

**Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Communications – Cissie Graham Lynch
Fearless – Ep 135 – Chaos, Politics, and John Wayne
Final Transcript**

MUSIC STARTS

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:00:02 Hi, I'm Cissie Graham Lynch. Welcome to *Fearless*, helping you have a fearless faith in a compromising culture.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie:

00:00:22 Welcome back to a new season of *Fearless*. It is hard to believe summer is already over and kids are back in school. And I don't normally like the schedule of school. I love the free time of summer. But this year, I'm going to be honest, I was ready for my kids to go back to school. My family, personally, had a *really big* change this summer and we moved. For the last 17 years, my husband and I have lived in southwest Florida since he played football with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and we have called that home; that's where he was born and raised. And we have felt for the last couple of years, God was calling us to North Carolina, and so, we just made the move about two weeks ago, and my kids have started a new school, but that's not the only big things that happened this year.

The world just had some major events that it was hard for me because I always take the summer off and there were so many things that happened that I wish I could have just popped back in and talked about with y'all to discuss over them because we had the assassination attempt of President Donald Trump, President Biden announcing that he was not going to run again, and then Kamala Harris being the nominee for the Democratic Party.

Everything from that to the Olympic ceremony where they were clearly mocking Jesus Christ. And I know so many people went to social media and were boycotting the Olympics and if you know me here on *Fearless*, I'm not really into boycotts. I love the Olympics and I'm not going to let the *evil* and the perversion of one group rob the athletes of what so many athletes have worked for their entire lives. I use those as opportunities on the couch with my kids at night to talk about the Olympics.

One of my favorite stories—I won't go into the Olympics; we got a lot to discuss here on *Fearless* today—but one of my favorite stories out of the Olympics was Brody Malone, who was a male gymnast for Team USA. He had had an injury, but he had lost his mom when he was a young boy, and I think his father was the hero of the Olympics. They didn't talk much about his father, but to me, he was one of those unsung heroes of the Olympic Games. He was a farmer from Georgia, I believe, and when he lost his wife and was a single dad raising his children, he still took his son to gymnastics every single day. Brody Malone had a kind of a terrible opening to the Games, but he came back with redemption and ended well. So those are stories that I love sitting on the couch with my kids to talk about how do you overcome adversity and the work ethic and stuff like that. So, I don't allow the evil of one group just take away from what so many athletes worked for.

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But now we're at the end of August, and we find ourselves just a few months, a few weeks, away from a presidential election, and it's hard to believe that we're already at another presidential election. My best friend and I love politics. We've always said kind of until this summer with everything that happened in the political sphere, that we wouldn't even believe that there was a political election coming up because it's been *pretty* quiet living down in Florida—of course, we're in Ron DeSantis-land down there and you don't even *hear* anything political. Of course, until the world was shocked, following the assassination attempt and the news of Kamala Harris taking the Democratic ticket. But I've always said—if you're new here to *Fearless* and you haven't heard me say this—I love the good, the bad, and the ugly of politics. I always have since freshman year of high school sitting in Mr. Combs' political science class; I've loved it. My dream one day was always to work on Capitol Hill. That didn't come about, but I found myself in the public square in different areas.

And although it's hard to believe that November is right around the corner, the last four years have also felt like a lifetime when we reflect on the rapid decline that we have witnessed in our country. Never before have we seen the American government express such an open disdain for the nuclear family and Biblical values as evidenced by the legislature that they have passed and have proposed recently.

And if we were looking at the world, of course, it seems like it is in pure chaos. The world seems to be spinning out of control. We have wars overseas. We are in economic crisis here. When I go to the grocery store, my bill is crazy. We are fighting a huge cultural war that we have been here in this nation for the last 10 years that things happening now that we couldn't even imagine 10 years ago. And the waves just keep crashing on the beach so fast that it just seems like we can't come up for air. We can't catch our breath. But we know that God's not the author of chaos and that Satan is, and that the real enemy, Satan, he has this calculated scheme and that right now he's in full throttle executing that scheme right now.

And I think it's easy to become disheartened by the darkness. We've seen far too many divisions when it comes to our family, when it comes to our friends, our churches, when we look at this nation ... and evil is not hidden in the dark alleys anymore. It's not secretive. It's not just being whispered about. It's being paraded around on the streets in broad daylight, right in front of our eyes. We saw that during, you know, June, which was Pride month, and some of the images coming from these parades in these different cities was just pure evil and demonic. And I think when I talk to other moms—of course, I'm a mom raising three young children—there can be a sense of panic. There can be a sense of worry when it comes to raising our kids, not knowing what the unknown future is ahead, worried about the times that we're facing, and that can strike a fear in our hearts. And I think so often now I see people reacting and living in fear. Even in the Christian world or Christian influencers or conservative influencers on social media, they are going after some tough topics, but they're also promoting fear inside of that, and I don't think that should be our right reaction, coming from popular voices to spread this fear because we as Christians, we are to never operate in fear. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, "*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and ... a sound mind.*" And instead of fear, we are to operate with a sound mind when we face with what's going on in this world.

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I grew up watching western movies, those old western ones, the new westerns—that's all my parents watched growing up. And I love John Wayne. I love the movies, *Big Jake*; *McLintock!*. Those are two of my favorites. But what I love about John Wayne is everything can be in chaos. In the movie line, things could be chaotic. Things could be of confusion and worry and panic and then comes John Wayne and he walks in with this confidence, with a steadiness, and he's able to confidently face the problem and take action.

And I was reminded of this this past summer when I sat down with my dad, interviewing him up at my grandparents' house. I've always felt safe. When my dad has been present, I felt safe in his arms. I've always wanted my dad in a crisis. I look at my dad who has seen a lot in this world with Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He has seen the worst of humanity. He's been in countries after genocide. He's seen what happens on the front lines of war and the aftermath of that. But now, in his older age, he sits back; he has this peace inside of him, and that is just instilled in him, and that's the peace of Jesus. And a friend shared with me last night, Psalm 91: "*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*"

And that is exactly how I would describe kind of that feeling going back to John Wayne when he enters a room. You can feel his presence. You feel protected even just by his shadow surrounding you. It's kind of like all the blood pressure of the good guys goes down because he's there. He's the man who does what he says he's going to do. And that is what Christians need today. We need that steadiness. We need to walk in with that assurance. We need to dwell in the shadow and in the shelter of the Most High. He defeats everything. And rest in the shadow of the Almighty. He will do everything He has promised. And that we are to walk in that confidence according to Psalm 91. But how do we get that sound mind? Instead of fear, how do we get that?

And this could be a whole episode of *Fearless* all on its own, but as I was quickly just thinking, like, how do we have a sound mind? And one is discipline. The discipline of studying God's Word. It's kind of like knowing the playbook. I've had my husband Corey here on *Fearless* before interviewing him, and he talked about he could study that playbook. This playbook in the NFL was so thick, and he would study it over and over, so when he would walk on that football field, he walked out with a confidence. He knew the plays that were going to be called and what was going to happen. And that's how we as Christians should live. We're to study. We have the whole playbook of life that God has given us, and sadly, we're not studying it the way we should.

We should also be spending a dedicated time in prayer, not just quick prayers at night with our children, not just quick prayers in the morning before we drop them off, but a dedicated time. That is something I've challenged with myself, spending a specific amount of time in prayer. And I encourage you in these next few weeks, maybe get a prayer group, one that you'll walk and exercise with around the neighborhood or invite just some friends really quick. It doesn't have to be something long. Say, "Hey, we're going to pray for 30 minutes. I'll provide the coffee. You come with your prayers." And spend time praying.

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But also having a sound mind comes with worshipping, but also keeping our eyes on what is above. I've said this here on *Fearless* before, I don't think we talk about Heaven enough and studying Heaven, that that's our goal, that's our end goal, that can give us a peace and sound mind when we have an end goal, and that end goal is Heaven.

But how do we adequately equip and prepare our children for a society that is this godless? And that is so far beyond anything that maybe we experienced as parents? And I think that's because that's the chapter of life I'm in. How do I go about this with my children? And the answer is the same as it's always been.

It's to make the truth of God's Word the cornerstone of our home. Spending time with our kids. We can't shadow them from everything. You know, as I talked earlier about boycotting the Olympics, this is the world we're in. We're going to face this kind of evil every day. We, as parents, are having to have conversations with our children that we've never had before. You know, we can shelter them from the Olympics and try to boycott them if that was your plan, but I go to Walmart in the small little town that I moved in, and we're checking out, buying stuff for our new home and school supplies, and there's a man with a full beard and dress and dangly earrings. And those are conversations I have to have with my son with grace and with truth.

But during an election year like this one, I believe we also have the unique opportunity to do this by electing leaders whose views and voting records are friendly to the people of faith. And my encouragement to you is to work on having a sound mind, even in this rollercoaster and craziness of politics. And I know politics. I just said it here on *Fearless*. I've said it before, but if you're new to *Fearless*, I've said I love to talk about these issues. And politics can be a dirty word. And I can understand people's weariness of it comes when you hear the word politics. But as I've reminded you here on *Fearless* before, it's not about politics, but it's about governance. And what do I mean by that? It's who's going to govern over you? Who's going to make those daily decisions regarding *your* life? Who's going to make the decisions about a place of worship? Who's going to make the decisions about your own personal business? Who's going to make those decisions regarding your child's education? Who's going to make those decisions of where your tax dollars are going? Those are things we have to think about. Who is going to govern over us?

And I've traveled all around the world with Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and there's billions of people around the world who don't get to choose their leaders, but in America, we have that responsibility, and we have that as a privilege deciding who's going to represent us. And I'm personally baffled every election cycle of how many Christians say they're going to sit this one out. Just recently I heard a friend—he's younger than I am—he was saying his friends are not going to vote, they just can't seem—who would be the right candidate? And *never* in the history of the United States have we ever had an election where we've had two perfect candidates, not even one perfect candidate. So why do we think this is something unique to us today? But still, it is an opportunity and it's a privilege that I'm really sad that so many people neglect and sit out because I can tell you of the

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women that I have met around the world whose rights have been stripped away, who don't have the right to an education, to raise their families the way that they see fit. They would do *anything* for that opportunity. That's why we see so many people coming to this wonderful country *for* those opportunities like that one.

And I, as a mom, I feel the urgency to stand up and fight for these rights and to talk about these issues for our families. And as parents, we can take a strong stand at the ballot box to protect the God-given authority that we have in our own homes. And today we are surrounded by a culture both inside the church and outside the church that continues to compromise on truth and on morality. And it feels if the only sin in America today is to call something sinful. Marriage, gender, sexuality, equality, and justice are simple words that have been twisted and redefined in ways that God never intended to be. And people are choosing to be ruled by their feelings and their emotions rather than truth. My grandfather once said, "The secret strength of a nation is found in the faith that abides in the hearts and homes of the country." We *must* have a strong faith if we *want* to stay a strong nation.

And as believers, our hope is found first and foremost in Jesus Christ. We know that. That's what I teach here on *Fearless*. And it's not in our elected leaders, but we're also called to submit to governing authorities according to Romans 13:1. But how can we do such a thing when those governing authorities create policies that go against Biblical commands?

First, we must do our part in electing candidates from a local office to state to federal who protect Biblical principles and that they are voted into power. Because once again, this is a privilege that we get. We want people in office who's going to protect our religious freedoms the best, who's going to protect the right of life, who's going to protect and conserve these values, and we do that at the ballot box. And to not vote is wasteful. Just have a hard-fought right. I think of the people, our forefathers before us, from the Revolutionary War, that put everything on their lines, that sacrificed their families and their lives, their livelihoods and their farms, so that we could have this all these years later, that their generation, their great- great- great- great- great-grandchildren have that, and that's what I want to leave for future generations, because our vote matters.

Second is, we must remember that the highest authority comes from God. This is true for us. It's true for our elected leaders. And though many Christians may feel conflicted by Romans 13, the mandate is simple. Obey God, then man. When man's orders conflict with God's, who do we follow? Of course we follow God. And that's why we must remember not only to vote carefully, but pray fervently over this. Like I said, start a prayer group in these next few weeks, praying with your friends, over your children and your family and your communities and our nation.

And third is above all, remember this, God Almighty is still on the throne. In fact, He already knows the outcome of the election come November. And so, we don't need to worry. We don't need to panic. We have our assurance in that. And while He can work through good and bad governments, I believe we have a clear responsibility as Christians to do everything we can to place godly leaders in power. This can be done

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only by one way and try to fulfill the two greatest commandments: to love God and to love our neighbor. And when it comes to voting, I say that's one of our greatest reasons to go to the ballot box is because you're going to love your neighbor. You're going to love that child that lives down the street who's being pulled in by severe ideologies. You're going to love your neighbor by protecting that girl that has an unwanted pregnancy and you're going to protect her by not doing something that she's going to live regretfully for the rest of her life. That's why we go to the ballot box. I think it's one of the greatest ways that we can show to love our neighbor is to protect them and our Biblical values and to conserve them.

But I also want you to remember that we have something the world does not have as Christians and that's that we have a peace that the world cannot have because we have the peace of Jesus. He promises that. And we can't be Christians who are running around, worried Christians, that are living in fear and living frantically, because according to John 14:27, one of my favorite Bible verses, it says, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*" I'm going to say it, but I want to encourage you when you go home and you read it, insert your name where it says, "*Peace, I leave with you, [Cissie]; my peace I give to you, [Cissie]. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*"

During this chaotic season our world faces and that our nation is facing every single day, you face the day with the assurance, with the peace of Jesus because He gives it to each of us. That is a promise we hold, and we need to be living as Christians full of assurance with that promise that we can walk into any situation with a steady assurance with the peace that *He* gives us.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:17:44 Thanks for joining me on today's episode of *Fearless*. It's so wonderful to be back and we got a tough lineup of issues to discuss because that is what God's laid on my heart these next few weeks leading up to the election. But in the next few weeks, I have special guest Gary Hamrick will be back. And my dear, dear friend, Pam Pryor, who's worked inside of D.C. her entire career. We're going to talk about how do we as Christians face some of these tough issues. And with all of those things on my heart this fall, I'm going to be releasing a voter's guide, a resource for Christian families, where we're going to talk about eight important topics that are close to my heart, but also what this nation is facing. We'll be discussing immigration, the rights of the unborn, defending marriage, LGBTQ issues, gender ideology, and others. So I encourage you—I will keep those updated on my website, CissieGrahamLynch.com, and we'll be releasing this resource on BillyGraham.org.

CLOSING MUSIC

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