



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** How Christians Can Assert A Biblical Worldview of Race, Gender, and Sexuality – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Dr. Neil Shenvi

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute, supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and on the last edition of our program, we began a fascinating conversation with Dr. Neil Shenvi about understanding woke ideology and where it comes from. Dr. Shenvi holds a Ph.D. in theoretical chemistry from UC Berkeley. And along with his co-author, Pat Sawyer, he's written a brand new book called *Post Woke: asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. Now, on the last edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we worked to understand what critical theory actually teaches. On today's program, we'll turn the corner toward what we do about it. Dr. Shenvi will show us how to reach people in our lives who've been swept up in these ideas, not by winning an argument, which could lead to losing that person in the relationship, but rather by speaking the truth in love. Dr. Shenvi will also explain why giving our kids a positive biblical vision matters far more than a list of do's and don'ts. So let's rejoin this conversation right now.

Well, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love. I'm Roger Marsh, joined again for part two of a conversation about a brand-new book by Dr. Neil Shenvi and Pat Sawyer. The book is called *Post Woke: Asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. We have a link for it up at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), and Dr. Neil Shenvi is with us. Once again, Dr. Shenvi, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. Neil Shenvi: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: There was a big paradigm shift, and I remember the Obergefell decision, and we were told by the White House, well, this isn't going to affect anybody. It's not really going to change anything. If you are in a straight marriage, then gay marriage isn't going to change anything. And yet, it seems like that was the shot heard around the world that kind of unleashed all of this woke ideology becoming the norm. And it's interesting, Dr. Neil Shenvi, I'm sure, as you've seen some of the statistics that are suggesting anyway, I don't know if they are actually verifiable at this point, the number of Gen Z, especially young men, that are starting to return to traditional, biblical, or at least they're going to Catholic

and more organized religious expressions, and they're looking for a basis. Is that a response, do you think, to this great awakening, or are they just kind of trying on Catholicism and Christianity because they're looking for a little more structure in their lives?

Dr. Neil Shenvi: It could be either. I've seen conflicting data sets on the number of Gen Zers and Gen Alpha who are re-entering the churches. I would say it's a real phenomenon, but it's still extremely small. And you have to set that against, you know, talking about 80, 90% of young people who are totally rejecting Christianity and all biblical norms and values. So even if we're seeing a small spark of interest in "traditional values and norms," it's not enough to offset this desperate need for the church to respond directly to the claims of critical theory. So I think we can be hopeful, but what we need to do is be prepared. I liken our position to that of a missionary. You know, we're missionaries to our culture, and to be an effective missionary, A, you have to understand the gospel. You have to preach the gospel, teach the gospel, but also you have to speak the language, or help speak the language of your culture. We're missionaries to our culture, which is consumed right now by wokeness. How do we articulate the gospel in a way that they can hear?

Roger Marsh: You have talked and debated a lot of so-called progressive Christians. This has got to be the worst of the worst, where they know just enough Scripture to be dangerous, but they've completely bought into this critical theory that says, my Christianity is only as good as it is to facilitate favor with the people that are on the woke side of the equation.

Dr. Neil Shenvi: Yeah, it's really their whole, the telos, the end goal of critical theory has always been liberation. That's their ultimate good.

Roger Marsh: Because there are oppressors and oppressed.

Dr. Neil Shenvi: Exactly right. That's their whole moral framework is geared towards a "liberating the oppressed," They're defining those words, of course, in ways the Bible wouldn't condone, but that's their motivation. And again, something deep in the human heart screams out for true liberation. That's a good thing for true justice. It's a good thing. But they've redefined all of these words in very non-biblical ways. So, you know, another way to approach people who are getting caught up in woke ideology is just to point out, if it's the kind of person who responds to, say, logic and reason, like as an engineer or scientist, just point out how this reasoning will put an end to logic. You can't subscribe to this kind of rationale that says I can always impute impure motives to the person based on their identity, their skin color, their gender, or you're just saying that because you're a straight white male. Look, that's not how evidence and reason and logic work. If I go to the car mechanic and he says, hey, your carburetor's broken, I say, "I don't believe. You're a straight white male." You're like, you better not take that approach to like medicine. Or to, you know, engineering, you're driving over a bridge, but you can't drive that. "Oh, it's built by a straight white

male. I can't trust that bridge. I'm going to get a random person who's not an engineer to build a bridge for me because of diversity." That's crazy. Reality is there. Reality is non-ideological. It's just there. And I think Francis Schaeffer said, reality is what you bump into when you have wrong ideas. We're increasingly bumping into reality when we insist on things like straight white men are all blind. We can tell them to sit down and shut up. We can exalt people's identity as a source of truth. It's like, look, we all have blind spots. We can acknowledge that, say, if I'm half Indian. As a half Indian, upper middle class scientist, sure, I have blind spots. I should be willing to listen. Absolutely. The Bible says be slow to speak, quick to listen. All of that's great. I can say, maybe you can help me understand the Bible better. But at the end of the day, when all is said and done, I have to come back to asking, what does God's Word say? What does the objective evidence indicate? And how can I use my God-given reason and intellect to understand these things? I can't just go based on my feelings. I can't go based on my lived experience because my lived experience is fallible. My heart is deceitful. My mind is corrupted by sin. So I have to go back to some kind of bedrock, and that bedrock is God's Word.

Roger Marsh:

Dr. Dobson recently, we featured a program of his from the archives where he was talking with Dr. Kevin Leman, and they were discussing childhood memories. And the whole idea that those aren't memories that kind of shaped you. They really, in many ways, are you. I mean, a lot of your early foundational formations come from those moments. And Doctor was sharing a moment where his dad brought him home a tricycle and came and knocked on the front door, which you ordinarily wouldn't do. Young Jimmy answered the door and he said, come around, I got something for you. And he says, I can remember the sights and the smells, all those different things. And then they started digging down and says, well, why would a three-year-old be answering the door? Why would your dad come through the front door? Obviously, he'd talked to mom ahead of time, but in your mind, what you experienced was, I answered the door and my dad was there and a bike showed up and this is wonderful. And you've reasoned, you know, like a child. Doesn't the apostle Paul encourage us to not even warn us to not keep reasoning like children as we get older. But it seems like that lived experience part of the woke generation, you then wind up with the gibberish of Anthony Fauci saying, trust the science. And oh, by the way, I am the science. And so you're like, okay, that doesn't, you're a scientist. I mean, that doesn't make, that makes no sense whatsoever. But there are a lot of Christians who are buying into it. There are a lot of people running for office. I think of the governor of Kentucky, the possibly soon to be senator from the state of Texas that are all wrapping up woke ideology in Bible language. I can't even call it biblical Christianity.

Dr. Neil Shenvi:

Last November, Zohran Mamdani won New York City's mayoral office, right? And if you look back at the 2020s, he was spouting the most insane woke stuff like, you know, promoting sex work and talking about how intersectional feminists need to protect the rights of trans women. Just all kinds of stuff like that. He ran that campaign and he won and he's the mayor of New York City. So we have to dispel this idea that wokeness is dead. We have to be able to

combat it, not just politically, like I'm not against at all passing laws that promote actual equality opportunity but reject this Marxist framework. That's fine. But at a one-to-one level, we have to engage with our neighbors, our kids, fellow people in our churches, our pastors and explain to them this is not innocuous. This is also not going to lead to actual justice. This is actually going to promote injustice in the name of justice. They're examining... the Supreme Court a few years ago overturned affirmative action. Why? Because they found that under the guise of affirmative action, colleges were actually discriminating very clearly against Asians. In the name of justice, they were, and the data, if you haven't looked at the data, it is shocking how Harvard discriminated against Asians very clearly. A friend of mine who's a lawyer actually wrote about the data. He's actually an Asian American, but it was astonishing. This was allowed for, I guess, decades under the aegis of diversity. When in reality, you're actually working very hard to keep the class less diverse by excluding people that you've deemed overrepresented.

Anyway, the bottom line is I think there's many ways to attack this ideology. One other last thing I'll say is this. Wokeness and critical theory are very anti-hierarchy, obviously. They see hierarchies as inherently oppressive. You have oppressors and oppressed. But the Bible, there's a hierarchy in the Bible that's good and God-ordained. Now, not all is good and God-ordained, obviously. Racial hierarchies of whites above blacks, that's unjust. But other hierarchies are actually good. For example, here's a no-brainer. God is in charge and we are not.

Roger Marsh:

God is God and we're not.

Dr. Neil Shenvi:

God is God and we're not. We're His creatures. And actually, this is sort of fundamental to the outlook of critical theory. In one sense to them, God is the ultimate oppressor. He's the ruling class. He's imposing His values and norms on everybody and saying, and these norms justify His own sovereignty and goodness. He says you all must submit to them. You must internalize them and accept them. So in a sense, God is the oppressor greater than which none can be conceived of the critical theorist. But beyond that, take parents and children. It is a very good thing that parents have authority and power over their kids. Why? It's for the kids' good. But believe it or not, there's an oppression termed adultism that's in the literature where critical theorists believe that parents are the oppressors and children are being oppressed because they're being denied agency and freedom and power. And the last thing I'll say is this. Unfortunately, they go all the way with this. So within queer theory, there is, within parts of it, there's a push to normalize pedophilia. Because in their minds, children are being denied sexual agency, the right to choose sexual relationship with adults and that as adults, we should destigmatize and decriminalize pedophilia because that's the ultimate frontier of children's liberation. Again, if you think I'm being a scaremongering or being... no, it's right. We have quote after quote in the literature saying outright this is a justice issue. So that's to say we really have to take these ideas seriously and then combat them.

Roger Marsh:

It's interesting to see yet another contradiction in woke theory, Dr. Neil Shenvi. As you were discussing this, I couldn't help but wonder how many of these children who are basically having their bodies mutilated for "gender reassignment." I was born in the wrong body. You assigned this to me at birth. This is not who I am. If it weren't for adults who were pushing for this, how many children would actually take agency and say, this is what I want? How many children would, if it was same-sex attraction? Find how many kids there are in America right now, let alone the world, who didn't have some sort of undue influence on them in terms of, I think of Dennis Jernigan, Christian singer and songwriter, who was unfortunately introduced, he was sexually assaulted when he was like five years old and struggled with same-sex attraction in his adult years simply because of something he didn't want, he didn't ask for, it was forced upon him. I don't know that there's any credible research, and I'm sure you'd have a better handle on it than I, Dr. Shenvi, as to whether or not there are cases where there are verifiable claims of people who say, I knew it this way all the way through and I had to become it. It seems like these very adults who are saying, get the adult agency out of the way so the kids can experience the agency, are the ones who are behind the scenes puppeteering all this. And it's insidious.

Dr. Neil Shenvi:

There's something called gender dysphoria, where some people, a small number of people, do really seem to grow up uncomfortable, intensely uncomfortable with their physical body, right? But one obvious question to ask is, why is the solution to mutilate their body rather than teaching them to love their body, right? Again, anorexia is a good example. There's no doubt there are girls who suffer from anorexia. They truly believe that they're overweight when they're not, right? But no one's saying the solution is, you know, just liposuction. The solution, everybody agrees, is no, teach them to love their body. Actually, who do we blame? We blame the overt sexualization of the female body in media. We're like, that problem is not you, honey. It's not you. You're imbibing the swill of culture that's telling you you're only as good as your sex appeal. And that's the problem, not your body. And so why don't we take the same approach with, say, gender dysphoria and say, yeah, it's a real condition. We feel terrible. How can we help you? But help is found in becoming comfortable with how God's made your body.

That's one. And then people, of course, have done studies. A really famous one is by Lisa Lipman, who worked for Brown University. She did a study in 2021, maybe, about what she called rapid onset gender dysphoria. What she described was she interviewed hundreds of parents of kids who had grown up, mostly girls. They grew up expressing no discomfort whatsoever with their gender, none. No signs that they were ever uncomfortable. And then they'd go to school and suddenly you'd see this transition of like a whole friend group in the school would all suddenly declare we're all boys. And over and over, she's seeing this pattern, and so she characterized this pattern she was seeing as a rapid-onset gender dysphoria, and she viewed it as a social contagion.

Roger Marsh:

Interesting.

Dr. Neil Shenvi: So, unsurprisingly, when the LGBTQ activists saw this paper coming out in PLOS One, which is a very prestigious journal, and it was being welcomed by Brown University in a press release for this paper, they were furious. So they got Brown University to delete the press release. They got the paper taken down or reviewed as if there was something wrong with it. But after a review process, the journal said, no, the paper's findings are accurate. But they still apologized for the harm it had done to the LGBT community. But I'm like, look, we want to know the truth. I mean, in the end, after the investigation, the paper was sound science. And I think today people are more open to the idea that, yes, there can be this community hysteria, this sort of fad sweep through the community like slinkies or fidget spinners, where suddenly everybody's doing it, everyone's caught up, and the next day it's all gone. But believe it or not, that can happen with things like gender dysphoria, where suddenly all these 12-year-old girls decide they're all born in the wrong body, but they're picking it up from culture, from TikTok, from Tumblr. And we should be, again, if we're people of the truth, we need to be concerned with what is actually true, not simply what society commends and pats us on the back for.

Roger Marsh: Well, Dr. Neil Shenvi has given us a lot to think about in this brand new book, *Post Woke: Asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*, I think is a must-read for every educator, every parent, every pastor. Let's take some practical steps here. There's a... say I'm a Christian teacher right now or a parent who's homeschooling. And the reason that they chose that route, as we talked about earlier, is they want biblical values and they're trying to prevent this type of thing from happening. It's kind of like saying, you know, I want to walk in the rain and not get wet. I mean, it's just, it's where culture is right now. And the battle, the enemy will bring it right to you. Give us a couple of first steps for parents, give a look first steps for pastors and educators as to what we can do if this is that revelatory moment where you're saying, okay, now I'm awakened to the fact that we had a great awakening and it's infiltrating the church now. What are some good first steps for someone who just took the blinders off and said, yikes, what do I do?

Dr. Neil Shenvi: Well, we wrote the book for you. So that's number one. You can buy *Post Woke*. I think it'll be a good framework for understanding these ideas and showing you why they're wrong. But I'm glad you mentioned biblical values and worldview. The subtitle of our book is *Asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. I think that's often missing from these discussions. It's very easy to slap someone's hand and say, "No, don't. Critical race theory is bad. Queer theory is bad. It's false and unbiblical." Okay, but here's the problem. You've given them nothing in response. You've given them nothing to substitute. So it's like saying to a starving man who's eating moldy bread, you're slapping his hand, don't eat that, it's moldy, then giving him nothing. Well, he'd rather eat moldy bread than starve to death. So we want to not only criticize these ideologies, we want to also give people a positive vision of race, gender, and sexuality. So in our book, the second half of it is all about saying, what does the Bible tell us about ethnicity, marriage, sex, etc.? And that will actually, even

more than the criticism, Giving them a positive vision will give them a basis to stand against these ideologies. They'll have something substantive to fall back on.

Here's a great example from my own life. When my oldest son was, I think he was four, out of the blue, all of a sudden, he began saying, I want to be a girl. I wish I were a girl. And I'm like freaking out. I'm like, oh no, what is going on? This is crazy. And my wife was like, calm down, calm down, just ask him questions. I think it was actually three. So it's pretty little still. So I was just going to ask him, buddy, what's going on? Why are you saying that? And after talking for a few days, I suddenly realized I knew what was happening. His sister had just turned one, was one, one and a half, and had just begun to play with mommy's high-heeled shoes and wear her makeup and put on her dresses, right? But when her brother, my son, when he saw, he said, oh, look, she's trying on these cool shoes. We'd say, oh, no, you can't do that. But she's wearing perfume. Oh, you can't do that. But she's wearing a tiara. Oh, no, you can't do that. So he began to conceive of masculinity, being a boy, as a wholly negative thing. It was a list of things you couldn't do. And suddenly I'm like, this makes total sense.

So I took him into my closet one day. I showed him, you know, oh, I have a tie. You can wear a tie. This is for boys. So boys wear ties. I have cologne I wear sometimes. You can wear my cologne. Instantly, this, I want to be a girl, totally stopped. Because we gave him, what he was saying to me was, I want to do things on my own because my sister can do anything I can do. She can play with action figures and cars and locomotives. She can wear pants, but I can't do things that she can do. So we just gave him a special thing that he could do as a boy, and that was all he wanted. So that's one illustration of how a positive vision, not a list of don'ts, but a list of dos, can help create this desire, this recognition that God's truth is good and beautiful.

And the last thing I'll say is that the same son, when he was older, pretty young still, I wanted to expose him to gender ideology and explain to him why, you know, biblical vision of gender was better in an age-appropriate way. So I brought him into our, you know, our playroom and I said, hey, I just want to explain to you something, buddy. You might see it on TV or in culture on a billboard, but there's some boys who think they're girls and there are some girls who think they're boys and they want to be the other thing, but they're not. And the way God designed this is actually good. So he sort of was totally shocked and taken aback and couldn't figure it out. But he finally says to me, "What's wrong with being a boy?" Now, what's interesting is this. He didn't say who'd want to be a girl. He didn't say that because his knee-jerk intuition was, being a boy is good and being a girl is good too. They're both good. Why? Because he'd been just steeped in a Christian view of reality for as long as we've been able to teach him, and his gut reaction was not to disparage the other gender, but to say, but both of us are made in God's image. We're both good. So this is a great illustration of how a positive, constructive biblical worldview is a prophylactic against these unbiblical ideologies. Because your kids grow up

being exposed to like, well, thinking like, well, ethnicity is a good thing. It's cool to have different kinds of food and clothing you wear and traditions and et cetera. But no, your skin color doesn't matter to me. Who cares what color you are? That's a biblical view. Or this, I go to church with people of all different ethnicities, and it's great because we all believe in Jesus. It's in a simple way that kids can articulate this biblical vision of humanity, of gender, of marriage, of family, and that will inculcate them against these unbiblical ideologies.

Roger Marsh:

I love that, the fact that when you take a look at true biblical Christianity and you see who God is, who Jesus is, who the Holy Spirit is, and the reasons that we have for placing our hope in him and our faith and trust in His death and resurrection. It really does clear a lot of the confusion. And the enemy would love nothing more than to confuse people. Did God really say that men should be in charge of the household? And all of a sudden, you create this false narrative.

And I love what you've done with this book, Dr. Shenvi, because you really do help people see here's the problem, but then here is the solution. And the fact that I'll never forget that moldy bread analogy because you're right. I mean, let's face it. We've all had those moments where you're driving down the road and you go, well, I don't like my food options, but I'm hungry. I'll just get something. And that's where a lot of people are with their values right now. And unless we take Paul at his word and say, now let me show you a more excellent way, then we run the risk of losing souls, not just losing the culture. Dr. Neil Shenvi, along with Pat Sawyer, the co-authors of the new book, *Post Woke: Asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. We have a link for this book up at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). And Dr. Shenvi, thank you for the work and the passion that you've put into this project for helping and equipping parents and grandparents to make sure that our kids don't get lost into the wokeism of America and culture, and then church culture as well. Thanks for being with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. Neil Shenvi:

Thank you.

Roger Marsh:

When we give our kids a positive vision of who God made them to be, we hand them something solid to stand on long before the culture comes knocking. You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, where we feature the conclusion of my conversation with Dr. Neil Shenvi about his new book, co-authored with Pat Sawyer, called *Post Woke: Asserting a Biblical Vision of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. If you'd like to hear today's program again or share parts one and two of this discussion with a parent, a pastor, or educator, just visit [jdafi.org](http://jdafi.org). And once you're there, you'll also find a link for Dr. Shenvi's brand-new book called *Post Woke* as well.

Conversations like the one you heard today are only possible because of friends like you who believe families are worth defending. For over 15 years now, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute has centered on one conviction, that the family is God's design and that biblical truth is the firm foundation our culture

so desperately needs. When you make a donation to support this ministry, you help carry that message to millions of homes, introducing people to the gospel, defending the sanctity of human life, and equipping parents to stand strong. You can give securely when you go to [jdfi.org](http://jdfi.org). Or you can call a member of our constituent care team. The number is 877-732-6825.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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