

How Local Leaders Can Stop Government Abuse

Why Conservatives Must Get Involved Locally to Stop Federal Overreach

By Eric Olsen

In an age of growing federal intrusion into our daily lives, our families, and our God-given freedoms, an old but powerful idea offers a clear path forward for conservatives: the Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrates. This biblical and historical principle calls on local officials — county commissioners, school board members, sheriffs, and mayors — to stand between tyrannical higher authorities and the people they serve. When Washington or state capitals pass laws that violate God’s eternal law, natural rights, or the Constitution, lesser magistrates have a sacred duty to refuse enforcement, protect their communities, and defy the injustice.

Far from chaos, this doctrine restores true order by holding every level of government accountable to a higher standard. Conservatives who are tired of watching federal mandates erode parental rights, religious liberty, and economic freedom need to hear this loud and clear: **your involvement at the local level is not optional — it is essential.**

The doctrine traces its roots to the Reformation. In 1550, Protestant leaders in Magdeburg, Germany, issued the Magdeburg Confession, refusing Emperor Charles V’s orders to crush religious freedom. Scottish reformer John Knox built on it, declaring that lower officials must shield the innocent from ungodly commands. Scripture itself provides the foundation: the Hebrew midwives defied Pharaoh’s order to kill baby boys (Exodus 1:15-21), and Daniel’s friends refused to bow to Nebuchadnezzar’s idol (Daniel 3). The core truth is simple — all human authority comes from God and must obey His commands. When it does not, interposition is not rebellion; it is obedience.

This principle is as American as the Declaration of Independence. Our Founders interposed against King George III’s tyranny. Northern officials during the Fugitive Slave Act era refused to return escaped slaves, placing moral law above unjust federal power. Just two years ago, Texas Governor Greg Abbott deployed

state resources to secure the southern border against federal inaction — a modern example of a lesser magistrate stepping up.

Yet today, too many local conservatives sit on the sidelines while federal overreach rolls in. The crisis is clear: most local officials — especially on school boards and county commissions — are woefully uneducated about this doctrine and even the U.S. Constitution itself. Surveys show widespread civic illiteracy; many cannot name the three branches of government or basic First Amendment rights. Local leaders routinely defer to Washington on education, health, and regulations, assuming “higher” authority always wins.

Compounding the problem is the influence of legal advisors who urge blind obedience to secular law, even when it clashes with biblical commands on life, family, and liberty. Many local officials are either atheists or nominal Christians shaped by weak, government-fearing pastors who preach unconditional submission (ignoring the full context of Romans 13). These pastors often closed churches during the COVID mandates out of fear of losing tax status, modeling cowardice instead of courage. The result is a generation of officials who view government — not God — as the final authority.

The consequences are devastating and hit conservative communities hardest. When local leaders fail to interpose, one-size-fits-all federal policies destroy parental authority through curricula promoting critical race theory and transgender ideology — ideas that directly contradict God’s design for humanity. County commissioners who rubber-stamp burdensome regulations crush small businesses, drive up energy and food costs, and hurt working families. Crime rises, families fracture, and faith communities weaken. Submission to centralized tyranny is not neutral — it is actively ruining our society.

Conservatives, this is your wake-up call to get involved.

Reversing the tide requires deliberate action right where you live:

1. **Educate yourself and your local officials.** Host community seminars, study Matthew

Trewhella’s book *The Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrates*, and dive into biblical teachings on interposition. Churches must lead workshops on the Constitution and this doctrine, so believers understand their duty.

2. **Run for office or elect faithful Christians.** Vet candidates rigorously for genuine faith. Reject atheists and nominal believers. Support bold pastors who preach truth instead of compliance. Conservatives must stop ceding school boards, county commissions, and sheriff’s offices to those who will not stand. If you cannot physically volunteer for a campaign, consider donating financially to a candidate—not the state party—but to the candidate directly.
3. **Hold legal advisors accountable.** Demand counsel rooted in Judeo-Christian ethics and push back against groups that use courts to erase religious expressions or force progressive agendas.
4. **Practice interposition now.** Local leaders should refuse to enforce unconstitutional federal mandates — whether on harmful school curricula, property rights, or business regulations. Citizens can petition, protest, and vote to back them up.
5. **Pray for revival.** Ask God to raise up courageous lesser magistrates who will restore a nation under Him and when he does, show up! Support those leaders at public meetings. You don’t need to even make public comment. Just being there can make all the difference.

The Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrates is not dusty history — it is a living blueprint for righteous resistance. Conservatives who complain about federal tyranny but refuse to engage locally are part of the problem. The fight for liberty begins in your county courthouse, your school board meeting, and your sheriff’s office.

It is time to stop watching from the sidelines. Run. Support. Interpose. The future of your family, your community, and your country depends on conservatives finally getting involved where it matters most — at the local level. The lesser magistrates are waiting to be called to duty. Will you answer? 🇺🇸