
**A Leader's Guide
For Pastors and Ministry Workers**



Therefore Choose Life

“...Therefore choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice and hold fast to him...”

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

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- *Help for the Post-Abortive Woman* (now titled *A Solitary Sorrow*)
by Dr. Paul and Teri Reisser
- *Healing Life’s Hurts Through Theophostic Prayer*,
by Edward M. Smith © 2002, 2005

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FORWARD

This Leader's Guide is meant to accompany the pro-life presentations "*Therefore Choose Life*" and "*Created To Choose Life*", addressing the topic of abortion. Through animated sequences, live testimony, and teaching from Scripture, abortion is shown to be not only a personal matter, but also a sociological and spiritual issue as well.

"Therefore Choose Life" and "Created To Choose Life", were produced by caring people with notable ministry and professional credentials. It is important that people be taught the truth about abortion. Many people have been deceived about abortion, what it really is and what it really does to everyone involved.

However, abortion is a complex issue, all of which could not be fully covered in the pro-life presentations. Therefore Proclaim Life Global has prepared this Leader's Guide with additional information contained in Section One.

Also, some people who see this video may already have had an abortion, or may be considering an abortion, or have helped someone to get an abortion. They will need the whole truth about forgiveness and healing. Some information on healing is available in the video presentation, as well as in a tri-fold brochure produced by Proclaim Life Global. It is of value to those who have had an abortion and to those who wish to minister to people hurting from abortion.

However, there are times when people would like to provide or receive more in-depth counseling. For this purpose Proclaim Life Global has prepared Section Two of this Leader's Guide. This Section contains biblical teaching to guide post-abortive people through the healing process. Since true healing only comes from repentance and restoration of a person to God, Section Two is based on Scripture. Pastors and ministry workers are strongly encouraged to understand the materials and to minister to those who are grieving over the sin of their abortion. This section will also help the post-abortive person recover from the loss they experience because of the death of their pre-born child.

Following Section Two there are supplemental Scriptures for post-abortion counseling and for teaching about the sanctity of life. These Scriptures

augment the teaching contained in the videos "*Therefore Choose Life*" and "*Created To Choose Life*", and "*Wonderfully and Uniquely Created.*"

If you do not have "*Wonderfully and Uniquely Created*", we invite you to go to:

www.proclaimlifeglobal.org

for information about this video. It is a 23 minute presentation that is intended for general adult audiences. "*Wonderfully & Uniquely Created*" reveals the marvels of our creator God with regard to human reproduction. The viewer is left with a deeper appreciation of Psalm 139:13-16.

It is the prayer of all those who participated in preparing the videos and the printed material that Second Timothy 2:1-2 will be fulfilled in your ministry.

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:1-2

Special appreciation is expressed to Rhea Boone, and The Reverend Raymond M. Tear, M.Div. for their valuable contributions to this Leader's Guide.

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INTRODUCTION TO SECTION ONE

Elaboration of Concepts In the Video Presentation

The purpose of this Section is to provide further information which was too complex or too lengthy to include in the video presentation. However, this

information is important for pastors and ministry leaders to know, especially when preaching or teaching on the issues concerning abortion.

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF POPULATION CONTROL

Throughout Scripture God reveals His will concerning population control. In fact, He begins in Genesis 1:27 & 28 we read *“So God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it...”* Then in Genesis Chapter 12:1-2 we read: *“The Lord said to Abram, “Leave you country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing.”*

After Hagar and her son were cast out into the desert, God again spoke about His protection concerning population. We read in Genesis 21. 17-18 *“God heard the boy [Hagar’s son] crying and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, ‘What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.’”*

God is pro-life and favors the expansion of nations. In fact one of the names for God in Hebrew is Elohim meaning “creator”. He created life and He promises to sustain life. David affirms this in Psalm 37:25. He writes, *“I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.”*

However, the world would have us believe otherwise. The world would have us believe that there is overpopulation and that the world food supplies cannot sustain the current population. This simply is not true. The world can and does produce enough food. However, because of corruption in government, man’s greed and poor methods for delivery of food resources, children and families go hungry.

The world’s answer to this should be to correct the corruption, promote generosity and be creative in ways to more equally distribute resources. Scripture teaches these principles time

and time again. However, the world, and, sadly, sometimes Christians do not follow these principles. Rather they approve of, or promote abortion, aggressive use of birth control and permanent sterilization. These interventions have led to an emerging problem in many countries and people groups. This problem is referred to as negative or zero population growth. Simply stated, this means that more people are dying in those countries than are being born.

As of the year 2009 Russia, Latvia, Romania, Croatia, Belarus, Lithuania, Estonia, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Czech Republic are among the countries that are at negative population growth. The number of deaths of adults is exceeding the number of births in those nations; the population is simply not replacing itself. Japan, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Italy, Sweden are at zero population growth. This means that the number of deaths is equal to the number of births.

These may seem to be innocent, and by some of the world’s standards, desirable statistics. But they have great sociological implications. If that trend continues, entire people groups will no longer exist. Great emphasis is placed upon the potential extinction of whales, tigers and other animals. Yet, why is most of the world unconcerned about the extinction of people groups?

When a population becomes unbalanced – that is there are more senior citizens than young people, unexpected outcomes occur. There will be fewer and fewer young people who will be willing and able to care for their aging parents. Institutions have been made in Europe and North America to take the place of family care. Parents are often cast off into these centers where they languish or in some cases are neglected. Sometimes they do not even have visits from their children.

This is no surprise. Abortion proponents advocate the death of the infant in the womb saying it has no intrinsic worth and is unproductive. This creates a mindset in young people that

their aged, dependent, and seemingly unproductive parents have no worth. In First Timothy chapter 5, Paul gives very clear instructions to families and the church about the care of widows. In verse 8 Paul writes ***“If anyone does not provide for his relatives and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*** And the sixth commandment is, ***“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”*** Interestingly, it is the only commandment that has a promise as well.

Another consequence of zero or negative population growth is that there will be fewer and fewer young people to enter the work force and to become productive members of society, which has adverse affects on national and global economies.

Randy Alcorn in his book “Pro-life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments” writes: “A declining population is a serious threat to social and economic prosperity. Most western European countries are now experiencing economic problems that their governments attribute to population reduction. France offers childbearing incentives that include monthly financial payments to families with more than a certain number of children. Why

would a government pay its people to have children? Because it recognizes that all societies need a continuous influx of the young in order to remain healthy.” Other European countries offer similar incentives.

Interestingly enough, the governments of these nations had been strongly advocating birth control and abortion. When they saw the result, they tried to change young couple’s thinking so that they would consider having two or more children, but to no avail. The world forgot that when you ***“train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it.”*** (Proverbs 22:6) These young people were trained from early childhood, by word and by example that a large family and many children are inherently bad.

Lastly, it should be remembered that the family is the smallest unit of a society. When there is only one child and/or perhaps only two children, the child does not learn how to behave in a group, how to have give and take, how to defer and how to lead etc. A small family simply cannot prepare them for life as well as a larger family.

UNKNOWN DANGERS IN WHAT ONE CONSUMES

There are some many facts that are known about the human body. For example a person cannot live for more than forty days without food, cannot live for more than four days without liquid, and usually cannot survive oxygen deprivation for over four minutes.

There are other matters relating to the human body that are more variable. Many of these are with regard to what we put into our bodies. These include food, alcohol, tobacco products, and medicines, either herbal or those developed in laboratories. Ancient civilizations used a wide variety of herbal medicines to treat many ailments. And now physicians prescribe thousands of different medications for various illnesses. Many medications are life saving or life extending. However, some have undesirable or unintended consequences.

Just because a medication, herb, or local remedy is legal to take, does not mean it is safe for a person to take. For example, the hormones that are prescribed for women often alter an already normally functioning reproductive system. Over use of these hormones *may* have long term effects of which we are presently unaware. Many medications once thought to be safe, have been shown to cause serious problems. Sometimes these problems take years before they are discovered.

The following are some examples:

Diethylstilbestrol, known as DES, was the first man-made estrogen. In the early 1940’s, doctors recommended DES to pregnant women to stop miscarriages and premature labor. Doctors claimed it would make bigger and stronger babies. Later, in the 1970’s, it was discovered to have caused serious

problems in women whose mothers took DES while pregnant. It can cause cervical cancer, reproductive organ deformities, miscarriages, premature labor and infertility. ***It took an entire generation to discover the ill effects of DES.*** But for many it was too late.

Thalidomide, an anti-nausea medicine prescribed to pregnant women during the 1960s, caused birth defects in the infants. Many babies were born without arms and legs. The hands or feet extended like flippers from the shoulders or torso.

Another example is an herbal that now is sold as “Comfrey”. Comfrey has been grown since about 400 BC as a healing herb. The word “comfrey”, comes from the Latin word for “grow together”. Greeks and Romans used comfrey to stop heavy bleeding, treat bronchial problems, and heal wounds and broken bones. The herb was applied to external wounds. Tea was made from its leaves to be consumed for internal ailments.

However, it was only in the past 20 years that scientific studies showed comfrey to be potentially very dangerous. It may be carcinogenic, since it appeared to cause liver damage and cancerous tumors in rats. Comfrey-pepsin capsules, which are sold as a digestive aid in herbal and health-food stores in the USA, have been analyzed and found to contain a substance that causes liver damage in people and is a potential carcinogen.

Alcohol formerly was considered safe during pregnancy. However, it is now known that alcohol is a major cause of birth defects. Alcohol goes directly into the baby’s blood through the placenta. It can result in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) in the baby. FASDs can have mild or severe effects. These may include mental retardation with learning, emotional

and behavioral problems. The baby's heart, liver and other organs may not develop properly. Mothers who drink have a higher risk of miscarriages, stillborns and small babies. While alcohol has been in existence for thousands of years, this syndrome was not recognized until 1968.

What a woman puts into her body will affect her. And it may affect her baby. Women need to be taught about the possible

dangers before they take any medications, herbs or special remedies.

MEN AS PROTECTORS OF WOMEN – A BIBLICAL VIEW

Men's responsibility to be protectors of women and others who are vulnerable starts in the very beginning of the Bible.

In Genesis we find the man created as the crown of God's creation, and called Adam. (The woman comes later and is also part of that crown.) The man is given authority over the animals and The Garden. Adam gave each animal a name, and that is what the animal was called.

None of the animals is a fit helper for the man, so God creates Eve out of the man's rib. The woman is brought to the man as a wonderful gift by God Himself. Adam then rejoices, "This at last is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called "woman" because she was taken from a man." The English words for "woman" and "man" are very like the Hebrew words: "ishah" (female) taken from the "ish" (male). From this account we can see that multiple rankings of authority within loving relationships are established.

Human beings in the image and likeness of God are made for relationship with Him and under His authority. Woman is taken from the man, the two made for relationship with one another, and her under his authority with both responsible before God. It is only after The Fall that human authority leads to sinful perversion and tyranny.

The following general principle is clear throughout Scripture: to have authority also means to have responsibility to care for and to protect. The whole notion of God as the Shepherd of Israel, and Jesus as the Good Shepherd are only two of many, many examples of the Divine Protector serving as an example for humans to imitate.

An excellent example of this protecting and caring for women is the account of the relationship between Ruth and Boaz. (Ruth 2:1) Boaz was a man of authority and wealth. His very name means *Strength* and he is an Old Testament representation for Jesus. First, from the tone of the Bible's account, Boaz has clearly set an example for the men who serve him. Boaz is "*a man of great wealth*" (2:1). Great wealth meant very great privilege. Boaz could have had many opportunities to misuse women because of the privilege. Clearly he did not! From the details of the story it is clear that Boaz was just the opposite and has set a fine example for his servants and for all men. The greetings Boaz and his workers exchange (2:4) tell us much about the man and his relationship with his workers—some of whom are female.

As a foreigner Ruth is especially vulnerable to exploitation and mistreatment. However, when she first goes to Boaz's field

she must have been allowed to glean without being assaulted. If she had been assaulted she would have found another field in which to work. Also, when Boaz instructed her to do her gleaning only in his fields, she would certainly have told him she had been mistreated, if that had been the case.

To assure that Ruth's honor is guarded, Boaz reminds his young men to treat her with respect. He even instructs her to stay close to his young men throughout the harvest, which likely assured that no workers from other landowners would molest her.

Boaz provides for her in other ways. Along with having Ruth eat some of the food provided for his workers, Boaz instructs the workers to be sure to leave plenty of grain for her to glean, thus assuring she and Naomi, the mother of Ruth's deceased husband, have enough to eat.

As the story continues to unfold, it is very clear that Boaz has come to love her. On several occasions he could easily take advantage of her. Instead he follows a very deliberate course to care for her and Naomi, and to preserve Ruth's honor. There is another man who first has the right to marry Ruth. Though it could cause Boaz to lose Ruth, Boaz protects Ruth's interests by doing the right thing. He approaches the man who has the prior claim. That man declines and the way is then clear for Boaz to marry Ruth. Ruth, gains Boaz as a husband of great integrity. And Boaz has a chaste, industrious wife. They enter the human, earthly line of our Lord Jesus. Boaz and Ruth soon have a son, "*and they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.*"

Some people will argue that sexual desire, along with other human passions, are too strong to be resisted. The New Testament argument against that notion is rather simple. In Jesus, God has set us free from the grip and authority of any master other than Himself. That includes the rule of human passions. A clear example of this from the Old Testament (Genesis 39) is the story of Joseph. Joseph is the head servant in the household of a man named Potiphar, the captain of the guard for the Egyptian Pharaoh. Though Potiphar's wife tried many times to entice Joseph to lie with her, he refused each time. In refusing, Joseph was saying "No!" to a human passion in order to preserve his own honor, the honor of Potiphar and his wife, and to honor God's command. Rather than give in, Joseph fled naked from the house!

Along with Joseph of the Old Testament is Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary. When he discovered Mary was pregnant, and knowing it was not by him, "*he purposed to put her away*

quietly.” In other words, he intended to act in such a way as to spare her the scandal and possible death by stoning should Hebraic law be applied. Additionally, after they were married, though Joseph might have insisted upon his husbandly rights, he did not do so. Joseph’s self-control establishes the clear factual base that the child Mary bore was unmistakably of divine origin, as the Angel Gabriel had said to her.

Scripture reveals to us that men are to take the leading role in most areas of life. And one of those roles is to lead in guarding male and female chastity and thus women’s honor. Solid evidence is found in the Commandments against coveting a neighbor’s spouse and household, and against committing adultery. With the coming of the Lord Jesus and the founding of the church, God’s people have come to understand these Ten Commandments as not simply stating rules, but also carrying positive duties. Stated briefly, two of the commandments show positive duties that are to safeguard our neighbor’s goods, well-being, and relationships. That means we should not damage, diminish, or destroy anything our neighbor rightly holds and cherishes, including an exclusive sexual relationship with a spouse.

Men have special responsibility in each of these areas for, as Peter tells us, *“the woman is the weaker vessel.”* That does not mean that women are morally inferior. It simply means that women lack the physical strength of men, and are more strongly influenced by their emotions than are men. Therefore, men are to use their physical strength to protect the vulnerable. And men can use their more reason-based mental processes rather than their emotions to control and direct their own behavior.

As in all things, the Lord Jesus is the prime New Testament example. The Gospels mention that many women followed Jesus and His disciples, even supporting the ministry from their own means. In most every case of Jesus’ recorded interactions with women those interactions are respectful, protective, and healing or redemptive. If Jesus, or any of the disciples, had made improper advances towards the women they would not have continued to follow.

Scriptures are in all things honest and forthright. If the disciples had made improper advances towards women it would be reported in the Bible. Additionally, for women to follow along behind a man, even a respected rabbi, could easily invite accusations of bad or immoral conduct. With all the other false accusations made against Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees, if there had been any hint of bad behavior with women, the Scripture would have recorded it. The accusation that Jesus was starting some morally loose cult would have been made loud and often; but again, nothing of the sort is reported in the Gospels.

Other definitive New Testament Scriptures are: Paul’s instruction to Timothy, a younger man, to treat the older women as mothers and the younger women as sisters. The advice is given to Timothy, but obviously applies to all the men, especially the leaders, of the church. Paul’s instruction to the Corinthians is that *“it is better to marry than to burn”* (with lust). Clearly this assumes sexual attraction is a normal, albeit powerful, human drive, but relations are to be confined to marriage between one man and one woman. In the

letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes, *“Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*

With the above Scriptures in mind, and if a man understands that his wife is a special gift from God (see above the reference in Genesis), we can draw some logical conclusions:

1. Both men and women are to be responsible and moral. Men, as the leaders, have a special responsibility to be shields and protectors of women and their persons and bodies.
2. Wealth, power, or position, give men additional responsibility to act virtuously and respectfully towards women. They do not grant permission to use women badly.
3. Third, sexual relations within marriage are good, right, honorable, and necessary. Through this physical relationship they receive the full blessing that God intends for the married couple and for the human community. A marriage, in which husband and wife have kept and continue to keep themselves only for one another, provides a shelter for both men and women. Most of all, such a marriage honors God.
4. Fourth, any man who has relations with a woman to whom he is not married commits adultery or fornication. This does one of two things. He either violates the marriage bed of the woman’s present husband, or violates the marriage bed of an unmarried woman’s future husband. In either case, such a man steals from his neighbor the exclusive right of a husband to his wife’s purity. Further, this deprives a neighbor of that same special gift given to that neighbor by God. So, a man who takes advantage of a woman not only violates her, he fails in his duty to safeguard what belongs to his neighbor, that is, fails in the positive duty of the Commandments.
5. An impure man denies his present or future wife her exclusive claim on his sexual purity.

It is clear that women also have responsibility for purity. However, too often, the burden of guilt, when purity is not maintained, is placed only upon the woman. Clearly, the Bible teaches that both men and women are responsible.

INTRODUCTION TO SECTION TWO

A Guide For Counseling Post-Abortive Individuals

Proclaim Life Global has produced a tri-fold pamphlet called "Abortion: Helping People Cope with Grief and Guilt." This pamphlet will help you to counsel with post-abortive individuals. Or, it may be used by post-abortive individuals themselves.

However, healing the deep wounds of abortion may require more extensive counseling. This section is an in-depth guide to helping people heal emotionally and spiritually from the abortion. The materials apply to:

1. Men and women who either directly had the abortion.
2. Those who assisted or coerced a woman to have an abortion.
3. Those who have been abortion providers.

The material in this section is a collection of concepts that

have been used for decades in recovery programs. The principles are also from abortion recovery Bible studies.

However, it should be noted that the true basis for recovery is found in the Word of God. This is why so many Scriptures are included. There is no doubt that pastors and ministry leaders are aware of these Scriptures. However, it is helpful to review their use with post-abortive people.

It will also be helpful for you to review the testimonies of Debbie Dunn and Mickey Thompson found on the videos. These testimonies are typical of the feelings of post-abortive individuals. It may help you to understand the person that comes to you.

UNDERSTANDING POST-ABORTION STRESS (PAS)

Post-abortion stress occurs in both men and women, in people who assist (or coerce) women in getting abortions, and sometimes in providers of abortion. Some symptoms may occur immediately after the abortion and others take time to develop, as was stated in the two testimonies the "Therefore Choose Life" video presentation.

It is suggested that women tend to experience PAS more often than men. Dr. Paul and Teri Reisser in their book, "Help for the Post-Abortive Woman" (now entitled "A Solitary Sorrow") explain the symptoms experienced by women. However, clearly men are capable of experiencing these feelings as well.

If a person shows two or more symptoms listed below, they could be experiencing PAS.

1. **Guilt:** Guilt is what an individual feels when she has violated her own moral code. For the woman who has come to believe, at some point either before or after the abortion, that she consented to the killing of her unborn child, the burden of guilt is relentless. There is little consolation to offer the woman who has transgressed one of nature's strongest instincts: the protection a mother extends to her young. In fact, many post-abortive women believe that any unhappy events that have occurred since the abortion were inevitable because they "deserve it."

2. **Anxiety:** Anxiety is defined as an unpleasant emotional and physical state of apprehension that may take the form of tension, (inability to relax, irritability, etc.), physical responses (dizziness, pounding heart, upset stomach, headaches, etc.), worry about the future, difficulty concentrating and disturbed sleep. The conflict between a woman's moral standards and her decision to abort generates much of this anxiety. Very often, she will **not** relate her anxiety to the abortion, and yet she will unconsciously begin to avoid anything having to do with babies, such as dedication of babies in a church service, parties held for pregnant woman or visiting with new mothers.

3. **Psychological "numbing":** Many post-abortive people maintain a secret vow that they will never again allow themselves to be put in such a vulnerable position. As a result, often without conscious thought, they may work hard to keep their emotions very controlled, preventing themselves from feeling the pain of what has happened, but also greatly hampering their ability to form and maintain close relationships.

4. **Depression and thoughts of suicide:** Everyone experiences depression from time to time, but the following forms of it are very common in women who

have experienced abortion:

- Sad mood ranging from feelings of melancholy to total hopelessness.
 - Sudden and uncontrollable crying episodes, the source of which appear to be a total mystery.
 - Deterioration of self-concept because they feel wholly deficient in their ability to function as a "normal" woman. They experience insomnia, loss of appetite and/or reduced sex drive.
 - Reduced motivation for the normal activities of life. The things that occupied their lives before the depression no longer seem worth doing.
 - Disruption in interpersonal relationships because of the general lack of enthusiasm for all activities. This is especially evidenced in relationships with husbands or boyfriends, particularly if the man was involved in the abortion decision. Post-abortion people often have a deep sense of loneliness because of this.
 - Thoughts of suicide or preoccupation with death. Not surprisingly, in a study done by the Elliot Institute some 33% of post-abortive women surveyed reached a level of depression so deep that they would rather die than go on.
5. **Anniversary syndrome:** In the survey referenced above, some 54% of post-abortive women report an increase of PAS symptoms around the time of the anniversary of the abortion. These symptoms may also increase on the anniversary date of when the child would have been born.
 6. **Re-experiencing the abortion:** A very common event described by post-abortive women is the sudden distressing, recurring "flashbacks" of the abortion episode. This often occurs during situations that resemble some aspect of the abortion, such as a routine gynecological exam, or when they hear sounds that remind them of the noises they heard during the abortion. "Flashbacks" also occur in the form of recurring nightmares about babies in general or the aborted baby in particular. These nightmares usually involve themes of lost, dismembered or crying babies.
 7. **Preoccupation with becoming pregnant again:** A significant percentage of women who abort become pregnant again within one year, and many others verbalize the desire to conceive again as quickly as possible. The new baby, sometimes referred to as the "atonement baby," may represent an unconscious desire to replace the one that was aborted.
 8. **Anxiety over fertility and childbearing issues:** Some post-abortive women maintain a fear that they will never again become pregnant or will have a miscarriage in future pregnancies. Some expect to have handicapped children because they have disqualified themselves as good mothers. Many refer to these fears as punishments from

God.

9. **Interruption of the bonding process with present and/or future children:** Fearing another devastating loss, a post-abortive woman may not allow herself to truly bond with other children. Another common reaction is to atone for her actions toward the aborted child by trying to be the world's most perfect mother to her remaining or future children. Likewise, the woman who already had children at the time of her abortion may discover that she is beginning to view them in a different light. At one extreme, she may unconsciously devalue them, thinking things like, "you were the lucky one, you were allowed to live." Or she may go in the opposite direction and become overly protective.
10. **Survival guilt:** Most women do not abort for trivial reasons. They are usually in the midst of a heartbreaking situation in which they stand to lose much if they choose to give birth. In the end, the decision boils down to a sorrowful "It's me or you, and I choose me." But, while the abortion frees them from their current trauma, it frequently produces in them an unrelenting guilt for choosing their own comfort over the life of the child.
11. **Development of eating disorders:** Some post-abortive women develop anorexia (self-starvation) or bulimia (causing one's self to vomit after eating). Anorexia results in a person becoming dangerously thin. Others might go to the other extreme and overeat, causing extreme obesity. Becoming unattractive, by being extremely thin or obese, is a form of self-punishment. This helps perpetuate their own belief that they are unworthy of anyone's attention.
12. **Alcohol and drug abuse:** Alcohol and drug use often serve initially as a form of self-medication, a way of coping with the pain of the abortion memories. Sadly, the woman who resorts to alcohol and/or drugs eventually finds herself having not only more problems but also fewer resources with which to solve them. The mental and physical consequences of alcohol or drug abuse only worsen the symptoms the woman is already experiencing.
13. **Other self-punishing or self-degrading behaviors:** In addition to eating disorders and substance abuse, the post-abortive woman may also enter into abusive relationships, become promiscuous, and fail to take care of herself medically or deliberately hurt herself emotionally and/or physically.
14. **Brief reactive psychosis:** Rarely, a post-abortive woman may experience a brief psychotic episode, for two weeks or less, after her abortion. The break with reality and subsequent recovery are both extremely rapid, and in most cases the person returns completely to normal behavior when it is over. While this is an unusual reaction to abortion, it bears mentioning because it is possible for a person to have a brief psychotic reaction to a stressful

event without being labeled a psychotic individual. During such an episode, the individual's perception of reality is drastically distorted. These individuals should be referred to the care of a professional.

THE CALL TO COUNSEL

This Guide and the video presentation show the devastating effects of abortion. The greatest privilege you have is that of participating in the ministry of Christ, through helping a person heal from those effects. It is important that you become familiar with the material in the following pages before you minister to post-abortive people. Christ came to save the world not to condemn it. He offers love, forgiveness, restoration, redemption, salvation, healing and eternal life to all who call on His name. (Jn.3:16-17; Jn.12:47; Rom.5:10; Rom.10:9-10; Gal.5:1) He calls you to minister to others with the same heart and purpose. He does not call you to judge them, reject them or add more shame and guilt to what they are suffering. (Matt.6:15; Matt.7:1; 2 Cor.5:18-19; Eph.4:32; Jas.4:12) Bring them to Christ or restore the Christian to the fullness of His Grace. The Scriptures below are a clear reminder that Jesus is the only one who can change them and set them free. You cannot.

John 3:16-17 *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”*

John 12:47 *“If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.”*

Romans 5:10 *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”*

Romans 10:9-10 *“That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”*

Galatians 5:1 *“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”*

Matthew 6:15 *“But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.”*

Matthew 7:1 *“Do not judge so that you will not be judged.”*

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 *“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”*

Ephesians 4:32 *“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”*

James 4:12 *“There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?”*

Since you minister in Christ's name, you will want to search your own life for any sin or wrong motives that would hinder the Holy Spirit working in and through you. (Gal.6:1-2; Matt. 7:3-5; Ps.139:23-24; Jas.5:16; Matt.5:23) Confess your own sin and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you as you minister to others. If you minister in your own flesh, with wrong motives, you may do more damage than good. When your heart is clean, you will be more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence with you. You are not alone as you minister to others.

Galatians 6:1-2 *“Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”*

Matthew 7:3-5 *“Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite,*

first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Psalm 139:23-24 *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way."*

James 5:16 *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."*

The women and men who come may be broken, desperate, angry and fearful. Many have kept the secret for a long time. They need to have a safe, trusting and confidential person and place to share. **Keeping confidences is of utmost importance.** You may **not** mention their name or their story to anyone, not even your spouse or closest friends. You must **always** get permission from the person to share with others. If you cannot keep confidences, send them to someone who can. You must protect the person, as well as your church, from gossip, slander, malice, judgment and a lack of forgiveness. (Prov.10:12; Prov.17:9; Prov.11:13; 2Cor.12:20; Eph.4:31)

Proverbs 10:12 *"Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions."*

Proverbs 17:9 *"He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."*

Proverbs 11:13 *"He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is trustworthy conceals a matter."*

2 Corinthians 12:20 *"For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances;"*

Ephesians 4:31 *"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice."*

You also need to protect yourself. When counseling with someone of the opposite sex, you do not want to be totally alone with them. If possible, have a place that is private, but where others can be near. You want to avoid any accusations of wrong behavior.

When they come to you, be a good listener. Show you are

interested and care about what they are sharing. Do not interrupt. Do not assume you know what they are feeling or what they have done. Let them tell you. Let them express their feelings whatever they may be. It is best if you do not act shocked or repulsed by what they share. In love, tell them God's truth with a gentle voice and humble attitude. Let God speak however He desires through you. Remember, this is not a time to scold or accuse, but a time to be understanding and compassionate. (Col.3:12-14)

Colossians 3:12-14 *"So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."*

Often the road to healing is long with many setbacks. Be patient. Each person may be at different place on their journey. There is no pattern or formula they will follow. Trust God to do His work, in His time and in His way. If they are Christians, Christ will finish what He has begun in their lives. (Philp.1:6)

Philippians 1:6 *"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."*

As you begin to minister to the post-abortive person, it will be important to remember the verse below. You are there with them to help them "reason" with the Lord. And yet you will be fully dependent on "reasoning" with the Lord as you guide the person through the process. May God bless you!

Isaiah 1:18 *"Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*

TEACHING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

The Scriptures presented here are likely well known to you and used as a part of your evangelistic ministries. However, it is important to use these Scriptures as a tool specifically for counseling post-abortive individuals.

The first step in the healing process requires the person to take responsibility for their sin of murder involved in the abortion. Other people might have been very influential in their decision to have an abortion. In fact, they may have even been coerced. However, if they can't accept full responsibility then they can't fully accept the Grace. Whether or not a person is a Christian, the following truths apply.

Remind them that God is holy and hates sin. He does not hate the individual you are ministering to, but hates the sin they have done. God hates sin because it separates that person from Him. Sin destroys lives and makes a person its slave. It steals their freedom, peace and joy. The final outcome, the penalty of sin, will be death. (Isa.59:2; Rom.6:23; Heb.9:27; Jn.8:34)

Isaiah 59:2 *"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."*

Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Hebrews 9:27 *"Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,"*

John 8:34 *"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."*

Help the person to realize that God loves them and has a plan for their life. He created that person to know, love and follow God. (Jer.29:11; Ps.139:1-6 & 15-17; Ps.100:3)

Jeremiah 29:11 *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

Psalm 139:1-6 *"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. 5 You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain."*

Psalm 139:15-17 *"My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, 16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. 17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!"*

Psalm 100:3 *"Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture."*

People, especially those involved with abortion, need to understand they are not alone. Everyone has sinned. (Rom.3:10-13; Rom.3:23; Is.53:6; Ps.58:3)

Romans 3:10-13 *"As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." 13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips."*

Romans 3:23 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"*

Isaiah 53:6 *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

Psalm 58:3 *"Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies."*

Post-abortive people often feel that there are degrees of sin and that their sin of abortion is too great for God to forgive them. You can remind them that the blood of Jesus covers all sin, even that of abortion. He can change the person grieving from the sin of abortion and give them a new, meaningful and full life. (Jn.3:16; Jn.14:6; Lk.19:10; Rom.5:8; Jn.10:10; 1Pet.3:18; Acts4:12; Heb.7:25; 1Jn.5:11-12)

John 3:16-17 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

John 14:6 *"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

John 10:10 *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

1 Peter 3:18 *"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,"*

Acts 4:12 *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

Hebrews 7:25 *"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them."*

1 John 5:11-12 “*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*”

The post-abortive person needs to confess their sin. This can be privately before God or with you present. When they acknowledge their sin forgiveness can be received immediately. It is important for them to know that they may not feel the forgiveness immediately. Remind them that forgiveness is not a feeling but a fact. (Rom.6:23; 1Jn.1:8-9; Eph.1:7; Eph.2:8-9; Rom.10:9-10 & 13)

Romans 6:23 “*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

1 John 1:8-9 “*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*”

Ephesians 1:7 “*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.*”

Ephesians 2:8-9 “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*”

Romans 10:9-10 “*That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*”

Romans 10:13 “*for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’*”

The person will not forget what they have done. But assure them that God has erased the record of that confessed sin. He does not count it against them anymore, nor will He punish them for it. Instead, God gives them Christ’s righteousness. When God looks at them, He sees the goodness of Christ, a new creation.

Remind the person that they may have to face the consequences of the sin. God does not always change our situation, but He changes the heart and the attitude. Assure them that whatever they continue to face, God will help them through it.

(Rom.8:1; Rom.8:28; Jer.31:34; Isa.1:18; Ps.103:11-13; 2Cor.5:17; 2Cor.5:21; Jn.1:12-13; Ezk.36:25-28; Philp.4:12-13; Josh.1:9; Zephaniah 3:11 & 15-17)

Romans 8:1 “*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,*”

Romans 8:28 “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*”

Jeremiah 31:34 “*No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*

Isaiah 1:18 “*Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”*

Psalms 103:11-13 “*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;”*

2 Corinthians 5:17 “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*

2 Corinthians 5:21 “*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*”

John 1:12-13 “*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”*

Ezekiel 36:25-28 “*I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. 28 You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.”*

Philippians 4:12-13 “*I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”*

Joshua 1:9 “*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

Zephaniah 3:11 “*On that day you will not be put to shame for all the wrongs you have done to me, because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill. ...15 The Lord has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. 16 On that day they will say to*

Jerusalem, “Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. 17 The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.”

It is important to teach the person that God, in His great power and wisdom, can use their past for His glory. The memory of their past can help them avoid repeating the same sin. Or it can help them to counsel others who are considering abortion or who have also had an abortion. Teach them that remembering their own sin should make them more compassionate towards others who sin. (2Cor.1:3-5; 2Cor.2:14-16; Ps.116:1)

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.”

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. 15 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?”

Psalms 116:1 “I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy.”

Finally, it is extremely important that the person you are counseling understands that forgiveness should bring **true repentance**. Repenting is sincerely turning from your sin and having a changed attitude towards that sin. Remind them that

they are forgiven but that they cannot have another abortion or think that it is acceptable behavior. Jesus did not condemn a woman who was caught in sinful behavior. But he did tell her to **“Go and sin no more”** (Jn.8:11). (Acts3:19; Eph5:6-7)

Acts 3:19 “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”

Ephesians 5:6-7 “Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them.”

HELPING OVERCOME ANGER THROUGH FORGIVENESS

For healing to occur, the person must address their anger and forgive those who have hurt them before, during or after the abortion. As people come out of denial and secrecy about their role in an abortion, they will often be angry. Their intensity of anger will vary, but expect to see it and help them deal with it. Keep in mind, they may not be ready to release their anger and forgive. Be patient and continue to point them to forgiveness.

The principles that will be discussed are found in the parable Jesus tells in Matthew 18:23-35. The listed principles are taken from Edward M. Smith’s book “Healing Life’s Hurts through Theophostic Prayer.” A few additional principles have been added. You may want to read the parable aloud with the person as you explain the principles.

“That is why the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. When he had begun to settle the accounts, a person who owed him 10,000 talents was brought to him. Because he couldn’t pay, his master ordered him, his wife, his children, and all that he had to be sold so that payment could be made. Then

the servant fell down and bowed low before him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will repay you everything!’ The master of that servant had compassion and released him, canceling his debt.

“But when that servant went away, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him, seized him by the throat, and said, ‘Pay what you owe!’ Then his fellow servant fell down and began begging him, ‘Be patient with me and I will repay you!’ But he refused and went and had him thrown into prison until he could repay the debt.

“When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were very disturbed and went and reported to their master all that had occurred. Then his master sent for him and said to him, ‘You evil servant! I canceled that entire debt for you because you begged me. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he

could repay the entire debt. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each one of you unless you forgive your brother from your hearts."

The parable Jesus tells is meant to show a clear picture of God's forgiveness towards a sinner. When a debt of sin is that great, only God can repay it. Since God has forgiven the post-abortive person in Jesus, He commands that person to forgive others. Forgiveness is not a choice for a Christian it is a requirement. (Matt.6:14-15; Matt.18:21-22)

Matthew 6:14-15 *"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

Matthew 18:21-22 *"Peter came up to the Lord and asked, 'How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?' 22 Jesus answered: Not just seven times, but seventy-seven times!"*

The first principle: Help the person understand that forgiveness requires a person to take an account. In the parable the king had an account, a record of what was owed him. (Matt.18:23-24) The person you are counseling may want to make a list, either written or verbal, of what others have done to them how they felt. Let them share that list with you. They may benefit from writing a letter to the offender expressing what that person did to them and how it hurt them. This may be their boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, pastor, doctor, family member, God, a friend, etc. **The list and letter are not to be sent**, but used to help identify areas where forgiveness is needed.

The second principle: Prepare the person you are counseling to have realistic expectations. They must realize the offender can never make the situation right. They cannot undo what was done or said. They cannot remove the pain or memories. Only Jesus can heal emotional wounds and ease suffering. In Matt.18:25, the king knew the servant could never repay him. After he forgave the servant, he did not go and seek payment again or expect it. It was finished.

The forgiveness of the person you are counseling may or may not impact the life of the offender. The offender may feel remorse of they may not care. It does not matter. Forgiveness is about finding freedom regardless of the response by the offender.

Also, the king forgave the servant even though the servant lied. The servant could never pay back the amount owed even if he gave the king every coin he earned till he died! The king knew this, yet he forgave the servant's debt. Why? The king forgave because he was willing and able to do it. Jesus forgave our sins even when we were sinning and did not love Him. Forgiveness is a decision of our will, not our emotions. (Rom.5:8; Col.3:12-15; 2Cor.2:10-11; Luke 11:4)

Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

Colossians 3:12-15 *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one*

another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 *"If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes..."*

Luke 11:4 *"Forgive our sins, as we forgive everyone who has done wrong to us. And keep us from being tempted."*

The third principle: The post-abortive person must accept that anger is a normal emotion to injustice and pain. The anger of the person you are counseling may be justified. Others may have hurt them or lied to them. Trusted friends or family may have abandoned them or discarded them once the abortion was over. They may be angry at several different people, themselves and even God.

However, teach them that anger must be dealt with before freedom will come. In the parable we see that the king's anger was severe, but was the right response to the servant's irresponsibility. (Matt.18:25)

The anger may be serving as a mask for the post-abortive person. That mask can hide other emotions such as fears, hurt, depression, guilt and hopelessness. Letting go of their anger may make the individual feel that they will be hurt again as those other emotions come out.

If the unresolved anger and the underlying emotions are not dealt with, the post-abortive person will cope in unhealthy ways. The two unhealthy ways of dealing with anger are: expressing it aggressively

1. Outwards towards others
2. Inwards towards oneself

Aggressive, outward anger may come in the form of shouting, ridiculing, name calling, cursing, threatening, blaming and physical violence.

Internalizing anger may result in bitterness, keeping record of wrongs, resentment, depression, denial of anger and emotional stress. Both types of unhealthy anger may result in broken relationships, alcohol and/or drug use, promiscuity, sleeplessness, nightmares, rebellion against spiritual things, over reacting, etc. (Matt.5:21-22; Eph.4:26-27, 31-32; Ps.32:3-4; 1Jn.2:9; Heb.12:15; 1Jn.3:10; 2)

Matthew 5:21-23 *"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."*

Ephesians 4:26 & 31-32 *"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and*

compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Psalm 32:3-4 *“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.*

1 John 2:9 *“Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.”*

Hebrews 12:15 *“See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.”*

1 John 3:10 *“This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.”*

You may need to be prepared for the person to express their anger toward another person by revealing their anger about that individual to you. It may make you uncomfortable, especially if expressing anger is against cultural behaviors. But it must be tolerated. This all part of the Christian counseling process. (Gal.6:2)

Galatians 6:2 *“Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.”*

The fourth principle: Once the post-abortion person sincerely decides to forgive, new thinking must take place. Help the person you are counseling to know that it is necessary to stop repeating thoughts about the matter and repeating the matter to others. This would be just a form of self pity or seeking pity from others. This may be a good time to burn or discard the letter or list that was made in the first principle. We do not forget, but dwelling on the past will keep the post-abortive person a prisoner to its pain and continue to give the offender power over them.

The fifth principle: Even though forgiveness has been given, the person you are counseling may not trust the offender or want reconciliation. This is not wrong. The king did not become best friends with the servant. Nor did the king lend the servant more money. In order to be protected from future injury, it may be wise not to be in a relationship with the

offender. The offender may not understand this. In fact you might help by explaining that to them in a loving way. Reconciliation is about relationship. Relationships require trust, honesty and integrity from both persons. Trust may take time to be reestablished. It may never be achieved or even desired. It may not be wise trust someone, or stay in a relationship.

The sixth principle: Teach the person you are counseling that forgiveness requires compassion for those who have committed an offence. In the parable the king felt sorry for the servant and forgave his debt. Finding compassion will take time. It helps to see the offender as God sees him or her. The goal of forgiveness is to replace anger with peace and compassion when the offense is recalled.

The closing verses of the parable are clear. God requires us to forgive. The servant was punished because he refused to go and forgive others in the same way. God has forgiven us all. He will enable us to forgive others. He never commands us to do something without enabling us to do it in His strength and power. Help the post-abortive person to forgive and leave the offenders to God. Encourage them to trust that God will deal with them however He chooses. Their choice is to forgive and be free.

HELPING WITH THE GRIEVING PROCESS

The grieving process has two principles.

Principle One— Seeking the forgiveness of others: Just as a post-abortive person needs to forgive others, they may need *to ask* forgiveness from those they have hurt. They may have had an abortion against the wishes of others, even the father of the baby. They may have treated others cruelly or inappropriately because of PAS. This will need to be dealt with.

Have the person make a list of all the people they have harmed. If possible, they will need to ask for forgiveness from these people. They must be certain that going to them will not cause greater hurt to the person. If it is not possible to go to the person, as in a death or moving away, have the person write a letter requesting forgiveness. Have them read it out loud to

you privately. Another method uses an empty chair. The person can speak to the chair as though the offended person is seated there. They can say what was done, that it was wrong and they are sorry.

It is very important that the person does not go to the offended person in anger or go to shift blame to that person. It is a time to share only what they have done and ask for forgiveness. It is best if this first time is brief. It may be helpful if you go with them, mainly to pray for them. Always have the person you are counseling pray before they go and search their hearts and motives. God can soften the hearts of others on their behalf. Realize that some people will not forgive. God only requires that they ask for forgiveness. The person is not responsible for the responses they receive.

Principle Two— Mourning the loss of the child: *The most important person, other than God, that the post-abortive person will need to seek forgiveness from, is the aborted child.* This is part of healthy grieving. The post-abortive person must be given permission to grieve and acknowledge the loss of their child. Grief and sadness are normal responses to any traumatic experience in our lives. Just as with anger, unresolved grief and sorrow can lead to unhealthy thinking and unhealthy behaviors. The Bible tells us in John, Chapter 11 that Jesus wept when His friend Lazarus died. Jesus immediately went to His Father in prayer. Sorrow should drive the person you are counseling to the loving arms of the Heavenly Father. He wants to comfort them. He wants to replace their sorrow with joy. Show them the Scriptures that affirm His love from them. (2Cor.7:9-11; Matt.5:4; Rom.8:35-39)

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 *“yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.”*

Matthew 5:4 *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”*

Romans 8:35-39 *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

One method which has been helpful in the grieving process is to allow the post-abortive person(s) to name the lost child. This can be done in different ways. The person(s) can hold a life-like doll naming it and sharing why that name was chosen.

The doll is given to the pastor or helper. As the doll is given up they may say something like, “I release you into the hands of God. Good-bye (name).” Some counselors use the lighting of a candle. After naming the child, the person can then blow out the flame. You may have different cultural ways to acknowledge the child and allow the mother and or the father to say good-bye.

The Bible does not tell us clearly where the unborn and infants go at death. We do know God loves children and has compassion for them. He understands that they have not had an opportunity to hear, understand and decide to follow Him. There are a few verses that give us comfort. (2Sam.12:22-23; Is.43:5-7; Mark 10:14-16)

2 Samuel 12:22-23 *“He answered, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, ‘Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live.’ 23 But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”*

Isaiah 43:5-7 *“Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. 6 I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth— 7 everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”*

Mark 10:14-16 *“When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” 16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”*

STAYING HEALED BY AVOIDING DECEPTION

Principle One— Healing is a process. Assure the person you are counseling that it will take time to learn to live in the forgiveness and freedom Christ gave them. They will be discouraged at times, and may feel like giving up. They should not! God has given them a Helper, His Holy Spirit to help them go forward in His power. God has also given them you. Make yourself available to them whenever the doubts come into their life. Encourage them to seek you out, if necessary. But they should be assured that they have direct access to God’s throne where there is sufficient grace to face the struggles. Remind them to trust that God is doing a new thing in their life. (Jn.14:16; Heb.4:16; Gal.5:1; Is.43:18-19)

John 14:16 *“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.”*

Hebrews 4:16 *“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

Galatians 5:1 *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”*

Isaiah 43:18-19 *“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing!*

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.”

Principle Two— There is an enemy. The person you are counseling must not forget that there is an enemy who seeks to destroy them and undo the healing that is taking place. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. Satan wants them to doubt the character and word of God. Satan will speak lies and accusations into their minds. He will use difficult and painful circumstances to cause them to begin to believe his lies. If they believe these lies, they will soon find themselves in bondage to thoughts and behaviors that are destructive. This will then lead back to sinful behavior. Remind them that all sin begins with lies. (Rev.12:10; 1Pet.5:8)

Revelation 12:10 *“Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.’”*

1 Peter 5:8 *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”*

As they begin to believe the lies, they will act on them. What a person believes and thinks affects the way they behave. The Bible says in Proverbs 23:7, *“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.”*

Principle Three— The word of God is a sure defense. The most important weapon you have against Satan and the lies is the Bible, the Word of God. Lies must be confronted immediately with God’s Word. Christ Himself used scripture when tempted by Satan. (Matthew4:1-11)

Matthew 4:1 *“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

2 And when he [Jesus] had fasted forty days and forty nights, he hungered. 3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’

5 Then the devil took him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said unto him, If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down: for it is written, ‘He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, On their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ 7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord thy God.’

8 Again, the devil took him onto a high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 and he said unto him, ‘All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.’ 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, ‘Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, ‘You will worship the Lord thy God, and him only will you serve.’ 11 then the devil left him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

Christ used the words of His Father to conquer Satan. Follow-

ing in his example the post-abortive person will need to rely on God’s powerful Word. The Bible reveals the truth about who God is. The person you are counseling will need to continually read it, pray it, think on it, memorize it, learn it, speak it out loud, listen to it and obey it. It is powerful to keep the person in the process of healing. (Rom.12:1-2; Jn.8:31-32; 2Cor.10:3-5; Heb.4:12; 2 Tim.3:16-17)

Romans 12:1-2 *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

John 8:31-32 *“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 *“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*

Hebrews 4:12 *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

In conclusion help the person to remember this. Perhaps they should memorize it almost as a prayer.

“Dear Lord, I know I am forgiven. I know that I can’t change or control what has happened in my past. But, with Your help, I can control how I feel and what I do now, in the present. I realize that this will make all the difference in my future so that the end of my life will reflect your Glory from this point onward.”

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL AFTER COUNSELING

This information should be given to any person who has been counseled and is healing from abortion.

I will not believe the lie that I am rejected, unloved, dirty, shameful, because in Christ I am completely accepted.

John 1:12	I am God's child.
John 15:5	I am Christ's friend.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord and I am one spirit with Him.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20	I have been bought with a price. I belong to God.
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of Christ's body.
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint, a holy one.
Ephesians 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child.
Ephesians 2:18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
Colossians 1:14	I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
Colossians 2:10	I am complete in Christ.

I will not believe the lie that I am guilty, unprotected, alone, or abandoned because in Christ I am totally secure.

Romans 8:28	I am assured all things work together for good.
Romans 8:31-34	I am free from any condemning charges against me.
Romans 8:35-39	I cannot be separated from the love of God.
Philippians 1:6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.
2 Timothy 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.
Hebrews 4:16	I can find grace and mercy to help in time of need.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.

I will not believe the lie that I am worthless, inadequate, helpless, or hopeless because in Christ I am deeply significant.

Matthew 5:13-14	I am the salt of the earth and the light of the world.
John 15:1-5	I am a branch of the true vine and a channel of His life.
John 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed by God to bear fruit.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am a temple of God.
Ephesians 2:10	I am God's workmanship, created for good works.
Ephesians 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ who gives me the strength.

SUPPLEMENTAL PRO-LIFE SCRIPTURE

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF LIFE

Genesis 1:27 - *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

Job 33:4 - *The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

Psalms 95:6 - *Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;*

Psalms 100:3 - *Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his, we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*

Psalms 119:73 - *Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.*

Acts 17:24-25 - *The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.*

GOD CREATES AND FASHIONS LIFE WITHIN THE WOMB

Genesis 25:21 - *Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer and Rebekah became pregnant.*

Genesis 29:31 - *When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.*

Job 10:8-12 - *Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again? Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese, clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.*

Job 31:15 - *Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?*

Psalms 139:13-16 - *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I*

know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Isaiah 44:2 - *This is what the Lord says — he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you:*

Isaiah 44:24 - *This is what the Lord says — your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:*

Isaiah 49:1.5 - *Listen to me, you islands; hear this you distant nations: Before I was born the Lord called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name. And now the Lord says — he who formed me in the womb to be his servant . . .*

Jeremiah 1:5 - *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.*

THE INCARNATION OF JESUS BEGINS WITH CONCEPTION

Luke 1:31 - *You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.*

Matthew 1:20 - *But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Ghost."*

THE UNBORN ARE TREATED AS PERSONS IN THE BIBLE

Psalms 51:5 - *Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*

Psalms 58:3 - *Even from birth—the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.*

Luke 1:41.44 - *When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, ". . . As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy."*

CONCEPTION IS A GIFT FROM GOD

Genesis 25:21 - *Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer and Rebekah became pregnant.*

Exodus 23:25-26 - *Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you, and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life-span.*

1 Samuel 1:1-20 - (Hannah prays to the Lord because she was barren, and the Lord grants her request.)

CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM THE LORD

Genesis 33:5 - *Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."*

Psalms 127:3-5 - *Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.*

GOD FORBIDS THE TAKING OF HUMAN LIFE

Genesis 9:6 - *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.*

Exodus 20:13 - *You shall not murder.*

Exodus 21:22-25 - *If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.*

WE ARE TO DEFEND AND PROTECT LIFE

Deuteronomy 27:19 - *Cursed is the man who withholds justice from the alien, the fatherless or the widow.*

Psalms 10:17-18 - *You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.*

Psalms 41:1 - *Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble.*

Proverbs 31:8-9 - *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Matthew 25:35-36, 40 - *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.*

RAPE, INCEST & BIRTH DEFECTS DO NOT JUSTIFY TAKING A CHILD'S LIFE

Deuteronomy 24:16 - *Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin.*

Isaiah 45:9-10 - *Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "He has no hands?" Woe to him who says to his father, "What have you begotten?" or to his mother, "What have you brought to birth?"*

1 Corinthians 10:13 - *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

Ephesians 2:10 - *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

PROCLAIM LIFE GLOBAL

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
2 Timothy 2:1-2

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