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**A
BIBLICAL
MANDATE
TO DO
SOMETHING
ABOUT
ABORTION**

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ADDRESSING THE SILENCE

If you read the Bible from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, you will come across more than 14,000 different words, but you will never come across the word *abortion*. Scripture says exactly nothing on the subject, and yet here you are, reading *A Biblical Mandate to Do Something About Abortion*. Is that presumptuous? Is it possible to articulate a biblical mandate about something that the Bible never even mentions? I would argue that it is both possible and necessary. If Scripture *did* deal with abortion directly, we wouldn't have to wrestle through what the biblical response should be. Since it doesn't, we do. We must take all that the Bible *does* tell us, so that we can faithfully apply it to all that it *doesn't*.

For those of us who believe the Bible, and do our best to live by it, the most significant question regarding abortion is not whether it is right or wrong, but whether God expects us to do anything about it. I say that because any honest query into the act of abortion reveals it to be nothing less than the deliberate execution of a living, growing, genetically-distinct human being. Since the Bible expressly condemns the shedding of innocent blood,¹ recognizing the injustice of abortion is fairly easy.² Figuring out what our response should be is decidedly harder. On the one hand, abortion kills more than 3,000 helpless human beings every single day (and that's just in the U.S.). On the other hand, abortion is the natural fallout of an increasingly godless and self-serving society. Abortion, in fact, is *deserving* of God's wrath, and may well be a *manifestation* of God's wrath.³

Some have argued that actively opposing abortion takes crucial resources away from the primary call of the church. Others believe that opposing abortion *is* the primary call of the church. What is a biblically-minded person to do?!

At the outset of my Christian life, I was fairly convinced that abortion was a relatively insignificant “side issue”, one that could easily divert the church from more important matters. I have since come to a very different conclusion. To demonstrate why I believe God’s people have a responsibility to actively defend those whose lives are threatened by abortion, I will direct your attention to five biblical texts. Though they don’t deal with abortion directly, they introduce a variety of scenarios which parallel abortion in striking ways, and provide valuable insights into the character and expectations of God.

PURE AND UNDEFILED RELIGION

The book of James is a practical book about the importance of meeting practical needs. It even provides a practical definition of true religion. We find it in James 1:27:

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

This remarkably concise definition makes it clear that helping those in desperate circumstances is a primary component of pure and undefiled religion. Orphans and widows are the examples James gives, but it is unlikely that he has *only* these two groups of people in mind. In the very next chapter, he warns against neglecting

the poor; so we must surmise that the application of James’ charge goes beyond orphans and widows alone. They are simply representative of those in severe distress. And lest we wrongly assume that James’ emphasis on practical deeds of love is out of step with the rest of Scripture, consider the prophet Jeremiah’s command in Jeremiah 22:3:

Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

In the patriarchal society in which James and Jeremiah wrote, without the safety net of state-funded social services, the prospects for orphans and widows were extremely bleak. With their natural providers gone, orphans and widows would not likely survive apart from the intervention of God’s people. As daunting and desperate as *their* circumstances were, children facing abortion are even worse off. John Piper argues that since God commands believers to care for children whose *parents* have been killed, he would also have us care for children whose parents want *them* killed.⁴ By explicitly commanding us to care for those whose *livelihood* is in jeopardy (orphans and widows) God is implicitly commanding us to care for those whose *lives* are in jeopardy (abortion-vulnerable children). Reaching out to those in distress is an essential component of pure and undefiled religion, and since abortion-vulnerable children are in distress, it is essential that we reach out to them as well.

RESCUE THE DYING

While orphans, widows, and abortion-vulnerable children are all “in distress”—and generally “unwanted” by society at large—the circumstances surrounding their distress are very different. It is one thing to provide food and shelter for people in need, and quite another to actively intervene for people who are about to be killed. Perhaps you wonder if the Bible actually mandates our involvement in these more extreme circumstances, where the price of engagement is generally much higher, and the level of opposition is far more significant. Here enters Proverbs 24:11-12:

Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay each man according to his work?

Like almost all Biblical proverbs, the text gives us no indication as to what specific injustice, if any, the author has in mind. It serves as a general guideline for what God’s people are called to do in the face of violent injustice. If innocent human beings are in danger, God-fearing people are to come to their rescue.

This proverb becomes even more poignant in light of verse 12. The author anticipates circumstances in which injustice will be cloaked to such an extent that people, with some plausibility, will be able to deny that they had any knowledge of it. We are

warned against taking up such an excuse and reminded that God knows our every thought. False claims of ignorance will do us no good on the day of judgment.

Let us ask ourselves then, are there people among us, right here in America, who are stumbling towards the slaughter? Are there injustices in our day that God would have us raise our voices against? Yes, and yes. Abortions occur thousands of times a day, affecting nearly every community in the nation, yet most Christians barely give it a thought. We know it’s happening; we know it’s bad; but we seem content to remain as uninformed as possible, as if a general ignorance on the subject will somehow clear us of moral responsibility. According to Proverbs 24, this is a very dangerous line of reasoning to take.

God knows our hearts, and he will repay each of us according to the work we’re doing (or not doing) to rescue those who would otherwise be slaughtered. And just in case you feel the word “slaughter” is too severe to apply to abortion, think again. “Slaughter” is defined as either “the brutal or violent killing of a person,” or “the killing of great numbers of people.”⁵ Abortion fits both definitions. It’s hard to imagine a death more brutal or violent than having your body literally torn to pieces. And if the more than 50 million American children who have already lost their lives to legal abortion don’t qualify as “great numbers of people,” then the term is meaningless. Can any of us point to another injustice, happening in America today, for which Proverbs 24 would be *more* applicable?

FEAR GOD, SAVE BABIES

While Proverbs 24 gives us the general command to intervene on behalf of those who are being killed, Exodus 1 provides a very specific example of this command in practice. A new king has come to power in Egypt. Fearful that Israel's phenomenal growth will threaten Egypt's security, he commands that every newborn Hebrew boy be put to death. To ensure that his command is followed through with, he tasks the Hebrew midwives to carry out the decree. We learn in Exodus 1:17-21 that his plan did not succeed:

But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that he provided households for them.

The implication of this passage is that those who fear God will do what they can to keep mothers from killing their babies. Some might read the command in Proverbs 24 and argue that it doesn't apply to babies in the womb. Don't count on it. Exodus 1 explicitly demonstrates that those who fear God rescue babies from death, and the only differences between babies before and after birth are differences that don't matter. Babies

in the womb are smaller, more dependent, and less developed than newborns, but these are all quantitative differences, not qualitative. Newborns are smaller, more dependent and less developed than three-year-olds, but that doesn't make them any less human or any less worthy of protection. If we know that God is pleased with those who help spare the lives of babies after they're born, we can infer that he is also pleased with those who spare the lives of babies *before* they're born.

A LESSON IN LOVE

Psalm 82:3-4 is a passage which parallels Proverbs 24:11-12 in many ways: "Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them out of the hand of the wicked." Through passages like these, God is calling his people to intervene whenever the vulnerable are threatened, be it an individual or an entire group. Masses of German Christians should have come to the active defense of their Jewish countrymen, and a much larger portion of the American church should have joined the fight against slavery and segregation. Why didn't this happen? Why don't more Christians today follow these passages into the active defense of unborn children? I would suggest that most of us, myself included, have too narrow a view of who our neighbor is and too narrow a view of what it means to love him. Regarding widespread oppression and injustice, we tend to confuse opposition in *principle*, with opposition in *practice*. We content ourselves with the idea that we're not participating in injustice, failing to consider the fact that we're often doing nothing to

stop it either. Martin Niemöller, a German pastor imprisoned for his opposition to Hitler, made the following statement in 1946, “Christianity in Germany bears a greater responsibility before God [for the Holocaust] than the National Socialists, the SS and the Gestapo.”⁶ How could he say this? Because he recognized that those who have been rescued unto salvation are far more accountable to God than those who remain mired in blindness and unbelief. If we don’t get a better grasp of what it means to love our neighbor, history will again look back on the church with the same indictment: “Where were all the Christians while innocent babies were being killed en masse?” We would do well to turn our attention to the Good Samaritan.

In Luke 10, a certain lawyer tests Jesus with the quintessential gospel question—“what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus points the man to the law. Whoever loves God with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind; and whoever loves their neighbor as themselves will have eternal life. The lawyer, however, wanting to know exactly who he is obligated to love, asks Jesus a follow-up question—“And who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds to this second query with the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37).

The Good Samaritan was a man who, at significant cost to himself, cared for a dying stranger who was being ignored by everyone else around him. Making his service even more remarkable is the fact that Jews and Samaritans generally despised each other, yet the Good Samaritan rescued his Jewish

neighbor anyway. He is the hero of the story, the model of biblical love. His actions are commendable, but they should not be seen as extraordinary. This is the kind of love God expects from all of us!

The villains in this tale are the religious leaders who passed the stranger by. It’s easy to heap scorn on such callous disregard, but we may have fared no better. These men probably felt badly for the victim. They may have even prayed for him as they passed by. Getting involved, though, wasn’t their calling, wasn’t their responsibility, or wasn’t a wise use of their time. Maybe they were late for an important religious engagement; maybe they weren’t trained in CPR. Whatever their reasons, Jesus condemns them, not for *wrong thinking*, but for *wrong doing*. To love their neighbor, at that moment, required rescuing and caring for him, and that is something they deemed either too costly or too insignificant. God, through the Good Samaritan, is calling his people to the real and practical and often painful ministry of meeting physical needs in a dying world. Right thinking is not enough. James says as much in James 2:15-16:

If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

What good is it if you say you’re opposed to abortion, but don’t actually do anything to help those who are dying? When Jesus says in Matthew 25:45 that whatever you did not do for the

least of these, you did not do for Me, he makes it even clearer that meeting physical needs is crucial. Yes, we are called to more than this, but we are not called to less. The people in this passage are sent into eternal damnation because they failed to care for the “least of these.” And if unwanted, unborn children do not fit the bill as the “least of these” in today’s America, then who does? Whatever we do not do for them, we do not do for the Lord.

CHILD SACRIFICE

Leviticus 20:1-5 is our final text to consider:

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Say to the people of Israel, ‘Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do at all close their eyes to that man when he gives one of his children to Molech, and do not put him to death, then I will set my face against that man and against his clan and will cut them off from among their people, him and all who follow him in whoring after Molech.

Lest there be any confusion, “giving” a child to Molech does not refer to some form of indentured servitude. Leviticus 18:21 makes it explicitly clear that God is talking about child sacrifice, the heathen ritual of offering living babies as burnt offerings

to pagan gods. After reading this passage, does it appear that God has much patience for this barbaric practice? Notice that God isn’t just commanding Israel to not sacrifice their *own* children; he also expects them to intervene for the children of the strangers among them. If God’s people “close their eyes” and fail to drive child sacrifice from their midst, God will set his face against them! We read in Jeremiah 19:4-6 a statement that is perhaps even more shocking:

Because the people have forsaken me and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their fathers nor the kings of Judah have known; and because they have filled this place with the blood of innocents, and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, nor did it come into my mind -- therefore, behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter.

God, through the prophet Jeremiah, tells us that the act of child sacrifice is so wicked that it never even entered his mind that his people could do something so despicable. This is a stunning statement to come from the mouth of a sovereign and all-knowing God! Read it again to make sure you feel the weight of what God is saying. “Nor did it come into my mind” that my people would “burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal.” The domestication of abortion has made it tragically commonplace, so much so that we seem to have lost our ability to be outraged by it. How is it that even we who

oppose abortion are not more overwhelmed by the fact that it is legal, *in the United States of America*, to tear apart the tiny bodies of helpless unborn children?

The Old Testament accounts of child sacrifice give us as close a parallel to abortion as anything we'll find in Scripture. Though the nature of the idols has changed, the sacrifice is virtually the same. The false gods of today are not Molech or Baal, but wealth, freedom, and autonomy. These modern idols drive most abortions. It is unthinkable that God's people would sacrifice the lives of their own children, but it is also unthinkable that God's people would do nothing while other children are being sacrificed all around them!

FINDING THE BALANCE

It is fairly easy to become indignant over the sin of abortion, but it is very difficult to become sufficiently indignant over our *own* sin. Some years back, I heard John MacArthur publicly identify the “greatest” sin in the world. Guess what. It isn't abortion. The greatest sin in the world is nothing less than the violation of the greatest commandment in the world—which means that every second that we fail to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, we are guilty of the greatest sin! No one among us has ever committed a *good* deed for which we didn't owe repentance. Everything we do is mired by imperfection.

I say this because the defining characteristic of Christian zeal should not be arrogance. It should be love. If we focus only on

the sins around us, we'll become angry and self-righteous. If we focus only on the sins within us, we'll become detached and unresponsive to the needs of those surrounding us. We must keep an eye on both, which brings us back to James 1:27. You may have noticed that I only dealt with the first half of James' definition of “pure and undefiled” religion. Now is a good time to bring in the second:

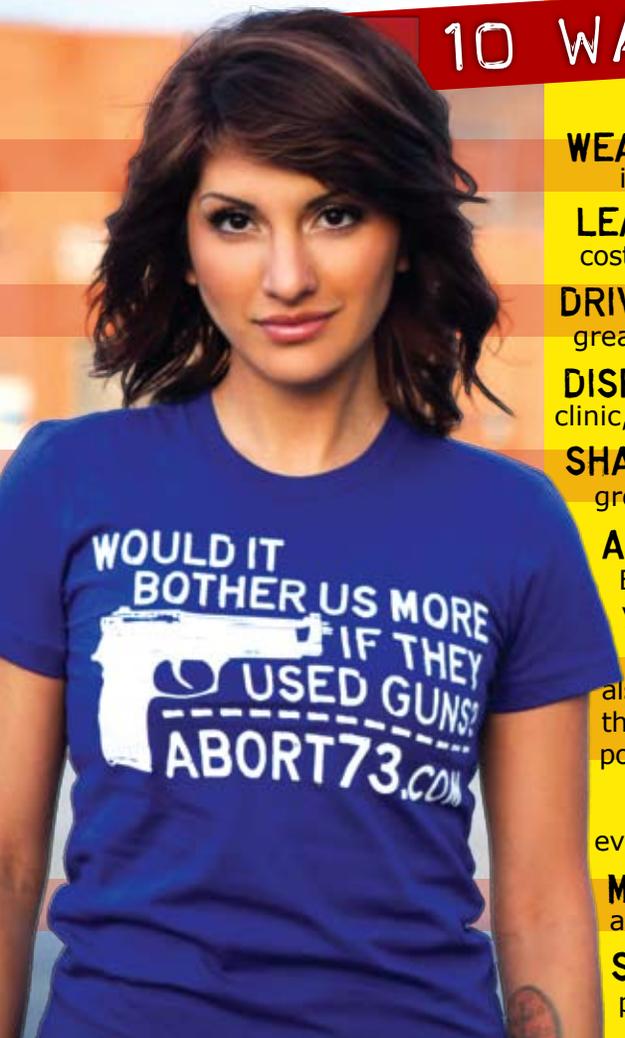
Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Pure and undefiled religion consists of two things. Visit those in need, *and* keep yourself unstained from the world. It is a combination of doing and being, a union of meeting needs and walking in purity. The first aspect is “visiting.” Visit the widows. Visit the orphans. Get up. Get out. Do something in the service of love to alleviate suffering in the lives of those around you. Ephesians 5:11 tells us to “not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness,” but it doesn't end there! It also commands us to “expose” those deeds of darkness. Refraining from *having* an abortion is only half of our Christian duty!

The second aspect of pure and undefiled religion is, “keep [yourself] unstained from the world.” Be holy. Be sanctified. Renew your mind. Live a life of humility. Be above reproach. In other words, it isn't enough to *just* help those in need.

There are some in the church who are so focused on being

10 WAYS TO HELP PROMOTE ABORT73.



WEAR A SHIRT. Be a billboard for education and justice by introducing everyone in your path to Abort73.com. We've got thermals, hoodies & tote bags too!

LEAVE A PEN. Abort73 pens, flyers, promo cards and booklets are low-cost, high-impact items that can be handed out or strategically left behind.

DRIVE A STICKER. Like an Abort73 shirt for your car. They also work great on notebooks, laptops and guitar cases.

DISPLAY A SIGN. In your yard, on your wall or in front of your local abortion clinic, Abort73's lightweight, weatherproof signs work in multiple settings.

SHARE THE WEALTH. Your tax-free donation keeps Abort73 going and growing. You can support Abort73 through Amazon and eBay as well.

ADD A FRIEND. Abort73 is on Facebook, MySpace, YouTube and Twitter. By becoming a friend, fan or follower, you can promote Abort73 amongst your online friends. Add our free graphics or videos for even more impact.

POST A LINK. Linking to Abort73 not only pushes *your* visitors our way, it also increases our overall web popularity. If you don't have your own website, there are many sites that accept user-generated links. We point to the most popular ones on each of our content pages. Look for "Share this Page" links.

SEND AN E-MAIL. Add an Abort73 link to your email "signature," and every time you send message, you'll be introducing the recipient to Abort73.

MAKE A PITCH. At school or church, help give your peers a better grasp of abortion. There are many ways to incorporate Abort73 into group presentations.

SAY A PRAYER. At the end of the day, our only hope is that God would be pleased to use small people to do great things. Pray for our wisdom and growth.

“unstained from the world” that they isolate themselves almost completely from the suffering of those around them. They may read the Bible and pray, but they stay far away from the ugly and messy needs of the downtrodden (like orphans, widows and unborn children). There are others in the church whose commitment to meeting social needs is unwavering, and they hit the streets—caring for the homeless, feeding the hungry, protesting at the abortion mill—but perhaps have too little concern for personal holiness, and too little regard for the centrality of the gospel. Devotion to God has been replaced with devotion to cause.

It is crucial that we neither become so “spiritual” in our Christian life that we write off the daily slaughter of 3,000+ innocent human beings as a political issue beyond our jurisdiction, nor become so “worldly” in intervening for these children that we lose sight of the bigger picture—reconciling people to Christ through holiness and love. Erwin Lutzer expresses the balance in these terms:

In our desperate moment in history we face two dangers. The first is to say that we must retreat from our cultural and spiritual battles to be true to the supremacy of the Cross. This viewpoint is right in emphasizing that our primary mission is to preach the gospel, but it fails because we end up preaching to ourselves... The second danger is that we become so overburdened with social/political agendas that our message is lost... When [the gospel is made secondary to a cultural agenda], Christians have exposure to the culture, but the Cross does not.⁷

Even more to the point, John Piper proclaims:

The root cause of abortion is the failure to be satisfied in God as our supreme love. And, for all the [effort that needs to be made] to protect human life, the greatest work that needs to be done is to spread a passion - a satisfaction for the supremacy of God in all things. That's our calling.⁸

As believers, we are not called to “either/or” Christianity. We are called both to live a life of holy devotion to Jesus Christ *and* to reach out to those in distress.

MORE THAN EVANGELISM

For a number of years, I maintained that the most biblical way to combat abortion was to simply preach the gospel. Getting someone to condemn abortion, without seeing them united to Christ, does them no good in the long run. They will simply go to hell as a more moral person. While such logic may work as it applies to the parent, it wholly neglects the unborn child and wholly ignores the myriad of scriptural mandates we've already considered. Changing someone's mind about abortion has nothing to do with creating a more moral person; it has everything to do with saving children. If you convince a pregnant woman not to abort, it won't gain her access to heaven, but it will certainly gain her child access to life, and that is of no small significance!⁹

Though the “evangelism-only” approach may sound spiritual, I can see, now, that it was just an excuse. My refusal to engage

wasn't just built on a "passion" for evangelism. It was also built on ignorance and fear. I was ignorant of what abortion actually is and does, and I was fearful of what opposing it might cost me. Let's face it. There may not be a more *unpopular* cause to take up in all of America. I've certainly never faced as much animosity sharing the gospel as I have expressing the opinion that abortion is unjust.

Bono and Brad Pitt will cheer the church's efforts to combat AIDS, poverty, or traditional forms of genocide, but Hollywood isn't lining up to shake the hands of abortion opponents. Abortion is a uniquely neglected phenomenon. In the secular community, it is endorsed by many of the same people who are so sensitive to injustice on other fronts. In the religious community, it is ignored by many of the same people who are so familiar with the commandment to love their neighbor.

There are all sorts of excuses we can make to justify inaction. I've probably used them all. *The abortion issue turns people off to the gospel. It distracts people from what is most important. Social activism doesn't save anybody.* It's a very one-legged approach to the Christian life. Ostensibly, I was trying to exalt the gospel, but I was actually neglecting half my witness. Emphasizing verbal proclamation, at the expense of tangible acts of love, is like trying to walk on one leg. It doesn't work well. It's basically saying, *I'll tell you how to get to heaven, but I won't waste my time feeding, clothing, or protecting you.* Not only is such an approach to evangelism incomplete, it is also less effective. The

credibility of the message *increases* when accompanied by acts of love. If children are dying in our midst, God isn't looking for pious excuses, he's looking for us to come to their aid!

Imagine if you were to witness the kidnapping or assault of a small child, especially your own child. You certainly wouldn't stand there and debate your calling, nor would you think for a moment that evangelism was the only legitimate means of changing the attacker's behavior. You might physically confront him; you might call the police; you might ask for help from someone nearby; but you would never rationalize that the only "biblical" way to save your daughter would be to share the gospel with her assailant so that he would repent and let her go. Such an "evangelistic" approach would be in violation of so many of the biblical principles we've already covered that it would be an absurdly unbiblical path to take.

Obviously, there are some huge differences between a child attacked on the street and a child attacked in the womb. I am NOT suggesting that violent confrontation is an effective or appropriate way to combat abortion, but I am suggesting that there are certain life and death situations for which evangelism is not a particularly effective first response. If we only rely on salvation as an *indirect* means of keeping people from killing their children, then all those people who do not repent and believe (which is the vast majority) will continue to put their children to death.

Some people minimize this tragedy by declaring that aborted babies go straight to heaven anyway. While this seems a

reasonable assumption to make, the Bible never tells us for sure. There are a few inferences,¹⁰ but nothing concrete. We can trust in God's goodness, his mercy, and his justice, but we cannot say with absolute authority that children who die before a certain "age of accountability" wind up in heaven. At the very least, this assumption must never serve to justify an indifference towards abortion. If there *is* an age of accountability, such thinking could just as easily breed nonchalance towards the killing of children *after* they're born. We must hold such speculations very loosely and content ourselves with what we do know. God calls his people to intervene on behalf of threatened people no matter *what* the condition of their eternal soul.

SO WHAT DO WE DO?

For almost 40 years, all manner of pro-life energies have been invested on the legislative front, and for almost 40 years, close to nothing has changed. Since 1973 when the Supreme Court ruled that abortion was a constitutionally protected act, it has been legal in all fifty states to abort a pregnancy, through all nine months, for virtually any reason at all. Abortion-related cases have reached the Supreme Court a handful of times since *Roe vs. Wade*, and in each case, *Roe* has been affirmed. States are free to "restrict" abortion on the fringes, so long as a woman's "right" to easy access isn't compromised.

With all of the lobbying, all of the rallying, and all of the petitioning, why do legislative efforts continue to fail? The fact is, most people just don't care about abortion. Until a

much greater number of people *do* care, legislative efforts will continue to fail. The real question is, *why* don't people care about abortion? That's an easy one. They don't care because they don't know. People have a sense that abortion is "bad," but they have no idea how bad.

For too long we've put the cart before the horse. Widespread education must precede widespread legislation. Even if *Roe vs. Wade* were overturned tomorrow, abortion would still be legal in most states. The public would still need to be educated for abortion to ever go away.¹¹ Of course, before we can adequately educate the world, we must educate ourselves. When I first started researching abortion, I was stunned by how clear-cut the *secular* case against it actually is. We need not worry about preaching people into a "new" morality; we only need educate them towards a more consistent application of the morality they already have in place. Most Americans already believe that child-killing is wretched and immoral. They just haven't been sufficiently convinced that abortion *is* child killing. The primary obstacle keeping people on the wrong side of this issue is not so much moral as educational.

Abortion is legal in America because it slithered in through the back door. It has never stood the test of full-disclosure, nor could it. The most powerful human weapon we have against abortion is the massive body of evidence that condemns it on every front. We must present this evidence as broadly, as comprehensively, and as compellingly as possible. We must

evaluate what are the most effective ways to do this and what aren't. Expressing an opinion is one thing. Demonstrating the reliability of that opinion is quite another.

Each of us has a responsibility, not just to *act*, but to act *wisely*. This is no less true as it relates to abortion. Yes, we should invest our money in pro-life efforts, but we should not invest haphazardly. Before you give, figure out where your money will go and what it will be used for. Be convinced that it couldn't be better invested somewhere else. One of the most dangerous comments you'll hear sounds very noble on the surface. It goes like this: *If even one life is saved, then it's all worth it!* While it is certainly right to value each and every life, such thinking subtly introduces the idea that we needn't bother with any critical examination of our strategy. *As long as some good is done, nothing else matters.* But what if a lot *more* good could be done by simply embracing a more strategic approach? Doesn't Christ tell us to be innocent as doves and *shrewd* as serpents (Matthew 10:16)? Doesn't God commend the servant who yields the highest return on what was given him (Matthew 25:14-28)? If we have x-amount of time or money to invest in combating abortion, wouldn't God be more pleased with an approach that saves ten, twenty or a hundred lives, instead of just one? We must think critically, not just about abortion itself, but about how we can best combat it.

Abortion by no means has the market cornered on institutional injustice, particularly as you move beyond the borders of the U.S. It is only through the diversity of the body of Christ that

the church can move in so many directions, to meet so many needs. Not everyone can be a missionary to the Middle East, and not everyone can make a vocation of combating abortion. Having said that, there is a danger in assuming too much upon the "diversity of the church." Malcolm Gladwell notes in his remarkable book *The Tipping Point* that "When people are in a group... responsibility for acting is diffused. They assume that someone else will [solve the problem], or they assume that because no one else is acting, the apparent problem... isn't really a problem."¹² It is much the same in the church, where it can be very easy to assume that someone else is handling things. It is unreasonable to suggest that everyone in the church should be working relentlessly to end abortion, but it is not unreasonable to suggest that everyone in the church should be doing *something* to end abortion.

THE CASE FOR ABORT73

Everything we've talked through to this point has been fairly general. It could easily compel your involvement across a wide variety of "pro-life" ventures. I hope it will. But now I'd like to get more specific, by telling you why I believe **Abort73.com** is uniquely equipped to change the way America thinks about abortion and is uniquely qualified to merit your support. I suspect that many of you are ready to do something but have no idea where to begin. **Abort73.com** is a great place to start! It provides what is arguably the most thorough, engaging, and accessible abortion education in the world, and it offers a variety of simple ways to extend that education to those around you.

Abort73.com launched in 2005. The goal was simple: to completely change the way people think about abortion. How? By stretching the educational potential of the world wide web beyond where it had ever been before. There were already hundreds of pro-life websites in existence, but the evidence against abortion needed a more credible and engaging outlet if it were to ever take hold. We didn't want a website that focused on an organization. We wanted one that focused squarely on abortion, pairing solid content with first class design.

Since middle school, high school, and college students are the people we most need to reach, and since they spend *huge* amounts of time online, an internet-based campaign made perfect sense. It reaches students where they're at, students who will determine public policy in the future and who are uniquely vulnerable to having an abortion in the present.

For five years, I spent significant amounts of time visiting college campuses across the nation, talking to students about abortion. When the evidence is well presented, minds change. I've seen it over and over. The problem is, how do we get that evidence in front of an entire nation (and world) of students? How can we have an influence on every college in America, every day of the year? And how do we reach high school and middle school students at the same time? The most logistically-feasible answer is through a polished, professional-grade website like **Abort73.com**.

Of course, even the most compelling website in the world

is useless if nobody visits it. This is where you come in. The influence of **Abort73.com** is very much built on grassroots marketing. Though we cater to students, our resources will work for anyone. We've created an entire line of T-shirts that say almost nothing about abortion, by design. Since most people don't have a natural inclination to learn about abortion, we've embraced an intentionally-veiled marketing approach (even our name gives away very little). In lieu of typical pro-life slogans, our shirts, pens, bags, and stickers all point people to a free, comprehensive, and almost universally accessible resource where they will learn the *facts* about abortion, instead of just an opinion. We say less on the front-end so we can communicate more on the back-end. It is a much more holistic approach to education with all sorts of entry points for involvement. By visiting **Abort73.com**, not only will you become better educated yourself, but you'll also find a variety of simple ways to then educate your world.

A FINAL CHARGE

R.C. Sproul asserts (and you can hear the echoes of Martin Niemöller) that “the organized church – more than any other institution apart from the Supreme Court – has neglected its duty to inform the public conscience [about abortion].”¹³ If the church *says* that abortion is a horrific injustice, but *acts* as if it's no big deal, what is the world going to conclude?

The Guttmacher Institute, which tracks abortion data, tells us that 70 percent of aborting women identify themselves as Catholic or

Protestant.¹⁴ Let that number sink in. Eliminating abortion in the *world* begins with eliminating abortion in the *church*.

Pastors, you must get over the fear of offending those in your congregation who have already had abortions so that you can help spare those who still haven't! Youth Pastors, you must come to terms with the fact that, in many ways, Christian teens are even more vulnerable to abortion than their unsaved peers.¹⁵ They must be exposed to the truth! John Piper pleads with you again:

The cowardice of some pastors when it comes to preaching against abortion appalls me. Many treat the dismemberment of unborn humans as an untouchable issue on the par with partisan politics. Some have bought into the incredible notion that they can be personally pro-life but publicly pro-choice or noncommittal... The law of our land is immoral and unjust. That should be declared from tens of thousands of pulpits in America...¹⁶

We must remember that there is a balance in the Christian life, and we are all prone to fall off on one side or the other—some on the “social justice” side and some on the “spiritually detached” side. The Bible should keep us from falling off. The world must know that abortion is an act of violence that kills a baby, and the world must know there is only one name under heaven, given to men, by which we are saved (Acts 4:12). We are not sometimes working to end abortion and sometimes working to spread the gospel; we are always working for the magnification of the glory of God. We must not lose sight of the

bigger evangelistic picture, but neither can we ignore with pious indifference our unborn neighbors. The only hope we have for maintaining this balance is to consistently live under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. Francis Schaeffer writes:

In the flesh we can stress purity without love, or we can stress love without purity; we cannot stress both simultaneously. To do so we must look moment by moment to the work of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Without that, a stress on purity becomes hard, proud, and legalistic; likewise, without it, a stress on love becomes sheer compromise. Spirituality begins to have real meaning in our lives as we begin to exhibit simultaneously the holiness of God and the love of God. We never do this perfectly, but we must look to the living Christ to help us do it truly.¹⁷

There is an irreversible order in the Christian life (laid out beautifully in Ephesians 5). It is a mysterious union of being and becoming. We are not God's children because we imitate God, rather we imitate God because we *are* his children. We do not “walk in love” so that God will love us. Rather, we walk in love because God *has* loved us. We do not “let our light shine” (upon the deeds of darkness) so that we will be made “children of light.” Rather, we let our light shine because we *are* children of light. There are ramifications of being united to Christ (if we are united to him!), and they cannot be avoided. So let us throw off any allegiance to the dreaded Christian idols of “personal peace” and “comfort,” and pursue with joy all that the Bible calls us to. May we go boldly forth into the world and be who we are, in Christ.

ENDNOTES

1. Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 19:13, Deuteronomy 21:9, 1 Kings 2:31, Proverbs 6:16-18, Isaiah 59:7, Jeremiah 19:3-5, Jeremiah 22:3, Joel 3:19.
2. The primary purpose of *A Biblical Mandate to Do Something About Abortion* is not to demonstrate that abortion is unjust. That's what Abort73.com is for. The aim of this work is to bring more believers into the active defense of abortion-vulnerable children and to help those already in the battle to be more biblical.
3. When Pharaoh refused to let God's people go, the wrath of God manifested itself in 10 plagues, the most severe of which was the death of all the first born sons in Egypt. When David sinned with Bathsheba, the wrath of God manifested itself in the death of their innocent child. Children are the hope and future of every society. When God's wrath lands on them, for the sins of a parent or the sins of a nation, it is an incalculably severe blow. When a society starts killing its own children, it engages in nothing less than self-destruction. Romans 1:18-32 reveals that God's wrath can simply be the "giving over" of people to bear the natural consequences of their wicked and depraved choices. For a nation that allows its children to be executed in the womb, not only does such behavior deserve punishment, in many ways, it is punishment.
4. "Visiting Orphans in a World of AIDS and Abortion" was preached on January 24, 1999 and can be listened to online at Abort73.com or DesiringGod.org.
5. "slaughter." Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1). Random House, Inc. 10 Jul. 2007. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/slaughter>>.
6. Quoted in *Hitler's Cross*: Erwin Lutzer, *Hitler's Cross*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995. p. 191.
7. Erwin Lutzer, *Hitler's Cross*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995. p. 193.
8. "Where Does Child Killing Come From?" was preached on January 25, 1998 and can be listened to online at Abort73.com or DesiringGod.org.
9. The value of saving a baby's life should go without saying, but in case you wonder why it is a good thing to bring another sin-cursed child into this sin-cursed world, be reminded that every single human being is created in the image of Almighty God (Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 9:6, I Corinthians 11:7).

That is why destroying someone who bears that Image is such a monumental atrocity. Furthermore, every child that is born testifies to God's grace, reminding us that when Adam and Eve rebelled against God, God showed them mercy instead of wrath. That mercy, in fact, was largely manifested through the very act of bearing children! Adam and Eve deserved death, but they were given the grace to produce new life. And it was the continued bearing of sin-cursed children which eventually led to the One who finally triumphed over sin. The Savior of the universe entered this world as a human child! Be assured, every time a child is born, it is a very big deal!

10. In 2 Samuel 12:23, after David's infant son dies, David proclaims, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me," indicating a belief that he would be reunited with his son in the afterlife. Some scholars also point to the fact that, in Mark 10:16, Jesus blesses young children, and argue that there is no record of Jesus ever blessing the lost.
11. Even the strictest anti-abortion legislation will never eliminate abortion altogether. What it *will* do is dramatically reduce the frequency of abortion, saving more than a million lives a year.
12. Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*. New York, Boston, London: Little, Brown and Company, 2000, 2002. p. 28.
13. R.C. Sproul, *Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1990. p. 15.
14. "Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States", The Guttmacher Institute. May, 2006.
15. Since pregnancy exposes the sin of premarital sex, abortion becomes a very attractive way for unmarried Christian teens to keep their sin under wraps.
16. John Piper, *Brothers, We are Not Professionals*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002. p. 212.
17. Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1984. p. 70.

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Abort73.com is a free, online resource that educates thousands of people each day about abortion and provides an assortment of simple ways to extend that education to those all around you.

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