



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Lighthouse Faith – Part 1

Guest(s): Lauren Green

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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.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, featuring psychologist and best-selling author, Dr. James Dobson. I'm Roger Marsh. You know, in a world where truth seems increasingly blurred by cultural confusion, how do we find our way forward? Well that's the compelling question at the heart of today's Family Talk conversation. Our guest is Lauren Green who has served as Fox News channel's chief religion correspondent since 1996. She'll be joining Dr. Dobson to discuss her powerful book called *Lighthouse Faith: God as a Living Reality in a World Immersed in Fog*. What happens when society abandons absolute truth? Well, we're seeing some of those examples in the culture right now. So how can believers maintain moral clarity when surrounded by relativism and what does it mean to have faith that acts as a guiding lighthouse through life's storms? Lauren Green brings her years of experience covering religious events worldwide to this thought-provoking discussion about finding God's unchanging truth in an everchanging culture. So here now is Dr. James Dobson with his special guest, Lauren Green, to introduce today's edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, greetings everyone. I'm James Dobson, and we want you to help us today. I want you to help welcome our guest, Lauren Green. I know that many of you will recognize her name, and you've seen her on television. She is Fox News chief religion correspondent, and a lady with I'm telling you a long list of accomplishments and honors. You've no doubt seen her on special assignments with Fox, and she always handles her work with skill and poise.

Lauren provided live coverage for Pope Francis' ascendancy in 2013. She did that from Rome and she has also provided live coverage of Pope Benedict the 26th and his visit to the U.S. in 2008. She's a concert pianist and has interviewed many classical musicians, including Plácido Domingo and Joshua Ball. And the list just goes on. Lauren covered the Van Cliburn piano competition. And she also was at the opening night at the Metropolitan. And she's a beautiful lady. In fact, she was Miss Minnesota in 19 ... blah, blah.

Lauren Green: Yeah, we won't go in at the that. Let's leave those last two digits off.

Dr. James Dobson: You also were third runner up in Miss America title about the same time.

Lauren Green: Yes. Yes. Third runner up.

Dr. James Dobson: You've had quite a history, Lauren.

Lauren Green: Well, I thank you very much. First of all, thank you for having me on your show. And it's just such an honor. I've listened to you for a long time over the years. So first at Focus on the Family and now Family Talk, so I'm a big admirer.

Dr. James Dobson: Thank you. And of course, you have a new book, *Lighthouse Faith*. We're going to be talking about that today too. And the subtitle says *God as a Living Reality in a World Immersed in Fog*.

Lauren Green: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: That kind of describes our culture at this time, doesn't it?

Lauren Green: Well, there are a lot of gray areas out there. My original title for the book was *The Lighthouse: God is a Living Reality*. And the publisher suggested maybe kind of speak to people's lives, a world immersed in fog because some of the realities out there are not realities at all. There's just sort of things that we sort of create in our minds.

Dr. James Dobson: Describe that fog for me.

Lauren Green: Well, think about it, is that the vast majority of decisions a lot of people are making are not based on what's right or wrong, but wise choices, things when the moral rules really don't apply. Should I go to this job, or should I take this job? What decides which job do you take? Well, that takes wisdom, and that takes years. But the idea of a reality of a world immersed in fog, it means that the truth has been shaded over. The truth is not clear to anyone. What we've got is a sort secular humanist world that says I can decide what's right and wrong for myself. And that's-

Dr. James Dobson: There is no absolute truth.

Lauren Green: Right, and there's no absolute. There's no objective truth. When I've asked people, "Do you believe there is an objective truth or objective right or wrong that exists outside of yourself?" Then they say yes. But when you ask them, "Is something objectively wrong?" They say, "Well, no. I have to decide what's right or wrong for myself." You see? So that's the fog. Where do you get the idea that you can decide what's right or wrong for yourself? "I have total control of my life." And then I ask, "Well, did you decide who your parents were?" "No, I did not decide who my parents were." "Did you decide when you were born, what day you were born, the year you were born?" You decided none of that.

Dr. James Dobson: I grew up in a Christian home. I want to talk about your home because you didn't. But I did. And the world made a lot more sense to me when I was younger than it does today, because the culture has drifted and shifted.

And like you say, a lot of people don't even know what they believe, and many people don't believe anything. But there are others that just don't have a clue.

Lauren Green: Well, I would like to say that I actually did grow up in a Christian house, home in the sense that-

Dr. James Dobson: I misunderstood that.

Lauren Green: We went to church. We believed in God. We believed in Christ sacrifice, but it wasn't the kind of faith where you walk out in faith. This is how I described... Dennis W. Miller at Princeton University who created a faith and works department at Princeton University. And he said, "A lot of us were just sort of breathing the air of Christianity. We're kind of living off the capital of Christianity without really understanding and digging deep down into its doctrines." And I think that describes a lot of people. I think that describes my home, my household. But as I say, we believed in God. We said prayer before, grace before meals. I said prayers at night. So there was nothing in me that said that God did not exist, but what happened was, and I believe this is that I was in a world that was starting to get darker and darker and darker as the secular world and secular culture started to redefine what right and wrong was.

I mean, it's the age of abortion, abortion rights, fighting about abortion. I remember having this discussion with one of my friends in junior high about it, was abortion right or wrong. I remember in the sixth grade when we were talking about evolution, and my dear friend whose father was a minister and she had a very, very bad argument with the teacher who wanted to bring in this evolutionary concept, and she believed something else. So my age of growth, my coming of age came at a time when there was a lot of questioning authority, questioning the authority of the Bible, as well as questioning the authority of the government, of the presidency, of everything. And I think that had an effect on how I saw God.

Dr. James Dobson: So, you had a faith journey that has been a little uncertain or rocky along the way. When did you really put your feet down and say, this is for real, this is worth everything I invest in it for my whole life?

Lauren Green: I think it was a journey of time. I remember in graduate school and I was at Northwestern studying at Medill and getting a master's degree in journalism and going to Second Baptist Church in Evanston, Illinois, and having this emotional response to faith and realizing at that point I needed to be baptized. I hadn't been baptized. I thought I was when I was a child, but I didn't realize that my church did not baptize children. So I took the step of faith and became a baptized Christian at that time. And that was the moment where I said, yes, I

put my faith in Christ. And it's a journey. And even when you do, it's still a journey. You're still a new Christian. You're still a new child in Christ. And so there's a journey that happens.

Dr. James Dobson: Paul said, "We see through a glass darkly." We see through a dark glass, and we won't know till we get to the other side. All that culture has confused within us, but He's real, and He's there and I've given my whole life to Him. And I think I'm hearing that you have too.

Lauren Green: I remember going to a church in State College, Pennsylvania and hearing a sermon for the first time that actually made sense to my life. And it was the first time I'd ever heard a sermon that applied to my life. And that made me hungry for more. I needed to find out more. And I think that began this whole journey of being baptized, of reading, of finding the right church, finding the right Scriptures, finding this wealth of direction that was in the Bible that I had never known.

I mean, I know people who had read C.S. Lewis when they were teenagers. I had no idea about C.S. Lewis and I wish I had. I didn't read. I didn't know about Francis Schaeffer. I didn't know about Spurgeon and all of these great minds. It's just this wealth of knowledge that was out there, and I didn't know. I just didn't know. And now I'm voracious. I'm a voracious reader of who's next. Who's next on the list? I just happened to go a really great church in New York, Redeemer Presbyterian.

Dr. James Dobson: You're getting an opportunity now through your work to really get acquainted with some of the bright lights of Christendom. Aren't you?

Lauren Green: Oh, absolutely. But even before that, I was incredibly interested in it.

Dr. James Dobson: Lauren, you titled your book, *Lighthouse Faith*. Explain what that is.

Lauren Green: *Lighthouse Faith* is because of the imagery of the lighthouse. And I talked about this in the morning, the devotional, about the lighthouse is the emblem of God's love and His law. I mean, you can't have one without the other. If God is love, water is wet. Then the laws that we see every day, the scientific laws, the law is about who we are, these are covenants. These are part of His love for us to create laws, to create laws, to create boundaries. That's love. And the other part of the law is that the lighthouse has ... in shape and in structure is like the 10 Commandments. There's this beacon on the top, which is the first commandment. "I am a Lord, your God. You shall have no other gods before me."

Dr. James Dobson: You say that all the other nine are based on that first one.

Lauren Green: Right. You can't violate two through nine without first violating number one. That's how comprehensive these laws are. Why did I do this? Why did I think

these thoughts? Or why did I commit even adultery? Right? It's because something else was more important to me than the living God. And so that to me was, that's the lighthouse. If we're made in the image of God, then we too have this beacon in us that needs to connect with God.

Dr. James Dobson: Is the lighthouse the Scripture?

Lauren Green: The lighthouse is God's Word. It is who God is. Right? Well, God has two books. He has the book of nature basically which testifies to Him constantly. Psalm 19, "The heavens declare him as glory."

So, the created world is talking to us constantly, glorifying God. That's the book of nature, but then they have the Scripture. That's the other book. And these two go hand in hand. These two are together. So, the lighthouse is God in both His elements. And so that's why I bring together the structure of the 10 Commandments as a sort of template for all law. It's like God's logo on everything and us too. And so we can't operate, we can't live without being connected to that light. How do you process pain and suffering without understanding the sacrifice of Christ on the cross?

Dr. James Dobson: So, the lighthouse faith is a faith that is informed by those two sources.

Lauren Green: Yes. And it looks to God for that objective sense, that objective stance of truth, objective reality. I can feel a lot of things. Give an example. I love jelly beans. I love jelly beans.

Dr. James Dobson: Did you see I have a whole bowl of them?

Lauren Green: I love jelly beans, but I shouldn't be eating jelly beans. No matter how I feel about jelly beans, jelly beans are not going to be good for me. Right? No matter how I feel.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, they're not so bad.

Lauren Green: Let's take another example and this is a classic example of a fish. A fish exists in water. This is how a fish thrives. No matter how confined you think the fish is in water, a fish can only survive in water. If you try to liberate the fish from the water, it will die.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah.

Lauren Green: You see? And so when you understand that God's law is the water in which we need to thrive. If you take us out of that and we say, no, this doesn't apply to me. I can live however I want. You see?

Dr. James Dobson: You pay price for it.

Lauren Green: You pay a price for it, and it may not happen immediately. And then this is what gets most people is that the arc of your destruction can be very, very long. And people sometimes don't even realize it over a period of ... until it's almost too late. Can happen over lifetime, 10, 15, 20 years. And then people wonder, why did he self-destruct? I mean, I don't want to use names, but I mean, I see this every day in news. Let's just give an example of somebody who's a prominent person who gets involved in a hit and run and then leaves, leaves the scene. Why did he leave the scene? Did he just turn into that person who gets away with everything at that moment? I don't want to be held responsible. No. His entire life has been going along step by step, trying to skirt the rules, trying to get around what was right or wrong.

My little lie here at 10 years old, now has created at 30 years old, a bigger lie that I can walk away from. You see, it's a process. And the same way with somebody who does something, fraud, financial fraud. All of those crimes are very common these days in the financial industry. How did that happen?

Dr. James Dobson: And in politics.

Lauren Green: And in politics. It's because at some point somebody takes a little turn to this way, because it's not important because it's just a little lie. It's just a little fraud until the next time, the next time, and the next time. It's like a train track that if all you do is push one little lever, and the train goes in another direction. At first, it doesn't seem like it's a totally different direction until it gets 50 miles down the road. And you realize it's in a totally different direction.

Dr. James Dobson: Let me give my own illustration on that. I've run Christian ministries for 40 years. And I find that keeping it on track is not unlike the satellite Pioneer 10, which went to Saturn, more than a billion miles away. And if the rocket is going to get there and arrive where it's supposed to, there are little jets on the side of that rocket that just ... it's a little squirt that moves it or corrects the trajectory. If somebody's not doing that, it can miss by five billion miles, because you have to have that little correction that takes place. If you look at the Ivy League schools, they started out being totally committed to Christ. They were Christian institutions.

Lauren Green: Designed to train ministers.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah. That's exactly what their purpose was. But now they've completely missed the mark, because you didn't make those little corrections. We all have to do that in our lives. And our consciences will guide us to say that really was not good.

Lauren Green: Right, right.

Dr. James Dobson: What you did there, you shouldn't do that again. And you repent of it and you make the little correction-

Lauren Green: Make the correction.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and keep it on track. But it is not only for an institution like those I was responsible for, but also for us as individuals, because we press toward the mark. You don't allow it to vary, and then you find out you're in big trouble.

Lauren Green: Oh absolutely. I mean, it's the classic case of the Israelites being given God's law and the rituals of sacrifice and the laws that went around them and then being so enamored with that process in itself, they forgot the reason behind the law in the first place. And that's what happens to Christians who become more interested in the ritual rather than the relationship.

Dr. James Dobson: Lauren, you came here today, and gave a devotional to our staff. I told you earlier that everybody on our staff in order to work here has a commitment to Christ and a determination to serve Him. And that's one of the qualifications to work here. And so you came and spoke to them today, and I couldn't be there this morning. But you spoke on the Psalms.

Lauren Green: Yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: You love the Psalms, don't you?

Lauren Green: I do love the Psalms because as a musician, of course I love the Psalms because they're the songs to God.

Dr. James Dobson: They're songs.

Lauren Green: But the Psalm I talked about most is the Psalm 119, which is the longest single chapter in the Bible, and it sits right in the middle of it. It's 176 verses. It's an acrostic poem, which means each letter of the first stanza of the eight is a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It starts with Aleph and then Beth and then it goes down. And we lose that in the translation. As you translate the Bible into the various languages, we don't understand, but usually most of the translations have the Hebrew letter name and the beginning of each eight stanzas, you actually kind of understand what that it means.

For people don't understand that about their Bible, that's the reason why you have it because it's in acrostic. It's alphabetical according to the Hebrew alphabet. And so Psalm 119 is 176 verses, and it's the largest single chapter, but it is a virtual love song to God's laws. It's a love song to the law of God. And I thought it was an incredible, powerful understanding of this Psalm, because it sits right in the middle of the Bible. You've got the law of given to the Israelites in the Old Testament, moving towards-

Dr. James Dobson: That was not an accident. I'm sure.

Lauren Green: Exactly. And then as you leave Psalm 119, you're going towards the birth of Jesus and the New Testament. And I think that it's a very, very telling position for this Psalm, which is a virtual love song to God's law.

Dr. James Dobson: Are you speaking at various venues? Do people invite you to speak?

Lauren Green: Well, they can. Anybody can invite me. They can certainly get a hold of me, and I will certainly go. I actually spoke a few weeks ago at North Greenville University. I also spoke at Patrick Henry College outside...

Dr. James Dobson: Great little school.

Lauren Green: It's a very, very, it's a wonderful little school. And so this is my first book, and it took me about 10 years to write.

Dr. James Dobson: Did it really?

Lauren Green: Between the research and the interviews. The lot of the research was done with scientists as well as theologians because I was a 2009 Templeton Cambridge Fellow. I went to Cambridge University, lectured to by many of the scientists who at the Faraday Institute for the study of Science and Religion. And so a lot of the science is in there about bringing these two elements of science and faith together. That if there is a God, this is my take, if there is a God, then He's totally understanding of what the science is. He created it. And to me-

Dr. James Dobson: There's no contradiction within.

Lauren Green: Exactly. There's no contradiction. Not only that, I look at the nature around this and whatever science has discovered about it, I take it as covenants, because it's a covenant to God. He created it. So to me, they're not just natural laws or scientific laws. They're covenants that God has given us for the purpose of human flourishing.

Dr. James Dobson: Mathematics is closely related to music and so on.

Lauren Green: Oh my goodness. Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Is science for you an outgrowth of your love for music, and the mathematical aspect of your training?

Lauren Green: I think so, because one of the consistent things we've seen in the past is how music is very much a part of a scientist's background. Have you seen the movie *Hidden Figures*?

Dr. James Dobson: No.

Lauren Green: Talking about the Black women who helped put a man into space in Nassau, and because they were basically called human computers. And they had incredible math skills, and they called them computers. And one of the consistent things about their background is that they were all musicians and played in church. And it's a very consistent study that music, particularly piano, I believe because I'm a pianist, trains the brain in a way that only music can, to look at scientific problems, technology.

Dr. James Dobson: That's kind of related to the code breakers in World War II who were able to decipher both the Japanese and the German codes.

Lauren Green: Music is probably the most important element of an academic training that's not directly related to academics. I was told, and I should probably look this up that the Japanese actually include music as part of the curriculum of their academics, of their education process because they understand how much it influences how a child thinks.

Dr. James Dobson: That is true. I've read that.

Lauren Green: Yeah. So this is something that America really needs to understand. And one of the things that I would love to do, and I keep talking about this is create what I call the "Piano Forte Project," to bring piano curriculum into the schools as a conservatory, not as something to be fun, but as a conservatory so that they actually start learning and processing and growing, and having exams and juries and getting to the next level and having requirements.

Roger Marsh: Well in a culture that's drifting like a ship without an anchor, Lauren Green's lighthouse metaphor illuminates how God's unchanging truth can guide us through even the thickest fog. Friend, you're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a special conversation Dr. Dobson had with our special guest, Lauren Green of the Fox News Channel. To hear today's program again or to share it with a friend, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's where you'll also find information about Lauren Green's insightful book called *Lighthouse Faith: God as a Living Reality in a World Immersed in Fog*.

The biblical principles discussed here on Family Talk represent the heart of our mission at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. We are committed to preserving and promoting marriage, family, and faith in a culture that desperately needs God's moral compass. Your generous support enables us to continue broadcasting these important biblical truths each and every day. You can partner with us by making a secure donation over the phone at 877-732-6825. If it's easier, you can make a secure donation online when you go to drjamesdobson.org.

Well I'm Roger Marsh inviting you to join us again next time for the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's fascinating conversation with Lauren Green from Fox News

Channel. That's coming up right here next time on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust, for the family you love.

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

Dr. James Dobson: Hello, everyone. This is James Dobson inviting you to join us for our next edition of Family Talk. Every day we come to these microphones with someone in mind. Whether it's a busy mom looking for tips on discipline, or a husband who wants to learn more about connecting with his wife, we want to put an arm around your family in any way that we can. So join us next time for Family Talk, won't you?