

A Pastoral Letter to the People of Salem Church, Catonsville

*"We must obey God rather than any human authority."*

Peter and the apostles, Acts 5:29

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Earlier this month the White House spokesperson defended the Trump Administration's practice of separating children from their parents who had illegally entered the country by calling the practice "biblical". Attorney General Jeff Sessions pointed to the Apostle Paul's admonition, to the congregation in Rome, to obey the governing authorities as justification for supporting the practice of separating families. (Romans 13:1)

Holy Scripture is filled with examples of righteous disobedience to governing authorities. Two Hebrew midwives refused to obey the Pharaoh's order to kill all male Jewish babies. The Exodus story of Moses and the people of Israel escaping slavery in Egypt is a story of mass civil disobedience. Many of the apostles were arrested for violating the government's prohibition from proclaiming the Good News of Christ Jesus.

Jesus' command to his disciples is clear: love one another. His command to love takes precedence over governing authorities and laws, especially laws that are evil. Separating babies and young children from their mothers is evil. There is no scriptural justification for this immoral practice.

I urge you to raise your voice in protesting the practice of separating families by contacting your elected Federal officials asking them to immediately end this practice. In the meantime, may we keep all of these children and their families in our prayers.

In Christ,

Pastor David K. Asendorf