

Midnight Call Before the Wall

How Would Jesus Answer This Desperate Mother?

It was late at night when the phone rang. It had to be either a prank call or something bad had taken place. Well, it was the latter.

I could hardly understand the voice on the other line. Between the strong accent and sobs I could tell someone was in a bad situation and needed more than a prayer.

The caller was one of our church members in a city that I will not mention. She was 32, Hispanic, a mother with three children whose husband was three hours late returning from his job— he worked the third shift. She was in panic mode. Her husband had been taken by the Federal I.C.E. agents, and must have been deported, she said, because he is never late.

“Pastor, how am I going to support these kids? I have no education and my English is terrible.”



Fodder for Fake News

This mother represents a group of people in the United States who live in the shadow of fear. Their plight has been highlighted by policies and rhetoric coming out of Washington, and racism re-emerging around this country.

Undocumented citizens do not all come from Mexico or Central America. They come from Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa. They cross every ethnic line. The myth that they are bad people stems from nothing more than undocumented rumors or fake news. But, who are these people? They are our neighbors, our children’s friends, and yes, the nurses, doctors, leaders in our churches,

and people who sit next to us in churches, subways, and on planes. They are people who hurt, shed tears, love, and who only want to live better lives. They are no more rapists, or exhibitors of criminal behavior, than any other race or ethnic group.

What Documents Would Jesus Require?

It should be made clear that the Bible does not classify anyone as an undocumented race or ethnic group. God never classified human beings as documented or undocumented, regardless of our origins and where we were born. Those labels serve the purpose of dehumanizing a group of people, which, as history has shown, creates a fragile human rights predicament.

Think about it, if you can label someone, or reduce them to merely a number, you regard them as less than human. It is easier to inflict pain and inhumane treatment on someone labeled as less than human. History always repeats itself. Hitler did it with the Jews; slave-owners did it with the slaves. Where do you stand? With those who degrade humanity, or with those who tear down the wall of racism and intolerance? That is the question.

While Christians must respect the laws of the land and seek to do the right thing, Christians also always recognize that we answer to a higher law, the Law of God.

Whether, as a Christian, you are labeled conservative or liberal, you must always be a follower of Christ. He reached out to the least of them regardless of whether it was politically correct or not. So, when it comes to difficult issues and regardless of public policy, ask: "What would Jesus do? What side would He take? Would He put a political position in front of meeting the human needs of our world?"

Walls Come Down

I can still hear that fearful call ringing in my ear. I am more convinced than ever of what Jesus would do—He would not build a wall, but He would tear down any and every wall and declare: "Bring me your tired, your poor and restless yearning to be free, and take my yoke upon you."

Rather than political ideology, I choose to be controlled by the Divine principle—"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Luke 6:31).

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