



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Fighting for Our Future

Guest(s): Ryan Bomberger

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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, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and on today's program, I am sitting in the co-host chair. You probably know me as the voice of Family Talk, but I'm also a radio host, ordained minister, and a published author. And we are here at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Nashville, Tennessee where we're recording this program today. It's really an incredible conference, so many gifted Christian communicators from all over the world who are just passionate about spreading the gospel through various platforms and mediums.

Now, joining me on the program today is one of those Christian communicators. His name is Ryan Bomberger. Now Ryan is a renaissance man, an Emmy Award-winning creative professional, a columnist, an author, along with his wife, Bethany, he's also the co-founder of The Radiance Foundation. Now, The Radiance Foundation is a life-affirming organization based on the belief that every human life has purpose. Ryan was the creative force behind the first ad campaign to expose abortions hugely disproportionate impact in the Black community. The bold campaign, the billboards TooManyAborted.com was a web campaign that went along with it and it made a really unexpected impact in the pro-life movement.

Ryan Bomberger has been named one of the 50 greatest pro-life leaders of the last 50 years. That is an honor that is also held by our own Dr. James Dobson. Ryan and his wife, Bethany, have four children and make their home in Virginia.

So welcome to Family Talk, Ryan Bomberger, Dr. and Mrs. Dobson extend their warm regards to you.

Ryan Bomberger: It's so great to be here.

Roger Marsh: It's good to have you here, especially with your story. Everyone has a story and the ones who can tell the story the most effectively, I think are the ones that have the impact. None of us get to choose how we're born. Yeah, we don't

know our birthdate, we don't know our end date. Your birthdate came around as kind of a surprise to some people. I mean, in terms of the way it happened and the fact that you are here sharing your testimony today really is something of a miracle. For those who don't know Ryan's story, share it with us, if you would.

Ryan Bomberger: Sure. There are many who say that I should have been aborted. I am that 1% that's used 100% of the time to justify abortion. I was conceived in rape. And I'm that fringe example where people talk about abortion. It's the inevitable conversation, "Well, what about rape?" And of course, the natural follow up many think to the violence of rape is the violence of abortion. But I thank God for an incredible birth mom who was courageous enough not only to give me life, but gave me the incredible gift of adoption. So I grew up in your typical American family of 15 where I have 12 siblings, six brothers, six sisters-

Roger Marsh: How many adopted? How many biological?

Ryan Bomberger: Three biological, or as I like to call them, "The homemade ones". And then there were 10 adopted. I was the first of 10 adopted. And we're every hue, white, Black, white and Black, Native American, Vietnamese, able, disabled. But each and every one of us loved like crazy by my parents.

Roger Marsh: What led your parents to get involved in adoption to that level? That's a commitment.

Ryan Bomberger: It is a commitment. I mean, you have to be in the same wavelength. So my mom had that heart for adoption actually as a young child because she grew up in a home, in a trailer park. She grew up in a home with an alcoholic father. And so at the age of five while her parents were separating, she went to a children's home, an orphanage for a year, and that's where she got the heart for adoption. She noticed that another little girl who had physical disabilities had no one to visit her, but my mom had her parents visit her separately, and that broke her heart and that's when she made a promise to God to be a mommy to those who didn't have one.

Roger Marsh: And how long did it take her to convince your father?

Ryan Bomberger: Oh, he was on board before they got married. My dad, the late Henry Bomberger, one of the most amazing men I've ever known. He loved God and loved people. I mean, when he passed away, it was so evident that, not only did he love deeply, he was so deeply loved by everyone who knew him and I'm glad that he was my father.

Roger Marsh: The way you reacted when I asked you about your dad, I think it's the way every father dreams that their kids would. I'm tearing up just thinking about what a great... I would've loved to have met your dad. And I know that you still hold those memories dear. How long has he been with the Lord?

Ryan Bomberger: He passed away at the height of COVID, so he passed away in 2021, actually on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, that's the day he passed away. So it's been three years. But I'll tell you, his life redeems that day for me. His life of faith and just unconditional love. And he transformed our lives just by pouring himself into all of us and just being such a godly example. I mean, he survived 13 teenagers, which is not an easy feat. He and my mom survived 13 of us.

Roger Marsh: But they chose you.

Ryan Bomberger: Yes, they did.

Roger Marsh: They did. He signed up for that.

Ryan Bomberger: They stepped into it, but they really stepped up. Honestly, they loved us through an incredible amount of brokenness. I mean, a number of my siblings came from really broken backgrounds and to have witnessed how love transformed all of us and unleashed purpose, it's why I love doing the work that I do today with my wife, Bethany and-

Roger Marsh: And well, let's talk about The Radiance Foundation. Where'd that name come from?

Ryan Bomberger: It actually comes from my wife's own story of brokenness. She had kind of walked away from God, was in a relationship that was toxic, walked away from that relationship only to find out that she was pregnant. So it was in her late twenties. She was teaching in Philly at the time and felt so ashamed because she was trying to have her kids not fall into some of the same generational things that perhaps their parents have. And here she was in that situation. She never considered abortion. The biological father, of course, wanted the baby aborted. In fact, he pressured her over and over again to abort. She refused. Her fellow teachers would say things like, "Well just abort it." Some even offered to pay for it. But it was actually just a really revealing moment when she went to the ultrasound and she saw that image and saw that little blinking piece, what looked like rice, her little heartbeat.

And she just thought, "I can't be selfish in this anymore." And all that hardness that she had kind of, I don't know, developed over the years toward God, she just felt like melted away. In fact, that night she went home, read her devotional, and in the margin there were these verses, Psalm 34: 4-5 and says, "I sought the Lord and He relieved me of all my fears that those who look to him are radiant. They're never covered with shame." And that's why she named that precious baby girl Radiance, the reason for the name of our organization.

Roger Marsh: You're just going to keep me in tears the whole show, aren't you?

Ryan Bomberger: Well, I'm telling you, it is a God-sized miracle. I mean, God is the only one who can perform these miracles. But honestly, I marvel at how when we allow God

to step in, my gosh, the way He can transform situations. So she's my oldest daughter. She's 19 and a freshman at Liberty University, and just she radiates God's beauty inside now.

Roger Marsh: I love it. I love it. Ryan Bomberger, at The Radiance Foundation, you shared a statistic earlier about the number of babies that are aborted as a result of the way you were conceived and how small that number is, but that's not what you hear in the media. Talked to the Charlotte Lozier Institute they'll say 1% for rape and 2% for incest or whatever. It's a very, very small amount.

It's a predatory illness that people have when they go after pre-born children, I believe. There's really no scientific reason for doing it other than just your own convenience. And yet you have taken on, you really stood up to the beast with the campaign TooManyAborted.com. There are cities in America, including New York where there are more. There's the negative birth rate, especially of African American kids. Talk about that if you would.

Ryan Bomberger: Well, as a fledgling 501 (C)(3), my wife and I decided through The Radiance Foundation that we were going to take on the easiest topics possible: abortion and race. Why not combine them? And so we did, and we were living in Atlanta at the time, and oh my goodness, the explosion, the media firestorm was unbelievable. "How dare we," and this was coming from even some journalists, "how dare we address abortion and race!" I'm like, "Well, the CDC reports abortion by ethnicity and by people groups." Why is it wrong to actually have an ad campaign that highlights not only these numbers, these devastating numbers where more are aborted than born alive? But also, the fact that you've got the Planned Parenthood whose history of racism has actually never changed. It's an unsevered timeline. Eugenics, a deeply racist pseudoscience.

So we were exposing that and we placed 500 billboards around the country in different cities. Atlanta, we did Madison, Wisconsin, Milwaukee, L.A. I mean, the list goes on and on. And we were denounced by the ACLU, denounced by Planned Parenthood, which feels good because we're obviously doing something right if you're denounced by those two groups and denounced by the NAACP.

Roger Marsh: So now why would the NAACP care?

Ryan Bomberger: The NAACP, first of all a group I grew up revering for many reasons. Brown v. Board of Education being only one of many landmark decisions that was the result of their work. But they are radically pro-abortion, and so they called our campaign. We placed billboard campaign in the San Francisco Bay Area. It's a really conservative area, if you're familiar with that. Not at all?

Roger Marsh: Right.

Ryan Bomberger: We placed one of our billboards that said, "Black and beautiful, TooManyAborted.com." And we were blasted as being racist. In fact, the NAACP said, "It was horribly racist and gave the false impression that Planned Parenthood kills Black babies".

Roger Marsh: But you have the statistics to prove it.

Ryan Bomberger: And Planned Parenthood's own annual report showing over 350,000-

Roger Marsh: Which they make available.

Ryan Bomberger: ...killed every year, white, Black and every hue in between. So I wrote an article being the factivist that I am, and I wrote an article called The National Association for the Abortion of Colored People. And yeah, they didn't like that.

Roger Marsh: So they still keep the end of the NAACP thing though, I mean, right?

Ryan Bomberger: Right. But it was bizarre. It was bizarre. I mean, they were suing us for trademark infringement, dilution and confusion. And so the judge was saying, "You were confusing the public about what the NAACP stands for," which during the trial, the judge kept, and he was a lifetime member of the NAACP. He kept calling the NAACP, the NCAA the whole time. And I'm like, "You need to be in the witness box. You're confused." But that led to a two-year federal court battle. We won that battle, but we're still battling the insanity.

The NAACP today is radically pro-abortion. These civil rights groups, radically pro-abortion. And we ignited this firestorm because we dared to talk about the past and present racism of the abortion industry. People want to talk about systemic racism. Systemic racism is a government funded entity that disproportionately kills Black lives. That's Planned Parenthood.

Roger Marsh: It's amazing. When I think about it, we've had the Super Bowl, the controversy over Lift every Voice and Sing, and that was coined the Black National Anthem by the NAACP. So maybe they need to change a few lyrics to Lift Some Voices and Sing. I mean, it doesn't make any sense.

Ryan Bomberger: No, it doesn't have the same ring. I mean, if you say Black Lives Matter, but actually only some Black Lives Matter. I guess that hashtag is too long.

Roger Marsh: Ooh, I guess so. Tough issue. You guys just dove headfirst into it. You've talked about a number of different potentially toxic topics. Nonprofits fall into one of two categories. Category number one is we're going to change the world. Category number two is we're going to raise a lot of money. You're in category number one and you're still doing it. You wrote an op-ed recently about the ad that was in the Super Bowl, He Gets This, which I enjoyed it thoroughly.

Ryan Bomberger: Well, thank you.

Roger Marsh: Because you handled it just the way you're handling this conversation right now. For those who are not familiar with the ad, give us the whole scope of why you did what you did to speak biblical truth into something that had such an emotional appeal to people, "Oh my gosh. Look at all those people washing each other's feet." That sounds so biblical. And you said, "Hey guys, guess what?"

Ryan Bomberger: Not exactly. Yeah. The, "He Gets Us," doesn't really get Him. And that's the sad thing. The campaign itself, which prides itself in doing these starter conversations, but the conversations are very misleading. I mean, here they're talking about Jesus' love, "He gets us. He was just like us." In fact, in one of the sections, they're talking about how this person's like, "Yeah, I changed my mind about all this because He gets me. I don't have to do anything to be like him. In fact, there's no call or no request or no call to action." Like, "Well, that's the problem because you keep talking about the fact the campaign calls Jesus the world's most radical love activist".

I mean, that may sound great with all the critical theory and anti-racism rhetoric but they never once say, "He's the Son of God." They never say, "He's a savior." They never say that, "We are sinners in need of salvation." So that's why I wrote the op-ed and just pointing out these things that a hundred million dollars plus campaign should eventually get to the part about why Jesus loves us and why He gave up his life for us. In fact, they don't even talk about him giving up his life for us.

So unfortunately, there are some very well-funded and well-intentioned efforts but if they're unbiblical and they're misleading, what is their value? And He didn't go around by the way, just washing random people's feet. He washed the disciples feet. So again, it's all of this reinterpretation of things that leads people away, I feel from the authentic biblical Christ.

Roger Marsh: You were explaining some things to people that they've probably never heard before when it comes to Jesus, even in the church, even from the pulpit, "God loves you, has a wonderful plan for your life. Jesus is pursuing you romantically, and He wants to be in love with you, so you should give your life to him." Not that you needed to do that. You know the savior part, sure, that's great. The Lord part, not so sure, but that's part and parcel of the culture we're living in right now. And I commend you for having The Radiance Foundation position to say, "Yeah, we're going to go after abortion issues. We're going to talk about the LGBTQ community. We're going to talk about gender." You're a father. You've got, how old are your kids?

Ryan Bomberger: My kids are 13, 15, 16, and 19. Four teenagers. Pray for me. Thank you.

Roger Marsh: Would you like a nap?

Ryan Bomberger: All the time.

Roger Marsh: You've written a couple of books. You and your wife, Bethany, have come out with these two children's books. I'm holding them here. We don't have a camera up. I'm holding my, just because I'm practicing. But they have very provocative titles from what I understand.

Ryan Bomberger: Yes.

Roger Marsh: Now, I looked at the title and I didn't think they were provocative, but when you gave me the books earlier, you told me, "These are very provocative books." Ryan, what are the provocative titles of your provocative books?

Ryan Bomberger: Can we say this in radio? Can we say this?

Roger Marsh: I think we're okay. I think we're okay.

Ryan Bomberger: The first one is *He is He*, and the second one is *She is She*. I mean, it's crazy that it's controversial, that we're just restating what biology teaches us. We're restating what the Bible teaches us. Genesis 1:27, "He created us male and female." And yet, that is radical and extreme. And the sad part about it, we live in Loudoun County, by the way, my wife and I. The ground zero for-

Roger Marsh: Those school boards and everything.

Ryan Bomberger: Yeah. School boards run wild.

Roger Marsh: Nice.

Ryan Bomberger: And they have this policy 8040, where they are trying to transition children. They're trying to keep secrets from parents. And when we're telling kids, "You can't possibly know who you are at the core of your being who you are," then what else can they know? So it's more than just the erasure of basic biology and just basic simple truths. It's about the erasure of any objective truth, and that's the whole point. So we wrote this, these children's book, which are age-appropriate for kids two to eight. You can go to Heishe.org or Sheishe.org and get the books. It's really just a great tool for parents. There's a section after all the cute rhyme and all the illustrations that say, "What does the Bible say?" And then the other section says, "What does science say?"

Because science is constantly reinforcing biblical truths. So we wanted to do this to just create a tool, because we understand that the world is constantly targeting our children at younger and younger ages. So why not teach them, give them this worldview formation at such a young age to understand who they are, that they are intentionally and beautifully made by God in male or female.

Roger Marsh: I found the controversial part, by the way, it's the subtitle, *A Book About Your Identity*. That's the problem right there.

Ryan Bomberger: Only the world's allowed to tell you who you identify as. When we identify in Christ, when our identity is rooted in Christ, it won't be uprooted by everything else. And we're seeing that right now tragically in our culture.

Roger Marsh: I'm a grandparent. I'm looking at these two books and saying, "I have an almost three-year-old granddaughter." Well, we've got six grandkids total, "Almost three-year-old granddaughter, almost two-year-old grandson. They're getting this book. Seven-year-old grandson, he's getting the book. They'll get both so they can see he is he, she is she," because they're in schools where one of the grandkids, his mom and dad moved him from California to Texas because they wanted to be taught the truth as opposed to the California politically correct way of doing things. This is the culture we're living in now.

Fewer and fewer people have a biblical worldview. And even professing Christians, George Barna says it's 4 to 6%.

Ryan Bomberger: It's devastating.

Roger Marsh: It's shocking. How do we get this message across? I think talk to some grandparents for a second like me and say, "This is the book that you want to get because this is a message you need to reinforce".

Ryan Bomberger: Absolutely. And overall, all the tools that we create, people can find them at RadianceLife, but part of the fear is that people don't know how to start the conversations. They don't know exactly how to frame things. And that's part of what we love doing through The Radiance Foundation. It shouldn't be difficult to explain some of these basic things, but you know what? Sometimes it is, and it's great to have a tool that talks about that.

There are thousands of physiological differences between boys and girls. Yet the world wants to pretend that guys and girls are just swappable, that there's nothing different about them. We see the attack on women's sports and girls' sports, and so many people are just sitting back because they're afraid like, "I'm not being loving. I'm not being kind." Look, we have to distinguish between certain things. We can love every human being, but not love every human doing.

And when people get that wrong, they get everything wrong. It's not kind to lie, yet we're told, "Well, no. Kindness means that you embrace all these things." Well, that's not kindness. I love you enough not only to speak the truth, but I'm going to live the truth. And we try to create tools for people to express that love to others, and especially at the youngest ages, because honestly, the assault on children today, it blows my mind. It's so surreal. I can't even believe we're at this place. I grew up in a day and age where they said, "Just say no to drugs." And now it's, "Just say yes to drugs and body mutilating surgeries." Somebody has to stop this attack on our children.

Roger Marsh: One of the things you have been outspoken for, obviously coming from a family where there were, what did you say, 3 homemade and 10 adopted kids. I'm going to borrow that and quote you off and on it, but it does kind of bring to the issue ultrasounds giving good information, pregnancy resource centers are outnumbering abortion clinics. What's it? 100 to 1 or something? I mean, there's a much bigger difference.

And the pregnancy resource centers are talking about you have three options when you're pregnant in a state where abortion's legal, not just two, and the abortion clinic will tell you your option is, "Do you want the procedure on Monday or Tuesday, or do you want a pill," or whatever. I mean, that's it.

But adoption is becoming a more viable option. And there's a whole new generation, I get the sense are saying, "I can do that?" Women who are pregnant and saying, "I can do that?" Talk to those families that are listening to us right now and saying, "I didn't realize." I mean, it's crazy to you and me, but for a lot of people it's like, "I didn't know that was an option".

Ryan Bomberger: Oh, yeah. It's such a loving option. And one of my good friends, Melissa Ohden says, "Adoption is the option everyone can live with." I love that quote; it's so powerful. I'm so glad that I'm alive. You have people talk about adoption in the sense of, "Oh, it's the primal wound." In fact, there's a book about that. How about the mortal wound? The mortal wound of abortion that no one comes back from, especially the child who's being aborted.

I love adoption. Adoption is the essence of salvation and both the natural and the supernatural. It brings wholeness and healing. I know this. I've lived it. I'm an adoptive father. Two of my four kiddos were adopted too. We have an initiative called AdoptedAndLoved.com. In fact, when my father passed away, we created an adoption fund to help fund Christian families seeking to adopt, a married mother and father and we give grants to these families because we love seeing the fatherless being put into homes.

But we live in a culture that has so many misperceptions about what adoption is. It's a lesser-than option. It's like the option C or option D. No, it can be a first resort, especially when we understand that biblically, adoption is the essence of salvation. I mean, we wouldn't be part of God's family without it. So it's not a lesser-than option. And there are great systems of support. Our pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, they offer a lot of support to the birth moms, and they can never be forgotten, the birth dads as well. And there needs to be that support. Adoption, especially the way that we try to work this out through The Radiance Foundation. We want it to be a win-win-win situation, a win for the adoptee, a win for the birth parents, and a win for the adoptive family.

Roger Marsh: Did you maintain a relationship with your birth mom?

Ryan Bomberger: No, I actually never met my birth mom. I searched for her years ago, and the search came up without any response.

Roger Marsh: Do you recommend it? Do you recommend for kids who are placed in adoption, having some kind of connection to maybe either or both of their birth parents?

Ryan Bomberger: Majority of adoptions are open adoptions today, and it's a great avenue because they don't have the what-ifs? The birth parents don't wonder, "What happened to my child or what if I?" So there is that connection, and I love that. And in a lot of cases, it's a good situation. There are some situations where open adoption is not a healthy situation for either the birth parents or for the adoptee. But yes, it's something that one of our board members is a birth mom, and I love how she describes adoption. She said, "Adoption not only saved my child, adoption saved me".

And so I love that we have an outreach to birth moms called Sally's Lambs. So we just never want the birth parent, the birth mom especially, because she's typically the one that makes that decision, especially when there's abandonment. But we never want her to be forgotten. We want her to understand that she's cherished too, and it's a lifelong decision and a lifelong journey. But yeah, we're slightly biased toward adoption.

Roger Marsh: Sure, as well you should be. As well you should be. Knowing that's your situation now when you talk about your faith and you talk about maybe the father wound or the mother wound not really knowing. Knowing your adoptive parents just loved you thoroughly and completely, and how wonderful that is, how did you reconcile that? Have you reconciled it? Is it reconcilable?

Ryan Bomberger: It's typical for an adoptee to go through all those questions like, "Why didn't he or she want me? Why didn't my biological parents want me?" And I went through that, but I was loved like crazy. And that's the thing about adoption. It's not like this instant cure-all. It isn't. But there's a lot of healing that happens on this side of heaven.

And I will say, looking at my siblings and several of them came from horrific backgrounds, some abuse, and to see how adoption radically transformed their lives. I mean, I can't help but look at the beautiful possibility of adoption and honestly, for those birth parents who are courageous enough to make that parenting decision to say, "I cannot take care of this child now. Can you love my son or love my daughter?" That's powerful. And that's why the church needs to come around those birth parents. The church needs to come around the foster families and around the adoptive families.

There needs to be more support and reminding us that this is a lifelong journey for many and for someone like me, an adoptee who I love the fact that I was adopted, I love that I have two kiddos and I'm experiencing this full circle sort of

thing, being an adoptive dad on this side. I love to see the beauty that comes out of making an adoption choice.

Roger Marsh: Well, we are so grateful for the work that you and Bethany are doing with the Radiance Foundation, the fact that you have taken what some people might consider to be scars or disadvantages and turned them into advantages in God's economy and letting him work in and through you. We're just so very, very grateful that you're doing what you're doing. Keep doing it Ryan Bomberger and thank you for being with us today, here on Family Talk.

Ryan Bomberger: Thank you so much. God bless.

Roger Marsh: If you'd like to learn more about Ryan Bomberger or The Radiance Foundation, just visit our website at drjamesdobbson.org/familytalk. And while you're there, why not consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute? During this month of May, we have a special matching grant in place of \$300,000 thanks to some special friends of our ministry. Every dollar we receive this month will be instantly doubled to reach twice as many families and marriages. So please consider supporting the JDFI today. You can easily make a donation over the phone when you call 877-732-6825. Or if you prefer, you can send your donation through the mail. Address your donation to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949.

Please know how much we greatly appreciate your prayers and your faithful financial support, and let us know how we can support you as well. We have many resources available to help you and your family, and we'll be happy to pray with and for you when you contact us.

I'm Roger Marsh, and I hope you have a peaceful and blessed weekend. Be sure to join us again Monday, 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.