessings to you and your family. Remember, don't forget to vote. It is your duty. Thanks again for listening, and we'll see you again tomorrow right here on another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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