Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Redeeming Justice – Part 1
Guest(s): Dr. Christina Crenshaw
Air Date: November 19, 2026

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: When you mention the term social justice, a lot of different issues might come to mind. But what do we as Christians have any kind of responsibility towards social justice? And maybe is it a game that we need to be a little more involved in? Today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we're going to get into a great new resource that's going to help believers from all different backgrounds talk about how we as Christians can redeem justice in our culture. Our guest is Dr. Christina Crenshaw. She's an assistant professor at Arizona Christian University, also serves the university's Cultural Research Center as a fellow. She has over 20 years experience in Christian education, holds a Ph.D. in education with an emphasis on American literature from Baylor University. Also has a master's in biblical and theological studies with an emphasis on Christian leadership from Dallas Theological Seminary. Her undergraduate degree is in English from Texas A&M, and we're gonna get into how an English teacher with the background that she does and the credentials that she does and the high school teaching experience she does got into something like writing a brand new book that just came out.

It's called *Redeeming Justice: Doing Good for God's Glory*. In addition to her academic pursuits, Dr. Crenshaw is actively involved in ministry, church conferences, passionate about speaking to millennials and Generation Z, and she loves balancing her professional life with her roles as wife and the mother of a couple of boys, and then they make their home in Waco, Texas. Dr. Christina Crenshaw, welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. It's good to have you on the program today.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Oh, thank you, Roger. It's good to be here. And thank you for that hearty introduction. I appreciate that.

Roger Marsh: Well, I want to make sure that people know exactly who is behind the what here, and the what we're talking about, of course, is the book *Redeeming Justice*. And a lot of people, when you say social justice, you get one of two responses, right, from Christians. It's either, ugh, you know, that's what all those leftists are doing, and they're ruining our society, and they're moving away from the Bible. Or you hear Christians saying, wait a minute. I mean, don't we have a

seat at the table here? Shouldn't we as believers be more involved in these issues, even if we don't go at it the same way the left would do? You started out your career as an English teacher, so I'm curious as to how you wound up kind of becoming, is it fair to call you a social justice warrior? Or is that maybe a little bit too far in the extreme to say?

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Well, I don't think true social justice warriors would welcome me into that circle or allow me to bear that title. So we could say a biblical justice warrior, certainly.

Roger Marsh: There you go. Okay. Well, what's the difference? How do you delineate between, like you just said, biblical justice and what we would call social justice in the culture?

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Yeah, so I guess in answer to the first question, and I think that would then answer the second question too, I've always been very driven by truth. And I think studying literature, studying philosophy, the humanities lent itself to questions like what has withstood the test of time? Or when we start to pull the thread on “little t” truth, we realize that it's connected to “larger t” biblical truths, truths that come from God's Word. And so when I was an undergrad, I actually was not really raised in a Christian home, sort of culturally raised around Christianity, but came from a pretty dysfunctional, broken, divorced home.

And so I went off to college really hungry for what does God say to be true. I would look around at my friends, and my friends who were raised in a Christian home, just holistically speaking, much healthier than my friends who were raised in a secular home or a broken home like mine. And I kind of stumbled my way through college. I wasn't discipled real well, but I would go to church. I would seek out discipleship as I could find it. But as I was an English major, I'm always searching literature for truth. So not always finding it in the right places, but very hungry for what is true, what is right, what is good, what is beautiful, sort of that Roman Greco definition until I really started walking with Jesus and realized, oh, these were God's good ideas first.

Roger Marsh: Yes.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: And so then as I grew older and I started teaching and I was a university professor, I went to seminary, I realized you can't disconnect the two, that there really is no such thing as little “t” truth, that it's derived from God's truth, that where we get our human rights from, where we get the idea of elevating women, where we get the idea, the notion of abolishing slavery, these were all deeply Christian, Judeo-Christian ideas long before they belonged to Western culture and long before they belonged to what we're living in right now, which is a postmodern culture. So that sort of how I kind of like stumbled into this was really just seeking like, okay, but I have other questions. I've never been the person to just sort of accept face value. I want to know the ontological argument for something, the epistemology, which are, you know, kind of fancy

words that I don't know that most people need to know, but what it comes down to is I just really want to know that I know, and that led me to Scripture.

Roger Marsh: You know, it's wonderful to hear your confession of faith, Dr. Crenshaw, because of the fact that there are a lot of people who kind of wander in one of two worlds. Number one is either we need to study, study, study, study, study to show ourself approved, or, hey, faith is an experience, and so if you aren't living it out necessarily, why do you spend so much time in Bible study? And the fact that you have purpose to meld the two, to make that a part of your holistic faith, if you will, I think it makes it a lot easier than to read your book, *Redeeming Justice*, and say, okay, well, I get it because you're looking at this from a biblical standpoint first and foremost. And we don't realize how social media and other aspects that influence our thought processes really do give Christians the false impression that when it comes to justice, you're either a social justice warrior or you just kind of sit this one out because I'm a Christian and I don't do that type of stuff. And I think just in the first five minutes of our conversation here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, it's been very encouraging to realize, hey, we all have a seat at the table in this conversation, but we also have a responsibility to follow that biblical framework for justice because it's God's character, it's not culture's definitions that really are what we're living out.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Yeah, absolutely. In fact, you know, Roger, the first thing that a publisher will tell you to do, an editor will tell you to do, is to define your audience, and I completely get that. I've taught writing for 20 years, taught English for 20 years, and I tell my students the same thing, because you cannot speak to everyone at once. And so with this book, my heart was to reach the Big “C” church. I recognize that people who are outside an Orthodox Christian perspective may not find solidarity, they may take issues, but my heart was to remind the body of Christ, I know that you have a heart to do good work. We heard those phrases in 2020, do better, or Amos was quoted a lot, what is God's desire of you to do righteous work? And even in Malachi, we are told to uphold righteousness and to love justice. So I understand why people see an imbalance in the world, and they want to fight against that injustice.

My heart in writing this book was to remind the church, the body of Christ, that we don't have to look to culture for a blueprint that God has already given us a framework. And God's plan is better. And not only is it better, not only does it produce better results, it's also redemptive. Culture cannot be redemptive. It does not have Jesus. And so the real premise of the book is you cannot do justice without Jesus.

Roger Marsh: I love that thought. Dr. Christina Crenshaw is my guest today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Her brand new book is called *Redeeming Justice: Doing Good for God's Glory*, and I love the way you break this out in your book, Dr. Crenshaw, the cultural moment that we're in right now. We're getting into things like worldview and what matters, because I know there are a lot of Christians who see the headlines or they watch the videos on TikTok or

wherever they're looking at them, whatever they're consuming that. And even just in the past decade, and maybe in the past decade, even more so than any other time in our history, there are Christians saying, do I kneel at the national anthem, do I not? Do I protest for BLM, for George Floyd, or do I not? You know, what am I doing right or wrong? And nobody wants to be on the wrong side of this.

You have a chapter in your book called “Equipping the Next Generation for Biblical Justice.” And I love this, “Jesus, Justice, and Why We Should All Care.” Let's talk about how we can start taking some steps back to starting where we are right now, knowing that there are horrible things that have happened in the past, that wrongs that could have been righted and parts that the church was complicit in. How do we, on this very moment right now, moving forward, embrace this notion of Jesus and justice working together as opposed to trying to compartmentalize him as so many of us do?

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Yeah, so, Roger, that's the third part of the book. I broke the book down because I wanted to end on what I thought was, you know, okay, guys, how do we move forward in this? Academics can be guilty of not doing application. Like, they're real big on criticism, but they don't necessarily give you the application. So I wanted to make sure that I ended my book with some sort of pragmatic application that people could then go and do. So the first part of the book looks at this cultural moment. And so I'm kind of gathering the church together, and I'm like, how did we get here, Church? How did we just sort of wake up one day and the world was crazy and chaotic and just so confused? So walking through how this was thought creep that happened really with Marxist thought, with Frankfurt School of Thought, kind of walk the readers through that.

The middle part of the book, the second part of the book is on worldview, reminding readers that your worldview and your framework matters. It will inform everything you do in life. A biblical worldview will radically change the way that you approach living your life. It will change the way you parent. It will change the way you work. It will change the way you approach your vocation in general, all of your vocational callings and spheres of influence.

And then the last part of the book is, okay, well, what do we do? What is biblical justice? And I look at the history of what the church has done that has been good for the world. And it's really not conjecture. I even pull in different studies that show when you apply a Judeo-Christian, and I say Judeo because we've got some evidence of even before Christ, this worldview led to flourishing more than any other worldview and framework.

And then, of course, with the finality of Christ, the fulfillment of the law in Christ's atonement and grace, we see now that this biblical framework for going in and doing good work and doing justice isn't just to alleviate a temporal circumstance. We are doing this to lead people to eternity. And what's beautiful about doing justice is that it is redemptive, not just for the person who is

receiving the help of the body of Christ, but it's redemptive for us. It's a great part of our sanctification process.

When we roll up our sleeves, as we're told in Scripture, we don't do good work for our salvation. We are justified and we are saved without ever having to do anything. But there is a sanctifying process that occurs when we roll up our sleeves with the body of Christ and we link arms and we say, okay, human trafficking, hunger, homelessness, this is not okay on our watch. We're going to do something about this. And we're not doing it just because we want the world to be a better place. We are doing it because it is a command on our life from the Lord and because we have been set free. And to whom much is given, much is expected. And so it's a beautiful partnership of joy, it's an honor to be able to go out there and eradicate where we see brokenness and fall from the fall and to be able to say there's a better, more redemptive plan, and His name is Jesus.

Roger Marsh: I love that. When you think about the number of people who get into relief work for whatever reason, whether they're Christians or not, and you see the motivation behind it, and sometimes, let's face it, you and I both know there are a lot of relief organizations that are doing it because it's very financially rewarding for them. Maybe they're producing some good fruit out of it, but their motive isn't really right. And then there are other people who are maybe in the body of Christ who have a really strong heart for this, but they're kind of messing things up sometimes because they kind of get in the way of things that are actually working. You're looking at this whole holistic thing and saying, okay, here's the deal. We're going to go out. We know we can't eliminate human trafficking, but we can eradicate it in certain areas. We can have a positive impact on each individual life that we're helping. And doing so from the standpoint of one who is redeemed, saved by grace, and now is literally called to go into all the world and preach the gospel. And this is the way they're preaching the gospel.

How difficult was it for you when you were researching this book, Dr. Christina Crenshaw? Was it when you came across people who were professing faith in Christ, thinking they were doing this right, but you realized after a couple of moments of the conversation, everything they were doing was secular. Everything was from the unbiblical playbook, and if only they could kind of take a step back and see what God's plan A for this was.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Yeah, you know, so sort of a litmus I received actually after writing the book, but I do think that in a subconscious way it comes across in the book. My husband and I had the honor of being invited to a Hobby Lobby Green family meeting on generous giving. And I love, I'm probably not going to get the quote exactly right, but David Green, the founder of Hobby Lobby, essentially said, when we decide to give as a corporation, as a family, we ask the question, where are you sharing the gospel? Because there are a lot of great organizations that you can partner with. And I want to be really clear, Roger, because I do talk about in the book that there is common ground and that there's common grace and there's areas of partner.

Roger Marsh: Sure.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: And I'm more thankful than I am disappointed in people who show up to the table at all. I learned that through my human trafficking work, that it really does take all kinds. But where we have to be very clear as Christians is that we're not doing it. to make the world a better place. We are doing it to share the gospel, to lead other people to salvation.

Roger Marsh: Yes.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: And we're doing this because we know that we have been set free. So just kind of as we talked about before. So I would say for readers that that is something that I hope comes across in the book, is asking the question, okay, I see that you are providing aid work in a third world country, which is so good. Thank you for doing that. However, I just need to know are you also sharing the gospel? Because if you're not sharing the gospel, then that's not really a holistically biblical framework. You've basically gotten, you know, we can recognize creation, we can recognize fall together, but if you're not bringing redemption and restoration in Jesus' name, then you are just doing this from a humanitarian perspective. And we've got enough humanism in the world that…

Roger Marsh: That's for sure.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: The church doesn't need to partner with that, right? So, you know, if you're a humanist organization, if they're a secular organization and they're digging wells in Africa, then thank you for digging wells in Africa. That is good work. But for Christians, if we're going to go out and partner with something, give our time, our treasure, our talents to it, then we want to make sure that we're not just providing water for the here and now, that we are providing living water, eternal water.

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: As you know too, Roger, and I talk about this in the book as well, when my husband and I went overseas, we went to Greece to help with the height of the Syrian refugee crisis and human trafficking. And I remember having this epiphany that I could eliminate my entire bank account and probably help one family. But if I haven't actually given them the Lord, what have I done for them beyond helping them live for a year, right? So that's where I hope that the book highlights for readers the difference between social justice and biblical justice.

And social justice would say, we're going to make the world a better place. And their means for doing it can be antagonistic. It can be hostile. We're looking to find the oppressor and topple the oppressor and find an equilibrium with the oppressed. Biblical justice says, hey, good news, bad news. You are all the oppressor without Jesus. You are all sinners. It takes me. It takes salvation through me. It takes grace through me in order to bring redemption and

restoration. That's not just for the here and now. It's not just for the temporal. It is for the eternal.

Roger Marsh: I love that. Dr. Christina Crenshaw is our guest today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and we're discussing her brand-new book. It's called *Redeeming Justice: Doing Good for God's Glory*. As we talk about this concept that a lot of people are starting to get a little... a little better arms around, if you will, a little better vision on what's going on. One of the things that we do see is, and it's something that we in the church have to own, is the fact that for many years, there have been people who, in Jesus' name, have been engaging in justice faithfully, but also imperfectly. Some people have gotten it wrong. You mentioned the Green family, and I couldn't help think about the display at the Museum of the Bible, which they were very foundational in putting together, of those slave Bibles that were there that had literally parts of the Bible taken out. So if for some reason somebody who was in that situation did come across one, learned how to read and could read it, they would see how we were kind of picking and choosing.

Talk about how you're talking about this redeeming justice. Takes that holistic approach that says, okay, this is the whole word of God. Like our friends at Through the Bible say, we're taking the whole word to the whole world. But it also is manifesting itself, that gospel presentation, in the feeding of the hungry, the caring for the poor, the rescuing the trafficked, and so on.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Yeah, so one of the things that I thought was important to do, Roger, I dedicate several pages to acknowledging that the church has missed it throughout history. I mean, anytime you have a faith that's 2,000 years old, you're going to have some mistakes. But I hope that I underscore even greater the flourishing that has come out of the body of Christ.

Roger Marsh: Yes, yes.

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: So one of the things you brought up, like the slave Bibles, and I'm thankful that the Green family had the discernment and the great theologians around them to really present an honest picture of like, this is where we missed it. Or the Jeffersonian Bible is in their museum as well. And as you know, Jefferson famously went out and was like, I don't really like these miracles. This is weird. It just made his own. Bible, and it was wrong. And so I highlight those kind of things like, hey, guys, this is human error, and sometimes we have missed it.

But when you look at the macro picture of what the body of Christ has done well, yes, we were complicit in upholding slavery, but you know what? We were also the leaders of ending slavery. And so I talk about William Wilberforce, and I talk about the abolitionist movement, and I talk about how that was a deeply Christian movement based on Christian principles based on a biblical worldview. And so it took faithful remnant of the body of Christ to say, hey, because of the Imago Dei in all of us, we are not going to stand for this. And so that would be one example of just kind of showing readers where there have been times

where we have missed it, or we have been too harsh on women, or we have subjugated women, and there's a place where Jesus elevates them, right?

And so I think, you know, I don't go into the argument about complementarian versus egalitarian, but I do talk about when you look throughout history, how women have been marginalized and children have been marginalized. And then I balance that, but here's what Jesus had to say on allow Mary to come and sit at My feet and do not harm these little ones, let them come unto me. And you did not see that within Roman culture. This is very unique to, again, this Judeo-Christian worldview of no because of the Imago Dei in us, we all have equal value. In Jesus, you have equal worth and value. And so trying to show readers like, hey, that's not a social justice value. That is a Jesus justice. That is a biblical justice.

Roger Marsh: I love that you brought up Mary and Martha just down, Christina, because of the fact that I think that's a story, a part of Scripture that we get wrong all the time, right? I mean, we kind of make it a zero-sum game. You know, Mary's all right because she wanted to hear the words of Jesus. And Martha's all wrong for spending all that time cleaning up instead of saying, no, what you're doing is good, but Mary made a better decision. And that better decision was come sit with the guys and let's have this conversation. And I love the fact that He just very matter of factly said, no, I'm affirming you. I'm condoning what she did. In other words, I know part of the reason why your heart was saying, I better clean up and whatever, because that's my cultural role. And he stepped into that and said, no, you know what? I'm here to kind of undo a lot of that cultural stuff. I'm here to take over the Passover. I'm here to redeem it and make it the way I want it to be. That's part of the new covenant. And if we're truly living in the new covenant, then that's something that we can embrace and we can really wrap our arms around.

Redeeming Justice, the brand new book by Dr. Christina Crenshaw, *Doing Good for God's Glory*. Christina, we've been flying through this topic of conversation, and unfortunately, we've reached the end of today's program. Can you come back again next time so we can continue this conversation on the other side of that?

Dr. Christina Crenshaw: Oh, I would love to, Roger. I feel like, yes, we have so much more that we could talk about. So thank you for having me.

Roger Marsh: Well, what a pleasure it was to sit down for this conversation with Dr. Christina Crenshaw on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. She reminds us that Christians are called not simply to react to culture, but to seek justice, to honor human dignity, and to demonstrate Christ's love in the culture. Now you can hear today's Family Talk broadcast once again when you go to our website at drjamesdobson.org.

Every day here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we are working to help families stand on biblical truth and walk through hard questions with wisdom

and grace. Parents seeking guidance, marriages needing encouragement, families struggling to navigate a changing culture. These are more than abstract debates. These are real issues that are affecting the people we care about and the next generation that we're raising. And your prayers and financial support help keep these conversations on the air and help make resources available to families all across the country.

Through the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we are able to bring biblical teaching into their homes when they need it most. And your gift is more than just a donation. It's an investment in families seeking guidance and believers learning to stand for truth with grace. You can give a gift today when you go through our secure website at drjamesdobson.org. If it's easier, simply go to jdfi.org. They're one and the same. Or you can send a gift through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Once again, our ministry mailing address is the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, or just use those initials, JDFI P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949.

Now, before we leave for the day, I want to point you to a resource that speaks right to the heart of what Dr. Crenshaw was sharing with us. So many families and churches are wrestling with how to stay faithful to Scripture while treating people with real dignity. And few questions make that more difficult than the conversation about transgenderism. That's why the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute offers a free five-day email series called “Transgenderism: Truth and Grace.” Based on the book by Dr. Owen Strachan called *What Does the Bible Teach About Transgenderism?* This free five-day email series offers biblical insight and practical guidance for approaching sensitive conversations with courage, respect, and love. You can sign up to receive the free five-day email series called “Transgenderism, Truth and Grace” when you go to drjamesdobson.org.

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 joining us today. Be sure to tune in again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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