



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.

Women Ministers Bless Abortion Center

The abortion business, Whole Women’s Health, is fighting a Texas pro-life law. To express their support, women ministers in the area joined on November 15 to bless the pregnancy termination provider. They prayed for the business and its staff.

The organizer, Kentina Washington-Leapheart of the Religious Institute, said the purpose of the media event was to promote the idea that abortion is an acceptable Christian thing to do. The pro-life “narrative isn’t the only narrative related to faith,” she explained. For many Christian women choosing abortion, faith is “informing the decision they make [to abort].” She sees pro-abortion Christians as being “progressive people of faith.”

Whole Women’s Health went to court in order to stop a Texas ban on dismemberment abortions. The dilation and evacuation (D&E) procedure literally rips, tears, cuts, and pulls apart the living baby limb from limb, then collects the “pieces” to ensure the whole child was taken. The Texas ban requires abortionists to first kill the baby (“fetal demise”) and then “extract” him or her.

D&E abortion should be legal, argues Whole Women’s Health, because it is the most common way to abort in mid-pregnancy (12 weeks’ to 25 weeks’ gestation). The baby’s bones have calcified by the second trimester. This being the case, the abortionist inserts forceps and takes hold of a leg or other body part in order to twist and tear it from the baby’s body. This is repeated as long as seemingly necessary. The baby is then “morcellated,” or methodically cut to pieces. The

skull must be crushed and the spine snapped to facilitate removal. The baby’s body must be reassembled to be sure all body parts are removed because a life-threatening infection can develop if a “piece” is left in the womb.

The dangers to the mother are real. The forceps, inserted through the vagina and worked by hand, may puncture the uterus and cause permanent damage. Nearly ten percent of women undergoing this procedure need blood transfusions (The Lancet medical journal). There are emotional consequences for both the mother and for the abortion center staff. Guilt, bitterness, and deep depression are more common than we know.

In Cleveland, Methodist and Episcopalian ministers performed a blessing ceremony over an abortion business in 2015. These ministers held signs that read: “Good women have abortions.” The clergy prayed that the abortion business would be “a beacon of hope.” The Cleveland ceremony was organized by The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Rev. Laura Young told *The Columbus Dispatch*, “I’m here ... to say, thank God for abortion providers.” (Source: LifeSiteNews, 11/15/17)

What can we do? Keep yourself informed so that you can dialogue with children, grandchildren, and other family members. Become familiar with God’s Word for life, for example Ex. 21:22-24; Deut. 30:19-20; Job 33:4; Ps. 139:13-16; Prov. 6:16-17; Eccl. 11:5; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:41-44; 1 Cor. 6:19-20. Bear in mind God’s response to the Israelite’s who, with hopes of a better future, sacrificed their children to the gods Baal and Molech. Read especially Lev. 20:1-5; 1 Kings 11:4-11; and Jer. 32:35-36.

Please pray for every woman with child, that she might turn her face to the Lord and Giver of Life; and for every caring pregnancy center that offers personal support in times of need, help with parenting, adoption options, and hope for mother and child ... in Jesus’ name.

The USAF and Religious Liberty

A strange religious liberty case is developing in the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force sometimes issues a "certificate of spouse appreciation" to acknowledge the sacrifices of the spouses of military personnel. Col. Leland Bohannon was asked to sign such a certificate for an airman in a same-sex "marriage." After talking with a chaplain and a lawyer, Col. Bohannon, a committed Christian, quietly asked for a religious accommodation so he didn't have to sign. The Air Force failed to act on his request.

The airman filed a complaint against Bohannon, accusing him of "unlawful discrimination on the basis of his sexual orientation." Ultimately, Bohannon "was suspended, given a poor performance appraisal, and virtually guaranteed that he would never be promoted again," according to an account of the incident by the Family Research Council's Tony Perkins. First Liberty Institute's Michael Berry is representing Bohannon. He told Fox News, "His career is likely over, and he will likely have to retire as a colonel instead of a general. This sends a clear message—if you do not have the politically correct viewpoint, you are not welcome in the military. The military is no longer a place of diversity and inclusion if you are a person who holds to a traditional belief on marriage." (Source: Warren Cole Smith with Breakpoint, 11/14/17.)

What can we do? Support organizations that defend religious liberty such as Alliance Defending Freedom, Becket Law, and First Liberty Institute. Keep yourself informed by visiting Breakpoint.org and the Family Research Council. Dialogue with family and church members. Write letters to the editor.

Please pray for hearts and minds to welcome the little ones... in Jesus' name.

Don't Crack Under Cocktail Party Pressure

How do you respond when asked about a controversial issue? Recently, Hillsong pastor Carl Lentz appeared on ABC's "The View." He "spoke boldly," writes John Stonestreet, "and in no uncertain terms about the issue of racism. As well he should. Christians should condemn racism whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head. But

when asked directly about abortion, and whether or not he considers it a sin, Lentz couldn't give a straight answer." Eventually, Lentz said something about God being "the judge" and "people have to live by their own convictions." It was predictable, writes Stonestreet, for the audience to hear this as an affirmation of abortion. They "rewarded Lentz with thunderous applause."

Later, Lentz made a better pro-life defense, but the damage was already done. Stonestreet points out that Lentz, like so many others, "squandered a chance to speak up for the unborn ... A watching world had heard a famous Christian pastor buckle on a crucial issue of our time."

Stonestreet says that "Lentz is not unique. He's just the latest victim of what my friend Michael Miller calls 'cocktail party pressure,' the urge to tone down or disavow Christians beliefs found to be distasteful in our culture. Typically, these are the so-called 'culture war' issues like life, marriage, or religious liberty." During last year's doctor-assisted suicide vote in Colorado, Stonestreet was "heartbroken when pastors of Colorado churches told me they didn't want to take up the issue from the pulpit, because it was 'too political.' But many of these same pastors have no hesitation whatsoever when addressing issues that are also so-called political ones, like racism or refugees." We are called to be courageous. Admittedly, "it's so very easy to be courageous on issues where our Christian convictions are in agreement with talk show hosts and the larger cultural ethos," writes Stonestreet, "but we're not just called to proclaim the truth when it's easy." (Source: Breakpoint 11/16/17.)

What can we do? We don't have to be on a television talk show. The pressure is on us all no matter whether we're talking with a neighbor, a fellow worker, or a family member. Martin Luther is credited with saying, "If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the Word of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Him." Read 1 Peter 3:14-15.

Please pray for courage to speak God's Word in all seasons and, thus, confess ... in Jesus' name.

