

# Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate

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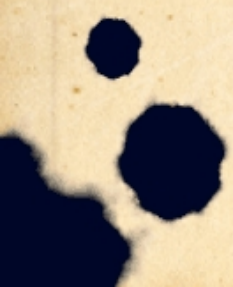




# Sam Adams Masters Thesis



**"Whether it be Lawful to resist the  
Supreme Magistrate, if the Commonwealth  
cannot otherwise be preserved."**





# Magdeburg



Quelle: Deutsche Fotothek



# Magdeburg A Refuge

- Situated **between Berlin and Hanover**, not far from Brandenburg, **determined to recover their federal, their covenantal, their Biblical culture**
- **Emperor Charles V's** campaign against France in the west (1544) and the Turks in the east (1545). With his forces not otherwise preoccupied, he **entered into a tenuous agreement** with Pope Paul III to **wage war against the Protestants**.
- On **May 15th of 1548**, the **Augsburg Interim** was imposed upon the German people. The Interim **required Evangelical Churches to restore** nearly all of the papal abuses that they had been freed from by the Reformation



# Magdeburg Under Siege





# Resources: Magdeburg Confession



- The Magdeburg Confession, Oct 08, 2018 -  
<https://www.georgegrant.net/blog/magdeburg>
- Introduction to the Magdeburg Confession with an Appeal to The LC-MS, IDE Symposium: The Just War Doctrine, by Rev. Michael Kearney -  
<https://lcmside.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/4-Rev.-Michael-Kearney-Magdeburg-Confession-.pdf>
- The Book 'the Mageburg Confession: 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1550 AD' can be purchased at:  
<http://magdeburgconfession.com/mag/>
- Great resource: The Magdeburg Confession of 1550, Article by Larry Beane, October 5, 2020 -  
<https://www.gottesdienst.org/gottesblog/2020/10/3/the-magdeburg-confession-of-1550>
- A Defense Of The Biblical Doctrine Of Resistance To Wicked And Tyrannical Civil Magistrates by John Knox 1564 -  
<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/history/knox.defense.txt>
- Civil Disobedience In an Age of Tyranny: Introduction BY GERALD R. THOMPSON -  
<https://lonang.com/commentaries/foundation/civil-disobedience-age-of-tyranny/>



# Doctrine Of The Lesser Magistrate



- **Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate – Wikipedia reference:**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesser\\_magistrate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesser_magistrate)
- **Teaching the Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate:** <https://defytyrants.com/>
- **The Book by Matt Trehella, ‘The Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrates’ -**  
<https://defytyrants.com/lesser-magistrates-book/>
- **What is the Lesser Magistrate Doctrine? -**  
<https://defytyrants.com/the-doctrine-of-the-lesser-magistrate/>
- **\*\*\* Whose Rebellion? Reformed Resistance Theory in America: Part I by Sarah Morgan Smith, 10-2017 -**  
[https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist\\_fac](https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist_fac)
- **\*\*\* Whose Rebellion? Reformed Resistance Theory in America: Part II, By Sarah Morgan Smith, 4-18 -**  
[https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1083&context=hist\\_fac](https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1083&context=hist_fac)
- **\*\*\* 4 Levels of Injustice: Knowing When to Suffer Patiently and When to Resist -**  
<https://www.intoyourhandsllc.com/component/content/article.html?id=84:4-levels-of-injustice-knowing-when-to-suffer-patiently-and-when-to-resist>



# Other Resources For Citizens and Magistrates



- **Johannes Althusius, Politica [1614] -**  
[https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/692/Althusius\\_0002\\_EBk\\_v6.0.pdf](https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/692/Althusius_0002_EBk_v6.0.pdf)
  - **The Idea of Covenant by Daniel J. Elaza -**  
<https://www.jcpa.org/dje/index-cov.htm>
  - **True Transnationalism: Getting Right Back to Where America Started From -**  
[http://www.belcherfoundation.org/true\\_transnationalism.htm](http://www.belcherfoundation.org/true_transnationalism.htm)
  - **The Real Change Agents: Christians Acting on Moral Law Principles in Order to Advance the World Christian Civilization -**  
[http://www.belcherfoundation.org/real\\_change\\_agents.htm](http://www.belcherfoundation.org/real_change_agents.htm)
- 



# Doctrine of The Lesser Magistrate

- A result of the 1550 Magdeburg Confession

**The Magdeburg Confession is constructed in three parts.**

- First is a basic re-presentation of **the articles of faith** as **outlined in Augustana**.
- Second part is a **doctrinal defense for the resistance of the lesser magistrates against higher authorities**.
- Third part is **an exhortation to all those who** would aid Charles V in his war against the Evangelicals. This portion also **includes a condemnation of all who would attempt to be bystanders and give no aid one way or the other**.
- Confession then concludes with Psalm 93.

Primary Source for the points: Introduction to the Magdeburg Confession with an Appeal to The LC-MS, IDE Symposium: The Just War Doctrine  
By Rev. Michael Kearney



# What is The Doctrine of The Lesser Magistrate? In short....

- The **Lesser Magistrate Doctrine** teaches that when the superior or higher ranking civil authority **makes unjust/immoral law, policy, or court opinion** – the lower or lesser ranking civil authority **has both the God-given right and duty to refuse obedience to that superior authority; and if necessary, actively resist the superior authority.**
- The lesser magistrate doctrine is **rooted in the historic Christian doctrine of interposition.** Interposition is **where one steps into the gap – placing themselves in between the oppressor and his intended victim.** Interposition ***can take place verbally or physically.***



# When to Exercise Interposition?

Dr. Ryan C. MacPherson

## **4 Levels of Injustice**

**Level 1** The “Not Excessively Atrocious” Governor

**Level 2** The Lawless Tyrant

**Level 3** The Coercive Tyrant

**Level 4** The Persecutor of God

**Adapted from the Magdeburg Confession (1550)**

**[www.intoyourhandsllc.com/interposition](http://www.intoyourhandsllc.com/interposition)**

Source: <https://www.intoyourhandsllc.com/component/content/article.html?id=84:4-levels-of-injustice-knowing-when-to-suffer-patiently-and-when-to-resist>



# Level 1 Injustice: The “Not Excessively Atrocious” Governor

All people, governors included, “by their **natural weakness** have their own vices and sins, by which, either knowingly or wantonly, they sometimes do injuries, not excessively atrocious, but remediable.” In such cases, the **lesser magistrates should “exercise their office by warning them [the offending governors] seriously, and in other civil ways.”** However, the lesser magistrates should “**bear the harms they can bear without sin, and by no means take up arms themselves.**” **In brief, the “not excessively atrocious” governor must be borne patiently.** (All quotations are from the edition translated by Matthew Colvin.)



# Level 2 Injustice: The Lawless Tyrant

Level 2 injustice involves “atrocious and notorious injuries.” In this instance, the governor violates his own oath to uphold the constitution and the laws of the land, for example, by depriving “life, or spouse, or children, or privilege and sovereignty acquired by inheritance or law.”

The Magdeburg confessors here left the matter largely to the individual consciences of the lesser magistrates, noting that God does not compel them to obey the unlawful orders of the lawless tyrant, but also noting that, if possible, it may be better to suffer in Christian patience, yes, “to suffer even injuries of this sort, and to leave vengeance to God, when the injury affects individual men, or a few men; and when the injury is able to be tolerated without sin.”



# Level 3 Injustice: The Coercive Tyrant

When the tyranny of a level 2 injustice **swells to the point beyond which innocent toleration is possible**, it becomes a level 3 injustice. Here “*an inferior magistrate is so forced to certain sin*, that he is *not able to suffer it without sin if defense is omitted*.” Drawing the line between levels 2 and 3 admittedly *requires “accurate and true judgment.”* In both levels, “*the authors of such injuries properly become and are called tyrants.*” The difference between them is **a matter of degree**, but at some point becomes almost a qualitative difference as well: as lawless tyranny expands from a few isolated cases that injure an individual here or there **into a pattern that injures the populace more generally**, the lesser magistrate’s responsibility becomes increasingly clear: *he no longer can in good conscience bear patiently with the offending governor above him*, but now **becomes duty-bound to interpose for the defense of the people**, taking up arms against that governor if no peaceful methods remain.



# Level 4 Injustice: The Persecutor of God

involves a “more than tyrannical” injury. This occurs when:

*Tyrants begin to be so made that they persecute with guile and arms, not so much the persons of the inferior magistrates and their subjects, as their right itself, ... and that they persecute God, the author of right in persons, not by any sudden and momentary fury, but with a deliberate and persistent attempt to destroy good works for all posterity.*

At level 4, concluded the Magdeburg confessors, the tyrant deserves to be called a “werewolf,” and indeed has placed himself in league with the Devil himself. When a tyrannical governor censors the Gospel and establishes an impostor theology as if it were the only true Christian teaching, then he furthermore has earned the appellation “Antichrist.” Such a tyrant has left his Christian subjects with no other conscientious option than to resist at all worldly costs.




# Doctrine of Vocation

**We don't teach or support this from the pulpit or in general education**

- Identifying the proper response to each level of injustice, the Magdeburg confessors also **identified the proper responder**. Consistent with the Lutheran doctrine of vocation, these theologians and magistrates recognized that God calls upon **different people to fulfill different duties**.
- The Magdeburg confessors did not wish to stir up a popular revolt, but rather they **urged the lesser magistrates to fulfill their own vocation** by interposing between the tyrannical armies of Emperor Charles V and the people of Magdeburg, whom God **had entrusted to their care**.



# Declaration of Independence

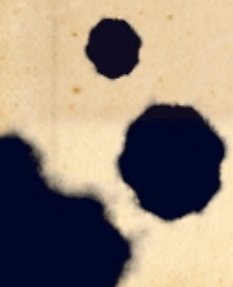


The full title of the document speaks volumes as to the context and intention behind it:

**IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.**

**The unanimous Declaration of the  
thirteen united States of America**

Source: <https://www.intoyourhandsllc.com/component/content/article.html?id=84:4-levels-of-injustice-knowing-when-to-suffer-patiently-and-when-to-resist>





# Actions of Individuals – Can You Act?

- At noon on April 8, 1689, **the leadership** of the rebellion in Boston **gathered the citizens together** to hear a "Declaration" of the grievances against Andros.
- "one of the Lords said, 'I perceive the Revolution was there, as it was here, **by the unanimous agreement of the people.**'"
- In other words, the primary understanding of resistance advanced by advocates of the Glorious Revolution in Boston was as **an individual right**: Time and again, the rebellion is justified on the grounds of **the people's sense** of "their own necessary safety and defense from the imminent dangers they apprehend they lie open unto."

- Whose Rebellion? Reformed Resistance Theory in America: Part I by Sarah Morgan Smith, 10-2017 -  
[https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist\\_fac](https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist_fac)



# Justification for 1689 Revolution

A broadside published on May 18, 1689, entitled "The Case of Massachusetts Colony Considered,"

- “that since the good of the people was the fundamental law, if it had required them to overthrow their existing government, such an action was legitimate.”

Andros: “illegal and arbitrary”

- Illegal by violations of “original charter”
- Arbitrary – ignoring the rule of law, acted by fiat and trampling on “both the Liberty and Property of England Protestants”

Cotton Mather - "not resisting an ordinance of God but restraining a cursed violation of his ordinance, [when they imprisoned Sir Edmond Andros and his accomplices.]"

Samuel Sewall argued that "the scripture speaks of a lawful and good rebellion, as well as of that which is unlawful."

- **Whose Rebellion? Reformed Resistance Theory in America: Part I** by Sarah Morgan Smith, 10-2017 -  
[https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist\\_fac](https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=hist_fac)



# Lesser Magistrate and or Individuals?

- Calvin- EOL - came to the conclusion that private citizens may actively resist tyrants.
- Cotton Mather - 1725, drafted “Une grande voix du ciel a la France (A Loud Voice from Heaven to France)

his stance on the legitimacy of individual rebellion against tyrannical governments dearly had not changed in the intervening decades since he helped lead the overthrow of the Dominion of New England in 1689

- 1747 election day sermon, Rev. Charles Chauncy (1705-1787) supported private individuals actively resisting tyranny if inferior magistrates were not available or willing to do so.



# Lesser Magistrate and or Individuals?

In 1749, Congregationalist minister Jonathan Todd preached an election day sermon in Connecticut

- Doctrine of Obedience & Subjection to Magistrates, hath doubtless been carried too far by those, who allow the People to make no Resistance, nor Self-Defence, under the most *arbitrary & illegal* Abuses of Power.... Doubtless, when *the whole Head is sick*, and the Foundations of a State are removed, when the governing Powers become tyrannical & arbitrary, and usurp a Power that never was given them, and *evidently* go counter to the Instructions of that great *Lord*, by whom they rule, the Law of Self-Defence is in Force amongst a People, and they may judge, that GOD is to be Obeyed rather than *Man*."



# Lesser Magistrate and or Individuals?

The Stamp Act crisis of 1765, In Massachusetts' election day sermon of that year, Congregationalist minister Andrew Eliot rejected the doctrine of "passive obedience and non-resistance in all cases," however cautiously:

- He condemned the violence of Boston mobs, and there is little doubt he preferred that active resistance be led by an inferior magistrate, but again the logic of his sermon points toward at least the possibility of private individuals acting against unjust rulers.


The Declaratory Act of 1766, Parliament declared that it had the right to legislate for the colonies "in all cases whatsoever." Calvinists (and others) found these words not only objectionable but heretical: God alone could claim absolute sovereignty over man.

**So Much more could be said!**



# What to do Today? Part 1




- **Return** to your Foundational Roots that are deeper than Constitutionalism Alone.
  - **Encourage** Pastors and church leaders to understand the truth and return to Foundational Reformation Roots.
  - **Persuade** the Elected at every level, even Precinct Committee persons to hold community gatherings as in Foundational Times.
  - **Initiate** Citizens development of platform planks that drive policy.
  - **Demand** the political party to have platforms with teeth of accountability.
- 



# Implementation Today? Part 2



- Get to know your office holders and appointed bureaucrats in your areas of interest.
  - Get to know if they have any understanding of Foundational Truths.
  - Get to know if they have any understanding of Foundational Biblical principles of Governance.
  - Introduce to them the concept of the Lesser Magistrate.
  - Actively work with them on areas of governance that establish Foundational truth in governance.
  - Actively work with them to bring Constitutional principles into ‘resolutions, decrees, law and adjudication.’
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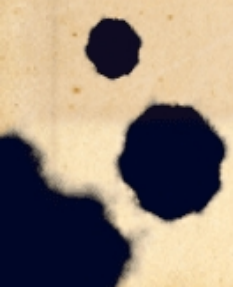


# Precinct Committee Handbook



## **Job Description**

The Precinct Committeeperson serves as the main communication source between the Indiana Democratic Party and current and future Democrats in his or her precinct. The Precinct Committeeperson is *charged with connecting the people in the precinct to the Democratic Party, and the Party to the people*. The Precinct Committeeperson is responsible for filling the roles that follow, keeping in mind that it is okay to begin slowly, filling one or two at the start. Your District or County Chair is always available to provide support and answer questions. Remember, you are providing a wonderful service to the Party and to your community. Have fun!





# Precinct Committee Handbook

- Ohio Republicans





# Implement Today?


## **Not Finding Lesser Magistrates willing to act responsibly?**

- Participate in Citizens groups that are making the difference!
  - Free Ohio Now,
  - Ohio Stands Up,
  - Ohio Advocates for Medical Freedom,
  - Mom's Against DeWine,
  - We The People Convention,
  - All in Ohio,



# Quotes for the Day



- For the traitor appears not a traitor; he speaks in accents familiar to his victims, and he wears their face and their arguments, he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation, he works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of the city, he infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to fear. The traitor is the plague. —Marcus Tullius Cicero
  - The goal of the Communists is to enter into men's minds and cast God down from his throne. —Karl Marx
  - A person's character is shown through their actions in life NOT where they sit on Sunday. —Navonne Johns – artist
- 



# Help Sam Adams Returns



- Sign up for the weekly news letter / program promo
- By one of Tom's books
- Fire up your Culinary Experience with Pepper Jams, Pepper Powders, Rubs and Fresh Peppers when in season  
– Buy at:

Pepper-Licious, LLC

<https://pepper-licious.com>

Or at the Geauga Fresh Farmers Market,

The 2021 Mento Market or even at

Debonne Vineyards Winery

