



# 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.**

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## **Compassion: People, Not Government**

Compassion is the word that describes what Jesus had for us. His compassion resulted in persecution and sacrificial death so that the price for our sin would be paid in full. His compassion took Him to the Cross so that we might have the hope of new life.

But, compassion is not a word that describes government. “It can’t be,” writes Stephen Moore, “because as George Washington reminded us, ‘Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force,’ and a ‘fearful master.’ Government can only spend a dollar to help someone when it forcibly takes a dollar from someone else. At its core, government welfare is predicated on a false compassion. This isn’t to say that government should never take collective action to help people. But these actions are based on compulsion, not compassion. ... [We may] believe that supporting a government policy that takes money from one person and gives it to another is a sign of how compassionate and caring [we] are personally. It massages [our] consciences and egos. But why don’t [we] give the money ourselves if [we] feel so strongly about the benefit of a program?”

A compassionate government, writes Moore, “is “contrary to the Christian notion of charity.”

Government has neither heart nor hands to serve. Government cannot hold a crying child, serve a meal, or build a relationship. It is only people—that is, you and me—who can use our hearts and hands to help a neighbor in need or befriend a lonely soul. Government can take your money and give it to someone else, but that is not an act of

charity. True charitable compassion is when you and I give willingly of ourselves. (Quotes from Stephen Moore excerpted from “Liberalism is false compassion,” *The Washington Times*, 4-3-17.)

**What can we do?** As an individual, family, or congregation, seek opportunities to protect human life, defend marriage, serve the elderly, and feed the hungry. Do you have a local caring pregnancy center that, unlike Planned Parenthood, doesn’t accept state or federal funds? Learn how you can volunteer! Do you want to help provide blood for life? Contact, for example, Lifeserve Blood Center and offer to host a local blood donor drive. Do you want to help parents of children with disabilities? Provide a hot meal for the family one night each month, or offer childcare so mom and dad can enjoy a night out.

***Please pray not for government to take care of us, but for families and neighbors with hearts to love and hands to serve... in Jesus’ name.***

## **Who Will Defend the Vulnerable?**

As a teenage girl, Stella felt a strong desire to live as a man. A therapist obliged. Testosterone was prescribed at 17. A few years later, she underwent a double mastectomy. Her family was supportive and her workplace included transgender leadership. Her transition seemed a success. But it wasn’t. Stella felt worse, not better. Testosterone made her feel more “dissociated” than before. It was “hard,” she said, “to figure out that the treatment you’re being told is to help you is actually making your mental health worse.” After three years, Stella stopped taking testosterone and detransitioned to living as a woman. But, “I’m a real, live 22-year-old woman with a scarred chest and a broken voice and 5 o’clock shadow because I couldn’t face the idea of growing up to be a woman.” Stella asks, “How many other medical conditions are there where you can walk into the doctor’s office, tell them you have a certain condition—which has no objective test, which can be caused by trauma or mental

health issues or societal factors—and receive life-altering medications on your say-so?”

The special January issue of *National Geographic* celebrated transgender children. Featured was a 17-year-old girl whose bare chest was scarred from her recent mastectomy. Under the photo of a little boy dressed like a girl was the caption, “Gender creative,” followed by a statement that many parents would question: “At six years old, he is already very sure of who he is.” Michelle Cretella, president of the American College of Pediatricians (ACP) compared the magazine’s approving displays to “institutionalized child abuse.” She said, “You don’t treat medical confusion by putting people, especially children, on toxic hormones and cutting off healthy body parts. Just because a person thinks and feels something does not make it true.”

Allan Josephson, a psychiatrist and member of the Christian Medical and Dental Associations, says parenting involves guiding kids in what is true: “Children aren’t sure of much of anything, let alone their identity.” Studies show as many as 80 percent of children who express signs of gender dysphoria grow out of those feelings by adulthood.

Why are children vulnerable? Cross-sex hormones or puberty blockers could potentially interfere with neurological development and bone growth because the blocked hormones promote those functions. Many children will stay on hormones for a lifetime and doctors have warned of increased risk for heart disease, diabetes, and blood clots. Cross-sex hormones can induce sterility. That means children as young as 13 or 14 must make momentous decisions about whether they will have children of their own someday.

Paul McHugh, professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Medicine, helped persuade the institution to stop performing sex-change operations in the 1970s. There was little if no evidence to suggest that patients were better off after the surgeries. Today, Johns Hopkins is again offering sex-change surgery. “I think they’ve just fallen in love with another cause,” McHugh says, “but these children are going to be their victims.” Quentin Van Meter, pediatric endocrinologist chimes in, saying, “You’re never changing the sex of the patient. Never. Every cell in the body is programmed to be male or

female.” (Source: “Suffer the children,” *WORLD* magazine, 4-15-17)

**Resources for you:** *Gender, Lies, and Suicide* by Walt Heyer (former transgender), “10 Ways the Transgender Push Mirrors The Lobotomy Craze,” *The Federalist*, 3-29-17.

**Please pray** that parents identify their children as God does... in Jesus’ name.

### **Do No Harm**

Christians should prepare to help when affirmation of transgender impulses results in hopelessness and despair. Heath Lambert of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors says, “Transgender people have declared war on their Creator, and the battleground is their bodies.” If we ourselves are not truthful about that sin (or any other) and, instead, “suppress the truth in unrighteousness,” we are not being helpful. Instead, as believers in Christ, we can speak to transgender people and their families as “co-sinners.”

The confusion and pain of transgenderism are real. We Christians are of no help if we simply call wrong a “sin,” but then fail to love the sinner. The Christian group Harvest USA offers helpful links and articles on the subject of transgenderism and our biblical response. One Christian, homeschooling mom and dad write about trying to help their son who wanted to be a girl. The boys’ parents explained that they persisted in teaching their son biblical truth. They prayed. They cried. They trusted God. Their son moved past transgender impulses in his teenage years, but now battles same-sex attraction. The boy’s parents say that in their own suffering they “fight for glimpses of God’s glory in His Word and His world. One day, however, our faith will be sight. We will see Him as He is, and be changed to be like Him.” (Source: “Do No Harm,” *WORLD* magazine, 4-15-17)

**Resources for you:** *Same-Sex Attraction and the Church* by Rev. Ed Shaw; *Out of A Far Country* by Christopher Yuan & his mother, Angela Yuan; “Transgender Children: What Is a Christian Parent To Do?” (Patheos.com/blogs)

**Please pray** that all might know and trust their Baptismal identity: a child of God... in Jesus’ name.

