

CHAPTER 3 MODERN HOLOCAUST: THE GOSPEL AND ABORTION

Shamefully silent and appallingly passive. These are the words that come to mind when I consider my approach to the issue of abortion for the majority of my life as a Christian and my ministry in the church. Until a few years ago, I barely talked about it. I viewed abortion as a political issue about which I had no need to be personally concerned. I failed to realize that abortion is a biblical issue about which I had great need to be deeply concerned. For of all the pressing social issues addressed in this book, abortion poses the most clear and present danger to the most people on a daily basis. Across the world, more than forty-two million abortions occur every year.^[1] That's 115,000 abortions every single day. I find it hard to fathom that number when I look at the faces of my four children each night as I put them to bed. I find it hard to imagine 115,000 other children who that day were introduced to

[1] "Worldwide Abortion Statistics," *Abort73.com*, last modified May 26, 2011, www.abort73.com/abortion_facts/worldwide_abortion_statistics/.

the world with a tool or pill aimed at taking their lives. And I find it hardest to comprehend how I, for so long, could show no concern for this gruesome global reality.

The worldwide practice of abortion is why I do not believe it is anywhere close to an overstatement to call abortion a modern holocaust. My intention in saying this is in no way to downplay the horror of the Holocaust in the mass murder of six million Jewish men, women, and children over a few short years. But we're talking here about the massacre of forty-two million unborn children every single year. And just as German Christians should not have ignored the reality of what was happening in concentration camps across their country, I should not have ignored—and American Christians must not ignore—the reality of what is happening in abortion clinics across our country and around the world. As multitudes of babies are dismembered and destroyed daily, this is clearly an issue where the gospel requires us to counter culture.

FOR ALL OF US

Abby was in her early twenties. She had grown up in a Christian home, attended a Christian school, and had even joined a church. But a relationship with Christ

was far from a reality in Abby's life. Instead, she was consumed with her work and caught up in the pleasures and pursuits of the world. She met a man who captivated her thoughts and quickened her emotions, and before long they had given themselves to each other.

Everything was going great.

Until Abby discovered that she was pregnant and he was gone.

In an instant, it seemed as though the world had come crashing down around her. *This can't be*, she thought. *I can't have a baby. My reputation will be ruined, my family will be shamed, and my career will be over.* Enveloped by panic and gripped with fear, Abby saw a lone solution to her problem—only one way out of her predicament.

One Friday afternoon, Abby walked into an abortion clinic. Within a couple of hours, her problem was solved and her predicament taken care of (or so she thought). The following Monday morning, she returned to business as usual and life as normal, hiding the secret of what she'd done as if nothing had ever happened.

Abby is not alone when it comes to abortion in America. Conservative estimates reveal that approximately one-third of American women have had (or

will have) an abortion at some point in their lives. In light of this, I realize that various Abbys with abortions in their past are likely reading this book right now. Some of these women have never shared that secret with anyone else. Abortion has been called a silent killer—not only of babies but of moms who possess deep wounds and dark scars from past history. So I want to be sensitive to women who have had abortions. I do not presume to know all that may go through your mind and your heart as you read what I'm writing. I lean on good friends who have had abortions and who have shared with me that their deepest comfort has come not in minimizing the severity of abortion before God but in magnifying the reality of grace from God. That, more than anything, is what I want to do. I want to be clear about how a holy God views abortion, but I want to be equally clear about how a loving God views you in the gospel.

Moreover, my aim in this chapter is not simply to write for women who have had abortions. I hope also to speak to women who have thought about aborting a baby in the past, who may be thinking about aborting a baby in the present, or who might ever think about aborting a baby in the future. In addition, this chapter is not

only for women who are able to bear children; it is for every Christian who lives in a culture marked by abortion. My hope in the pages ahead is that every follower of Christ might see how the gospel informs our thinking on abortion, and that in so doing, we might be compelled not by way of party politics but by way of gospel passion to speak clearly and stand boldly against abortion in the church, in our country, and around the world.

GOD AND THE UNBORN

As you read through the Bible, you won't find the word *abortion* anywhere. But that doesn't mean Scripture is silent about it, for the core truths we've already seen in the gospel concerning who God is, who we are, and what Christ has done speak directly to the issue of abortion.

Consider the way the Bible describes the relationship between God and an unborn baby. The psalmist writes to God:

You formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.

My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,

intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.

PSALM 139:13-16

As we read these words, we're reminded of the core gospel truth that God is the Creator. He alone has the power and authority to give life. Elsewhere in the Bible, Job says, "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life" ([Job 33:4](#)). He also says, "In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" ([Job 12:10](#)). God is not only the Giver of life; he is also the Taker of life. Again, Job confesses, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away" ([Job 1:21](#)). God himself declares, "I put to death and I bring to life" ([Deuteronomy 32:39](#), NIV). This is why murder and suicide are both sins. It is God's prerogative alone, as Creator, to give and take innocent life. In light of these biblical realities, it becomes abundantly clear that abortion is an affront to God's sole and sovereign authority as the Giver and Taker of life. Abortion, like murder or suicide, asserts

human beings as the ones who control life and death. But God the Creator alone has the right to determine when someone lives and dies, and abortion flies directly in the face of his authority.

Abortion is not only an affront to God's authority as Creator; it is also an assault on his work in creation. Did you hear the psalmist describe the beauty of the way God forms the "inward parts" of a baby in a "mother's womb"? As the psalmist reflects on God's work in the womb, he responds in an outburst of worship: "I praise you! I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" The way God creates people compels praise.

These verses are all the more stunning when we realize that the psalmist came to his conclusions without knowing so many of the details that we know today concerning a baby's development. The psalmist didn't necessarily know how God takes an egg and a sperm and brings them together. How a few weeks later, often before a woman even realizes she is pregnant, a human heart is beating and circulating its own blood. Within a few more weeks, fingers are forming on hands and brain waves are detectable. Before long, these "inward parts" are moving. Kidneys are forming and functioning, followed by a gall bladder,

and then by the twelfth week, all the organs of a baby boy or girl are functional, and he or she can cry. All of this occurs within three short months—only the first trimester! A heart, a brain, organs, sexuality, movement, reaction—and the Creator of the universe is orchestrating all of it! This work of creation evokes awe and amazement. So then, imagine in this moment of creation inserting a tool, taking a pill, or undergoing an operation that takes the very life God is developing and destroys it. Most abortions occur between ten and fourteen weeks of gestation—what is described as the "optimal time" for dismemberment and removal. Abortion is without question an assault on God's grand creation of a human life. There is no way around it.

Our lives and language testify to this. When I think about the journey my wife, Heather, and I have walked, including years of physical infertility, I remember the pure joy that filled our hearts when we found out that she was pregnant. Finally, a baby was living inside of her—the beginning of life for a boy who now reads every book put in front of him and runs around my house doing tae kwon do moves on me and the rest of our family. From the very beginning, we talked about

our son like he was a person. He was never a clump of tissue that could become our son if we chose to have him. He was our child from the start, and we loved him as such.

Similarly, I think about Chris and Melody, two close friends whose two kids are the joy of their lives. One is entering college, and the other is just starting elementary school. Between the births of these two children, Melody miscarried four times. Chris and Melody don't speak in terms of losing tissue. Instead, they speak at their most vulnerable moments, through many tears, of losing treasured babies whom they loved and longed to raise.

Chris, Melody, my wife, and I are not alone in the way we think and speak about what is happening in the womb. Even abortion advocates join with us, albeit unintentionally, in talking about unborn babies as exactly that: *babies*. I remember when reports announced that Princess Kate of England was pregnant. Even the most secular news outlets immediately began talking about the child in the womb as an heir to the throne. They made much of the significance of this baby, and no one spoke in terms of a “blastocyst” or “blob of cells.” We would loathe the journalist

who dared to use such language. But doesn't the dignity we conferred on a “royal” baby apply also to countless other “ordinary” babies whose lives are no less significant?^[2]

THE KEY QUESTION

The key question that we all must answer—and the question that determines how we view abortion—is this: What is contained in the womb? Is it a person? Or is it merely an embryo, a fetus? Virtually every other question and every single argument in the abortion controversy comes back to this question: What, or who, is in the womb? And once this question is answered, everything else comes into perspective.^[3]

Think about it. As Gregory Koukl points out, “If the unborn is not a human person, no justification for abortion is

^[2] See Denny Burk's exploration of this point in his blog post “Why Aren't We Calling It the ‘Royal Fetus’?,” *Denny Burk* (blog), December 5, 2012, www.dennyburk.com/why-arent-we-calling-it-the-royal-fetus/.

^[3] I am indebted in this section to a booklet written by Gregory Koukl called *Precious Unborn Human Persons* (Signal Hill, CA: Stand to Reason Press, 1999), especially chapter 1, which provides the basis for much of my thinking here.

necessary.”^[4] And some people contend this. They will say that the unborn is not a person or that the unborn is merely a person who has the potential to become human (whatever that means). Again, if this is true, the argument is over; no justification for abortion is necessary. However, as Koukl writes, “If the unborn is a human person, then no justification for abortion is adequate.”^[5] Many people say, “Abortion is such a complex issue, and there just aren’t any easy answers.” But if what is in the womb is a person, then even if someone is proabortion or pro-choice for any number of reasons, all of their reasoning falls apart. Regardless of where you currently stand on the abortion issue, imagine for a moment that the unborn *is* a person formed and created by God himself. If this is true, then think through the primary arguments for abortion.

[4] Koukl, *Precious Unborn Human Persons*, 7.

[5] Koukl, *Precious Unborn Human Persons*. The obvious and only exception to this is when a mother’s life is in imminent danger, in which case one of two human lives will be lost and a determination may be made to save the mother’s physical life. The arguments in this section follow Koukl’s *Precious Unborn Human Persons*, 8–12.

“*Women have a right to privacy with their doctors.*” Without question, we all have a right to some measure of privacy. Yet our laws regularly override people’s privacy when another person’s life is in question. No woman or man has a right to a private conversation with a doctor to conspire how to end someone else’s life. If the unborn are people, then we must protect them, regardless of what that means for someone’s privacy.

“*Women should have the right to choose.*” Yet we all agree that no one should have unlimited rights to make choices. If toddlers or teenagers become burdensome or expensive, parents don’t have the right to eliminate them. Similarly, then, when it comes to abortion, the real question is not whether a woman has a choice, but whether that woman actually has a human being that God recognizes as a valuable person in her womb. If so, then a moral duty to honor life supersedes the personal hardship that might come due to pregnancy. Choosing to terminate innocent life is by definition choosing to murder.

Indeed, the primary issue in the debate over abortion is the identity of the unborn. Listen to Gregory Koukl describe a little girl named Rachel, a daughter of a

family friend:

Rachel is two months old, but she is still six weeks away from being a full-term baby. She was born prematurely at 24 weeks, in the middle of her mother's second trimester. On the day of her birth Rachel weighed one pound, nine ounces, but dropped to just under a pound soon after. She was so small she could rest in the palm of her daddy's hand. She was a tiny, living, human person. Heroic measures were taken to save this child's life. Why? Because we have an obligation to protect, nurture, and care for other humans who would die without our help—especially little children. Rachel was a vulnerable and valuable human being. But get this . . . if a doctor came into the hospital room and, instead of caring for Rachel, took the life of this little girl as she lay quietly nursing at her mother's breast, it would be homicide. However, if this same little girl—the very same Rachel—was inches away resting inside her mother's womb, she could be legally killed by abortion.^[6]

To any reasonable person, this makes absolutely no sense. Abortion is utterly ludicrous *if* this is a child in the womb.

[6] Koukl, *Precious Unborn Human Persons*, 26–27.

Everything—everything!—revolves around what is happening in a mother's womb, and Scripture is clear: that womb contains a person being formed in the image of God. Any distinction between the unborn and a person (or a human and a person, for that matter) is both artificial and unbiblical. God recognizes the unborn as a person and designs the unborn for life from the moment of conception. While our culture is continually pushing against this idea, it is not possible to believe the Bible and deny that the unborn are persons. And once followers of Christ accept this, we can no longer sit idly by while people are mercilessly murdered in their mothers' wombs.

WONDERFUL WORKS

Abortion not only assaults God's work in creation, it also attacks God's relationship with the unborn. One of the wonderful things about [Psalm 139](#) is the glimpse we get into how God relates to a child in the womb. He is intimately involved in the life of that baby from the moment of conception—and even before that! God tells Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you” ([Jeremiah 1:5](#), NKJV). The psalmist says to God, “You are

He who took Me out of the womb . . . from My mother's womb You have been My God" (Psalm 22:9-10, NKJV). Scripture speaks about how God calls, names, and blesses children while they are still in the womb (see Galatians 1:15; Isaiah 49:1; Luke 1:15). The Bible even describes a baby leaping with joy in the womb (see Luke 1:39-44)! God reminds us in his Word that though an unborn baby is visibly hidden from us, he or she is not hidden from him. God sees children in wombs all across the world right now, and he is personally forming, fashioning, knitting, creating, nurturing, shaping, and crafting them in wonderful ways (see Job 31:15; 10:8-12).

Unfortunately, this biblical view of God's relationship with the unborn is more and more at odds with what our culture believes to be true. Much of the contemporary defense for abortion denies that these works of God in the womb are all that wonderful. Abortions in America often occur because children are seen as inconvenient. Childbearing and child rearing are too costly. It's too much for women in certain situations to handle. It's inadvisable for women in other situations to undertake.

With the advancement of medical technology that enables us to detect

gender before birth, people in countries around the world now have the choice to abort children based on this revelation. China, for example, limits the number of children each family can have, and it's advantageous to have boys, which subsequently leads to the abortion of many girls. In India, it's much more expensive to have a girl (because a family will lose money on her dowry), so families who find out the child in the womb is a girl will often choose to discard her.

Do we believe this is right? Aren't all children, regardless of gender, wonderfully made in God's image? And if it's not right for people to discard girls in China or India for the sake of their convenience, then why is it right for us to discard children in America for the sake of ours?

This is not only an issue when it comes to the sex of a child but also when it comes to disability in children. It is possible for us to determine whether a baby in the womb is at risk for Down syndrome or other disabilities that will affect his or her life. So should abortion be permissible in such circumstances? Again, not if we actually believe all of God's works are wonderful.

Consider the man born blind in John 9.

Most of the Jews who knew this man would have considered his disability a sure sign of sin in either his life or his parents' lives. So the disciples ask Jesus, "Whose fault is this?" Jesus answers them, "This is not his or his parents' fault, but this happened so that the wonderful works of God might be revealed to and through him." Jesus reveals that this man was born blind so that one day he might see, know, declare, and delight in the glory of Christ.

I in no way claim to know all the difficulties associated with disabilities. My wife and I have invested time and resources in a special-needs orphanage in China, where we have seen and served boys and girls with severe disabilities. Closer to home, we have walked alongside various families in our church who have taken heart-wrenching journeys with children with disabilities. I think of Thomas, a teenage boy with Down syndrome who for years has come up to me almost every Sunday, shaken my hand, given me a hug, and told me all about his week. And I just can't get Thomas out of my mind when I hear a pediatric geneticist at Boston Children's Hospital report that "an estimated 92 percent of all women who receive a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome

choose to terminate their pregnancies."^[7] We're killing 90 percent of the Thomases in our culture.

Based on Scripture, I beg us not to deny the wonderful work of God even (or especially) in disability. Even when we don't understand it, God has a design and a desire to use everything for our good and his glory (see [Romans 8:28](#)), and it is not only wrong but also foolish to play god in such situations by essentially saying that we know better than he does. Likewise, God's works are wonderful even (or especially) in the midst of difficulty. People ask, "Well, what about cases of incest or rape? Is abortion justifiable then?" Once again, I don't claim to know what it is like to be in such a situation. I shudder at the horror of rape happening to my wife or to any other woman, for that matter. I cannot imagine the physical and emotional toll such a situation brings upon a woman and her family.

[7] Susan Donaldson James, "Down Syndrome Births Are Down in U.S.," *ABC News*, November 2, 2009, http://abcnews.go.com/Health/w_ParentingResource/down-syndrome-births-drop-us-women-abortion/story?id=8960803.

Platt, David. 2019. *Counter Culture (Wordsearch Version): A Compassionate Call to Counter Culture in a World of Poverty, Same-Sex Marriage, Racism, Sex Slavery, Immigration, Abortion, Persecution, Orphans, and Pornography*. Tyndale House Publishers.

Exported from Logos Bible Software, 3:16 PM January 7, 2022.

Yet we come back to the fundamental question: Is the baby in the womb a person? If so, then our entire perspective changes. Would we murder a child *outside* the womb because he or she was conceived by rape? Of course we wouldn't. Then why would we murder a child *inside* the womb? Why should we punish a child for the father's crime (see [Deuteronomy 24:16](#))?

How, after all, should we treat an innocent child who reminds us of a terrible experience? The answer is clear: with love and mercy.

But people will say, "Have you no care for the emotions of the woman?" Again, I cannot imagine what that woman has gone through emotionally. Without question that precious woman needs compassionate women and men around her to love her, support her, and serve her in every way possible. But think about it this way. If the rapist were caught, would we encourage this woman to murder him in order to get emotional relief? Surely not. Then why would we encourage her to murder an innocent child in the name of emotional relief?^[8]

On this question, I find myself particularly going against the culture, for

even the most socially conservative politicians today would never say that abortion should be illegal in cases of rape or incest. But I am not a politician. I am a follower of Christ, and I am confident of this: the God of the gospel has a proven track record of working all things, including evil things, for his good purposes. He took Joseph's brothers' attempt to murder him and turned it into the preservation of multitudes of people. He used incest to eventually bring about the very birth of Jesus Christ (see [Matthew 1:3](#)). Ultimately, God took the murder of his Son and turned it into the means of our salvation.

The gospel proves that we can trust God. All of his works, even those we least understand, are wonderful, and he has the power, love, goodness, and grace to give you and me all that we need to persevere through difficulty. And in the end, he promises to turn all of our mourning into dancing and all of our suffering into joy.

GOD THE JUDGE

Abortion is an affront to God's authority as Creator, an assault on God's work in creation, and an attack on God's relationship with the unborn. Once we realize the severity of abortion before God, the implications of the gospel for

[8] Koukl, *Precious Unborn Human Persons*, 9.

abortion become clear.

Remember God's character. He is the holy and righteous Judge of all, and he hates injustice. He detests the taking of innocent life, and he is the Judge of all who participate in it. God is the Judge of mothers who have aborted babies, fathers who have encouraged abortion, grandparents who have supported abortion, and friends who have advised abortion. God is the Judge of doctors who have performed abortions, leaders who have permitted abortions, pastors who have counseled people to have abortions, and legislators who have worked to make abortion possible.

This includes President Barack Obama and an ever-increasing host of other leading politicians in my country who are proactively and aggressively working to keep the murder of innocent children legal. I venture cautiously into the political arena with no desire to support a party line. Rather, I want to speak biblical truth, for Scripture is not silent on abortion, and it is not silent on government's role in it.

In [Romans 13](#), the Bible addresses the role of civil authorities and our responsibility to them:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no

authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good.

([ROMANS 13:1-4](#))

The Bible teaches that God has given us government for our good. Government exists under God's authority. According to God's design, government is to reflect the morality of God, who cares for the weak, the poor, the oppressed, and the vulnerable who are least able to protect themselves. The fundamental purpose of government under God is to promote the good of all its people.

Government does this by making and enforcing laws that reward good and punish evil. Many people today say, "It's not the government's job to legislate morality." This is a sham argument, though, and we all know it. The state not only has the right but also the responsibility to legislate morality. The state should most definitely say that stealing, lying, murder, and a host of other things are wrong. This is

foundational to its purpose. Government imposes morality on people every day, and this is a good thing.

Other people say, “It’s not the role of government to take away people’s right to choose.” But this is absolutely the role of government. You cannot choose to steal: if you do, there will be consequences. You cannot choose to do a whole host of things there are laws against, and it is good that government has made those laws. If everyone chose to do whatever they wanted, the inevitable result would be anarchy. It’s moral silliness and cultural suicide to say that government shouldn’t take away people’s right to choose.

What matters is what we’re choosing. Someone should have the right to choose Mexican or Chinese food for dinner, or where to live, or what kind of car to drive. Of course we are pro-choice on these and thousands of other things. But we aren’t pro-choice about rape. And we aren’t pro-choice about burglary. We aren’t pro-choice about kidnapping children. So why should we be pro-choice about killing them?

If you are a Christian, I plead for you to step out of a muddled middle road that says, “I may not choose abortion, but I don’t think we should take away others’

right to choose it,” and to realize how inconceivable it is for us to stay silent while millions of children—individuals made in the image of God—are dismembered and destroyed around us in the world. Such thinking is not enlightened tolerance; it is sinful indifference. Moral and political neutrality here is not an option for us. Randy Alcorn put it best when he said, “To endorse or even to be neutral about killing innocent children created in God’s image is unthinkable in the Scriptures, was unthinkable to Christians in church history, and should be unthinkable to Christians today.”^[9]

As I said earlier in the book, we cannot pick and choose which issues we will address and which we will be silent on. If we believe the gospel, then we must speak out against the injustice of abortion. For God is not only the Judge of parents who have abortions, doctors who perform abortions, and politicians who permit abortions, but he is also the Judge of church members and leaders who do nothing about abortion. And as I mentioned at the beginning of this

[9] Randy Alcorn, *Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2000), 293.

chapter, I am the chief of sinners on this issue. For far too long, I have been guilty of selective injustice when it comes to abortion, and I desperately need God's grace.

REDEEMED AND RESTORED

Thankfully, God has given such grace—to me, to you, to all of us—in the gospel. Remember: God is not only the Judge of sin, but he is also the Savior of sinners. God is the Judge who loathes abortion and the King who loves even those who participate in it, so hear this good news. To anyone and everyone who has ever aborted a child, supported abortion, encouraged abortion, performed abortion, permitted abortion, or done nothing about abortion, may the following realities lodge deep within your soul.

God forgives entirely. “As the heavens are high above the earth, so great is [God's] mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” ([Psalm 103:11-12](#), NKJV). God says, “I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins” ([Isaiah 43:25](#)). “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness” ([1 John 1:9](#)). The good news of the gospel is that when we turn from our sin and trust in Christ, we find that he has paid the price for any part we have ever played in abortion, and because of his cross, we are entirely forgiven.

God not only forgives entirely, but he also heals deeply. God does not desire for you or anyone else to live with the pain of regret. It is altogether right to hate sin in your history. The pain of past sin is often a powerful deterrent to future sin, but don't let it rob you of the peace God has designed for you in the present.

Remember what Jesus said to a woman who had lived an immoral lifestyle: “Your sins are forgiven. . . . Your faith has saved you; go in peace” ([Luke 7:48-50](#)). God desires that peace to be yours today. He forgives entirely, he heals deeply, and he restores completely. To all who trust in Christ, remember this: in Christ you are not guilty, and there is no condemnation for you. This is true whether you have had one abortion or five. This is true whether you have medically performed thousands of abortions or legally permitted millions. You do not walk around with a scarlet A on your chest, for God does not look at you and see the guilt of abortion. Instead, he looks at you and sees the righteousness of Christ. God restores,

and he redeems. Even as we saw earlier, God has a track record of working all things, including evil things, ultimately for good.

Remember Abby, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter? For years she kept the secret of her abortion to herself. But on the weekend that her husband proposed to her, she decided she needed to tell him what she had done years before they met. He listened graciously, and they chose to keep it a secret between them for the next eight years. No one else knew.

Until one day Abby and her husband were talking with some friends who told them about the freedom and forgiveness found in the gospel. Abby knew about Christ and had grown up in church, but the words of [Isaiah 61](#) had never clicked in her mind and heart. In a passage that Jesus would later quote in reference to himself, the Bible says, “The LORD . . . has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound . . . to comfort all who mourn . . . to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit” ([Isaiah 61:1-3](#)).

For the first time, Abby realized why Christ came and died on the cross. He came to heal the broken hearts of people just like her by freeing them from their bondage to sin and shame. For fifteen years Abby had done all she could to cover her past in order to have others’ approval. Now, for the first time, she knew that in Christ she had God’s approval, regardless of her past.

The freedom Abby has experienced now propels her to lead a ministry in the church that reaches out to women who have had abortions. She has received training on how to wisely, carefully, and compassionately come alongside these women to serve and support them. She puts this training into practice on a regular basis with groups of women in the city. In addition to leading other women in the church, Abby is actively involved in public efforts to minimize abortions in the city, specifically counseling pregnant women who are considering abortions, sharing her own story, and telling them there is another way to solve their “problem.” She does all of this together with her husband and two children—a beautiful daughter, who runs up to me with a huge smile to hug me every time I see her, and a wonderful son, whom I had the opportunity to help

coach in basketball. It is a priceless picture to see this woman who once thought abortion had permanently stained her past and forever stolen her peace now transformed by the gospel, and to watch God use her quite literally to save countless children's—and women's—lives.

EVERY ONE WORTH IT

As I bring this chapter to a close, I think about a mom who lives in one of those countries of the world where baby girls are not favorably looked upon. Over thirty-five thousand children are ripped from wombs every day in China, and over half of the women there have had at least one abortion.^[10] Some of these abortions are voluntary; others are mandatory. Government officials enforce abortion to ensure population control. Women in rural villages are routinely checked to make sure they neither are pregnant nor have given birth recently.

I don't know all the details about this particular mom, but I do know that when she became pregnant, she believed she

[10] "Forced Abortion Statistics," *All Girls Allowed*, accessed May 20, 2014, www.allgirlsallowed.org/forced-abortion-statistics.

was not able to take care of her child. Yet she refused to have an abortion. Instead, she brought her child to term and gave birth to a precious little girl on her own. Then she took that newborn baby girl, wrapped her in a light-blue cloth, placed her in a brown paper box, and in the middle of the night laid her in front of an orphanage for children with special needs. The orphanage found this baby girl the next morning and conducted a search for her mother, only to come up empty.

Though I don't know who that mom is, I thank God for her. Because of her courage to refuse abortion, and because of her compassion for the unborn, a little girl was able to live. And every day when I come home from work, that little girl comes running up to me with a smile spread across her face, jumps into my arms, yells, "Daddy!" and gives me the biggest bear hug you can imagine.

Every one of these children is worth it. May we have the conviction, compassion, and courage to do everything we can to stop the modern holocaust around us.

FIRST STEPS TO COUNTER CULTURE

Pray

Ask God to:

- End the injustice of abortion in our country and around the world.

- Forgive you for whatever part you have played in abortion.
- Convict those in positions of power to use their influence to end abortion.

Participate

Prayerfully consider taking these steps:

- Write to your representatives in Congress and clearly and respectfully lay out why abortion in this country must stop.
- Work with ministries or participate in events (e.g., Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, 40 Days for Life, prayer walks) that seek to uphold the value of unborn human life.
- Volunteer with a crisis pregnancy center in your city to aid in their work of showing women in desperate situations that there are options other than abortion.

Proclaim

Consider the following truths from Scripture:

- [Psalm 139:15-16](#): “My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”
- [Proverbs 24:10-12](#): “If you faint in the

day of adversity, your strength is small. 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 man according to his work?”

- [Matthew 19:14](#): “Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.’”

For more (and more specific) suggestions, visit CounterCultureBook.com/Topics/Abortion