



Christian Citizenship

“You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world” (Mt. 5:13-16). One way to be salty and let our light shine is by being good citizens on earth. Our vocation as citizens of both the secular kingdom and God’s kingdom gives us the responsibility to proclaim God’s Word and care for our neighbors. We are called to engage the “public square” with our message of Christ’s mercy for all. Please pray for God’s will to be done... in Jesus’ name.

Beware the “Pro-Choice” Scorpion

“The pro-choice side was never arguing honestly about abortion,” writes Andree Seu Peterson. She continues:

“They said who knows when life begins. So we said, OK, let’s talk about when life begins. ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you,’ we quoted from Jeremiah 1, verse 5.

“We’re not into religion, they replied. So we said fair enough, forget the Bible, let’s talk science, you like science, right? And if the science proves when life begins, then you’ll stop killing babies in the womb, agreed?”

“They said not so fast, we grant that life of some kind starts when sperm and egg unit and make a being with a separate set of chromosomes and blood type from the mom, but, well, it’s just a fetus at that point, and not a person, and a fetus is a blob of protoplasm lacking consciousness.

“What if we show you that the fetus does feel pain, we said, would that make you rethink your policy? Maybe, they said. And so we came bristling with ultrasounds of babies flinching and recoiling in the womb at stimuli and mentioned how the state of Utah passed a law ... requiring docs to give a fetus slated for abortion anesthesia if it has passed 20 weeks in its gestation.

“Well, pain is a subjective thing, they countered. You don’t know for certain that the flinching is from pain. And even if it is, it’s only after third-trimester pregnancies that that would be an issue. We’re good people, we don’t do abortions after 24 weeks like that horrid Dr. Gosnell who did them at 25 weeks—may he rot in prison.

“But you do perform abortions after 24 weeks, we reminded them. Oh, they said, in extreme cases: Only when it’s really, really necessary, or the mother would feel really, really bad to have a baby at this time, and has a doc’s permission slip to prove how bad she feels. We care about the mother’s health, they said, don’t you?”

“But they had their fingers crossed behind their backs. And when we blinked, they passed a brand-new law in Albany, N.Y., that said you can kill babies up to 40 weeks or any time you want until the day they’re born. And when Virginia and Vermont saw what New York had done, they both took courage and suggested we could go still further.

“And we stood with mouths agape and stuttered: ‘What about the things you said for years to us about not knowing when a fetal life is viable outside the womb? You said the matter hinged on viability. Big questions of biology, you said, as if you, like us, searched for truth. And now it looks like you were lying all along....’”

Peterson concludes, “Note well, all ye who take upon yourselves to dialogue with people of this world who with feigned searchings of the soul would plead their case on matters from abortion to aberrant sexuality. Beware the velvet glove that hides the iron fist. The pattern of persuasion will be similar across the board: at first the plaintive cry of suffering and social justice, to enlist your sympathy.

“Then follows, in the blush of victories won, removal of the mask, abandonment of pretense, and the cackle of contempt toward all who thought they cared a whit about their former ratiocinations. Beware the scorpion who with smooth words seduces hapless frogs to ferry it across the pond, for in the end the poor naïve amphibian will rue his gullibility.” (Source: WORLD, April 13, 2019)

What can we do? We can be informed with the facts of science that perfectly harmonize with Psalm 139:13-116; Isaiah 44:24; 46:4; Jeremiah

1:5; Luke 1:41-44. We can talk to our children and they to their friends, classmates, and teachers.

Please pray that we return to God and love the life He creates... in Jesus' name.

Recant Christians... and Bend the Knee

For now, writes Nathanael Blake, the First Amendment protects the rights of Christians "to believe what we will in our homes and churches, but we will be penalized for our beliefs in the professions, the marketplace, and in government."

Jack Phillips and Barronelle Stutzman know this all too well. Despite his victory in the Supreme Court, the state of Colorado continued to target Phillips and encourage harassment against him. The state of Washington has attacked Stutzman professionally and personally.

Phillips and Stutzman are examples of Christians who love and serve neighbors with opposing beliefs and behaviors, but out of obedience to God will not celebrate same-sex marriage or gender dysphoria. Blake explains that the Christian perspective acknowledges "the reality of same-sex attraction," but considers it a "temptation to be resisted, not an identity to be embraced. Gender dysphoria, like other sorts of dysphoria, is viewed as an affliction that should be treated with compassion in accord with biological reality, rather than a metaphysical truth to which physical bodies must be molded."

Those who oppose orthodox Christians believe "we are bigots, and that bigots should not be allowed to run schools, work in government, or hold good jobs. If we will not recant and bend the knee to the sexual revolution, they want to close our schools, hospitals, and charities, drive us out of the professions, shutter our businesses, and get us fired from any job they deem above our station. Although they are willing to use private means and social pressure, their ultimate goal is a legal regime that will treat us very much like the English treated the Irish Catholics." Phillips and Stutzman understand firsthand that those who oppose the Word of God are "determined to make being an orthodox Christian debilitating and difficult in many ways." ("Today's Left Now Openly Aims to Make Christians Second-Class Citizens," *The Federalist*, 1/23/19)

What can we do? Blake offers suggestions. "The Apostle Paul ... appealed to the emperor; we should appeal to the government to protect our rights as guaranteed by the Constitution." We must not be naïve. "A culture that considers sexual desires the essence of a person will not tolerate a rival Christian viewpoint but stigmatize and punish it." Therefore, we must prepare ourselves to be treated as "nonconformists" and be "targeted for harassment and destruction" like Phillips and Stutzman. We can familiarize ourselves with the legal services of Alliance Defending Freedom and the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

Please pray that as clouds of judgment gather, we be found faithful... in Jesus' name.

Hope for Women After Abortion

A woman who has chosen an abortion may depersonalize her child and convince herself that what she did was an act of "self-defense." Coming out of denial, she moves into the stage of grief, asking: "How can God ever forgive me?" This is the time to focus on God's mercy.

"It is important," writes Rev. Dr. Randall Shields, "for the woman to look back much further in time—to the cross and resurrection of Christ. It is here that she will find her strength and comfort, both the assurance that she has been forgiven and the wisdom of the Spirit to let go of the secret things." (Source: *No More Weeping*, seven devotions for after the abortion by Linda Bartlett, Lutherans For Life/CPH #LFL408)

What can we do? We may not know who they are, but women in our families and congregations harbor the secret sin of abortion. Be mindful of them. Defend the lives of babies in the womb, but with words of hope for mothers who regret their abortion decision. Jesus says, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:10-11). "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

Please pray for moms and dads who mourn the abortion of their child... in Jesus' name.

