



IMMIGRATION: The Two Faces of Compassion?

"I think the key to getting rid of illegal immigration, no matter where it's coming from, is that you have to have a good legal apparatus for immigration."

—U.S. Senator Rand Paul

A Thought-provoking Question:

Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus fled the terror of King Herod, and crossed borders at night to find sanctuary among Egyptians. If they fled gang terror in Central America and crossed the Rio Grande River under cover of night, would you agree to let *them* stay in the United States?

1. Introduction: The Two Faces of Compassion

On the right, a call for compassion for millions of American citizens who will be adversely-affected by a flood of illegal immigration. On the left, a call for compassion for millions of immigrants who are fleeing cataclysmic disasters at home, only to live in squalid refugee camps on our southern borders. Which side would Jesus take? How should we respond?

2. Another of many generational divides.

- Amongst generational value differences, immigration reforms are number three of our next generation's priorities.
- According to Pew Research, a strong majority of Millennials and Gen Z's perceive Evangelicals to be unsympathetic to

undocumented immigrants and hostile to an easier path to citizenship.

- Many Millennials who have left churches point to what they see as a disconnect with how Jesus and the Bible tell us to treat sojourners, and regular Evangelical practices in those areas.

3. The Bible and Immigration.

1) The Sojourner in Scripture

- Wandering a consequence of sin [Genesis 3:23&24; Genesis 4:14]
- From Seth to Noah to mass people movements throughout history, mass migrations have and will reshape nations and history.
- The Book of Revelation predicts apocalyptic times that will produce unprecedented migrations from undeveloped to rich nations.
- The Israelites as Sojourners [Hebrews 11:10,13&16, etc.]
- New Testament Sojourners. The Holy Family in Egypt. Jesus' Great Commission calls his disciples to be sojourner missionaries among the nations.

2) Our Citizenship [Philippians 3:20] A born-again American Christian is more a fellow-citizen with an undocumented immigrant who is a committed follower of Jesus, than an fellow-American who doesn't know Jesus.

3) A Christian's view of immigrants—whether documented or not.

- **We must identify with them.** [Deuteronomy 10:19; 1 Peter 2:11]
- **However they got here, we must treat them as our own** [Leviticus 19:33&34]

- **Do not take advantage of their circumstances** [Exodus 21:21; Deuteronomy 27:19; Jeremiah 7:6; Zechariah 7:10]
- **Remember, God will judge us if we harm them** [Malachi 3:5]

4) Our treatment of immigrants is a proof of our Salvation
[Matthew 25:35&36; Hebrews 13:2]

5) Our welcoming of immigrants is a mark of our spiritual maturity [1 Timothy 3:2]

6) We must balance compassion with the rule of law. [Mark 12:17; Romans 13:5; 1 Peter 2:13]

4. Give Reasonable Answers.

1) Lead with Compassion.

2) Speak with Humility.

3) Don't label the Undocumented as Common Criminals

Malum in se

Malum Prohibitum

4) Know the Facts before you Spout Off.

5) Reach out to the Immigrants—both Documented and Undocumented. [Matthew, chapters 25&28]

6) Always ask, 'What Would Jesus do?' [Matthew 22:15-22]

7) From Civic Leaders to Ordinary Citizens, we should All Respect our laws. [1 Timothy 5:8]

6. A Christ-Like Approach with Reasonable Answers [1 Peter 3:15]