



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Inauguration 2025: What's Next for America

**Guest(s):** Gary Bauer

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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: Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. And today here on the program, a very, very special installment of Family Talk. Today is Inauguration Day 2025. And who better than to join me in studio to have a conversation about what we're anticipating with a brand new presidential administration than Gary Bauer? Gary is our senior vice president of public policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. And he's been around Washington a little bit. He knows a little bit about what happens on Capitol Hill.
- Gary, happy new year and welcome back to the broadcast.
- Gary Bauer: Thank you, Roger. It's an exciting day in Washington, DC. This is one of the little things that happens every four years here. We inaugurate a president. But this year seems particularly profound and it's also historic, as you know, because we're inaugurating a president who was president once before, but there was four years between the first time he was president and the beginning of this one. And that hasn't happened since Grover Cleveland did it back in the late 1800s.
- Roger Marsh: Wow. Wow.
- Gary Bauer: So we've already made some history today.
- Roger Marsh: Yeah. I love the fact that we do have this history. It does seem like the Trump administration is now going into its third term because of the last four years were somewhat tumultuous. I think first and foremost, we are giving glory to God, not because we here at the JDFI, were backing any particular candidate, but I know the work that you did and Dr. Dobson did and we did with our Countdown to Decision 2024 program. The whole name of the game there was to encourage people to vote biblically, if you're a Christian, especially to vote for your biblical values, but secondly, to get Christians who typically sit on their hands to get engaged. And I think we saw a huge turnout of people who ordinarily don't engage, get engaged.

Gary Bauer:

You're absolutely right, Roger. This is something that's been dear to the heart of Dr. Dobson his entire career. He and I, over the years, over the decades, have been complaining about Christians not being good Christian citizens. It seems like for about a hundred years we've been complaining about that. But in fact in recent years, and particularly in this last election, there has been a more encouraging turnout of men and women that believe the Bible and believe that our liberty comes from God not from government, and they made a difference.

And of course it needs to be mentioned. You know this Roger, but I know a lot of Christians are still confused about it. We hear over and over again from people that say, "Look, I'm just going to go to church on Sunday. I'm going to worship God. I'm going to leave all that outside of the church. It has nothing to do with me." Well, that's really a flawed thinking. This is a country whose founders believed that it could only exist, it could only survive if the population were moral people, though everything they built was based on that idea.

It's also a country that has sent more missionaries around the world to bring the good news about our Savior Jesus Christ than any country in the history of the world. So America is deeply intertwined with our Christian faith. So that means today on Inauguration Day, the battle really begins in a very profound way. And one of the things we want to do at JDFI is keep people informed and let them know when they're going to need to weigh in on legislation is pending or something that the president is or isn't doing as we deal with these great issues that will determine the future of our country.

Roger Marsh:

Well, it's interesting, Gary, because I appreciate the position that you have with us here at the JDFI as the senior vice president of public policy because a lot of people don't realize, they think, "Well, that's politics and those are laws, and that's not my lane," if you will, and realizing that as Christians, that's absolutely something that we should be concerned with. The policy decisions that are made by an administration have huge ramifications in the culture.

And then this year we also launched and brought in Dr. Owen Strachan as our senior director of the Dobson Culture Center to help us understand the policies kind of set the agenda for what the administration's going to do. And then the cultural impact causes us as believers to head back to Scripture and say, "Wait, is this forcing me to compromise my values or not?"

Maybe one of the black eyes, if you will, of the Biden administration has been the fact that they have sought so aggressively to seek out ways to basically undermine biblical and traditional values that beyond the fact that they're an offense to God, but they really do bring havoc in society.

Talk about from your vantage point, what we've seen over the past four years and why Donald Trump being in the White House means we're going to see a shift in those policies.

Gary Bauer: It's a great question, Roger. I think all of us here at JDFI, we get a little nervous. Maybe that's not the right word, but we don't want to come across as being political partisans or tied to one political party or whatever. But there is a certain reality in American political life and public life right now, and one of the ways we've addressed this is to look at the platforms of the two parties. Nobody in the Democrat Party is going to disagree with what I'm getting ready to say. The Democrat Party platform is all in on abortion on demand, to give you just one example. And it's all in on the political demands of the LGBTQ community or special interest group, however you want to refer to it. And because of that, the Biden years have been four years where our religious liberty, our rights of conscience have been under constant attack. It's not just that the president promoted abortion and promoted LGBTQ issues. President Biden did that at the expense of our right to not be involved in those things.

Roger Marsh: That's a good point.

Gary Bauer: So in fact, right now we're part of a lawsuit against the outgoing Biden administration over regulations they issued to try to make Christian ministries and Christian businesses violate our conscience by promoting abortion or paying for abortions or promoting LGBTQ issues or being implicated in the whole transgender movement and all that's going on with that that threatens our children. All of that ends, all those things that were coming out of Washington, all of that ends today on Inauguration day.

Roger Marsh: Amen. Gary, you brought up an excellent point in the fact that there are a lot of people who don't see the interrelativity, if you will, the interconnectivity of the things that the previous administration, the outgoing one, now thank the Lord that we've survived four years at that. But isn't that a testament to the great American system that we have here, Gary Bauer? I mean, let's face it. There are a lot of people every four years who say, "I'm so glad that person's not president anymore." Other people who say, "Thank the Lord they are." But the system still works.

I mean, it really does. It's a testament to the Constitution and to God's hand of providence on our nation that even a fascist dictatorial type, and maybe fascist is a bit too strong, but the Biden administration really did have those tendencies in terms of saying, "Look, we're going to push abortion rights. We're going to push transgender ideologies at the expense of religious liberty." I mean, if it weren't a zero-sum game like that, there's no way you could do one without the other, and yet they keep saying, "No, no, no, everybody can be accepted. Everybody's welcome." But as you duly noted, that's a place where Christians have to stand in the gap and say, "Wait a minute, not only is that not morally right, it's also unconstitutional."

Gary Bauer: That's a great summary, Roger. To stay on the LGBTQ part of this, and I don't know if any new letters have been added since our show began, it seems to be a growing phenomenon. But early on in that movement, the appeal that it made to the American public and quite frankly to Christians was, "Look, we know you

don't agree with us, but we're not asking you to marry somebody of the same sex. We're not asking you to have an abortion. We're just saying, let us live our lives the way we want to. If we love someone, who are you to question our love?" And that was a very effective argument.

And I think quite frankly, there's a lot of evidence that particularly younger Christians found it persuasive and said, "Well, yeah, why are you being so mean-spirited and not letting those people have the same rights that we do?" Well now that that movement got traction, the LGBTQ movement got traction. It was no longer a live and let live movement, it was an iron fist, "You will participate and bake cakes for our weddings."

Roger Marsh: Right. Right.

Gary Bauer: And all the rest of it. "You will not preach about this in your churches or we will sue you for denying us our constitutional rights." So it is been very, I think, instructive to see the live and let live argument really doesn't play out.

There's no society that's neutral. Every society will have a set of things that it admires, that it looks up to, that it wants to teach its children to follow and to be committed to. And it will have a series of things of ideas and ways of living that that society will say, "No, don't do that. That is not right. That is wrong." Somebody always wins in a society, in our society over these sorts of things. And thank God for JDPI and thank God for Dr. Dobson's voice over the decades because we have said that the things to look up to here in America are faith, family, and freedom.

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Gary Bauer: That's what the country was built on, and that's what we remain committed to following and to defending.

Roger Marsh: Well, today here on Inauguration Day, Gary Bauer is with here us here in studio on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and we're talking about what this new administration, the, we used to call President Trump, President 45. Now he's also President 47, which is kind of interesting. Hasn't happened in this country in well over a hundred years.

But as I was just thinking, Gary, of the image as Donald Trump placing his hand, left hand on the Bible, right hand in the air to take the oath of office, I could hear the border closing. I could hear the gates kind of... the doors shutting up. And not only that, but I could hear Homeland Security under the capable direction of former South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem coming in and saying, "Okay, we're shutting things down now." That open border issue, I think that's a hand that the Democrat Party horribly overplayed in the election as kind of downplaying the fact that, "Well, it's really not that important to American families." And yet the open border has put so many families at risk. So many

communities are being overwhelmed. We think about right even hearing Colorado. I mean the gang activity moving into taking over apartment complexes and things of that nature.

A lot of Christians are going to say, "But Gary, you know what though? It's not right. People are coming here and they need a place to flee their homeland and they need a safe place to land."

Why is it good and godly for us to close the borders and have not keep people out necessarily, but have a better way of filtering those who come in?

Gary Bauer: Well, Roger, you're absolutely right. This is another one of those issues that there's been division in the church about, although when you do polling on it, Americans overwhelmingly are against what they watched the last four years. And that goes for men and women of faith, men and women who are in church every Sunday. Just their common sense told them, "You can't have eight, 10, 12 million people walk into America without having a profound impact on the country." And now some of it might be a positive impact, but a lot of it is a very negative impact.

If a good person can walk across the border and now go wherever they want and never leave even if a court demands that they leave, well then what would stop a bad person from walking across the border?

Roger Marsh: Exactly. Yeah.

Gary Bauer: Or a terrorist from walking across the border? And in fact, we know that that has happened. And the reason we know it is that American citizens, the people that our government has the first responsibility to defend and protect have been raped and killed and robbed. That's unacceptable. There's nothing Christian about that.

I will often hear someone, usually a progressive, self-identified progressive in the church, who thinks that the argument is over, if that person simply says, "Jesus loves migrants," well, Jesus loves all human beings. He sent His son to die for our salvation as the perfect lamb. The fact that Jesus loves men and women that He created does not, in any way, settle the argument about what a nation's border policy should be.

Roger Marsh: Right.

Gary Bauer: Jesus loves taxpayers. Jesus loves American citizens. So you've got to bring a more well-thought-out moral mindset to deal with these sorts of issues.

Roger Marsh: I remember one theologian one night. A guy was trying to do the open border thing with him, and his response was, "Well, do you lock your door before you go to bed?"

Gary Bauer: Exactly right. Yes.

Roger Marsh: You know? I mean, of course we do. So that's the thing. And last time I checked too, Heaven does have a gate and does have a narrow way in. And there is a way that people can get in, but there's also provisions for keeping people out. That's a godly principle.

Gary Bauer: There's a half million children we shouldn't forget about. That's the number of children during the Biden years that crossed our border, many of them unaccompanied by an adult. And those children were given to other adults in the United States that claimed they were a relative or claimed that they were somebody, that there had been a prearrangement made with the family and the home country the child comes from to take care of that child. And we found out in the closing months of the Biden administration that we were no longer able to locate the great majority of those children.

Roger Marsh: That's terrible.

Gary Bauer: There is absolutely no doubt that some of those children are being abused. They've been trafficked. Others are no doubt working in sweatshop factories as illegal minor workers for businesses that are off the grid. So this is a human tragedy. No country can legitimately allow something like that to happen. And yet that's exactly what happened over the last four years. And I know that the Trump administration has said all during the transition period, they're going to do everything they can to find those children and rescue them wherever they are. That is something that Jesus would be smiling about.

Roger Marsh: Amen. Well, we're smiling about it here at Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and the JDFI. Gary Bauer is our senior vice president of public policy. He's the host of the Defending Faith Family and Freedom Podcast, and a regular contributor, of course, to the Family Talk Program.

And today here on Inauguration Day, Gary, also having served in the Reagan White House for many years, and also you served President Trump in a capacity, I didn't want to make you a cabinet member or anything like that at that point if it wasn't warranted to give you that promotion, but you served the last couple of years of his first term working in an area that I know a lot of people think is kind of an anomaly, Donald Trump and religious liberty, especially as it pertains to Christians. And yet he's got... You look at all his foreign policy decisions, look at the Christians that he's picked to cabinet posts and ambassadorships and things of that nature. It's a very exciting time for Americans, again, to see men and women of faith put in these positions.

Gary Bauer: Yes. Well, it's an old saying in Washington that the personnel is policy. A president brings 6,000, 7,000, 8,000 people with him to all these posts. There are Christians all over the Trump administration. There wasn't his first term. You mentioned the assignment I had. It was not a paid assignment, but he

nominated me to be one of the nine members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. And our job was to look at every nation in the world and rate them on whether they were allowing the citizens of their country to enjoy the most fundamental right that all human beings should have, which is to seek God and worship God as they see fit. And President Trump was very committed to that issue, remains committed to it.

Roger Marsh: Did I read this correctly, Gary? There's a new faith office that's going to be coming in as part of the Trump 47 administration?

Gary Bauer: Yes, there is going to be a faith office. Now, he had an office in the administration in his first term, and it was very effective. But it still had to deal with bureaucracy and so forth, like all these departments and commissions and agencies do. This faith office is going to report directly to the president, and there's going to be an individual in each government cabinet agency that is part of that faith office and will represent it in each of those agencies around Washington D.C.

For years, Donald Trump has had a faith advisory board.

Roger Marsh: Right. Right.

Gary Bauer: He had that in his first term. And Dr. Dobson is a member of that Faith Advisory Board, continues to be a member of it today. And it will, this time, report directly to the president, this faith office. So I think it's another example of how seriously Donald Trump is committed to religious liberty.

One other thing on this, Roger, that I think a lot of Christians forget, religious liberty right now at the Supreme Court is in a stronger position than it's been in in 50 years. And the reason for that is that, in his first term, Donald Trump had three Supreme Court vacancies that he was able to fill. And that gave us, depending on the issue, somewhere between a five or six vote majority on the Supreme Court in defense of religious liberty.

We don't know what's going to happen in the next four years. I believe there could be another vacancy of another one of the liberal justices. And if that happens, I have no doubt that Donald Trump will appoint somebody that is committed to the First Amendment and its guarantee of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, what we call the first freedoms that are part of our constitution.

Roger Marsh: Well, it's an exciting time. It's an exciting day. Inauguration Day 2025. We've been having this conversation with Gary Bauer, who's the senior vice president of public policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, former undersecretary of education and served on the advisory board for the... I always get the lettering wrong.

Gary Bauer: Yeah, it's USCIRF is the alphabet name.

Roger Marsh: Okay. Uh-huh.

Gary Bauer: But it's U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom. And by the way, Roger, the most persecuted group in the world, we founded the commission, this won't surprise anybody, are followers of Jesus Christ.

Roger Marsh: It's come to that point. So this is the world we live in. And for such a time as this, we are very hopeful and anticipating that the next four years are going to be years of not necessarily just easy-peasy for Christians, but rather to see the biblical worldview carried out from the highest level of government here in the United States. And Gary, thank you for handicapping that with us.

Would you take the final moments of our time together and just offer a prayer for the incoming administration, for our nation, and also for maybe believers who are kind of scratching their heads saying, "Wait a minute. Why would God put this man as our president? How is that a good thing from God?" if you would be so kind?

Gary Bauer: Of course, Roger. Well, Father God, we just thank You for the incredible blessing we received when You allowed us to be born or to immigrate legally to the United States of America. Of all the places in the world that someone could be born in, to be born here is an unbelievable blessing. This is a nation built on the idea that liberty comes from You. You weren't surprised by the fact that we were born in America. You knew exactly where we were going to be born. And so because of this gift You gave us, Father God, we have an obligation to preserve it, to take care of it, to protect it. Otherwise, we would be ingrates. Nobody would want to abuse or ignore a wonderful gift given to them. And You've given us this gift to be citizens in the United States. So thank You for that blessing. Give us the courage as Christian citizens to speak up for our faith and to stand for faith, family, and freedom.

And Father God, for some who still don't understand why Christians voted by massive margins for Donald Trump, help them to have the wisdom to know that the Bible is full of stories of heroes and heroines, often unlikely and fallen men and women who You used for Your purposes in ways that helped the world of the time they lived in.

Father God, we pray for Your protection on President Trump and the members of his administration that You would keep them safe. We would pray, Father, that all those in the administration, followers of Jesus Christ, would be strengthened in their faith, but also members of the administration that may not yet understand You and Your message of salvation to us that may be during their time of public service. This will be when they find Jesus and being even better in the jobs that they've given us.



Father God, finally, we ask that this great country that has done so many good things, we're a flawed nation as all nations are, but we pray, Father, that You would continue to help America follow your will to make us a nation that in fact is a shining city on a hill. Father God, we know that America can't be great again until it's godly again. We ask these things in Christ's name and for His sake. Amen.

Roger Marsh: Amen. Gary Bauer, thank you so much for helping us to get the proper spiritual perspective on Inauguration Day 2025 here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Gary, it's always a pleasure to be with you.

Gary Bauer: Always great to be with you, Roger.

Roger Marsh: Well, you've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, featuring an insightful conversation about Inauguration Day 2025 with our own Gary Bauer, our senior vice president of public policy here at the Dr. James Dobson Policy Center.

Now, if you missed any portion of today's historic broadcast or if you'd like to share it with others, go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) or you can also access this audio through the Family Talk app. And speaking of apps, you can now follow JDFI on the Bible app, the YouVersion Bible app, which is utilized by millions of people worldwide. You can join the nearly 100,000 people who have subscribed to three-day devotional plans with practical biblical insights to strengthen marriages and equip parents. For example, you can get started with one of these popular plans, Dr. Dobson's 3-Day marriage plan for improving communication skills or finding true love in your marriage. You'll also benefit from Dr. Dobson's 3-Day parenting plan for a mother's impact on her children and opting for effective discipline. You can follow JDFI when you access the YouVersion Bible app, and you'll find that information in Google Play or the App Store.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, thanking you so much for listening to the broadcast today. Be sure to join us again next time for another 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.