



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Faith of Mike Pompeo

Guest(s): Mike Pompeo

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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.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. Dr. Tim Clinton. Welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Today, Dr. Dobson and I are so pleased to present an amazing interview with the 70th Secretary of State for the United States, Secretary Mike Pompeo. This is going to be a fascinating and encouraging conversation as we discuss the strong faith of Secretary Pompeo and his reflections on our country and culture. Let's jump right in and remember 2022 is going to be a critical year for righteousness in culture. If there's ever a time to stand strong together, it's now. Let's go now to Secretary Mike Pompeo here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Mr. Secretary, thank you for joining us. Dr. Dobson sends his regards. He has such respect for you and the work that God's been doing in and through you.
- Mike Pompeo: Well, we, Susan, Nick, and me, love Dr. Dobson and his wife and they have for decades been in this fight to speak with truth and with clarity about the Lord and about Jesus Christ as our savior and about the central nature of the family in the United States of America. If I've done a little bit of good work to help him and his organization at any point in my life, it's something I'm deeply proud of.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: It's been a delight to spend some time with you and to learn a little bit more about what's happening in your life, your family, and so much more. But as we get started, just a little bit going on in the country right now. Quite a bit has happened since you've left office. You're out there on the front lines every day, you're canvassing the country, the world. What are you seeing? Where do you think we're at?
- Mike Pompeo: Well, Tim, this administration and the Senate and the House too have taken this country in a direction that is fundamentally at odds with the things that have made America so special and so great. They have adopted a progressive secular line of thinking that has led to policies that are really bad for families, for young people, for our school system, all these things that you can see becoming at the center of what they are trying to do. The good news is I have also seen enormous fight in America. I think the American people can see that this isn't

the direction they want their country to go and they're beginning to take concrete actions and say, "Take me. I'll stand up," and they're joining in this fight to reclaim the greatness of our nation.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I think people are exhausted. I think they're emotionally shot. There's a lot of fear out there in the culture, but at the same time, I agree with you, I think there's a stirring like I've never seen before.

Mike Pompeo: Yeah, Tim, sometimes it takes a jolt to the system to light the fire, and I think that jolt to the system has been evident. We can walk through them. Because of the virus I think parents were a little closer to what their kids were being taught in schools and they saw what was in front of their children. Not just the horribleness of this idea of CRT, the idea that there's an oppressive class and a victim class, we know America's history. We had slavery. We should accept that we didn't get it perfect, but this is as close to a perfect nation as there ever has been and a nation that has moved closer to that perfection every day.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Mike Pompeo: They saw that our kids were being taught that there's not a difference between men and women. The basic truth, basic things that people came to know, they saw the government lie to them about the virus. We've seen Dr. Fauci lie to the American people. I don't think there's any mistake about that. He wanted to cover up for what took place in Wuhan and I think people can feel that. There are parents all across America who also saw their faith institutions threatened as well. When the virus came, the churches were shut down in large parts of America. They said, "No, you may not go worship with your fellow believers." I think people saw this and said, "This is not the America that I know. This is not consistent with who I am and who our family is."

And they took themselves and their spouses and their kids and said, "We're going to stand up for the things that matter most to take care of not only our children and our family, but my neighbor's children and their family and our communities," in ways that we haven't seen in the United States in an awfully long time. I'm really heartened by what I've seen all across the country.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. God be with us for such a time as this. You served as the 70th U.S. Secretary of State. Now, some have described you as the most conservative Secretary of State since World War II. You're the first pro-life Secretary of State since the Roe v. Wade decision. Here's one thing that I think is pretty evident and that's that you have never tried to hide your personal faith in Jesus Christ. Tell us a little bit about why you think faith is important, and then why is faith important to you?

Mike Pompeo: I wouldn't even know where to begin to hide my faith. It drives the way I think about the world. It's just who I am. It's also I know incredibly important to fellow believers that when people enter a different service, whether that's in

the business world or in government service or in the military that we still have the place to act out and live out our faith. It's absolutely central to the American tradition. I came to faith a little bit later in life. I was very focused on being an NBA basketball player when I was in high school.

Dr. Tim Clinton: When I read that, I was like, "Wow, I didn't know that." You wanted to go straight to the NBA.

Mike Pompeo: It was hopeless.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You wanted to play for the Knicks or the Mavericks? Who?

Mike Pompeo: No, a Laker. I grew up in Southern California, I wanted to be a Laker, but it was hopeless from the time I was five or six. But I didn't give up until I was 13 or 14. I wasn't very focused on faith. My parents gave me an opportunity to do so, but I rejected it. But then when I was a young cadet at West Point, there were a couple folks that were just a year ahead of me and they held a Bible study. I showed up and they taught me how to read the Bible and they taught me the importance of understanding Jesus Christ as your savior. And I have been a believer since that moment in time. I can never thank those two people for what they did for my life and the life of my family.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That was at West Point.

Mike Pompeo: Yes, I was a freshman and we would read the Bible and talk about it then talk about our life as soldiers as well. It changed my life.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Five year Army career. Went on to Harvard Law School. Back to Kansas after that. Started some businesses. Met a little gal back there named Susan. Tell us a little bit about your journey there.

Mike Pompeo: I grew up in Southern California, but my mother was from a little place called Wellington, Kansas. And so I had a couple of 100 cousins in that part of Kansas and got a chance to go back there with three of my buddies from West Point, three of my classmates, to start a company. We became Thayer Aerospace. We made airplane parts. It was wonderful to be back in Kansas. But, most importantly, it took me to a place where I met this woman, Susan. We were in love as soon as we met each other. She's a faithful Christian believer. She's the most gracious woman that I know. She keeps me straight and humble and keeps our family all thinking about not only the things we have to do today and tomorrow, but about our place in the world. She ran our fifth grade Sunday School class. She and I co-taught for years.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I was fascinated by that. You also served as a deacon.

Mike Pompeo: I did.

Dr. Tim Clinton: But, I mean, you probably learned a few lessons teaching fifth grade.

Mike Pompeo: I did. Look, you've been in church politics too. That is a training ground for the bigger world.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Oh yeah.

Mike Pompeo: But it's a great church. Our home church is Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Wichita, Kansas. Susan and I were married there and we wanted to give back just a little bit so we got a chance to serve as one of the lay leaders as a deacon. And then we taught fifth graders, which was just a joy.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You know what I like too? I follow you on Twitter. And that's the love you have for your son, Nick. Mr. Secretary, tell us a little bit about your son and your family. I mean, the lifestyle, the pressures, the responsibilities that you've had and that you continue to have, how do you keep your family front and center?

Mike Pompeo: Tim, I don't get asked this very often. I appreciate that. I probably don't say this enough to Nick. He sacrificed a ton for me and for our mission the family went together. He was a student at UCLA and he came back to help me in my very first campaign. The campaign obviously went on into the school year and he decided not to go back to school, to stay and help his dad run for office. And the three of us together have been in this mission field, this political mission space.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah, you have.

Mike Pompeo: He's a good kid most days. He's now 31 years old living in New York City. He's engaged. We love Rachel Keller, who's his fiancée. They're getting married in the summertime. We're just so blessed that Nick has now found the person that loves him and who he loves. And you know this as a parent, nothing brings you more joy.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. Mr. Secretary, I know that while you were in the throes of leading the State Department, all the responsibilities going on, I think of China, North Korea, Middle East, the terrorist stuff that's out there, nearly impossible issues really, you had to step up and into it every day. But you make a statement that your faith informed what you do, how you would make decisions. Lead us down that road. I think you put a Bible, you kept an open Bible on your desk there in the State Department.

Mike Pompeo: Tim, these problems are of such scale that no human can hope to resolve them. We can hope to work on them, we can hope to use our knowledge, our space, our intuition, the team that we build around us to work and help. But in the end, there's a higher power that is driving this. And every morning on the elevator ride up from the parking lot when I was in Washington to the office on the seventh floor, I don't know, it was a 15, 20 second elevator ride, and I would just bow my head in prayer because I knew the moment I walked out of that

elevator door, the world would be upon me. I'd be in the intelligence. There'd be meetings. The President would call. So, I wanted to take that moment to just pray that the Lord would help me get through the day and to have the wisdom and the strength to do His work on this planet.

And then I go in and face the secular world and go in and face the State Department and the team and try to solve these big problems. But I was always deeply aware, Tim, that if you took this all upon yourself, if you thought, "I'm the smartest guy in the room and I'm the person who can create peace in the Middle East," or can convince Chairman Kim to get rid of his nukes, if you think you're going to count on how smart you are and how capable you are, this is folly. This is what the Lord talks about when He talks about the absence of humility. Just prayed to the Lord that He would help provide me the guidance to be a part of the journey to try and deliver better outcomes for people not only in our own country, but around the world.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. You spoke recently at a gathering event here for Dr. Dobson and the ministry. It was deeply encouraging and moving and hopeful. That's what I really liked. But in the midst of your talk, you talked about how your faith influences your values, which influence how you look at life. So I want to start there and just dial in for us your perspective on life itself and why you see that position being so important, especially in this hour, if you will.

Mike Pompeo: My grounding started with my family growing up, but then as you go through, I would read the great military historians when I was a cadet and then you would the great philosophers in law school, and you would do this all the time. You were also in the Bible and you would see the deep connectivity between these set of understandings. And then you would go back to America and what our founders did, what these men who came together with these ideas and understandings about, how do you create space for religious freedom for faithful people built on a Judeo-Christian set of understandings of the world? And so I watched the State Department issue cables about human rights that were disconnected from what I knew to be true, and so we tried to pull that back in. We created a commission called the Unalienable Rights Commission, which essentially said, "Let's go back to the American tradition. Our founders were right. Let's lean on that."

And so, it created this enormous hub-bub all to just speak the truth about the fact that our rights weren't provided to us by anybody in Washington, D.C. They were and bestowed upon us by our creator.

Dr. Tim Clinton: By God.

Mike Pompeo: That means they're intrinsic to each of us as a human being. That means we have an obligation to protect every human life, including those not yet born. And we worked and we banged away every day to try and deliver those very set of outcomes. The policies that the administration ends up, the policies are downstream from the values and the culture that we create, and if you miss the

grounding, if you step away from these central traditions and these beliefs that Christians hold, if you step away from those things then you are headed down a path towards a secular, socialist, progressive America that I think most Americans by far don't want any part of.

Dr. Tim Clinton: While under the Trump administration, you guys ended taxpayer funding used for abortions overseas. You were big time focused on and you fought and exposed human trafficking. All this relates back to this concept of life. And there's a statement you made, "Devaluing life certainly undermines families and it's the hallmark of totalitarian countries." As you traveled around the world and you saw what you saw around the world, what did it do inside of you?

Mike Pompeo: Two things. One, it made me go to my knees on more than one occasion thanking the Lord for allowing me to grow up in America.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I can't imagine, seriously.

Mike Pompeo: And I don't think I ever take it for granted, but sometimes I think we underestimate the enormous privilege we have to live in this incredibly special place. It's got its problems. We got work to do.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Not a perfect nation, yes.

Mike Pompeo: But my goodness, when you compare it to some of these places. I'll never forget, Tim, we focused on making sure that Americans who'd been held hostage were freed. I had the chance to travel to Pyongyang and say to Chairman Kim, to look him in the eye and say, "President Trump expects the three Americans you're holding to come back with me on my airplane." Remember we'd had Otto Warmbier return to the United States who'd been held there in this authoritarian, terrible human rights conditions, and he passed away within hours of his return as a result of how he'd been held by Chairman Kim. And so I looked him in the eye and said, "The President expects them to be with me." Didn't know if we'd get them back. And my team had told me that the North Koreans had said, "Send the van to this location." And the van comes back and out walk these three Americans.

I had a chance to meet with one of the three just last week when I was in Southern California. He's a Christian pastor. They walked out of the van. They were ambulatory. They could walk around. I mean, it just brought tears to my eyes that we'd get to return these three Americans home to their families from this authoritarian, religion denying, atheist, totalitarian regime and we brought them to freedom. On the flight back, this fellow wrote a little card and there's some video you can see where he climbs off the plane at Joint Base Andrews. It was 3:00 in the morning. It was televised around the world. President Trump was there. The First Lady was there. I'm at the bottom of stairs and he hands me a card, and I tuck the card into my coat and got home that night and opened it up. It was Psalm 126.

And this man had written this on the flight back to freedom. He'd taken his time to say thank you to me. I didn't do this. The Lord brought him home. And it reminded me that our work around the world to try and create space for religious freedom is so important. Not only for those handful of Americans who are held hostage, but for every human being that deserves the right to be able to practice their faith with their family and their co-religionists. We don't have that in so many places, and we as Americans have a responsibility to try to deliver that certainly here at home but around the world as well.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We do. What do you think are the greatest threats to religious freedom internationally still?

Mike Pompeo: One of the greatest threats is that America will abandon the field.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Wow.

Mike Pompeo: And this administration to some degree has done that. The Biden administration has placed climate change where we used to talk about religious freedom. Indeed, I saw a tweet from their International Office of Religious Freedom that said, "Religious leaders should come together in the world to work on climate change." No, religious leaders should come together to pray. Whether that's in their faith or my faith, they should come together to pray and to build and to foster religious freedom around the world, not to work on a top down political model of tyranny in a secular outcome.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah.

Mike Pompeo: So the biggest risk is that we'll walk away from advocating for this. And then there is the cultural decline that is taking place in lots of parts of the world. Europe is largely secular today. Christianity is rising in parts of Africa and South America. We need to nurture and in urge that. But totalitarian regimes around the world, including perhaps foremost among them the Chinese Communist Party, is working to thwart that and denying religious freedom. Persecuting not only Christians, but faithful people from every religion. And we need to, at the very least, shine a light on that.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know some listening would say, "Tim, ask about our country." What are the greatest threats to religious liberty here?

Mike Pompeo: Too much power in the hands of a few.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Wow.

Mike Pompeo: Whether that's our big tech companies or big government, when powerful people take on roles where their power increases by ever expanding surveillance and control of people, the risk for believers to practice their faith simply increases. Second comes from the other direction. It comes from faith

institutions. There's a real risk that faith institutions won't fight the fight, won't push back. We saw this during the virus. We saw churches allow states to close down their ability to worship.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I know.

Mike Pompeo: Too many folks allowed the state to dominate the church in ways that are inconsistent with our tradition. And so if you ask what the greatest risk is, the faithful and faith leaders aren't prepared to stand up to demand that they continue to be able to practice their faith here in America in the way that they so choose.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Mr. Secretary, also in this journey, your faith in how you live out and conduct and what governs your life, you also talked about your values influencing your perspective on education. Everybody knows that that's a battleground right now with CRT, critical race theory, the whole issue of gender ideology. What are your thoughts on what's happening and how does your faith inform or influence your perspective?

Mike Pompeo: The educational battleground is something I think Christian conservative believers have walked away from too often. Look, this is government. This is about schools. We just haven't engaged in ways that were serious and important. We saw this at higher education as well. Look at our college campuses today. They are dominated by secular progressives. They're teaching racism to kids in classrooms. They're segregating in the dormitory. And so to have fifth graders taught that there is an over class, that somehow Whites are oppressive because of their skin color and that somehow Hispanics are inferior because of theirs is racist to the nth degree, but most importantly, it's inconsistent with who we are as the American people. And yet it's been foisted upon us. The news is, a flip side is, you've seen it on TV some. I've seen it in person all across America. People are hacked off. I can't imagine a deeply less Christian concept than saying that these children are simply creatures of the state and not of their families.

Dr. Tim Clinton: There's so much we could talk about. I've got a couple more things I want to run by you. I've got to go to the border just for a second. What's happening in our Southern border. What can be done about it? But really, is it a moral issue to you?

Mike Pompeo: You mentioned in the opening the work that we did on human trafficking. What's coming across our border is a classic example of human trafficking. These young people, the women who are being brought across our Southern border, are being trafficked by the coyotes, by the cartels. They're being deposited in cities across America and then suffering the worst abuses.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's unbelievable.

Mike Pompeo: To see the suffering of these people trying nothing more than to get to a better life, to watch the suffering of these people was something we knew was inconsistent with who we were. And so we managed to turn the magnet off and then tried to make their lives better where they lived. This administration now has allowed more people in than any administration in American history. This is dangerous for our security, the national security risk of a terrorist coming across.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Mike Pompeo: The drugs, the fentanyl that is coming to our communities all across America will take down cities in America. The Biden administration has now been captured by the open borders crowd who deeply believe that they should allow this kind of human trafficking to take place. I hope that parts of the Democrat Party will come to see that it is immoral to allow this to take place, that it is not in America's own security interest to allow this to take place, and begin to move their party back to where, frankly, it was 20 years ago accepted policy, at least on both sides of the aisle, that protecting American sovereignty and securing our borders was a common sense approach.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amazing. As I think about you, I think about your work around the globe, and you have a deep affection in your heart for Israel and the efforts for peace that were done over there, the Abraham Accords and more, I just wanted to get a perspective from you to all of us as you think about the Scripture challenging us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Mike Pompeo: Yeah. It was so lovely that I had the chance to work for a President who permitted me to go develop a deep relationship between our two countries. It matters to America. It matters to people of every Abrahamic faith that we get this right. So we did.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Mike Pompeo: We not only moved the American Embassy to Jerusalem, the rightful capital of the state of Israel, the Jewish home land, but we just took actions that demonstrated our resolve. We worked with Arab states, Muslim countries to say, "It's not a good idea to make your entire foreign policy built on the destruction of the state of Israel. It's a much sounder thing, much better for your own people to recognize the right of Israel to exist." And we convinced four countries of that, something that had been worked on for decades. And I worked on it, Ambassador Friedman worked on it, Mr. Kushner, Secretary Mnuchin, a big team, all of us together. President Trump, Prime Minister Netanyahu, the Crown Prince in the United Arab Emirates, a remarkable leader in Morocco, the King in Bahrain. It took these leaders and it took their faith, not always the Christian faith, Jews, Muslims, and Christians working together to deliver peace and prosperity in the Middle East. Only our creator can drive such a remarkable outcome.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amen. I love the hope that I see in you and the love you have for our great country. You have been quoted to say, "It's the greatest nation and the greatest force for good on the planet and it's up to us to keep it that way." Mr. Secretary, give us your closing thoughts on our great country for such a time as this and how we all can step up and into this moment.

Mike Pompeo: I was thinking about the people that I met who said, "Mike, I'm in this fight. I am willing to do the right things for my family, for my country," and it reminded me that we've been through an awful lot in this country before.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes, we have.

Mike Pompeo: Our faith institutions have been challenged before, our governmental institutions have been challenged before, and each time, Tim, Americans have risen up and gotten this country back in the right directions and created a moment, a revival that seriously began to build out this most special nation, "The shining city on a hill" that President Reagan spoke about biblically. I am confident that this will happen again. I am very confident that people see the risk to their faith institutions and to their communities and they're not going to let it happen. I am long on America in the most fundamental way, because I am confident that our Judeo-Christian tradition combined with the Lord watching over us will lead us to another 250 years of true exceptionalism.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Amen and amen. May God do that very thing. Secretary Pompeo, it's been such a delight to have you here with us.

Mike Pompeo: Thank you, Tim.

Dr. Tim Clinton: On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife, Shirley, they have a deep love and respect for you and the work that God's doing in and through you, praying for you and your wife, Susan, and your family. And I know that we'll see a lot more leadership from you in the days ahead. Thank you for joining us.

Mike Pompeo: Thank you, Tim. Bless you. Thanks.

Roger Marsh: Well, this concludes our special one-on-one sit down interview featuring our own Dr. Tim Clinton with his special guest, the 70th Secretary of State for the United States of America, the Honorable Mike Pompeo. Keep your eye on Mike Pompeo. He has big plans coming for 2022. Now, in closing, a reminder the National March for Life Day is coming up Friday, January 21st. Make plans to get out and let your voices be heard. Well, that's all the time we have for today. Keep standing up for all precious human life and be sure to join us again tomorrow for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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