



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.

Christians Protect Children

In his book *We Will Not Be Silenced*, Erwin W. Lutzer writes: Jesus was not neutral when it came to children. To all those who would cause one of these little ones to sin, He had strong words. "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:5-6).

. . . As for those children who think they are transgender, we must listen to what they say, hear their concerns, and provide a safe place where they feel free to express their feelings and desires. We must warn against body-altering surgery that is done in the name of being "authentic." There are a growing number of stories of those who have gone through these surgeries who discover that this didn't heal their dysphoria or bring about the sense of well-being they expected. Their suicide rate is as high as 41 percent.

It is dangerous to place our lambs in public schools if they are being indoctrinated into pagan sexuality, the normalcy of deviant behavior, and the mockery of God's intention for men and women. I'm reminded of Jesus' words, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). Then we read that He took them in His arms and blessed them.

I can't imagine Jesus then taking the children and passing them off to pagans waiting to teach them that you can have two mommies or two daddies or any combination thereof. I can't imagine Him giving the children to those who would encourage them to experiment with their sexuality and choose one of any number of "genders" they wish to be.

. . . We must return to the creation account to remind ourselves that God created only two genders: male and female. Without a belief in God as Creator, there is little hope of making sense of our lives and the roles we are intended to have in marriage, the family, and of course, sexuality. To quote Michael Brown . . . "We want to see people freed from their internal pain. We want to see them find resolution for the emotional torment they're experiencing . . . But no amount of compassion can change biological and chromosomal realities. That is why the transgender movement is starting to hit the wall. Science is against it."

Do we have the courage to stand against this assault on our children? Or will the bullies win the battle for the next generation? Seductive delusions are gaining currency in our media-driven, politically correct culture. We must be prepared for the radicals who will call us hateful names, all the while claiming that they have taken the moral high ground.

Let's wake up and realize that there are many people who struggle with their gender identity; they may be gay or trans or struggling with sexual issues. Heath Lambert of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors says, "To love transgenders we must work through the complicated layers of sin and pain--a process that requires the relational context churches can provide. It will be the death knell if we say this is wrong, but then we can't help." People have to lean into their pain and not seek a deceptive antidote for their internal dysphoria and suffering.

Our churches should count it a privilege to be welcoming of all people who struggle with their sexual identities, while recognizing that God does not affirm sexual relationships outside of the one-man, one-woman relationship in marriage. What do we say to someone who says, "I am a gay Christian," or "I am a trans Christian?" To this Anne Paulk [who left a lesbian lifestyle] had a wise answer: "Satan calls you by your sinful name; God calls you a Christian who struggles with identity issues." Gender identity--the gender that you were born with--is fundamental to self-knowledge. (Excerpted from *We Will Not Be Silenced* by Erwin W. Lutzer, 169-173.)

What can we do? We must “recognize the human heart’s propensity to deception” because only then “are we able to help others see their problems from a divine perspective.” We can remember that “those who walk in darkness do not see things as they are, but rather, see things the way they want them to be.” Proverbs 4:19 tells us, “The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.” We can acknowledge that “the church is the last barrier against a total breakdown of sexual sanity in today’s culture. And if we feel powerless against the media, the courts, and our politicians, let us remind ourselves who is the head of the church (see Ephesians 1:21-22).” We can share the promise of Christ with a world blinded by pain and hungry to fill the emptiness. Jesus says, “Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29).

Please pray that Christians stand against the assault on our children ... in Jesus name.

Christians Identify and Resist Propaganda

“Propaganda,” writes Erwin W. Lutzer, “can change the direction of a nation.” He explains, “Any cause can appear legitimate if it is tied to some noble cause. Even evil, if packaged correctly, can appear to be good, and good can be packaged as evil.” Edward Bernays defends the use of propaganda and the need for the “intelligent manipulation” of the masses in his book *Propaganda*. He writes that those “who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the truth ruling power of our country.”

In a lecture titled “The Truth About Critical Methods,” “James Lindsay says of those who propound social justice that *the label on the box does not match the contents inside*. The label might say ‘Social Justice,’ but when you open the box, you find something different. You discover it is about deconstructing everything in society and seeking to overthrow the existing order; it is about a grab for power.”

Lutzer continues, “Slogans are often used to mask sinister evil.” For example, the “extermination of Jews was called ‘cleansing the land.’ Euthanasia was referred to as ‘the best of modern therapy.’ Plans to exterminate millions of people was referred to as “the final solution. Sanitized terms were used to camouflage unspeakable crimes. Evil was described in clinical terms.”

Lutzer points out that propaganda and slogans “are actively used by those who are pro-abortion to advance their cause. Those who oppose abortion are described as being ‘at war with women.’ Pro-abortion advocates are ‘protecting women’s health’ and sponsor the ‘Reproductive Health Act,’ which will legally protect a woman’s ‘right to make her own health-care decisions’ right up to the point of the infant’s birth. ‘Reproductive health care’ or ‘reproductive justice’ or ‘terminating a pregnancy—all are code for killing preborn infants.”

Lutzer quotes Hitler in *Mein Kampf*: “By clever and persevering use of propaganda even heaven can be represented as hell to the people, and conversely the most wretched life as paradise.” Lutzer observes that “the people of Nazi Germany were ordinary citizens capable of sympathy and a willingness to help their neighbors. They appeared to be no different than the people who live in the flyover parts of the United States. There was only one way for Hitler to mobilize these people to join his cause. *Hate* would do what reason could not. And *fear* would make certain that everyone fell in lockstep.” The Jews became the enemy and “losing your job, being dismissed from school, or being sent to prison was reserved for people who dared to think and speak for themselves.” Slogans, symbolism, and soon even science moved the Nazi agenda forward, all “for the good of the people.”

Lutzer agrees with William Sargant who wrote in his 1957 book, *Battle for the Mind: A Physiology of Conversion and Brain-Washing* that people have “temporary impaired judgment” and “herd instinct” most clearly in “wartime, severe epidemics, and in all similar periods of common danger, which increase anxiety and individual mass suggestibility.” Anyone who steps out of line is vilified. “Just ask Dietrich Bonhoeffer or Martin Niemoller how much it costs to withstand a cultural revolution among a people who are willing to abandon reason in order to avoid collective demonization. Propaganda can do what reason cannot.” (Excerpts are from *We Will Not Be Silenced* by Erwin W. Lutzer, 129-141.)

What can we do? “We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God” (2 Corinthians 4:2). We must identify wolves among the sheep and not bow to deception. We must “Buy truth, and do not sell it” (Proverbs 23:23).

Please pray to distinguish truth from error, half-truths from lies... in Jesus’ name.

