



# 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.**

---

## What Are We to Do?

"When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan" (Proverbs 29:2).

"It is an abomination to kings to do evil, for the throne is established by righteousness" (Proverbs 16:12).

". . . When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth" (2 Samuel 23:3-4).

But what are we--the people--to do? We are to hold accountable all men and women placed by God in positions of authority. We are to hold parents, pastors, and teachers accountable. We are to hold mayors, governors, representatives and senators accountable.

Every ideology given voice has an effect on society. Every faith lived out in daily thought and behavior has an effect on society.

A Muslim strives to affect society in faithfulness to Mohammed and the Koran.

A Cultural Marxist strives to affect society in faithfulness to secular humanism, relativism, critical race theory, Queer Theory, gender identity, and Gnosticism.

A Christian strives to affect society in faithfulness to Jesus Christ who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Rome never became a Christian empire. But Christianity changed everything for women, children, and marriage.

Civilization, writes Paul Maier, "was transformed by Jesus Christ. In the ancient world, His teachings elevated brutish standards of morality, halted infanticide, enhanced human life, emancipated women, abolished slavery, inspired charities and relief organizations, created hospitals, established orphanages, and founded schools. . . . It was Christians who invented colleges and universities, dignified labor as a divine vocation . . . advanced science, instilled concepts of political and social and economic freedom, fostered justice, and provided the greatest single source of inspiration for the magnificent achievements in art, architecture, music, and literature that we treasure to the present day." (Excerpted from the Foreword to *How Christianity Changed the World* by Alvin Schmidt.)

The very things that Christians in all of history have done before us are what we are called to do now.

**What can we do?** Read *How Christianity Changed the World* by Alvin Schmidt who has served as a Lutheran pastor and professor of sociology. Add these books to your home and church library: *What's So Great About Christianity* by Dinesh D'Souza, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels* by J. Warner Wallace, and *Politics According to the Bible* by Wayne Grudem. (Grudem's book is a comprehensive resource for understanding modern political issues in light of Scripture.)

**Please pray** that we hold people in positions of authority accountable to God and that we ourselves live in ways that glorify God for generations to come... in Jesus' name.

## Misconceptions of Abortion

In her article, "The Ethics of Abortion: Clarifying Misconceptions," Melissa Moschella writes, "Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned, and authority to determine abortion policy has finally been returned to the people through their elected representatives, persuading our fellow citizens that the lives of the unborn deserve legal protection is more important than ever." Public debates, however, are too often

“distorted by numerous misconceptions and misleading slogans.” Here are four of the seven misconceptions explained by Moschella.

*We don't know when life begins.* It is common to hear people say that in the early stages of pregnancy the embryo or fetus is just a “clump of cells,” or to speak of abortion as the removal of “pregnancy tissue.” Yet such rhetoric is ideological, not scientific, aimed at obscuring the undeniable reality that abortion kills a human life. Standard biology texts affirm that human life begins at fertilization (when sperm and egg fuse), and the underlying science makes it clear that the fusion of sperm and egg results in a new human being that is genetically and functionally distinct from the mother, with all of the internal resources necessary to direct himself or herself to maturity. Embryos and fetuses are not “potential life,” but nascent human beings with the potential to mature into adults.

*Abortion is about a woman's right to do what she wants with her own body.* The unborn child is a distinct human being, not part of the woman's body. Otherwise we would have to say that a pregnant woman has four legs, four arms, and two hearts beating at different speeds. The unborn child has a unique genetic code, different from the mother's or father's, and the unborn child directs his or her own development. The mother's body only provides nutrition, protection, and a suitable environment—things that we all need to survive at any stage of life.

*The unborn child is not a person.* [It is argued] that the unborn, while human, are not persons with full moral status and moral rights, because the unborn lack qualities like self-awareness and rationality that they believe to be the basis of our special moral status and accompanying rights. . . . If this is true, then infants, toddlers, the severely cognitively disabled, and many other human beings after birth would also not count as persons with moral status and rights. . . . This view . . . justifies not only abortion, but also infanticide . . . nonvoluntary euthanasia . . . slavery . . . and genocide.

*Abortion is healthcare.* Abortion is not aimed at healing or health. Pregnancy is not a disease. Women's bodies are designed to be able to reproduce and gestate their offspring. Pregnancy is actually a sign of health, not an illness that needs to be “cured” through abortion. Treating women's capacity for pregnancy as if it were a disease rather than a sign of health has arguably distorted the practice of medicine to the detriment of women, ignoring the importance of the menstrual cycle as a “fifth vital sign,” and relying instead on the birth control pill (with its many side effects) to mask

women's health problems rather than identifying and addressing their causes. (Excerpts from Moschella's article.)

**What can we do?** Become familiar with more of the misconceptions of abortion by visiting [www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2022/07/83173/](http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2022/07/83173/)

**Please pray** to faithfully care for women and children in word and deed... in Jesus' name.

## The Pursuit of Happiness

Is there a theological context surrounding “the pursuit of happiness?” Justin Dyer writes: On the day C.S. Lewis died, his last written work was already in press with the *Saturday Evening Post*. “We have no ‘right to happiness,’ Lewis declared in the essay, by which he meant that we have no moral right to trample the rules of justice to gratify our impulses.

Lewis did concede that the idea of a right to the pursuit of happiness is “cherished by all civilized men, but especially by Americans.” However, the authors of the American Declaration of Independence, according to Lewis, could only have meant that we have a right “to pursue happiness by all lawful means”: that is, by all means which the Law of Nature eternally sanctions and which the laws of the nation shall sanction.”

. . . The shared background assumptions that made sense of the inalienable right to the “pursuit of happiness” in the Founding era included a belief that God created the universe and the natural laws that direct the universe to its ultimate end or perfection. These laws include the physical laws that govern the inanimate and non-rational parts of creation, but also the moral law of human nature. The latter clarifies what constitutes genuine human well-being and thereby helps man to pursue his own happiness, or flourishing, by living a life of virtue. (Excerpted from “The Pursuit of Happiness Rightly Understood” in *The Public Discourse*, July 2022.)

**What can we do?** Read Dyer's article. We can understand that the principal Founders Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin “held unorthodox religious beliefs. Nonetheless, all of these men publicly and privately affirmed a shared natural theology: that there is a Creator who has imbued the world with discernible natural laws, both physical and moral, and who governs the affairs of men with His sustaining and intervening providence.”

**Please pray** to pursue happiness... to Jesus' glory.

