



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Sensing the Presence of God in the Trump White House

Guest(s): Gary Bauer

Air Date: February 5, 2025

Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, joined in studio today by Gary Bauer, who's our senior vice president of public policy here at the Dobson Policy Center. Gary, it's always good to spend time with you.

Gary Bauer: Hey, Roger. It's great to be with you too. There's so much going on. I hope men and women of faith around America are as excited as we are these days.

Roger Marsh: Well, we certainly are, and part of the reason why Gary is with me in studio today is we are getting ready to commemorate something that's happening in Washington, D.C. that we haven't seen in quite some time. And Gary, of course, being based in Washington, D.C. with Dobson Policy Center and having interaction with the men and women who are part of the new administration, especially, what we saw, something that started with the inauguration and is continuing even today that really does demonstrate, I guess, for lack of a better phrase, Gary, a reemergence of the presence of God and Jesus Christ on Capitol Hill. And you and I were having this conversation the other day and wanted to bring this discussion to our Family Talk listenership. Talk about your initial reaction to what you're seeing now that we're just a few days into Donald Trump's second presidency.

Gary Bauer: Thanks Roger for setting that up. Let me just give a little bit of background here. Dr. Dobson probably for 40 years has been bemoaning, as we all have, this very unfortunately successful effort that the left and the radical secularists have done to rip God out of our society. School prayer and Bible reading were taken out of the schools. Then you got to the point where you couldn't have a manger scene on the public square. You had these ridiculous Supreme Court cases that started chanting, "Separation of church and state. Separation of church and state."

And then probably the most dangerous thing of all, Roger, as you know in our schools, our own children are being taught by liberal teachers and these big teacher unions, they're teaching our kids that America was founded to get away from religion. That the idea of America is that nobody should be talking about

religion, because it might offend somebody. Well, America was founded on the exact opposite idea. And the founders said, "One nation under God, et cetera."

But for whatever reason on the week of the inauguration and particularly on Inaugural Day, God seemed to be all over Washington, D.C. I mean, there's some really big shots on the stage there in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol. Look at that senator. There's the former president. Here comes the new president. But what was striking to me was God was in that room. And Roger, He was on the walls. He was in the art. He was on the ceiling. If anybody looked up in the rotunda, they would've seen a depiction of George Washington done in a fresco by an artist many years ago, rising to Heaven and looking down upon us to see if we could preserve this great nation that God helped to create.

So starting from the rotunda roof to all kinds of things that were said, it was a big day for remembering that God is the author of our liberty.

Roger Marsh: Well, there were a number of speakers at the inaugural and we want to share just a couple of highlights. This is how the tone was set for the 47th President of the United States, Donald Trump, who was also the 45th president and kind of a unique situation in American history. Franklin Graham, who is the president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association that his father started, a dear friend of Dr. Dobson. He was part of the group of people who gave opening prayers in commemorating the inauguration of President Donald Trump. Let's go ahead Steve now and roll that first clip. This is Franklin Graham's prayer that he prayed over Donald Trump and our nation at the inaugural a couple of weeks ago.

Franklin Graham: Mr. President, the last four years, there are times I'm sure you thought it was pretty dark, but look what God has done.

Franklin Graham: We praise Him and give him glory.

Audience: Glory to God.

Franklin Graham: Let us pray. Our Father and our God Thou has said blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. As the prophet Daniel prayed, blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are His. He changes the times and the seasons. He removes kings. He raises up kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. Our Father, today as President Donald J. Trump takes the oath of office once again, we come to say thank you, oh Lord, our God. Father, when Donald Trump's enemies thought he was down and out, You and You alone saved his life and raised him up with strength and power by Your mighty hand.

We pray for President Trump that You'll watch over, protect, guide, direct him, give him your wisdom from Your throne on high. We ask that You would bless him and that our nation would be blessed through him. We also ask that You would bless and protect Melania as First Lady. We thank You for the beauty, the

warmth and grace that she shows not only to this nation, but to the whole world. We thank you for Vice President-elect J.D. Vance and his wife, Usha and their young family. May he be a strength to President Trump, to stand beside him, to hold up his arms like Aaron held up the arms of Moses in the midst of battle.

The Prophet Samuel reminded the people it was You that brought them up from the land of Egypt and he said, "Now, stand still that I may reason with you before the Lord." So Father, we take this moment to stand still to remember the great things that You have done for this nation. Thank you for the protection, the bounty, the freedoms that we so enjoy. We remember to keep our eyes fixed on You and may our hearts be inclined to Your voice. We know that America can never be great again if we turn our backs on You. We ask for Your help and we pray all of this in the name of the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, Y our son, my Savior, and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, amen.

Roger Marsh: The words of Franklin Graham at the inaugural of Donald J. Trump as the 47th President of the United States. And Gary Bauer, your thoughts as the senior vice president of the Dobson Policy Center. I'm sure there are some people that are scratching their heads saying, he said God, he said Jesus Christ, he said, preserved him from death regard to the assassination attempt and everything he said is perfectly legal and constitutionally protected. Is it not?

Gary Bauer: It is Roger, and this is what's so frustrating about the lie we have bought into in recent years. I even have periodically a Christian tell me when I give a speech ... Dr. Dobson's run into the same thing. They'll come up and say, "Well, I agree with everything you just said, but Gary, we have the separation of church and state. I don't think you're allowed to say those things." It's like we're self-censoring ourselves. That prayer was so powerful, Roger, and there are things there that I hope people don't miss.

When Franklin Graham said that God had raised Trump up and had saved him, and it was a reference among other things to the assassination attempt, that is exactly what Donald Trump believes. Donald Trump, like Ronald Reagan, who I worked for, both men believe after their assassination attempts that they were saved by God. And for Donald Trump and Ronald Reagan, they both decided, well, if God saved me, He must have something He wants me to do. Ronald Reagan concluded that it was to bring down godless communism in the Soviet Union, and Donald Trump has said that he believes what God wants him to do is to make America a great country again, and that's a godly thing to want because America has done so much to promote the Scriptures around the world.

We sent more missionaries out in the early decades of our country. We asserted the idea that we're created in the image of God and that's what makes us all equal. I mean, America is intertwined with a Christian philosophy and has been from its beginning right up till now. So Franklin Graham just boldly stated it. I was so proud when I heard him say the name of Jesus-

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Gary Bauer: ... without any hesitation. So many of these public prayers come very close to, dear whom it may concern, instead of actually getting to the God of the Bible, which is what it was all about.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, I think George Barna calls it moralistic deism.

Gary Bauer: Yes.

Roger Marsh: Where you believe that there is a higher power of some sort, but you don't want to mention that person, that entity by name. And as we heard Franklin Graham say, something that's very important to us here at the James Dobson Family Institute, everything we do with Family Talk, if you're going to preserve the family, you have to acknowledge that God is the creator, the author of life, the creator of the family, and that's where our blessings flow from and through. And that's the same idea that we've lived by for 250 years here in the United States of America, where we believe that our rights are given to us by God and not by government.

And for Franklin Graham to stand in the rotunda there and to give that inaugural prayer giving glory to God through His son Jesus Christ, it's really huge. Today here on Family Talk, a special edition of the program, Gary Bauer is here with me here in studio, I'm Roger Marsh, and Gary is our senior director of public policy, senior vice president of public policy here at the Dobson Policy Center. As we're taking a look back at the first couple of weeks of the 47th presidency of the United States, Donald Trump, we're here listening to some of the prayers that were given at his inaugural, using them as kind of a litmus test, if you will, for where we're moving.

Because Gary, you're hearing good things from D.C, from Capitol Hill, the president's inner circle and things like that. You're hearing some really good things about the faith component being more prominent in American government once again.

Gary Bauer: There's no question about it, Roger. As I listened to those prayers beginning with some of the people that first prayed at the inaugural, I kept looking at then President Biden and Vice President Harris as they were putting in the last hours of their administration and I couldn't help but wonder what are they thinking right now hearing all of this overt expression of Christian belief and weaving the Christian faith and the Jewish faith into the fabric of America. Because as our listeners will remember during the Biden-Harris administration, they were at war with religious liberty. They put Christians in jail that prayed at abortion clinics. They sent out the annual message, the annual proclamation for Thanksgiving and Christmas and Easter and often never mentioned either God or Jesus. And here was God and Jesus all around the President, the former President and Vice President as they were, in not a great way, leaving the city.

Roger Marsh: What's very interesting, as you mentioned, the Biden administration on its way out and how many members of Congress and from the President on down and former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi would profess their Catholic faith and then seemingly vote against it. And yet we saw a number of people who identify as Catholic in the United States voting for Donald Trump as opposed to voting for Kamala Harris and her running mate. And when I think about the prayers that we typically hear at an event like this, Gary, of course, Cardinal Timothy Dolan was there. He's the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of New York, and he offered a prayer that I found to be a little surprising. I know you did too, but for slightly different reasons. Steve, let's go ahead and hear how Timothy Dolan Cardinal of New York's Archdiocese offered his invocational prayer at the inauguration of Donald Trump.

Timothy Dolan: Be still and know that I am God supreme among the nations supreme on the earth. Let us pray. Remembering General George Washington on his knees at Valley Forge, recalling Abraham Lincoln at his second inaugural with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right. Remembering General George Patton's instructions to his soldiers as they began the Battle of the Bulge eight decades ago. Pray. Pray when fighting, pray alone, pray with others. Pray by night, pray by day. Observing the birthday of the Reverend Martin Luther King, who warned, without God our efforts turn to ashes. We blessed citizens of this one nation under God, humbled by our claim that in God we trust, gather indeed this inauguration day to pray for our President Donald J. Trump, his family, his advisors, his cabinet, his aspirations, his vice President.

For the Lord's blessings upon Joseph Biden. For our men and women in uniform. For each other whose hopes are stoked this new year, this inauguration day. We cannot err in relying upon that prayer from the Bible upon which our President will soon place his hand in oath as we make our own the supplications of King Solomon for wisdom as he began his governance. God of our fathers and your wisdom, you set man to govern your creatures, to govern and holiness and justice, to render justice with integrity. Give our leader wisdom for he is Your servant aware of his own weakness and brevity of life. If wisdom which comes not from You, be not with him, he shall be held in no esteem. Send wisdom from heavens that she may be with him, that he may know Your designs. Please, God, bless America. Please mend her every flaw. You're the God in whom we trust, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Roger Marsh: The words of Cardinal Timothy Dolan at the inauguration of Donald Trump. And Gary, I know this was a very, very powerful, impactful prayer for both of us, and we both noticed certain particularities, I guess, about little nuances. You go first. I mean, there were some things that you picked up on that I didn't catch the first time through listening to this.

Gary Bauer: Okay, well first I'm going to start with the very positive, Roger. I mean, what Dolan did was sort of review a little bit the history of America And how that history shows a reliance on the God of the Bible and prayer all through it. And of

course, he begins with George Washington who gave the first inaugural address in New York City, which was the Capitol at the time on the steps of what's now the federal building just not that far from ground zero on 9/11. And in that inaugural address, George Washington pledges the nation to God. And says that without God there is no way the United States, what would become the United States, would've ever defeated the British Empire.

Then he mentions Lincoln's second inaugural. Folks, if you have not read Lincoln's second inaugural, and I would say this particularly to homeschool families, it's one page long. Now, maybe it would take a child at the high school level, Roger, but in that one page, Lincoln refers to the Bible or God directly or indirectly over a dozen times in one page. It is some of the most powerful rhetoric in American society, in American history. If a president gave that exact speech today, he would be called a hater and a Christian nationalist. And it's one of the most important inaugural addresses ever given.

But then there was something that was so kind of surprising. General Patton? That was somebody that he decided to mention. I thought, well, maybe I missed something. Look for those that don't know, General Patton was a rugged rough man. He was profane quite often. You might be a little uncomfortable if you had him over for dinner. He reminds me of some other people that we know in Washington these days. But General Patton was actually a very faithful man, committed to a belief in God. And what Dolan said was absolutely true. This was before the Battle of the Bulge that took place after we had already won on D-Day, and this is sometime later, the Germans counterattacked and we were in bad shape.

I think we ended up losing 17,000 men in that battle. That was the bloodiest battle of the war. And Patton said to his men, pray. Pray when you're fighting, pray when you're not. Pray in that foxhole. Pray with your friend. Pray before you sleep, and when you wake up. This was the best advice he could give them as they were going into a life or death situation in which 17,000 of them wouldn't survive. Now, as wonderful as the prayer was, I missed this at first, but some of my more Orthodox Catholic friends said, "Well, Gary, it was okay, but he didn't say the name Jesus." And I have to admit, I kind of missed that.

But it is true. And look, not saying the name Jesus, I don't know what was in his mind. But this has been an almost unconscious compromise many Christians have made when they're asked to do a public prayer. They'll say, God, but they're afraid of offending somebody, so they won't say specifically Jesus. And I would urge us all to get over that. I've talked to a lot of Jewish friends who've said to me, "Gary, I am not offended hearing the name Jesus. So don't not say it because you're worried that I'll get upset as an American Jew." We need to be bold and proclaiming the name of our savior.

Roger Marsh:

We're talking with Gary Bauer, our senior vice president of public policy at the James Dobson Policy Center, and today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk,

we're taking a look at the first couple of weeks of the Trump presidency, Trump presidency number 47, compared to contrasted with 45.

Gary, I was thinking back to just about a year ago, you and I had the privilege of having a conversation with Pastor Jack Hibbs, who's gotten a lot of airplay, if you will, for his very outspoken faith in Christ. And he wrote a book about the days of deception that we're living in right now based on the fact that he had given a prayer in front of the joint sessions of Congress. And if you remember that prayer, he pieced together bits and pieces of prayers that had been prayed in Congress before. And Congress's response just 12 months ago was he is now banned from ever giving a presentation in front of the joint session of Congress again. What a difference a year makes to hear Franklin Graham, Cardinal Dolan invoking the name of God, and Jesus in the case of Franklin Graham, and people are applauding. They're not banning them from the White House grounds. It's really quite a turn of events we've seen in the past 12 months.

Gary Bauer:

It is Roger, and it's a reminder as if we needed one, it matters who governs us. So when he got in trouble, it was because the House of Representatives at that point was in the hands of a Speaker of the House that was a radical when it came to the separation of anything that had to do with God and the Bible from anything going on on the floor of the House of Representatives. And not only that, to the extent that then Speaker Pelosi and some of the others will even ever mention the Bible or passages out of the Bible is when they're trying to use it to justify a big growth in the size of government. The exact opposite message than the message that the Bible sends to us.

Roger Marsh:

Yes, the current speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, is a great man of faith, someone that we both know and respect. And of course, he was part of an event that we were pleased to sponsor back here in Colorado Springs back in the fall and had a great dialogue with Dr. Dobson. And there's a lot of love and admiration between Dr. and the current Speaker of the House, and we are glad to see more and more men and women of faith who are there. We've known they've always been there, but to see them now at the platform that they have and actually speaking into these issues.

Gary, let's take the last couple of minutes of our time together, we have a season and an opportunity right now that you and I were speaking about earlier where Dr. Dobson, one of his biggest concerns for America has been that the church has kind of been asleep at the switch in letting not only God be eliminated from the public places, but then not bringing him in when he is welcome. Talk about where that passion came from for him and for you and why now we really do have a golden opportunity to reclaim some of that lost territory.

Gary Bauer:

Yeah, this was the first thing, Roger that drew Dr. Dobson and I together. He first noticed me when I started fighting in the public square when I was in the Reagan administration, and I was getting into controversy by some of the things

I said, and Dr. Dobson called me and said, "Hey, are you allowed to go on my radio show?" And here we are so many years later.

And of course his whole life, he has tried to make the case that America can't solve its problems. America can't be blessed by God, unless Christians are actively involved in every aspect of American life. And of course we need to be involved in government and in making laws, et cetera. If we aren't involved, our places will be taken by those that have a quite different view of what America should be like.

Again, I don't want to make this partisan, I'm not making a partisan point, but some of the people that had their heads bowed up there during Inauguration day were people who spent the last four years doing everything they could to promote abortion on demand. So you not only have to get people willing to pray, but they have to pray and mean it. So you want people that go into office, they believe in God, they believe He's the author of our liberty, but they don't put their faith on a shelf, because now they're in government. They are informed by our faith. They are guided by our faith. And that is not a violation of the Constitution. That's what our founding fathers hoped we would do.

Roger Marsh: Well, the policy issues that you read about when you go to drjamesdobson.org and you click on the Policy Center, Gary Bauer is our senior vice president of the Dobson Policy Center, you can also hear his thoughts and insights every couple of weeks on the Defending Faith, Family and Freedom Podcast, which is available at OnePlace. It's available wherever you get your podcasts. And of course you can sign up to start receiving that when you go to drjamesdobbson.org.

Gary, thank you for the insights that you've shared with us today here on the broadcast, and we look forward to many more of these atta-boys. For nothing else, it looks like we're off to a really good start here with the new administration. We encourage our listeners to keep them and their prayers, but also to keep you and your team in their prayers as well for everything you're doing to keep an eye on policy and to actually even shape it as you are given the opportunity to do so. Gary Bauer, our senior vice president of public policy here at the Dobson Policy Center. Thanks so much for being with us today here on Family Talk.

Gary Bauer: Great to be with you, Roger. God bless.

Roger Marsh: All right, and thank you so much for joining us as well here on the broadcast today. For Dr. Dobson and all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening. 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.

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