



The Canberra Declaration Bible Study

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM - MARRIAGE & FAMILY - LIFE

The Canberra Declaration, launched 23 July 2010, is a call to Christian conscience. This study has been prepared to help Christians gain a deeper understanding of the role of faith and conviction in society. Faith, and the right to protect our own and our children's faith have never faced the challenges they face today. We ignore Scripture and our Judeo-Christian traditions at our own peril!

There is material here for one (more likely two) small group studies, as well as resources for deeper personal reflection. We warn you that there are some questions here that may stir significant emotion. However they are important! If used for a group session it certainly won't be dull! Whether you simply use the questions at left, or dig into the scripture references at right; we believe this study will give you insight, knowledge and enjoyment.

Some quick key focus questions:

1. Is God interested in the social fabric and laws made in our country? Why or why not?
2. Should Christians be involved in leading society? Politics? Community leadership? Committees? (Matt 5:13-16)
3. What should believers do when forced to compromise religious conviction? (Daniel 3, 6, Acts 4:18-20, Acts 5:27-29)
4. How can Christians be persecuted in a representational democracy such as Australia? Think of examples of things that are or could happen. How would they happen?
5. How important is marriage in a society? To a family? To a child? (Eph 5:21-33, 1 Tim 3:3-4, 12 Eph 5:21-33)
6. Is a "family" merely a group of people who care about each other, or is it more?
7. What do these texts say about the unborn? Their personhood? God's relationship to them? (2 Sam 11:5, Psalm 51:5, Ps 58:3, Matt 1:18-20, John 10:10)
8. What about the "hard cases" of abortion? Incest? Rape? Birth defects? (Gen 19:36-38 (incest), Gen 38 (rape), John 9:1-3 (birth defects))
9. Are the issues worthy of taking a stand for?

For those who want to go deeper

- a) For Q 1: (Gen 1:31, Ps 24:1, Matt 6:9-10, Lu 10:25-37, Col 3:17)
- b) Discuss the importance of Joseph, Esther and Daniel as they worked in secular govt. (Gen 37-50, Esther, esp. 4:12-14, Daniel 1-6)
- c) How do these words of Jesus relate to Christian social and political involvement? (Matt 5:13-16)
- d) What government features do we find in these passages? (Matt 22:15-22, Rom 13:1-7, 1 Pet 2:13-17)
- e) What should believers do when forced to compromise their religious beliefs and convictions? (Daniel 3, 6, Acts 4:18-20, 5:27-29)
- f) Discuss these examples of religious persecution: Acts 5:17-41, 5:8-8:1 (Stephen), 12, 16:16-40 (Paul & Silas)
- g) What does this passage say about religious coercion? (Rev 13)
- H) Discuss these passages about freedom (John 8:36, 1 Peter 2:16)
- i) Is marriage and family is ordained by God. (Gen 2:18-24)
- j) Did Jesus affirm this understanding? (Matt 19:1-6, Mark 10:1-9)
- k) Did Paul's? (Eph 5:21-33, 1 Tim 3:3-4, 12)
- l) Discuss how the importance of covenant marriage is used as a symbol of God's covenant relationship with us? (Ez 16:8-14, Mal 2:13-16, Eph 5:21-33, Rev 19:6-8)
- m) Discuss what these texts say about the personhood of the unborn. (2 Sam 11:5, Ps 51:5, Ps 58:3, Ps 139:13-16, Lu 1:15, Lu 1:44)
- n) How do these passages speak of God's relationship to the unborn? (Job 10:8-12, Matt 1:18-20, Ps 139:13-16)
- p) What is God's concern for the vulnerable and defenceless? (Psalm 82: 2-4, Proverbs 24:11, Proverbs 31: 8-9, Prov. 31:8 (KJV))
- q) Is suicide viewed positively in Scripture? (Jud 9:50-56, 1 Sam 31-2 Sam 1, 2 Sam 17:23, 1 Kings 16:18-19, Matt 27:3-10; Acts 1:18, 19)
- r) Discuss how these passages speak to the importance and sanctity of life. (Gen 9:6, Ex 20:13, Pro 8:36, John 10:1)