Thinking Christianly about Migration

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Author: Andy Draycott
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Not long before the last U.S. presidential election, on my pre-dawn bicycle ride to work, a companion Southern Californian road user in a car took umbrage at my having the audacity to signal to change lanes to turn left. Lit up like a Christmas tree, I was clearly visible, but my not staying to the side of the road irked this driver who, upon arriving at the red light jointly with me, wound down her window to upbraid me. I was asked why I was cycling illegally. I pointed out that I had every right to use the lanes of the road to make a turn. Upon hearing my English accent, I was immediately asked if I was a citizen. Answering in the negative unleashed an angry exclamation: "You immigrants are all the same. Always breaking the law." The driver took a photo of me bedecked in my bright yellow helmet and reflective jacket, saying she would report me to the police, and drove off in a fury. I was shaken. As a one-off incident contrary to the privilege I normally enjoy (even with my accent), I was certainly not as shocked as others whose ethnicity or religious identity has occasioned verbal and physical attacks in order to send the "alien" "home."

Now why is it that immigrants, non-citizens, and illegality co-exist for this early morning driver? Immigration is both headline news and fodder for partisan trolling. A young female runner is assaulted and killed, and the residency status of her assailant is the immediate focus of reports. Immigration officers extract people from courthouses because certain city police forces refuse to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Children are separated from families. A French teenage jogger accidentally wanders into the U.S. from British Columbia and is detained for two weeks. Beyond the U.S., pregnant Venezuelans travel to Brazil to give birth; Spain's north African outpost, Ceuta, has its gate scaled by the young and adventurous from multiple sub-Saharan African nations; and millions of the displaced occupy shadowy existences in refugee camps at national borders.

In a number of ways, both Tisha Rajendra and Robert Heimburger bring scholarly clarity to the present problems we have navigating the phenomenon of immigration in answer to this question of migrants, citizens, and legality. Both aim to give cogent reasons to change the way we imagine ourselves as participants in the conversations about immigration. Both commend a responsibility and empathy born out of the recognition of relationships. These relationships in turn sustain a better narrative that plots the migrant and the citizen as neighbor. Both books emerge from the discipline of Christian ethics....

Russell Moore. Not only is it campaign season in the United States, with political candidates arguing one way or another on how to “fix” the system, but in recent months a migration crisis in Europe has dominated the headlines and hence the need to engage this subject again. In a new roundtable video sponsored by the ERLC, Russell Moore (TGC Council member and president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission) sits down with Edgar Aponte (director of Hispanic leadership at Southeastern Seminary) and Rúben Cabrera (associate pastor at Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City). In other words, we must think and respond like Christians to the news of this pandemic and the crisis that is emerging. While that involves many things, at the heart of our response should be an unshakeable confidence in the God who raises the dead. Our great God loves us so much that He has given up His Son for us. Today migration still takes place all around the world, is the process that takes place when an individual or a group lives one country for another with the intention to settle permanently down in that country. Immigration is also a phenomenon that happens inside the countries as well, people leave the rural areas and move to the capital or larger cities looking for better opportunities. 4. High Standard Of Living. By moving to a different nation, you people are looking for a higher standard of living. Not talking only about money but cleaner, healthier, and a better quality of life. 5. Personal Needs. Some people genuinely believe they belong in a different country.