

Episode 160: Tony Perkins

Speaker 1 ([00:04](#)):

Welcome to The Bill Walton Show, featuring conversations with leaders, entrepreneurs, artists, and thinkers, fresh perspectives on money, culture, politics, and human flourishing. Interesting people, interesting things.

Bill Walton ([00:24](#)):

Welcome to The Bill Walton Show. I'm Bill Walton. All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts. Well, when I think about one man playing many parts, the man that comes to mind for me is Tony Perkins. I had the great pleasure of working with Tony Perkins fairly closely for five years when he was president at the Council for National Policy. And Tony's indeed a man of many extraordinary and effective parts. He's president of the Family Research Council. He's been chairman of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom. He's a syndicated radio host. He's an author of a terrific book called No Fear of New Generation Standing For Truth. He's a Baptist minister. He was a Louisiana State Representative, a TV reporter, a Marine, a policeman and when he was five years old, he led his father to Jesus. Tony.

Tony Perkins ([01:34](#)):

Feel good to be with you.

Bill Walton ([01:35](#)):

Good to be with you.

Tony Perkins ([01:36](#)):

I'm still trying to figure out what I'm going to do when I grow up, but...

Bill Walton ([01:38](#)):

Well, I know, I have no doubt that it'll be interesting and maybe I'll do with you. We'll figure something out.

Tony Perkins ([01:44](#)):

Well, it's good to be back with you. I enjoyed our time together at CMP.

Bill Walton ([01:47](#)):

Yeah. Well, CMP pulled together all the parts of the conservative movement, which is in need of pulling together, given all the stuff we're fighting. Your longtime assistant Lindsay Hofer, who I came to love working together, I asked her to describe you in one phrase and she said, "Well, Tony, if you look at his career, I'd call him a first responder." She said you got a tendency to jump right into things when you see a problem. And I think the thing that got you into, for example, the board abortion rights issue was you were policeman and you discovered an abortion clinic in Louisiana was horrifying.

Tony Perkins ([02:31](#)):

Yeah, I do have that orientation as a first responder, you see a problem, you respond to it, you see an opportunity, you respond to it. But you're driven by a desire to help people. And I think that we all to some degree have that, especially as believers, as followers of Christ, our desire is to help other people. Now, sometimes that help takes on the atmosphere of conflict, because sometimes there is resistance to help. I've seen that before, when you're trying to help someone they're so panicked, they respond in what appears to be a negative way. And the same is true, politically, when we're addressing some of the issues we are today. Having an understanding of where these things lead, but people sometimes are locked into the very, to this moment and they don't realize. And so this is why we see a lot of conflict in our culture today. But I would say our first responders are adequate as a descriptor.

Now, my time in law enforcement, I... There was only two things I ever wanted to do growing up. I either wanted to ride on the back of a garbage truck when I was about four years old. That was my desire. I always thought that was neat to ride on the back of a garbage truck. Quickly passed through that phase, but then it was to be a police officer. I always wanted to do that.

I lost that dream. In 1992, Operation Rescue came to Baton Rouge and I had friends that were in the churches and the pro-life movement, and obviously friends in the police department, because that's where I was. And I saw something that really, for the first time, illustrated to me this really life and death issue over the abortion. And this was a battle of good and evil and I saw good people engage in bad things. They were beating peaceful, pro-life protestors. I mean, these protestors weren't doing anything but sitting. And this shocked me. And I spoke out about it and as a result, I was ushered out of the police department and that opened a door for me then to move in into media or something I never [crosstalk 00:05:02]-

Bill Walton (05:01):

You were fired from the police department because of your position on what was happening at the abortion clinic?

Tony Perkins (05:07):

Yeah. I spoke out about it and I was told that that violated department policy of speaking out publicly.

Bill Walton (05:14):

And this was what year?

Tony Perkins (05:14):

This was 1992. And so that opened a door then to... I was offered a position as a television or reporter because I actually filmed some of this and it was turned over to a television news agency. And so they offered me a position. I started covering politics, Louisiana legislature, which opened the door for me to run for office. I felt the Lord leading me into that arena again because we saw bad things happening. And in that period of time in Louisiana, Louisiana was the target of the biggest FBI investigation up to that point in time over corruption revolving around gambling. Louisiana at that time had more gambling than Nevada.

Bill Walton (06:01):

Well, it had a history of Huey Long, too.

Tony Perkins (06:03):

Well, there's a long history of...

Bill Walton (06:05):

Louisiana's not exactly known as [crosstalk 00:06:07] -

Tony Perkins (06:07):

But it's changed. It's really turned to corner. And that was a period of that time when we saw I was a reformed candidate.

Bill Walton (06:14):

When you left the police department, did they offer you an alternative? They said, if you just back down we'll keep you-

Tony Perkins (06:19):

Yeah, they did-

Bill Walton (06:20):

So this was, you took a stand and you paid the price.

Tony Perkins (06:21):

Yeah. I was suspended and then the chief, who's a good friend of mine now. I mean, he is a very good friend of mine. He's retired, but he's a good friend. He said, look, if you'll promise not to say anything and just abide by this, then you can come by.

Bill Walton (06:37):

And you wouldn't do it.

Tony Perkins (06:38):

No, I can't. I said, I couldn't do that.

Bill Walton (06:40):

Well, that leads us. I want to jump through the whole resume. We're not going to cover every piece of it, it'd be for 17 hours. But fast forward to being present the Family Research Council, you take a lot of stands for which you paid price.

Tony Perkins (06:55):

Well, you could say that, but I mean, I think there is truth. And I know in this postmodern world, there's this idea that truth doesn't exist, but there is truth and truth is worth defending. And as a father of five children and now a grandfather-

Bill Walton (07:12):

Would you tagline on your radio show? You're hosting [crosstalk 00:07:16]-

Tony Perkins (07:15):

About standing?

Bill Walton (07:16):

Yeah. What's the-?

Tony Perkins (07:18):

Well, it comes from Ephesians 6 where Paul talks about in that final chapter to the Ephesians that we're wrestling with not fleshing blood. This is not a battle with people, but it is a spiritual battle against principalities, against powers, against rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual host of wickedness and heavenly places. And he's just put on the whole armor of God and so he goes through listing those elements of the scripture or of the armor. And by the way, Paul is writing this in prison in Rome when he writes this letter.

Bill Walton (07:50):

This was the letters?

Tony Perkins (07:51):

Yeah. There were four that he wrote from the jail, from prison in Rome. And he really summarizes, this is now I close my radio program is that when you've prayed, because he says that we're to pray, and when you've taken your stand, when you've prepared and you've taken your stand, when you've done all, you stand. There is no retreat, there is no surrender, we stand firm.

Bill Walton (08:18):

Well, you covered the out in your book, No Fear. Tell me about how you came up with the stories.

Tony Perkins (08:24):

Well, I wrote that a few years ago and it was actually probably one of the most enjoyable writing projects and I'm not a big writer. I like radio, I like television, I'm not a writer but I wrote that.

Bill Walton (08:37):

[inaudible 00:08:37] on the same way. It's a lot easier to talk [crosstalk 00:08:39].

Tony Perkins (08:39):

It is, it is. And I labor behind a keyboard. What I actually did is I took and I interviewed a lot of young people because we kept hearing all this stuff about whether young people, they're lost, we're not going to get them. And there's actually young people who are standing firm for truth. Now it's a remnant, but I just saw the conviction. I am attracted to courage because courage breeds courage. And when you see people standing up courageously, I want to look at it more, I want to look at into it, I want to look into their story, so I actually tell their story.

So the first story in there's [Lila Rose 00:09:18]. She's a young girl who now is just about to have her first child. She stood up against planned parenthood. In fact, she was the first really to come in and go undercover and tell in great detail all kind of the corruption within planned parenthood, which has led to some of the other things we've seen in recent times. And she did this as a young UCLA student in California. And so I tell her story and what led up to it. So it's really stories. And then-

Bill Walton ([09:52](#)):

Well, the good stories.

Tony Perkins ([09:54](#)):

Yeah, they're stories of courage.

Bill Walton ([09:55](#)):

Heartening.

Tony Perkins ([09:56](#)):

They're stories of people who stood up for their conviction. Now you might not agree with them, but you have to agree with courage and their motivation for doing it. And then each chapter, there's 13 chapters, it actually ends up with a Sudanese mother, Christian mother that we helped get out of prison in Sudan who was sentenced to death, Mariam Ibrahim. But each of those have a biblical devotion that goes along with it to lay the biblical principle for the stand that that individual took.

Bill Walton ([10:30](#)):

Well, Family Research Council teaches people to live by the biblical worldview.

Tony Perkins ([10:38](#)):

What we do is we work on public policy as it pertains to families from a biblical perspective. So we think the founders of this nation had an orientation that they may, not all of them were Christian, but there was a shared world view which came from the Judeo-Christian ethic. And so our premise is if that was good enough to build a country on, it's good enough to continue to guide a country by today.

Bill Walton ([11:08](#)):

Well, I don't think the country works without a Christian morality informing the constitution and everything else we do. I mean for me, that's flat out. If each take Christianity out of the equation, it's hard to think about how this country really works and we've taken Christianity out of the equation and we're reaping the whirlwind.

Tony Perkins ([11:29](#)):

Well, and that's been part of your journey.

Bill Walton ([11:31](#)):

Yes. It is.

Tony Perkins ([11:32](#)):

I mean, you've come...

Bill Walton ([11:34](#)):

You mean my recovering libertarian.

Tony Perkins ([11:37](#)):

Yes. I mean, you've connected the dots. You've had a front row seat to this. I mean, you're very successful in business and that's when we met, you came into the conservative movement with that orientation, but you've honestly come to this understanding that all of these pieces have to fit together for it to work.

Bill Walton ([11:55](#)):

Yeah. Unless you have faith in family and civil society, forget about business, and they're all interrelated. And how you come to it, whether you come to it through utilitarian reasons, or whether you come to it through faith, you still end up at the same place. You have to have all that. And I think we're paying a price for not [crosstalk 00:12:12]-

Tony Perkins ([12:12](#)):

I mean, that's what keeps it tethered to the whole... I'm a free market guy. I am excited when people prosper, when people... I am not at all upset that we've got billionaires in this country. I wish we had more. But I also know that that success has to be tethered to truth and that the problems we've seen on Wall Street is not because we didn't have enough government regulation, it was because we were missing the moral foundation.

Bill Walton ([12:46](#)):

Bad actors. Yeah. This is The Bill Walton Show. And I used to say watching it but we've got many people listening to the show. We're now just saying, this is The Bill Walton Show, and it is, and I'm here with Tony Perkins who's one of my heroes. He's president of Family Research Council and we're talking about how [inaudible 00:13:05] about my background a bit in finance and Wall Street and about how you really can't succeed even there without a firm moral foundation for everything. So it's this idea that you can divorce economics from morality, and civil society just can't do it.

Tony Perkins ([13:23](#)):

Does it work?

Bill Walton ([13:24](#)):

Yeah.

Tony Perkins ([13:25](#)):

[inaudible 00:13:25]

Bill Walton ([13:25](#)):

But I remember [crosstalk 00:13:27]

Tony Perkins ([13:27](#)):

[crosstalk 00:13:27] getting together.

Bill Walton ([13:28](#)):

You were the one that brought me in as vice president of Council for National Policy, and I was sort of off the street and I had some skills that could help you with, but the first couple dinners we had, you

explained to me the biblical worldview and I thought, well, this is new. And it turned out to be a terrific journey.

Tony Perkins ([13:49](#)):

We made a great team.

Bill Walton ([13:51](#)):

Yeah.

Tony Perkins ([13:52](#)):

It was an enjoyable journey.

Bill Walton ([13:56](#)):

We talked about this before we get on, I kind of want to jump into where we are right now with what's happening with schools and with parents and with critical race theory and really both of you and I are optimist, really the opportunity that's come out of this terrible lockdown mandate world we've been in.

Tony Perkins ([14:14](#)):

Yeah. As a believer, I think you have to be an eternal optimist. And so I'm just optimistic. I can always find something positive about what's unfolding. And it's not being denying reality. Our country's in trouble. There's no question our country's in trouble. But what gives me hope, and I was sharing this with some Republican leaders on the Hill recently in conversation with them, is that the virus, as you said, the lockdown gave parents, it really forced parents to pay attention to what their kids were being taught in the schools. And I think if I could pin or put my finger on one thing that I think has been very problematic for our country, it's been what's happening in public education for the last several decades. In particular, it began to accelerate under the Obama administration, where we went from teaching children to excel with the basics that we began to train activists. And those that are in the education system will admit this, that under the department of education and what was being fed into the education system was to train young people to be social activists, seeking social justice.

I mean, all these things don't happen on their own. I mean, the riots we saw in 2020, really, the seeds had been planted years before. So parents now have a front row seat and they're appalled at what they're seeing. The critical race area is a part of it, but this radical gender ideology is a part of it. I mean, we've seen this play out in Virginia and Loudoun County where the school superintendent in the school board covered up the fact that their bathroom policy that was pushed by the Biden administration previously from the Obama administration led to sexual assaults and they denied it. They knew it. The memo, the paper trail has shown that they knew it, but yet they covered it up.

And it's not just Loudoun County, it's happening all across the country. We've been working with activists across the country that are requesting documents through the four year request. My prediction is that this will eclipse the Tea Party movement of 2010 in the midterm election. Parents have had enough.

Bill Walton ([16:39](#)):

Two things. One that when I get into the Mary Garland memo but you're really saying because the bathroom policy changed everything that led to this behavior and so...

Tony Perkins ([16:53](#)):

Look, I think it's... Look when you've got-

Bill Walton ([16:56](#)):

I mean, it makes sense to me. You create an opportunity-

Tony Perkins ([16:58](#)):

When you've got boys, I don't care if they're wearing a skirt or what they're wearing, but if you've got biological males in a girl restroom, locker room, you are inviting problems. And you've had two girls there that had been sexually assaulted just in Loudoun County. Now, and then you had a school system trying to cover it up. Look, as a father of three girls, there's not a decent man in this country who would not fight for his daughters. If he is, he's not a decent man, quite frankly, because I think we need to protect our daughters and we need to protect our sons. That's the role of a parent. That's why God gave children to parents and not to governments.

And parents are once again, beginning to exercise their God given responsibility. I talk about this on my program a lot, because my audience is Christian and they understand, predominantly Christian, they understand the biblical context, but sure, children are given to parents and parents are to train them up in the way that they should go. Parents are given the authority and the responsibility to teach and to train their children. Now you delegate the authority. I can delegate it to a public school, I can delegate it to a private school. I can delegate it to a tutor, but I can never delegate the responsibility. I am the one who will ultimately be responsible for the training of my children. And parents have to understand that, and I think there is a understand ending now that the government schools are not working in the best interest of our children or in our families. In fact, they're driving a wedge between parent and child.

Bill Walton ([18:42](#)):

Well, it seems like that's the fundamental divide. Do you think that children should be raised by the state or do you think children should be raised by parents?

Tony Perkins ([18:49](#)):

Well, if you're Marxist, you would say the state.

Bill Walton ([18:50](#)):

Well, exactly. I mean, that's just economic issues, it's the cultural issue [crosstalk 00:18:56]-

Tony Perkins ([18:55](#)):

Well, you have to start with the family.

Bill Walton ([18:57](#)):

Yeah. So and it's interesting with the lockdowns and keeping schools closed, kids learning on their computers, parents started looking over their shoulder to see what it was they're being taught and that was cataclysmic for people who were trying to push this stuff.

Tony Perkins ([19:15](#)):

Well, let me give you a personal example. One of my daughters is in law school and their classes are by Zoom. Now, I would've never gone to class with her to sit in the class, but I've been able to look at over her shoulder not that was prying or anything because she invited me to come and watch [crosstalk 00:19:37].

Bill Walton ([19:36](#)):

I think we have a right to learn what our kids are being taught, Anyway...

Tony Perkins ([19:42](#)):

Especially when we're paying the bill. But the lunacy of the stuff that they are talking about in these classes. So yeah, I understand. Parents are getting for the first time, a front row seat to the indoctrination of their children.

Bill Walton ([19:58](#)):

I think you're exactly right though about the education issue energizing probably something much bigger than the Tea Party movement. I totally agree with that. I mean, when we're taping the show, Mary Garland, it's just appeared before Congress, was it the Senate-

Tony Perkins ([20:15](#)):

Senate Judiciary.

Bill Walton ([20:15](#)):

Senate Judiciary Committee, and he wrote this memo saying that because the parents are threatening the school boards with violence, which of course they haven't been, and because of the incidence of violence against school board members, which there haven't been, he now is instructing the FBI and all the other instruments of the Justice Department to work with local authorities to help provide protection back to your police days, local police. Now, I guess he had to do it that way because the FBI doesn't really have any jurisdiction.

Tony Perkins ([20:48](#)):

Well, it was interesting. In the hearing Tom Cotton of Arkansas brought this out that there was actually another memo that Garland said he hadn't seen or wasn't aware of, but it was a three page memo that listed all of the charges, federal charges that it could be levied against parents that were involved in some of these issues.

Bill Walton ([21:12](#)):

Federal charges.

Tony Perkins ([21:12](#)):

Federal charges. So they were looking for ways to go after these parents.

Bill Walton ([21:17](#)):

But that didn't end up in the memo, but that's in the pocket [crosstalk 00:21:21]

Tony Perkins ([21:21](#)):

It was a secondary memo that was being circulated.

Bill Walton ([21:24](#)):

Well, you and I talked about this before, this seems to be a way to head off what we think is a roiling revolt against what's going on. This memo came from, it was triggered by the National School Board Association, wrote a five page denial letter saying they weren't doing things like teaching critical race theory in K12 when in fact, Mary Garland's son-in-law has got a business teaching critical race theory in about 25% of American schools. So there's that. And then they got the Democrat operatives and the White House involved in this because what are they afraid of? 2022?

Tony Perkins ([22:07](#)):

They are afraid of 2022 and parents who... I mean, I see this as really a... it's an army of mama bears that are being raised up across the country because you get between... Parents suspected something was going on and there was these issues they were dealing with, but all of a sudden they saw it. And then when they began to address it, the other aspect, Bill, that makes this thing so outrageous is the arrogance we see coming from the educational establishment. You made a reference to the memo, the National School Boards Association. If you read that and I've read it, the arrogance and the sense of disdain for parents, it is shocking. And you watch some of these school board meetings, and I've watched a lot because we've encouraged people to go, and the arrogance of some of these school board members toward parents is if we have to waste our time with parents. And of course you've seen the gubernatorial candidates in Virginia addressing this issue, Terry McCullough saying, parents have no right to determine what their children are being taught. The left has run the table for so long that they can't even blush or even be thoughtful that maybe they're overstepping their bounds.

Bill Walton ([23:34](#)):

How big is this [inaudible 00:23:36] across the country?

Tony Perkins ([23:37](#)):

I think it's huge. The Tea Party was big and I've been in politics 25 years. I've been here in DC, almost 20. So I've had a benefit... it's gray hair.

Bill Walton ([23:47](#)):

That's when you became president of Family Research Council.

Tony Perkins ([23:49](#)):

Yeah. Gray hair gives you longevity, gives you a longer term perspective. And I saw this play out with Obamacare in 2009 and the 2010 elections. We see them pushing the same agenda, big overreaching agenda. People are pushing back. But I think the infrastructure bill, the reconciliation, the \$29 trillion in debt, those are all biggest issues, but I'm telling you the biggest issue is the one closest to home and it's when it comes to the children of parents and what they see now so clearly in the open. That runs counter to all they know to be in the best interest of their children and what they want to pass on to their children. Parents are not going to let go.

Bill Walton ([24:47](#)):

This is The Bill Walton Show. I'm here talking with my great friend, Tony Perkins and president of Family Research Council. And we're talking about the rage that's boiling because of the way the schools are abusing their privileges to teach our children. Somehow parents, we should be involved and I think we would be right. So we've got education, we've got CR, critical race theory, which is an issue and then on top of that, we've also got these mandates, the vaccine mandates. And I mean, I know a lot about economics and when you start deeming businesses essential and non-essential, it's crazy. And I was thinking about this, even when this started, that when you start doing that, you start wrecking... The economy is a very intricate organism where all the parts are connected with each other. It's like saying, well, these fingers are not essential. You're right handed, so you don't need your left hand. It doesn't work that way. You can't have the governor of Michigan say this Department of Home Depot is essential and this one isn't, and we're paying the price for that right now. And so we've got all that supply chain nonsense, rising prices, consequence of people [inaudible 00:26:11] things essential, non-essential, now we've got the mandates.

And the police are leaving. I've heard the 20% of the New York City Fire Department [crosstalk 00:26:22]

Tony Perkins (26:22):

It's going to be closing down.

Bill Walton (26:23):

Teachers are leaving.

Tony Perkins (26:26):

Yeah. This is a disaster and the supply chain situation... And I've had, Bill in Louisiana, going back to that first responder, in the last 20 years, we've had a lot of natural disasters. Hurricanes, floods, and we've responded, I've done that in various capacities. But I've seen how fragile-

Bill Walton (26:49):

We lost your own house. [crosstalk 00:26:51]

Tony Perkins (26:50):

Yeah, we did. Yeah, in 2016. But I've seen now repeatedly how fragile our distribution system is the supply chain. Because when one of those disasters hit, it doesn't take long for basically society to be frantic. Now that's just a snapshot in a small geographical area, but we're looking at that now nationally and even globally, with the breakdown of the supply chain. And I can tell you how quickly society breaks down when people don't get the essentials.

We just had a hurricane about on a month and a half ago, two months ago, which I... I'm back involved in law enforcement. I love it, so I still do some things there with local law enforcement. And so I was helping out. And we had two shootings at a gas station where people couldn't get gas because we didn't have gas and so people become frantic because they can't get what they want. And this is actually in a pretty conservative law and order area of Louisiana.

So when you look at what's happening when parents can't get the food for their children, or basic supplies that you need this breakdown, we're being warned about Christmas. I'm not so concerned about missing Christmas. I'm concerned about what's going to happen when the bigger supply chain of the fundamental basics of life are not working. We can be in a really, really bad situation.

Bill Walton ([28:27](#)):

So we've got... Let's just pile on, pile on pile here. We've got CRT, we've got parents, we've got terrible stuff being taught in schools, we've got mandates now with the vaccines that are causing people to leave the workforce. All these things are... Education, maybe not so much, but the lockdowns and the mandates are working together to disrupt the supply chain. And then we've got... I don't know, what else can we add to our list of horrors right now?

Tony Perkins ([28:55](#)):

Well, I mean, let's talk. If you want to talk about foreign policy and what's happening internationally, I mean...

Bill Walton ([29:01](#)):

Yeah. I want to talk about that. You've got a unique window into that because of your work with the international commission.

Tony Perkins ([29:06](#)):

Well, Afghanistan was a debacle. We're still trying to get religious minorities out of Afghanistan that were abandoned there and not to mention the number keeps rising of the number of Americans that were left behind.

Bill Walton ([29:20](#)):

How many do you think now?

Tony Perkins ([29:21](#)):

Well, as of last week, the State Department late in the week admitted there was over 400 and some that were wanting to leave that were still left behind. That increased about a 100 from the previous week. So that's an issue. I mean, what we see happening in China... I will tell you as one who's been sanctioned by China, that China is our greatest adversary.

Bill Walton ([29:47](#)):

And China threatened you.

Tony Perkins ([29:49](#)):

Yeah.

Bill Walton ([29:49](#)):

Didn't they say something about-

Tony Perkins ([29:51](#)):

Yeah, I don't know if it was a euphemism or whatever.

Bill Walton ([29:53](#)):

By the way, China's watching the show. Hi guys. We've done a lot of shows on China and-

Tony Perkins ([29:58](#)):

China's a bad-

Bill Walton ([29:59](#)):

What's happening with the Chinese Communist Party-

Tony Perkins ([30:00](#)):

China is a bad actor and they're being emboldened by the policies of this administration. They were emboldened by what happened in Afghanistan. They are repress their own people but they're exporting that. And it's a problem with what they're doing to the Uighurs and other religious minorities, but they're taking that technology and they're exporting it to other tyrannical governments. And so someone has to hold them in check. And it was under the Trump administration, it was the United States. That's not the case now.

Bill Walton ([30:44](#)):

Well, I remembered my... I was going to go with three things. Our energy policy is... you talked about a of boiling bit of trouble here, energy policy by shutting down production [inaudible 00:30:58] have. The things as simple as natural gas and fuel that people use to heat their houses with. Prices are likely to go up two or three or four times and in some places it's going to be unavailable.

Tony Perkins ([31:13](#)):

Well, it's in their policies only. See this goes back to like the mandates and the disruption of the supply chain. You would think that you want to address the issues in not add to them. Adding these vaccine mandates that is driving people from the workforce is multiplying the problems in the supply chain. The energy policy under this reconciliation bill, where they want to move Americans over the next eight years to get 40% of their energy from renewable sources. And you're cutting off pipelines, you're cutting off domestic production, you are making the situation worse. And at the same time, of course, we're doing this all because of the environment. And I'm a conservationist. I love the outdoors. I'm all for reducing-

Bill Walton ([32:01](#)):

Habitat and species we need to protect.

Tony Perkins ([32:03](#)):

Absolutely. But we've been doing that.

Bill Walton ([32:05](#)):

We're doing that.

Tony Perkins ([32:06](#)):

We have been doing that over the last-

Bill Walton ([32:07](#)):

By the way, our air is cleaner than it's been ever.

Tony Perkins ([32:10](#)):

And so is our water. And this has been driven mostly by technology of industry. Industry is doing it. They realize that it benefits them to be a good neighbor, not because the government told them to. There is a place for government regulation, don't get me wrong, but this whole idea that we're going to save the planet by basically eliminating reliable energy sources is going to crush our economy while at the same time China is going to continue going forward. I mean, they're putting on online almost one coal plant every week, about 50 a year, coal burning plants and we're shutting them down over here.

Bill Walton ([33:04](#)):

So I've got to find an optimistic line of action here. One of the things-

Tony Perkins ([33:10](#)):

Well here's the-

Bill Walton ([33:11](#)):

... that Tony Perkins says you among all the people I've worked with seems to have good relationships with people in Capitol Hill that you talk to people, they talk with you, they share with you. When you're in the building, and you're seeing how people are interacting with each other left versus right, how can the Democrats in Congress feel that this is going to go well for them?

Tony Perkins ([33:34](#)):

They don't. They don't.

Bill Walton ([33:35](#)):

What are they saying?

Tony Perkins ([33:37](#)):

They know that this is not going to go well for them. I think Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer and them are at a breaking point. I cannot predict what's going to happen with this reconciliation bill by the time this [inaudible 00:33:50] that may have been resolved, but this is taking them a lot longer than they thought. They are very divided and they're Democrats that are beginning to realize that their future does not look good if they're tethered to the current democratic leadership. But Bill, here's what it comes back to and I do want us to leave on an optimistic note.

Bill Walton ([34:14](#)):

Otherwise, we got to-

Tony Perkins ([34:16](#)):

Well, first off-

Bill Walton ([34:18](#)):

You don't drink, otherwise, we [inaudible 00:34:19] adjourn from martinis.

Tony Perkins ([34:22](#)):

Look, America was a country that was established by problem solvers. We are people that have been energized historically by challenges. You go back and read our Plimoth Plantation, and the pilgrims who came over here. In fact, this fall will be the 400th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving. They gave Thanksgiving. They had this Thanksgiving and they thanked God, not the Indians. They thanked God for what he had brought them through. And they had lost almost half of their first number. Out of 105 at 52 died in the first eight months. They were living off one kernel of corn a day at the height of the winter, that first winter. But it came around and they were still thankful, and they gave thanks and they persevered. And look what we have to day. They were grateful for the opportunity to endure the challenges. This is our generation. This is our time. Yes, there are challenges and they're great, but you know what, great people are made from great challenges.

And I believe America can still have a future, but it's not going to come from Washington D.C., it's not going to come from state capitals across the country, it's going to come from moms and dads who are sitting across tables like this, to determine, you know what, I'm going to chart my future. I'm going to chart the future of my children. I'm going to take, as Nehemiah in the Book of Nehemiah, they rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem by building it in front of their homes. Each family challenged to do their part. This is time, Bill, that Americans need to step forward and do their part.

Bill Walton ([36:11](#)):

I so agree. This is The Bill Walton Show. I'm here with Tony Perkins and we're talking about our faith in basic Americans' ability to come back, solve problems and restore their freedoms, our freedoms. But I'm filled with questions because you've got all these avenues that you're involved in. Let's take churches. Family Research Council's got a network of churches around the country. I may be wrong in this, but my perception is that the churches were very passive in the face of the lockdowns and in terms of fighting for our freedoms, they didn't really do it.

Tony Perkins ([36:47](#)):

Some, some.

Bill Walton ([36:48](#)):

And the churches also, aren't very good in economic issues. And there's a whole social justice piece of churches in a way that I think we lose them.

Tony Perkins ([36:59](#)):

I think we got to... It's like when we talk about Congress. When you talk about Congress as a whole people have a bad idea or a bad perception, and it's probably correct. But when you talk about a Congressman or Congresswoman, it changes. And so same thing with churches. I mean, you talk about churches generally, they have been missing the mark. But when you begin to look at individually, there were churches out there that stood up to these tyrannical mandates not to meet. They met anyway. And we've got about 15,000 churches in our network and a large number of them resisted this. And I will tell you, what's encouraging is that those churches that did have exploded in growth, because people are looking for answers. They're looking for leadership. Whether it's political, spiritual, people are looking for leaders because they know intuitively that things are not right. But, again, I operate from a scriptural standpoint that the Bible describes us as sheep. Most people are sheep. They're looking to be led.

Bill Walton ([38:16](#)):

As you know, you and I've been through this journey to gather in part. And I fully appreciate that we've got to have a spiritual component to our resurgence, to our coming back from where we are. What about a possibility of a great awakening, a third grade awakening?

Tony Perkins ([38:33](#)):

Yeah. It's internet. I was just talking with a pastor on my way over here to tape this with you who's doing some revival services on the West Coast. He says he's never seen anything like it that these people are coming in for hours. In fact, just had an event with young people, college students and younger packed house. Over 700 came in for a night version of the message they were giving, and they're coming back. There's a hunger. So I do think there's a realization that what we've been doing is not working and we've got to chart a better way. And it's faith in action. We've got to have the spiritual basis, that foundation. I mean, it really begins for personal, that personal piece, that personal sense of mission and purpose when we come to a relationship with Jesus Christ, it puts everything into perspective. And then from there, we can build out and we can reach our community, we can reach others, we can serve, but it's got to start with that personal piece, because then you can have peace in the midst of the storm, knowing that there is a bigger plan here and you're part of it.

Bill Walton ([39:55](#)):

The second grade awakening, what was that? 1840 something? And there was a point in which America, our alcohol consumption then was off the charts. The civil communities were coming apart and [crosstalk 00:40:12]-

Tony Perkins ([40:11](#)):

Yeah, we've been here before.

Bill Walton ([40:13](#)):

That's where I'm going with this. I mean, there was a time in America, but then the people thought it was over. So what are the elements for a third grade awakening? You say it's personal, but what do we...

Tony Perkins ([40:25](#)):

Well, I think what you have-

Bill Walton ([40:26](#)):

... That is if social media companies will let us communicate with each other. Well, I don't want to bring that up.

Tony Perkins ([40:35](#)):

It becomes more complex when you have the larger society is and the more locked in, we are in certain ways. And so what I see our role at FRC, this may offend some people, but so I offend [inaudible 00:40:53].

Bill Walton ([40:52](#)):

Let's make news.

Tony Perkins ([40:53](#)):

Okay. Well, our role, I see our role in Washington and I tell people last time, we're not going to change the country. Washington is not going to change the country. Politics is downstream from culture and culture is downstream from the church. It should be, historically. Now I would argue that the church is drinking from the stream of culture too much today and we need to go back to our role of being the influencer of the culture, which influences politics. What I see our primary role at the Family Research Council right now is to simply give families, churches, believers, the opportunity to live out their faith unmolested by the government. We're just keeping the barbarians at bay here in Washington. We're trying to keep the policies from repressing the faith that holds the hope for the future of the country.

Bill Walton ([41:51](#)):

Who are your allies?

Tony Perkins ([41:55](#)):

In D.C. or?

Bill Walton ([41:57](#)):

In D.C. and around the country? I mean, what's the coalition look like?

Tony Perkins ([42:00](#)):

Well, I mean, I think-

Bill Walton ([42:02](#)):

I think of you as a coalition builder.

Tony Perkins ([42:03](#)):

Yeah. We can't do... Paul says that we're one body, many members and we don't function with just one arm or leg. We can't do everything. I mean, it depends on the issue in terms of we can team up with others depending on what the issue may be. Our focus primarily is working with churches and being a bridge churches into this realm. And the same thing with helping politicians, political leaders be able to communicate more effectively with churches. I mean that's probably our biggest ally. Now, of course, we work with all the other kind of conservative groups here in Washington, depending on what the issue may be. But we see our mission is pretty straightforward and we stay in our lane. We want to work where we can with others, but we see our role as really as an organization working on policy speaking from a biblical perspective, which is not common in this city but we don't mind filling that space.

Bill Walton ([43:20](#)):

I forgot to mention in the intro your sense of humor.

Tony Perkins ([43:25](#)):

Occasionally, yeah.

Bill Walton ([43:26](#)):

Occasionally it comes. Well, no, it's not real common. No, that would be true. So as we begin to wrap up here, I think we've got... Let's come back to where we were with the pivot maybe what's happening with schools and education and parents. Do you think that's the catalyst to really-

Tony Perkins ([43:46](#)):

I do.

Bill Walton ([43:47](#)):

... get back to a governing majority?

Tony Perkins ([43:48](#)):

I do. I think it's-

Bill Walton ([43:50](#)):

Because Trump lost all the suburban women, but this is bringing them back.

Tony Perkins ([43:56](#)):

Because it's where they are. When you're in business, when you're a salesman, you sell what people need. If you meet a need, you're going to have a customer. And I have this conversation with some of the Republicans. I say, look, this is where people are. This is what they're concerned about, and rightfully so. I mean, this is not, I want to be very clear on this is not pandering, this is addressing a critical real need for every mother and father and [inaudible 00:44:30] very few. And I know that there are some disconnected parents, but the vast majority of parents love their children and they want their children to do well. And they understand that a key part of that is a solid education. Not an indoctrination, not teaching them what to think, but teaching them how to think. We've lost that in our education system today and we're producing activists. So as the Republicans and as others address those issues and equip parents to be able to fulfill their desire, you're going to have allies.

And now one thing, Bill, that's happening, and I guess I should have said this earlier in complete disclosure, we've homeschooled our children. My wife has homeschooled our five children because I think that was the best thing for us and without question. But that has more than doubled in the last two years. Homeschooling-

Bill Walton ([45:27](#)):

Homeschooling, yeah.

Tony Perkins ([45:27](#)):

... is growing by leaps and bounds. But primarily it was several things. The lockdowns, the mask, the mandates, but also of the curriculum that the children are being exposed to.

Bill Walton ([45:39](#)):

Well, the thing that I'm hopeful about is that this exposes because I've owned a dozen education businesses either directly or through private equity firms, they've started some from scratch. And I don't think until now people really understood the mindset of the education establishment. And this permeates school boards, it permeates teachers unions, it permeates the teachers colleges, the textbook publishers, the accreditors. I mean, there's like eight or nine of these interrelated people and they all March in lockstep. And so for parents really to wake up, they've got to be able to understand, no, no, it's not just the school board, it's a much bigger-

Tony Perkins ([45:39](#)):

It is issue.

Bill Walton ([46:24](#)):

... [crosstalk 00:46:24] ball.

Tony Perkins ([46:24](#)):

It is, it is massive. And when I was in office in Louisiana there was a couple of educational reform efforts I took on and I locked horns with the education establishment in that lobby, there's very few lobbies that are stronger than the educational lobby. And so this is why this is a-

Bill Walton ([46:45](#)):

You know why, Tony? Because they're doing it for the children.

Tony Perkins ([46:48](#)):

Yeah. There's a lot of money in it too. That's why this moment is so important, is because you have this folk us onto one area. So a collective focus of the American people. Even people who don't have kids in schools are looking at this and rightfully so because they live in the communities that are going to be run by these kids that are produced through these schools.

Bill Walton ([47:14](#)):

So the number one thing we have to do is take back control of education.

Tony Perkins ([47:19](#)):

Yes.

Bill Walton ([47:20](#)):

And that comes in many different forms. I encourage homeschooling if it works, other forms, but even so we cannot neglect the control of the public schools, making sure that we get back to educating our children and not indoctrinating them.

Tony Perkins ([47:42](#)):

All right, Tony Perkins, it's fun to finally get you here.

Bill Walton ([47:45](#)):

It's been a long time.

Tony Perkins ([47:47](#)):

It has been a long time. It's been a complicated last couple of years though. So this is The Bill Walton Show and I've been here with Tony Perkins, president of Family Research Council and filled with wisdom and hope you'll join us next time. And of course you can catch the show in all the major platforms, both video and audio. And usually on YouTube if they haven't banned any particular show, but I think we might get through with this one.

Bill Walton ([48:14](#)):

We might. We avoided most of the landlines.

Tony Perkins ([48:16](#)):

Okay. Most of them. Anyway, thanks for joining.

Bill Walton ([48:20](#)):

I hope you enjoyed the conversation.

Want more? Click the "subscribe" button or head over to the billwaltonshow.com to choose from over a 100 episodes. You can also learn more about our guest on our interesting people page and send us your comments. We read everyone and your thoughts help us guide the show. If it's easier for you to listen, check out our podcast page and subscribe there. In return, we'll keep you informed about what's true what's right and what's next. Thanks for joining.