



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Give Them Unshakeable Faith – Are Your Kids Prepared? – Part 2

Guest(s): Dr. Jeff Myers and Ryan Dobson

Air Date: March 30, 2022

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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: Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. And Family Talk is the radio home of Dr. James Dobson, America's preeminent Christian child psychologist. Dr. Dobson serves as president of Family Talk's parent organization, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, and is still intimately involved in the production of Family Talk's daily programs. If you've been listed to Dr. Dobson for decades, or if you just found us, we want to thank you for making us a part of your day. On yesterday's broadcast, Dr. Dobson began a conversation with his son, Ryan Dobson and Dr. Jeff Myers, president of Summit Ministries in Manitou Springs, Colorado. They talked about Summit's two week biblical worldview Summer conferences for students. Summit Ministries equips and supports rising generations to embrace God's truth and champion a biblical worldview. We are bringing you the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's conversation with Jeff Myers and Ryan Dobson today, right here on Family Talk.

Dr. Jeff Myers is an educator, entrepreneur and well regarded authority on youth leadership development and training. He is the author of 14 books, including textbooks and his latest publication, *Unquestioned Answers: Rethinking Ten Christian Clichés to Rediscover Biblical Truths*. Jeff Myers holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Denver. He and his wife, Stephanie, and their family make their home in Colorado. Ryan Dobson is a public speaker, author and podcaster. In 2016, Ryan began *Rebel Parenting*, a digital ministry which he runs with his wife Laura. They make their home in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and they have one son and one daughter. Let's join Dr. Dobson, Ryan Dobson and Dr. Jeff Meyers right now, as they continue discussing the merits and value of Summit Ministries' summer conferences for students and young adults.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, Dr. Myers and Ryan I'm delighted to have you back today. I just regret the fact that there are a lot of people out there who should have heard yesterday's program and didn't get a chance to be tuned in. We're going to pick up a little bit with what we were saying yesterday. But we we're talking about a fantastic program for young people between ages of 16 and 24. And what happens there

is dramatic. In fact, Jeff, I want you to start with right there. What is there about talking about worldview and things of that nature that sets these kids on fire?

Dr. Jeff Myers: I think a lot of young adults in today's culture have come to believe that if you're a Christian you're making a claim, but if you're not a Christian you're neutral. And at Summit Ministries they realize this isn't neutrality versus you making crazy claims. This is a biblical worldview versus other worldviews. I was in a different country and a man came up to me on the sidewalk and said, "Hey, do you want to buy a real fake Rolex?" And I thought, is it fake or is it a real fake? But I realized, that's what a counterfeit is. It's something that convinces you that it's an original when it's not. So it uses a little bit of truth and creates a big lie.

So, at Summit Ministries students, their eyes are open to realizing, there are at least five major counterfeit worldviews that they're going to face when they get to the college campus. So they're no longer afraid when they go to class because it's no longer the case where they say, "Gosh, I'm a Christian. I make claims. I should be quiet." They say, "Oh, the professor is religious. The professor is one of the most religious people I've ever met. He's an atheist. He believes everything came about through nothing." And so, they're no longer afraid of engaging about the world of ideas.

Dr. James Dobson: So, you're preparing and readying students to deal with whatever life throws at them.

Dr. Jeff Myers: That's right. Well, if you think about it, what you believe about God, will determine what you believe about reality. What you believe about what's real will determine what you believe about what's right and wrong. What you believe about right and wrong determines what kind of a society is a good society. How we should have our economic system structured, what kind of political system we have and everything else, if you miss that, why do we believe there is a God? Why do we believe that God is as He reveals Himself to be in the Bible? How do we know the Bible is true? If you miss that, then the whole track of a person's life can be off. It's easier to think that I am the one who knows the truth and everybody else is wrong. Right. That's the substance of what a lot of people today believe. The vast majority of people I would say, say that truth is up to the individual.

That I am the one who decides what is right and wrong for me. That's why people talk about speaking my truth rather than seeking the truth. So, we've got to go back and begin with Truth, which is found in Jesus. And a lot of people say, "Well, that's a faith claim. That's something that should have some background music and only be talked about in church." But the reality is, if God really created the world, and if Jesus Christ really is His son, then you don't know reality, if you don't know that.

Dr. James Dobson: Ryan we talked yesterday about the fact that you were 17 years old when your mom and I sent you to Summit Ministries. And that was many years ago. Is that teaching still with you? Do you still remember what you encountered there?

Ryan Dobson: Yes, of course. Of course it's with me. Of course it still has that fire ignited within me. I bought so many books at Summit when I was there in 1987. I have most of them today. Those have come back to me so many times. This is why it's foundational truth. It's not today's "truth", foundational eternal truths that last forever. I can read a book that was written in the 1800s and it applies today because those are foundational eternal truths. A lot of things are going to come my way, things are going to go up and down, but I know this to be true.

Dr. Jeff Myers: And I want to learn more. I can grow. I can read. I can think. I can't tell you how many students we work with at Summit Ministries who look at me and they say, "You mean my question was a good one? You mean what I have to think is important and I'm worth it?"

Dr. James Dobson: Now these are two week programs-

Dr. Jeff Myers: Two week long courses.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and what happens during that time?

Dr. Jeff Myers: The very first thing that happens at Summit Ministries is you realize you are not alone. They're going to be 180 to 200 other young people there, who all have questions, who all want to know the truth, who want to be the sort of people who live with purpose and want to make a difference. And then you start meeting your instructors and they talk with you about everything from "how do we know that human life is even valuable? To how do we know there is a God? What is the evidence for intelligent design? How do we know that Scripture is true? What evidence do we have for that?" I will spend time with all of the students talking with them about, what are the counterfeit worldviews that you'll be facing out there? And this is not something that students get any place else. I do an hour long lecture on the Marxist worldview.

Why Marxists believe what they believe and then, how to respond intelligently as a Christian. I had a student last summer whose came up to me afterwards. She was so distressed. She said, "I have tried to convince myself for three years to be a Christian socialist. I've read everything out there. And in 45 minutes, you undid the whole thing. What do I do now?" Right. Well, I can help her understand. It's not like the Bible is an economics textbook, but when you think about stewardship and private property and the value of our minds, as image bears of God, then you develop a whole, an understanding of what flourishing and blessing for the nations would look like.

Dr. James Dobson: I saw some of your literature recently and I brought it with me. Here are some of the things you'll talk about. We've already mentioned the biblical worldview, which is foundational. Other divisive topics include abortion, doubts, evolution, gender identity, God's existence, homosexuality, marriage in the family, pornography and reliability of Scripture. That's just a short list but you go

through, you touch most of those and a lot more during the course of that two weeks.

Dr. Jeff Myers: I'll say we work hard and we play hard. So, we study hard in class, but everybody has a chance to ask their questions. All of our instructors will sit down with the students. You can ask any question you want. You'll have a small group. You'll be meeting one on one with a mentor. But then you'll also go on the zip lines and rock climb and whitewater rafting and all of the fun things that you expect to here.

Dr. James Dobson: So, it's not all classroom work?

Dr. Jeff Myers: No.

Ryan Dobson: But it's a lot.

Dr. Jeff Myers: We have a great time.

Ryan Dobson: We do.

Dr. Jeff Myers: We meet in these beautiful locations and we take full advantage of being there to get outside and have fun with the new community of other people who are thinking, I feel like I'm a part of something. This is my tribe. I can be a Christian and I can be an intelligent one.

Dr. James Dobson: Ryan suppose that you're talking to somebody who's a candidate or could be a candidate to be at the Summit Ministries this summer, it's a summer program, and they hear us talking and they say, "I know you're excited about it, but it sounds like watching grass grow. It sounds very dull and boring. There are all those intellectual topics and so on." What do you say to that person? How do you convince them that this may be the turning point of your life?

Ryan Dobson: I don't have to do a lot of convincing. Here's what I will tell any student that is attempting or thinking about coming to Summit. This will place you in the top two or 3% of anybody else in your age group, as far as understanding the big picture of life and where you're going. That will change everything else about the rest of your life. Why do I love Summit today at 51 when I went for my first time at 17? It's because it gave me a foundation where I know where I'm going. Every day I wake up and I know Jesus loves me. And he wants me to do better for him today. Summit ingrained that into my soul.

Dr. James Dobson: Hmm. Jeff, you ever heard that before?

Dr. Jeff Myers: I love hearing the stories of people who have come through Summit and realized I'm smart. I know how I'm smart. And I know how to grow. I know how to ask questions. I'm no longer afraid. The number one command in Scripture is, do not fear, but what do we have in our age today? Everybody is so wrapped up

in fear. We did a recent poll and found 42% of people say they're afraid to talk about what they believe because of criticism. One third of people say, "I think I might lose my job if I say what I believe."

And as long as we are afraid, of what we might lose, we can't really ever stand for truth. So, when students come to Summit and realize, "I don't have to be afraid anymore, God will take care of me. I can stand for what is right. I can ask those tough questions in inconvenient situations like in a lecture room with 300 students and it will be okay, other people might begin to gain courage as well because of my example." And that's what we're seeing with our students. They're in the military, they're in business, they're in government serving as elected officials, they're in medicine and in science, and all these different areas, being the people who can lead because they understand the times in which they are.

Dr. James Dobson: Does it break your heart working with young people? To know what's occurring starting in kindergarten and many public schools and the twisting and warping that's occurring to their minds by the time they get to 16, 17, 18 years of age, there's a foundation there of lies and you got to unravel all that. Does that hurt you to see what's taking place?

Dr. Jeff Myers: What breaks my heart, is that when children go to kindergarten, they believe there is a God, there is meaning and purpose and my life matters. And by the time they graduate, they've become convinced there is no purpose in life. My life does not matter. There's no way to find truth out there. Truth is completely up to the individual. I don't even know whether I'm a male or a female. The level of confusion is so high because we have reality that God exists and we know this and it takes 12 years of indoctrination to try to turn people around. Well, it doesn't turn them around, it just makes them confused.

Ryan Dobson: Yeah. Mm-hmm. You know what's interesting too, Dr. Jeff? *Rebel Parenting*, our slogan is, the struggle is worth it. You realize that the struggle is real. Of course it's real everybody knows that, but it's also worth it. I think what Summit teaches is the truth, is worth it. The truth you learn at Summit, is worth losing your reputation for. It's worth losing friends for. It's worth losing your job for. That's why I do what I do today.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. We're talking to parents and grandparents who heard what we had to say yesterday and today and they're sold. They want to get their kids there. Tell us more about the program. How do they register? What does it cost? Who should come? What are the ages?

Ryan Dobson: You want me to tackle this? Yeah, let me give you a couple of scenarios. One, you've got a kid that wants to go. Fantastic. Send them, without questions. As soon as you can possibly get them if they're interested, get them there. Lots of you are listening, you're going, "Are you kidding, Ryan? I'm going to tell my kid it's like summer school but you'll like it like your parents did. I'm going to have a grand mal fit. We're never going to get my kid there. Do I force my child to go?"

That's the number one question I get from parents. And I say, yes, it's two weeks. It is not that big of a deal. It's only two weeks. You force that stinker to Colorado or Georgia. Get their rear in a chair. I cannot-

Dr. James Dobson: You just lost the stinker who's out there.

Ryan Dobson: I did. You know what? I love speaking at Summit because the first thing I say when I get on stage there to kids, I go, "Who was forced to come here?" And I get about three or four kids that raise their hand. I go, "All right, my people are here" and I tell them, "Oh, I was forced to come here. I ran away from here. It changed my life. And I'm here to tell you it can change your life." And those kids eat it up.

Dr. James Dobson.: Oh, I say answer the question. Jeff, answer the question he didn't. How much did it cost? And when does it start? And how can you register?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Two weeks at the Summit Ministries including everything is \$1,995.

Dr. James Dobson: That's a lot of money.

Dr. Jeff Myers: It's a lot of money. Students who sign up before March 31st have an early bird price, that's \$200 off. And if you use the code that Ryan mentioned in our last program, which is Rebel22, it's an additional \$100 off. But Dr. Dobson, I want to say this, I know a lot of families are thinking, "Wow, that would ordinarily be a tough price but gas has gone up. Our family budget has shrunk. Groceries, everything, all of that is up." So, if you go to summit.org to register, you'll notice that there's a way that you can just signal that, "Hey, we're having a tough time as a family, can you help?"

We want to partner with families. We can help them financially through scholarships that have been provided by generous donors. We are meeting new generous donors all of the time who say, "That program, is so important, I want to help a kid get there." Grandparents are chipping in to pay for it because they want to secure their legacy by having their grandchildren follow the Lord. So, between all of us all together working together, we want to be sure that no one has to get turned away from a program like this because times are tough financially.

Ryan Dobson: And college students can get college credit for going to two weeks at Summit.

Dr. Jeff Myers: Right. So you can also earn college credit which will save you tens of thousands of dollars later.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. We're all right around the corner from the first two week session and that's in ...

Dr. Jeff Myers: We'll begin in the middle of May, and we'll have two week sessions all throughout the summer in Colorado. We have options in Georgia and also in Kentucky. So, summer schedules are tough. There are other things, there are sports camps and family vacation, all the things that you want to do. But we can work around that schedule because of the number of two week programs that we offer.

Ryan Dobson: And the difference, dad, this is an investment in fun. This is an investment in eternity. And I mean, honestly, how much would you now have paid for Summit for the change it did in me? What was it worth monetarily?

Dr. James Dobson: It's priceless.

Ryan Dobson: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: Absolutely priceless.

Ryan Dobson: I don't have a price to be able to teach my children things I learned when I was 17. I have a 15 year old that's getting ready to go to Summit and I'm teaching him things I learned when I was there his age. And by the way, list some of the speakers that come. You've got Sean McDowell.

Dr. Jeff Myers: Yeah, Dr. Sean McDowell, J. Warner Wallace, who wrote the book *Cold-Case Christianity*. He's the Los Angeles cold case detective, have been very famous on television, but he has talked to the students about how he used his detective skills to discover the truth of Scripture. Christopher Yuan is there who came out of the same sex lifestyle and helped students grapple with questions of gender identity, having their primary identity in Christ. John Stonestreet from the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, who is one of the wisest men on how you apply biblical worldview to all kinds of topics in the culture. Dr. Kathy Koch.

Ryan Dobson: She was on your program. That's right. You loved her.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, she is outstanding.

Dr. Jeff Myers: Dr. Kathy Koch, the students adore her. She talks about the eight great smarts. Every student comes away thinking, "I always thought that because if I didn't have book smarts, I wasn't smart, but I realized I am smart. I can think. I can grow. I can be a leader." So, these are just some of the people. There are 75 instructors, Dr. Dobson, who will be with us throughout the summer. Not all of them at one time, but at different points in time. And during the two weeks students will hear from probably 15 or so of them for about 50 hours, and then the rest of the time we just play.

Ryan Dobson: And, listen, when I was in college and I had troubles and I had struggles with professors, I could call Summit. They gave me reading material, literature resources to help me in my time there. They do that for students today. They

don't just leave them there. They follow through. It is a brilliant, amazing program.

Dr. Jeff Myers: Afterward, if you have those questions, you'll be able to talk to someone. You'll be able to have a whole resource library available for you. And we have people whose job it is, to follow up with the students, see how they're doing and help them do better.

Dr. James Dobson: Is it common to have decisions for Christ made among the students?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Dr. Dobson when we studied our graduates years later and asked them to reflect on their experience at Summit, only 44% said they were committed to a Christian faith when they came to Summit Ministries. By the time they left, 70% of them were committed to a Christian faith. So there's a dramatic experience with Christ. Just because someone says they're a Christian may not mean a whole lot. Some people say, "Oh yeah, I'm Christian. What else would I be?" But when they realize, to be a believer in Jesus Christ means to say, truth exists. And it's not just a mathematical formula. It's not just a logical proposition. Truth is a person and it's Jesus. He changed my life. He will bring you to the place where you can be an agent of flourishing and blessing to the nations of the earth. You don't have to live in fear anymore.

Dr. James Dobson: Mm. Do you typically fill up in the summer?

Dr. Jeff Myers: The summer session is-

Dr. James Dobson: Do people need to get in there and get registered quickly?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Yeah, we would need to be in contact soon. So, if you can go to drjamesdobson.org you'll see the information there. You can come to summit.org and sign up, but the sessions do fill so it's not something you want to delay.

Ryan Dobson: Dr. Jeff, for the parents listening that are like, "Man, I can't wait to send my child there. But when they come home, I'm going to be at a deficit. How do I learn these things without coming to a two week program at Summit?"

Dr. Jeff Myers: A lot of parents are asking, "Well, what about me? I need to know more about a biblical worldview. I need to know how to defend my faith." So, Summit Ministries has a program called Base Camp. You can just go to summit.org/basecamp. And you'll see that it's a three or four hour program, it's offered virtually. You can download the programs. There's no cost to it.

Ryan Dobson: It's free.

Dr. Jeff Myers: It will help you understand a biblical worldview of all of these issues that young adults are struggling with from a biblical worldview of mental health, to a

biblical worldview of gender, to a biblical worldview on racial issues, all of these kinds of things. All of that's available for parents, for grandparents and for educators.

Ryan Dobson: It's a lot of teachers that want to hear that stuff too.

Dr. James Dobson: Ryan you mentioned earlier in the program that you call a lot of people. I think it was last program yesterday. You're not fundraising. You're not calling to ask for money. Everybody thinks you get a phone call from a ministry they want to beg for money. You don't do that. You're calling for what purpose?

Ryan Dobson: I thank parents for sending their kids and asking if they need any other resource to help them raise those kids or improve their marriage. Summit's allowed me to build relationships with families. We think the best parents have the best marriages and any way that I can help parents better their parenting ability or help their marriage, I'm involved in doing it. And I'm so appreciative to Summit for allowing me to, and it makes the program better.

Dr. James Dobson: Jeff, what's the future hold? What are your plans? It's growing. The ministry is growing like Topsy, what's in that plan?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Our future plans, Dr. Dobson, include working with churches. We've developed a Sunday school curriculum on biblical worldview for children, kindergarten through 13 years of age, because so much of your worldview is formed when you're a little kid and you don't even really realize it. That we're also developing a small group course that will be for adults, with the goal of doubling the number of people who claim to be Christians who would actually have a biblical worldview.

Dr. James Dobson: Awesome.

Dr. Jeff Myers: We think those things can be world changing. So, we could expand the programs, working with more and more Christian schools and home schools. In the last year, our programs and our curriculum courses trained 66,629 students.

Dr. James Dobson: Unbelievable. Well, once again, thanks for being with us these two days, Ryan Dobson of *Rebel Parenting*-

Ryan Dobson: You got it.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and Dr. Jeff Myers, who's the president of Summit Ministries. It's growing. It's exciting. You guys are thrilled to be part of it aren't you?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Well, we absolutely are. And thank you for your friendship and partnership over the years, Dr. Dobson. I and many thousands of other young people had the opportunity because our families heard about it from you. And now it's a privilege to be the one helping to lead the charge.

Dr. James Dobson: Before we started the program last time, you said something that meant a lot to me. Tell about the very first time Dr. David Noebel was on our program. It was a brand new idea, at least to most of our listeners, what happened?

Dr. Jeff Myers: Well, at the time, the idea that you would take two weeks and a young person would study their faith, for two weeks, was just unheard of. And then you had Dr. David Noebel who is the founder of Summit Ministries on your broadcast. He called me, I was a graduate student and he said, "I need your help because we just went from having 250 students a summer to having 14,000 requests for applications in one month."

Dr. James Dobson: After that broadcast.

Dr. Jeff Myers: After that broadcast. And the world has never been the same in little Manitou Springs, Colorado, as a result of that. Think of the tens of thousands families who have benefited.

Dr. James Dobson: Keep doing what you're doing guys. I'm proud of both of you. Ryan, I'm definitely proud of you-

Ryan Dobson: I appreciate it.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and I just thank the Lord that I was able to get you there to the first Summit event at 17 years of age. And you got to keep your car.

Ryan Dobson: I did. Thanks for sending me and thanks for having me on the broadcast today. I appreciate it.

Dr. James Dobson: Love you both.

Dr. Jeff Myers: Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: God be with you.

Roger Marsh: Powerful and encouraging words from today's guests here on Family Talk. And you just heard the second half of Dr. Dobson's recent conversation with Dr. Jeff Myers, president of Summit Ministries and author, speaker and Dr. Dobson's son, Ryan Dobson. It's humbling to think of how many ministries Dr. Dobson has been able to highlight throughout his radio career. Thousands of lives have been changed because of his faithfulness in getting the word out about important causes, including the work of Summit Ministries. If you would like to learn more about Summit and its annual summer conferences, visit drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. You'll find all the information you need, right there. Again, that's drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. Who knows? Maybe you have a child or grandchild who will be one of the students who has a life changing eternity altering encounter with Jesus Christ at a Summit student conference this year. That would truly be a priceless experience. As always

thank you for making Family Talk a part of your day. I'm Roger Marsh. And from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, may God continue to bless and guide you and your family.

Announcer:

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