

Issues
of
LIFE

Volume 13



THE CHRISTIAN
Appeal



Issues of Life

Only time will tell whether the latest ruling by our nation's Supreme Court will reduce the number of abortions in our land, but any of us who watch the news know that their reversal of *Roe v. Wade* unleashed an eruption of violent protests and attacks on pro-life facilities. The pro-abortion outcries now make it clear that those who claimed to support “reproductive health” were actually in the baby-killing business.

For decades our Senior Editor Gene Shelburne has been speaking out in defense of the unborn. Here, in what may be his last set of essays on this topic, he calls on Bible believers not to think the battle is now over—not to grow weary in this struggle to protect the moral and legal right of all babies to be born.

THE CHRISTIAN APPEAL
(UPS 107-240)

April 2023, Vol. 71, No. 10. Owned and published monthly by CHRISTIAN APPEAL PUBLISHERS, INC., 2310 Anna Street, Amarillo, Texas 79106. Senior editor, Gene Shelburne. Managing editor, Curtis Shelburne. Consulting editor, David Langford. Subscriptions: Free, thanks to our donors, to all who request the magazine. Free monthly bundles to churches, Bible study groups, and ministries. Send all orders to Christian Appeal Publishers, Inc., 2310 Anna Street, Amarillo, Texas 79106. (Offer subject to issue and print-run availability.) Postmaster: Send address changes to 2310 Anna Street, Amarillo, Texas 79106. Periodical postage paid at Amarillo, Texas. © 2023 by Christian Appeal Publishers, Inc.

COVER & PAGE 2 PHOTO by Jerry Huggins

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John Gulley

“**K**now that the Lord is God.
It is he who made us,
and we are his;
we are his people,
the sheep of his pasture.”



Psalm 100

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Have a Heart

On September 8, 2021, the *heathline.com* website featured a piece which insisted that at six weeks “an embryo does not have a fully formed heart.” Of course, it doesn’t. At six weeks, nothing in an embryo is fully formed. But that doesn’t keep the unborn infant from being alive and identifiable by its DNA.

The Texas law banning abortions after a six-weeks-old embryo’s heartbeat can be detected has drawn the loudest protests (probably because it blocked the most abortions), but similar laws are now on the books in multiple states. In effect, these new legal rules protect unborn babies that are verifiably alive in their mothers’ wombs. Abortionists and their backers rushed to discredit these new legal prohibitions.


The *Healthline* article claimed that instead of a heart, such an embryo has only “a cluster of cells” and that the rhythmic electrical signal detected on ultrasound equipment is actually “a sound generated by the machine.”

Of course, it is. But the overwhelming majority of obstetricians and other medical professionals who take care of pregnant women have always called those sounds “heartbeats.” Have all of them been wrong all of these

years? And if that same ultrasound machine produced sounds to time the beating of your own heart, would this prove you don’t have one?

I can understand why some morally sensitive doctors and nurses who perform abortions rallied to contest any evidence that human life can be detected in the embryonic cells they are paid to extract and discard. Who wants to be seen as a baby-killer?

Many (perhaps most) of our best obstetric practitioners received their training and have done most of their work during the decades after *Roe v. Wade*—during a time when extracting and discarding unborn infants has been socially and legally okay. Now the new laws force them to face a reality they had chosen to ignore or to explain away.

The words of the ancient psalmist reflect the Bible’s consistent view of the unborn. “You knit me together in my mother’s womb,” he prayed to God in Psalm 139. “Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex. You saw me before I was born.” What the Lord saw inside that mother-to-be was not “a cluster of cells.” He saw a man who one day would grow up to bless the generations to come with his marvelous words of praise. 

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An Easter Truth

As Easter drew near again this year, I was surprised to find myself pondering the blessings we find in death instead of life—the exact opposite of my usual Easter meditations.

Several years ago I saw Leonard Wolcott’s blunt assertion that “there is no Easter apart from Good Friday.” He went on to explain, “There is no resurrection without the cross, no rising with Christ except in dying to self that we might live again, or rather that the risen Christ might live through us.” He was right. Without death, resurrection means nothing.


But thinking of death as a blessing is still not my normal perspective. The Creator embedded in all of us a basic survival instinct. He made us so that we’re constantly alert to danger and hungry for the nourishment and oxygen it takes for us to stay alive.

We do everything in our power to avoid death—both our own and the end of life for those we love most, and that’s good. One of St. Augustine’s most memorable lines says we are “deafened by the clanking chains of mortality.” Dodging death is our full-time job.

But death is not always a

curse. In the final days of my dear mother’s traumatic struggle with a malignant brain tumor, she prayed over and over, “Lord, take me home!” And when he did, we thanked him. We knew she had transferred to a realm where there would be “no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, no more pain: for the former things are passed away.” We knew without doubt that death blessed her.

In Madeleine L’Engle’s book called *The Summer of the Great-Grandmother*, she looked back at those final days with the grandmother she loved so much. After the funeral she wrote, “It’s a good thing to have all the props pulled out from under us occasionally. It gives us some sense of what is rock under our feet, and what is sand.”

At least a dozen of my close friends have buried their spouses in the months just past. I’m sure that each of them, after enjoying decades of togetherness, have found it brutal to adjust to living alone. I hope that when Easter comes, it will remind them that life always follows death. The anguish of Good Friday is always dissolved into joy before the open tomb. 

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Two Reasons to Choose

In this woke generation so obsessed with gender equality, can you believe the stats reported in a recent *USA Today* article? In that column, pro-football hero Benjamin Watson told us that thirty-nine states in the USA will let a mother abort a baby “for reason of sex selection.” In other words, because of the infant’s gender.

That amazed me. In far too many schools all across the land, teachers can no longer teach kids pronouns that identify a human as a him or a her, but in four-fifths of the states, we still can make that distinction for the babies we decide to kill? Incredible!


In this age when everything from sports team names to pancake mix brands must be filtered to avoid even a hint of racism, what kind of legal repercussions would explode for any Ivy League school or for any major corporation that decided to exclude certain students or employees because of their race?

Race is the test nobody in our nation can use legally today, unless . . . Unless they want to exterminate their unborn baby. Watson’s research (he’s a black athlete, in case you’re not familiar with him) revealed that all but four

of our fifty states still have laws that allow their citizens to abort a child “specifically because of his or her race.”

From the earliest days, the legal arguments for abortion were phrased as defenses of “the right to choose.” That sounded so reasonable. So honorable. But no abortion advocates bothered to advise the justices who signed off on *Roe v. Wade* that the basis for such choices might be gender or race, two categories the Supreme Court has outlawed for almost all other selections.

Do you know any active abortionist who is not also an outspoken defender of gender and racial equality? I can’t think of one. In the light of the stats highlighted above, though, it seems to me that our friends who are so ardent about the right to choose are going to have to choose between abortion and equality. They can’t be logically consistent and opt for both.

Of course, they’re not the only ones who have to make a choice. All of us are confronted daily with the options of doing things our way or God’s way. As Joshua commanded, “Choose this day whom you will serve.” 

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Dennis and Dagwood

“I start every morning with my newspaper and coffee,” a longtime friend told me in an email yesterday.

“Ditto,” I replied. “So have I, almost all of my adult life.” And I confessed to him that, despite recent radical changes in newspaper content, I still begin almost every day chuckling at Dennis and Dagwood.

That brief online conversation was less than profound, but it reminded me of a truth I confront almost every day—the truth that we older folks don’t live in the same world our grandkids do.

“Dagwood?” they would respond. “Who’s that?” And most of those young adults would confess that they don’t pick up a newspaper twice a year. They get their news via TV or online.

Of course, this rather trivial change is just the tip of the iceberg of massive shifts in generational habits.

During my first five decades, people showed up at the church at least three times every week. Wednesday night was almost as sacred as Sunday. Today youth sports dominate the calendar. For many, Sunday morning soccer is the norm.


In the 1940s, Christian grandmothers like mine protected visiting grandchildren from Sears Roebuck

catalog pages that were even slightly risqué. Today almost every home gets polluted by television shows that feature naked people and lingerie ads that make the indecency of Victoria’s Secret seem modest.

Does anybody in Hollywood today even know the meaning of the movie rating PG?

In the dashboard pocket of my car, I still have a handful of neatly folded paper maps. In this GPS era, any young cop who saw me browsing one of those would probably wonder if I was up to no good. A map? What’s that?

What I’m describing is nothing new. You know that. Cain and Abel probably thought Adam and Eve were nuts when they shared memories of Eden. The only difference is that the pace of change is so much faster today. Wagons and plows lasted for centuries. My own father crossed Texas in a wagon. Interstate highways and 747 airliners appeared in his lifetime. And in this IT age we octogenarians are having to deal with changes at an accelerating pace.

How should we who are Bible-believing Christians react when some of these changes violate the clear instructions of God’s word? 

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Number Fourteen

Long before any of us were born, thirteen became an unlucky number. I remember when hotels and whole neighborhoods avoided using that ominous number because they couldn't rent rooms or sell houses defiled with those digits.

I'm not sure why. Googling probably would tell us, but since I have never bought into this mindless superstition, I've never taken time to research it.

It did catch my attention, though, when wacky calendar author Jeff Kacirk recalled a weird "thirteen" event that happened three hundred years ago in London. When Joseph Addison reported it, he explained that a lot of British folks believed then that if thirteen people ate at the same table, the first one to leave would be headed for big trouble.


Addison said that when two ladies got up to leave a dinner, a last-minute headcount came out with thirteen. Panic struck. The women quickly sat back down and all of the diners began desperately searching for some way to dodge the hoax.

They yelled for a neighbor to join their party so their guest count would be fourteen, but the neighbor was not at home. Plan B was for all of them to rise and depart at the same time. Just before this mass

exit, however, someone noticed that one of their female companions was pregnant. Adding in that unborn child brought their table census to a safe fourteen.

Why am I telling you this strange tale? Because it substantiates the historical truth that until this latest generation when we discard fetuses as garbage, people with Christian roots have always considered an infant in its mother's womb to be a person with heredity and rights—in this case, enough of a person to break the thirteen dinner curse.

Check the laws in most states and—even in states that have legalized the highest percentage of abortions per pregnancy—and you will find strict laws making it a crime to harm a pregnant woman's unborn baby if you hurt or kill her. I'm not sure how any lawmaker or judge can resolve the contradictions in these fetal laws.

In the early days of her own pregnancy, Jesus' mother Mary visited her six-month-pregnant cousin. Elizabeth's baby (John the Baptist) jumped for joy in his mother's womb. The babies in both women were already identifiable humans. That's what the Bible has always taught us, but for half a century America's abortion laws ignored it. 

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If God Is Watching

Genesis 6 tells us that the famous flood in Noah's day happened because "God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence." What do you think he's seeing today?

Our Creator doesn't have to watch news on TV to learn about the social mayhem breaking loose all across the globe today.

He knows that we Americans have killed over 60 million babies in recent decades.

He hears the gunshots which every year kill far more people in Portland and Chicago than all the victims in Uvalde.

In his Book of Life, he has the names of the millions of couples who are cohabiting without bothering to say "I do," and he hears the boasting of those whose same-gender relationships are now legally protected.

God sees the thousands of lives being lost or ruined because of drugs like cocaine and fentanyl, and he sees the greed of the cartels who hawk those deadly substances.

Security cameras often fail to identify members of the robber gangs who have begun raiding stores and cleaning off whole shelves, but God knows who they are.


He knows that over 3 million porn sites pollute the Internet, with a thousand new sites being added daily

and 40 million people visiting them regularly.

The same God who long ago decided to wash away the corruption on Earth is watching us today. He sees all the incidents of road-rage and racial hatred and riots in our streets. What do you think our epidemic of violence might cause the Almighty to do this time?

Former *Touchstone* editor James Kushiner says, "We sit on the knife's edge between barbarism and Christian civilization." It's entirely possible that God won't have to fix the mess. President John Adams warned, "Our Constitution was made only for moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other kind."

When the prophet Jeremiah described his people, he nailed us too. He wrote, "They actually rejoice in doing evil!" And this generation likely will demand the right to keep doing it, even if it destroys them. God won't need to drown us if we keep snorting coke and sharing HIV and shooting babies in car seats.

"The wages of sin is death," the Scriptures warn us. But that message seems to be lost in a culture that scorns God's holy word. If he sent a flood today, we'd call it climate change. 

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Christ's First Miracle

Many traditional Protestant wedding ceremonies include a line that refers to the time when Jesus turned water into wine “at his first miracle” in Cana of Galilee.

Today, as I was reading the weekly blog of one of America’s best informed, most capable religious journalists, I was surprised to see him repeat this popular error.

Yes, I know. In his Gospel, John does refer to the water-to-wine event as the “first miracle” of Jesus. And, if we ignore the Messiah’s performance that amazed Nathanael in the chapter right before the wedding feast, the winemaking is indeed the first miracle John tells us about.


But if you’ve read any of the “harmonies” of the four Gospels that depict the ministry of Jesus in chronological order, you know that in the months before Jesus got to that wedding feast in John 2 he had already healed dozens—probably hundreds—of sick, disabled, and dying people. The wedding wine was not his first public miracle.

If it was not, then why did John say it was?

Over six decades ago I was blessed to study the Gospel of John at the feet of best-ever Bible professor, Dr. Frank Pack. When we came to

John 4:46 in our studies, Dr. Pack helped us to see that John was not offering a timeline inventory of Jesus’ miracles—first, second, third, etc. Instead, John had picked up on a subtle repetition in the travel and work of Jesus.

When Jesus came back through the Galilean village of Cana in John 4, John noted that this just happened to be the second time Jesus performed an eye-popping miracle in Cana while he was on the way home from Jerusalem. Pointing us to John 4:1 and 46, Dr. Pack suggested that John was just noting the coincidence of those two miracles done on a return trip through Cana—the first one and then the second one—and not inventorying all the miracles Jesus ever worked anywhere.

Does all of this matter that much? Not really. But it does show us how easy it is for Bible readers—even expert ones—to see something in a text that really isn’t there. The more we value God’s word and want to share its truths, the more humble and careful all of us need to be. What we think we’re seeing on those holy pages may sometimes be the preconceptions or prejudices we brought with us to the Bible and not at all what the Holy Spirit means for us to see. 

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Legalized Murder

Fox News reported that police in Chicago found “a newborn baby abandoned in a discarded dresser in an alley.” The baby was less than a week old. Garbage pickup was due not long after somebody heard the baby’s cries. For that little one’s sake, abandonment turned out to be better than abortion.

Results were not so good when a South Carolina mother left her newborn daughter to die in a cardboard box in an empty field. Some fellow picking wild flowers for Valentine’s Day stumbled onto the baby’s remains. Authorities identified the mother and charged her with murder.


First-degree murder was also the charge filed against the Lakeland, Florida, mother who secretly gave birth in her home bathroom. The sheriff said she used scissors to pry the tiny body out of her birth canal and then “placed her hands on the infant’s neck and squeezed until he wasn’t moving or breathing any longer.” When the baby-killer’s mother was hit by the odor of the decaying body and found the dead child in a shoe box, she reported her daughter’s crime.

In a similar case, Tennessee authorities filed murder charges against a Chattanooga mother

whose drug abuse caused her newborn twins to die. During her pregnancy, the mother had tested positive for cocaine, oxycodone, Roxicodone, methamphetamine, and benzodiazepine drugs. She admitted taking ecstasy the day the babies were born. Both of them tested positive for drugs when they died just a day or a two after their birth.

Another mother who didn’t want to be one also gave birth to twins, this time on the sidewalk behind a California business. Somebody saw what was happening and alerted the local police. They got there in time to save one of the babies. I never did see the conclusion of that story, so I don’t know what consequences that woman suffered because of her baby’s death.

I share this brief catalog of dead babies to make the point that new laws being proposed or passed in several states would exempt any of these baby-killing mothers from criminal charges. Those laws would make it legal for any mother (and any medical professional she hires) to kill a newborn without facing any penalty.

“God made both me and my servants in our mother’s wombs,” Job testified in his final speech (31:15). How can anyone who believes this justify killing a baby? 

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The Years Fly By

Several months ago the Guinness record keepers honored a Venezuelan man, Juan Vicente Perez Mora, as the oldest man on Earth. He had just celebrated his 113th birthday. That's a lot of years, but he's a latecomer beside that nun in France who has been welcoming the sunrise for 118 years.

When I turned 83 last May, during a Facebook birthday visit with my 3-year-old grandson, I challenged him to tell me what numerals he would have to use to record my age. (He can hold up three fingers to show me how old he is.) He's brilliant, but his math skills didn't let him count that high. Tallying up that many years stretches my credibility too.


Calendars have gone digital for the modern generation, but some of us old-timers still mark New Year's Day by taking down the used-up paper ones and hanging new ones to sort out the days ahead of us. Every time I do that I pause and wonder if I'll be around to do it again.

Earlier I quoted Madeleine L'Engle's fine book *The Summer of the Great-Grandmother*. In it, she shared her reflections on the death of her mother. She posited that the

shortness of life (even longer ones) blesses us.

"Our lives are given a certain dignity by their very evanescence," she wrote. "If there were never to be an end to my quiet moments on the brook, if I could sit on the rock forever, I would not treasure these minutes so much. If our associations with the people we love were to have no termination, we would not value them as much as we do."

With each tick of the clock, we're using up the seconds that make up our lives. With the turning of every calendar page, we're closing the book on that segment of our days. And L'Engle was right. Knowing that our time here is limited should make every moment—every experience—a finer blessing that we appreciate more.

In Psalm 90, Moses tells us that life "fades away like a whisper." As he acknowledges, "life is soon over, and we are gone." Last year is gone now. Forever. It was a mere blip on the larger screen of life. Recognizing this can bless us, Moses insists. So he prays, "Teach us how short our life is, so that we may become wise." 

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Baby Killing

In June 2022, police in Nunn, Colorado, arrested a Texan, 17-year-old Leilya Cepeda, for murder. Hospital workers said her newborn had suffered multiple fatal stab wounds, probably from the scissors the reluctant mother had used to cut the umbilical cord. Cepeda's family said they had not known she was pregnant and did not know she had delivered the dead baby that was found in a basement bedroom.

That same week, halfway across the U.S., in Jamesburg, New Jersey, 19-year-old Jessica Farag was arrested for killing her brand new baby. She also was charged with murder.


It took Minnesota authorities almost two decades to identify Jennifer Lynn Matter and charge her with second-degree murder of her just-born son and daughter, who were found in 2003 and 2007 floating in the Mississippi River with their umbilical cords still attached. The *Washington Post* reported that Matter faced forty years in prison on each charge.

In the shadow of these news reports, does it take a wizard to discern that something is incredibly confused in our legal system? Half a century ago our then-liberal U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that our nation's Constitution makes it legal for mothers to kill babies in their

wombs. If the mothers in the stories I've just cited had visited the right abortion clinics, the babies they killed would have been far more mutilated but just as dead, and pro-abortionists across the land would have praised these women for standing up for their rights. Instead, these reluctant mothers got charged with murder.

No doubt, most of us who watch TV news saw the explosion of outrage all across America when some culprit leaked the paperwork linked to our highest court's potential ruling that might reverse *Roe v. Wade* and restore protection for the unborn. We've also seen reports of the outburst of dangerously violent protests by some who want to keep on killing babies. Churches have been burned. Pro-life offices have been attacked.

So—which is legal? Which deed is our legal right? To protect infants with umbilical cords, or to discard the ones we don't want? Right now we seem to be swimming both directions in this legal stream. And whatever SCOTUS ruled likely will not change this.

Those who have abandoned the biblical protections for all who are created in God's image are not likely to hush their strident claims that baby-killing is their feminine right. 

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Two Neighbors

Recently I met two guys who live on the same block (I think).

One of them was the hooligan who ran a stop sign and then, turning unexpectedly, almost hit my RAV4 head-on. It all happened too fast. I didn't have time to look for a license number or to try to identify the culprit, but I think he had just pulled his huge white pickup out of a driveway on that block.

To avoid a major crash when he drove out in front of me, I had to swing desperately to the wrong side of the street. The high concrete curb I hit wiped out one of my new front tires.

While I sat dazed, blocking an intersection in my disabled vehicle, the driver who caused all of this floorboarded his assault vehicle and fled the scene. I tried to call 9-1-1 to see if some nearby cop might nab him before he got totally lost, but I had trouble getting through.


Later as I crossed town to go replace my mangled tire, I found out why. I just happened to drive up on the scene when some miscreant had backed his vehicle over a motorcycle cop who had stopped him. That injured officer was on the way to the

Emergency Room, and a dozen of his colleagues were analyzing the crime scene. So I relaxed and realized that, in comparison, my concerns were minor indeed.

Neighbor #2 on that block where I almost got run over was the exact opposite of the first one. Sitting in his living room, drinking coffee, barely dressed, this big-hearted man saw me stranded in the intersection across from his corner house. He came padding barefooted across the sizzling hot pavement to make sure I was okay.

I had already called AAA to ask for somebody to come install my spare tire, but that kind neighbor used his impressive strength and his auto mechanic know-how to solve my problems. Without my asking or even hinting that I needed his aid, this good-hearted man jacked up my disabled RAV and replaced the damaged wheel. I think he understood what I meant when I called him "my good Samaritan."

Which of these two neighbors are you? The one who causes trouble, or the one who fixes problems for others?

I hope you're like Neighbor #2, a helper. Jesus told his listeners, "Go and do likewise." 

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Helping the Helpless

Gynecological studies have found that premature births tend to run in some families.

Take, for example, the case of Megan Grace Baker, a premature Virginia mother, who celebrated her own 24th birthday by giving birth to her own premature daughter. Experts in the studies of early births called this a "full-circle story of multigenerational preemie survival."

Baker said she was born ten weeks early. Her daughter beat her. She came fifteen weeks before her due date. At birth, this latest preemie weighed less than two pounds and had to spend more than a month in neo-natal care. Today she's a healthy child.


I share this story—now more than a year old—to emphasize the reality that, when they were born, either of these preemies could have been aborted before their mothers' water broke. Then neither of these females would be alive today for us to consider their story.

That's what abortion does. It kills people. Before the recent *Roe v. Wade* reversal, in the U.S. alone abortion legally killed 64 million people who could have lived fruitful lives. Pro-abortion protestors want to legalize this again.

Radicals who have made headlines by attacking U.S. Supreme Court justices, burning churches, and defacing the office buildings of pro-life organizations are demanding the legal right to direct the same sort of violence against helpless babies in the womb.

Those of us who wear the name of Jesus need to stand up for those who can't help themselves, people like these babies yet to be born. God has always expected his people to help the helpless. He commands his people to help the poor, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked—to help those who will be in grave trouble without our aid.

Pure religion—the genuine, best kind—the New Testament tells us, involves helping widows and caring for orphans that are in distress and totally dependent on us. Can you think of any human more helpless and in need of our protection than an unborn child?

The Good Samaritan drew the praise of Jesus because he helped a stranger who didn't expect his assistance. Right now, while millions of Americans are lobbying for the legal right to kill them, all of the unborn sons and daughters in our land need our protection. We need to help the helpless. That's the Christian thing to do. 

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Living On


At least twice every day—early and late—I stand in front of the mirror in our bathroom, and almost every time I think of the lifelong friend who installed that medicine cabinet when he remodeled that bathroom thirty years ago. He’s been gone at least a decade now, but in my memories he lives on.

Every single morning when I tie my shoes, I think of the original, always affable owner of our local Red Wing Shoe store. Only days before he retired, I stopped by his business to see if they could sell me some of those special shoestrings. “No,” the staff told me. “We don’t stock those anymore.” But the aging owner evidently recognized me. “Wait,” he said, and he hurried to retrieve a set of strings that had been tucked away somewhere in their storage area. He gave them to me. That little man has also been gone for several years now, but not a morning passes when I don’t think of him. In my mind, he lives on.

Almost half a century ago, my brother-in-law purchased a massive, somewhat elegant office desk from one of our city leaders who was closing his office and

retiring. When Dan also retired and got ready to move to Dallas, he sold that impressive desk to me for a pittance. I’ve used it every day for more than three decades now. We buried Dan several years ago, but I seldom sit down behind this desk without thinking of him. He lives on.

The truth is that all of us do. Long after we return to dust, a surprising number of relatives and friends and customers and neighbors will remember us. We’ll still be a very real part of their daily lives. The only question is whether their unavoidable memories of us will bless them or curse them. When they think of us, will their hearts be warmed or will resentments be kindled?

“It is appointed to all humans to die,” the Good Book says. But, after we do, all of us will live on. Some of our most shameful acts will not be forgotten. But our kindest words, our most generous gifts, our wisest advice, and our corniest puns also will live on long after we’re gone. So we need to be careful every day to be speaking the kind of words, dispensing the kind of love, living the kind of life we want others to remember. 

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Deadly Travel

After the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the always unconstitutional ruling called *Roe v. Wade*, in lots of places nationwide voters have approved stricter laws that make it harder to abort a baby. Two or three months after the court’s recent decision, one of America’s largest retailers told their female employees they would reimburse their expenses to travel to wherever they had to go to get an abortion.

Ever since the Covid pandemic, this same retailer, like so many other employers across the land, had been making desperate pleas for new workers to staff their stores. Their “Now Hiring” signs matched those in almost every business in town. Didn’t they realize that this new abortion benefit would subsidize the killing of hundreds of future employees?


This same company spends a fortune to advertise and dangle come-on offers to attract customers. Why, then, would they help pay to exterminate future customers?

Are our left-leaning corporate executives and government policy makers too addled to see that today’s babies are tomorrow’s customers and tax-payers? Sixty million of them are missing today because, during the last half century, we made it legal to end their lives before they were born.

Right when Vladimir Putin began disgracing himself with his Ukrainian aggressions, he displayed a bit of rare social insight. Concerned about Russia’s declining census figures, he offered a generous stipend to any mother who would agree to have ten children. He knows that the future of his country depends on having babies born.

Meanwhile, here in America, right when we’re struggling to find enough nurses or teachers or garbage truck drivers, we’re paying mothers to kill their offspring. We’re accentuating the very problem we’re desperate to solve. Does that make sense?

“I want you and your descendants to have many children,” God told Noah after he docked the Ark (Genesis 9:7 CEV). Why? Because that was the only way humans could take control of the world and be blessed by it. And that hasn’t changed.

Healthy societies, as described by the Bible, are made up of a throng of parents whose children honor them and a multitude of children who are being raised with “the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Instead of killing our little ones before they can inhale a breath, we need to welcome them as the potential solution to the danger and disorder so common in our land today. 

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Laws to Protect Us

Would you agree that when most parents make strict rules for their offspring, they do it not to curtail their fun, but to protect them?

That's exactly how our heavenly Father does it, too.

Back in days before food biologists could test the content of pork and catfish, God told his people, "Don't eat them." He wasn't robbing them of the pleasure of chowing down on a pork chop or a fish filet. He was saving them from the miseries of gastritis.

Likewise, the biblical laws that limit sexual activity to married, male-and-female couples. Three decades ago the worldwide outbreak of HIV demonstrated God's wisdom in making such restrictions. The more people broke these rules, the most likely they were to catch this deadly disease.


Telling single women not to sleep around was not a divine hedge on fun. God knew how much heartache would be the result of those immoral pregnancies. Today's stats tell us that during the past decade 87 percent of the abortions in America were performed on single women. They broke God's law. And most of them will spend the rest of their lives devastated by what they did when they violated his rules. God has

not punished them. They punished themselves.

Monkeypox may be our most recent demonstration of this principle. CDC tells us that all but a handful of its victims will be males who are breaking God's rules by having sex with other males. If they behaved, they probably wouldn't be sick. God's instructions would preserve their health.

We see this principle at work in every rule God ever made for us. He wants us to be healthy and happy, so he builds a fence around potentially damaging behavior. The Father knows that "the wages of sin is death," and he wants to give us life. Abundantly, the Bible says.

God lays down his rules only to bless us. This can be seen in his willingness to change or repeal laws that are no longer needed. Just as we relaxed the mask rules when the Covid pandemic abated. When God knew that we humans had learned how to recognize polluted meat, he relaxed those diet rules. "Now you can eat anything," he told Peter.

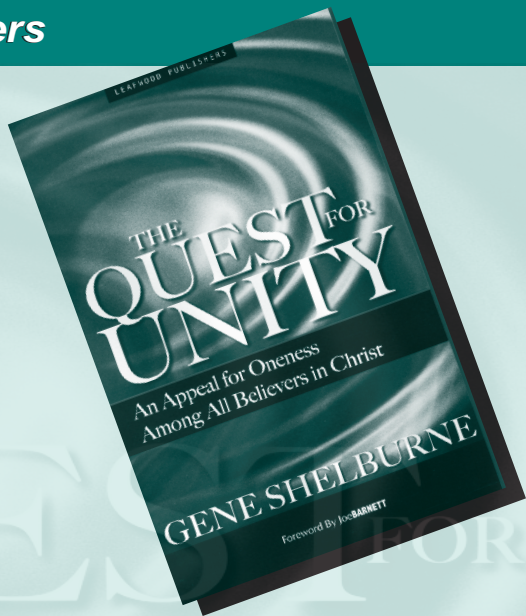
You and I are just like the brat who ignores his parents' rules not to cross the street without looking both directions. If we break our Father's rules, we foolishly endanger ourselves, and the price we pay may last a lifetime. 

**“YET YOU
BROUGHT
me out of
my mother’s
womb; you
made me
trust in
you, even at
my mother’s
breast.”**

 Psalm 22

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