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THE BIBLE SPEAKS LOUDLY ABOUT ABORTION!

By Don Nelson, Nevada LIFE

Notes to the reader.

1. No one could get away with a sermon this long! This comes from an actual sermon I preached to my congregation in the 90's while still in active ministry. The pastor of a large Nevada evangelical church told me to flesh it out. So, I have expanded on my points to make the points more clear. I've added point seven from pastor Steve Bond.

2. Pastors, let's get rid of any straw men characterizations of what right to life Christians in your church want you to do. We don't want to take over your church. We don't want you to preach on it 35 times a year. But since this is the biggest moral and human rights issue facing our country, we have the right to some biblical teaching on it. Is it or is it not for us to have an abortion? What is abortion in God's eyes? Is it or isn't it something that will affect our relationships with the Lord our other children, our families and friends? Is it something that will hurt us in the long run? What do I do with my pain and feelings from the abortion I had or influenced some one to have? These are serious problems and I want to suggest that while crisis pregnancy centers are appropriate for abortion decisions making and post abortion trauma, they are no substitute for your authoritative teaching and counseling.

3. Preaching on abortion will not wreck your church. The best sermons I've heard on abortion are from pastors of large and growing churches. Sure people walk out, but the positive response and the help men and women receive from them far outweigh those who are turned off.

Well, let's begin...

Friends, I know many of you have come here today scared because I'm going to be talking about abortion. President Clinton has recently revived a common tactic to disarm pro-life Christians from working to end abortion by saying in so many words, "the Bible does not say abortion is wrong."

This interpretive sleight of hand is very effective. An evangelical minister in Reno once told me "there was abortion in Jesus' day and he said nothing about it. So abortion is not a Christian problem." End of discussion.

Step children of this view say that the church now has no prophetic voice (an ethical voice to engage, guide and confront society). The cultural commission of Genesis 1:28-30, Matthew 5:13-16 has no claim on them. The church's sole mission is evangelism. People need a good opinion about the church to foster evangelism and church growth. Abortion talk hurts our image. In the words of another evangelical pastor in Reno, "we have no right to beat people over the head until the church gets its own act together."

I'm preaching to you today on this subject because I believe it is the biggest moral issue in our nation and world today. I believe that while the word abortion doesn't appear in the bible itself, it speaks loudly about it. I want to give you seven biblical principles which show that abortion is contrary to scripture. They suggest that it *does* matter that we speak up about abortion. They say that we have a Christian duty to both proclaim as loudly as we can that every person conceived has an unalienable dignity and that we Christians must be the first to voice objections to the murder of innocent babies by abortion.

A. 7 Christian Principles That Abortion Violates

1. God is God In 1992, I asked an abortionist when life begins. He answered, "it's a child when the mother decides it is." Talk about playing God! I couldn't help but feel an intense hypocrisy, since abortionists and women choosing abortion say pro-life activists play God. Here's the principle. *The Bible tells us that God, and God alone, is God.* He gives life to all (*Nehemiah 9:6*). Jesus says he is the giver of life. To grant a mother the right to determine humanness and personhood exalts women to deity by granting them the powers of life and death.

This is dangerous because the first step in discrimination is to play God. You dehumanize those you hate to justify your actions. You choose who is and

isn't worthy of life in your society. Once a person's humanity is taken away, it makes your oppression more acceptable to your now seared conscience.

All of this undermines everyone's rights. You can't take one person's natural rights or the right to life without creating the possibility that one day your own may be taken too. It just doesn't happen right away.

Were God not to exist, the most heinous crime against humanity would be for anyone to claim the right to determine who has humanity. Since God alone can determine when a life can be justly taken, the woman procuring an abortion, and the abortionist destroying that child, usurp God's authority. They presume an authority no person dare be allowed to presume. Pro-life Christians are not playing God. They are telling women and abortionists they have no right to play God either.

2. Humanity is given. It is not earned. Pastor John Piper, PhD says that the Bible describes the unborn in personal terms-nothing like the impersonal terms of abortion-choice, contents of the uterus, products of conception, a blob of tissue, pregnancy mass and the like. (Renaming, slurring or reclassifying humans precedes oppression and is necessary to quiet our guilt).

The infancy narratives about the birth of Jesus show that his cousin John the Baptist had a personality in utero. While still a baby in the womb, he leapt for joy. The same New Testament Greek word *brephos* is used to describe John's inter-uterine joy (*Luke 1.41*), the baby Jesus (*Luke 2.12, 16*) and the children approaching Jesus during his ministry (*Luke 18.15*). Piper says that *Genesis 25.22* uses the ordinary word in Hebrew for children to describe the fraternal skirmish in Rebekah's womb.

This tells us that the preborn child is not *becoming* a human. The child is growing in the humanity he or she already possesses. He or she is not a potential person, but a person with great potential. *Psalms 139* says God creates us in the womb. Because God gives humanity, calling a child a *choice* dehumanizes the humanity God has given. To abort a child destroys the humanity God has given. Humanity is not earned, it is given. It is inherent in our being from the moment of conception.

The legalization of abortion on demand is the first time in American history that we have shrunk the meaning of humanity instead of expanding it. Our biblical doctrine of the dignity of all humankind caused us to, although too slowly, humanize slaves, grant women's suffrage, rights for minorities, the

handicapped and children. This reversal threatens the humanity and protection of all people groups. Will the church stay silent while this happens?

3. Abortion violates the principle of personal responsibility. The Bible teaches that “the soul that sins shall die” for his or her own sin (*Jeremiah 31.30, Ezekiel 18.17,19* etc.). “The son shall not die for the sins of his father!” This means no one can justly compel one to suffer or die for the sins of the other, especially without his or her consent.

Every society and culture looks for some means of atonement to atone for its sins. In our sexually depraved society, abortion, which is the cornerstone of free sex, has become a new sacrament or means of atonement wherein the abortionist sweeps up the consequences of illicit sex.

Abortion is largely used to cover up the sins of the father and mother. The abortionist functions as the free sex cult’s high priest taking away our sexual sins. Couples present themselves for forgiveness and absolution. “Forgive us abortionist. We have sinned. Please take away our infirmity.” The abortionist proceeds to break the body and shed the blood of the unborn child. “This body has been broken for you. Your sin is covered. No one will ever know. Go in peace.”

This travesty of justice is an outrage to Christians. The Bible teaches that Christ, and Christ alone, has died for the sins of the parents. Only He can bear the sins of another. It is self evident that it is wrong to force an innocent to take away the embarrassment and hardships of anyone without that one’s consent.

4. The principle of impartiality. “But, can’t we have a sanctity of human life for people born, but not for the unborn?”

We Americans believe that justice and equality are two pillars undergirding our society. Abortion violates both justice and equality. That’s why the right to abortion will never be morally accepted. Women exercising the now constitutional right to abortion are choosing this right at the expense of the unborn child’s right to life.

Some say that a babies size or inability to live on “its” own mean the unborn is not a human with rights and therefore can be trampled on.

This too is partiality. There is no real difference between a baby in the womb and one outside, except size and breathing. Since when are size and the

ability to breath determinative characteristics for being a human? God says “do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike.” (*Deuteronomy 1.17 see Lev. 19.15 Psalm 82.2, James 2.1,9, Colossians 3.25, Romans 2.11, Ephesians 6.9, I Timothy 5.21*).

God gives humanity. Ability, dependency, strength, size have nothing to do with making one a human (i.e. “to survive on *its own*”). To favor a women in difficulty over the baby is unbiblical because it is impartial. The baby deserves the most life saving attention and defense because the child has the worst problem. Her life, not the mother’s is in jeopardy.

5. Abortion violates the Golden Rule. Jesus said, “do unto others as you would have others do unto you. This sums up the law and the prophets.” (*Matthew 7.12*) The pro-choice ethic is radical utilitarian individualism. Radical utilitarian individualism is concerned about me, myself and I. People, things or events are permissible, tolerable, or even acceptable if and when they suit, please, or benefit me. This is antithetical to “the Golden Rule.” When Jesus says we should do this “in everything” he means that the Golden Rule is what Christian living is all about. That is what the prophets and the law are trying to say.

In addition to these words, John tells us to provide that which is lacking to *others* (*I John 3.17*). The apostle Paul says to treat others and their interests above your own. “Consider others better than yourself (*Philippians 2.3-4*).” Abortion violates the golden rule because it suppresses the rights and interests of others to one’s self.

6. Abortion violates the command to love by laying down our lives for others. *I Kings 3.16-27* tells the story of two women who came to King Solomon for justice. Both women had babies. One accidentally killed hers in the night when she laid on her child. She seized the other woman’s child and claimed that the other’s child was hers. When Solomon proposed dividing the baby in two parts, one for each, the true mother would not tolerate it. She loved her child so much that she was willing to give her away so that her child might live. She was willing to forgo the joy of motherhood so her baby could live.

Her story mocks abortion. Abortion takes the life of another for one’s convenience. Many women will not consider adoption because the idea of their baby living with someone else is too much for them. Christian love gives one’s life for another’s. Jesus said, “you must love one another” (*John 13.34*). “Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.” (*John 15.13-14*) The greatest

of all the gifts God has given is this kind of love (*I Corinthians 13.13*). Abortion is intolerable to Jesus because it takes the life of an innocent human. It is especially egregious because it is for personal gain.

7. Abortion violates the Christian belief that every person has a unique and undeniable dignity regardless of one's physical or financial situations or prospects.

Some have tried to appeal to the quality of life ethic in justifying their decision to abort their baby. "We did it out of the love for the child. 'It' would not have had a good life." To say this is love for a child is arrogance. It is playing God. No one can say how one might turn out. No one can take the place of God and say that another's future is not worth living.

Pastor Steve Bond, in his sermon, *Life is Precious*, says this concerning the justification of abortion based upon a babies future life probabilities.

Consider the following. There's a preacher and wife who are very poor. They already have fourteen children. Now she finds out she's pregnant with the fifteenth. They're living in tremendous poverty. Considering the economic implications of another child, would you recommend the woman get an abortion? If you would, you would have killed John Wesley, one of the greatest evangelists in the history of the church.

Or consider this. The father is sickly, the mother has tuberculosis. They've had four children. The first is blind, the second is dead, the third is deaf and the fourth has TB, like his mother. The woman finds out she's pregnant again. Given the extreme situation, would you consider recommending an abortion? If you would, you would have killed Ludwig von Beethoven, one of the greatest composers of all time. Or consider this. A white man raped a thirteen-year-old black girl and she got pregnant. If you were her parents, would you consider recommending an abortion? If you would, you would have killed Ethel Waters, the black gospel singer who ministered to millions of people around the globe with Billy Graham.

Further, to say we should abort the child out of love because he become handicapped or grow up in poverty, or be abused is blasphemous and a condescending insult to the handicapped, the poor and the abused. This says that the poor, the handicapped, and the violated are so pitiful and lacking in dignity, that we ought to kill anyone who might become like them.

B. Why We Need To Discuss Abortion.

As I prepared to preach about abortion on *Sanctity of Human Life Sunday* a woman asked me, “but pastor, why do we have to talk about this? We’re old people. None of us are going to have an abortion?” In my sermon I answered with the following points.

1. People without knowledge have no power. Knowledge is power (*Hosea 4.6*). What you think about the unborn child affects your conception of justice. People without knowledge lack the ability to wage a moral discussion and influence people. Christians must do their part in communicating the sanctity of human life to a new generation of people who have no idea about what is right and wrong. Pastors have the responsibility to give people a worldview by which to live, to make moral judgments by which they can form and hold values. Understanding what God says about abortion and the sanctity of life is crucial.

Evangelical ministers and parishioners who resist speaking up about the evil of abortion, need to remember listen to their own words. We evangelicals have criticized the church for not speaking about the selective killing of Gypsies, Communists, Poles, Jews, the infirm, the retarded, the elderly and others during the Holocaust. Just like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day we say we would never have killed the prophets or allowed such things to happen. Pastors and parishioners who do not speak up are near to being silent accomplices to abortion. Our silence is a monument being built to the church that was complicity silent only fifty years ago.

2. You don’t know whose life you may save. You do not know what kind of beauty you will keep from being destroyed by being able to talk with people about abortion. Just recently I was consulting with a right to life group about my experiences in Reno. After I was done, a little four year old girl handed me a picture she had drawn during my discourse. At the bottom she wrote an inscription, “Pastor Don, Jesus Loves us all. Your friend Alicia.” Fern, a Crisis Pregnancy Center Leader who invited me to speak, leaned over and said to me “her mother was going to abort her. But I went over to her house several times...” At that moment I cringed at the thought that was it not for Fern, I would never have experienced the beauty of little Alicia. Her courage and ability to talk about abortion had helped bring Alicia and all her beauty into the world. Your ability to talk about abortion will save lives and make the world more beautiful indeed.

3. When we infringe on the sanctity of human life, we erode the authority and principles to fight racism, sexism and other discriminations. Dr. Martin Luther King said that justice denied anywhere threatens justice everywhere. So it also is that when humanity is denied anywhere it threatens humanity everywhere. Your unalienable rights to life liberty and the pursuit of happiness depends on the extension to and protection of that right to every living human being. Members of a society cannot think for long that their human rights can be unalienable if that society is willing to trample on the right to exist of anyone, no matter how weak, pitiful and useless that society may make those groups appear.

Of course there are some who will say ending oppression is no comparison to eternal life. That's not what the church is about. Salvation of one's soul is far greater. It's better to know Christ and be oppressed than to not know him and be free. But no one will take the messengers of salvation seriously if he or she is not outraged or at least concerned about the evils afflicting the hearer.

4. Abortion causes secondary pains. Many women have no idea what abortion is because no one will tell them. And despite the objections and invective of the abortion lobby, who would stand to lose revenues, we know substantial harm comes to women and many times, families, husbands boy friends and a whole matrix of relationships connected to and surrounding each abortion. Many of those are long term. When we are silent about abortion we rob young women of information that will spare them life long guilt and other social, relational, spiritual and even physical problems. Churches counsel about the pains of divorce, adultery, fornication, drug and alcohol abuse. Why not abortion?

C. Some Common Objections To Involvement On Abortion.

1. Isn't this forcing my morality upon others? "Morality is private. Isn't it wrong for me to try to force my opinions on others?"

All laws have a moral basis. Name one that doesn't. What law or regulation is not based on some person's or group of person's conception of right and wrong? Since all law is legislated morality, why should abortion be an exception? Are you prepared to say that Wilberforce, Lincoln, Frederick Douglas and the abolitionists had no right to force their opinions about slavery on our republic? Are you prepared to say that Susan B. Anthony and those who fought for women's suffrage were wrong? Then you should not say fighting for the right for every baby to live and be free of the threat of having his or her

life extinguished is wrong. This is a greater fight because the unborn child cannot speak for herself! And since this is a democratic republic, there is no reason for you to keep your opinion on this matter to yourself.

If you are a Christian, you live for God's approval, not the approval of humans. Proverbs says "rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, 'But we knew nothing about this,' does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?" (Proverbs 24.11-12) We have a Christian obligation to defend the rights of the unborn whether or not anyone approves of it. We have a judge to face when we don't. He will definitely know we did not defend those rights.

2. The Bible says all government is ordained by God. We must obey and stay out of politics. Many Christians wring their hands about causes and are standing on the abortion sidelines with a private morality. Many of them believe Romans 13 says we cannot protest the government because it is ordained and sanctioned by God.

Here are a couple things to remember. Just because a government may be ordained by God, doesn't mean that everything it does is willed by God or approved of by God. It's hard to believe that God would ordain things he clearly says are wrong and contrary to his prescription.

Second, if we take the position that all government decrees are God's will, then we have a problem. The Supreme Court that made abortion a choice and stripped the unborn child of her rights. It is the same Court that denied Dred Scott his humanity and said that he was another's personal property. It refused him the right to self-determination. The court also gave us the separate but equal doctrine and the Korematsu decision which interned American Japanese. If Romans 13 means governmental decrees are God's will, then God is open to the charge of being the creator of unjust governments and being the sanctifier of the horrible injustices that have been committed by our Court and government.

This really argues scripture against scripture, or at least misses the full teaching of scripture. Romans 13 must be compared with Revelation 13. In this case the apostle John calls the Roman government, which is persecuting the righteous, the beast. The government there is not ordained by God. It is anti-Christ.

To remove this apparent contradiction in the Bible, we only need to say that only good laws and good governments are ordained by God and bear his stamp of approval. It is no sin to petition a government about heinous, unjust laws. Even if we were to say that evil governments were ordained by God, it is no sin to petition a government about heinous, unjust laws.

Third, governments and laws are always changing. Don't discount the truth that God uses Christians to advocate justice to change governments and their laws and policies. The slave trade in the British Empire was not ended by evangelism and the changing of hearts to Christ and the church. It wasn't as if, one day after successful evangelism, that there was no more need for the slave trade. It came to an end because of persistent advocacy by Christians like Wilberforce at the behest of the great evangelist John Wesley.

Finally, it is self evident that our society is in a great need of the insights of biblical teaching.

3. The right to life cause is not worth the effort because right to life people don't care about children after they are born. Many of our most dedicated Christian leaders who give their lives for the poor criticize us right to life advocates. They think we do nothing for the poor after they are born, or for the poor at all.

This overlooks the thousands of crisis pregnancy centers run mostly by volunteers. Even where this charge might be true, it should be remembered that in medical and civil emergencies, treatment and resources are first allocated to those with the greatest needs. The preborn child in the womb facing abortion has the greatest need. The child faces immediate death. That is why we are moved to put so many of our resources into waging the battle to save their lives.

This objection also absurd for another reason. It says that the unwillingness of certain Christians to care for another person gives a mother the right to kill her child. This too would be a good argument for infanticide and euthanasia. Few things more foolish could ever be said.

Unfortunately, people who say this usually don't realize that they are saying that people who are born are more worthwhile than people preborn.

A Biblical Call To Action

In conclusion, let me say why I think we should make abortion part of our church preaching and teaching programs and routines and public witness?

In 1996 a fire erupted on the hillside of Reno. Incredibly, it spread to 3000 acres in less than two hours and then to 6000. It shut down *Interstate 80* and threatened to come into the city and destroy many homes. Fire fighters from across the western states rushed to the fire lines and stopped it from coming down into the city.

My friends, America is on fire. The raging fires of abortion threaten our civilization and our civility. If we cannot convince people that killing innocent preborn children, we will never be able to convince this new generation that has come of age under the quality of life-choice ethic, that any killing is wrong. And having been saddled with an enormous national debt how will they treat you in your old age?

Unless we defeat abortion rights and its mind set-especially the quality of life and choice ethic is wrong, we will never be able to stop infanticide and euthanasia. If a child in the womb can be killed because we think she will not have an acceptable quality of life, then there is nothing to prevent us from killing others that society thinks are burdened with a poor quality of life. If a child in the womb can be killed because he may adversely affect a mother's emotional, economic and educational development, there is no argument to prevent society from killing those who are too burdensome to society, or whose beliefs are contrary to the perceived well being of society.

The United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has already granted a surrogate to give consent to assisted suicide to a mentally incompetent person. Assisted suicide has become euthanasia. Oregon has legalized physician assisted suicide. Some societies have treated religious faith as a mental illness. Given our current culture, don't think it can't happen here. People propagating these sort of societies are teaching in our universities.

Now is the time for you and the church to rush to the fire lines and do something about the fire descending upon our nation. If we don't, we will be irrelevant on the deepest moral crisis that has ever plagued our nation. How can that kind of faith be taken seriously by anyone? It is imperative that we proclaim the dignity and worth of each human being and proclaim as rationally and as forcefully as we can that every human being who is conceived has a

dignity that no one may assault. The future of our nation and the integrity of our faith depends on it.

The above courtesy of <http://www.nevadalife.org>