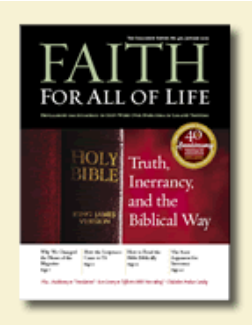




# Christian Piety or Nefarious Perfidy?

**John E. Stoos**
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> *"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."*
> 1 Timothy 2:1-4

In my radio ministry I often call on the listeners to pray for our political leaders and most times I remind them to review these simple verses from the Apostle Paul that explain why the actions of our civil leaders are important. We should not call Christians to participate in the political process to benefit one particular political party or another. We should not be involved just so we can have personal peace and affluence. We are called to influence and care about the political process because righteous leaders produce godly and reverent civilizations that carry the good news of God's salvation to the four corners of the world, so that all of God's people will be saved from their sins (Rom. 10:1-15).

As Christians we are obligated to understand the Biblical principles of submission summarized in Romans 13:1-10. At a time when abortion-on-demand is "the law of the land" by decree of the U.S. Supreme Court and the radical homosexual agenda continues to advance, it can seem very difficult for Christians to obey Scripture in this area. Here in California our tax dollars are used to pay for approximately 40% of the abortions that the government funds in America! In my flesh I want to be the biggest tax protester this state has ever seen, but God's Word says that we are to be in submission. And as long as they are not commanding that abortions take place in my family, as long as I am sounding the warning from the wall (Ezek. 3:17-19), then the blood is on the hands of the civil magistrates and those who participate in those sinful actions.

## A Course of Action

However, as Christians we are not left without a further course of action. Unfortunately, there are many times in today's America when so-called Christians are more a part of the problem than part of the solution. In the final chapter of his historic *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin takes dozens of pages explaining the importance of civil government and the Christians' duty to obey that government. In the final paragraphs he says, "I am speaking all the while of private individuals," and then includes a sentence that has shaken the civil governments of the world to their core:

> For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings (as in ancient times the ephors were set against the Spartan kings, or the tribunes of the people against the Roman consuls, or the demarchs against the senate of the Athenians: and perhaps, as things now are, such power as the three estates exercise in every realm when they hold their chief assemblies), I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that, if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by God's ordinance. [1]

There was certainly a case of such nefarious perfidy recently here in Northern California when a local school board was called upon to protect the health and welfare of minor girls placed in their care. A brave member of the board for the Roseville Joint Union High School, Dean Forman, asked that the board review a school policy that allowed

minor girls attending the school to be released for "confidential medical appointments" that could include abortions. Here in California it is perfectly legal for organizations like Planned Parenthood to arrange for a minor girl to have an abortion without the knowledge or consent of her parents. It will even be paid for by the state because the minor qualifies temporarily for Medi-Cal, since she cannot use her parent's resources. However, there is no state law that requires schools to participate in these ungodly and repulsive actions. All Mr. Forman wanted to do was make sure the school itself was not a party to these actions.

After a spirited discussion, the board voted three to two to affirm the current policy of allowing the girls who had appointments for abortions to be released from school without the consent or knowledge of the parents. *All* of the parents who spoke at the meeting asked that the policy be changed, but that did not seem to matter to the board majority. The only voices in support of the current policy were the organizations that profit from the abortions and the "student representative" to the board who had been fully indoctrinated. It was extremely ironic that Planned Parenthood wanted the girls to be released to their custody for a serious medical procedure like an abortion, while at the same time asking those students who wanted to enter their poster contest celebrating "Thirty Years of Choice" to be sure and get their parents' permission before they submitted their posters (honest, we don't make this stuff up!).

It did not surprise me that parents thought they should be in the loop when such serious decisions about their minor daughters' well being were made, and it certainly did not surprise me that the abortion industry would want to continue having unencumbered access to these profitable little clients with the state paying the bill. The nefarious perfidy came from the self-professed "Christian" and "prolife" members of the majority that sided with the baby-killers at Planned Parenthood. According to the *Sacramento Bee* story on the meeting, the discussion before the vote "made clear the trustees' need to reveal their personal values to their constituents, while following a law most board members said they did not like." Of course there is no "law" as referred to by the reporter, but that is no surprise since the writer was able to do an eleven hundred word "news" story on the meeting without ever using the "A" word: abortion.

**Appointed Protectors**

As Calvin so rightly pointed out, even if there were such a law, this would have been the ideal time for those board members, as "appointed protectors by God's ordinance" to have exercised their proper duty to protect the students placed in their care and to hold the erring magistrates above them accountable for their actions. Sadly, this was not the case with a professed Christian leading the charge toward failure: "I'm a Christian woman," board President Tami Brodnik said according to the *Bee* story, "but our nation is set up by laws, and I will not enact a policy that asks our employees to break the law." Could there be a clearer case of what Calvin refers to as nefarious perfidy?

"I am not in favor of abortion," board member Jim Joiner was quoted as saying in the same *Sacramento Bee* story. "I don't like *Roe v. Wade*, and I'd like to see it overturned. But the school board doesn't have the authority to overrule legislation." No, neither Ms. Brodnik nor Mr. Joiner gets to sit on the Supreme Court or even in the state legislature, but that does not mean that they are not properly elected members of the Roseville High School Board with the right as lesser magistrates to hold those above them that are in error to account. Had these concerned members sat on a school board in Nazi Germany in the late 1930s, would they have stood up to the wrong actions of Hitler? If an order to deliver some of the Jewish students to the new "camps" had been issued would they have said, "I will not enact a policy that asks our employees to break the law," or "the school board does not have the authority to overrule legislation."We would hope not, but sadly the historical record is very short on examples of lesser magistrates in Germany who were willing to hold Hitler accountable for where he wanted to take that once civilized nation. The result of their inaction was that some ten million Jews, Christians, Gypsies, homosexuals, and others whom Hitler deemed to be unfit, lost their lives.

The Roseville High School Board should have listened to the parents who entrusted their students to them and refused to release minor girls from school to obtain abortions unless the parents were notified. Every school board in our state should do the same. Every concerned parent who has a minor girl attending a government school that sends minor girls to have abortions should pull his or her daughters out until the

school establishes the right policy.

**What If...**

Perhaps some brave school boards would inspire the same type of action in other lesser magistrates like city council members or state legislators. I dream of the day when a strong Christian majority is elected to a city council somewhere in America. This council could then pass a resolution declaring that abortion is now illegal in their city. Of course, the city attorney would quickly tell them that they cannot do this, at which point he should be fired and a good prolife attorney should be hired to replace him. Next up would be the police chief, who would likely say he could not enforce such a law. Again, the council should accept his letter of resignation and hire someone who would enforce the law. This is exactly what John Calvin expected lesser magistrates — that is "any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings" — to do, to hold those above them accountable. In this case the state or federal officials would have to decide what they were going to do with this city that chose to protect its unborn residents. If they came to those members and said you *must* allow abortion in your city because it "is the law of the land," then the council members could rightly and with all Biblical authority respond to the state or federal officials by saying, "whom should we obey, God or man?" The council members are empowered by their office to do what I as a private individual am forbidden to do, that is, hold these erring magistrates accountable.

In the meantime, there are glimmers of hope in America. Last November the nine aldermen of Wisconsin Rapids voted unanimously to accept a nativity scene for inclusion in the city's Christmas time display despite the threat of a lawsuit from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, according to Mat Staver of Liberty Counsel. I wholeheartedly agree with Mr. Staver when he says, "It is encouraging to see a city that is not afraid of the empty threats of radical organizations." In Alabama, Judge Moore continues his battle to publicly display the Ten Commandments.

My prayer will be that many other "lesser magistrates" throughout America will learn from their example; review the stories of Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah in the Scriptures; and then join in the battle for our nation and western civilization.

**Notes**

1. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter XX, section 31.

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*John E. Stoos is a political consultant living in Sacramento California with his wife Linda. They have six children and soon fifteen grandchildren. John is also host of the radio talk show, Dialog on KFIA, AM710 in Sacramento, which airs weekdays from 5-7 pm.*

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