

# LifeDate

A quarterly journal of  
life issue news and commentary  
from National Lutherans For Life

Winter 2005

*Witnessing to the Sanctity of Human Life through education based on the Word of God.*

## In Life, In Death, Abide With Me



Life Sunday 2006!  
See the full color pull out  
for all new materials!

"I eagerly expect and hope  
that I will in no way be ashamed,  
but will have sufficient courage so that  
now as always Christ will be exalted in  
my body, whether by life or by death.

For to me, to live is Christ  
and to die is gain."

Philippians 1:20-21 NIV

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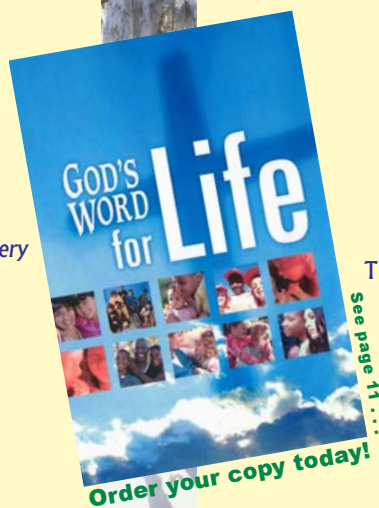
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**Life Thoughts in the Church Year**



## Circumcision and Life

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb  
Executive Director, Lutherans For Life

I haven't checked, but the Gospel reading assigned for the Circumcision of our Lord has to be one of the shortest Gospel readings ever.

**“On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived”** (Luke 2:21).

I suppose the Circumcision of our Lord is not something we think about celebrating much. This time of year the focus is on the celebration of our Lord's birth. Plus, since the Circumcision of our Lord falls on January 1, a “New Year” focus often takes precedent. But there is much worth celebrating in this “least of all” reading. There is much here for the “For Life” Christian to ponder.

**“On the eighth day . . .”**

Why eight? It is not a very “Biblical” number as numbers go. Seven would seem more appropriate. I read a study once that indicated that clotting time for newborn babies peaks at eight days. In other words, if you are going to make a baby bleed, the eighth day would be a good choice! The Bible, of course, is not a biology book, but with all the advances in biotechnology, it is good to be reminded that God does know His biology! He has not stepped away from that which He created, but uses it and works through it.



**“It was time to circumcise him.”** That could be put another way as Paul does in Galatians: **“born under the law”** (4:4). Jesus placed Himself under God's law. He did so to identify with those under the law's curse. He did so to keep that law perfectly in our place as part of removing its curse. Jesus not only died for us, He was born for us and lived for us. God not only credits our “account” with Jesus' perfect death on the cross, but we also get credit for His perfect life. What a comfort for those of us whose daily life is filled with imperfections. What a comfort for those who have one “big” imperfection—like the sin of abortion—that just won't let go of their conscience. When God looks at us, He sees the perfect life of Jesus!

**“He was named Jesus.” “Because He will save His people from their sins”** (Matthew 1:21). The circumcision

foreshadows the “how” of this salvation—blood. With the shedding of blood there is forgiveness. With the shedding of blood there is cleansing. I had a post-abortive woman tell me once, “I feel so dirty.” Those who have committed such sins not only need to hear about the forgiveness of the blood of Jesus, they need to hear about the cleansing that blood brings. They are declared pure and clean. No wonder Paul compares Christian baptism to circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12). In our baptism we are washed clean. Daily remembrance of our baptism brings assurance of this cleansing.

**“. . . the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.”** Here the Holy Spirit reminds us that “Jesus” is a Heaven-given name for this Heaven-sent Savior. But we are also reminded of when the sending happened—conception. Here is the great miracle we often associate with the celebration of Christmas. But God became a human being nine months before Christmas. Miraculously, Jesus is conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit using Mary's egg but no sperm. Our sinfulness from the moment of conception (Psalm 51:5) made it necessary for Jesus to assume our humanity from that moment. Jesus' conception, therefore, attests to the fact that we are all human beings from the moment of conception.

What will you be doing New Years Day? Remembering the past? Looking forward to the future? It is a good day to do so. But you might also want to remember a baby long ago being circumcised. There is much in that event that gives hope for the future.

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## The “One Person” Story

by *Diane E. Schroeder*  
President, *National Lutherans For Life*

“I came back today to talk to someone from Lutherans For Life,” said the young woman standing in front of the LFL booth I was manning at a teacher’s conference. It had been one of those particularly difficult days. My small children were bored, running around and generally creating havoc. Couldn’t I just go home? But apparently God had a different idea for here was this woman standing in front of me. Sobbing, she began to tell me her story. She had become pregnant with her boyfriend (now her husband) and afraid to tell her parents, had gone to her sister, confided in her and asked for advice. Her sister had been morally neutral, telling her she could do whatever she wanted; after all it was her choice. So she had gone ahead with the abortion. She continued, “I wish I could live that day over and make another choice. If there had been only **ONE PERSON** who had said ‘don’t do it.’ I would not have had the abortion.” I tell my “one person” story often.

Not too long ago on a quiet Sunday afternoon, a good friend of mine, Chris, called for help. She had just found out that her sister who was 35, newly married and pregnant with her first child, had been told by her doctor that the baby’s condition was “incompatible with life.” Of course an abortion was recommended and had been scheduled for Tuesday. What could Chris do? We talked strategy for a while. Her sister needed to slow down, get a second opinion and most importantly understand that even if her baby’s life was to end shortly after birth, God still gave that life a reason and purpose. God could work in the direst of circumstances. Plans were made to contact other families who had carried the pregnancy under similar circumstances. “In life, in death, abide with Me.”

My friend, Chris, understood our strategy, but hesitated becoming involved. After all, the rest of the family seemed willing to abide by the doctor’s recommendation. It was then that I related my “one person” story. Chris had to be that **ONE PERSON** to her sister. She had to be the one to tell her, “DON’T DO IT!”

Chris did it and her sister responded. Another high risk ultrasound was performed and an amniocentesis. They came back normal and the baby is now due in February. After the immediate crisis, other family members came forward and said they had had doubts, too, but they didn’t know what to say or what to do. Chris was the only one who told her sister “Wait! Don’t do it. God put this life here and no matter what happens I’m there for you.”

That’s what LFLers do. We equip people through the Word of God to make life-affirming decisions. We offer Christian compassion to others in need. Sometimes we are a little hard on ourselves. We often don’t see the result of our witness and we wonder if we are having any effect at all. But you see we are the **ONE PERSON!** When we convince our pastor that he must preach both law and gospel on the issue of abortion, we are the **ONE PERSON** warning the young woman in the congregation not to take abortion as the easy way out of an unplanned pregnancy. When we discuss in our Bible classes the issue of in vitro fertilization and other reproductive technologies, we are the **ONE PERSON** encouraging the childless couple to make a God-pleasing choice in pursuing parenthood. When we distribute information on end-of-life documents we are the **ONE PERSON** reminding families that God can work in what appears to us to be a hopeless situation. Sometimes God, as in the story of Chris and her sister, gives us a little glimpse of the fruit of our labors, but mostly He asks us to trust in Him and remember His promise that His Word never returns empty. He says to us, “I am your God and you are my people! In life, in death, abide with Me.”

So my friend Chris is now the **ONE PERSON** and her boldness has been rewarded by knowing that she made a difference in the life of her sister, her husband, and their unborn child. And her sister is eternally grateful, listen to her words:

“Thank you ever so much for taking the time to care so much and share your true thoughts and feelings with me. Even though Jim and I have been extremely torn at our situation—you being there for me (us) and all that you said truly did have an impact on us and our decision and for that we will be forever grateful!! I love you!!

Love, Melissa & Baby, too!

So be bold—go and be the **ONE PERSON** to the people around you. Speak God’s truth in love and patiently watch for miracles!



### Abortion Numbers for the United States alone...\*

The total number of abortions in the U.S. from 1973-2004 is estimated at 44,613,300.\*  
There were over 3,542 abortions per day in 2001-2002, 148 per hour, one every 24 seconds.

(\*Alan Guttmacher Institute)



## Your Church Can Help with Post-Abortion Recovery

by Grace Kern,  
Director of Word of Hope, 888-217-8679

Word of Hope, the unique healing ministry of LFL, serves the needs of women, men, and families who have experienced the loss of a child through abortion. It is our mission through confidential, spiritual care *To bring the healing of Jesus Christ to those whose hearts are broken by abortion.*

Over 44 million abortions have been preformed in the United States since abortions were legalized in 1973. In its wake, abortion has left millions of mothers and fathers in emotional turmoil and devastation.

Sadly, Christians faced with unwanted pregnancies choose abortion on a regular basis. Of those who have experienced abortion, studies show approximately 70 percent profess a Christian affiliation. Obviously many of these women and men are in our own Lutheran churches.

**What can your church do to reach out to the Post-Abortive?** Here are a few suggestions:

1. **Understand the many factors that lead women to abortion.** Pressure from others, lack of information, and the reality that many women feel that they have no other choice. This understanding enables us to avoid condemning.
2. **Understand that because abortion has been legal in the United States for over thirty years, our society now considers it normal and acceptable.** People believe it is their right and it has no consequences. Also, realize that no one is talking about the severe emotional and physical effects of abortion.
3. **Realize the cost our society has paid for legalized abortion.** We would all be shaken to our core if we fully realized the cost, in human suffering, abortion has caused since 1973—suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, promiscuity, abuse of women and children.
4. **Make your church a place where people can feel safe to share their pain caused by an abortion.** There are many people in our churches who are hurting in silence and need your help. Encourage your church to talk about how people are seriously hurt by abortion. Then be ready to show compassion and acceptance toward the post-abortive person, and help them through the healing process.
5. **Be compassionate.** It is easy to stand on one's principles when you're not the one faced with the life-altering consequences of pregnancy. It is easy to say, "I would never have an abortion," until faced with a pregnancy that creates a crisis situation in your life. We know these things can happen in our families too. It is with gratitude we should say, "There but by the grace of God go I." Always be prepared to show the compassion of Christ and avoid being judgmental.
6. **Be aware of the other victims of abortion.** For every "potential" mother there is a potential father and potential grandparents. Any of these people could have coerced, forced, or participated in the decision-making process. Many times, the father or grandparents have no say in the decision, and are left with the pain and grief and the feelings of being powerless to stop it. It would seem that nearly every person in our country has been touched in some way by the devastating painful word *abortion*. Who is willing to bear the burden with them? It should be their brothers and sisters in Christ.
7. **Understand their need for forgiveness.** Many believe that because they knew it was wrong and did it anyway, it is a sin too big for God to forgive. Even if they can be convinced that it is not beyond God's ability to forgive, they are often unable to forgive themselves. Through counseling, they can confess their sin, and through the gentle urging of His Holy Spirit, accept His love. For only Christ can bring hope for the broken hearted.
8. **Receive specialized training in counseling the post-abortive person.** Training is vital in order to provide help and encouragement to the post-abortive, without causing more pain. Learn more about Post-abortion syndrome, and it's specific symptoms which are unique to this trauma.
9. **Develop a specific ministry for post-abortion healing.** Realize that the healing process can be lengthy. Have a plan in place and specific Bible study materials. *After the abortion . . . there is hope in His healing* is an excellent booklet available from Lutherans For Life. Call Word of Hope or LFL for more suggestions.
10. **Love them where they are.** Allow them to see the love, hope, and healing power of Jesus Christ. Help them to be set free to rejoice in the newness of life. When the hurting have walked through the healing process they then can speak out, impassioned to take their message of pain and healing to the world around them, perpetuating the truth of the harmfulness of abortion and the healing found only in Jesus. "*He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds*" (Psalm 147:3).

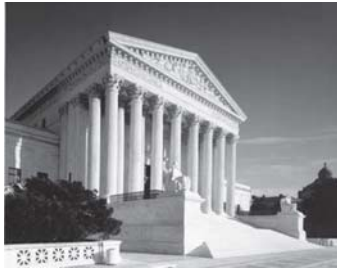
## Myths About Illegal Abortion

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer and others are making the claim that if a pro-life justice is appointed to the Supreme Court and abortion is overturned, thousands of women will die from illegal abortions despite the fact that statistics do not back up their claims.

Boxer was quoted by the Associated Press as saying that if Roe is overturned, “it means a minimum of 5,000 women a year will die . . . I personally believe that [the number of women dying from illegal abortions was] higher than that, given that these were back alley, and a lot of them were done in unsanitary conditions.”

On the heels of Boxer’s remarks, the National Organization for Women (NOW) issued an online “Emergency Alert” that included photos of four women whom the group claims “died because they could not obtain safe and legal abortions.” According to pro-life advocate Jill Stanek, however, only two of the women died from illegal abortions (one in 1929 and the other in 1940).

The other photos are of Rosie Jiminez, whose 1977 legal abortion death was used by abortion advocates to attack the government for not funding abortions for poor women, and Becky Bell, an Indiana teen who died in 1988 from what her parents and abortion advocates claimed was an illegal abortion, despite a coroner’s report that she died of pneumonia after suffering a miscarriage.



Elliot Institute director Dr. David Reardon, who did extensive research on illegal abortion deaths for his landmark book *Aborted Women, Silent No More*, pointed out that NOW’s alert did not mention that hundreds of women have continued to die from abortion . . . including Erica Richardson, a 16-year-old Maryland girl who died from a legal abortion six months after Bell’s death, and five women who died after taking the RU-486 abortion pill.

“Ironically, abortion advocates continue to oppose stricter regulations for abortion businesses and tougher civil liability standards that would hold them accountable for performing unsafe and unwanted abortions measures that could help prevent the deaths of more women from abortion,” Reardon said.

Boxer’s staff allegedly told the AP that her figures on illegal abortion deaths came from a 1968 book called *Septic Abortion*, and from a claim by the pro-abortion Alan Guttmacher Institute in 1982 that as many as 5,000-10,000 women died from illegal abortions each year. However, these figures contradict claims by pro-life activist Dr. Bernard Nathanson, who helped lead the push for legal abortions as a co-founder of the National Abortion Rights Action League.

Nathanson wrote in his book *Aborting America*: “We spoke of 5,000–10,000 deaths a year. I confess that I knew

the figures were totally false [but] it was a useful figure, widely accepted, so why go out of our way to correct it with honest statistics?”

In fact, says Reardon, deaths from legal abortions are probably many times higher than those from abortions prior to Roe.

“Independent studies have confirmed that before Roe, deaths from illegal abortions were pretty accurately reported because they were deaths resulting from criminal activity and the medical profession and the police were eager to investigate them,” he said. “After the 1940’s, after antibiotics were introduced and with advances in health care, deaths from abortion dropped sharply. In 1972 there were only 32 reported deaths. Since Roe, however, the number of abortions taking place each year skyrocketed, but no one usually bothered to examine women’s deaths because abortion was no longer illegal.”

Further, Reardon said, the image of illegal abortions as taking place under unsanitary conditions is largely a false one.

“The evidence shows that about 90 percent of illegal abortions were performed by doctors, with most of the rest being performed by midwives, nurses, or people with some medical training,” he said. “They had to be very careful in their activities because if they did lose a patient, they risked being exposed and prosecuted for their illegal actions. After abortion became legal, a lot of the illegal abortionists simply turned into legal abortionists. The difference was, no one was going to investigate them because abortion was now legal.”

If anything, Reardon says, banning abortion could actually help protect women from being pressured into unwanted abortions.

“Studies have shown that the majority of women have abortions because they are coerced or pressured to do so by the people around them,” he said. “When abortion was illegal, it gave women an out because most people were probably not willing to pressure them into an illegal and dangerous activity. Most people now assume that since abortion is legal, it must be safe. The result has been many, many more abortions, with many more women suffering physical, emotional, and spiritual injuries.”

“Legal abortion has been a tragedy for women,” Reardon added. “However, the cost to women has been routinely covered-up, denied, and dismissed by abortion advocates and their sympathizers in Congress. It seems most abortion advocates care more about protecting abortion than they do about the lives and well-being of American women.”

(*Elliot Institute News*, [www.aterabortion.info](http://www.aterabortion.info), 8/15)

## Can Relationships Survive After Abortion?

by Theresa Burke, Ph.D.

Many women choose abortion in an effort to “save” their relationship or “keep” a boyfriend from leaving. Sometimes this choice is the result of an outright threat of abandonment if the woman won’t “do the right thing” and abort. Other times, the pressure is more subtle: “It’s your decision, but ...”

Unfortunately, all the evidence shows that abortion to “save a relationship” almost never works. Most relationships between unmarried couples come apart shortly after an abortion. Others survive only because the partners are still bound together by grief. These relationships often turn into prolonged, mutually destructive mourning rituals. Even married couples are often driven apart by an abortion unless they can find a way to complete the grieving process together.

Abortion breeds anger, resentment, and bitterness toward the partner who was not supportive or who ignored the other’s desire to keep the baby. At the same time, there is often tremendous pressure in the relationship to conceal one’s true feelings of grief or guilt. This can especially be a problem for men, who are often taught to hide their emotions. Men may also feel obligated to appear “strong” so as not to upset the woman any further.

Men can be affected by abortion in many of the same ways as women. Many men have reported post-abortion problems such as feelings of grief, helplessness and guilt; sexual dysfunction; substance abuse; self-hatred; fear of relationships; risk-taking and suicidal behavior; depression; greater tendencies toward becoming angry and violent; and a sense of lost manhood.

When either women or men carry the emotional baggage of an unresolved abortion into a subsequent relationship, it can cause trouble in subtle and even dramatic ways. This is especially a problem when they keep the abortion a secret from their spouses, who are then unable to understand their emotional cycles.

The distortions in behavior that result when spouses keep secrets from each other can be devastating to a marriage. At the very least, the “need” to keep a past abortion secret prevents couples from giving and receiving unconditional

love. This deprives the relationship of the opportunity to reach its full potential.

It is no coincidence that the abortion rate and the domestic violence rate have risen almost side by side. Abortion, for both women and men, is associated with self-hatred, self-punishing behavior, and an increased tendency to act out anger and rage toward others.

A woman who is self-destructive or suicidal, but afraid to deliberately harm herself, may be more likely to become involved with a violent man. A violent relationship may allow her both to express her own rage and to experience what she unconsciously feels is the “punishment I deserve.” Because of self-hatred and low self-esteem, she may remain in the relationship because she thinks she doesn’t deserve anything better.

Certainly, there are many other causes of domestic violence. But substantial statistical evidence and many case studies show that abortion is contributing to this national tragedy. Until these women and men are provided with an environment that promotes post-abortion healing, they are likely to remain trapped in these cycles of violence.

(The Elliot Institute News, 10/25.

This article is excerpted from the Elliot Institute’s 12-page newspaper insert, “Hope and Healing” – [www.afterabortion.info/hope/hhindex.htm](http://www.afterabortion.info/hope/hhindex.htm). Dr. Theresa Burke is a psychotherapist and founder of Rachel’s Vineyard post-abortion ministries – [www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org).)

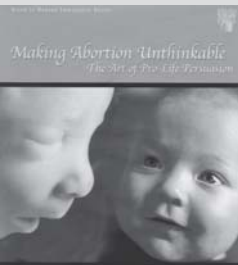




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## Living Together Before Marriage Has Disastrous Results Study Finds

The Ottawa-based Vanier Institute of Family reveals that “living together” comes with a heavy cost in a study entitled *Cohabitation and Marriage: How Are They Related?*

The study, authored by Anne-Marie Ambert, compiles results from hundreds of research papers that examined the social, emotional, and financial effects of cohabitation and marriage on women, men, children, and society.

The study shows that cohabitation by its nature is highly unstable, that it leads to higher divorce rates, and is detrimental to children both psychologically and physically.

“Commitment and stability are at the core of children’s needs; yet, in a great proportion of cohabitations, these two requirements are absent,” observes Ambert. (*LifeSiteNews.com, 10/3*)

## Nuclear-Family Households No Longer Number One, Census Bureau Finds

“Mom, Dad, and a Child”—the nuclear family—is no longer the most common household in America. The Census Bureau recently reported in its *Examining American Household Composition: 1990 and 2000* that single-adult households surged to first place.

Nuclear-family households (two married parents and a child) were the most common in 1990 at 25 million. But by 2000, single-adult households took the top spot, numbering 27 million. The third most common household is a married couple with no children (from 20 million in 1990 to 22 million in 2000).

Demographic observers feel the trend will continue for single adults heading their households; estimates are a high of 34 million by the 2010 census. Also of note is the dramatic increase in multi-generational households: from three million in 1990 to 4.1 in 2000. (*U.S. Census Bureau, 8/18; LifeWire, 8/19*)

## Promiscuity Linked to Disability, Premature Death

The continuing push for explicit sex-ed programs in the U.S. and abroad and the consequent rise in promiscuous sexual activity among youth has concerned organizations re-emphasizing the dangers that result from this phenomenon. One study being emphasized is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which warned that the prevalence of sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the U.S. is having a serious impact on the rates of disability and premature death.

In the year studied, 1998, approximately 30,000 deaths were attributable to STD infections, most prevalently HIV/AIDS, but also cervical cancer resulting from human Papilloma virus (HPV) in women. They reported that the U.S.

incidence for these diseases was three times the average rate of other developed countries.

In addition, the study, reported in the January 27, 2005, edition of the journal *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, revealed that STDs accounted for 20 million cases of adverse health problems arising from STDs, such as infertility and a tendency to miscarry.

The researchers at the Atlanta-based CDC reported a staggering 2 million years of life were absent as a result of STDs—known as “disability adjusted life years,” or DALYs—due to premature death and loss of healthy life because of disabilities attributable to sexual behavior. The two million represented six percent of the national total of DALYs.

The leading causes of death were HIV/AIDS for men, and HIV/AIDS and cervical cancer for women.

Meanwhile, United Kingdom researchers are now calling for major increases in the capacity of clinics to tackle what they call an STD “epidemic,” claiming that current levels are inadequate to meet the government’s own health targets. Recorded numbers of new STDs have doubled in the last five years. (*LifeSiteNews.com, 9/20*)

## Number of U.S. Unwed Mothers Reaches All-Time High

The percentage of women who are unmarried when they have children has reached a record high according to statistics released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics.

The statistics for 2004 revealed that 35.7 percent of all births were to unmarried women and that the percentage of unmarried mothers increased for all ages and races. The increase translates to almost 1.5 million children born to unwed mothers last year, up significantly—four percent—from 2003.

“It’s really unfair to children,” said Rutgers University sociologist David Popenoe, co-director of the National Marriage Project, according to a *USA TODAY* report. “It means more children are going to grow up without mothers and fathers.”

Popenoe and his group at Rutgers confirmed that the increased prevalence of unwed mothers is bad news for children. Swedish researchers documented that children raised by single parents are twice as likely to suffer from psychiatric problems, suicide, and other injuries as those raised in intact two-parent homes.

U.S. data suggested children reared by one birth-parent are twice as likely to drop out of school or become teenage parents, regardless of a parent’s education credentials. They’re also one-and-a-half times more likely to be jobless after leaving school. (*LifeSiteNews.com, 11/1*)

## Better Off Dead?

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Maybe you've heard it said of someone, "Look at all they are going through. Wouldn't they be better off dead?" Maybe you have said it or heard someone else say it. "Why doesn't God just take me home? I'd be better off dead." So, is it true? Would we be better off dead?

The first answer for the Christian is, "Yes!" Paul said as much. **"I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far"** (Philippians 1:23). As Paul writes the Philippians, he faces possible death. He is in prison in Rome unsure of the outcome. But he is ready for death. He wants Christ to be exalted in his death (1:20). Christ is exalted in this joyful confidence of Paul's because Christ is the reason for it. It is because of what Christ has done in His life, death, and resurrection that Paul has the assurance of knowing things would be better in heaven with his Savior.

It is okay to join Paul in wanting to be with Christ. It is okay to want this for an elderly and feeble grandparent or a desperately ill friend. You know it would be better. You know it would be a gain. There would be no more crying or pain or sickness or loneliness. Christ is exalted in such thinking because He is the One who gives such confidence. He has been victorious over death and the grave. He forgives your sins; He makes you worthy of the heavenly mansion He is preparing for you. Because of Christ, death is but a narrow gate into life eternal. Yes, it is Christ's abiding presence in our death that exalts Him as the One who has conquered death and brought life and immortality. It is Christ's abiding presence in our death that comforts us, calms our fears, and gives us patience as we await His call to join Him in eternity. And so we can pray, "In death, O Lord, abide with me."

However, there is a second answer to our question, "Would we be better off dead?" That answer is "Yes, but . . ." You see death is not the only possibility for Paul. He may very well live! If so, he knows Christ will be exalted in his life. In fact, Paul becomes convinced he will go on living. He is convinced that even though it would be "better by far" for him to depart and be with Christ, it is "more necessary" for the Philippians and others that Paul keep living (1:24). God has some "fruitful labor" for Paul to do (1:22).

Death is not the only possibility for the elderly or disabled or ill or even the unconscious. Such folks may very well live a number of years. As we said, it is certainly okay to desire to depart and be with Christ for that would be "better by far." But God is in charge of the time of death. As the children's book says, "God will decide when I should die, and the time will be just right . . . because God is very wise."<sup>1</sup> But as long as He gives life, we must believe that in God's wisdom it is "more necessary" for life to continue. And as long as God gives life, God gives life meaning and purpose. God has some "fruitful labor" to accomplish just as He did for Paul.

Now you might say, "But Paul was different. He was still young, able to travel, preach and teach, and tell others about Jesus. But what about people who are not so healthy,

those who cannot get around well or maybe are not even aware of their surroundings? What possible 'fruitful labor' could they do?" But remember, it wasn't Paul. It was the abiding presence of Christ in Paul that was accomplishing this fruitful labor. Christ was exalted in Paul's life because Christ was the One who was at work in Paul's life.

We limit the power of God if we say He can work and accomplish things only in people who are young and healthy and up and around. He's God! He can work in your life as well as in the life of Paul. He can work in the life of the chronically ill or the terminally ill or the bed-ridden grandma who is not aware of her surroundings. Christ isn't exalted because of what we do. He is exalted because of what He does in us! In fact, you could say that the less we are able to do, the more Christ is exalted as He

works through us! So we pray, "In life, O Lord, abide with me."

More and more in our society people are saying that certain others would be "better off dead." Paul reminds us that certainly it is "better by far" for the Christian to depart and be with Christ. But he also reminds us that the timing for that is in God's hands. If He gives us continued life, then in His plan, it is "more necessary" that we go on living. But you see, whether we live or die we know that Christ is at work and that He will be exalted. And so we pray, "Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes. Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

<sup>1</sup> Joanne Marxhausen, *If I Should Die, If I Should Live* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975).





# Whatever You've Got Going, Lord!

by Linda D. Bartlett

The woman was scheduled for surgery. One day she called to tell me she was “getting her affairs in order.” I didn’t think much about it as she went on to ask me a few questions about her durable power of attorney. It was not odd for the woman to speak this way because I knew her to be a person of common sense. She understood that the operation would, for all practical purposes, be a routine procedure. Nevertheless, a few days later she called back to say, “Whatever the Lord’s got going here is fine with me.”

A few days before the surgery, the woman’s two daughters flew in to be close at hand. The woman had a grand idea. She told me she was planning a joyful “night out on the town.” The evening was special indeed. Over a leisurely dinner, the woman and her daughters shared many memories. They laughed, then cried, then laughed some more as they lingered over a single glass of white Zinfandel. Later, they returned home to curl up in the living room where they continued their storytelling into the wee hours of the night. “I gotta tell you girls,” said the woman, “whatever the Lord’s got going here is fine with me.”

When the woman’s son called to say he would drive down to be with her, she assured him there was no need. “You stay with your family right now. I’ll see you soon.” Then she penned him a loving letter with words that can only flow from a mother’s heart. The message was conveyed once again. “Whatever the Lord’s got going here is fine with me.”

On the morning of the surgery, the woman woke early. She slipped out the back door to say good-bye to her two dogs, the faithful companions who greeted her this morning as they did every morning. Coming back inside, she slowly walked through the rooms of the house, touching her lips and planting a “kiss” on the photo faces of husband, children, and grandchildren. The woman sighed, then picked up the bag she had carefully packed the night before. With one quick glance over her shoulder back at the house, she walked to the car. No one but the Father heard her say, “Whatever you’ve got going here, Lord, is fine with me.”

The surgery did not go as expected. There were many complications. The woman’s body grew weak and could no longer fight the battle of life over death. In the distance, she could hear the great choir of heavenly angels praising God. “Whatever you’ve got going here, Lord, is fine with me.” Yet, there was a brief hesitation. Perhaps she heard one of her daughters say, “We must let her go.” Perhaps she heard her other daughter cry, “No!” The woman waited as if she were giving her daughter time to adjust her thinking and receive the same peace that was now flowing through the mother. It was not easy, but both daughters agreed, “Mom is ready.” And they entrusted her to God.

Days later, the daughters opened the bag which their mother had packed for her hospital stay. In it were all the things that a woman would take for recovery from surgery – a few toiletries, a nightgown, a photo or two of family, books for passing the time, and a well-worn Bible. Looking through the items in the bag, they paused to remember the behavior of their mother the morning she left home for the hospital. They heard her sigh and saw her lingering glance at the house. They knew she had written a “good-bye” letter of encouragement to her son. But, at the same time, here was a bag filled with the items one would need for life.

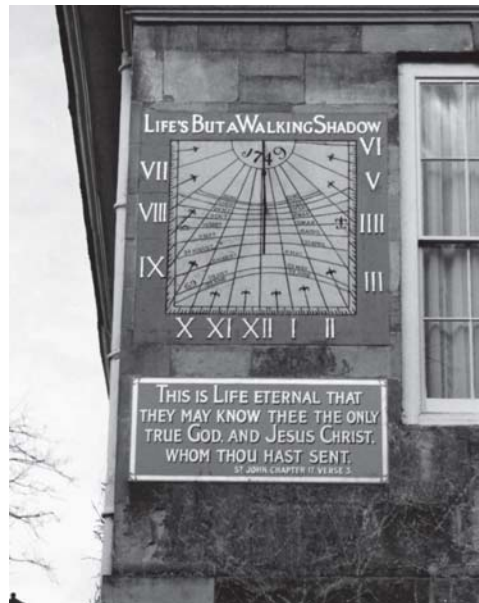
This was a woman who truly believed, “Whatever you’ve got going here, Lord, is fine with me.” She lived each day ready to do those things God had already prepared for her to do, yet she kept her eyes focused on the Savior who would one day carry her home. Her children agreed that, as long as they had

known her, she had always spoken with excitement about her eternal home with Jesus. Yet, never had they met anyone who was more content to be in the present—loving souls and sharing the Word of life.

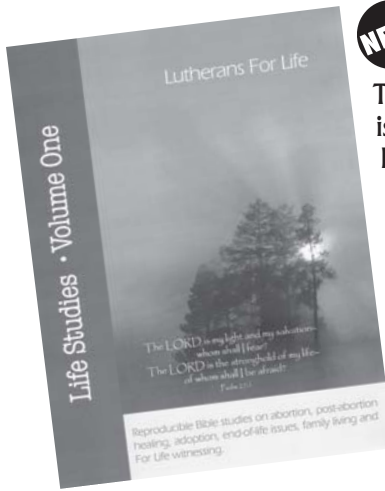
This was a woman who eagerly expected and hoped that she would have nothing to be ashamed of. She spoke boldly and honored Christ in her body. Whether she lived—or died—it would be to the glory of her Heavenly Father (Philippians 1:20-21). And He abided with her.

And so, the peace that passed all understanding for this woman is the legacy that was given to her children and her children’s children.

“I gotta tell you, Lord!” the woman’s words still echo. “Whatever you’ve got going here is fine with me.”

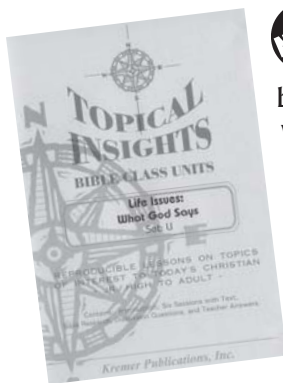


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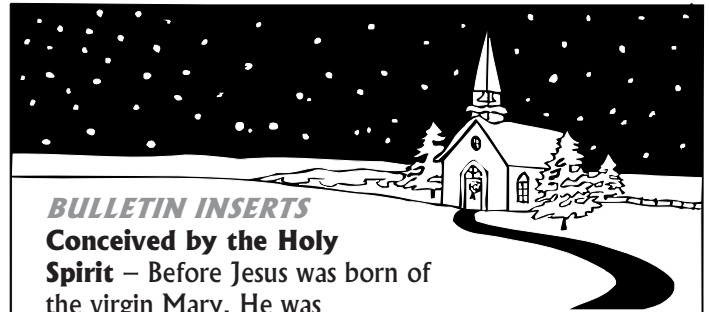
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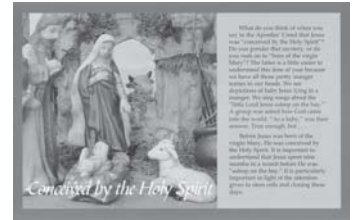
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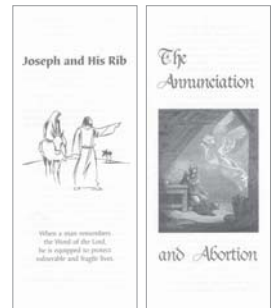


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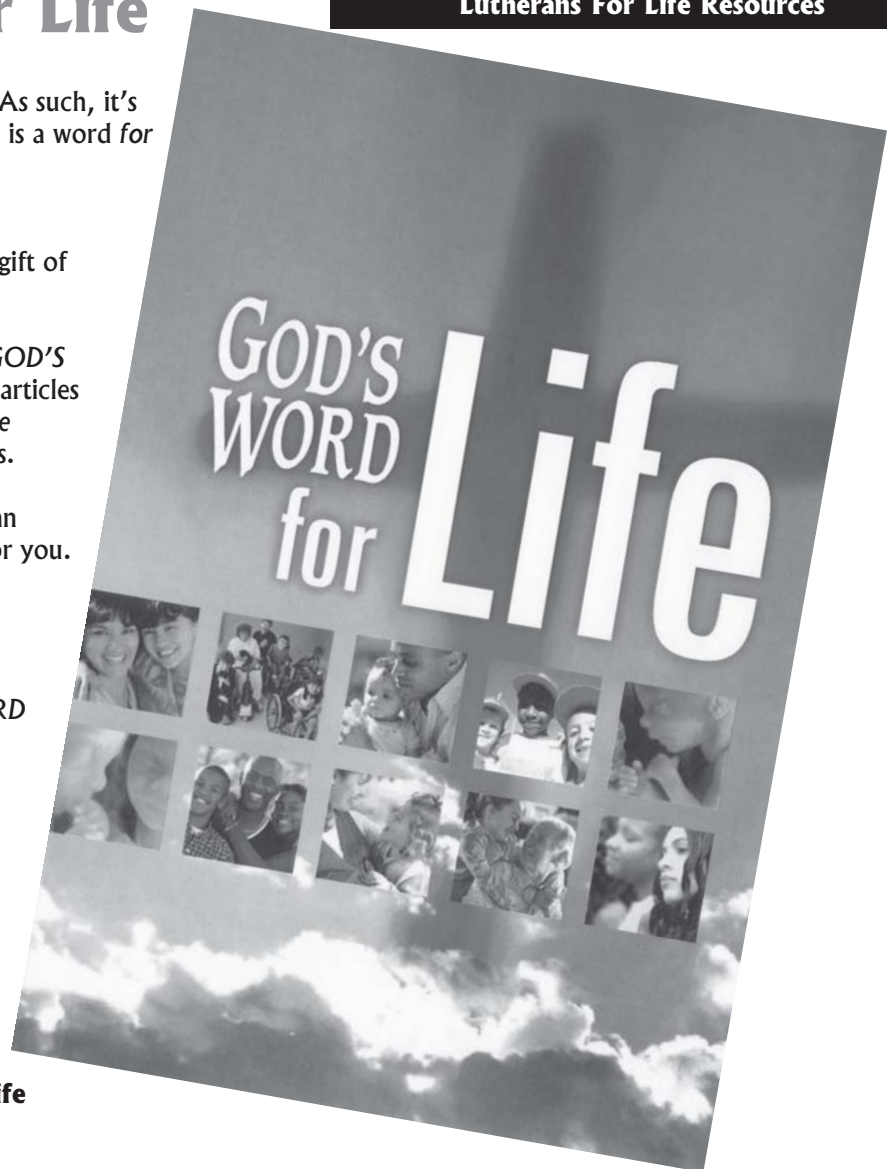
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## The Great Stem Sell and Other Mistakes

What Americans really think about science: astonishing new polling data.

by Nigel M. de S. Cameron

If you read the mainstream press, you would be forgiven for believing that America is besotted with science, that only half-crazed, pro-life “extremists” have any doubts about the miracle cures that will spring any moment from embryonic stem-cell research, and that “therapeutic cloning” is the technology of the future.

According to a new opinion poll conducted by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), you would be very wrong. Polling, of course, depends a lot on the questions you ask. So you may have seen polls quoted this way and that on these key issues. The VCU poll is generally fair. It does not bend over in either direction, and while we may wish some of the questions had been asked a little differently, its results are clear enough to turn upside down many of the assumptions of advocates for destroying embryos for research or for “therapy.” Americans are much more level-headed than many editorial boards and certainly than many members of Congress.

Some of these results are so astonishing that you may not believe them—but they follow closely the results of earlier polling by VCU, so they can’t be dismissed as accident and error. For example, how many Americans believe that embryonic stem-cell research “holds the greatest promise for discovering new treatments for disease, compared to other types of stem cell research?” 90 percent? 70 percent? 40 percent? 25 percent? All wrong. The answer is an almost unbelievable 14 percent. So what do the rest think?

Well, the stress that many of us have been placing on adult stem cells, which have already proven to have great therapeutic potential, seems not to have gotten through. Those who think the “greatest promise” lies here number only 7 percent. Far more have concluded that the “greatest promise” lies with “other sources, such as umbilical cord blood”—37 percent. This is a strange result, and it may indicate a conviction that “stem cell research” is the answer among people put off by destroying embryos but not familiar enough with the debate to know what an adult stem cell is (it’s a very strange term).



Either way, the fact that only 14 percent are favorable to the “greatest promise” of embryonic stem cells shows that the editorialists, advocacy groups, and scientists who have pushed this down our throats for years have failed. Savvy politicians should read these numbers and ponder. They are not elected by editors and science pundits!

### The clone wars

When it comes to cloning, the results are even stronger—and surprising. Cloning an embryo, of course, can yield embryonic stem cells (if the embryo is destroyed). This is what is meant by “therapeutic cloning,” a dishonest term for cloning for research. A cloned embryo could also be implanted (like an in vitro embryo) and lead to a newborn child. The bioscience advocates have been trying their best to have us think of these two in quite separate categories: “therapeutic” versus “reproductive” cloning. Indeed, they try to avoid the word “cloning” altogether, and speak of “somatic cell nuclear transfer” (the technical term for cloning) “to get stem cells.”

Once again, the American public has not been taken in. According to the poll, 81 percent oppose cloning as such. If cloning is done for research on disease treatments, 51 percent are still opposed, with 43 percent in favor.

But the strangest result is this: If it is specified that the goal of the cloning research is to get embryonic stem cells, support for research cloning *goes down* and opposition *goes up*. Support drops from 43 to 34 percent, and opposition goes up from 51 to 59 percent. This is an astonishing result, since the magic of stem cell cures has seemed to provide the ultimate justification for cloning. It may suggest that people want to support research for disease cures, but are ethically squeamish when it comes to the details if they involve destroying embryos for stem cells.

Either way, despite years of hype, the aggressive support of most editorialists, and an often contemptuous disregard for the moral scruples of those of us who have objected, the American people are far from being convinced that “therapeutic cloning” is the way of the future.

By the way, the poll also asked people about evolution and intelligent design. Just for the record, only 15 percent believed that only evolution should be taught in public schools, while 73 percent thought that either intelligent design, creationism, or a combination of them and evolution should be offered.

## Alarm bells for the science establishment

It is widely assumed that Americans are uncritically “pro-science” and that possessing the most powerful technology in the world makes it hard for us to ask hard questions about where science is taking us—and what its values are. Yet, partly as a result of the aggressive pro-cloning, pro-stem cell research, and pro-evolution views of so many scientists and their organizations, the poll reveals deep-seated ambivalence on the part of many people.

While 85 percent believe that developments in science have helped to make society better (I wonder why that was not 100 percent; how can anyone disagree?), as many as 56 percent (versus 37 percent) agree that “scientific research doesn’t pay enough attention to the moral values of society,” and 52 percent (versus 41 percent) actually agree with the statement that “scientific research has created as many problems for society as solutions.” These numbers should set alarm bells ringing in the science establishment—which is ultimately entirely dependent on two factors: public funding through the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and other federal bodies; and the market for biotechnology and other products. Both of these depend on the support of the people, and well over half of them are now very skeptical of science.

## And also ...

In a fascinating article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, (“Echoes of eugenics movement in stem cell debate,” 10/24) science writer Carl T. Hall draws a scary connection between the movement for embryonic stem-cell research and the eugenics movement of the early 20th century in California. Eugenics was the idea, finally discredited only due to the horrors of Hitler’s Germany, that we should use an animal breeding approach (including compulsory sterilization) to encourage the genetically well-endowed to have children and to discourage or prevent those with inherited genetic weaknesses from bearing children.

The full awfulness of the eugenic movement (which captured the imagination of politicians, editorialists, and liberal religious leaders alike, just as stem cells have) needs to be seen to be believed. California State University at Sacramento has pulled some of these materials ([www.csus.edu/cshpe/eugenics/index.html](http://www.csus.edu/cshpe/eugenics/index.html)) together, and they are depressingly well worth reading. (If you want the full pictorial scoop on eugenics in America, the eugenics archive (<http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/>) offers a treasure trove of disturbing images and facts.)

*Nigel M. de S. Cameron, President of Institute on Biotechnology and the Human Future and BHF, is also Director of the Center on Nanotechnology and Society, Director of the Council for Biotechnology Policy (Washington, D.C.), Chairman of the Centre for Bioethics and Public Policy (London, UK), and Research Professor of Bioethics and Associate Dean at Chicago-Kent College of Law. This article was first posted 10/26/05 on www.ChristianityToday.com. Used by permission of Christianity Today International, Carol Stream, IL 60188.*

## Adult Stem Cell Research Treats Spinal Cord Injury Patient

by Wesley J. Smith

I have known about this for some time, but because I didn’t want to be guilty of the same hyping that is so often engaged in by some therapeutic cloning proponents, I waited until it was published in a peer reviewed journal.

Now it has been and the news is HUGE: Korean scientists have used umbilical cord blood stem cells to restore feeling and mobility to a spinal cord injury patient. I have no link, but I do have the report published in *Cytherapy*, (2005) Vol 7. No. 4, 368-373.

The patient is a woman who has been paraplegic from an accident for more than 19 years. (Complete paraplegia of the 10th thoracic vertebra.) She had surgery and also an infusion of umbilical cord blood stem cells.

Note the stunning benefits: “The patient could move her hips and feel her hip skin on day 15 after transplantation. On day 25 after transplantation her feet responded to stimulation. On post operative day (POD) 7, motor activity was noticed and improved gradually in her lumbar paravertebral and hip muscles. She could maintain an upright position by herself on POD 13. From POD 15 she began to elevate both lower legs about 1 cm, and hip flexor muscle activity gradually improved until POD 41.”

It goes on from there in very technical language.

The bottom line is this, from the Abstract: Not only did the patient regain feeling, but “41 days after [stem cell] transplantation” testing “also showed regeneration of the spinal cord at the injured cite” and below it. “Therefore, it is suggested that UCB multipotent stem cell transplantation could be a good treatment method for SPI patients.”

We have to be cautious. One patient does not a treatment make. Also, the authors note that the laminectomy the patient received might have offered some benefit. But still, this is a wonderful story that offers tremendous hope for paralyzed patients.

Typically, it has been completely ignored in the American media (although it has gotten some foreign press attention). (Can you imagine the headlines if the cells used had been embryonic?)

One last point. This is a patient with a very old injury — making the results even more dramatic.

(*LifeNews.com*, 9/26.) Wesley J. Smith was the keynote speaker at the LFL National Conference in St. Louis (see pages 15-16).



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**England** – An anemic unborn baby is safe and well after receiving a blood transfusion while still in his mother’s womb. This treatment has been carried out relatively few times in the United Kingdom and it was the first time it had been performed at the city hospital in Plymouth. The baby’s mother, Lizzie Morgan said: “It was amazing to see the blood going through the needle into my baby’s vein. I feel a lot happier since the transfusion. I could feel the baby slowing down as he was getting poorly, but after the transfusion he instantly started wriggling.” (*This is Plymouth*, 9/24; *SPUC – Society for the Protection of Unborn Children*, 9/27)

**Canada** – The executive director of an international organization of obstetrics and gynecologists has warned that the practice of obstetrics is dying as a result of the culture of death. Dr. Rob Walley of Matercare International told a gathering of students at Campaign Life Coalition’s Toronto office that when he trained in obstetrics, they talked of having two patients—the mother and the child—but this changed with the acceptance of abortion within the field. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 8/17; *SPUC*, 8/18)

**France** – Singer Celine Dion, 37, told *Tele 7 Jours* magazine that she plans to have another child. She will proceed with in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments after her Las Vegas contract expires in 2007. The child already exists and is frozen at a fertility clinic in New York City. Her first child, Rene-Charles, was born in 2001 after years of in-vitro fertilization treatment. Dion acknowledged to the French magazine that the tiny life is indeed a child: “This frozen embryo that is in New York is my child waiting to be brought to life.” Yet, the IVF procedure has caused ethical concerns due to the loss of human life that occurs in the process. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 10/26; *LifeWire*, 10/27)



**England** – A mother who was diagnosed with cancer while pregnant has been told she has two years to live, unless she can find £48,000 for a potentially life saving drug not available on the National Health Service. Mrs. Newbery, of Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, is fighting the decision. Had she agreed to an abortion when first diagnosed, she could have received treatment immediately but she carried her daughter to term and gave birth by Caesarean section. She said: “I couldn’t give up on her. She’s our miracle baby. It was only because I was having her that I found out I had cancer.” (*Cambridge Evening News*, 10/13; *SPUC*, 10/14)

**India** – Sex-selective abortion and infanticide in India have led to a serious gender imbalance, a United Nations Population Fund report has warned, with female/male birth ratios as low as 800–1000 in several regions. A tradition of low female

status is partly to blame for the 60 million “missing” girls, as is pressure to achieve the perfect family of one boy and one girl promoted by the two-child population policy. The resulting shortage of women often leads to sexual abuse and exploitation of poorer women by rich families desperate to find wives. (*Middle East Times*, 10/13; *SPUC*, 10/14)

**England** – Britons are traveling to Barbados, Ecuador, Russia, and the Ukraine for cosmetic treatment involving stem cells from aborted babies, the *Independent* reports. The Institute of Regenerative Medicine in Barbados claims that if fetal cells are injected into the arm, they may repair damaged and dead cells in the body and help regenerate the skin, improve sex drive and general quality of life. However, Dr. Stephen Minger, director of the King’s College London stem cell biology laboratory, warned that these claims are not backed up by any scientific data. (*The Independent*, 10/16; *SPUC*, 10/17)

**India/China** – A report in the *India Telegraph* has warned that forced abortion continues to be practiced in China, in spite of official claims, and that more than 120,000 women have been victims of the program. The *India Telegraph* includes the story of a couple from the Linyi region whose son was forcibly aborted then dumped in a black bin liner. The activist Chen Guangcheng who is currently under house arrest for speaking out against forced abortion, was beaten for the second time as he reportedly tried to leave his house to greet visitors. (*LifeSiteNews*, 10/26; *SPUC*, 10/27)

**Russia** – Financial pressures are pushing Russian women to abortion at a much higher rate than was previously thought. For the first time, Russian abortions have exceeded births and the rate shows no sign of slowing in the perennially unstable Russian economy. With a population half the size of the U.S., in 2004, Russian women had 24 percent more abortions than their American counterparts. About 1.6 million women had an abortion last year, a fifth of them under the age of 18, and only about 1.5 gave birth. Rampant abortion and environmental damage have rendered huge numbers of Russians infertile with one report stating about six million women and four million men—about seven percent of Russia’s population—are incapable of having children. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 8/24/05)

**Italy** – A man who was in a coma for two years after a traffic accident has recovered consciousness. Salvatore Crisafulli told reporters, “The doctors said that I wasn’t conscious, but I understood everything and I cried in desperation.” His brother Pietro told the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper, “I don’t expect that he will be like he was, but it’s already a miracle . . . And to think that some doctors said that it was all useless and that he would be dead in three, four months.” (*LifeNews.com*, 10/5; *SPUC*, 10/7)

## LFL Meets in St. Louis!

*In Life, In Death, Abide With Me* was the theme as nearly 300 Lutherans gathered from across the United States and Canada in St. Louis, Missouri, for the national conference of Lutherans For Life (LFL). Lutherans For Life, the only pan-Lutheran pro-life organization in the nation, is based in Nevada, Iowa, with 15 state/regional federations, 155 local chapters, and 745 Life Ministry Coordinators nationwide.

Wesley Smith, an award winning author, senior fellow at the Discovery Institute, an attorney for the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, and a special consultant for the Center for Bioethics and Culture, gave the Friday night keynote and a Saturday plenary address.

Mr. Smith said many in the field of bioethics no longer believe that human life has value “simply and merely because it is human.” Rather, ideologies such as Personhood Theory see human life as “expendable, exploitable, and disposable.”

Too often, according to Mr. Smith, the question seems to be, when talking about a human embryo, an unborn child, or the elderly or disabled, “Who can we kill and get a good night’s sleep?” He said “no human life should ever be seen as an object. Every human being should be seen as a subject.”



Rev. Todd Wilken

Also on Saturday, Rev. Todd Wilken, host of the nationally syndicated radio show *Issues, Etc.* told the gathering that “we have a cross-shaped theology of life.” Sharing how Christ took the path to the cross through the virgin’s womb, Rev. Wilken asked, “How could Christians not be pro-life when the very means by which God redeemed fallen men was a human life!”

Earlier, LFL President Diane Schroeder said, “we equip people to make life-affirming decisions,” adding, “you can make a difference in the lives around you . . . speak the truth in love and patiently wait for miracles!”

Saturday’s sessions included presentations on euthanasia, assisted suicide, the media, the dangers of “the right to die” and “duty to die” mentalities, biotechnology, Christian care giving, advance directives, and the mission, message, and manner of Lutherans For Life.

Sunday featured a Bible study and worship service centered on the theme *In Life, In Death, Abide With Me*, based on Philippians 1:20-21.



Wesley Smith

LFL Executive Director Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb said since the *Roe vs. Wade* decision in 1973, “over 45 million babies have been killed through surgical abortion in this country. That’s around 3,600 every day or one about every 24 seconds . . . the legacy abortion gives is that death is the solution to a problem and that certain people are better off dead.” “As long as God gives life, then God is at work giving life meaning and purpose.” “Paul reminded us today that certainly it is ‘far better’ to depart and be with Christ. But he has also reminded us that the timing is in God’s hands. If He gives us continued life, then in His plan, it is ‘more necessary’ that we go on living . . . whether we live or die we know that Christ is at work and that He will be exalted.”



Saturday night’s banquet featured an appearance by Micki Cunningham whose story is updated in LFL’s *For Life* DVD (*Item 1704*. \$5.00 ea.). Micki thanked LFLers for helping “give children like me a chance.” (Top) Micki with Rev. Jim Likens, who provided the entertainment at the banquet. (Below, back) LFL Executive Director Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Wayne and Karen Cunningham (Micki’s parents), LFL President Diane Schroeder; (front) Micki Cunningham.

The *For Life* DVD can be ordered by calling 888-364-LIFE or online at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org).



After the banquet . . . (l-r) Deb Lakamp, *Secretary*; Ed Szeto, *Director of Outreach*; Grace Kern, *Director, Word of Hope*; Diane Schroeder, *President*; Katie Friedrich, *Office Assistant*; Lowell Highby, *Director of Communications*; Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, *Executive Director*; Trisha Adams, *Business Manager*; RoxAnne Lamb, *Mail Room Supervisor and National Volunteer Coordinator*; Karen Frohwein, *Director of Development*.



To receive LFL Action Alerts and other e-mail updates sign up online at:

[www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

## LFL Unified Annual Membership

Membership in LFL demonstrates a commitment to the mission of LFL:  
*"To witness to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God."*

Annual and Sponsor Members of Lutherans For Life:

- Believe in the mission, message, and manner of LFL.
- Support LFL through prayer, leadership, and service activities.
- Contribute to the ministry on a monthly (sponsor) or yearly (annual) basis and at other times when they are able.
- Grow in knowledge and faith in God's message of life through the study of God's Word and through information on life issues from LFL and other sources.
- Are eligible to vote and hold office in state federations and local chapters.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Matthew 6:21 (NIV): "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Effective July 1, 2005, Lutherans For Life began changing all memberships to a common, yearly renewal date. Members can join anytime during the year, but their membership will expire June 30 of the following year. For example:

- Members joining LFL or renewing at any time in 2005 will have a June 30, 2006 end date for their annual membership.
- Members joining LFL or renewing at any time in 2006 will have a June 30, 2007 end date for their annual membership.
- Sponsor members will be asked in June of each year to make a renewed commitment to LFL and will receive a new membership card each year.
- Lifetime members (an option no longer available) will not have to renew their memberships, but will receive a new membership card each year.
- All renewal dates will be July 1.

An annual membership drive will begin in May of each year. Current members will receive renewal information at that time. New memberships to LFL will also be encouraged through the annual membership drive.



**Lutherans For Life thanks all those who have given Donations in Loving Memory of:**

**John Beaty** by John & Helen Maddick; **Matthew Beise** by Jim & Sally Beckendorf, Carver Lifelines LFL Chapter of Waconia, MN; **Evelyn Bohlmann** by Bethine Klinker; **Sarah Blomenberg** by Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Blomenberg; **Olga A. Bock** by Altenburg Circuit LFL Chapter #4, Perryville, MO; **Dwight Bramley** by Erma Ockenga; **Roger Burkel** by Jim & RoxAnne Lamb; **Glen DeGeest** by Donald & Joan DeGeest; **Delphine** by Donnetta L. Schmieding; **Herman Dochow** by Ed & Esther Oehme; **Joan Phyllis Engel** by Hub & Diane Cloeter, Kent & Lynn Engel, Paul & Janet Friederich, Rev. & Mrs. Charles A. Gierke, C. Jefferson, Irma Zimmerman; **Bonnie Ernst** by Bernadyne Herndon; **Olga Feine** by Orma Hadley; **Nan Garnas** by Rev. Ed & Eileen Brandt; **Roy Hagedorn** by Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **Carolyn James** by Wayne & Diana Westphal; **Myron Johns** by Jay & Jeanne Mackay; **Esther Kautz** by Mr. & Mrs. Waldemar Kautz; **Bobby Land** by Rev. Kory & Cindy Boster; **Kate Leltow** by Lloyd & Dorothy Barhite, Steve & JoAnn Barhite, Paul & Linda Bartlett; **Alice Lowe** by Janet Bartlemay, Lorraine Jamison, Smith & Turley of Waynesville, MO; **Ron Moenning** by Merlin L. & Darlene Oerman; **Margaret Myers** by Trinity Lutheran Church of Parsons, KS; **Dean Nielsen** by Bob & Avis Diercks; **Betty Penno** by Welma Klute; **Martin Rehborg** by Eugene M. & Frances Rehborg; **Faye Richeson** by Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **Don Rikkels** by Edith Armbrecht; **Lillian Schultz** by Les & Beth Tepe; **Jimmy Smith** by Benjamin & Kathy Bellinder, John & Laura Dailey, Dalton & Janet Kehlbeck, Robert & Marilee Leming, Jeanne & Jay Mackay, Marianne & Paul O'Connell III, Concordia & Sharon & Thomas Ostermann, Kristian & Desiree Peat; **Son-in-law of Rev. & Mrs. Mike Botsford** by Rev. Ed & Eileen Brandt; **Lilian Stade** by Roger & Carolyn Kahler; **Bernadine Sternberg** by Vic & Geri Schulz, Phyllis Terry; **Dave Stokes** by Rev. & Mrs. Don Meyer; **Gerald Tafelmeyer** by Robert & Alice Ganskop

**Lutherans For Life thanks all those who have given Donations in Thanksgiving/Honor of:**

**Rev. James & Cherie Endrihs** (marriage) by Eva Marie Arvey, Robert & Mary Benson, Shirley Bergman, Mark & Gwyn Borchering, Marcella Bordeleau, Jay & Jill Brown, Dick & Mary Beuch, Cynthia Coffman, Rev. Carl & Marcella Ehrfurth, Rev. James & Cherie Endrihs, Mark & Julie Engelhardt, Richard & Grace English, Eugene & Carolyn Fiedler, Anthony & Patricia Giovanetti, William & Twila Gipp, Robert & Debra Grothman, Donald & Vera Hausfelder, Christopher & Candee Hendricks, Allan & Mary Holmes, Eric & Wendy Johnson, Kristine L. Keller, Denise M. Konen, Luella Korth, Anna Kozik; Nancy Kraszewski, Celeste Krueger, Mary Kvitrud, Larry & Terri Meyer, Nancy Nesbitt, Debbie Nohr, Gary & Colleen O'Malley, Lisa Rathjen, Joseph & Teresa Rosengarten, Kenneth L. Schnakenberg, Margaret A. Schoenwalder, Steve Shefchik, Linda K. Siegmann, Thomas & Nancy Theis, Erik P. Thomack, Susan J. Timm, Marilyn Whipkey, Crystal L. Williams, Vernon & Marjorie Wischmeyer; **Cecil & Carolina Marin** (marriage) by Carl & Diane Schroeder; **Maureen Neuser** by Alpha Omega LFL Chapter #76; **Gene & Marilyn Nienhueser** (50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary) by Donald & Norma Troester; **Rev. Dean Poellet** by Mr. & Mrs. Mark Hough; **Bert & Marjorie Sjostrom** (50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary) by Rev. & Mrs. Gilbert Croll

*Help Others, Yourself, & LFL*

Go to [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org) and click "Support LFL!"

**Give Online!** – You can join LFL or give extra contributions online through the secure *Click and Pledge™* server.



**Simply Giving®** – Never write another donation check! You won't have to with the *Simply Giving®* program from Thrivent. Your gift to LFL can be made through electronic funds transfer from your checking or savings account. A free service from Thrivent!

**LFL Endowment Fund** – The fund receives gifts and bequests and uses the interest accrued from them for the mission and ministry of LFL. You can make a difference!

**Have you drafted a Will or Living Trust?** – LFL can provide free, no-obligation information on how you can accomplish your personal and family goals through trusts, annuities, and other plans.

**New ways to support LFL!** – Are you an online shopper? Through [iGive.com](http://iGive.com) up to 30% of your e-purchases at hundreds of online stores can be donated to LFL—at no cost to you! Also, LFL can now receive funds from the Thrivent Financial Bank FundRaiser Rewards Visa® Platinum Plus® card.

[www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

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## Measuring Success

by Karen Frohwein  
Director of Development, Lutherans For Life

This is the planning time of year for most organizations. Budgets have to be finalized, strategic plans reviewed, new goals set for the next year. It's the time of year people and organizations "take stock" of where they are, and look forward to where they want to be in one, three, five, or even 10 years.

I am often asked what Lutherans For Life *does* at the national level. When someone gives a gift to LFL, they want to know their gift produces *results!* How can we measure our success and plan for the future? How many lives did we save? How many abortions did we stop? How many caring pregnancy centers did we fund? How many laws were changed? How many pro-life sermons were preached? How many people signed a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care this year? How many people chose life because of the work of Lutherans For Life? How do we *know* we have made a difference? Where are the *numbers* that document our success?

Goals and measures are key words for managers and for donors. Since the goal of the department of development is to secure the funds needed to carry out the overall mission of LFL, being able to document the success of the organization to our donors is very important. So, what can I tell you about the activities of Lutherans For Life?

In order to measure success, an organization has to go back to their mission statement.

Lutherans For Life's mission is to "witness to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God." It's what makes us unique from other pro-life organizations. It's what joins you to us in this work. The organization exists to equip *you* to witness to the sanctity of human life based on the Word of God. Our work at the national level is not to fund caring pregnancy centers, although many of our members do just that. Our work doesn't directly change laws, although many of our members are involved in the legislative process. Our work doesn't provide direct services to enable us to count how many pastors observed Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in their churches, or how many women chose to continue an unplanned pregnancy and give their unborn child life, or how many people made God-pleasing end-of-life decisions directly because of the work of Lutherans For Life,

but our members see those activities happening in their daily lives.

So, it sounds like I am saying more about what we don't do than what we do at the national office. Is this just some type of fund-raising double-speak? Well, yes . . . and no. You see, the way LFL measures success is through YOU! As you look through this issue of *LifeDate*, you can see what national LFL is all about. Our mission is to help you grow in knowledge of life issues, but beyond that, our mission is to share God's Word of LIFE with you. From there, we ask the Holy Spirit to step in and change hearts—your heart and the hearts of the people you in turn witness to about the sanctity of human life. National LFL may begin the work, but the real success story isn't in what we do, it's in hearts that are changed through the Gospel message we share.

There are numbers to tell our story: brochures distributed, staff speaking engagements, contributions received and used to further the mission of LFL, Sanctity of Human Life Sunday materials (see the full-color center section) leaving the office every day. But the story of LFL is not just in the numbers, it's in your stories. Stories of how you grew "**in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**" (2 Peter 3:18 NIV), of how you shared that grace with your neighbor when they were faced with a difficult situation and needed to know what God had to say to them.

Recently we received a note of thanks from a donor. She wrote "I strongly believe this organization has touched many lives by informing and helping spread God's love and forgiveness." There's the real story of Lutherans For Life. Our success has already been measured you see. God's love and forgiveness, freely given, is the story we share. We are thankful that you share in this success with us through your time and treasures, and that you share the Gospel story with your neighbors. We can and will continue to measure our earthly achievements, but the victory has already been won, the real pro-life message is life eternal, through Jesus Christ. That's the true measure of success.



**Our Mission . . .** To witness to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God. LFL has 15 state federations, 156 local chapters, and 745 Life Ministry Coordinators in the United States.

**Our Vision . . .** To be a powerful, Biblical, pro-life voice and resource to Lutherans and, through them, transform society.

**Our Philosophy . . .** Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of Biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give witness, from a Biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

# Life Thoughts in the Church Year

(based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Worship*)

## January 1 – The Circumcision of our Lord

The fact that Jesus submitted to circumcision (Luke 2:21) shows He came to take our place under the law. His name shows the reason—to be our “Savior.” The blood shed points to what would be necessary for our salvation. The fact that He was “conceived” shows He values human life from the very beginning.

## January 8 – The Baptism of our Lord

Though sinless, Jesus stood in line with sinners to identify with sinful humanity (Mark 1:4-11). As you think about the sinners Jesus “stands in line” with today, include those who have sinned against life. Jesus identifies with them. Jesus brings forgiveness to them.

## January 15 – Second Sunday after the Epiphany

“Don’t do these things because they are bad” is how we often teach about sexual immorality. But we have a better message, “You don’t have to do these things because God is good.” He bought us with a price and lives within us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). God’s people can make good decisions and honor God with their bodies.

## January 22 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Today marks 33 years of legalized abortion which opened up the floodgates of seeing death as a solution to the problems of life. Christ’s Church has a better solution. We have the most positive and powerful message of life in the universe! We should not be a reluctant messenger as Jonah was (Jonah 3:1-5, 10). Life is too precious and the message of life and new life in Jesus is too important.

## January 29 – Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Not every Christian makes the connection between the life issues and the Word of God. The world convinces many that these are only political issues. Paul’s advice for dealing with meat sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 is helpful in dealing with such Christians. Those who clearly see the connection should not be puffed up because of their knowledge. They should speak the truth, but in love. “Love builds up.”

## February 5 – Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

In Mark 1:38, crowds of sick people were looking for Jesus, waiting to be healed. His response? “Let’s go somewhere else.” Why would He leave them? “So I can preach . . . That is why I have come.” It is important for Christians to remember when they are struggling with illness that Jesus’ primary mission was not the healing of disease but the greater healing of forgiveness. Therein lies our assurance of His love and presence in our lives.

## February 12 – Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

It seemed right to the man healed of leprosy in Mark 1:40-45 to tell everyone he could. Yet, it was contrary to Jesus’ command. As a result, Jesus could no longer teach and preach freely. Everything we do must flow from our love for Jesus and our trust that He knows what is best for us and for the spread of His Kingdom.

## February 19 – Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

It is common in many ads, “No money down! Easy payments!” But God has put money down on you. His Spirit in you is God’s “deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (2 Corinthians 1:22). The payment for this guarantee was high, the innocent suffering and death of God’s own Son. God has said “yes” to you in Jesus. He remembers your sins no more (Isaiah 43:18-25). Those who have sinned against God’s gift of life particularly need to hear this “yes” applied to them.

## February 26 – The Transfiguration of our Lord

“Setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (2 Corinthians 4:2). This is how Lutherans For Life strives to share God’s *For Life* message. It is not screaming and yelling that will get results. God’s plain and profound truth will get results.

## March 5 – First Sunday in Lent

The song does not go, “Jesus loves me this I know for my circumstances tell me so”! It is “for the Bible tells me so.” Romans 8:31-39 reminds us that there are no circumstances that can separate us from God’s love in Christ. The proof of God’s love is in the giving up of His Son for us, not in the absence of bad things happening in our lives. Christians have this beautiful promise to cling to especially in times of distress and want.

## March 12 – Second Sunday in Lent

It is not assisted suicide or euthanasia that is our hope in suffering. Our hope comes from our God who enables us to stand in His grace (Romans 5:2). Our hope comes from our God who is at work in our suffering for our good (Romans 5:3-5). Our assurance of this comes from the greatest good of all time that God brought through the suffering and death of His Son.

## March 19 – Third Sunday in Lent

God did not go into Egypt and say to His people, “Here are Ten Commandments. Keep them and I’ll see what I can do to get you out of here.” God got them out of there first! It is a redeeming God giving these commands to a redeemed people (Exodus 1:1). The commandments are not given to show us how to become holy. The commandments are given to show us how holy people live. We can make good God-pleasing choices because God has chosen us.

## March 26 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Since this Sunday is so close to the Annunciation, March 25, it gives opportunity to talk about *when* God sent the “Light” into the world (John 3:19). God so loved the world that He became a Zygote (one-celled human being) in the fallopian tube of Mary! The road to the cross begins here, not in a manger. Jesus’ passing through all stages of our development in order to redeem us gives great value to all stages of our development.

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## GOD'S WORD for Life

Our great God and Savior is the creator of life! As such, it's hardly surprising that His divinely revealed word is a word *for Life*. God is *for Life* because:

- Every human life is a gift created by Him.
- Every human life has been reclaimed by the gift of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

The articles and commentaries you will find in *GOD'S WORD for Life* are based on these truths. These articles will enable you to connect God's positive *for Life* message with a variety of life issues and concerns.

- **Want more Bible-based information on life issues? Here it is!**

**Whether you're a pastor or a layperson, a teacher or a student, there is a lot a life-changing truth in *GOD'S WORD for Life* for you!**

**See page 11 for more information!**

