
A Biblical Response to Abortion

by Richard Fredericks

As I became involved in the abortion issue a young female Adventist pediatrician told me of a late saline abortion in an Adventist hospital. The abortion failed. The baby was born alive and crying, but placed in a sealed bucket to suffocate. She was horrified by such an act of murder. Beyond the initial horror she was stunned on two accounts: first, during her own training she had stated she would withdraw from medical school (University of Virginia) rather than perform or participate in an abortion due to her religious convictions as an Adventist. After first saying she must assist in an abortion to graduate, the university backed down. Second, she assumed that as a church we took a strong stand against abortion. Then she found that abortions for convenience (nonmedical emergencies) were regular occurrences in Adventist hospitals. I will never forget her tears as she looked at me and said: "How can we do this?"

I then learned that in Adventist hospitals where abortions are done the overwhelming percentage are elective abortions (no defect in the child or danger to the life of the mother); a practice allowed for under No. 5 of the church's official guidelines. Next, I saw pictures—real pictures—of what happens in an abortion. What was being torn apart by suction curette 10-13 weeks into a pregnancy is not a "blob" or "unwanted tissue" but a child with perfectly formed little arms, hands, fingers and even fingernails; with feet that have toes and toenails; with faces showing eyes and changing expressions; with a brain that had

already emitted strong brainwaves for a month before the "termination." I was looking at a human being with potential, and not at potential life.

In the United States, I discovered, three out of every ten pregnancies end in abortion. In 14 metropolitan areas, such as Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and Seattle, abortions outnumber live births.¹ Three abortions are done per minute, 4,200 abortions per day, 1.5 million per year—a total of more than 21 million since the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973. Since 1975 the "war on the unborn" has produced twice as many casualties *each year* as have the combined deaths in all the major wars in U.S. history, from the Revolutionary War through Vietnam.

During this time I met Patti McKinney, the president of the fastest-growing organization in America: WEBA (Women Exploited by Abortion). Starting five years ago with two members, it currently has 36,000 members with chapters in 30 states. Patti introduced me to the "women's issue" in abortion from another angle—the incredible sense of betrayal and the equally tremendous physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional scars left with many who choose to abort.²

Meeting Patti had an impact on me for another reason. This courageous lady, who appears regularly on national television, was at one time an Adventist. She left us because she believed we were not serious about our call to keep all the commandments of God. Her question was "OK, Adventists, what about the sixth commandment?"

Next to basic apathy ("I don't want to get involved," or "If the church is neutral so am I"), the predominant response I have found among Adventists, especially clergy, is a denial that the

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scriptural principles have anything to say concerning this issue. Because no proof text against abortion can be found, it is argued, the Bible is neutral or, at best, nondefinitive. This, to me, is a view that discredits Scripture and God himself.

Two basic perspectives guide the following discussion: Scripture (not human reason) is the final arbitrator of all significant ethical and moral issues; and Scripture is far from silent about abortion.³

The Old Testament

God is against murder. "You shall not murder" (Hebrew: *ratsach*, Exodus 20:13). The sixth commandment may allow for some forms of capital punishment or self-defense. But the Hebrew term, and its context, consistently defines as murder, then forbids and unequivocally condemns the taking of any innocent human life by violent means (Exodus 23:7). No exceptions are offered, no conditions (economic, emotional, or otherwise) are given where taking an innocent life is acceptable to God. He repeatedly condemns (literally, "declares a

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curse upon") those who take the life of an innocent human being in a futile attempt to atone for their own sins as in Deuteronomy 24:16. Proverbs 6:16, 17 states "six things the Lord hates. . . hands that shed innocent blood" (NIV).

More specifically, God views as especially heinous the sacrifice of children for the sins of the parents (see Jeremiah 7:30-34 and Micah 6:7); and those who "ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead [double murder] in order to enlarge their borders" (Amos 1:13, NIV). In Psalm 106, verses 35-40, God sends destructive judgments upon his people who have accepted the practices of the Canaanites, leading them to "shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their

daughters" (KJV). In Jeremiah 22 God directly links child sacrifice with greed, the desire for materialistic self-fulfillment (22:3, 13-17).

This link is confirmed in the *Biblical Archeological Review* (January/February 1984). Archeologists have discovered that the practice of child sacrifices in Carthage similar to those condemned in the Old Testament were motivated by economic reasons, but with religious justification. Child sacrifice was more prevalent in wealthy homes than in poor ones. The wealthy were disposing of their "unwanted" children in order to preserve their life-style and standard of living.⁴ God declares this mindset both fatal and alien to His kingdom.

God affirms the personhood of the unborn. In both the Old and New Testament the term used to describe a human being in the womb is *child*, the same term used to describe an infant after birth. There is nothing anywhere in Scripture to indicate God views the unborn child as only a potential life. Rather, all babies in the womb are spoken of as persons, as unique and distinct individuals with identity and worth, for whom God already has a destiny:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).⁵

"Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and the One who formed you from the womb, I, the Lord am the maker of all things, . . . Thus says the Lord who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you" (Isaiah 44: 24, 2).

"Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. . . Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Thy book they were all written, The days that were ordained for me when as yet there was not one of them" (Psalm 139:13, 16).⁶

God is especially for the weak, the orphan, the voiceless, and the oppressed. Those who are without a power base in society are the objects of his special regard; and are to be so treated by his people: "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" (Psalm 82:3, 4). If the unborn are persons to God, they are the most defenseless of persons. To be God's servant is to defend such as these in a selfish, brutal world.

The New Testament

The Gospels elicit an immediate sense that Jesus formed a kingdom where the self-centered, materialistic values of the world are turned upside down. Fulfillment, in Jesus' terms, is redefined as valuing all others, especially children,⁷ more than we value personal comfort, autonomy, or the pursuit of individual rights. This participation, even if it is in the "fellowship of His sufferings" (Philippians 3:10) with one who gave himself on the cross for sinners, is the heart of Christianity. It declares all human life valuable. This *agape* life-style is illustrated in a number of New Testament themes.

The gospel reveals a God who accepts and values each of us as persons, not on the basis of our achievements. Christ offered himself in sacrificial love to those who were unworthy and incapable of earning such love by their attractiveness, achievements, or assets. God loves us in our morally and spiritually defective state and declares us acceptable by grace.⁸

Abortion is a false gospel. The Christian gospel declares that the Son of God, in divine love offered himself as the all-sufficient ("once-for-all") atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. Abortion promises peace and redemption through the blood of the unborn rather than the blood of Christ.

Abortion also assaults the gospel by breeding sociological perfectionism; people who are inconvenient or fail to measure up are denied human value and subsequently denied life. It makes a big difference whether we communicate to our children: "Grandma is no longer a functional person and it is expensive to take care of her, so we're going to help her have a good death"; or we say "Grandma can't communicate with us but she is still Grandma; and we can still love her and take care of her until she dies." Children raised with the first orientation grow up eliminating people who are inconvenient. Those taught the second perspective grow up understanding the power of grace. When she accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Mother Teresa said:

To me, the nations with legalized abortions are the poorest nations. The great destroyer of peace today is the crime against the innocent unborn child. . . . In destroying the child, we are destroying love, destroying the image of God in the world.⁹

The apostles' concept of love grew out of a concrete, historical reality—a bloody cross on a windswept hill called Golgotha. Jesus' death for sinners taught them that genuine love is always costly, and above all else, sacrificial and redemptive. Their values were different, above all, the value they put on human life. This became evident in their relationships, as the earliest nonbiblical Christian moral code, the *Didache*, illustrates:

Our oldest moral catechism prepared candidates for baptism by instructing them: "You will not kill. You will not have sex with other people's spouses. You will not abuse young children. You will not have sex outside of marriage. *You will not abort fetuses.*"¹⁰ [Italics supplied.]

For these early Christians, the value of the unborn child was a logical extension of the gospel. This put them at odds with the prevailing practice in Roman society where abortion was rampant. In every age, the way in which the Christian community deals with the weakest and most needy in its midst is an accurate reflection of how personally

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real the power of the gospel is to its members.

The Incarnation speaks strongly against abortion and the ethic supporting it. When the "Word became flesh" he began as an unborn child, a fetus. Part of the revelation of his "glory" (John 1:14) was to enter into the womb of an unmarried but pregnant teenager. Was he at that moment "potential life" with only relative value?¹¹

Remember, Jesus was born into poverty and hardship, destined for suffering. If we look at the nativity story in all its harsh reality, one wonders

what advice we would have offered Mary today about her pregnancy. Birth in a filthy stable. Only rags available to dress the child. Jesus' identification with the poor and underprivileged rather than the successful, powerful, or prosperous was so real he had literally "nowhere to lay His head" (Luke 9:58). This is such a low "quality of life" by modern reasoning it would have been far better for Mary to terminate her pregnancy. Yet this life is the ultimate revelation of the "glory" of God (John 17:1-5).

The "love of money" is not the key to happiness, but "the root of all evil." It is a mindset that causes "people who want to get rich" to "fall into temptation" and wander "away from the faith" (1

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Timothy 6:5-11, NIV). Jesus emphatically declared that "you cannot serve both God and Money" (Matthew 6:24, NIV); that "life does not consist in the abundance of . . . possessions," therefore, his disciples must "be on . . . guard against every form of greed" (Luke 12:16-21). When John, in Revelation, describes Babylon, the great harlot in whom is found the blood of "all who were slain on the earth" (18:24, NIV), he pictures her as that spirit in humanity that values gold and silver above human lives (18:11-13).

This is crucial. Many arguments for abortion or killing the defective, if listened to carefully, appeal to economic self-interest. They warn that preserving and protecting such people threatens either present or potential financial prosperity. The biblical priority is radically different. Paul identifies greed as the sin of idolatry—the most fatal sin in the New Testament (Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:5). More than any other topic, Jesus talked about the danger of basing life's decisions and goals on money, and flatly declared "it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven," and "turning His gaze on His disciples, He began to say, 'Blessed are [even] you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.'"¹² This meaning,

derived from discipleship, is in direct opposition to the belief that a life of potential material hardship is a life not worth living.¹³

Happiness is found in the company of the committed whose purpose is to mirror Christ's unearned, undeserved love by indentifying with those who need it most: the weak, the frail, the poor, and the helpless. "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40, KJV).

Abortion is rooted in the greatest sin of all: humanity's desire to play God. Trying to be autonomous, the creature living as if his finite reason were the highest authority and therefore taking the prerogatives of the Creator—this is the essence of sin. Paul speaks of "the lie" as worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25; see context, verses 18-32).

The first lie the Bible records is Satan's assertion to Eve that she could "be like God" (Genesis 3:5). Isaiah identifies the one overpowering determination of the Satanic spirit as: "I will exalt myself. . . . I will make myself like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14), and he described spiritual Babylon (the archetypal kingdom of human rebellion against God, cf. Daniel 4:30) in these words: "You sensual one, who dwells securely, who says in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me'" (Isaiah 47:8).¹⁴

Some defenses of abortion appeal to the "absolute rights" of men and women to total sexual freedom, and of each woman to do what she wants with "her own body" (meaning the unborn child). But do we have absolute rights to do what we want with our bodies? Is personal autonomy a "Christian right" to be defended by the church? "You are not your own; you were bought with a price; therefore, honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV). The New Testament calls us to accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It never defends "personal autonomy" or defines freedom in terms of autonomy: "If anyone would to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23, NIV).

God's grace never covers willful, cherished sin, and autonomy is the primordial sin (Isaiah 14:12-14). *Auto-nomy* literally means "self-

law”—the sinful desire to be one’s own ultimate authority. Again, in Genesis 3:4-6, it is the serpent who distorts true freedom into personal autonomy (“ye shall be as gods”[KJV]). Jesus’ own discussion of authentic freedom is found in John 8:28-36; here it is defined within the context of discipleship and abiding in his Word. Biblical freedom is the opposite of autonomy.

Another defense of abortion, the argument that those who might be born with physical, mental, or economic handicaps would be better off dead, leads physicians and others to play God. They act as if they are omniscient, speaking with certainty about the misery “unwanted” children will both cause and experience.

Really? Who gave these prophets their crystal ball? Will this new child’s life be a continual burden or a joyful praise to God? How can we know?¹⁵ The greatest gospel singer of this century was the illegitimate daughter of a 16-year-old poor, black girl who was raped. Beethoven’s family background included a deranged father, a syphilitic mother, a mentally retarded older brother, and a sibling born blind. Surely Planned Parenthood would have said to Ludwig’s mother: “Protect your freedom, terminate the poor thing.” Their “god” is human speculation, and that god is small and impotent. To argue for death as the best answer to life’s problems lacks imagination and a sense of God’s redemptive might. For an atheist this limitedness is understandable, from a Christian it is bankrupt.

Biblically, then, God is actively involved with the unborn as persons of value. Since abortion is the taking of such an innocent human life, it is not only for the Bible an act of murder, but an assault on the purpose of Christ’s life, his gospel, and his call to discipleship.

The Biblical Call to Commitment Now

Should the Adventist church take a stand against the practice of abortion? Yes, for many reasons. The most common argument against this step is a very legitimate desire to protect personal freedom of choice. But

for the Christian community the crucial question is not whether God has given freedom of choice to His people. He certainly has. Rather, for us the question is whether our choices are just and moral.

Individuals are free to practice adultery, or cruelty, but such choices are neither moral nor Christlike. Neither is the choice to kill an unborn

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child in an attempt to solve a present crisis.

Another roadblock to a biblically consistent Adventist position is a curious denial of ethical accountability because of eschatological speculations. What may happen is causing us to deny what *is* happening. Prominent speakers within our church have said that those on the side of the sanctity of life are the vanguard of the “religious right,” those who would bring in legislation limiting our religious freedom. They conclude we must avoid being identified with these Christians in their struggle against abortion and infanticide. This is curious and sad. Speculations about a future death decree should not make us actively participate in a present one. Surely for the unborn of America this is already a time of trouble such as has never been (Matthew 24:21).

Other church leaders have said “it is a Catholic issue.” But is protecting innocent life the private domain of the Catholic church? Proverbs 24:11, 12, and a host of other warnings from God (in the minor prophets especially) call us to defend the weak, voiceless, and oppressed (Jeremiah 22:16; cf. Jeremiah 5:26-29).

Compassion must be our common ground, our point of agreement as a church. Those on both sides of this debate often see themselves as the defenders of compassion, either compassion for the unborn child or for the woman in crisis. Must this be an “either/or” choice? A response that is truly and consistently compassionate to everyone

involved in a crisis pregnancy should be our goal.

Consensus on compassion might lead to consensus on two specific points. First, the realization that abortion has a second victim—the woman. Abortion not only destroys a child, but damages and sometimes destroys the very person it is suggested it will help. Because of this, compassion for the woman (as well as the child) dictates alternate answers.

Here, I want to speak from personal experience. I have counseled with six students and one close friend following their abortions. The story in each case was sickeningly similar. Career

plans, money, self-esteem, boyfriend's affection: abortion promised to keep all intact. They were told the fetus was their hindrance to a happy life. The counselor at the clinic promised a quick escape back to freedom once the unwanted "blob of tissue" was removed quickly and painlessly (for only \$500, thank you).

In each case, the abortion only deepened the crisis and hastened the already deteriorating relationships and self-worth. Two girls who had abortions to stay in school ended up leaving. Another who had it against her will because of extreme pressure by her boyfriend and parents

Fredericks' Suggested Guidelines for Crisis Pregnancies and Medical Protocol Within Seventh-day Adventist Institutions

1. Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) medical institutions do not allow abortions to be performed for social or economic reasons.¹ Such procedures, commonly referred to as "elective abortions," are inconsistent with the biblically derived belief that human life (including the life of the unborn child) is sacred, and of higher value than individual or corporate considerations of convenience, life-style preference, or economic prosperity.

2. SDA medical institutions will allow an abortion to be performed only if:

- a. It is required to save the physical life of the mother;
- b. In exceptional cases of anencephalic fetuses or equally rare cases of clearly diagnosed fatal congenital defects.²

In such situations the abortion will be performed only after professional consultation between the primary physician, two advising physicians, and a hospital chaplain.

3. Individual SDA church congregations will be assisted in establishing a crisis pregnancy network to assist, as necessary, Adventist women and their families in a crisis pregnancy. Such assistance should include affordable pre- and postnatal medical care, support in helping students continue their education, financial planning and assistance, and spiritual and emotional nurture.

4. The SDA church requires at the elementary, academy, and college level (appropriate to the maturity level of each), scripturally-based, values-oriented seminars focused on Christian principles of sexual behavior and accountability [i.e., stressing the significant consequences of all moral choices].

[NOTE: On issues of this nature, church discipline on a denominational level is a conundrum. No rule or set of rules

deal with all possible situations adequately and redemptively. Within the individual congregation, disfellowship should be seriously considered against physicians who routinely perform elective abortions. The woman in crisis who receives an abortion is a dramatically different situation. When a Christian woman in a moral or emotional crisis feels abortion is her only viable option, it signifies a failure on the part of her entire church community to create a redemptive atmosphere that allows acceptance, repentance, and forgiveness to occur—and tangible support to be given. In such cases, deeper issues need to be addressed by everyone involved with a corporate attitude of compassion and repentance.]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This does not imply that social (including psychological and emotional) or economic considerations are trivial. Very few, if any, women consider an abortion for trivial reasons. But emotional and economic crises are best resolved within the Christian community, not by killing the unborn child, but by compassionate and tangible support for the mother.

2. Perhaps the toughest exception often discussed is the extremely rare request for abortion resulting from violent rape. The caution here should be the reality that it is not the unborn child who is a criminal or enemy. The child is an innocent life. If anyone should die, a more logical argument would be in favor of the death penalty for the rapist, not the child. But in those very rare cases where a woman conceives due to a violent assault and rape, and believes she cannot carry such a child to term, the protocol committee of each hospital should consider her needs seriously and compassionately. The Christian ideal remains the redemption of both the mother and the child.

now refuses to have any contact with either, and suffers from severe depression. Another girl, who worked in the women's residence hall, following a suction abortion, vomited uncontrollably every time she turned on a vacuum sweeper. Another suffered from recurring nightmares of a baby girl crying. She found herself illogically hoping, each time she saw a little girl from the back, that it would be the child she had aborted. Still another of my students wrote this letter before we talked:

I am writing to explain the many times I was absent to your class in the month of March. I can't really say the exact reason why I did not come because it is very, very personal. It is so personal, that my parents or friends do not even know what I have gone and is [sic] still going through. A reason, I can mention, for not coming is that some times I was just to [sic] depressed to be around people, and my problem too complicated to concentrate on anything else. Sometimes all I wanted to do was stay in bed. Things got so bad that I felt there was no hope anymore—I now know what it feels like to cry for help within the depths of your soul . . . when you feel like you are in hell.¹⁶

Recently I have had two single young ladies come to me for help who are pregnant and determined to keep this child as a means of compensating for the terrible regret and loss of self-respect they felt from an earlier abortion.

A woman does have the "legal right" and the personal freedom to take the life of her child. But as Christians we must recognize she does not have God's grace or approval for such an action. Killing the fetus is a violation of God's commandment; it is sin and is therefore futile for healing a damaged life. Doing so will not solve an emotional and moral crisis, but will only horribly deepen it. As Dr. John Willke has stated: "It is easier to scrape the baby out of a woman's womb than to scrape the memory of that baby out of her conscience."¹⁷

We are false to our calling as Christ's disciples when we intimate to a woman who may lack the support and emotional strength she needs to face her pregnancy that she will find healing and emotional strength by aborting her child. In reality, abortion only terminates innocent children, not the moral or emotional crises of their parents.

The second specific point that might emerge

from a consensus on compassion is a commitment to offer sacrificial and redemptive support to these women. All truly compassionate people are individually involved people. (See 2 Corinthians 9:8.) Talk is cheap. Our task as individuals and as a community is to provide the support women need to be givers—not takers—of life. To encourage women in crisis pregnancies to give their unborn children life we must stand by them and help meet their needs. The real question is not: "What should we tell a woman in crisis *to do?*"; but rather: "What should we, as Christ's disciples, *do for her* when she reaches out for help?" We need to love, not just with "word nor with tongue, but in deed and truth" (1 John 3:18).

This point is illustrated by the story of Joan, a story referred to in several articles within Adventist publications. Joan, after disassociating herself from the church and her parents following high school, became involved sexually with a married man. Realizing the futility of her life-style, Joan ended the relationship and found a renewed relationship with Christ. She returned to college with her parents' help, intent on studying for dentistry, but only to realize six weeks later that she was pregnant.

She sought counsel. She did not want to contact the man nor tell her parents. The author states: "She had considered continuing the pregnancy and putting the baby up for adoption, but she saw no way of finding a place to live, support herself, and explaining her actions to her family and friends." Her options, he says, seemed to be suicide, abortion, or dropping out of school and disappearing, and then concludes her story with these words:

The conclusion to Joan's story will not help—her story has no fairy tale ending. After much indecision, Joan finally elected to leave school and confront her parents with her problem. She also decided to continue the pregnancy and relinquish the infant for adoption. But when the baby was born, she changed her mind and chose to keep it. She felt so little acceptance by her parents and her church that she sought public assistance and now lives alone with her child. She has not returned to college and has no hope of doing so at this time. She, her child, and all whose lives touch theirs will continue to need a special measure of God's forgiving and redeeming love.¹⁸

What is the tragedy in this story? Is it Joan's courageous decision to give her child life? Not at all. The tragedy is the failure of the affluent, upper-middle class Adventist college community to whom she turned to be authentic and sacrificial Christians. Listen again to the options listed by Joan's counselor. Abortion, suicide, or "disappearing." Why was he and his community incapable of coming up with a fourth? Where were the heart and hands of this church?

Joan should have found, not platitudes or "nonjudgmental feedback," but the continued assurance of God's forgiveness and help (in the context of her own recent recommitment to him), followed by a tangible, practical outpouring of financial, emotional, and medical support.

William Willimon, a professor of Christian ministry at Duke University, gives a practical and beautiful example of what it really means to be Christ's agents to someone in crisis:

One Monday morning I was attending a ministers' morning coffee hour. We got in a discussion about abortion. A bunch of older clergy were against it, a bunch of younger clergy for it. One of those who was against it was asked, "Now wait a minute. You're not going to tell me that you think some 15-, 16-year-old is capable of bearing a child are you?"

"Well," the fellow replied, backing off a little bit, "there are some circumstances when an abortion might be OK."

Sitting there stirring his coffee was a pastor of one

of the largest black United Methodist churches in Greenville. He said, "What's wrong with a 16-year-old giving birth? She can get pregnant, can't she?"

Then we said, "Joe, you can't believe a 16-year-old could care for a child."

He replied, "No, I don't believe that. I don't believe a 26-year-old can care for a child. Or a 36-year-old. Pick any age. One person can't raise a child."

So I said, "Look, Joe, the statistics show that by the year 1990, half of all American children will be raised in single-parent households."

"So?" he replied. "They can't do it."

We asked, "What do you do when you have a 16-year-old get pregnant in your church?"

He explained, "Well, it happened last week. We baptized the baby last Sunday, and I said how glad we were to have this new member in this church. Then I called down an elderly couple in the church, and I said, 'Now we're going to baptize this baby, and bring it into the family. What I want you all to do is to raise this baby, and while you're doing that raise the momma with it because the momma right now needs it.' This couple is in their 60s, and they've raised about 20 kids. They know what they're doing. And I said, 'If you need any of us, let us know. We're here. It's our child too.' That's what we do at my church."¹⁹

As Adventists, our challenge is to actively adopt the world view of Scripture and find a better alternative than death in the face of economic and emotional problems. Armed with a commitment to life, and confident in the resources of our Creator, we are called to demonstrate Christ's alternative within a decaying society.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Curt Young, *The Least of These* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), p. 30; Susan Okie, "Abortion Since Roe v. Wade: Safer, Earlier, and at a 'Plateau'" *The Washington Post* (March 21, 1989), p. A1.

2. WEBA is not alone in this type of ministry. There are numerous organizations at the grass roots level for women suffering from what is medically termed "post-abortion syndrome" (PAS). Also at the national level is American Victims of Abortions (AVA), founded and directed by Dr. Olivia Gans.

3. Personally, I have not seen a "pro-choice" ethic that is even remotely derived from a biblical base. While the

Bible may be referred to as a starting point, the thought forms and language which undergird a defense of abortion are (and I believe, must be) consistently relativistic, humanistic, and hedonistic (e.g., personal "rights to autonomy and self-fulfillment," thought forms alien to biblical Christianity).

4. Lawrence E. Stager and Samuel R. Wolff, "Child Sacrifice at Carthage: Religious Rite or Population Control?"—*Biblical Archeology Review* (January/February 1984), pp. 31-49.

5. Bible texts in this article are taken from the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise specified.

6. Some religious scholars, seeking to avoid the twin facts that, scripturally, an unborn baby is a human child and killing any innocent human, especially a child, is murder, have used a very curious rationalization. They argue that since no Bible text specifically states "aborting an unborn child is murder" it therefore is not murder in Scripture. If one were to accept this, then one could argue with equal validity that it is all right to murder a six-year-old or a 36-year-old, for there is not a single text that states specifically: "Thou shall not murder a six-year-old child."

7. See especially Mark 10:13-16 and Matthew 18:1-6. It should be remembered that Jesus did not say that unless children become as adults they cannot enter the kingdom, but just the opposite.

8. Romans 5:6; Ephesians 2:3-6; 1 Timothy 1:15; Titus 3:4, 5. We must not miss this point. While the "quality of life" ethic is totally consistent with an evolutionary, atheistic "survival of the fittest" world view; it is antithetical to the spirit of the gospel. Since Eden God has shown himself to be redemptive through great personal self-sacrifice. He didn't respond to sin by ripping Adam and Eve to pieces, even though they were now morally deformed and would cause him great suffering and inconvenience. Instead he opened a way back to the tree of life by giving himself.

9. John Powell, *Abortion: The Silent Holocaust* (Allen, Texas: Argus Publishers, 1981), p. 15.

10. William Willimon, "A Crisis of Identity: The Struggle of Mainline Protestant Churches," *Sojourners*, 15: 5 (1986), p. 28.

11. In this context it is valuable to notice how Luke, a physician, documents the conception of John the Baptist. An angel tells Zechariah that his son will be "filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15; see also vs. 41-44, NASB).

12. The Epistle of James, while not directly referring to abortion, concerns itself with human injustice and the link between greed and violence against the innocent (James 4:1-4; 5:5, 6, 3).

13. See Matthew 25:40. "The rest of the world goes about disposing of the very young and the very old, the very weak, the very vulnerable, and the very poor, calling that reality. But the church is called to adopt and embrace the

little ones in the name of the Lord, who was once a little one."—William Willimon, "A Crisis of Identity: The Struggle of Mainline Modern Protestantism," *Sojourners*, 15: 5 (May 1986), p. 28.

14. Emil Brunner writes: "All human sin has an element of weakness; it is mingled with anxiety for one's life, a fear of losing something by obedience to God. . . . Man's arrogance consists in believing that he can look after himself better than God can, that he knows what is good for him better than his Creator."—Emil Brummer, *Man in Revolt* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1939), p. 131. Ellen White, in describing the voice of Satan to the soul, writes: "I can give you riches, pleasures, honor, and happiness. Harken to my council. Do not allow yourself to be carried away with whimsical notions of honesty or self-sacrifice. Thus multitudes are deceived. They consent to live for the service of self, and Satan is satisfied."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1948), p. 130.

15. "To have destroyed the defective infant, Helen Keller, would have been to destroy also the teacher-humanitarian who was Anne Sullivan. We will never know how many Helen Kellers and Beethovens are destroyed each year in America's abortion mills, or how many Anne Sullivans are left without the challenge that makes an Anne Sullivan."—George Tribou, quoted in John Powell, *Abortion, The Silent Holocaust* (Allen, Texas: Argus Communications, 1981), p. 129.

16. Pam Koerbel cites a study of the emotional state of 46 randomly selected postabortion women responding to a questionnaire. In this study, 87 percent of the women reported an increase in feelings of guilt, 78 percent an increase in a sense of grief, 76 percent had increased depression and remorse, 67 percent experienced an increase in anger, and more than 60 percent struggled with a sense of shame and bitterness about their abortion decision. Pam Koerbal, *Abortion's Second Victim* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1986), pp. 140, 141.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 124. Cf. Gerald Winslow, "Abortion and Christian Principles," *Ministry*, 61:5 (1988), pp. 12-16.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

19. William Willimon, p. 27.