



# Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

While you were getting a tryptophan buzz (*the amino-acid in turkey that is reputed to cause naps after the midday meal overload*) and an NFL hangover (*were you a witness to Denver's inhospitable treatment of the New York Giants on Thanksgiving night?*), important action was underway that involves people who use their Christian faith as their most distinctive qualifier.

If you self-describe from your alma mater, or your professional designation, or your favorite personal recreational diversion, *The Manhattan Declaration: A Call of Christian Conscience* has the value of the retail advertising inserts jammed into the middle of your Sunday paper. You could go on about your business without having to declare a "for/against" position, if Sunday's scores get more of your attention than Sunday's sermon.

If you haven't read the 4700 words crafted by its drafters, go to [www.mastersprogram.org/storage/m-dec.pdf](http://www.mastersprogram.org/storage/m-dec.pdf).



If you want the Executive Summary from [www.manhattandeclaration.org](http://www.manhattandeclaration.org):

*We are Orthodox, Catholic, and evangelical Christians who have united at this hour to reaffirm fundamental truths about justice and the common good, and to call upon our fellow citizens, believers and non-believers alike, to join us in defending them. These truths are:*

1. *The sanctity of human life*
2. *The dignity of marriage as the conjugal union of husband and wife*
3. *The rights of conscience and religious liberty.*

*Inasmuch as these truths are foundational to human dignity and the well-being of society, they are inviolable and non-negotiable. Because they are increasingly under assault from powerful forces in our culture, we are compelled today to speak out forcefully in their defense, and*

*to commit ourselves to honoring them fully no matter what pressures are brought upon us and our institutions to abandon or compromise them. We make this commitment not as partisans of any political group but as followers of Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*

Don't rush to judgment.

Thoughtfully consider the positions they're defining, and the implications of a sincere agreement. Dr. James Dobson has affirmed the document, based on his agreement on the issues. Dr. John MacArthur has declined consensus, based on his concern for compromising the Gospel because of his theological differences with some of the signers' church systems. They - and many like them - are establishing their reasoned responses to the declaration.

In Babylon, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego established their positions regarding Nebuchadnezzar's and Darius's political demands, based on their loyalty to Jehovah God. It resulted in Lion's Den and Fiery Furnace stories (see Daniel 2 and 6), but they defined themselves by their personal convictions more powerfully than by their professional political positions.

Read and consider The Declaration. Determine your position, for or against. Don't be "for it," and leave it unsigned. Don't be "against it," without knowing why.

I've signed it, online. I've made my name available to be listed with the Christian leaders who have "come out" in support. The Declaration doesn't "neutralize" my clarity of The Gospel, or distract from my Kingdom Calling, but it puts my doctrinal partisanship aside and says, with the assembled, "Enough, already."

May God be honored in America, once again,

Bob Shank

*Bob Shank is Founder and Chief Mentoring Officer of The Master's Program (TMP).*

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