

# A Small Price To Pay

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Somewhere in 1992

(there is only one reason to capitalize “god” and it isn’t in this piece)

A light dusting of snow covered the house next door and the first light of morning outlined the roof line against a black sky. Will glanced at the clock, it was 6:30 a.m., less than a month into the second quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He had wondered many times what it would be like, the future, and now he knew. 6:30 a.m., plenty of time. Will felt the space where his wife of 35 years slept beside him. Oh god! He wished she would be here this one morning, but he knew it was the law, all Christians had to attend prayer breakfast on Wednesday. It was a good law, so Will overcame the wave of fear and disappointment and returned his thoughts to the day ahead.

The Voluntary Organ Donor Enforcement Department had called last week. His tissue matched a recipient and he was to report this morning. The thought sent a chill through his body. Quick waves of hate and loathing and helplessness swept over him, but it was over in a minute and his strength returned. This was it. It had finally hit home, and he was proud. His mind drifted back over the accomplishments of the last 40-years.

The last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century had been a godless time. Family values had decayed, violence had increased and the quality of life had declined. Will had been a foot soldier in the fight to restore god to our government. He remembered with pride the fight to get I Corinthians, Chapter 13 ratified as the 52<sup>nd</sup> amendment to the U.S. Constitution. How wonderful the world would be if only that beautiful passage had been turned into law.

A smile crossed his face as he recalled the dismay of the Traditionalists at the news conference a few years back where the Secretary of the Department of Religious Affairs had announced that a team of government bible scholars had found evidence that Matthew, Chapter 6, verses 5-15, where Jesus had criticized praying in public as pagan, was a forgery concocted by some devil worshipers in the middle ages.

He tossed off the covers and rose to his feet. The hot water of the shower invigorated him. His clothes had a clean smell today, much richer than normal for some reason. They felt good against his skin. He looked at his hand as it slid through the sleeve and wondered when it had started to look like the hand of an old person. No matter, he felt good today, and he had work to do.

No solid food, no coffee, just water this morning, how awful! His stomach growled as he stepped out of his house. Down the street a white van with the Official fish on it was parked in front of Tom’s house. A couple of men in black suits, Christian Compliance Officers no doubt, were wrestling Tom to the van. It was inevitable, Tom had refused to sign the Loyalty-To-Jesus form required of all citizens before they could get their voter registration. Sure Tom was had seemed to live an OK life, but he hadn’t signed the Oath, and without signing the Oath he really couldn’t expect to be saved anyway. A muffled shot rang out on the quiet street, Will glanced quickly to

his left to see Tom slumped in the arms of the Officers. His heart fell. Tom had been a good man and a good friend. But he hadn't signed the Loyalty Oath. Why? Why? Why couldn't he have just signed it? This sort of foolish thing happened all the time, and it frequently ended like this. The very folks who were unwilling to sign the oath were the same ones who resisted the Compliance Officers. What a tragedy. But it was a small price to pay to have a Christian Government. Family Values were the law now, it was a good feeling to know he lived in a godly country.

Will's hand went into his pocket for the keys to his car. He felt the cross on the key chain and was strengthened by it as he slid the keys out of his pocket and into the first lock on his car. The second lock on the door was a little stiff, he would have to take it in to get it fixed. It wouldn't do to leave it unlocked. Until multiple locking units were installed on autos a few years ago, you couldn't leave one in your driveway and expect it to be there in the morning. Multiple locks were good.

The sun was bright in Will's face as he drove toward the hospital. The Voluntary Organ Donor Regulation of 15 years ago had been controversial, but it had passed. Precedent made it a shoe in, the logic was easily understood. If you were unwilling to donate a kidney to a fellow human you were putting a human life in jeopardy, you were depriving someone of life. It was natural and Christian to want to protect the rights of a terminally ill person, to give that person a chance to further life, so why not make organ donation the law! It passed by only a couple of percent, but it did pass and that was the important thing. Will tried to think who was going to get his kidney. Oh, yes, a nephew of a Senator from Massachusetts needed a kidney, that was why Will had been called, his tissue had matched. Yes, thank god, we have a Christian Government. Where else on earth could you live and know that you could get a kidney if you needed it? It was the law here, it was the law to share your organs with others if they needed them. And it was a good law, too, Will thought. Because if you didn't share your kidney with a fellow human being you stopped a beating heart. And that was something that a Christian government could not tolerate.

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