



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: When Culture Hates You – Part 1

Guest(s): Natasha Crain

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- Dr. James Dobson: Well hello everyone, I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.
- Roger Marsh: Is it possible for Christians who are living in hostile times to still win the culture war, if you will. That's a question that a lot of Christians are asking, especially when they see themselves through the lens of a secular worldview, where only 40% of Americans now say they even believe in God, let alone have any kind of faith in Christ. Well, today here on Family Talk, I'm joined by Natasha Crain, speaker, podcaster, author of five books, and including a brand-new one that has the most provocative title of any book that I've read recently. It's called *When Culture Hates You: Persevering for the Common Good as Christians in a Hostile Public Square*. We have a link for the book up at drjamesdobson.org and Natasha Crain, welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Dr. and Mrs. Dobson send their warmest regards in inviting you to the program today.
- Natasha Crain: Well, thank you so much. It's great to be here.
- Roger Marsh: Hate is sure a strong word, isn't it?
- Natasha Crain: It is.
- Roger Marsh: Yeah, so a lot of people are saying, wait, I don't get it because I think as Christians, we want to hate what is evil and love, cling to what is good. But the culture as hate is just a horrible word and since we don't like what you're doing as Christians, therefore, you're haters, so we hate you. And our hate is somehow justified. Did I kind of summarize where you're starting as far as your hypothesis for this resource?
- Natasha Crain: Well, you know, it goes back to Scripture itself where Jesus says to His disciples that if the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. And so we get this sense already from just reading Jesus' words, that there is going to be this conflict between believers and non-believers in the world. So we should expect this, that what we're seeing today, this increasing hostility, we should expect to see it, because Jesus said that in some sense that we would.

Roger Marsh: You know, it's interesting when you talk about in this book, *When Culture Hates You*, the fact that there are a lot of people who have a hard time with the concept of hate as it were on the secular non-Christian side of it, because they think that whatever makes them feel good is good. And you walk us all the way through the different paces and it's a very, very practical resource in terms of how we can define what is good, you know, the role of God and goodness and all those types of things. Can you give us maybe a 60-second overview of where are we? You know, in terms of we're Christians and this is what we believe, but this is what the world sees us as, because there are some people's minds we're just not gonna change, but there are other people who the ones I'm most concerned with are the ones who are in the church, profess faith in Christ and yet look at people like you and me and say, "You're crazy."

Natasha Crain: Yeah, well, I think where we are today is that it's no longer a situation where people might look at Christians and say, "Hey, you're wrong about something." You know, intellectually speaking, you're just wrong about this verifiable fact over here. You guys keep going over there, being wrong. We're gonna be over here doing our own thing. We don't see that anymore. Instead of being seen as being wrong, we're seen as being evil. We're seen as being morally problematic with our beliefs. And we are toxic. We are haters, in a sense, like you said earlier. And so where we are today is that a lot of people that I've talked to-- this was really the catalyst for the book-- have been cut off by family members. They have been cut off by friends. They have lost jobs over things that they've said, or they've had trouble getting jobs in the first place because they're not willing to adhere to certain ideologies in the workplace. So we see this in a lot of different places, this hostility, and people are experiencing it personally and of course, on an aggregate level as well.

Roger Marsh: One of the things I was really taken with in this book is that you lovingly coax us off the bench. I've said many times before, there's no Switzerland in Heaven, right? I mean, there's no neutrality, and there are a lot of Christians who, let's face it, have been able to live in a country where God and country was the order of the day, where "in God we trust" is on the money. And if you go to church, no one demonizes you for it." And then all of a sudden, we hit our 50s and 60s and all of a sudden, we're the bad guys and there's a part of us that says, "Yeah, but I'm just trying to be, you know, blessed are the peacemakers, right? I don't want to cause any problems." At the same time though, you make a pretty compelling case early on in this book that we have to live out our faith in the public square and that means taking a stand for biblical values. Help us understand the difference between what it means to take a stand for biblical truth and I've got signs and torches and I'm out protesting and starting rallies and things like that. It doesn't have to be that extreme, but it really does call us to speak up.

Natasha Crain: Oh, it does. And, you know, I think that when we get into the mindset, like you said, of people feeling like, "Well, I don't want to cause problems, right? I'm supposed to be a peacemaker. I'm supposed to be nice." Well, we're not causing problems according to biblical standards if what we're doing is speaking God's truth. And so we're causing problems if we're doing that in an unloving way, if

we're not being gracious about it, if we're out there being jerks and gaining a reputation for being awful as people, but the message itself is always going to be offensive. And Christians have to really get our heads around this in today's culture and reset the expectations to understand that that is how people are going to see it. They're going to be offended by the message that we have, not just by the gospel, definitely by the gospel message, but from all the implications that flow from the gospel. When we are speaking God's truth and saying, "Hey, these are the things that are good for society. Hey, I'm going to step my toe out into the public square because I'm going to advocate for what is good according to God's standards. I'm going to advocate against what's evil." When we do that, people are going to hate it because they're going to have a different idea of what's good. And so, yes, that is getting out there and people are not going to like you for that doesn't mean you're causing a "problem" in the same sense that we would sometimes think of it as like, "well, I'm not being a peacemaker." We're not called to just make sure everybody's happy with everything. We're called to speak truth.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, I think a lot of people have mistaken the word peace making for peace keeping. And if that go along to get along type of mentality that we've always been able to get away with, if you will, I mean, I don't mean to call us out too much. And it kind of echoes your story, doesn't it, Natasha? For those who may not be familiar with the history of Natasha Crain, you've become one of the more, I think recognizable apologists, but I like to put you in the everyday apologist category as opposed to "I was in the Ivy League, hollowed stained glass walls of cemetery when I had this revelation." That's not your story at all. I mean, you're a mom, you have kids, and you're watching what they're being taught and saying, "hey, wait a minute." Give us kind of a 60 second overview of your background.

Natasha Crain: Yeah. So I started a blog when my kids were really little. I had three kids who were three and under and I just decided I was going to start writing about things we were doing to help our little kids know and love Jesus. And as I started blogging, then I started getting attacked by a lot of skeptics on my site and they were sending me emails and leaving comments basically saying, "hey, you're just indoctrinating your kids. You are, don't you understand that the Bible's filled with errors and contradictions, that science has put God out of a job, that there's no evidence that Jesus even existed as a person in history." I started getting all these kinds of claims and I had been a lifelong Christian, but I had no idea how to actually respond to those things.

Roger Marsh: How long have you been in California?

Natasha Crain: Since I went to college.

Roger Marsh: Okay, well, I won't go into how many years that is. That would be fair to either one of us.

Natasha Crain: It's been a while.

Roger Marsh: But you know, I think for me, the paradigm shifted. So you'd lifelong, you know, Angelino was when Proposition 8 was on the ballot. Were you guys in California at that point, you remember the definition of marriage things, Prop 22 and then Prop 8. And the culture went from why should we define marriage as the way we do, to why shouldn't we? And it was amazing to me how many Christians said because we shouldn't, and they didn't really have an answer. And I get the sense that your career, if you will, and your ministry and apologetics was born out of that, where here you are just blogging and being a mom and having three kids, and next thing you know, people are attacking you. And I used to receive them too on my radio program where people would say, "Hey, we're gay "and we have this, that and the other thing." And you'd sit there and try to have a reasonable conversation with them, but at some point, it would fall apart. Is that the reason you sense, Natasha Crain, that so many people in the body of Christ are saying, "I'm glad Natasha's doing this, so I don't have to. "I'll just give them a copy of your book." And you're saying, "No, no, no, it's the opposite."

Natasha Crain: Yeah, I hope that that's not what people do because it's not as Christians that we should just look to certain people who happen to be out there doing these kinds of things as like, "Hey, you guys find a reason for the faith." I mean, no, we should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us and do so with gentleness and respect. And so, yes, we're all called to do this. And it's not just about leaving it to certain people. And that's what I learned through my own experience when I got attacked because that's when I learned what apologetics is, how you make a case for and defend the truth of Christianity. And I just started reading everything and get my hands on. And then I used as an opportunity to turn around and use my blog as a place to equip other Christian parents to say, "Hey, here's what the world is saying. Here's what's going on out there. Here's what you need to know in order to be able to equip your own kids."

Roger Marsh: Can we take an example of what's happening in the culture and you write about this in *When Culture Hates You*. One of the hot button issues of the day, say transgenderism or things of that nature, where people who are good, God-fearing Christian people will say, "Well, I don't know. I'm not really sure." And you're saying, "Hey, you can know, and you can be sure." Take us through the process for someone who just is hearing our conversation right now. And they're saying, "Okay, yeah, that's me. I have a... there was a woman at my church years ago who had a granddaughter who went to the military and decided that she was really a man, and she was going to marry a woman and wanted to know if our pastor would do the ceremony. And grandma was the only one who would talk to her in the family. Everybody else just cut her off. That was their solution, was we're cutting you off. How would you, someone hears that, what's a good place to start and kind of put some of these principles into practice?

Natasha Crain: Well, the first thing that we have to do is determine what our source for truth is. Because a lot of Christians today are just kind of, you know, they're just

thinking, "Well, what do I think God would say about this transgender issue?" You know, well, people are happier and they wanna be their authentic selves, so shouldn't we support that? support that, and they're kind of using logic, if you will, to come to their own conclusions. But as Christians, we have to go back to God's Word. And it sounds so Christian-ese, but we have to get back to remembering, "Wait, no, this is actually what the creator and the sustainer of the universe told us. Do we really understand that, that this is where we go for our source for truth?"

So that's the first thing, is a lot of Christians just aren't even saying, well, what does the Bible say? The second thing is, A lot of times, Christians are like, well, can I point to page whatever in the Bible and find the verse that says, you know, oh, you know, we should have this gender ideology. Well, of course, we're not going to just a specific verse in that case. For some things, there are some very specific verses that you can go to. But on this, we have to understand overall God's design for gender and sexuality. This is a proactive doctrine about creation, really. That this is how God created us in the image of God and for a specific purpose to know God, to love God, to make Him known to others. And in the purpose and in the process of doing that, He has created people with a design. And so if He gives us this design of gender and sexuality and those things go together, obviously, then when we have that design, anything that we do that is going to live in conflict with that design is going to be harmful and in an objective sense. And I really want to emphasize that because the word harmful and helpful, those words get thrown around all the time today, especially in culture, people will say, you're harming me, right? By who's standard, by what standard?

And so when we go back to the concept of purpose, that if God has a purpose for us, for our flourishing as human beings, and we do something against that purpose, it will always be harmful no matter what someone else calls it. Because according to God's standards, it's harmful. So that's how we have to start thinking of things as Christians. I think there's a lot of self-loathing amongst Christians because there are so many people in culture who will say, you know, you're harming us, you're harming trans people, and they don't call it loving because to your point earlier, it's kind of like, if you're loving me according to culture's definition, you're just gonna, you know, affirm whatever, whatever it is.

Roger Marsh: You're trying to appease.

Natasha Crain: Yeah, exactly. You're just trying to go along with whatever is going to make me happy. And that can't be our definition of love from a biblical standard. It can't be our definition of harm. And so we have to really get our heads around the fact that people might actually call what's good harmful. You know, it's just like the Bible says, people will call good evil and evil good. And that's what we see today. So we've got to be really clear on what is actually good according to God's objective standards.

Roger Marsh:

And I love the fact, Natasha, as you were describing this, that you're encouraging us and dare I even say exhorting us to make sure we really know what Scripture says. Because you know, and I know a lot of bumper sticker believers, you know, who their whole theology is Jeremiah 29:11, John 3:16, Proverbs 3:5-6. And they take those verses somewhat out of context and they've knit together their own, I guess George Barna would say, syncretistic type of viewers to the world, but it's all Bible. So they could think, well, I'm a Christian, rather than saying, hey, wait a minute, we've got to get to the source of truth and who is the source of truth and how can we know it? And as we get more comfortable with it, I was amazed to find out in my later years as a Christian. I think some people call it the Romans Road, you know, of explaining the salvation process with all the different Romans 3, Romans 5, Romans 10, and how that explains our sinful nature and how we then as Christians can share that with other people. So it's not just a matter of Roger and Natasha are judgy and finger pointy, hateful Christians, but rather no, we care about you. To your point about the trans community, the happy ending of the story I was just sharing with you is the young lady thought better of it, had a spiritual awakening and is now living as a woman again. She stepped away from it. But the one person who stayed in there with her was her grandmother who was praying for her and kept living the truth saying, "I love you, you know. I will be with you on this journey, but I know the truth and you're not walking in truth." And I thought, "Wow, that must have been really tough to do for a woman in her 80s to say, 'I'm gonna hang in the gap.'" But that's, you're calling people to be more like that, it sounds like.

Natasha Crain:

Yeah, if we're not going to love people enough to tell them the truth, then who is? Who's going to do it? You know, non-believers aren't gonna be sharing God's truth with people. So it clearly comes down to us as Christians. And you know, you said something about, you know, we don't want people to think that we're judging and we don't want that kind of perception. We have to remember God's the ultimate judge, right? He is the one who's already judged what is good and bad and right and wrong and harmful and helpful. It's already been done. We're just sharing his truth. So you're not the judge. So many Christians are worried about being, you know, judgy. And when we're defining judgment by discerning between what's right and wrong, we should not be afraid to judge these situations. You judge these issues. We're just sharing what the great judge has already judged to be true.

Roger Marsh:

It's so powerful. And when you think about what Natasha Crane writes about in her book called *When Culture Hates You: Persevering for the Common Good "as Christians in a Hostile Public Square"*, it is okay to say that it has become hostile. I mean, when you see the Baronel Stutzmanns and Jack Phillippses and people who don't make the headlines. You know, I mean, you face that kind of hostility all the time and your contemporaries, this whole new group of apologists who or coming up and it's like, wait, they don't have like massive seminary degrees, well, you do now. But I mean, well, in terms of your study, it's not like you come from Princeton or Yale or something like that. You're coming at this from, hey, this is the Word of God divinely inspired in my life. Another area that we've seen

become a huge issue, and especially for people who live in the People's Republic of California, is the abortion issue. And remembering when *Dobbs vs. Jackson* was overturned, June 24th, 2022, and a lot of Christians said, "Whew, we won, it's over." And you and I both knew, wait a minute, this is the beginning, this is the seven more coming back to come after the one thief was running out of the house. Talk about how the pro-abortion, pro-choice, if you will, that's what you refer to in the book, how that debate is something that we as Christians need to step into, and we and do so effectively.

Natasha Crain:

Well, this is hugely important, and I talk about some of the history there because you're right, there is a lot of confusion still amongst Christians about what happened in the Supreme Court, that basically this just went back to the states to make these decisions. And what we're seeing is that overwhelmingly, the decisions that have been made by the states have been in favor of pro-choice causes. The pro-choice activists have been very happy about the way that things have gone. And I firmly place a lot of this, the blame for what's going on and in the church that we have not been discipling people well on this issue to understand why a pro-life position is the only position that's consistent with biblical truth. You know, according to the research about a third of evangelicals still consider themselves pro-choice. Think about that for a minute. A third of self-identified evangelicals consider themselves pro-choice.

There's something that's gone desperately wrong in the church. When we haven't been talking about these issues enough because, for example, a pastor feels that it's too "political." If it becomes a political issue, now it has to be off the table. But political just means it's the way that we make decisions about how we live together in community. That's all that means by definition. Should Christians in a constitutional republic be part of the decision-making? Should we be part of advocating? According to our views for what is good in society and against what is bad, well, of course we should. Just a matter of being a citizen in this country. Now, of course, if we had the right to do that, but Scripture said, don't do it anyway, that's something different, but we don't see that in Scripture. So as Christians, we need to have a much, much better understanding of the issue itself, how you defend the pre-born, but also just understanding that it is our calling to be light in a culture and that it's okay and not just okay, but we are called to get out there and to say this is what is objectively good for society. This is good for the pre-born, it's good for the moms, it's good for everyone when we do not allow for a culture of death.

Roger Marsh:

What do you make, Natasha, of where we are right now as a culture? Because there were a lot of people, the election was very contentious, obviously. There were people on both sides of the aisle. There were still a million and a half people who voted for somebody other than the two top candidates. I mean, there are a lot of folks who had some very strong opinions. And I see a lot of, I don't want to call it division in the church. I mean, there were different opinions, but I think the truly united church of Christ, I mean, the body of Christ is one, is unified. And so there are some people who are claiming that, but they're not really a part of it. You mentioned in the book, you know, the fact

that, you know, a civil government is what God gives to us. I mean, these leaders are called. And we know that when the righteous are in leadership, I'm paraphrasing badly, facing badly, that everybody prospers. Where do you think we are right now? I mean, based on the fact that there's still that level of hatred toward Christians, if anything, it's actually turned up a notch?

Natasha Crain:

Well, it's interesting because I actually wrote an article about this a couple of weeks ago on my website about the vibe shift as people are calling it. It seems like things are moving in a direction that in some issues, Christians would say, "Oh, this is moving in a direction that's consistent with biblical values," right? So for example, having an executive order that clearly defines the biological sex and that there, you know, there's no gender ideology according to our federal government and all of the implications that will come from that. We should look at that and we should be able to celebrate as Christians and say, "yes, this is corresponding with biblical truth that there is a design for biological sex. There's no separate gender. This is a good thing." But at the same time, we have to understand that it's not that our government came to that conclusion because they were looking to the Bible as their guide. It's not because the government said, "Oh, you know, we're really going to go with God's design on this."

Now what they're doing is going along in a way that aligns with biblical truth, but it sort of happens to be that way. And so I say that, and I make that distinction because I think as Christians, we can get comfortable thinking, "Well, does the culture really hate us, I mean, things are going in a different direction. Well, they're going in a different direction on certain issues, but because that direction is not going to be tethered to objective truth, it's going to be all over the place and it'll change again in the future. So we have to understand that even when things start to look better in some cases, we celebrate those knowing it's not permanent and we have to continue to be out there advocating for what is right on those issues because it's going to change again in the future. Even with marriage, you know, you run up marriage earlier, like 20 years ago, people would have said, "Oh yeah, you know, right now the vibe, if you will, "is that everyone believes that marriage is still between a man and a woman. Well, no one's tackling that one today. Yes, you know, on the gender ideology, we've had some victories lately, but no one's talking about biblical marriage again, and whether or not that should be redefined. I mean, people are always talking about it, but it's not the priority of the day, right? So we just have to always be on our toes as Christians and understand that victories are good and we celebrate those victories, but we have to continue to advocate for what's right on everything and not just what is the issue of the day.

Roger Marsh:

Yeah, I think when you get right down to it, there are a lot of us had, if we are of a certain age, grew up in an era where we believed that there were a lot of things that were "settled." And now that everything is seemingly unsettled, the only really settling thing is your faith in Christ, your salvation is secure. The fact that God is the process through Jesus of restoring and redeeming everything. And it's kind of upending a lot of things. I mean, there's positives and there's

lots of negatives. I want to take you to an initial quote from your book, *When Culture Hates You*, which is like the best title. Was that your idea?

Natasha Crain: It was.

Roger Marsh: I love it.

Natasha Crain: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: I love it. I love it. I'm glad you got that, you know, because sometimes, you know, we as writers will submit something, and then the publisher says, "No, this is what we're going to call it." So I'm glad that this is what you fought for it.

Natasha Crain: Well, I'm glad that you like the title. It's funny because a couple of reviews have said something like, you know, just read past the title. If you don't like the title, keep going past it, which is kind of funny that sometimes people are so sensitive to things that they hear a title like that and they think, ooh, ooh, the culture, you know, it hates. Jesus was the one who used the word hate.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, exactly.

Natasha Crain: Right, I mean, so, yeah, it's funny.

Roger Marsh: We want to cling to what is good and hate what is evil, so if a culture is hating us, then they think we're evil and that's where we start. Exactly. Well, Natasha, we're just kind of scratching the surface here on your brand-new book and our conversation, but we've run out of time for today's broadcast. Can you join us again next time so we can continue that conversation?

Natasha Crain: Absolutely. I would love to.

Roger Marsh: Well, Jesus Himself warned us about cultural hostility and when we understand that opposition comes with the territory of following Christ, we can stop being surprised and start being prepared. You've been listening to a special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, and a challenging conversation featuring author Natasha Crain about her book, *When Culture Hates You: Persevering for the common good as Christians in a Hostile Public Square*. I had the pleasure of sitting down with Natasha for this conversation at the recent National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Dallas, and we are so glad to be able to share it with you today. Now, if you missed any portion of today's program, or if you'd like to share this discussion with a friend, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's where you'll also find a link for information on how to order a copy of Natasha Crain's book called *When Culture Hates You*. That's at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we exist to help families like yours navigate an increasingly challenging cultural landscape with biblical

wisdom and practical guidance. While the world continues to reject biblical values, we are working to preserve and promote the institution of the family while introducing as many people as possible to the gospel of Jesus Christ. These broadcasts that you hear each day are made possible through the generous support of friends like you who believe that biblical truth still matters in our culture. Call 877-732-6825 right now to make a donation over the phone. That's 877-732-6825. You can also send your donation through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code, 80949.

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Well, I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of Dr. James Dobson and all of us here at Family Talk, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time for part two of our conversation with author Natasha Crain discussing how to live as a Christian when culture hates you. That's coming up right here on the next 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.
- Dr. James Dobson: How does a child learn to handle freedom and independence? It takes a precise, calculated effort by his parents.
- Roger Marsh: With another Dr. Dobson Minute, here's Dr. James Dobson.
- Dr. James Dobson: I remember a test of my own independence when I was 17 years old. My parents were going on a two-week trip and they left me behind with the family car and permission to have some school buddies over to stay at our house. I behaved responsibly while my folks were gone, but I always wondered why my mother took that risk. Well, she exemplified an important child rearing principle. She prepared me for independence. If you have children, let them test the waters of freedom as they're growing up rather than thrusting them into total independence all at once. Then when they're on their own and completely free, they'll know how to handle it responsibly and wisely.
- Roger Marsh: For more information, visit drdobsonminute.org.