

LEGAL, MEDICAL, RELIGIOUS, AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF ABORTION

(Jan 4, 2013)

By

John P Matuszewski

INTRODUCTION

For those who don't have the time to look thru the many references that cover legal, medical, religious & emotional aspects of abortion, this article will briefly explain key arguments in each area, and provide a few references. If you want to delve further, look them up, "Google" for others, and a classic with which to start is Willke [1].

The information herein is not original, and was collected in response to questions about abortion by over 2000, 8th thru 10th graders and their parents, over a period of more than a decade. Despite the difference in time, their questions always seemed to center about the same topics, & this paper reflects a summary of the answers to their questions. It is hoped this will serve as a catalyst for informed discussion of parents with children, based on fact.

After careful assessment of all these areas, one will see that abortion is bad for the baby, the woman, and society; it can never be justified, should be unthinkable, and should be made illegal.

WHY DO WE HAVE ABORTION ? – BACKGROUND / HISTORY

The series of questions usually begin with why people want abortion, why it came into being, how old is abortion.

The first part of the answer relates to the Eugenics movement, or heredity control. Grant [2], points out that exposure, abortion, child sacrifice, and other forms of infanticide were often legal and respectable in pagan societies, including ancient Rome, Greece, the Persians, Ancient Hindus and Arabs, Canaanites, Polynesians and others. They sometimes wanted to dispose of unwanted children, especially girls; or conceal illicit or illegal sexual activity; or some women were coerced into norms & values to despise and reject their progeny (sound familiar?). It was not until the rapid spread of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean world that a consistent and convincing pro-life message began to sound. It was not long until laws were passed and a cultural consensus was reached to protect both women and children.

This legacy regarding abortion seemed to stand in the U.S. until around the 1900's. [3, 4, 5, 6, 7] At that time there was a large influx of immigrants into the U.S. from many countries. This caused many of the same kinds of problems and anxieties we see today with the influx of Hispanics: namely, frequent poor living conditions, several families crowding into residences, low wages, immigrants doing the most menial jobs,

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making the sacrifices with the hope & intent of making a better life for their children and grandchildren. Some people “already here” felt these 1900’s immigrants, though legal, were inferior & that they should not be having more children in the poverty/poor environment they had. Further the emancipation proclamation of the 1860’s allowed poor black’s mobility, and they subsequently moved where they had more opportunity to find jobs. This added more to the difficult living conditions.

At the time, birth control was considered immoral. As early as 1917, Margaret Sanger, founder of what is now Planned Parenthood, advocated birth control, “...to create a race of thoroughbreds...” She wanted to reduce the birthrate of what she felt were “inferior people – human weeds.” These included Slavs, Latinos, gypsies, poor whites, Jews, Blacks, immigrants, feeble-minded. Even today, approximately two-thirds of abortions in the US are for non-white races [8, 9].

A second part of the motivation stems from the sexual revolution of the 1960’s & acceptance of contraceptives in the 1970’s. While espousing freedom, these really embraced sexual irresponsibility, that is, unrestricted sexual activity outside of a valid marriage between a man and a woman, without consequences. Organizations, led by Planned Parenthood, though driven by Eugenics, promulgated the impression that contraception works. This encouraged increased sexual activity, and when pregnancy occurred, the fallback is abortion. Recent Data [8,9] indicates only 8% of those aborting never used a method of birth control; about half of all abortions are 2nd time or more; and about two-thirds had never been married.

Contraception and abortion encouraged male irresponsibility: expecting abortion; fighting child support when the woman chooses life, because the woman could have had an abortion; less or no involvement with the child after it is born – more single mothers without support. Young people are often taken in by the make-believe, carefree, “Hollywood” lifestyle, resulting in less valid marriages, and more cohabitation. Sometimes they act in opposition to repeated direction and warnings from parents. They then often lose support from their families, when they get pregnant. They also find out their “friends” really aren’t, when it comes to helping with a baby. Women feel betrayed, coerced – that they really have no choice (84% [9]); they are left alone, isolated & afraid.

Because of this reality, a new radical element of feminism has arisen. While early feminists were pro-life [10, 11], this new feminism concluded the woman alone was important, she should be able to do whatever she wants, embraced abortion, and made

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up slogans to justify it. One example slogan: A woman has a right to do what she wants with her own body. In fact, there are two bodies involved, hers and the baby's. The baby can be male, and the mom is female – is that one body? The woman could be black and the baby white – is that one body? The mother and baby could have two different blood types which we know cannot be tolerated in one body, and leads to death. Ultimately it comes down to men and women embracing the contraceptive, irresponsible lifestyle, believing contraception works, and when it doesn't, get an abortion.

Finally there is money. Planned Parenthood is the largest single provider of abortion in the country -- abortion is a big business (100's of \$millions). While publicly stating altruistic goals such as making abortion rare, they advocate birth control, especially for minorities, and have quotas for increasing abortions [12]**. Fetal parts are being sold [13]. And, of course there are significant dollars in embryonic stem cell research on newly formed humans [14, 15, 16, 17].

ABORTION IS BAD FOR WOMEN (physically & emotionally):

The next series of student/parent questions relate to what happens in an abortion, what happens to the woman, why is it a bad thing, does it hurt, what are the risks & after-effects. [18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 82, 83].

Before getting into specifics, it is good to take a step back and observe [18]: "The impact of abortion on the body of a woman who chooses abortion is great and always negative..... (there is) no beneficial effect of a social abortion on a body. Why is this so? Because induced abortion is the premature, willful, and violent penetration of a closed and safeguarded system – a system in which nearly every cell, tissue and organ of a woman's reproductive system has been activated to carry out the function of sustaining and nourishing the developing child. Not surprisingly, any violation of the integrity of that system can lead to serious complications"

**Planned Parenthood (PP) has proven itself not only as a grizzly business, but also supporting illegal activities [78,79] for the sake of abortion and profits. PP employees and officers nationwide have been caught on tape by undercover investigators: (1) assisting sex trafficking of minors; (2) assisting coverup of boyfriend's statutory rape; (3) providing wildly inaccurate information on fetal development; (4) knowingly accepting donations from prospective donor with racist motives.

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For completeness, abortion techniques are listed, but see any medical reference for details. 1st Trimester: (1) Suction Aspiration(surgical); (2) Dilatation & Curettage (Surgical); (3) Ru-486(Chemical); (4) Methotrexate (chemical). 2nd Trimester: (5) Dilatation & Evacuation (Surgical). 2nd & 3rd Trimester: (6) Salt Poisoning, Urea, Prostaglandin (Chemical); (7) Partial Birth (Also D&X)(Surgical); (8) Hysterotomy (like C-Section) (Surgical).

Books, periodicals, news articles, reports, personal testimonies abound to document abortion is bad for women, is only grudgingly accepted, and means we, as a society, have failed women.

There are documented cases with legal affidavits where women have experienced mutilation of internal organs, incomplete abortions which causes more pain and infection, hemorrhage, rape & sexual assault by abortionists. Further there is increased risk of losing the next baby, low birth weight, and many women have died.

Again, from [18]: "Despite the use of local anesthesia, a full 97% of women having abortions reported experiencing pain during the procedure, which more than a third described as "intense," "severe," or "very severe." Compared to other pains, researchers have rated the pain from abortion as more painful than a bone fracture, about the same as cancer pain, though not as painful as an amputation. Younger women tend to find abortion more painful than do older adults, and patients typically found abortion more painful than their doctors or counselors expected. The use of more powerful general anesthetics can reduce the pain, but significantly increases the risk of cervical injury or uterine perforation."

"Even more harmful long term physical complications from abortion may surface later. For example, overzealous curettage can damage the lining of the uterus and lead to permanent infertility. Overall, women who have abortions face increased risk of ectopic (tubal) pregnancy, and a more than double risk of future sterility, and these generally increase with each subsequent abortion."

Personal testimony from reference [83], "Abortion destroys a woman inside out. It affects her emotionally, physically, psychologically, and spiritually."

There is a national information campaign called "Silent No More," [23, 24, 25] with National spokesperson Jennifer Oneill, actress; and participation by such folks as Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They talk about their regret & post-abortion depression. Some symptoms are that women can no longer run a vacuum since

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it reminds them of their vacuum abortion. They can't hold a pear in their hand because it's about the size of the baby they killed (Abortions are not usually done before about 6-8 weeks, when it already looks like a tiny doll). They never forget the abortion anniversary and due date so about 5 years later, they see other children going to school, or playing in the playground, and it's devastating. Many women report feelings of suicide, inability to have a positive relationship with their partner, marriages sometimes crumble. Then when they lose a 2nd baby, which they now wanted, it is devastating because they know they were the cause.

Finally, "Why Aren't Women Being Told?" is one catch phrase of the educational activity telling people about the link between Abortion and Breast Cancer - "ABC Link" [29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36]. Going back several decades, there have been 13 of 16 studies in the US and 29 of 40 international studies showing there is a link. In a 1994 study [35] of 2000 women, overall, women having abortions increased risk of getting breast cancer, before the age of 45 by 50%. For women under 18 with no previous pregnancies, having an abortion after the 8th week increased the risk of breast cancer 800%. Women with a family history of breast cancer fared even worse. All 12 women participating in the study who had abortions before 18 and had a family history of breast cancer, themselves got breast cancer before age 45.

In 2003 the National Cancer Institute (NCI) declared all these studies null and void, and said there is no risk increase. Yet as recently as April 2009, another study [31], not under their purview, shows there is. The report reconfirms the connection, and reports an overall 66% increase risk of contracting breast cancer as a result of abortion. Also in April 2009, the main NCI activist denying the "ABC Link" Louise A. Brinton, coauthored a report admitting the link, as well as the link of breast cancer and oral contraceptives. Abortion is listed as one of the strongest predictors of breast cancer. The "ABC" Link should not be hidden from women.

LEGAL

Why is it legal, it seems so cruel; what is legal age to get one. [19, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 43A].

The US Congress, the official law-making body, has never actually passed a law that says abortion is legal. Rather, abortion is decriminalized by two Supreme Court decisions, Roe v. Wade, and Doe v. Dalton both a few months apart in 1973. The two

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together fundamentally allow abortion for all 9 months, for any reason, without husband involvement, without parental consent for minors. Since then some states have parental notification laws, and in 2005 the US Congress passed a law prohibiting a particularly gruesome abortion technique, called partial birth abortion, upheld by the Supreme Court in 2007. And even this procedure was fought by abortionists as a "right."

In the Roe vs Wade decision [37], the justices stated " We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins." Also..... "If this suggestion of personhood is established, the appellant's case (for abortion), of course collapses, for the fetus' right to life would then be guaranteed specifically by the (14th) amendment."

They said they couldn't decide, but then did – they refused to declare an unborn baby as a human person. Instead, it is the property of the mother who can do whatever she wants with her property. Further the whole case was a lie. "Jane Roe" the pregnant girl, whose real name is Norma McCorvey, lied about being raped, never had the abortion. She and Sandra Cano, the "Doe" in Doe v. Dalton, are now pro-life & working thru the legal system to try to have the rulings overturned [24,38]. Yet the rulings stand.

History gives us numerous examples of injustices temporarily masked by Supreme Court Decision, but later corrected [39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 43A]:

(1) The 1857 "Dred Scott" Decision declared Black people were not legal persons, and could be bought, sold, raped, killed as the owner saw fit. That evil was eventually overturned through the 13th amendment , outlawing slavery (see also 14th and 15th).

(2) The 1896 Plessey v. Ferguson decision legalized segregation. In 1955, however, the Court outlawed segregation in Brown v Board of Education.

(3) The 1905 Lochner v. New York decision, gave constitutional protection to the owners of industry in direct violation of the rights of workers. However, the Court eventually gave protection to the rights of workers, starting with cases like Muller v. Oregon in 1908.

(4) The 1918 Hammer v. Dagenhart decision essentially declared that children had no rights under the Constitution, by invalidating the Child Labor Act. This decision was overturned by United States v. Darby in 1941.

In the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 [44, 45, 46, 47], Abraham Lincoln stated "the government is not empowered for the purpose of protecting one individual's right to do wrong to another. " Justice Douglas, his opponent, was "pro-choice" for slavery, was "..personally opposed..." but voted for it, and made statements

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like “if you don’t like it, don’t have one...” These same types of slogans are in use today to help rationalize abortion.

And, of Course, in Germany, Adolph Hitler legally had the Jews declared as non-persons, could seize them and their property, and resulted in 11 million Holocaust casualties. In the US our Abortion Holocaust has killed over 55 million, and adds about 1.5 million each year.

Abortion, from a legal perspective is a civil rights issue. An entire category of innocent person is being discriminated against by the strong & powerful. As Roe v Wade stated, if it is a person, it is protected, regardless of all the other arguments and emotionalism.

MEDICAL

The next series of student/parent questions relate to how big is the baby, is it really only cells at the time of the abortion, does it feel pain, how old are they when they can’t be aborted any more.[1, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 48, 49,50,51, 52,53,80,82].

There are many medical references now that show the growth of the baby from the time it is a fertilized ovum. It’s medically proven that once the sperm and ovum meet, they lose their own individuality, and form a brand new entity, called a human being. On the 1st day, when the baby is a single cell, it has its unique DNA—the entire genetic roadmap for developing. Nothing is added to the fertilized ovum, who you once were, nothing but nutrition. At the time of fertilization, the 23 chromosomes and approximately 50,000 genes from each parent, combined to determine all our physical characteristics: sex, facial features, body type; color of hair, eyes and skin. Even more amazing, intelligence and personality were already in place within your genetic code. You were already essentially and uniquely “you.”

By about 18-24 days after fertilization, before most women even know they might be pregnant, the heart beats regularly. At the end of the 1st month, the baby is about one-quarter inch long, about 10,000 times larger than the fertilized egg. About 6-8 weeks brain waves have been recorded; fingers and toes are seen, digestive system is working, and it responds to stimuli such as probing. Abortions are rarely done before this time, so the baby is clearly a new, tiny person when abortions are performed, and feels pain, often long & agonizing when they are aborted. At about 12 weeks, the baby can suck its thumb, can hear, and its fingers can grasp objects. By the time the mother physically shows signs of being pregnant, you were already fully formed, and all you needed was time to develop

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in preparation for birth. “Birth” isn’t the beginning of your life – it’s just another chapter in a continuing story. Life is a continuum from fertilization to natural death.

Medical researchers using embryonic stem cells have clearly demonstrated, with their desire for the growing cells of the embryo immediately after fertilization -- but not before -- that the miracle of life begins at the instant the Ovum is fertilized. The unborn Baby is clearly a person, and must be protected.

RELIGIOUS

Next, they asked what does our religion teach, what about other religions, what happens if you have one, is it a sin, can you be forgiven? [54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59].

Ethicists have long recognized the role of the laws of nature in deciding the right thing to do (e.g., “do no harm”), without reliance on any specific religious theology. The obligation to protect the innocent arises from just such principles which we are all obligated to follow, regardless of religious belief or lack thereof. But religion should complement our ethical civic duty derived from natural law, and motivate us to act for the common good. It requires us to stand up for innocent persons being attacked.

We’ve already seen that the spread of Christianity enabled a consistent and convincing pro-life message that lasted for about 1800 years – it had the force of being the teaching of God. Similarly the fractioning of the Christian holding of the sanctity of life has led to it’s demise. Prior to the 1960’s, virtually all religions opposed abortion and contraception, and they were considered sins. [2, 54, 55, 59]. Prior to the 1973 Roe V. Wade decision, some churches had changed their teaching.

Abraham Lincoln made a reflection at the time of the Civil war that applies here. He said, “...In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both *may* be, and one *must* be wrong. God cannot be *for* and *against* the same thing at the same time...”

When most people think of religion, in general, they think of a set of beliefs & unselfish actions covering non-violence, peace, help for the weak and oppressed, and which lead people to a heaven-like place. It is also not forced upon you, but should draw you in because of it’s teachings. In this context, a religion that advocates killing of the innocent really shouldn’t be called a religion at all.

A challenge of Ecumenism is hereby issued to all religions – especially Christian. God can’t be for and against abortion at the same time. Despite the claims of both sides

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that He is for their side....one of the sides must be wrong. Based on overwhelming evidence of evil to women, children and society over the past several decades, please reevaluate your position on killing of the innocent in abortion, and go back to being pro-life on abortion. If we can get back to a consistent pro-life position, we can go a long way to getting abortion to stop.

Ref [54] published a list of Churches that supported or opposed abortion, given here as a sample. Please see your own Church Leaders for their current official position. Churches that have come out in favor of protecting the unborn include: Catholic Church, Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) and Wisconsin Synod; Southern Baptist convention; Presbyterian Church in America (PCA); Orthodox Churches in America; independent Congregational Church; Independent Bible Church; Fundamentalist and Evangelical Churches; Orthodox and Conservative Jewish Committees; Hindu, Jehovah Witnesses & even Islam.

Churches that allow abortion include: United Church of Christ (Some Congregational); United Methodist Church; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); Presbyterian Church USA. For American Baptist, local churches decide; Episcopal & Reform Jewish Movement are mixed support. Again, please see your own Church Leaders for their current official position.

The Catechism of The Catholic Church [56, 57, 59A], for example, tells us that human life begins from the instant the egg and sperm unite to form us; it has a soul, and is made in the image and likeness of God. It is a serious sin to cooperate in any way with abortion – having one, helping another get one, working /deliberately voting for it. Further, Pope John Paul II stated, it is not right to leave the woman alone. To back this up, The Catholic Church has declared that anyone, of any race or religion, come to the Catholic Church and we will help you keep your baby. They also have The Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Project Rachel for Post Abortion Syndrome. There are many faith-based groups that provide help to any pregnant woman in need of support. By the way, where are all the pro-abortion groups when it comes to helping you through your anguish, when you make their “choice” ?

EMOTIONAL -- RAPE / INCEST / LIFE OF THE MOTHER

These were the next series of concerns -- the more emotional aspects typically used to justify abortion. [60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 81]. Let's start with Incest.

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There are obviously different pairings of incestuous relationships, but the one that is often brought up is the case of a young girl being molested by her stepfather. There are cases where this might occur where the man is not really married to the mother, but in the same household. This is a family pathology where the mother is obviously working on trying to make at least her second relationship work, or on at least her second marriage, and would have to face significant negative consequences to the relationship, and probably her financial situation if the incest were acknowledged. Sometimes the mother doesn't even know, and the young girl is too frightened to speak out. In this situation, if the young girl has the abortion, the family's reputation is saved, but the girl is put right back into the incestuous relationship, in danger of even more significant harm, both to her and the mother, and possibly other children. We already know abortion is significantly harmful to women, especially young girls, so the best thing for the girl's health is to have the baby & get away from the stepfather. Regardless of the difficulty, abortion doesn't help the girl, just saves the stepfather's reputation, hides the situation, and is in fact, devastating for the young girl. Incest should never be a rationalization for abortion. The incestuous situation must be corrected.

There are also many different circumstances involving rape. It could be a party situation with drinking that dulls decision-making capability, date rape, return of an estranged husband. One of the most difficult, however, is violent assault. In this situation, the woman feels dirty, guilty, sexually violated, of low self-esteem, angry, fearful or hateful toward men, may experience sexual dysfunction or feel she has lost control of her life. Everyone's assumption is that "she is pregnant from rape, she obviously has to have an abortion". But why? Is it that we believe that abortion somehow cures the rape, or helps the woman feel better? In actuality, abortion does not cure rape – nothing really does – and abortion just intensifies the same symptoms and makes them worse. It may make us feel better that we're doing something to try to help, but we're not helping. Abortion is like using gasoline to put out the fire of rape. In medical terminology, the existence of rape is a "contraindication" for abortion. It's the worst thing to be done. We are actually doing more harm to the woman than the rapist did.

Several studies discuss asking the rape victims themselves. They report 70-85% of rape victims who are pregnant want their baby. Reasons given include: (1) they are against abortion; (2) there is a meaning or purpose for this child; (3) having the baby allows them to defeat the rapist – the women recover their self-esteem. Further, of

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those that aborted, 80% deeply regretted it. In fact, they state that it makes the woman the attacker of her innocent child & lasts a lifetime "...long after the memory of the rape had faded..."

There are also individual speakers touring the country who are offspring of rape [81]. They are testifying that they don't care what crimes their father did, they themselves are good, productive people, happy to be alive, and thank their birth mother for giving them life in a very tough situation. Divorced women know they dearly love their children despite their possible disdain for the father. These folks reinforce that children should not suffer for the sin of the father. It takes courage and support -- our job. Even in this difficult situation of rape, abortion is evil, puts the baby thru agonizing pain, & further hurts the mother. Rape is not a justification for abortion. Help is available.

The discussion of abortion in the case of the Life of the Mother at stake, centers around the ethical principle called the Principle of Double Effect [69, 70, 71, 72]. Human Decency, Humanitarianism, and just plain Natural Law tell us, Independent of any specific religious discipline, if there are two people, there are two sets of needs that must be treated. This has been supported by Christian Moral theology starting about the 16th century, identifying conditions that must be verified for any particular situation. Further the medical profession has already acknowledged this dual need with the practice of fetology to operate on babies in the womb.[73, 74, 75, 76, 77].

There is a category of life-threatening medical conditions the mother may have, like appendicitis, where there is clearly no need to kill the baby in order to treat the mother. Doctors may like to have the baby not there so their job is less risky, or if there is a problem they are not blamed for losing the baby. But with today's medical capability, this situation can be handled by operating on the mother for the appendectomy, and not deliberately aborting the child. So abortion can be illegal and we can still save the mother in this class of medical condition.

In another situation the baby could be an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy where the fertilized egg implants in a Fallopian tube. In this situation the baby cannot survive, and grow to term. Further, if nothing is done, the mother will die. So the baby now is not only doomed to die, but will cause the mother to die. In this case, it is licit to remove the baby, and save the mother's life. But you're not using abortion techniques---abortion techniques can all be illegal, and the mother's life can be saved.

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Still another situation is where the mother has cancer. There are now documented cases [e.g., 34, 34A, 34B, 34C] where the mother was treated with Chemotherapy, while pregnant, and the baby turned out fine. So there is a body of evidence starting to develop that the baby can survive chemotherapy (and radiation). Again, treat the mother. We don't need abortion legal to do that.

The harder situation is the case of uterine cancer. In this case, even with prohibiting abortion techniques, the uterus can still be removed to save the mother's life. The baby will die, but the abortion techniques do not need to be used to do it. So Life of the Mother is not a consideration since she can be properly treated with abortion techniques being illegal. Given the new information above, on Chemo and no-ill effects on the baby, in these situations the mother may also work closely with the doctors to find out how fast the cancer is growing, what other options there are for treatment, and how long she could wait for the baby to develop. Babies have been born at 22 weeks after fertilization and survived, and at 24 weeks, there is an 80% survival rate. In fact, the medical profession (and even the founder of a pro-abortion research group) has officially stated there is no condition where they need abortion to be legal to save the life of the mother. "Life of the Mother" is not a rationale for abortion.

WHAT CAN WE DO; I WOULD LIKE TO HELP

According to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB.org), the life issues involving innocent people, such as abortion & euthanasia, are intrinsic evil, and are the highest priority for our action. We are to work within the law to change the law; elect pro-life officials; vote unconditionally pro-life; maybe be a pro-life elected official; do not use violence for that would be hypocritical; go out & discuss with everyone; volunteer to help at pregnancy care and counseling centers; conduct peaceful display of support like March for Life, Life Chains, prayer services; pray at abortion clinics; fast, conduct religious services.

God can't be for and against abortion at the same time -- Religions should work together in the spirit of Ecumenism to reassert their long-standing fundamental teaching on protection of the preborn person as well as the mother.

Mostly, decide now, before in an emotional situation, to never have an abortion, never refer or help anyone to get an abortion. Live a healthy lifestyle that doesn't fall for the contraception lie. Remember abortion is bad for the baby, bad for the mother, bad for families, bad for society. Legal, medical, religious, and emotional arguments support life; abortion can never be justified, should be unthinkable, and be made illegal. END.

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