



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Herzog Foundation: Helping Students Thrive Through Christian Education – Part 2

Guest(s): Dr. Darrell Jones

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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 Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we're continuing a powerful conversation about the state of education in America with our guest, the Reverend Dr. Darrell Jones, president of the Herzog Foundation. Here's the reality parents are facing: the public school system many of us grew up in simply does not exist anymore. What's being taught in classrooms today often contradicts the biblical values we're trying to instill at home. The question isn't whether education matters. The question really is who's doing the educating? Who's pouring into the lives of your kids and your grandkids five, sometimes six days a week, shaping how they see the world, themselves, and their Creator.

On the last edition of Family Talk, Dr. Jones shared how the Herzog Foundation is equipping families, churches, and educators with practical resources and real solutions. We heard about the dramatic shifts happening in education across our country with homeschooling up 51% in just six years, and also Christian schools seeing remarkable growth as family search for alternatives to public education. On today's Family Talk broadcast, Dr. Jones will share his personal journey from 35 years of pastoral ministry to leading this nationwide movement for Christ-centered education. You'll hear how hundreds of new Christian schools are launching all across the country, how teachers are being trained and equipped at no cost to them and how families are discovering educational options they never knew existed before. But most importantly, we'll discover why this mission matters now more than ever for our children and our grandchildren. So let's rejoin this conversation right now on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Darrell, you mentioned that you spent, what, 35 plus years in pastoral ministry before you came on board here. How did you get to know the Herzogs? I mean, you're kind of colloquial, very local, but also in terms of pastoral ministry, you're at a season in life right now where you could have very easily said, and you know what? It's time for me to hand this off to my associate pastor and my wife and I are going to fire up the fifth wheel and travel all over the country, and yet God brought you into this new season. How did that come about?

Dr. Darrell Jones: Well, it's an interesting, it is a whole interesting scenario, but honestly, I had known Mr. Herzog. I was pastoring in St. Joseph, Missouri, the same town that Herzog Corporation, where he ran his company was so certainly, we intersected through being in the same community, but I was actually very close with the person that Stan picked to be the chairman of the board. We had both grown up as Eagle Scouts in the Boy Scout program.

Roger Marsh: Wonderful.

Dr. Darrell Jones: And then we volunteered with Boy Scouts for a number of years until the Boy Scouts of America lost their marbles. That's another topic for another time.

Roger Marsh: Yes.

Dr. Darrell Jones: But my friend Todd had seen the growth of our church and knew me and had invited me to prayerfully consider when they were beginning operation after Stanley had passed. Where do we go with this? How do we go change the country and advance Christian education? And it was through his invitation and then through a lot of fasting and prayer and a lot of tears and conversations where my wife and I really felt like God is opening this door. We've not pursued this. God is bringing it to us, but is there really an opportunity here to influence the nation and student discipleship? Interestingly, in my 35 years of pastoring, the first 11 years I was a full-time youth minister.

Roger Marsh: Wow.

Dr. Darrell Jones: And never really wanted to leave youth ministry. But again, the Lord began doing some things and felt like, well, maybe this is, God is doing this. And so I really feel like at this season it's an opportunity to go 180 degrees and back to the very start of the passion of student discipleship. And so we really felt like this is a door that God's opened and it's been an exciting four and a half year ride so far.

Roger Marsh: It's not every day you hear someone who worked in youth ministry who says, I didn't want to leave youth ministry because I know that that's sometimes that's that how to succeed in business kind of limbo if you will, where you say, this is your training ground.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Well, for 11 and a half years I was a youth minister, and so maybe the elevator doesn't go to the top floor. I don't know. We'll leave that for somebody else.

Roger Marsh: Working with middle school-ish type kids, it's a calling. One of my best friends from high school, his dad taught middle school. He was math. He got into administration thought, oh, I want to be a high school principal. That's where all the money is and whatever. And he hit his fifties and he quit. He decided to retire early. Three years later I found him at... our church was meeting at a high

school and there was a middle school across the street and there was Mr. Morrison teaching seventh grade algebra.

Dr. Darrell Jones: There you go.

Roger Marsh: And he retired that way. He loved it and you really have to speak that language, but the beauty of the Herzog Foundation for me, Darrell, we're just getting to know each other, is seeing that there is that same love for the, you're talking K through 12, so you're not just focusing on high school, you're not just focusing on preschool and you're doing it all so well. One of the things that is in the works right now, I'd love for you to comment on, here I was commending you for not being hyper political and yet at the same time next year of course America celebrates her 250th birthday. The Herzog Foundation is launching what they call Freedom Tour 250. Talk about that.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Well, we're very excited about it and it is going to be a nationwide effort where we're going back to the original colonies and we're going to have birthday parties for the nation in as many of the 13 original colonies as we can book venues for in the few months prior to the 250th anniversary of the nation and the whole idea is what happened here and why does it matter?

Looking at it certainly from a Christian perspective, and we think there's going to be the ability to invite Christian teachers from across the country to these individual venues to do some professional development about Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and why was this an important place and across up and down the coast to hold all day sessions for professional development for teachers, but then in the evenings also inviting whole families to come out and a celebratory birthday party about the founding principles of America that have made us such a God-fearing and great country historically.

Roger Marsh: You got to love the fact that God in His mercy gave the founders the framers, the foundation, the framing if you will, for the nation. And we can see where some people would say, well, yeah, but I mean people talk about America being a "Christian nation" and yet look at what's happening here. It's like, well now wait a minute. We're sinful, fallible people. I mean, if this were Heaven on earth, it would be a totally different story. But God has given us the framework and I love the fact that what you're talking about is going to help people get back, kind of bring it down to studs and say, okay, hey, what were we originally supposed to be? This is what the founders envisioned.

Dr. Darrell Jones: That's exactly right.

Roger Marsh: And that's where you are.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Yeah, that's exactly right. That is the plan. And I talked about the professional development. We do a lot. I would say the third lane for us talked about readlion.com, talked about HF school box. By the way, we have a mirror site to

launch a homeschool group, whether it's a homeschool co-op or a parent support group or a playday group or you just whatever kind of home education group that your family needs for that kind of support. HF Homeschool was created using the same template to help launch homeschool groups. And God has really used us to do a lot of that. In fact, the fall of 2025, September of 2025, it appears we're going to be launching between home education and Christian schools somewhere between 225 and 250 new Christian education environments across 48 states across the country.

Roger Marsh: Oh, that's incredible.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Yeah, so very exciting to see how all that's coming together. That's in addition to the 197 that were started in the fall of 2024 in 96 states across the country. So God has really given us such a big footprint, but the third lane for us is now what about these folks that are starting these Christian schools? Do they know how to run a Christian school?

And so we have created a number of trainings that are on average three days in length. We have a menu of 25 different trainings that we offer Christian school heads, Christian school teachers, Christian school boards on different nuances of their lane in the Christian school and professional development on average, they're three days in length. And here's what we say to 20,000 plus Christian schools across the country: you get to our training on your dime. You have to have some skin in the game, you have to travel on your dime. But once you get to the training, we'll put you up in a hotel. We'll cover all your meals, we'll get you into the venue and we'll bring in the experts on the topic to teach them how do we do donor development, how do you do marketing for your Christian school, strategic planning, hiring and firing and managing people and all of these things that are a necessary part of running a Christian school. And the only expense to the school is the cost of gasoline to get to the training. In 2025, we are right on pace. We'll do 100 trainings this year in venues all across the country. And so we believe it's going to be somewhere between 9,000 and 10,000 educators that will go through our training.

Roger Marsh: Phenomenal.

Dr. Darrell Jones: And the only cost to those schools and those educators is the cost to get there. And so if we can help strengthen every Christian school and every homeschool group across the country, we think we can achieve our mission of being a catalyst to advance K-12 Christ-centered education across the country.

Roger Marsh: Dr. Darrell Jones is my guest today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and we're talking about Darrell's role as the president of the Herzog Foundation, which is an outstanding Christian organization that is designed to create stronger Christian educational opportunities, whether you're homeschooling, whether you are doing a homeschool co-op, if you're running a Christian school at your church or thinking about starting one, even one of these micro schools. I just think the Little House of the Prairie schools, the one room

classroom situation. And those are so very, very helpful and I appreciate the fact, Darrell, that you mentioned that you've got these opportunities for educators and they're giving them the opportunity to put a little skin in the game, but you're picking up the bulk of the cost because sometimes I get the feeling... I had the privilege of serving as interim pastor at my church for a couple of years and we have a K through eight school, JK through 8 school and it's nice, but unfortunately the school took on a life of its own and it was running separate from...the church was catering more toward an elderly group. I'm sure you see this happen all the time.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Sure.

Roger Marsh: I would've loved to have had these resources available when we were going through what we were going through because you want to have excellence in your academics at your Christian school, but you also don't want to forget the fact that, hey, this is a ministry of our church. And I'm sure there are a lot of churches that are kind of wrestling with that right now. Either the school's kind of deficient and the church is really going great guns or the other way around it. This seems like you have the opportunities to bring that message and messaging together.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Well, you're exactly right. And the anthem, I mean, I know for so many Christian organizations during this season of American history is for such a time as this. That these dollars and this mission is available for such a time as this. And I'll be honest with you, Mr. Herzog put a 20 year window, a 20 year sunset on his dollars. He wanted every dollar spent within 20 years because he believed when serious dollars change hands generationally, he believed they typically became more left-leaning and he was not interested in that on his dime. And so we're four and a half years in and Mr. Herzog's money will be spent to the penny. And frankly, we have opportunity now where we're looking at what does the next season look like? And so we've got people amazingly across the country who are saying, hey, they've told me we love what you're doing. We used to give to different organizations. They don't share our values. Can we give to the Herzog Foundation? And my answer is, well, I may be a retired pastor, but come on. I mean, of course, let's be real. So we have folks that are contributing on a regular basis to us for the furthering of the mission and honestly, even here and now as we're able to add to Mr. Herzog's dollars, there's just more that we can do. Very excited about the future, not simply for the next 15 years, but beyond.

Roger Marsh: For as long as the Lord tarries. The Herzog Foundation has something called an ambassadors program. I'd love for you to unpack because I'm sure some of our listeners are realizing, hey, there's someone in my world that would really benefit from that.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Absolutely. The Ambassador program really became an immediate answer three years ago to, we were getting invitations to go and speak to groups on a regular basis, but I'm the guy who has been pegged by the foundation board to do that,

and this whole mortality thing really is such a bummer where you can only be in one place at a time.

We launched three years ago what has become a very successful initiative, the Ambassador Program, where every year a one year program, we're looking for fresh college graduates. Typically we get them either from Christian schools, Christian colleges across the country or state universities, but they've been highly involved in campus ministry. So they share, they align with us regarding our values and regarding our mission, and we bring them here for a year and for the first three months, we completely immerse them in all things Herzog Foundation. And then for the next nine months, we send them out in pairs across the country representing us, telling the Herzog story, talking about what it is that we do, how it is that we do it, and involving and growing really the brand across the country. And then at the end of their one year, it's become very important for us to find a place for their next season. And so we're able to connect them to wonderful faith-based and conservative missions around the country.

We have former ambassadors that are working the marketing arm of the Vitae Foundation. Our ambassadors are working in the Pennsylvania Family Policy Network. I could list off the different places where our folks, our ambassadors have landed then for now the next season certainly fulfilling their calling to be engaged in cultural ministry, to be salt and light. And so it's an exciting program and it goes from July to July, and so very exciting to see how that program continues to grow. We have 10 of them that we hire and always looking for more so it's not too early or too late to nominate fresh college graduates who really don't know what the next season holds for them. This is a great opportunity to explore what's out there and to be connected with great organizations and Christian schools and homeschool groups across country.

Roger Marsh: You have an American Dream speaker series too that I was reading about that I'm very interested in, and I know a lot of our listeners would be too, Dr. Darrell Jones. Tell us about that.

Dr. Darrell Jones: One of the things that we've wanted to do locally we're in Smithville, Missouri, which really is an agricultural community of Kansas City, Missouri. And what we really wanted to do was be good neighbors and not simply have folks coming from all over the country to our headquarters on a regular basis, but we wanted to be able to share a part of our mission with them as well. And so about once a quarter, it is averaged out that we have got strong voices in conservative American culture that can come to speak to the American Dream and what it could be and so we have been blessed to have, we recently had Dr. Ben Carson here in Smithville, Missouri of all places. Riley Gaines has been here, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders has been here, Betsy DeVos in Trump's first administration, the Secretary of Education has been here, but a whole host of folks that have come and frankly this fall we're excited. We're doing our first ever as a part of the American Dream speech, we're doing our first ever drive-in movie night here at headquarters where we're going to be showing the video,

The American Miracle, just that fantastic work that Michael Medved did on the founding fathers in God's providence in the establishing of the country. So the American Dream Series has been a way in which we can give back to our community, the local community and invite them to understand why it is that we do what we do.

Roger Marsh: Dr. Darrell Jones is the president of the Herzog Foundation and he's our guest today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Martian and Darrell as we mentioned at the start of the program, of course, education is so important to Dr. and Mrs. Dobson, especially for their time in public education, and you've laid out the challenges obviously, of the public school curriculum that we now see being foisted upon our kids and grandkids in public school. And I love what Herzog Foundation does in terms of equipping families first and foremost. I mean, Christian schools wanting to see them bolstered and strengthened and resourced properly as well, but ultimately, this is a decision that's really coming down now to there was always something that you and I are contemporary, so when we were raising kids, there were things that we had to deal with that our parents didn't have to deal with. Well, now that we're grandparents, our kids are raising children in a society that is probably even more hostile to their Christian faith. Talk about why the Herzog Foundation mission really is so important now more than ever before.

Dr. Darrell Jones: Well, God in His providence and in His goodness has placed us where we are in the timeframe in which we live for a purpose, and so to be afraid for our children would really be listening to the enemy. We don't need to be afraid; we just need to raise them. So God wasn't afraid that Goliath was going to be bigger and take out David. He had created David for such a time. Ruth for such a time, Peter, for such a time. We, you and I, Roger for our era and now as we're raising, we've raised our children and now as we're pouring into our grandchildren for such a time. But our grandchildren and the children of today were created for this moment. The question is who's raising them? Is it someone who shares your faith values or are they being raised by someone who is hostile to your faith values? That's why Christian education is so important for such a time as this.

Roger Marsh: Herzogfoundation.com is where you find all the information, and of course there's no, I want to make sure I don't misquote you, Dr. Darrell Jones, but when we talked about Read Lion and the Lion Publication from the Herzog Foundation, that's a free subscription, is it not?

Dr. Darrell Jones: Absolutely. Everything that we do is free because Mr. Herzog set it up to make all of the resources available for the advancement of K-12 Christ centered education across the country.

Roger Marsh: We'll have that link up for herzogfoundation.com at drjamesdobson.org to make sure that our listeners and viewers get the opportunity to see what the Herzog Foundation has to offer and how you are having such a powerful impact not only on Christian education, but on education in general, K through 12 all across

the country, and will continue to do so for many years to come knowing that there is that sunset on the original gift that got this thing going, but you can also support the future work beyond that because they're certainly not going to say no to the help that you want to provide as well. Darrell, take the last 60 seconds of our time together, whatever's on your heart about why you are so committed to this mission as I mentioned in a season when you and your wife could very easily say, I've got 10 grandkids and nine of 'em are girls, that's plenty of work for me. That's plenty. I don't need to be doing this anymore. Why?

Dr. Darrell Jones: I've joked I've had estrogen poisoning, and so once you've had it, you're certainly, susceptible. Well, I will tell you in part, it is because of my 10 grandchildren and who's raising them and who's pouring into them, and recognizing how education across the country has changed over the years, certainly in my lifetime, and trying to be a part of the solution and not a part of the problem, and not simply to curse the darkness, but to light a candle and really feel like that there's an opportunity here for us to change the tide and to really make a difference in growing student disciples through homeschool groups, through home education, through Christian schools across the country. It really is an important mission, but it really is an important season in American history, and I'm blessed that the Herzog Foundation gives me opportunity to be a part of it every day.

Roger Marsh: Well, the Reverend Dr. Darrell Jones, thank you for your time and sharing your enthusiasm and your passion for what the Herzog Foundation is doing for Christian schools, for churches, for homeschool co-ops, for micro schools. I mean, the list goes on, and as new opportunities come where there's either the gap or there's definitely something that needs to be strengthened, we know that Herzog will be instrumental in making that even better and improving that situation in the years to come. Darrell, thank you so much for your commitment to Christian education, and thanks so much for being with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

As I listened to Dr. Jones share his heart for this mission, I kept coming back to something he said that really struck me. He talked about how his 10 grandchildren, nine granddaughters and one grandson shape everything he does at the Herzog Foundation, which of course makes me think about my own children and grandchildren because at the end of the day, this isn't just about curriculum or test scores, it's about legacy. It's about who's shaping the next generation's understanding of truth, of God and of their purpose in this world. On today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we featured part two of a compelling conversation with Reverend Dr. Darrell Jones about the critical mission of Christian education in America. If today's program has opened your eyes to what's really at stake in our schools, I encourage you to share this broadcast with a friend by visiting drjamesdobson.org/familytalk, and on our website, you will also find a link for the Herzog Foundation as well.

Now, if you're a parent or a grandparent who is wrestling with tough questions about raising kids in today's culture, I want to share with you about a powerful

resource we've created just for you, especially if you've got little young men in your home. Dr. Dobson's classic book, *Bringing Up Boys* has literally helped millions of families, and now we've developed a free 10-day email series based on its timeless wisdom. Each day in the email series, you'll receive practical insights delivered right to your inbox, covering everything from keeping boys physically safe to helping them navigate the unique challenges they face growing up in our current culture. Whether you're raising toddlers or teenagers, this series will inform and equip you wisely to lead your boys through even the toughest trials and the best part, it's absolutely free. Go to drjamesdobson.org and search for the "Bringing up Boys" email series today. You can sign up for it right away. That's drjamesdobson.org.

Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we are committed to helping families like yours thrive in every and any season of life. Programs like the one you heard today along with all of our daily broadcasts and the free resources you find online are made possible through the generous support of friends like you who share our passion for strengthening families through biblical truth. When you partner with us financially, you're investing in the next generation. You're standing alongside parents who are fighting for their children's hearts and minds. You're helping us reach families all across America with the hope and practical wisdom of Jesus Christ. If today's conversation about the battle for our children's education has stirred your heart, consider giving a gift to support our ministry. Your donation of any amount makes a real difference in reaching families who need biblical guidance.

And today, thanks to special friends of our ministry, the Dr. James Dobson Memorial Match gives you the opportunity to match any gift dollar for dollar up to \$6 million. To make a secure donation online, go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. If you'd like to give a gift over the phone, a member of our constituent care team will be happy to take your call when you dial 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh and from all of us here at the JDFI and the Family Talk broadcast, thank you 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 can still trust, for the family you love.

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