



Statement on the forced separation of families at the US-Mexico border

How long will the US government continue to separate children and their parents at our southwest border? How long will they be detained in fenced enclosures awaiting processing, deportation or even permanent separation? How long will it take for Congress and the Trump Administration to address this destructive policy that's harming vulnerable children?

Frontier Fellowship affirms that every person is created in God's image, inherently deserving of dignity and respect. We believe all people groups are loved by God and in need of the grace and peace secured by Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection life. We pray and work for all people of every culture to gain access to the Good News that brings flourishing to every part of life.

We join the growing number of Americans and others around the world who lament and object to this inhumane practice of forced family separation. The debates about enforcing the law, assigning blame and critiquing policy must give way to an immediate effort at keeping families together.

Voices are joining across political parties, denominations and faiths to oppose this new "zero-tolerance" policy. All four living first ladies have spoken out against it, including Laura Bush, who called it "cruel" and "immoral" in a Washington Post article. "Our government should not be in the business of warehousing children in converted box stores or making plans to place them in tent cities in the desert," she wrote.

Yes.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein condemned the US government's forced separation of families, calling it "unconscionable" that "any State would seek to deter parents by inflicting such abuse on children."

Yes.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops spoke out against the policy:

"Our government has the discretion in our laws to ensure that young children are not separated from their parents and exposed to irreparable harm and trauma.... While protecting our borders is important, we can and must do better as a government, and as a society...."

In defense of this policy, Attorney General Jeff Sessions said, "I would cite you the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained the government for his purposes."

No.

It's always dangerous to proof-text government policies with a scripture citation taken out of context. Romans 13:1-5 was once wrongly used to support slavery in America and gross human rights violations elsewhere in the world. Governments can do good and evil. Followers of Jesus must discern whether policies and practices truly align with the values of God's Kingdom.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14).

Yes. And may we stand against the abuse of His children, contributing our prayers and action toward a more just world in which every life is treated with honor.

**—RICHARD L. HANEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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