

“Seek the Welfare”

On the topic of abortion, the separating line is now blurred between the two political parties of America. I understand that a tweet is not a platform, but when a presidential candidate states that his administration will be great for reproductive rights, I question how it is different than the platform of the other party.

Decades ago, prominent leaders like Edward Kennedy were pro-life advocates. The 1992 Democratic platform aimed to make abortion less necessary. It was acknowledged to be regrettable. That’s quite a change of position from recent mobile abortion clinics parked outside the convention, offering it like candy. But what does the life of a Christian look like in the political realm?

We find an answer in the Old Testament book of Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 29:7, the Lord tells his exiled people in Babylon to “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and to pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” God doesn’t send them to seclude. He doesn’t send them to assimilate. He sends them to work. If I may simplify the Lord’s command, He tells his people to live faithfully as the people of God in exile. Their faithfulness to God included doing what was good for Babylon.

What was good for the city remains the same today. First, our work is to draw attention to the universal moral law that stands above everyone. The duties toward each other remain, such as not stealing, not committing adultery, and not murdering. If a Christian or the church has rebelled against this law, there must be repentance. Second, our work is to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ and the free offer of salvation, which is the only source of forgiveness and hope. Third, our duty is to demonstrate kingdom living by our life together as a Church. The church is

to speak truthfully to each other, do hard work, drive away all bitterness, wrath, and slander (Eph. 4:25-32). The church must offer an alternative community.

These works are based upon the fundamental identity of citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20). As citizens of heaven, we are pilgrims in this world. As pilgrims, there will never be any political regime in which the Church is truly home, for no government can eradicate the problem of sin. But while the Church is not truly at home in any political regime, we are nevertheless to seek what good she can for the regime in which we find ourselves at the moment. The mandate to love our neighbors requires nothing less.

While the two political parties appear to mirror each other on the topic of abortion, Christians must continue to draw attention to the universal moral law, declare the gospel of Christ to all who seek forgiveness and hope, and demonstrate works of mercy and kindness as the body of Christ.

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