



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Let Freedom Ring

**Guest(s):** Dr. Jerry Newcombe

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Dr. James Dobson: Hello everyone you're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Well, today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, I'm Roger Marsh, sitting in the co-host chair and joined for this special segment by Dr. Jerry Newcombe, who's the executive director of the Providence Forum, co-author of the best-selling book, *George Washington's Sacred Fire*. He also serves as senior producer and on-air host for Truths that Transform.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Yeah, on-air contributor.

Roger Marsh: On-air contributor for the broadcast ministry of Dr. D. James Kennedy. B.A. in history, doesn't surprise me at all, from Tulane. Masters in communications from Wheaton and his doctorate of ministry that turned into a book, his dissertation did, "The Book that Made America: How the Bible Formed Our Nation." Today we're going to talk a little bit about a new project that they're working on at the Providence Forum, and this is one that basically talking about the founding fathers establishing America based on God's Word. It's a book called *In the Footsteps of Giants*, and we'll and we'll have that link up at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). Dr. Jerry Newcombe, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Thank you, Roger. My privilege to be with you again.

Roger Marsh: It's great to spend time with you. We always have such a good time talking about history and faith and how the two are intertwined. And I know a lot of people will look at, you know, say, well, gosh, America, who are these MAGA people? Who are these Christians, who are these, you know, people who think that America is somehow a Christian nation? But I love the fact that you have historical proof and have done the research that back to the founding, this is where we are this is what we've always been.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Yeah, America in a sense is one nation under God, the essence of the Declaration of Independence which is our national birth certificate is really self rule under God. Our rights come from the Creator, therefore they're non - negotiable and here in America, we are ruled by the consent of the governed.

Roger Marsh: Right.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: That's the key, those two key things. And in a very real sense, that all began, those two key principles, self-rule under God, as the American experiment. That's the essence of the American experiment. It actually begins in the cabin of the Mayflower on November 11th, 1620. And what I mean by that is when the pilgrims first came over, they were blown off course, they had permission to go to the northern parts of Virginia back then, that was around the mouth of the Hudson River, and so for the Virginia was much larger at the time. Bottom line is, since they were blown off course, they had to basically make their own government. So, they wrote up an agreement, a self-government agreement, under God, but giving the consent of the people, you know, this is really revolutionary in the name of God. Amen. "We whose names were underwritten having undertaken a voyage for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith. We do covenant and combine ourselves into a civil body politic." Now the pilgrims actually had been practicing that kind of rulership in their own self, you know, created denomination about fifteen, or I should say congregation.

15 or so years earlier, the Mayflower Compact was in effect a political example of that. But this Mayflower Compact begins the whole process of constitution making, and there were literally about a hundred or so different compacts, frames of governments, mostly by Puritans and Presbyterians and Quakers and Dutch Reform, but leading all the way up 150 years later or so until it goes into full bloom with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. And this is the essence of America. Take away God and you take away the essence of America. And frankly, Roger, as you know, in the last century, the 20th century, we saw all kinds of examples and we're still seeing it from time to time, where they take away God and the people lose their rights. I was just looking at some photos of what happened in Ukraine with the Russian invasion. But all of those problems and conflicts in Russia and so forth, so much of that, when they said in 1917, we're going to build this new nation with the Marxist Communist revolution we don't believe there is a god and people were punished for believing in God. They killed priests, they destroyed churches. They turned other churches into museums and so with the whole thing was based on no God. At the end of the day after 70 years of this Soviet Union, what did they have to show for it? As a couple of former communists, former Marxists actually, fellow travelers, totally disillusioned when the whole thing collapsed, they said, "What did the Soviet Union have to show after 70 years of communism? Nothing but tens of millions of corpses." I've never forgotten that line.

Roger Marsh: Wow, powerful.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: I read that in the National Review in the early 1990s, after the implosion of the Soviet Union. I think that's a great summary. Bottom line is, we can flourish here in America because of God-given rights. And that's a huge difference, you know, in an approach to government, daily living really.

Roger Marsh: And it's interesting, Jerry, because what you're describing, the rights come from God, the government is implemented by the people. You know, so as long as we don't get those too confused, which it seems like a lot of the leftist mentality here in the United States has it the other way around. They're saying, "we create the rights, and then we let the universe or God or whoever it is kind of meet out the justice." It's whoever's on the bench that day.

We're here at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Dallas, and last year at the convention, you'll remember that Pastor Jack Hibbs, remember he went before the House of Representatives, the Joint Session of Congress, offered a prayer, and it was so heinous that they banned him from Congress. Well, when he revealed what his text was, he said, "I was just quoting famous prayers that were given in Congress." I mean, I'm not making this up. I pulled a little bit, and he gave chapter and verses where he got those prayers that were seen as milestones. They were seen as foundational in American history, and he said, "Now you're telling me if I prayed that prayer in 2024, which is when he did it, that I'm banned from Congress?"

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Yeah, and 26 Congress people wrote to Speaker Johnson, Mike Johnson said "What are you doing? You know this is terrible. You know this is this guy was guilty of hate speech" and all these different things which is ridiculous. Think about this little Roger, why do they even have prayers in Congress? They have prayers in Congress, that's been challenged of course, and the Supreme Court basically said "Well wait a minute, we've had chaplains both you know in the legislature, and in Congress and in the military before we even became a country. So, we will not agree with you ACLU or with you Freedom from Religion Foundation to say 'oh, no, no, no, you know prayers in Congress are unconstitutional now.'" Of course they've become very watered down; a lot of these prayers very namby-pamby if you will, but to whom it may concern or whatever. But when Jack Hibbs did that, he what he was saying in his prayers, and it's very short, by the way, I interviewed him about it. It's only about a minute and a half or two minutes, three minutes, not long at all.

Roger Marsh: Not long at all.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: And, you know, bottom line is you're 100% right. It was definitely in the tradition of having those prayers. In fact, think about this. The Continental Congress first met in Carpenter Hall, Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia in September 1774. They didn't know each other, but they first meet, and the question on the table on September 6 was, "Tomorrow is the day that we open the proceedings. Should we or should we not open in prayer?" And there were a couple of people that said, "Well, maybe if we pray in one tradition, it will offend people of another Christian tradition." Samuel Adams said "I'm no bigot. I can listen to a man who loves this country and loves his God first and foremost any day so let's open in prayer." And he moved that they had this Reverend, a local Episcopal, Anglican minister who was very respected. Christ Church Philadelphia and he's the one who came. They ended up having about a two-hour opening of Congress with prayer. He read the Scripture for that day, which

was Psalm 35. It's a psalm of persecution where David is saying, "Plead my cause, O Lord." And a lot of the founding fathers, especially the ones from Massachusetts, knowing that the British were descending on Massachusetts with their ships out in the sea, in the harbor, with the cannons ready. So they were like, "Oh God, please help us, we're appealing to you." And so, this is a really important point that the founding fathers looked to God for help. For example, during the time of the American war for independence, when it became a war, 15 times Congress wrote out basically a proclamation for fasting and prayer and thanksgiving, but asking God for God's help. And these, again, these weren't namby-pamby prayers. They were, you know, like, through them merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, you know, please forgive our sins and our many manifold discretions, trespasses against your divine law, et cetera. Very, very meaty and weighty things, but they appealed to God because, you know, basically they couldn't, there was no other appeal to go to.

Roger Marsh: Right.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: As they said in the Declaration of Independence, and Dr. Liebeck notes, this is talking about Jesus, it said we appeal to the supreme judge of the world.

Roger Marsh: Yes.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Because Jesus is the one that the Father has entrusted judgment to. And so, this is, this is our history. Roger, I want to that too, but let people know about this. Today, you have kids that hate America, but a lot of... it reminds me of George W. Bush when he was president. He had so much criticism, and he said, you know, if I listen to what these people said, and I believed all these negative things these people are saying of me, I'd hate me too. But, you know, America, for all of its words and faults, I mean, there's a lot of prosperity and human flourishing that's occurred because we are one nation under God.

Roger Marsh: You know, we're talking with Dr. Jerry Newcombe today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and we're discussing a new project from the Providence Forum. It's a new book called *In the Footsteps of Giants*, and we've got a link for providenceforum.org up at drjamesdobson.org, and you can find that information as well. Thinking about who has gone before us, thinking about the where we are. And I have to admit, one of the more popular broadcasts we've done here in 2025 already was when Gary Bauer, our senior vice president of public policy and I, went back and just played some of the prayers from the inauguration. And we prayed from Rabbi Berman and from Cardinal Dolan and from Franklin Graham and just, and Gary said, when you look at what our history looks like, you know, the artwork and you listen to these people praying, he said this is what America is supposed to be. There weren't a whole lot of people, even full-on atheists were saying, "Well, I'm not really into this religion stuff, but that was beautiful. It was very meaningful. It was very powerful." And I think it's comforting even to people who aren't part of the Christian faith to know that when the government is operating the right way in a way that's good and pleasing to God, it benefits everyone. And I know that's part of what you do

at Providence Forum is a lot of educational, whether it be films, books, things of that nature, that are all trying to just encourage people, not to browbeat and win arguments on the Internet, but rather say, "If you knew what our history really is, and you guys do, then you're sharing that with others to say, 'Hey, this is something that brings comfort to people of all backgrounds.'"

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Exactly.

Roger Marsh: Talk about that if you would. Why it's so important for us to just tell that story?

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: I think it's important because a nation that doesn't know what it was in the past or what brought us to this point doesn't know what it is now and doesn't know where it's going in the future. And the foundation of American liberty is our Judeo-Christian heritage. And when you just peel back the onion, you just look, you look at the original colonial charters, you look at so many of the original documents, you see God and the Christian faith played a key role. For example, Os Guinness, Dr. Os Guinness, he put it this way, he said "The biblical concept of covenant gave rise to the American constitution." And I think that's a really great way of putting it. That's kind of what I was describing earlier when I was talking about how the Mayflower Compact begins the whole process of self-rule under God in a written agreement.

One thing that I am so privileged, I got to spend about two or three hours, years ago, with the late Dr. Donald S. Lutz, and he was a professor at the University of Houston. He wrote a book called *The Origins of American Constitutionalism*, and he's the one where he and another social scientist, Heinemann, Charles Heinemann, they studied all these different documents from the founding era and the question was, what sources were important to the founding fathers? What were they quoting? And the Bible was being quoted by the founding fathers four times more than any human author, but then when you deal with the human authors, you're dealing with Christian sources; Montesquieu, Sir William Blackstone, and John Locke in that order. And it's really a fascinating thing when you actually read these. You see again, the Christian faith is the key. Sir William Blackstone, British jurist, he wrote four volumes, *The Commentaries on the Laws of England*, very influential in American history. For example, when Abraham Lincoln, is a poor guy, you know, in the Kentucky and Illinois frontier and so forth. Their a version of our yard sale. He gets a barrel. And in the barrel is a volume of one of Blackstone's commentaries. He studies that, and that's how ultimately, he was able to become an attorney. And then, you know, that propelled him on eventually to the White House even.

Roger Marsh: Incredible.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: He learned this from Blackstone. Okay, so William Blackstone said things like this. He said that "the Creator has impressed within the creation itself, His will. And we can know that by studying it. However, this is a fallen world. Therefore, the Creator has supplemented natural law with additional revelation so we can know the specifics about God, and where is that found? That is found only in the

holy Scriptures.” So it's like whoa, the laws of nature and of nature is God. I mean it all kind of fits together. America was born from a Christian worldview is the bottom line and ideas have consequences and ideas against God you know just reap all kinds of terrible ideas. May I take a moment to just contrast two things?

Roger Marsh: Please do.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Okay in in one of my documentaries, I have these different documentaries about America's Christian roots at [providenceforum.org](http://providenceforum.org), but endowed by their creator there's a section there where we're dealing you know, this is all about the Declaration of Independence.

Roger Marsh: Sure.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: And there's a section there where we contrast 1776 the year of the declaration with 1789, the year of the French Revolution. And a lot of people think, yes, the Constitution went into effect 1789, but in July of 1789 in France, they had the French Revolution. And some people think, well, that's two sides of the same coin. It's not. The French Revolution was explicitly anti-Christian. They, they, they stopped worship in Notre Dame, for example. They put a half-naked actress on the altar, called her Reason, said, "You worship here, but you're not going to, no more church services here," and so forth. They even changed the calendar. So, year 1791 became year one of the republic, because they didn't want to have a Christian calendar. They even didn't, they abolished the seven-day week and made it a ten-day week so that there wouldn't be any reference to Shabbat from the Jews or the Lord's Day from the Christians. So they did all these things to get away from Christian of all and then they of course beheaded priests and nuns and you know anybody if affiliated with the church. It was an explicitly anti-Christian revolution, and what ended up happening? Well, they killed all kinds of people. They just, they beheaded people, and after a while, the revolutionaries began to consume themselves. And it just, it was...

Roger Marsh: As revolutions do.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Right, but ours didn't.

Roger Marsh: But that's the exception.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Ours was based on liberty under law. It's the God factor that's the difference. Politics isn't going to save us. It's important, but it's not going to save us. And I think ultimately, we do need a revival. We need spiritual revival, and the other option is ruin. Revival or ruin. It's one or the other. As John Adams put it, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." At the end of the day, Roger, as you well know, the Bible says we're all sinners and the reason the Constitution has done so well and has worked so well you know, despite all the attacks on it and so forth. The fact is it was based on the premise that we're sinful and

because we're sinful as James Madison put it, he's a key architect of the Constitution. He said at the Constitutional Convention, "All men having power ought to be distrusted." The Bible says, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." So, if you read the Constitution, you see, wow, they were really careful to divide power, to separate power, so that you wouldn't have the accumulation of power into the hands of too few people, or even worse, one, just one man.

And so, in the American experiment, it was no, man is sinful, we've got to separate this power. Isn't it interesting that George Washington, the father of our country, after the successful victory at Yorktown, but before we officially became independent and was recognized by England? There's about a two-year period there. And some of the troops came to George and they said, "Why don't you become a king? We'll follow you. We'll make sure that that gets implemented." He said, "I didn't fight one king to become a king." He pushed away power, which is really a great thing. And then when they finally did negotiate the peace in the Treaty of Paris, 1783, how did they begin between England and America? They said, "In the name of the most holy and undivided trinity." That's how our Treaty of Peace, you know, that's how it's worded. That's how it opens. And so, we, we need to get back to God. And, you know, when a little kid, you know, gets in trouble for, you know, like having a patch or something, one nation under God or something like that, it's absurd. You know, what is the motto of this country? In God we trust. In God we trust is our national motto and yet people will get in trouble for saying anything about God in a public setting. That's just, that's wrong. They need to, we need to get back and to be frank with you, the atheist has the freedom he has to rail against all these things because we've granted that and that's fine. I mean, free speech is so, is such a gift but when you have these other worldviews, it just clamps down on the Christian.

I like to put it this way. The founders gave us freedom of religion. Freedom of religion includes those who don't share those convictions. But if you have freedom from religion, then all of a sudden you restrict what is allowed and you inhibit the believers you know from practicing their faith or you can practice your faith but only in the four walls of your church. You can't bring any of those ideas out and so forth. So the modern secularism in effect is trying to turn America into a secular wasteland. That's not what the founders intended. You know, "so help me god." From the beginning to the present, we see all kinds of different ways in which the Christian faith has impacted this nation and it's led to human flourishing.

Roger Marsh:

Well, the brand-new book from Providence Forum is called *In the Footsteps of Giants* and we've got a link up at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) for all things Providence Forum. Dr. Jerry Newcombe, who's the executive director of Providence Forum, has been our guest for the past half hour discussing this, especially in this transitional year, we see a new leadership in Washington that whether or not it is infiltrated with Christians, there is a Christian influence returning to the White House. Is that a fair assessment to say?

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: I think that is. And I think we also always remember, put not your trust in princes, put your trust in the Lord. And so, because we know that these movements come and these movements go. But there's going to there's gonna be, possibly in future times, the freedoms could be restricting again. And through it all, God's kingdom will always continue and advance. So, we know that it is in the Lord we need to put our trust. And in the meantime, I'm grateful. I think actually when President Trump almost got killed and he recognized God spared his life, I think that helped to change him in a very strong way. And the prohibitions against pride still apply to everybody. We reap what we sow, and if you don't like what you're sowing, change what you're reaping, and I think we as a nation need to do the same.

Roger Marsh: Amen. That's great counsel. Dr. Jerry Newcombe, the executive director of Providence Forum, thank you so much for being with us today here on Dr. James Thompson's family talk.

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: Thank you, Roger.

Roger Marsh: America's 250 year experiment in liberty stands as living proof that a nation built on God's principles can endure and flourish. You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a conversation I recorded with our special guest, Dr. Jerry Newcombe. We recorded this a few months ago at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Dallas, Texas. Jerry's deep dive into our founding documents clearly shows that faith wasn't just present at the start of our nation, it's the very foundation upon which America was built. Now if you missed any portion of today's conversation or if you'd like to share these historical insights with a friend, go to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). There you'll find the complete audio of this conversation as well as information on Dr. Jerry Newcombe's new book called *In the Footsteps of Giants* and the important work of the Providence Forum as they preserve America's Judeo-Christian heritage. You'll find all that and more at [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

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Well I'm Roger Marsh and from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we're thankful that you joined us today. Hope you join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

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