

Notes for a Pro-Life Sermon

By Stephanie Gray

Introductory Message for Pastors:

With pre-born children being killed daily by abortion, justice demands that our shepherds be their voices and protect their lives (“Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter” (Proverbs 24:11)). Moreover, with so many people having already made the choice to abort, mercy demands our shepherds also preach forgiveness.

Indeed, consider these words in Micah 6:8: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

*May this resource be a helpful tool for you in doing just that. It is purposefully designed to communicate **ideas**, but is not a word-for-word sermon from start to finish. Each pastor has their own style and way of communicating, and can put their own personal touch on the concepts below. Moreover, there is more information contained than can be included in any one sermon; however, the general framework is a good guide to follow. Please share this widely with other pastors and leaders you know. Finally, feel free to contact me if you have questions/comments: sgray@stephaniegray.info. God bless you!*

Start with Mercy

With over 57 million abortions in the United States since its legalization, and 3 million abortions in Canada since its legalization, one should assume that in every audience there are women who have had abortions as well as men and women who have facilitated/supported an abortion decision in some way. Speaking of God’s mercy at the beginning sets an important tone, particularly for those suffering from their sin in silence. Presenting the pro-life message in a context of compassion and sensitivity increases the likelihood of receptivity to it. Here are some examples from the Scriptures that highlight mercy:

- Luke 15:11-32: Prodigal Son
- Luke 15: 1-7: The lost sheep
- John 8:1-11: Woman caught in adultery
- Psalm 51: “Create in me a clean heart, O God...”
- Luke 23:40-43: “...‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom’...”

Post-abortive women (and men) can be empowered to seek healing, not only for their own good, but also to be a powerful witness to help others. While they cannot bring their own children back, they can spare other children a similar fate. While they cannot undo their own mistake, they can spare other women from making it. Telling the story of a post-abortive woman like Debbie Fisher is a powerful encouragement: Debbie travels to schools and tells teenagers of regretting her abortion. After one of her presentations, an audience member texted his friend who was en route to an abortion clinic saying, “There is a woman here who regrets her abortion.” Debbie, a post-abortive woman, met with the teenage girl, a pre-abortive woman, and the young mom changed her mind—giving birth to a baby girl several months later. Learn more about the story here: www.theinterim.com/issues/society-culture/five-minutes-from-abortion-students-save-woman-from-tragic-mistake/

It is helpful to point out that God not only forgives, He transforms. Jesus knew Peter would betray Him, and yet He gave Peter the tremendous responsibility to be the rock on which Christ built His church (Matthew 16:18). He tasked him with feeding Christ’s sheep (John 21:15-17). And this shows an

important distinction between two people, Peter and Judas, who betrayed Christ: In the face of their sins, Judas despaired whereas Peter repented. We are to be *repentant* sinners like Peter. Many post-abortive women and men have experienced the transforming power of Christ; consider sharing some of their stories from here: www.silentnomoreawareness.org/

Finally, know that in communicating a message of mercy, you are not only helping bring healing to the wounded, you are sparing the wounded further pain: The Guttmacher Institute reports that “[a]mong women having abortions in the United States, about one-half have already had a prior abortion.”¹ In Canada, one third of women having an abortion have already had a previous one.² In other words, a good number of post-abortive women are also pre-abortive; a good number of women sitting in the pews who have had one abortion are likely to have another. This underscores the importance of communicating a compassionate and compelling pro-life message.

The Pro-Life Message in the Scriptures

With abortion being an ongoing problem, there are pre-born children at risk of being killed—today—by Christians tempted to choose abortion themselves, or who are in positions of influence (physician, social worker, teacher, friend, etc.) who do not speak up—*unless* they hear the pro-life message. A sanctity of life message is entirely consistent with the Scriptures, as can be seen from these examples:

- Luke 1: Jesus came into the world as an embryo: “And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus” (Luke 1:31) and “When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and **blessed is the fruit of your womb**’” (Luke 1:41-42).

Note the significance of this exchange: John the Baptist, the late-term fetus, and his mother Elizabeth, both recognized that when Mary entered their home she didn’t enter alone—she entered with the Lord himself in her womb, as a very early embryo.

- John 3:16: We see how valuable humans are to God: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” We see from this that humans are so valuable to God that He would suffer, be killed, and rise from the dead to save us—not any other creature, but humans. If humans are that valuable to God, then we must ask if we value humans (in particular, the youngest among us, pre-born children) the way God does.

A powerful 1-minute video on the greatest love—and its opposite—can be viewed here: www.abort73.com/videos/opposites/

- Jeremiah 1:5: Each of us is known individually to God: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” And from Psalm 106:13-16: “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your

¹ “Repeat Abortion in the United States,” November 2006, Occasional Report No. 29, <https://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2006/11/21/or29.pdf>, accessed September 30, 2015. Note: Guttmacher Institute (GI) is a pro-abortion organization; however, they collect statistics that are otherwise difficult to obtain.

² “A Review of Therapeutic Abortions and Related Areas of Concern in Canada,” Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology Canada, 2012; 34 (6): 532-542. [http://www.jogc.com/article/S1701-2163\(16\)35269-0/pdf](http://www.jogc.com/article/S1701-2163(16)35269-0/pdf), accessed May 24, 2016.

works; that I know 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 beheld my unformed substance.”

- Matthew 28:19-20: In making disciples, we are to teach them to obey God’s commands: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.” God has commanded that we
 - a) not murder (Exodus 20:13),
 - b) not shed innocent blood (Proverbs 6:17),
 - c) love our neighbors (Mark 12:31),
 - d) love “the least of these” (Matthew 25:40),
 - e) care for orphans and widows (James 1:27),
 - f) be doers of the word and not just hearers (James 1:22).

Since abortion, in action or acceptance, is a violation of these commands, it is sin to be repented of, just as our other sins are to be repented of. We have no need for a Savior if we have no sin to be saved from—the very concept of needing Christ requires us admitting our failures.

- Deuteronomy 12:31: God abhors child sacrifice: “You must not do the same for the Lord your God, because every abhorrent thing that the Lord hates they have done for their gods. They would even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.” And another example (from Psalm 106: 34-38): “They did not destroy the peoples, as the Lord commanded them, but they mingled with the nations and learned to do as they did. They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood.”

Abortion is modern-day child sacrifice, as it is sacrificing our sons and daughters to the gods of convenience, sexual promiscuity, selfishness, and materialism.

- 2 Samuel 11: It is wrong to kill in order to conceal sex sin: Just as David had Uriah killed in order to conceal sex sin with Bathsheba; some Christians kill their offspring to conceal sex sin:

According to the Guttmacher Institute³, 13% of women obtaining abortions identify as Evangelical Protestant, 17% as mainline Protestant, and 24% as Catholic. That means that over 50% of women aborting align themselves with a Christian faith tradition of some sort.

Formation and Inspiration

It is one thing to know what is right in principle, it is another thing to be able to explain it and live it out in practice. Hearing about the inspiring stories of others who “walk the talk” can be a powerful motivational tool in order to follow in their footsteps and do the same. Consider the tough cases people in your church may face: a poor prenatal diagnosis, sexual assault, a pregnant woman’s life being in danger, the pain of placing a child for adoption, or being a single mom. What follows is a series of resources—

³ “Characteristics of U.S. Abortion Patients in 2014 and Changes Since 2008, https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/characteristics-us-abortion-patients-2014.pdf, accessed May 24, 2016. Note: Guttmacher Institute is an American organization. Similar statistics are near impossible to get in Canada since statistic-collection regarding abortion in Canada is limited. However, given the similarity between both countries regarding abortion rates and public opinion on abortion, it is reasonable to deduce that Canada’s statistics about the faith background of women having abortions would be similar to those of the US.

that you can show or tell—that address these difficult situations through the power of stories from people who have “been there”:

- **Poor Prenatal Diagnosis:** On Youtube with the search “Choosing Thomas” (www.youtube.com/watch?v=ToNWquoXqJI), you should get the 9-minute documentary produced by the Dallas Morning News about TK and Deidrea Laux whose son Thomas had trisomy 13. Unfortunately couples in this situation may be encouraged to abort, with the argument that “the child will die anyways.” TK and Deidrea’s story is so powerful because they refused abortion and instead carried to term and embraced every moment they had with Thomas.

In some situations, a poor prenatal diagnosis won’t involve death at birth, but it will involve a different life than expected. These inspiring resources can help change peoples’ perspective from one of sadness to one of beauty and opportunity:

- a) “Welcome to Holland” by Emily Perl Kingsley: www.our-kids.org/archives/Holland.html
- b) The Positive Exposure photography campaign of Rick Guidotti: positiveexposure.org/
- c) Author Leticia Velasquez’s reflection on the similarities between Jesus and children with special needs, inspiration she received when in adoration, holding her daughter who has down syndrome, and thinking about Mary mothering Christ:

“Mary bore a Child like no other; A child who did not conform to society’s expectations; He was different from the others; He gazed upon Heaven when the rest could only see clouds. He reminded them of their failings, their lack of charity, their shallowness, their impatience, and their rush to judgment. His government tried to kill Him, and eventually succeeded. He had to endure constant misunderstanding of what He was trying to communicate, and bore the frustration of those who misunderstood Him. He was mocked and rejected, and at times, it seemed only His mother still stood by Him. She felt the loneliness of seeing her Son rejected because He was different, yet she bore the pain patiently because she knew that it was for us, the ‘least of these’ that He suffered and died.”

- **Conceived in Rape:** www.savethe1.com is a powerful online resource, including videos, started by Rebecca Kiessling, who was conceived in rape. She and many others tell their stories and give voice to the fact that the circumstances under which we were conceived do not change the dignity of *who* was conceived.
- **When a Pregnant Woman’s Life is in Danger:** This scenario is often given by abortion supporters as grounds to accept abortion. With the correct analysis, the stories of Pamela Cook (www.unmaskingchoice.ca/blog/2011/09/23/pamela-cooks-example-ethical-response-difficult-pregnancy) and a pregnant leukemia patient (www.unmaskingchoice.ca/blog/2012/08/03/dominican-republic-abortion-ban-doesnt-need-overturning) show that while killing the pre-born child is always wrong, there are ethical solutions to these difficult situations.
- **The Gift of Adoption:** Ryan Bomberger was adopted as a baby and raised in a loving home along with 12 siblings. His ministry has a series of powerful videos and other resources that highlight the beauty of adoption: www.theradiancefoundation.org
- **Being a Single Mom:** Veronica was in university when she discovered her unplanned pregnancy. Although encouraged, by both friends and her then-boyfriend, to abort her child, she refused. In choosing life for her child, her own life became better; as she said, she “went from being very directionless to a full time student with a direction because of my daughter.” Learn more here:

www.lifesitenews.com/blogs/interview-with-a-beautiful-soul-a-single-mothers-story Another powerful story is that of Nadege, who became pregnant at 16, carried to term, and is raising her child, against all odds. A 4-minute interview of her story is available on Youtube called “beINSPIRED: A Single Mother’s Story”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmpeIxe_WLw

A Call to Action

In James 1:22 we are told to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” When bringing a pro-life sermon to a close, it is helpful to have some action points so people can turn their conviction into action:

1. Seek Reconciliation: Remind the hurting to “Be not afraid.” The words of the hymn “Hosea” by Gregory Norbet are helpful here: “Come back to me, with all your heart, don’t let fear keep us apart...Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply our new life.” It can be helpful to remind people of the difference between forgiveness and healing: Women who repeatedly confess their abortion don’t think they are forgiven when the real issue is they aren’t healed. Forgiveness can happen in an instant, but healing takes time. Encourage people to pursue post-abortion healing programs:
 - a) Rachel's Vineyard: www.rachelsvineyard.org/
 - b) Silent No More Awareness: www.silentnomoreawareness.org/
2. Be Outspoken: Encourage people to learn pro-life apologetics and to seize opportunities to dialogue with others, demonstrating persuasion and grace. Here are some of Stephanie’s resources:
 - a) Stephanie’s pro-life apologetics book “Love Unleashes Life: Abortion & the Art of Communicating Truth” provides pro-life apologetics and tactics for reaching peoples’ hearts as well as minds. Learn order information here: www.stephaniegray.info/love-unleashes-life/
 - b) There are video clips of pro-life talks on Youtube here: www.youtube.com/c/stephaniegrayloveunleasheslife
 - c) Encourage medical personnel to order the booklet, “A Physician’s Guide to Discussing Abortion” from LifeCycle Books USA here: www.lifecyclebooks.com/store/usa/book-a-physician-s-guide-to-discussing-abortion.html or LifeCycle Books Canada here: <http://www.lifecyclebooks.com/store/canada/endthekilling/book-a-physician-s-guide-to-discussing-abortion.html>
3. Get Active Locally: Encourage them to get in touch with their local pro-life society and/or pregnancy care center and volunteer.

For more information:

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www.youtube.com/c/stephaniegrayloveunleasheslife