

A Person's a Person, No Matter How Small!

This is the last day of 2006. My mind and heart are flooded with an admixture of different emotions. We just celebrated Christmas. Isn't it an amazing, wonderful time of the year? Worldwide we come to the end of our year with a baby on our mind. And as we contemplate the holy Christ-child we are reminded of the sanctity our Lord placed upon maturation. *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"* (Luke 2:52). How can we not think of babies and youth at Christmas? My wife and I have joyously been surrounded by our grandchildren, the hope of tomorrow. Coming down the stairs yesterday, I heard my son and his wife going over and over rules of good manners to their two year old, Miles Julian Pope. I overheard my son and daughter-in-law role-playing for their son, "Here's the spoon, Mommy," she then answered, "Thank you, Daddy". Then I heard Miles' sweet little voice parrot the kind words of proper manners, "Thank you, Mommy". Then I heard the firm voice of my son say, "Now look me in the eyes." I backed back up the stairs until they finished, for I felt as though I were on holy ground. Today, to God be the glory, we have been asked to dedicate our youngest grandchild, Henry Robert Pope to the Lord. We have been captivated by his beautiful smile. What joy it brings to our heart as we pray his life will bring the smile of God to this world. Jesus loves the little children of the world, doesn't He? *"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God"* (Luke 18:15, 16).

Please allow me to sacredly make a segue to a subject that looms before us like the proverbial "elephant-in-room." We have worshipped the baby in the manger; we have made much ado about our children and grandchildren. Yet as we draw to the end of 2006, it is estimated that America has taken the lives of 46.6 million babies by "legal" abortion since the Roe v. Wade decision. We are entering into yet another year of presidential election. With all the issues that are brought up, it appears that the issue of protecting the life of our unborn has now been consigned to the back-burners of the political platforms. There is a voice of benign lethality that speaks of moderating the count, since to some it is impossible to see the reversal of the crime and unconstitutionality of Roe v. Wade. Let us not surrender to compromise on the subject of life.

As you place modernity under scrutiny, it is staggering to behold the unapologetic hypocrisy and contradictions. There has been no expense spared to get the butcher Saddam Hussein to the gallows for the multitude of deaths he was directly responsible for inflicting. There was no expense spared as millions of dollars were expended this past December to rescue three mountain climbers stranded on Mount Hood. We are not arguing that the expenses to bring a madman to justice or to save the lives of three of our fine citizens were not worth it. What we are saying basically echoes the words of Jesus, *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone"* (Matthew 23:23). Here's the hypocrisy: if a young lady wants to receive an abortion for little or no expense to her or her family, there are organizations that will aid her in taking the life of her unborn baby. Are you ready for this recent statistic? I know when I came across it, I was not ready for it, but it certainly served as a wake up call. Planned Parenthood is not only the number one abortion provider in the United States, but the number one abortion provider in the world. It is funded to the tune of 250 million dollars per year by American taxpayers. Argument is given that tax dollars do not fund the abortion itself. One of the best lawyers I know finds that statistic hard to believe. But to play the kinder side, (if a kinder side exists), let's say taxpayers' money only supports their counseling and utility bills. What

conscientious life-loving American wants to fund counseling that encourages taking the life of an unborn? Who wants to pay for electricity that drives their lethal instruments?

In our past election which may be a foretaste of the coming election, one candidate may have won her election because her opponent was (she said) against "stem-cell" research. By the way, the wording was not correctly given because pro-lifers are not against stem cell research. Adult stem cells have not only been used, but used successfully to combat life-debilitating diseases. We are against taking the embryonic stem cell that holds human life. As of July of this year, 128 snowflake babies have been adopted. These are children that came from the embryonic stem cells that many politicians were saying it is alright to experiment with. This, in essence, throws away the life of the yet unborn. It has not been proven that human embryonic stem cells will, in fact, "stem the tide" in helping diseases such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's. But please allow me to be quick to add, we do not support taking the youngest of life to be used as (God forgive us) spare parts for our dying population that has enjoyed years of life already.

Recently a news program was showing animals in their embryonic state, yet unborn. A couple of the commentators that I strongly suspect were pro-choice (more appropriately could be called pro-death) were looking at the enhanced pictures of the animals and they were saying, "Oh look! the little whale, the little pig, the little dog, etc." My heart was sickened that they would not show the same compassion for the baby in its embryonic state! They were not saying, "Look at the potential whale, pig, or dog." Caesar Augustus said of Herod who ordered the death of the innocents, "I would rather be Herod's pig than his son." It was understood that Herod even ordered the death of his own son, not to mention Matthew's report: *"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not"* (Matthew 2:16-18. Do you think that God did not hear the cry of those innocents? Do you think God has not heard the cry of our unborn?

Why does this great country that has provided liberty for all, not also provide life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for our yet unborn? I would suggest to you that it is a reflection of a putrefying and ungodly desire to have conjugal activity outside of marriage without the responsibility of caring for the product of the union. Even in the cases of pregnancies inflicted by the abusive behavior of one, should we then punish the child? There are illegitimate parents, but not illegitimate children. Children are loved by God, who in His sovereignty gave them life. *"But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin"* (II Chronicles 25:4). In some instances some say, it is because they cannot afford having more children. The Bible says, *"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate"* (Psalm 127:3-5). Here God promises blessings upon the children and those who have and keep them! *"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it"* (Proverbs 10:22. If a person rejects Christ as Savior and lives in direct contradiction to the law of God, blessing will not follow. But here we would say, repent, believe, and live the life God would have you live, which is inclusive of taking responsibility for the life you partnered with God in bringing into this world. Even in the cases where you believe you cannot take care of the child and you don't want him or her, there are millions who do want him and are waiting for the opportunity to adopt! Finally, we have prolonged the atmosphere of accepted abortion so long, there may be people

who honestly haven't even thought about the sin and crime of it. Well, if this Pastor's Word has caused you to think about it, would you consider going a step forward? Let us do something about it.

Here are some end-of-the-year suggestions: Pray for the life of the unborn! Pray for elected officials and judges to change. Prayer changes things and prayer changes people (I Timothy 3:1-3). Write to our officials who make these decisions, such as our representatives and senators. Why, even a letter to our president would not hurt. Tell them of your disturbed heart over Roe v. Wade and tell them it is not right to take taxpayers' money to support something like Planned Parenthood to which we are diametrically opposed. Give to causes such as Carenet Pregnancy Centers in Houston, which under God saves the life of the unborn while evangelizing young mothers who come to them. God bless them!

And to my brothers in Christ who are commanded to speak the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), lift up you voice and let it be heard in 2007! *"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins"* (Isaiah 58:1). It is time to say with Dr. Suess from Horton Hears a Who, "A person's a person, no matter how small!"

- Pastor Pope -

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