

Are You Pro-life for the *Right Reasons?*

Christian First Principles and the Protection of
Preborn Boys and Girls



Rev. Jim Harden, M.Div., CompassCare CEO

COMPASSCARE

What does it mean to be pro-life?

Why should everyone, everywhere, stand against abortion?

Abortion is a symptom of a larger cultural cancer eating away at civilized order. How did this malady emerge and what is the cure? Jesus warned that as time ripened for His second coming, evil would mature and lawlessness would increase, causing people's love to grow cold. He encouraged His people to stand strong and endure (Mt. 24:9-13). Abortion is a systemic injustice, a crime against humanity, and the oppression of the weakest and most vulnerable among us.

To stand against systemic injustice requires courage and sacrifice. Why should anyone want to risk that level of discomfort, unpopularity, pain, arson, and even death threats? Why ought everyone, everywhere, be pro-life? We need an eternal perspective in America's moral midnight to keep us focused, a view empowered by the light of Christ.

Pro-life strategist Rev. Jim Harden, M.Div. takes a practical and theological look at what it means to be pro-life in this monograph, which can be used as an insightful Bible study for a church or small group, including questions for discussion and personal reflection.



Rev. Jim Harden is the CEO of CompassCare Pregnancy Services and lives outside of Rochester, NY, with his wife and ten children. He has written extensively on medical ethics, executive leadership, and pro-life strategy.

Are You Pro-Life for the Right Reasons?

Christian First Principles and the Protection of Preborn
Boys and Girls

By Rev. Jim Harden, M.Div.

© 2023 by Rev. Jim Harden, M.Div.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States of America.

ISBN: 979-8-9894922-0-6

V3

Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1977, by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Lockman.org.

For more information about CompassCare,
go to CompassCareCommunity.com

An imprint from CompassCare

2024 W. Henrietta Rd. #6D
Rochester, NY 14623



*An insightful Bible study for
your church or small group.*

Endorsements of Rev. Jim Harden, M.Div.

“Quite frankly... it's because of men and women like you [Rev. Harden] that we're at this moment where [Roe and Casey are] overturned.”

Tony Perkins

The Washington Watch

“Thank God for what you're doing—and you're still doing it... We're all grateful for that.”

Gov. Mike Huckabee

The Huckabee Show

“What you're doing is honorable. What you're doing is obviously your calling in life. And I admire you for it. I admire all the people who donate to you.”

Sean Hannity

Fox News

“I just want to let you know; we have your back. 100%.”

Charlie Kirk

Turning Point USA

"In times like these, there are always a handful of people who refuse to shut up and sit down. They change the world. Bonhoeffer, King, and today, the names include Jim Harden and those at CompassCare who refuse to bow down."

Glenn Beck

The Glenn Beck Program

"You are one of those heroes out there... It would be an amazing thing if instead of three CompassCare centers in the State of New York, there were 10—or 50!"

Eric Metaxas

The Eric Metaxas Show

"The minute Rev. Jim Harden walked on stage to film with Daystar, I was touched by his sincerity and wisdom. I am encouraged there are people like him to fight on behalf of the unborn: brave, forceful, and obedient to God."

Joni Lamb

Daystar Television Network

ARE YOU PRO-LIFE FOR THE RIGHT REASONS?

Christian First Principles and the Protection of Preborn Boys and Girls

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: What Does it Mean to Be Pro-Life?	1
Principle 1: Authority, What is Your Standard?	8
Principle 2: Creation, All Humans are Equally Valuable	14
Principle 3: The Fall, Do We Know Better Than God?	20
Principle 4: Redemption, Violence to End All Violence	26
Principle 5: Glory, How an Eternal Perspective Transforms Fear Into Confidence	33
Closing: A Word of Encouragement	38
About Rev. Jim Harden	44

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PRO-LIFE?

What does it mean to be pro-life?

Why should everyone, everywhere, stand against abortion?

Abortion is a symptom of a larger cultural cancer eating away at civilized order. How did this malady emerge and what is the cure? Jesus warned that as time ripened for His second coming, evil would mature and lawlessness would increase, causing people's love to grow cold. He encouraged His people to stand strong and endure (Mt. 24:9-13).

Abortion is a systemic injustice, a crime against humanity, and the oppression of the weakest and most vulnerable among us. Systemic social injustice is the collusion of government with culture, dehumanizing a category of

human in order to enslave or destroy them legally. But standing against systemic social injustice is, by definition, unpopular. For systemic injustice to exist it must be accepted by mainstream society such that to stand against it represents the minority position. The only place that this kind of injustice exists in the modern West and in the U.S. specifically is the killing of preborn boys and girls through abortion. This was an issue for the Supreme Court in 1973 because it was argued that if it could be established that an unborn baby is a person protected under the law, then

**To stand
against
systemic
injustice
requires
courage and
sacrifice.**

abortion ought to be outlawed. Unfortunately, the majority opinion author of the Roe v Wade ruling concluded, “The word ‘person’ does not apply to the unborn.” So began a systemic injustice of cataclysmic proportions, destroying well over 60 million Americans, including half of the black population. And, as the CEO of

an organization firebombed by pro-abortion Antifa, I can tell you being truly pro-life and standing against abortion on behalf of women and children exploited by a profiteering billion-dollar abortion empire, is very unpopular.

To stand against systemic injustice requires courage and sacrifice. Why should anyone want to risk that level of discomfort, unpopularity, pain, arson, and even death threats? Why ought everyone, everywhere, be pro-life? We need an eternal perspective in America’s moral

midnight to keep us focused, a view empowered by the light of Christ.

Why are you pro-life? The reasons most people give for their pro-life beliefs often are perceived by many as mere opinion, no better or worse than a pro-abortion opinion. In fact, I've argued that most pro-lifers are such for the same basic reason people are pro-abortion: personal autonomy. Those on the pro-life side might cite the baby's personal autonomous right to life while those on the pro-abortion side refer to the woman's personal autonomous right to her own body. Interestingly, when Roe was overturned with the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision on June 24, 2022, the majority opinion author said that as soon as Roe was decided, it was on a collision course with the Constitution.

Why? Anytime the government fabricates a right it will ultimately compete with an inalienable one—a woman's right to abortion competes with a baby's right to life, or a pro-life Christian's freedom of speech. Since Roe, the courts have been strewn with the remains of a cultural battle of these competing rights. One need look no further than the unequal enforcement of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act signed by Bill Clinton in 1994, designed to quell pro-life speech in or near abortion clinics, despite attempts at evenhanded language. That Act is not being enforced by the Department of Justice or the FBI against those who violently attack pro-life pregnancy centers, betraying the truth that the government has a vested interest in protecting the rights it creates over the ones "endowed by our Creator."

Beyond the failure of personal autonomy, people often fancy themselves pro-life based on how they as individuals experience the world. Interestingly, according to a recent Gallop Poll, most Americans want abortions restricted except in the cases of the unimaginable existential crisis of a woman's life or rape, both of which only represent approximately 1% of all abortions. Translation: Most people want 99% of abortion outlawed.

Bottom line: many people are pro-life if for no other reason than their existential experience; they simply cannot imagine not being alive or someone taking their life. This view often manifests when a person insists they are pro-life but could never tell a woman not to have an abortion because of the imagined existential angst associated with facing an unplanned pregnancy. "I can't tell them what they should do because I am not walking in their shoes."

If one were to speak to ardently pro-life people and ask them why they are pro-life, or why other people ought to be pro-life too, you might get a lot of good answers. This gets us a little closer to the truth. Unfortunately, they are often secondary reasons, failing to afford pro-lifers the power to endure increasing cultural pressure.

Most people want 99% of abortion outlawed.

Those good but secondary reasons include: the science of embryology demonstrating that human life begins at fertilization, the egregious statistical volume of abortion, the risks and side-effects to women, negative personal

experiences of abortion, or positive personal experiences of adoption or even surviving abortion.

Many of these thoughtful but secondary pro-life arguments hinge on the often-unstated presumption that pro-choice people share the same primary belief about the inherent value of all humans, a value demanding respect through protection without partiality. That inherent value, or dignity, makes each of us inviolable—not to be violated. This belief emanates from the foundational Biblical truth, or first principle, that humans are made in the image of God, designed to reflect His character and nature back to Him and to each other.

The problem is that this foundational made-in-the-image-of-God belief is all but an echo in Western civilization now. So, the majority of reasons that pro-life people give to persuade their family, friends, co-workers, and even fellow Christians as to why they ought to be pro-life fall flat. Again, they are good reasons, but only if the other person you are attempting to convince of the pro-life position believes mankind is made a little lower than God.

However, the predominant belief today is that man is not made but is an accident, just a little smarter than the animals. These pro-life reasons, then, are secondary reasons, designed originally as a corrective apologetic to realign a person or group of people raised in a culture informed by Judeo-Christian morality. This moral framework can no longer be taken for granted.

This book is intended to reinforce the moral framework of the house of human civilization. Abortion is not just another social issue. Abortion represents a fundamental

misunderstanding about what it means to be human under God. This book reintroduces the first principles of the nature and meaning of man as revealed by God in Scripture, providing Christians with the ability to understand and more clearly articulate who we are and how that identity impacts our understanding of right and wrong. This understanding will hopefully provide pro-life Christians with the ability to be unwavering champions of humanity, standing strong against the true social injustice of our times: abortion.

Questions for Discussion

What is systemic injustice and why does abortion qualify?

How is abortion defined as it pertains to society at large?

What are the secondary reasons people give for being pro-life and why do they fall short?

Principle 1

AUTHORITY

WHAT IS YOUR STANDARD?

“Son, your sins are forgiven.” (Mk 2:5b).

These are the words a paralyzed man heard right before Jesus made him walk.

What kind of person has so much ownership over all humanity that He can expect us to behave according to His standard, and when we don't, He considers it a personal affront against Him, a sin only He can forgive? The religious leaders of the day were offended at Jesus' words of forgiveness because they understood that only God can forgive another man's sin. To clarify to the unbelieving scribes that He *is* God fixing a sin-sick world, Jesus says to them, ““But so that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins,’ turning to the paralytic He declares, ‘I say to you, get up’” (Mk 2:10-11).

What makes Jesus' words so amazing is that "He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Mk 1:22). Everyone knows that no one possesses a moral authority that can stand alone. But why were so many people jammed into the house where the paralytic was healed? It was not a magic show or even something so fantastic as to make a local paralytic walk. No. It was because Jesus was authoritatively "speaking the word to them" (Mk 2:2b).

Everyone knows that no one possesses a moral authority that can stand alone.

Why are pro-life pregnancy centers like CompassCare so adamantly pro-life? How do we know what choices to make, which direction to go, or how to guide another person's decision-making?

And if we have no higher reference point than man's reason or experience to determine right from wrong, which man's version of morality has the authority to prevail over others? And what mere mortal is qualified to arbitrate questions of such universal importance?

Who possesses the right to claim exclusive authority or the comprehensive knowledge necessary for total objectivity? Or, more to the point, who is anyone to say whether abortion is right or wrong?

Our principles must be rooted in an authority that is more concrete than the vapor of personal views, deeper than the creek of individual experience, more substantial than the shifting sands of public opinion, straighter than the winding streams of philosophy, and far beyond the sight of science.

When people foist their personal standards of behavior upon others based solely on their finite understanding of the world, irreconcilable differences result.

Scripture teaches that mankind wallows in the midnight swamp of abject moral poverty, the only solution being a direct infusion of light from on high. Jesus came, “To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Lk 1:79). Without Christ we are so lost that we cannot discern accurately with our heart (Jer 17:9), nor properly interpret the world with our mind (Rom 8:6a).

And yet, “God created man in His own image” (Gen 1:27a), designed to reflect His character as the moon reflects the sun. This presumes God, not man, is the model under whom all humans must submit. Finding a way back from sin and depravity apart from the direct revelation of Jesus defies Scripture by presuming man is not all that bad or unreasonable. On the contrary, Scripture admonishes, “Let no one deceive you with empty words...for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord” (Eph 5:6a, 8a).

Being people of Light, how then ought we to live? “Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them” (Eph 5:11). Because of the light of Christ, CompassCare and other pro-life pregnancy centers, exposes these “deeds of darkness,” the things about which “it is disgraceful even to speak of” (Eph 5:12) — things like abortion. The light of Jesus is the standard by which all people everywhere, across all the ages, will be measured. No sin will go overlooked. Either He pays for our sins through the cross or we will pay for them forever. CompassCare, and

other pro-life pregnancy centers, compassionately cajoles women to awaken to the truth of their condition, seeing unplanned pregnancy as a sovereignly ordained moment when God calls her to reorient herself to Him through Christ's sacrifice for sin on the cross. Then He empowers her to be in right relationship to others too, starting with her baby. For the unassailable and infallible word of God insists all humans are equally valuable, without qualification or favoritism (Gen 9:6; Lk 10:25-37; Jas 2:8-9). And His word, not ours, is authoritative: "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation" (2 Pt 1:20). Abortion demonstrates that moral authority is a life-or-death matter. Submission to God always results in life. Submission to man's authority ultimately results in death (Mt 7:13-14).

Our principles must be rooted in an authority that is more concrete than the vapor of personal views, deeper than the creek of individual experience, more substantial than the shifting sands of public opinion, straighter than the winding streams of philosophy, and far beyond the sight of science.

Questions for Discussion

What reasons have you heard people give for being pro-abortion or pro-choice?

Who is the presumed authority for those who are pro-abortion?

What reasons do you give for being pro-life?

By what authority are you pro-life?

CREATION

ALL HUMANS ARE EQUALLY VALUABLE

When God created the world with sinless man made in His image to rule it, He surveyed the situation, declaring it “very good.” (Gen. 1:31). After man rejected God’s authority in a vain attempt to have all God’s blessings without Him, man fell headlong into the dungeon of his own appetites, causing all creation to groan (Rom. 8:22). Now man’s natural self-centered bent is to replace God’s authority for his own. Man’s condition is writ large in nations where God, through the prophet Habakkuk, describes them as those whose “justice and authority originate with themselves” (Hab. 1:7). The end of the line for nations who ride the dark train of self-authority is “human bloodshed and violence... cutting off many peoples” (2:8b, 10b, 17b). And why does God say they do it? To build a society, a house high above calamity (2:9), to live lives filled only with pleasure.

Systemic injustice is a sign of a people who do not know their purpose, whose moral authority can no more rise above the dirt of their base appetites than a worm can fly. In rejecting God's purpose for himself, man placed his own desires on the throne. Multiply that condition over thousands of years and billions of people, and we land in a time and place where governments sanction, fund, and celebrate the mass infanticide of preborn boys and girls through abortion as if it were a right.

The only decision-making filter for a people who drink the foul water of self-authority is personal pleasure and pain, their minds interpreting the fickle duo through the distorted spectacles of experience and emotion. When morality is determined this way by a nation, as it is in America, dehumanization, enslavement, and death are the natural outcomes. This is how society can insist with the straight face of the judiciary that preborn boys and girls are not persons under the law and therefore can be killed legally via abortion.

Reframing our society into one where all humans, without qualification, are blessed and protected requires submitting to the plans of a heavenly architect.

But since fallen humanity is not just in the dark but is darkness itself, we cannot figure out how we got here, why we are here, nor how we ought to act (Eph. 4:17-20). If we could, there would be no need for Jesus Christ. We need God to show us. He does that by revealing Himself to us through the authority of Scripture.

Scripture begins with the creation story. It makes sense since origin reveals aim. Yet startlingly, man is not the main character. Creation is about God: “In the beginning God...” (Gen. 1:1a). Since you and I are not the main character, to know our place in this created order and how we ought to behave means that we must defer to God. Creation is God’s idea. It and everyone in it exists by His decree and is actively sustained by Him (Col. 1:16-17). Furthermore, the world and everyone in it are God’s because the God who commands is the God who owns (Job 41:11). This truth grates against people who deify themselves through radicalized autonomy.

Creation is an act of love, whereby God chose to build a place where beings designed to reflect His character and nature could be in right relationship with each other, the world they were destined to subdue, and the God who made them—forever. But sin blinded mankind to the blessing and responsibility God provided. As an act of mercy, God required man to leave the Garden of Eden lest we grow into ravenous wolves greedily eating of the tree of life, dooming ourselves to an eternal living death, isolated from each other and separated from God (Gen. 3:22ff). This turn of events set God to work again. The story of man’s redemption becomes proverbially the eighth day of creation

**Reframing our
society into
one where all
humans,
without
qualification,
are blessed
and protected
requires
submitting to
the plans of a
heavenly
architect.**

where God recreates man in His image (Eph. 4:24) through His Word, Jesus (John 1:1, 14).

Rejecting God's authority and purpose subjects all of creation to the futility of sin (Rom. 8:19-22). The solution is simple: Surrender self-authority to God's self-disclosure and obey. Or as Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). And what do repentance and obedience look like in a fallen world? Joining God in His mission to redeem it: "Vindicate the weak and fatherless...Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked" (Psa. 82:3a, 4).

Questions for Discussion

How does creation demonstrate the value of people?

How does creation reveal humanity's purpose?

Is creation about God or people?

If all people reflect the image of God, what does that mean for how we view abortion?

THE FALL

DO WE KNOW BETTER THAN GOD?

Mankind fell (Gen. 3:1-8). Humanity is naked, exposed to God's judgment (Gen. 3:9-11), vulnerable to a world of chaos: "Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden" (Gen. 3:23a). Suffering is now the norm. All the wisdom of the world to solve or salve are futile sandbags when the ocean tide of catastrophe surges in. Disaster, disease, and death all whisper the same message into the ear of our soul, "Something has gone badly wrong."

After God created the world, He deemed it "very good" (Gen. 1:31b). Then He told Adam that all the goodness in the world was his. But to ensure God's continued provision of all that is good, He expected Adam and his wife to obey, trusting God's appraisal of the world and the way God designed it to work,

“The LORD God commanded the man saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die’” (Gen. 2:16-17). It is ironic to think that they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thinking they knew better. So began the history of suffering and death.

Original sin did not begin with the first bite of the infamous apple, that is how it ended. The sin was born from the pursuit of wisdom apart from God, “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and . . . desirable to make one wise, she took...” (Gen. 3:6a). The fall began by second-guessing God’s judgment of what is good and evil. God provided Adam with a simple formula: Trust and obey equals God’s provision of goodness. It is the same today, “The judgments of the LORD are true . . . by them Your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward” (Ps. 19:9b, 11).

**Disaster,
disease, and
death all
whisper the
same message
into the ear of
our soul,
“Something
has gone
badly wrong.”**

The moral atom bomb of Adam’s sin broke everything. His sin did not just break his relationship with God (Gen. 3:8-10), it felled the forest of all other relationships besides. This sin damaged Adam’s relationship with his wife (Gen. 3:7,12), set them at odds with an evil spiritual realm (Gen. 3:13-15), obscured their ability to know and accomplish their purpose as man and woman (Gen. 3:16-19), and sent the created

order reeling into disorder (compare Gen. 2:5 to Gen. 3:18). Adam's story is like looking into a mirror: It is my story and yours.

We were warned through Adam and we are warned still. God, speaking through Jeremiah, says, "Is it not from the

**God
bestows
the pain of
crisis to
pinpoint
the root
cause.**

mouth of the Most High that both good and ill go forth? Why should any living mortal, or any man, offer complaint in view of his sins?" (Lam. 3:38-39).

God bestows the pain of crisis to pinpoint the root cause. As man vainly attempts to break free, like

one stuck in quicksand, our flailing solutions only seem to sink us deeper, leaving us to wonder which is worse, our condition or our cure. We expect education to provide security, money to bestow safety, politicians to deliver utopia, and medicine to extend our lives. So too, when a woman faces an unplanned pregnancy, worldly wisdom says abort.

Our first response to an overwhelming crisis should not be to thrash and grasp anxiously, seeking salvation from the world, as if the sea could save us from drowning. When Jesus was confronted with the news of a brutal government injustice, instead of outrage, Jesus calmly refocused their attention on another tragedy, the collapse of the tower of Siloam, killing 18 people. Jesus' seeming insensitivity reveals the only true solution to the crisis of suffering and death: "unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3, 5).

In God alone we find provision of life and every good thing. It is the folly of Adam to think and act in ways that do not first begin with confession and repentance. Since God has become our lifeline through the cross of Jesus, maintaining our vigilance is key to resisting the temptations to trust in this world. Perhaps this is why Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthian church, says, “For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep [are dead]. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged” (1 Cor. 11:30-31).

Pro-life people ask a woman to trust that God is the author of life and to obey Him rather than acting on her own judgment of what is good and wise for her life, as Adam and Eve did. But in so doing, we, too, are challenged to make sure we are following the same advice. Sin swims in the water of worldly wisdom—we need to walk on that water. Erasing the need for abortion starts with us, trusting and obeying, heeding Jesus’ call to tread the sea of suffering with Him, ignoring the waves of cultural wisdom.

Questions for Discussion

How did Adam and Eve fall into sin?

What did sin break?

How is abortion worldly wisdom?

What is the alternative to following worldly wisdom?

REDEMPTION

VIOLENCE TO END ALL VIOLENCE

An abortion represents a death.

According to the World Health Organization, every year, abortion robs life from an estimated 45 million preborn boys and girls globally, 800,000 in the U.S., with New York as the hub. Abortion is the story of 125,000 life and death battles fought every day, a living death for a mother caught in sin and a death more immediate for the child. The Church, through pro-life pregnancy centers like CompassCare, steps into the carnage because of the hope of redemption for a mother and her preborn baby.

Jesus' resurrection tells the story of a death too, but not His. Jesus' death represents an act of violence, but not primarily against Him. The cross of Christ is God at war, a war against the reign of sin and the law of death. Since death is the

human norm, and sin causes death, then sin reigns. Jesus reverses all of that (Rom. 5:21). The cross is the greatest act of violence to end all violence. The resurrection does not point to the fact that Jesus was killed, but rather that it was Jesus doing the killing. If death has no power over Him, then He killed sin. Jesus' resurrection is the dawn of a new era of life where sin and death are abolished. Our salvation is a death of sorts too, whereby Jesus ends our natural maturity into sin and death. But this death, like Christ's, is the path to

The resurrection does not point to the fact that Jesus was killed, but rather that it was Jesus doing the killing.

a new life: "He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11b). And like the Apostle

Paul, Jesus causes this to happen to us.

The abrupt and blazing self-disclosure of Jesus arrested Paul on the Damascus Road, ironically on his way to arrest other followers of Jesus (Acts 26:9-12). The glory of Jesus' presence knocked Paul down and blinded him (Acts 26:13-14). Through this confrontation, Jesus delivered Paul from his dim and comfortable womb of sin and ignorance. All at once he was taken from a solitary kingdom of darkness and birthed into an unimaginable kingdom of light (Col. 1:13)—transferred forever into a new reality. Scales fell from the blind eyes of his heart (Eph. 1:18) in the healing presence of his Shepherd. His mind disoriented, his soul naked, his heart new, and nothing he could do about any of it. He was lost and found all at once, like a stillborn baby given life.

Paul referred to himself in this moment of redemption as one “untimely born” (I Cor. 15:8) or, as some interestingly translate it, “traumatically born,” forcibly removed from the womb. Paul was birthed traumatically from death to life, Jesus abruptly terminating his maturation into sin, bringing him into the kingdom of God.

By presenting Himself to Paul, Jesus made him an eyewitness to His resurrection. The risen Jesus sums up salvation from sin and death. The resurrection is the exclamation point that the kingdom of God has come. Paul describes the simplicity of the Gospel with three basic principles: “that [1] Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that [2] He was buried, and that [3] He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3b-4). These three stones of truth pave the road for fallen man to enter the eternal kingdom of Heaven. But after this gospel distillation, Paul proceeds to spend the next nine phrases expanding only on truth number three, the resurrection, describing the six people or groups of resurrection eyewitnesses.

While the crucifixion is terrible, the fact that Jesus died is normal to human experience. But now there is a new, outrageous fact altering the ground of reality, giving hope where once there was none – the fact of Jesus’ personal and bodily resurrection. When the gavel of death was the final word, and our downcast eyes blinded by tears of powerless anguish looked into the fading darkness, there stands Jesus. Men dared not hope beyond death, but now... sweet joy, because death is just a doorway, the planting of a seed – not the end, but the end of the beginning.

How did this happiness happen? Jesus became sin on our behalf (2 Cor. 5:21). By nailing sin to the cross (Col. 2:14), God killed sin, thereby transforming death, from a dead-end into a doorway for all those who believe. In Christ we died and in Christ we too will rise (Rom. 6:8-9). This new no-death reality

But now there is a new, outrageous fact altering the ground of reality, giving hope where once there was none.

converts cowardly slaves of sin into courageous ambassadors of the King. The sun of a new era is rising, relinquishing the icy grip of the old domain of death to Jesus. He is sovereign over life and death, too. And He is God. He changed Paul. He changes us. He is the one who transferred us out of the “domain of darkness” (Col.

1:13), “[causing] us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (I Pet. 1:3). So it is that we can “present [ourselves] to God as those alive from the dead, and [our] members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:13b).

Questions for Discussion

What did the cross of Jesus do to sin?

What is the sign that tells us Jesus defeated death?

How does the resurrection give us hope and courage to be pro-life in a world that is hostile to the truth that all people, including preborn boys and girls, ought to be protected?

The resurrection
is the exclamation
point that the
kingdom of God
has come.

GLORY

HOW AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMS FEAR INTO CONFIDENCE

The path of immortal life.

How would you describe an ocean sunset to a man born blind? On the other hand, how would a blind man describe the infinite details of that same nightfall, his heightened senses sketching the moment for his soul with details more profound than a seeing person could ever know? Christians, perceived to be blind by a self-proclaimed enlightened world, are tasked with describing the glory of an unseen God.

When a woman faces an unplanned pregnancy, she cannot see the radiant beauty of a future past the storm clouds of her crisis, distracted from peace by roaring waves of emotion and the shifting sands of circumstance. That is all she can see. But she needs someone next to her on her life's windswept shores, describing to her through care and kind words the quiet but powerful Son of God, until the face of her soul begins to sense the warmth of His presence. And, as the eye is drawn to the light, her soul turns to glimpse the source and finds herself face-to-face with the wonder that is His salvation. When God's glory and majesty dawn upon us, we can no more pay attention to a personal crisis than one could feel big while standing on the yawning edge of the Grand Canyon.

When a woman faces an unplanned pregnancy, she cannot see the radiant beauty of a future past the storm clouds of her crisis.

Man, thinking he knows better than God what is good and evil, taints the wellspring of his thoughts, deluded into believing he is self-sufficient. The resulting decisions poison all relationships and cause death. So, God quarantined us from living an eternal existence apart from Him until He could make a way to heal us. God has made a way to heal us through Jesus, reuniting God and man, heaven and earth.

Everything changes in the glorious presence of God, including and especially us. Our senses are awakened to reality, to God's holy glory, set in stark contrast to our dark and small sinfulness. Our starving and emaciated soul rises

from its slumber, seeking a breakfast of righteousness in the house of God. The light of a purpose beyond pleasure illuminates the path of an immortal life, a walkway leading to a new home, toward a celestial city where God, our new Father, dwells with His adopted sons and daughters.

When we see God, we see the future. The simple fact is that in Jesus, God took on flesh to give us a future. Fulfilling the wrath God required by His perfect justice at the cross, Jesus' resurrection opens the curtain for the light of God's perfect mercy to come flooding into the dark chamber of our isolation. He is the firstborn from the dead, life dawning upon a dying world. The future – our future – is seen in Jesus if, in fact, we have died with Him. Our bodies, too, will be raised up from death, for “He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies” (Rom 8:11).

And then what? We who live in Him will with Him “reign forever and ever” (Rev 22:5). “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom 8:32).

This glorious future is envisioned by John in the book of Revelation, stretching the limits of language, painting a glorious portrait of God and His family together at last, because of Jesus. He describes the canvas by what is not there—like the sea, because chaos has been done away, like tears, because joy reigns, like death, because it is swallowed up in life, and like a temple, because God Himself is the temple. Then He begins to fill the scene as if on top of a high mountain, seeing images like the massive capital city New Jerusalem coming down out of the heavens to earth with foundations of tribes, cornerstones of apostles, a city wall of gems, gates of pearl that never close, a boulevard of

transparent gold with the river of the water of life running through it, sprung from the very throne of Jesus. And along the banks of this river is not just a single tree of life but a whole forest of trees of life, constantly bearing fruit with leaves that can heal, and all basking in glory as an unending day (Rev 21-22).

**The vision
imparts
courage to
persevere in
love in a world
gone cruel, in
a world so
dark women
believe they
have to choose
between their
life or their
baby's life.**


Why this vision of God and glory? Because "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be His God and he will be My son" (Rev 21:7). The vision imparts courage to persevere in love in a world gone cruel, in a world so dark women believe they have to choose between their life or their baby's life. How, then, ought we live in the meantime? "Loosen the bonds of wickedness... let the

oppressed go free and break every yoke... [cover] the naked... and do not hide yourself from your own flesh" (Is 58:6-7). "Then your light will break out like the dawn... if you remove the yoke from your midst" (Is 58:8a, 9b).

Questions for Discussion

In the light of our coming resurrection, how ought we to live?

Does the truth of the resurrection give you hope for women considering abortion?

A large teal circle containing white text.

Everything
changes in the
glorious
presence of God,
including and
especially us.

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

A woman has an abortion not because she wants one, but because she thinks she needs one.

She feels trapped between two impossible situations – my life versus my baby’s life. It is this tension that drives her decision, a decision that often is made alone and in haste within the first 24 hours after the first positive home pregnancy test. It is as if she is trying to dodge the cruel oncoming traffic of culture after already being hit by the bus of reality. There she remains, broken down on the side of life’s road as the uncaring cars of circumstance whiz by her. She falsely believes that someone is going to die if the pregnancy continues. Her fear is that if she has the baby, she dooms herself and perhaps her baby to poverty or privation. The flip side of this tension coin is that if she has the abortion, her baby dies.

Abortionists like Planned Parenthood, the priestess of the religion of materialism, refusing to stop and help, shouts from the other side of the road, "I will be your friend if you get an abortion from us...just \$600!" Yet, the woman wonders in woe if true friendship were possible without needing to give anything in return. A little later, seeing the woman broken down and in dire straits, a politician, the self-appointed police of the secular religion of the state, calls out while flying by on the campaign trail, "Exercise the rights I gave you. Choose abortion. I'll get your neighbor to pay for it if you vote for me!" And the woman painfully ponders why having an abortion feels more like the shackles of slavery than freedom. The solutions of her culture feel cruel to her, like salt on the scrapes of her sick soul. She sees only the growing darkness, her mind reeling without consolation, until...a Christian, held in suspicion by the priestess and the politician, sees her hopeless condition and stops, bandages her wounds, takes her to a safe place, and faithfully pledges to cover any additional costs incurred to put her on the safe path to true health. The Christian represents the faithful acts of God's people: educating the community, reaching women considering abortion through marketing, serving her with needed medical care, funding these efforts through pro-life pregnancy centers like CompassCare, and giving her a vision of her future after having her baby.

Pro-life entities like CompassCare are effective at saving women and babies from abortion. In the wake of the overturning of Roe the abortion industry was dramatically regulated in pro-life states, forcing a change in the empire's business model. This change opens the door for more effective ministry for pro-life pregnancy centers than ever

before. As the abortion industry promotes their new hub and spoke model, encouraging women to travel to abortion hub states like New York or shipping dangerous chemical abortion drugs to women's homes (in violation of the Federal Comstock Act), pro-life pregnancy centers through CompassCare's TeleCare system can reach her first. Pro-life nurses through TeleCare cut the time it takes for a woman to see a pro-life nurse from 24 hours to 24 seconds.

On top of it all, the life-saving work to refocus pro-life resources to build infrastructure through both in-person and telehealth services in abortion hub states is being challenged by pro-abortion violent extremists, weaponization of legislation against pro-life pregnancy centers by pro-abortion politicians, and censorship by big tech to keep women from finding the life-saving services of pregnancy centers. Now, not only must pro-life pregnancy centers continue express our pro-life convictions by to serving women, we must also protect our ability to do so in the public square.

Yet the Church remains undeterred. Why? Because on the dangerous Jericho Road of our life we too were robbed by the lies of culture, beaten by the people and philosophies that led us astray, and left for dead by our sin. Senseless, we could not understand the seriousness of our condition nor had we strength enough to call out for help—and even if we did, we would not know to Whom. Then Jesus, God in the flesh, stooped and became our Good Samaritan. Spending His resources, leveraging His power, position, and voice on our behalf, He bought our lives back from the debt of sin at the brink of death. Once recovered, we, in

our gratitude, seek His pleasure by obeying His charge to: “Go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37b).

We walk in the footsteps of Jesus, our Good Samaritan, by helping a woman have her baby. We do so because abortion dehumanizes not just the baby and the mother, but all of humanity. God dignified all of humanity by becoming human and, even more overwhelmingly, by substituting Himself for us at the cross to buy our lives back from sin and death. Christians know human value, we see human need, and we take action to give people their lives back as Jesus did for us. Why? Because Jesus says, ‘Go and do likewise.’ And why are people worth the sacrifice? Because everyone is made in the image of God, each deserves equal protection (Gen 9:6). The injustice of neglecting even one life reveals a fundamental lack of respect for all. And as Martin Luther King Jr. said, “A threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Jesus says in John 14:12-13, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” He also says in Mark 11:23, “Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.”

And so, we pray, Heavenly Father, according to Your will and by the faith You have given us, use Your Church as the collective Good Samaritan. Use us as Your voice, Your feet, and Your hands in service to oppressed women and the

fatherless children they bear, saying to this abortion mountain, 'Be cast into the sea!'

The Church tells the world through its discussion with friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors along with its presence at pro-life pregnancy centers, that abortion is unjust toward the baby and unnecessary for any woman. Let us continue to invite others to follow in the steps of Jesus, our Good Samaritan, demonstrating that all people are equally valuable and deserving of blessing and protection.

Questions for Discussion

What is the primary reason that most women feel like they need an abortion?

What is it about a Christian's belief in Jesus that makes us uniquely suited to save women and babies from abortion?

About Rev. Jim Harden

Rev. James R. Harden, M.Div. is the CEO of CompassCare Pregnancy Services and lives in New York with his wife and ten children.



Rev. Harden led the team that pioneered the first measurable and repeatable medical model in the pregnancy center movement, helping hundreds of centers nationwide become more effective at reaching more women and saving more babies from abortion. He has written extensively on medical ethics, executive leadership, and pro-life strategy. In 2022, CompassCare's pro-life medical office in Buffalo, NY was firebombed by violent pro-abortion extremists.

Rev. Harden is the author of the first medical ethics book on women's reproductive health—Ethical Theory and Pertinent Standards in Women's Reproductive Health. The book was endorsed by Dr. Edmund D. Pellegrino, M.D., M.A.C.P., Former Chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics, who said, "I commend the work of this commission highly to physicians who seek to practice medicine with integrity in the field of reproductive health." Another book published in 2023 is an Advent devotional called Christmas - That We Might Have Life: Twelve Reflections on the First Christmas through a Pro-Life Lens.

*For more information on how you can save
women and babies from abortion, go to
CompassCareCommunity.com*