Mix My Blood with the Blood of the Unborn

by
Paul Jennings Hill

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Preface

by Reverend Donald Spitz

Shortly after Florida Governor Jeb Bush signed Paul Hill's death warrant, Paul asked me to be his spiritual advisor. Paul and I were friends dating back to the shooting of the babykilling abortionist David Gunn by Michael Griffin. Paul and I would visit in Pensacola and I would stay with him and his family at their home.

After Paul Hill shot the circuit-riding abortionist John Britton that we became even closer. From the time of Paul's arrest we had weekly contact through mail and over the years, many face to face visits. At the beginning of Paul's incarceration he started writing this book. Paul poured himself into his writings and *Mix My Blood with the Blood of the Unborn* is the product of his work and constitutes his written legacy.

During the ten days preceding Paul's execution, I was with him every day but two. One of those two days was his immediate family visit day, and on the second day Paul wanted to separate himself to fast and pray. Two days before his execution; Tony, Ms Kitty and I were meeting with Paul. We were preparing for Paul's execution and met to make sure Paul's wishes would be carried out. The discussion regarding the extent of the editing of Paul's book came up. As Tony and Paul discussed *Mix My Blood with the Blood of the Unborn* and possible editing scenarios, I sat silently by. When I could no longer take it, I blurted out, "It should not be edited at all. It should go out as is, warts and all." Paul instantly agreed and seemed relieved; and that seemed to settle the matter. The discussion ended and we went on to other matters.

We decided Paul's lawyer would draw up the necessary paperwork assigning rights of all Paul's writings, including *Mix My Blood with the Blood of the Unborn*, to protect his writings from being altered. The next day, in our presence, Paul signed off when a guard brought the legal papers from his lawyer.

I write the above because I am aware that there is a revision of Paul's book in progress. I was told it would take from a year to a year and a half for the editing process to be complete and that the book cannot possibly go out as is. As far as I'm concerned this length of time indicates more than spelling and grammar correction; which could be accomplish in two weeks maximum

by any competent person, and it surely is not the spirit of "warts and all". I therefore, being one of Paul Hill's closest friends, as well as his chosen spiritual advisor, believe it is my responsibility to comply with Paul Hill's request and put his book out totally unedited.

I personally handled Paul's letter “Why I Shot an Abortionist” and am aware of his preferences in his writing. Paul was always very specific about each word and punctuation point, right down to the last jot and tittle. I know he would not want his work tampered with and he stated so in the presence of three witnesses two days before his execution. Therefore, I am putting *Mix My Blood with the Blood of the Unborn* online totally unedited.

Cordially,

Rev. Donald Spitz

Director Pro-Life Virginia

Grateful thanks to my good friends Linda Wolfe and those who requested anonymity, whose help in this project was immeasurable.

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I also praise the Lord for the many contributions of those who have gone before me, and stand with me, in upholding these glorious truths.

Foreword

The clash between Peter and Paul over circumcising Gentile believers (Galatians 2) was enormously important: the truth of the gospel, and the salvation offered to all men, from that day to our own, is directly connected to it. The controversy that currently rages over defending the unborn with force is of similar significance: both people's physical and their spiritual lives literally depend it. Not only is the legitimacy of using the means necessary for defending the unborn at stake, by logical extension, the duty to similarly defend all human beings, both born and unborn throughout all future generations, hangs in the balance. In addition to this, people's spiritual lives are also directly related to their willingness to maintain the rights of a persecuted minority in their midst. When murder has been legalized, and thousands are being slaughtered each day, to neglect the right of these people to be defended is a sin of immense proportions, with many dire consequences. It is nearly impossible, thus, to overstate the importance of the issue before us.

I do not claim extensive knowledge of pro-life causes, nor do I claim any extra-biblical revelations on the subject. But I am convinced that the Lord has called me to maintain the defensive duties of the Moral Law, as it applies to the unborn. I offer this work to the public in obedience to this divine call, and in an effort to depend on His enabling grace. Considering the huge number of lives at stake, and ultimately for Christ's sake, I beg you to overlook the numerous shortcomings of this earthen vessel author, and search and see if the principle I am asserting is truthful and biblical, or not.

It is certain that we should use the means necessary to defend the innocent, and since the unborn are innocent, it is equally certain that we should use the means necessary to defend them. If we knew that we, or our loved ones were about to be killed, as thousands of unborn children are each day, we would defend one another with the means necessary. We would not limit ourselves to legal and educational remedies that might possibly stop the bloodshed in the future; rather, we would take the immediate action necessary to save one another. If questioned, we would assert the moral necessity of taking this action. The law of love requires us to similarly defend the unborn, and uphold the duty to do so.

The duty the defend the innocent with the means necessary is an essential aspect of the Moral Law that is found in both the Old and New Testaments, and has been recognized and implemented throughout history. Neither the overwhelming majority of citizens, nor the government, questions the duty to defend the innocent. Not everyone agrees on the degree of defensive force that is appropriate, but the obligation to defend innocent people with the means necessary is such a clear and compelling aspect of the Moral Law that it can scarcely be denied.

Not only does the Moral Law require the means necessary for defending the innocent, this duty comes directly from God, and cannot be removed by any human government. The duty to defend your own or your neighbor's child, thus, is inalienable. When the government forbids this defense, the people “. . .must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29b). The Scriptures teach that when the government requires a sin of omission (as it has by forbidding the defense of our

unborn children), we must obey God rather than the government. As a consequence, you do not need the state's permission before defending your unborn child. No man-made law can remove the individual's duty to defend his own or his neighbor's child.

A consistent effort to bring civil law into conformity with the Moral Law should be based on asserting, rather than denying, the duty of the Moral Law in question. If we want to alert people to the immediate necessity of protecting the unborn, and if we want the government to provide this protection on our behalf, we must assert this duty in a forthright manner, rather than continuing to neglect and deny it.

Abortion remains legal, in part, because Christians and pro-life advocates have not harnessed the horse to the cart. The moral obligation to defend the unborn with the means necessary should be the force that pulls the pro-life movement along. This compelling duty should provide both the logical ground and the moral impetus for all anti-abortion activities, including direct intervention, as well as educational and legislative efforts. Since we should use the means necessary for defending the unborn, even though this is illegal, how much more should we avail ourselves of legal remedies, and insist that the government provide this protection for the unborn on the people's behalf?

Not only does the Moral Law require the means necessary for defending the innocent, the Moral Law also requires that this duty be upheld in no uncertain terms. The Ninth Commandment ("You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" Exodus 20:16) not only forbids lying, it also requires the maintaining and promoting of truth, including the defensive duties of the Moral Law. When murder, thus, has been legalized, and thousands are being slain every day, there is an overwhelming moral obligation to maintain and promote the means necessary for saving those threatened.

For instance, when the King of Persia, in the book of Esther, legalized the slaughter of the Jews, and afterwards permitted them to assemble and protect their lives, it was essential to the survival of the Jews that they understood and asserted the duty to defend themselves. There is a similar moral imperative that we maintain the right of the unborn to be protected with the means necessary. Just as there is a moral obligation to promote the duty to clothe the naked, and feed the starving, there is a similar imperative to maintain the duty to defend those who are being attacked. This duty must be fervently proclaimed and maintained so people will be roused from their slumber, repent, and devote themselves to this task in obedience to Christ.

As we shall see, preventing mass murder must be given a much higher priority than it is currently given. Christians commonly believe that, while legal abortion is a great injustice, it does not require the same drastic response that would be required if the government were to forbid public worship or the preaching of the gospel. But this view cannot withstand critical analysis. Since all the rights and duties of life are dependent on being alive, maintaining the right to life should have the highest immediate priority. The freedom to worship or preach the gospel is of no use to dead people. It is bad, thus, to forbid people to worship the Lord, but it is worse to sanction their murder. Preaching is important, but if you are in a worship service, and someone begins shooting people, the first priority is to stop the killing. Under these circumstances, to ignore the killing and continue with the preaching is wrong and irrational.

The issue at stake must be kept in perspective. The problem is not that the government has merely forbidden Christians to preach the gospel or worship. At issue is not the legalization of rape or slavery; the government has sanctioned mass murder, and thousands are being

slaughtered every day. What is more immediately important than saving your child, or your grandchild from being murdered?

Some sins are more heinous than others. Neglecting any aspect of the Moral Law is sinful, but neglecting the duty to defend helpless children, as millions are being slaughtered, is an especially heinous sin. Bowing to an injustice of this magnitude encourages submission to an untold number of lesser atrocities. Tolerating this form and number of murders also sets a precedent for submitting to more heinous types, and even larger numbers of murders. If your right to defend your own child may be removed by the government, there is no right that may not be similarly removed by the state. These aggravators, as well as many others, make neglecting the defensive duties of the Moral Law (as they apply to the unborn) an extremely heinous sin in the sight of God.

The magnitude of this sin should be held in sharp contrast to the virtue and wisdom of maintaining the defensive duties of the Moral Law. Just as neglecting this duty enables the cycle of sin, misery, and death to continue and accelerate, so upholding the duty to defend the unborn breaks this cycle and produces extraordinary results. Upholding this duty brings an entirely new perspective to the abortion controversy, and unleashes previously neglected potential. Affirming this aspect of the Moral Law enables us to connect it to all the other truths and duties of the Bible. This lays the basis for a comprehensive understanding of the problem, and for prescribing an effective remedy. It also opens people's eyes to the necessity of immediate and effective action—as required by God's law—and their former neglect of this obligation. This duty provides strategic insight for directing people's efforts to defend the unborn in an effective manner, and ignites people to make the sacrifices necessary to stop abortion.

Affirming this duty also provides an adequate rationale for calling people to the degree of commitment that is consistent with the extremity of the situation. Since the Moral Law requires some people to lay down their lives in defense of others, including the unborn, how much more should those not called to make this supreme sacrifice determine to devote themselves to serving God in this compelling cause? Legal abortion will only end when people become willing to make the sacrifices necessary to stop it. The Moral Law requires the sacrifices necessary to stop it. Thus, it is imperative that people repent of neglecting this aspect of the Moral Law, and rather assert it with great zeal and devotion. Nothing moves people to action like the duties of God's word that require that action.

The more we love the Lord, the greater will be our affection for His word, including the defensive duties required by the Sixth Commandment. David, in Psalm 119:97, cried out, "0h, how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day." His affection for God's law certainly included the duty to defend innocent people. We should have a similar fervor for this neglected but essential aspect of God's word. As believers meditate on this aspect of God's law, as it applies to the plight of the unborn, His Spirit will give us great ardor for proclaiming and maintaining this duty throughout the world.

What those who favor abortion need to fear, and what those who oppose abortion need to promote, is a God-given zeal for protecting the unborn. The immoral passion that drives the pro-abortion movement—to indulge their lusts and abort the unborn—must be overcome by an even greater and godly passion for defending these children. This desire needs to be fanned into flames, purified by the entire Bible, and directed toward God (He is the ultimate source and

object of our fervor for protecting those made in His image). As we learn to sustain and spread this zeal, it will illumine the world with the blazing brilliance of the glory of God.

God has unspeakable zeal for His own glory and honor. All of His glorious attributes, including His love and holiness, incline Him to protect the unborn. He is certainly not cold or indifferent about defending the unborn, and is absolutely devoted to defending these helpless, little ones. We must experience a similar compassionate zeal for their protection; our joy in life—under these intolerable circumstances—and God's glory, are inseparably connected to it.

It is virtually impossible to overstate the importance of maintaining the eternal and immutable principles of the Moral Law, especially when the government opposes these principles. The most powerful and effective weapon in the world with which to fight the lethal force of abortion, and every other evil in the world, is the particular aspect of God's word that exposes and opposes this evil; in this case, the moral duty to resist lethal force with force. To this end, we must buy truth at all cost and sell it at none. Though the entire world may deny and dash itself against the defensive duties of the Moral Law, this aspect of God's word abides forever and will prevail against all opposition.

Upholding this principle of the Moral Law is essential to maintaining a consistent and credible pro-life position. It is obviously and blatantly inconsistent to assert that the unborn are fully human but deny that they should be defended with the means necessary—like other humans. If you condone defending born children, you should not condemn defending the unborn. Those who are pro-life should either stop defending born children or start defending the unborn.

The faith that abortion is murder is dead unless it is put to work by upholding the duty to resist this murderous force with force. How can you show your faith that abortion is murder as long as you neglect the duty to intervene in defense of these children? You believe the unborn are human. You do well; many who support abortion also believe this, but they don't act like it. "But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?" (James 2:20).

Thus, the issues at stake involve much more than the lives of millions of unborn children; our response to the immediate needs of our neighbors demonstrates the difference between biblical Christianity, which requires costly repentance, and the devil's counterfeit that allows people to continue in sin. (Men will profess faith in all sorts of religions so long as they may live as they please, and they are not required to take up their cross and follow Christ.)

If the message being proclaimed does not require people to love their neighbors as themselves, and repent of neglecting this duty, that message falls far short of the teaching and examples of both Christ and the apostles (they plotted to put Christ to death because He healed on the Sabbath , and the apostles were persecuted for illegally ministering to their neighbors cts 5: 12-42]). You cannot be a true Christian and persist in any sin, especially the gross neglect of your neighbors. Nor can you be a faithful teacher, under these circumstances, unless you are willing to call people to repent of neglecting their unborn neighbors. Any teacher who will not uphold the inalienable duty to love God with all the heart, and one's neighbor as himself, is guilty of gross omission.

If your brand of Christianity allows you to conform to popular opinion, and thereby avoid great sacrifice, when the government has forbidden people to save their neighbor's souls, or their lives, you have adopted a cross-less and false religion that contradicts the teachings of Christ—

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 17:24-25). Such a corrupt religion may be popular and easy to swallow but it renders Christians tasteless and lukewarm—fit for nothing but to be spewed out and washed down the drain.

Many assert that the best way to stop abortion is by the transformation of life that results from the proclamation of the gospel. This is precisely the point I am trying to make. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and offers the only hope in our bloody and aborting world. But the gospel being preached must be true, and not a watered down counterfeit that does not expose sin, or call people to repentance. Let us not forget that an essential aspect of proclaiming the gospel is the application of the law of God to the most common and heinous sins of the day. Our culture is not only guilty of committing murder by abortion; our hands are also covered with blood for neglecting the duty to prevent murder. Christ's perfectly fulfilling this aspect of the Moral Law on our behalf, and suffering the wrath and curse of God due to us for our neglect of the unborn, can only be properly appreciate in the light of this duty. Without a lofty ethic, there can be no hearty repentance; without a sight of sin, there is no apparent need of a Savior. How can you expect to convict people of neglecting the unborn, and point them to Christ for pardon, unless the requirements of God's law are being applied to the murder of the unborn? To fail to apply this essential duty of the Moral Law to the world's neglect of the unborn is to omit an extremely important aspect of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A characteristic of false teachers is that they refuse to expose the sins of the day, and rather encourage conformity to the sinful omissions required by the State. But when the government requires sin, by omission or commission, true teachers must uphold the duty to obey God rather than men. Thus, an important aspect of preaching the gospel to our culture is a proclamation of the defensive duties of the Moral Law, since they have been forbidden by the government. Therefore, the question is not whether preaching and practicing all the beliefs and duties of the Bible is the best way to transform the world; the question is whether we believe the unborn are human beings who should be defended with the means necessary—as are all other human beings. If so, they key to ending abortion, and transforming the world, is both preaching and practicing these principles.

Many are in denial of this forbidden duty, but apart from it one cannot understand the individual's defensive duties, just war theory, or consistently consider the many historical manifestations of this duty in the past, present, or future. These considerations are also fundamental to comparing and contrasting the pro-life movement with other social movements that have engaged in forceful intervention. Minds that are closed to this aspect of the Moral Law cannot even weigh the morality of the American Revolution against the ethics of similar revolution in defense of the unborn.

Unless this forbidden aspect of the law is maintained, there is no consistent basis for maintaining any other aspect of the Moral Law that has been, or may be, forbidden. But asserting this prohibited duty gives glorious relevance and significance to all the other duties and truths of the Bible. It causes the whole Bible to take on new meaning and relevance. It should revive all aspects of the believer's personal life, as it requires his faith to be put into action with joyous and sacrificial service. This practical concern for people's lives should stimulate a similar concern for lost and needy souls, and promote personal holiness and zeal for evangelism. Many of those who

assert this duty will find that all of their God-given gifts, and abilities will be infused with new vigor and put to work, thus promoting God's kingdom and glory in an extraordinary manner.

The strength and beauty of Christianity consists in exhibiting the relevant truths and duties of the Bible—not in suppressing and ignoring them. Thus, we must rid ourselves of the satanic delusion that we some how further the pro-life movement, or our personal ministries, by ignoring the defensive duties of the Moral Law. Biblical Christianity is not advanced by suppressing and hiding the difficult and unpopular duties of morality, lest people take offense. The suffering for Christ's sake that occurs when believers disobey unjust laws is one of the principle means that God has ordained for purifying His church, and brining glory to Himself.

True and Spirit-filled believers, thus, should get up on a high mountain and proclaim the duties of the Bible—regardless of the consequences: "What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:27-28). Any movement that is based on ignoring the duty to love and defend your neighbor, as millions are being slaughtered, is fatally flawed and cannot hope to enjoy God's blessing.

Any strategy to bring about true repentance and revival that is in denial of this aspect of the Moral Law must necessarily be piecemeal and superficial and can hardly be expected to provide adequate ground for ultimate success. There can be no true individual, church, or national revival unless people repent of tolerating the murder of their unborn children, grandchildren, and neighbors. The Lord Jesus was particularly insistent that men care for the needy and oppressed, "But go and learn what this mean, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE." (Matthew 9:13a). Any revival in love to God must demonstrate itself in love to our needy neighbors. God gives little account to our outward worship of Him as long as we are tolerating the oppression and abuse of our neighbor: "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you, Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood." (Isaiah 1:15). We must, therefore, repent of neglecting our duties to the unborn if we would enjoy the blessing of God: "Thus says the Lord, 'Preserve justice, and do righteousness, for my salvation is about to come and my righteousness to be revealed." (Isaiah 56:1).

The influence of Satan, our sinful nature, and the world's system have combined to blind us to the defensive duties of the Moral Law. Sin has a searing and stupefying effect on the heart that blinds it to the offense in question. One of the punishments for tolerating mass murder is the inability to recognize the duty to resist this lethal force with force. Our only hope is that the Spirit of God will quicken the word of God to our consciences, and awaken us to the magnitude of our neglect.

The battle over abortion is primarily spiritual. The conflict is between God's will and kingdom, and Satan's opposing will and kingdom. We must choose between maintaining God's word, though it turns to the world upside down, and ignoring the truth so that the murderous status quo, and our place in it, may remain intact. The choice is between the misery of sinful negligence, and the joy of sacrificial service. Instead of adjusting our responses to legal abortion to fit within our comfort zones, we must adjust our lifestyles so they conform to God's law under these truly horrific circumstances.

Make no mistake, under current circumstances, deciding to uphold the defensive duties of the Moral Law is a weighty and far-reaching decision that should not be taken lightly. Taking this step is similar to Christ's decision to help the needy on the Sabbath, and the apostles' decision to minister to their neighbors in the name of Christ—contrary to the law. It is difficult for us to appreciate just how radical and costly it was for the apostles to decide to disobey the law of the land. Many in that day, no doubt, considered the apostolic refusal to submit to the authorities to be wild-headed, unwise, and counterproductive to the "movement." It resulted in horrible persecution that cost thousands of Christians their lives. Surely the respectable, law-abiding citizens of that day questioned the wisdom, and perhaps the sanity, of those who joyfully endured the loss of their property, family, and lives. Those who hated vital Christianity stigmatized the believers who upheld the forbidden duties of that day as despicable outlaws, and tried to marginalize them in public opinion, to discourage others from associating with them.

The question that confronts us is whether we are willing to be similarly stigmatized for upholding the duties of the Moral Law that have been forbidden in our day. It is time for us to count the cost of being a Christian under a regime that has legalized murder, and has made it illegal to protect one's children and neighbors from harm. What would have happened if the apostles had refused to go outside the camp with Christ, bearing His reproach, and had rather loved this present world, and agreed to submit to the authorities? It is a good thing they immediately obeyed God in the matter, and did not limit their responses to those permitted by the state, or scorn those who obeyed God rather than men.

Since the government has legalized the murder of the unborn, much as when the Roman government legalized the murder of Christians, it gives believers a glorious opportunity to show where their true allegiance lies: either with Satan, the state, and the protection of murderers, or with God, His law, and the protection of the oppressed; there is no neutral moral ground. You must choose between protecting abortionists, and protecting the unborn. To encourage submission to mass murder, and stay in the mainstream, is to forsake the straight and narrow way that leads to life.

The time is long overdue for people to move beyond their unbiblical assumptions about ending legal abortion, and begin to uphold God's word at this point. Rather than continuing to plaster over the abortion problem by merely endorsing legal remedies, we must cut to the heart of people's sinful neglect of the unborn by upholding this forbidden aspect of God's law.

Those who have failed to uphold this duty should be reproved and warned of the consequences of persisting in this neglect. Both defending people with the means necessary, and upholding the obligation to do so, are such obvious duties of the Moral Law that God will not excuse those who neglect these responsibilities on the basis of false please of ignorance:

Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, 0 hold them back. If you say, 'See, we did not know this,' does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work? (Proverbs 24:11-12).

Christ declared, "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven..." (Matthew 5:1 9a). If someone who annuls one of the least of the commandments will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, what consequences will come on those who annual this essential aspect of the Moral Law as millions are being slaughtered? Deuteronomy 27:1 9a declares, "Cursed is he who distorts the

justice due an alien, orphan, and widow..." This curse should be held in sharp contrast to the blessing Christ promises to those who maintain, rather than annul, His commandments: "...but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:1 9b).

There is a real danger of becoming so engrossed in resolving the many empty objections that people raise to this duty that one loses sight of the compelling nature of the obligation at stake. We must not allow this to happen.

The Moral Law (as summarily comprehended by the Ten Commandments) requires the means necessary for defending innocent people. The unborn are innocent people. Therefore, the Moral Law requires the means necessary for defending the unborn.

Not only is this a vitally important duty of the Moral Law, since the unborn are unable to defend themselves, or to assert their right to this defense, it is imperative that this right be maintained on their behalf: "Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all the unfortunate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy" (Proverbs 31:8-9). God requires us to ". . .defend the rights of the afflicted and needy." The unborn are afflicted and needy and have a right to be defended with the means necessary. Therefore, God requires us to defend the right of the unborn to be protected with the means necessary. Our duty and highest joy, under these circumstances, should be to promote this duty with unwavering passion and zeal. If, therefore, you believe that abortion is lethal force, you should uphold the force needed to stop it!

This work will arm you with the most powerful weapon anyone could wield in the battle against abortion: the defensive duties required by God and forbidden by the government.

I challenge you to join with me in upholding these duties as the light of God's law dawns on the battle for the unborn.

Introduction

I didn't normally stand in the middle of the driveway leading to the abortion clinic. But this day was different. I was determined to do everything in my power to prevent John Britton from killing any children that day—or ever again. I had made up my mind that the clinic door would not close and lock behind the abortionist—protecting him as he dismembered over thirty unborn children.

Taking this "defensive action" first occurred to me eight days earlier, on July 21, 1994. I had a business touching up cars at dealerships and used car lots. I was working at a car lot in the afternoon, wondering who would act next, when the idea of taking action myself struck; it hit hard. During the next two or three hours, as I continued to work in a distracted manner, I began to consider what would happen if I were to shoot an abortionist.

The man who had previously shot an abortionist in Pensacola on March 10, 1993, Michael Griffin, had been dismissed because what he said about shooting abortionists contradicted his actions. But I wanted to put my beliefs about defending the unborn into consistent action.

God graciously converted my proud and rebellious heart when I was seventeen. Though I am a slow learner, I managed to graduate from seminary in 1984. The Lord then opened the door for me to serve in both the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. After seven years of rather unfruitful ministry, I turned from both of these denominations because I became convinced that they were inconsistently providing baptism to infants while denying them communion. (Taking this stand was made much easier by my diminishing desire to continue my unsuccessful preaching career). I then started my own business and moved my family to Pensacola to join a reformed Presbyterian church that practiced both infant baptism and infant communion.

In God's amazing providence, I began to engage in pro-life activism at the Ladies Center in Pensacola a couple of months before Michael Griffin shot and killed the abortionist, Dr. David Gunn. (I knew of Dr. Gunn before his death, and had seen him entering the clinic). Two days after Michael Griffin killed Dr. Gunn, I called the Phil Donahue Show and told them I supported the shooting. Three days later, I appeared on the show with the abortionist's son, and compared killing Dr. Gunn to killing a Nazi concentration camp "doctor."

The Lord then led me to contact Advocates for Life Ministries (Portland, Oregon). They graciously published an article I wrote for their magazine, Life Advocate, and provided the contacts necessary for numerous activists to sign a "Defensive Action" statement justifying Griffin's actions. After this, through another set of amazing providential occurrences, I appeared on ABC's Nightline, and justified Shelley Shannon's shooting of an abortionist in Wichita, Kansas in August, 1993.

Fighting for Life

During the Nightline broadcast, I defended the shooting on the basis of the Sixth Commandment (which not only forbids murder, but also requires the means necessary for preventing murder). It is not enough to refrain from committing murder; innocent people must also be protected.

Most people don't realize that legal abortion requires a sin of omission by forbidding people to intervene as mass murder is taking place. By legalizing abortion, the government has robbed you of your right to defend your own relatives, and neighbors, from a bloody death. It's as though a machine gunner is taking aim on bound peasants, huddled before a mass grave, and you are forbidden to stop him. In much the same way, the abortionist's knife is pressed to the throat of the unborn, and you are forbidden to stop him. It's as though the police are holding a gun on you, and forcing you to submit to a murder—possibly the murder of your own child or grandchild.

No human government can remove the individual's duty to keep each of the Ten Commandments: these duties are inalienable. Thus, when the government will not defend the people's children—as required by the Sixth Commandment—this duty necessarily reverts to the people. If the people's children will not be defended by the government, they must be defended by the people, or they will not be defended at all.

And if you want your fellow citizens and the government to recognize this duty, you must assert it. The outrage is not that some people use the means necessary for defending the unborn, but that, since most people don't uphold this duty, the government will not perform it on the people's behalf.

Could it be that those who point the finger, and accuse Michael Griffin of murder—even though he obviously prevented murder—are themselves guilty of complying with murder? Instead of faulting Griffin for going too far is it possible that people should be accusing themselves of not going far enough? As distasteful as it is to kill a murderer, isn't it infinitely more repulsive to allow him to murder, not just one or two, but hundreds and thousands of unborn children?

Striking Results

When I first appeared on Donahue, I took the position that Griffin's killing of Dr. Gunn was justified, but I asked the audience to suspend judgment as to whether it had been wise. I realized later, however, that using the force necessary to defend the unborn gives credibility, urgency, and direction to the pro-life movement. These are traits that it has lacked and that it needs in order to prevail.

I realized that using force to stop abortion is the same means that God has used to stop similar atrocities throughout history. In the book of Esther, for instance, Ahasuerus, the king of Persia, passed a law allowing the Persians to kill their Jewish neighbors. But the Jews did not passively submit; their use of defensive force prevented a calamity of immense proportions. (In this case, the government also permitted the Jews to defend themselves, but the morality of their defense was not dependent on men's approval). In much the same way, when abortion was first legalized in our nation, if the people had resisted this atrocity with the means necessary, it may have similarly saved millions of people from an untimely death. Thus, it is not unwise or unspiritual to use the means that God has appointed for keeping His commandments; rather, it is presumptuous to neglect these means and expect Him to work apart from them.

I realized that many important things would be accomplished by my shooting another abortionist in Pensacola. This would put the pro-life rhetoric about defending born and unborn children equally into practice. It would bear witness to the full humanity of the unborn as few things could. It would also open people's eyes to the enormous consequences of abortion—not only for the unborn, but also for the government that had sanctioned it, and those required to resist it. This would convict millions of their past neglect, and also spur many to future obedience. It would also help people to decide whether to join the battle on the side of those defending abortionists, or the side of those defending the unborn.

But, most importantly, I knew that this would uphold’ the truths of the gospel at the precise point of Satan's current attack (the abortionist's knife). While most Christians firmly profess the duty to defend born children with force (which is not being disputed by the government), most of these professors have neglected the duty to similarly defend the unborn. They are steady all along the battle line, except at the point where the enemy has broken through. I was certain that if I took my stand at this point, others would join with me, and the Lord would eventually bring about a great victory.

With thoughts like these racing through my mind, I finished my work that Thursday afternoon and drove home. Although, at the time, my thinking on these things had not crystallized, no matter how I approached the subject everything seemed to fall together in an amazing manner. I continued to secretly consider shooting an abortionist, half hoping it would not appear as plausible after I had given it more thought.

The Story of the Shooting

A Window of Opportunity

The next morning, Friday, as was my practice, I went to the abortion clinic (the Ladies Center). I arrived at about 8:00 a.m.: the time that many of the mothers began arriving. I was usually the first protester there, but that day another activist had arrived first. What was even more unusual was, after discrete questioning, I learned that he had been there when the abortionist arrived: about 7:30 a.m. More importantly, I discovered that the abortionist had arrived a few minutes prior to the police security guard. This information was like a bright green light, signaling me on.

For months, my wife had planned to take our children on a trip to visit my parents, and to take my son to summer camp. She planned to leave that coming Wednesday morning and return the following week. I would have the remainder of the day that she left, and all of Thursday, to prepare to act on Friday, eight days after the idea first struck me. All I had to do was hide my intentions from my wife for a few days until she left. If I did not act during her planned trip (since I could not have kept my feeling from her for long), she would almost certainly develop suspicions later, and my plans would be spoiled for fear of implicating her. I could not hope for a better opportunity than the one immediately before me. God had opened a window of opportunity, and it appeared that I had been appointed to step through it.

Remembering God's Promise

Saturday afternoon, the second day after I began to consider taking action, we took a family outing to the beach. My wife, Karen, and I enjoyed going to the beach in the afternoon, when it isn't so hot.

Our three children were delighted with the outing. My son was nine, and my two daughters were six and three. We dug in the sand, splashed in the water, and walked along the beach on the wet sand. All the while I weighed my plans in my mind, being careful not to arouse suspicion.

This became a heart-rending experience that almost overwhelmed me. I doubted I would ever take my family to the beach like this again. I would be in prison, separated from my beautiful wife and children. The sight of them walking along the beach so happy and serene, and the contrasting thought of being removed from them was startling, almost breathtaking. Waves of emotion swept over me—threatening to start tears in my eyes.

I could not allow my emotions to show. To retain control, I lifted my heart to the Lord in praise and faith. As long as I responded to the swelling pain in my chest with praise, I could rise above it, and still see things clearly—and what a strikingly beautiful sight it was. Somehow, responding to the pain with intense praise turned it into joy—joy as clean and clear as the sand and sky. As I lifted my heart and eyes upward, I was reminded of God's promise to bless Abraham, and grant him descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. I claimed that promise as my own, and rejoiced with all my might, lest my eyes become clouded with tears and they betray me.

All my parental instincts were stirred as I played with my children. They enjoyed their father's attention. I took them, one by one, into the surf with me. As I carried and supported each child in the water, it was as though I was offering them to God as Abraham offered his son.

I also admired the beauty and grace of my wife. I knew that, by God's grace, she would be able to cope with my being incarcerated, but it was soul-wrenching to think of being separated from her, although I knew our relationship would continue.

Though I would almost surely be removed from my precious family, I knew that God would somehow work everything out. I would not lose them but only be separated from them. The separation would be painful, but the reward would be great, too great to fathom; it was simply accepted in faith.

An Agonizing Decision

By the time the sun set, the emotions that I had experienced on the beach had ebbed. We brushed the sand from our things and walked back to the car. Neither Karen nor the children seemed alerted to anything. Like a man savoring his last supper, I enjoyed watching them through eyes unknown to them. I decided to suspend final judgment as to whether I would act until the upcoming Monday. After making my decision I would then have four days to prepare myself to act on Friday—the day abortions were performed.

The decision was agonizing. I would be leaving my home, children, and wife, but I felt that God had given me all I had so that I could return it to Him. Nor was I unmindful of the impact this gift would have, 'or of the reward. I was also assured, from God's "word" that He would be a Father to my children and sustain my wife.

I had not moved to Pensacola for this purpose, nor had I gotten myself on Donahue or Nightline and carried myself through them in my own strength. I certainly had nothing to do with Michael Griffin shooting Dr. Gunn, or with the highly publicized Pensacola abortion clinic bombings on Christmas of 1984. I was not standing for my own ideas, but God's truths—the same truths that have stopped bloodbaths and similar atrocities throughout history. Who was I to stand in God's way? He now held the door open and promised great blessing for obedience. Was I not to step through it?

When Monday arrived, I knew I had to decide. When I went from debating whether to act, in general, to planning a particular act, I felt some relief. Romans 14:23b says, ". . .and whatever is not from faith is sin." If I had not acted when I did, it would have been a direct and unconscionable sin of disobedience. One of the first things I told my wife after the shooting was, "I didn't have any choice!" That cry came from the depths of my soul. I was certain, and I still am, that God called me to obey His revealed will at that particular time.

My plan was to carry my shotgun from my parked truck to the front of the abortion clinic in a rolled-up poster board protest sign. I would leave the concealed shotgun lying on the ground until the abortionist drove past me into the clinic parking lot.

Preparing to Kill

In spite of my careful plans, the morning of the shooting was not easy. Although I had gone to bed late, I forced myself to rise about 4:00 a.m. to spend time in prayer and Bible

reading, and to prepare myself for the day. I concluded my meditations in Psalm 91. Verses five through nine stood out:

You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day; of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right had; but it shall not approach you. You will only look on with your eyes, and see the recompense of the wicked. For you have made The Lord, my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place.

I was fully determined to act, but my usual zest, and the zeal I expected to feel were missing. The lower half of my body was gripped with a gnawing emptiness. This was not an easy task.

While driving to the clinic, I decided to drive past it first, to see if everything looked normal (I was concerned that someone may have become suspicious and called the police). Just as I approached the clinic, a police cruiser drove by me in the opposite direction. I forced my fears under control as I continued down the road. After driving a quarter of a mile, it was time to head back, but the freedom of the open road beckoned to me. I could hear the undercarriage of my truck groan as I did a tight turn around in an open parking lot. It was hard to turn around, but I knew I could not continue down the road. Obedience was the only option.

Waiting for The Abortionist

Several months prior to the day of the shooting, GQ magazine had interviewed both the pro-life protesters and the pro-choice people (including the abortionist) who frequented The Ladies Center. This piece (published in February 1994) discussed the threat I posed to the abortionist, and the possibility of someone—like me—shooting him as he entered the clinic.

I knew from having read this article that the abortionist and his escort were on guard when entering the clinic. Jim Barret, an escort who took his turn driving the abortionist to the clinic, was described as being well armed. He was quoted as saying that, if threatened, he would "...shoot first" and ". . .not miss." As it happened, in God's providence, he was the driver killed that day.

Two thoughts sustained and impelled me as I went through this ordeal. The first was that if I did not intervene and prevent the abortionist from entering the clinic, he would kill two or three dozen children that day. The second, and more prominent thought, was that if I did not succeed in killing the abortionist, but merely wounded him, he would, in all probability, return to killing the unborn as soon as he was able. In the coming months and years, he would likely kill thousands of unborn children, under the security of the best police protection available. I was determined to prevent this.

As I stood awaiting the abortionist's arrival, I was struggling in fervent prayer to maintain my resolution of heart. At the end, as the moment of his expected arrival approached, I was praying fervently that the police security would not arrive first. I could still find the heart to shoot the abortionist but, while I knew it would be justified to kill a policeman in order to stop the murderer he was protecting, I did not want to have to do it. I implored the Lord, in an earnest and personal manner, to spare me, and the policeman—if possible.

God answered my prayers, and the abortionist arrived two or three minutes before the police guard. When I lifted the shotgun, two men were sitting in the front seats of the parked truck; Jim Barret, the escort, was directly between me and the abortionist.

When I finished shooting, I laid the shotgun at my feet and walked away with my hands held out at my sides, awaiting arrest. I did not want to appear to be threatening anyone when the police arrived.

Arrested but Successful

I was relieved when they cuffed me. I gave a hopeful and non-resisting look to the policeman who ordered me under arrest with his drawn handgun. I did not want to be shot, and was glad to be safely in police custody.

When they later led me to the police car, a handful of people had assembled. I spontaneously raised my voice: “One thing's for sure, no innocent people will be killed in that clinic today.” Not only had the abortionist been prevented from killing about 30 people that day, he had also been prevented from continuing to kill—unlike other abortionists who have merely been wounded and have returned to “work.” The remarkable thing about that day was that, unlike the children who survived to possibly work some other day, the one who intended to kill them did not.

At the police station, a specially summoned plain-clothed officer sat talking with me for two or three hours. He had sat similarly with Michael Griffin. But I did not discuss what had just happened. I did not want to aid those who had sinned by swearing to uphold mass murder (as have virtually all those who have sworn to uphold the law of the land).

The arresting officer then led me out of the police station, and escorted me 20 yards to his squad car in front of a teeming mass of reporters and photographers. As I came out of the door of the station, I seized the initiative, and raised my voice in a carefully planned declaration:

“Now is the time to defend the unborn in the same way you'd defend slaves about to be murdered!”

Soon I was alone in a large one-man cell. The emotions surging within me burst forth in praise to God for all that He had done. I repeatedly sang a song commonly used at rescues. The refrain begins, “Our God is an awesome God;”

Breaking the Shackles of Submission

Although I did not understand the meaning of all the emotions I experienced immediately after my incarceration, I understand them better now. Prior to the shooting, I experienced the oppressive realization that I was not free to defend my neighbors as I would defend myself. Wrath was ready to be poured out on me if I cast off the shackles of passive submission to the state. The fear of being persecuted for disobeying our tyrannical government made submitting to its yoke seem attractive. My mind and will recoiled from the high cost of acting responsibility. It required an act of the will to even consider obeying the Lord.

Any nation that legalizes abortion throws a blanket of fear and intimidation over all its citizens who rightly understand the issues involved. By legalizing abortion, the government has aimed its intimidating weaponry at any who dare to interfere with the slaughter. The resulting fear of the government has a paralyzing effect on both the individual and the collective mindset

that is incalculable. Anyone who underestimates the power that fear of the police has over men's minds fails to appreciate what may be the government's most powerful weapon. If you wonder why so few speak, or practice, the whole truth about defending the unborn, you need look no further for an explanation—it's illegal to save those being led away to slaughter.

The inner joy and peace that have flooded my soul since I have cast off the state's tyranny has made my 6' x 9' cell into a triumphant and newly liberated kingdom. I shudder at the thought of ever returning to the bondage to bloodguilt currently enforced by the state.

What is the appropriate response to news of an abortion provider being slain by someone defending the unborn? Under such circumstances, the focus should not be on the slain murderer, but on the deliverance of his intended victims. For instance, in the book of Esther, when the Lord delivered the Jews from the Persians who intended to harm them, the people did not mourn the death of their enemies; rather, they established a holiday of feasting and rejoicing that continues to be celebrated to this day.

Family Neglect and Excessive Force?

Some object that I have neglected my family. But in spite of the emphasis the Bible places on performing familial duties, it is abundantly clear that you must respond to the call of Christ—even if it requires you to leave your wife, children, and also forfeit your life. To perform a higher calling, it is often necessary to leave lesser duties behind.

Others object that killing Dr. Britton was excessive. But many who hold this position would not object if they learned that, during the Jewish holocaust, someone had shot and killed a Nazi concentration camp "doctor." Suppose, for instance, someone had shot and killed the notorious Dr. Joseph Mengele who practiced at Auschwitz. Wouldn't this have been warranted, under the circumstances, to prevent him from continuing his torturous and murderous experiments?

The appropriate degree of defensive force is determined by the circumstances. Force that is excessive under one set of circumstances may be totally inadequate under conditions that are more demanding. Extreme circumstances normally call for extreme measures. Would you think that you had done your duty if you merely wounded someone who was trying to kill your family, if, afterwards, you had to sit in jail as the murderer returned, week after week, until he had killed everyone in your family?

Under circumstances where it is likely that merely wounding an assailant, rather than killing him, will result in that person later returning to murder numerous people, lethal force is justified. Genesis 14 records an incident in which Abraham, and his men, attacked and killed a group of men who had taken Abraham's nephew, Lot, captive. God later blessed this slaughter through Melchizedek (a type of Christ), who declared that God had delivered Abraham's enemies into his hand. Under these circumstances, lethal force was necessary. It certainly prevented those killed from later regrouping and returning to threaten Abraham's family.

The Burden of Proof

In order to determine where the burden of proof falls in this debate, we must begin with a realistic 'evaluation of the circumstances: the government has legalized murder, and the overwhelming majority of people, including those who oppose abortion, are in denial about the

duty to defend the unborn with the means necessary. But since the defensive duties of the Moral Law are such a self-evident aspect of life, no one wants to bear the burden of trying to disprove the obvious. It would certainly be difficult for a pro-lifer who believes in justifiable homicide in defense of born people to prove that similarly defending the unborn could not also be justifiable. The best those who are determined to suppress this duty can do is to ignore it. It they can't do this (it is difficult to ignore all the abortion clinic bombings and shootings), they cast about for an objection to a particular aspect of this duty that appears plausible. (People in this debate commonly grasp at objections even though they know them to be flimsy as straw). But it is important to distinguish between raising an unsubstantiated objection to what someone did, and proving that what they did was wrong. In both church and civil courts, no accusations should be sustained unless they can be proven (I Timothy 5:19, Deuteronomy 17:6).

The tactic employed by those who prosecuted me, in both my church and civil trials, was to assume that it is wrong to kill abortionists, and proceed on this unproved assumption. But this was to assume the very point in question (they begged the question). Yet the Bible clearly puts the burden of proof on the accuser (I Timothy 5:19, Deuteronomy 17:6). All the accused needs to do, in a civil trial, is to raise a reasonable doubt about the prosecution's case. In both church and civil courts, a man should be presumed innocent unless it can be proven that he is guilty. Thus, in both my church and civil trials, the prosecution should have borne the burden of proving that what I did, under the circumstances, was wrong: i.e., that abortion providers should not be restrained with lethal force (even though they are protected by the police, and will likely return to killing the innocent if they are merely wounded).

The prosecution in both my church and civil trials was intent on suppressing, not only my particular actions, but any sort of forceful intervention. Thus, the last thing they wanted to do was to assert the obligation to defend the innocent with the means necessary, and then show why my particular use of force was inconsistent with this obligation. Yet, from a consistent biblical and pro-life perspective, this is what was required. If someone allegedly uses excessive force, this in no way annuls all the lesser and appropriate degrees of force. Rather, if you want to prove that someone used excessive force you must begin by asserting the proper parameters of defensive force, and then demonstrate that the act in question exceeded these parameters. But since those prosecuting me were in denial about all of the defensive duties of the Moral Law, and not just lethal defense, they did not do this; they assumed that what I did was wrong and did not try to prove their case. If they had done so, it would have soon become obvious that not only was the force I used appropriate, under the circumstances, lesser degrees of force would have also been justified. Thus, they did not accept the impossible task of proving what I did was wrong.

If they had asserted that I had used excessive force, I could have done more than raise a reasonable doubt about this charge; I could have proven that lethal defensive force was, under the circumstances, a moral necessity (Genesis 14). Since they could not have proven I did anything wrong, neither of these courts should have accused me of wrongdoing. But since they charged me with guilt, they should have at least accepted the burden of proving their accusations.

Not only do my accusers bear the burden of proof, this proof must be based on the Scriptures; men's laws, declarations, constitutions, and opinions should be tested by God’s law. People commonly appeal to America's Declaration of Independence, and the American Constitution in this debate. But even if those who drafted these documents had attempted to be distinctly biblical, which they did not, a man-made civil constitution is no more infallible or authoritative than a man-made church constitution. God’s word, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit,

must be looked to as the supreme judge by which all of faith and life is to be examined— not any uninspired church or civil constitution.

Many of my detractors, who are ordinarily careful to base their teaching on God's word, in this instance have not done so, but have rather based their opposition to my actions on men's unfounded opinions. And not only do some of their objections contradict the word of God, their arguments often contradict the commonly accepted norms for using defensive force. Since many of their arguments are contrary to the Moral Law, they not only fly in the face of Scripture, they often contradict common sense.

When a society is guilty of tolerating mass murder, it is difficult for those within such an inverted society to view the appropriate response from an objective viewpoint. The Bible provides this viewpoint. Viewing things from God's perspective requires a conscious and concentrated effort when you, and those around you, are hanging upside down. While it is difficult for us, under these circumstances, to see things as they are, the effort must be made.

The Principles of Defensive Action

All Killing Forbidden?

You do not need to enjoy detective stories, or even to have read the Bible, to know that some killings are evil, and some are good and necessary. This knowledge is instinctive since it is part of the Moral Law. Yet, in spite of this inner testimony, some mistakenly believe the Sixth Commandment forbids all killing. Those who hold this position commonly quote the King James Bible, which translates this Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." But the more accurate translation, used by most current versions, is, "You shall not murder." The Hebrew word that is properly translated "murder" in the Sixth Commandment is "ratsach."

Biblical Hebrew, much like modern English, has several words for killing that do not necessarily imply wrongdoing. But "ratsach," like "murder," is used to designate those killings that are wrongful, e.g., Psalm 94:6, "They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder (ratsach) the orphans." Ratsach is never used to designate justifiable killings, such as when David killed Goliath, or where God commands those guilty of capital crimes to be executed.

Therefore, the Sixth Commandment does not forbid all killing—only wrongful killing. This is consistent with the numerous texts that justify, and often require, the taking away of human life on three occasions: public justice (Numbers 35:3 3), lawful war (Jeremiah 48:10), and necessary individual defense (Exodus 22:2).

In order to grasp the full meaning of the Sixth Commandment, it is essential to understand that this Commandment, when joined with each of the other nine Commandments, forms a summary of the Moral Law (which requires the performance of all the duties of holiness and righteousness owed to God and our fellow man). Each of these Commandments, thus, summarizes the duties that are required under a particular aspect of the Moral Law.

There are two particularly important rules that should be observed in order to rightly understand each of the Ten Commandments, including the Sixth:

(1) "That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden; and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded..." (Westminster Larger Catechism Q.99.4). The sin forbidden in the Sixth Commandment is murder; one of the contrary duties commanded is the prevention of murder.

(2) "That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto" (Westminster Larger Catechism Q.99.6). We see here that when God requires a duty in any of the Ten Commandments, He also requires the means necessary for performing that duty. This principle, when applied to the Sixth Commandment, shows that this Commandment not only requires the prevention of murder, it also requires the means necessary for preventing murder, under the particular circumstances in question. Abraham's defense of Lot, in Genesis 14, provides a good example:

And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus
(vs. 14 & 15).

The circumstances described in Genesis 14 required Abraham to leave his place of residence, and execute an attack that he knew would involve lethal force. Since he used the means necessary, under the circumstances, to save Lot, his actions were not only moral, they were positively praiseworthy, and resulted in his receiving God's blessing through Melchizedek (a type of Christ):

And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most high, who has delivered your enemies into your hand" (Genesis 14:19-20).

Considering the explicit blessing that God gave to Abraham's use of lethal force, we should consider his rescuing Lot to have been an appropriate use of lethal defensive means, as required by the Moral Law.

And since the Sixth Commandment justifies the greatest degree of force, it follows that lesser degrees of force are also justified—when they are necessary. For instance, since it is justified to kill a violent aggressor, it is also justified to wound him, threaten him, or destroy property he is using—as necessary to protect the innocent. There are, thus, numerous legitimate means for saving someone from imminent death or bodily injury that do not involve the use of deadly force. Wisdom is needed to determine which means are required by the circumstances. The use of all these various means, however, falls under the general moral obligation to defend the innocent.

It is clear, thus, that the duty to use the means necessary for defending the innocent is an essential aspect of the Moral Law; this is why the principle of resisting force with force is so widely understood and accepted. Thus, we have good reason to believe that God requires the means necessary for defending innocent people—including the unborn.

In order to avoid confusion, however, we must carefully distinguish between the three previously mentioned cases in which it may be justified to take away human life: public justice, lawful war, and necessary defense. A common objection to my actions is to confuse what I did

with public justice. Some assert that I wrongly acted as judge, jury, and executioner. Although the civil government should put murderers to death, this does not mean that every citizen who kills a habitual murderer is necessarily presuming to act as a civil judge, or a civilly sanctioned executioner. I did not kill John Britton to punish him for his past murders, but to prevent him from continuing to murder. My actions, thus, serve as an example of necessary individual defense—not public justice.

Some have also confused my actions with lawful war. It has been objected that since I was not serving in the capacity of a duly-constituted civil leader, who was leading a just revolt, that I had no basis for killing an abortionist. This objection will be handled more thoroughly when the doctrine of the lower civil magistrate is considered. At this point, I will simply point out that my actions should not be confused, either with public justice or lawful war; my actions serve as a clear example of an individual using necessary defensive force—as required by the Sixth Commandment.

Illegally Observing the Sixth Commandment

Of all the people who have opposed my killing Dr. Britton, both formally and informally, I don't know of anyone who would deny that the Moral Law requires some sort of direct intervention to prevent murder. But due to the relative silence and neglect of the pro-life community on this duty, combined with the vigorous promotion of numerous legal activities, many mistakenly believe that their efforts to protect the unborn should be limited to legal remedies. But while this approach eliminates the difficulties and stigma attached to disobeying the government, it does not satisfy the requirements of the Moral Law. We must take the action necessary to help needy people, even if the government forbids it. When men forbid us to help those in need, we must obey God rather than men.

The Scriptures record several incidents in which Christ mercifully aided men's bodies (as required by the Sixth Commandment) in sight of men's opposition. Matthew 12:9-14 tells of Christ healing a man's withered hand on the Sabbath, even though the Pharisees had made it unlawful. Verse 14 records their response to this healing: “But the Pharisees went out and counseled together against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.” In spite of the impending persecution, Christ put the Moral Law before man's law, and used the power needed to heal the man's withered hand.

Notice that Jesus did not comply with the laws imposed by the Jews, and hope they might eventually be changed through educational means. He did not even wait until the Sabbath had passed before healing the man's hand, lest the Pharisees take offense. Rather, He took a bold stand at the precise point of Satan's attack in His day. The way He performed this merciful deed served to highlight and contradict the sin of omission required by the authorities. He not only taught the duty to love your neighbor as yourself, He also had the audacity to exemplify this teaching in spite of the opposition.

And since Christ would not submit to a law forbidding Him to use the power necessary to heal bodies, how much more should we refuse submission to a law forbidding us to use the means necessary to save lives? They plotted to destroy Christ for only healing bodies, should we not endure similar treatment for actually saving lives?

The Scriptures record other instances of God’s people taking the action necessary to help the needy, as required by the Sixth Commandment, in spite of official prohibition. The book of

Exodus tells how the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiprah, and the other Puah, disobeyed Pharaoh by allowing the Hebrew boys to live. Even though those actions were illegal, they were approved by God. We read that the Lord was good to these midwives, and established households for them, because they feared God (Exodus 1:20-21).

We also have record of Obadiah illegally saving a hundred prophets of the Lord by hiding them in a cave when Jezebel was seeking to kill them (I Kings 18). The Scriptures paint this illegal act in a favorable light: Obadiah is described as one who ". . . feared the Lord greatly" (vs. 3).

And not only is there a duty to protect people with non-lethal means, in spite of official prohibition, there is also a duty, under the Sixth Commandment, to similarly use lethal means—when necessary. As we have seen, the Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for defending the innocent, including lethal force. And since we must obey God rather than men, it necessarily follows that we must use the means necessary for defending the innocent, including lethal force, even though the government unjustly forbids it. For instance, if it had been necessary for Obadiah to have used lethal force to save the lives of the prophets he was protecting, he would have been justified in using this force—even though it would have been illegal. From God's perspective, the principle of justifiable homicide is not dependent on men's laws.

As we have seen, Abraham's lethal defense of Lot was also required by the Moral Law, and was explicitly blessed by God through Melchizedek. This use of force would have been moral even if a human government had forbidden it. Similarly, the Jews' defense of themselves, in the book of Esther, would have been justified under the Sixth Commandment, even if King Ahasuerus had not sanctioned it.

The Sixth Commandment, thus, requires the means necessary for protecting the innocent from harm—including lethal force. This duty exists even if horribly unjust laws, which sanction murder, and forbid the use of these means, are in force. Under these circumstances, we must obey God rather than men.

Apostolic Example

However, we should not assume from the preceding examples that, of all the duties of the Moral Law, the ones required by the Sixth Commandment are the only ones we should disobey the government to perform. On the contrary, we are obligated to keep the entire Moral Law, even though men may forbid it. The Scriptures teach that when men require sin, either by omission or commission, that ". . .we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29b). We are not limited to illegally healing and preserving men's bodies (as exemplified by Christ, the Hebrew midwives, and Obadiah). We must also refuse to participate in false worship (Daniel 3:18), refuse to neglect true worship (Daniel 6:10), and proclaim the whole counsel of God (Acts 4:18-20). These duties are obligatory, even if they are made illegal.

There is a relation between the duties that were forbidden to the apostles, Christ, the Hebrew midwives, and the duties that are now forbidden to us. The authorities did not require the apostles to lie and break the Ninth Commandment; they were just forbidden to do what this Commandment requires: to proclaim the truth and clear it of the opposing error. Similarly, Christ was not required to murder and break the Sixth Commandment. He was just forbidden to do what this Commandment requires: to take the action needed to help people physically—much as

we are forbidden to physically save the unborn. The apostles were forbidden to use the means necessary to save souls; Christ was forbidden to use the means necessary to heal bodies; we were, and still are, forbidden to use the means necessary to save lives. In each of these cases, it was illegal to take action that was required by God and owed to one's neighbors.

What would have happened if Christ had submitted to the Pharisees and not healed on the Sabbath? Suppose the apostles had gone along with the authorities of their day. Consider the carnage that would have resulted if the Hebrew midwives had complied with Pharaoh. It is similarly imperative that we defend the unborn. Our failure to do so has resulted in a terrible bloodbath. Evil prevails when men fail to take the action necessary to stop it.

Submission or Resistance?

The flip side of submitting to the "powers that be" is the duty to "obey God rather than men." Several passages, including Romans 13:1, I Peter 2:13, and Titus 3:1, require subjection to the governing authorities. But this submission is qualified. Other passages, such as Exodus 1:17, Daniel, 3:18, and Acts 5:29b, maintain the obligation to ". ..obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29b). The Scriptures, thus, warn against two evils: both rebelling against good laws, and submitting to unjust laws.

While it is true that, throughout history, many have sinned by rebelling against just laws, such sin has also resulted from submitting to unjust laws. It is important, thus, to apply the appropriate duty to the problem at hand. Under circumstances where the laws are just, and men are rebelling against these laws, it is appropriate to exhort people to submit to the authorities. But when the government is enforcing unjust laws, and men are habitually submitting to these laws, it is imperative that the duty being forbidden by the authorities be stressed, and that people be called to obey God rather than men. When the government requires an omission of duty, to teach obedience to the government, in that respect, is to teach rebellion against God. For instance, the apostles certainly believed in submitting to the authorities. But when the Jewish authorities required them to sin by omission, if they had responded by encouraging submission— rather than resistance—they would have been guilty of a sin of enormous consequences. It is no less sinful to counsel submission to unjust laws than it is to urge rebellion against just laws.

If people need to be warned not to rebel against both God and men, when the state is enforcing just laws, how much greater is the need to exhort people to obey God when the government sanctions rebellion against Him? When sin is given official approval, this disguise not only makes exposing the iniquity vastly more difficult, it also makes it all the more imperative. It is difficult enough to perform the duties of love with the government's approval, but when the government forbids these duties, it is all the more important that they be urged upon the people.

However, when Christian pastors and teachers are instructing their people in the extremely difficult duty of disobeying authorities, it is important that stress be laid on the necessity of disobeying respectfully. The Sixth Commandment: "Honor your father and your mother..." requires both preserving the honor that is due to everyone, and also discharging one's respective duties to them. But the emphasis in this Commandment is laid on treating those in authority with honor. Thus, when believers are called upon to disobey the civil authorities, it is imperative that they do so respectfully. When a citizen is brought before a judge who is upholding a grossly unjust law, it may become difficult to remain respectful. Be forewarned of this difficulty, and

resolve to suffer as Christ did: "and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously" (I Peter 2:23).

We have plenty of teaching on submission to authorities; the current need is for educators to adequately prepare people to step forward and resist unjust laws. If we expect to move people to perform these biblical duties we must give appropriate emphasis to them: not just make passing and general references to the subject. We need to get specific about stopping the holocaust that is going on in our own backyard. When, therefore, the government requires the neglect of an oppressed group of people (as Jezebel did when she killed the prophets of the Lord, and Obadiah hid a hundred prophets in a cave), it is vital that the population be taught to aid and protect their neighbors. Under such circumstances there will be no lack of people teaching submission to the "powers that be;" while those who advocate resistance can be expected to be few in number.

Much of the blame for legal abortion must be laid at the feet of the pastors and civic leaders who have failed to apply the whole counsel of God to this matter. Our leaders have not called people to both believe what God says we are to believe about abortion, and also do what He requires of us in protection of the unborn. Many pastors, with varying degrees of boldness, have forbidden murder by abortion, but almost no one upholds the obvious duty to protect the unborn as we would protect ourselves.

The urgent need in our day thus, is for teachers to proclaim the God-given duties that are currently being forbidden—much as the apostles did in Acts chapter five. Christ, in Matthew 28, commanded the apostles to teach the disciples to observe all that He had commanded them. This most certainly includes the defensive duties required by the Sixth Commandment. Paul told the Ephesian elders "...I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable..." (Acts 20:20). Pastors today are shrinking from proclaiming the duty to defend the unborn as we would ourselves. While this duty may be difficult and unpleasant to us, it is certainly profitable to the unborn. The duty to defend the unborn is a pertinent and important duty from which teachers in our culture cannot, in conscience, shrink.

When the government has sanctioned mass murder, and thousands are being slaughtered each day, it is immoral to avoid the subject of using the means necessary to defend these people, or to stress submission to those who forbid this protection. God will hold those who have served as teachers during the abortion holocaust, and who have failed to maintain this duty, to special account.

Therefore, our response to a law forbidding us to save our neighbors' lives should be similar to the response offered by Christ, the Hebrew midwives, Obadiah, and the apostles to similarly unjust laws. Under these circumstances, they did not teach subjection to the "powers that be." They did not comply (as we have with legalized murder), and agree to remain within the law, in the hope that legal remedies would eventually change the law. If they had, they would have been guilty of blatant sin.

The Priority of Preventing Mass Murder

What practical priority should be given to stopping abortion? While many people realize that abortion is a serious problem, they still categorize it as one among many other "social

issues" that should be given a lower priority than family or church concerns. But it must be recognized that the daily murder of thousands of helpless children is a problem in a category all its own. Since murder by abortion poses an irreparable and immediate threat to thousands of unborn children each day, it demands an immediate an effective response that is unlike the response required by lesser social ills.

It is also common for people to try to excuse their inattention to the needs of the unborn by asserting that preaching the gospel has a higher priority. They would never appeal to the importance of preaching the gospel as an excuse for neglecting the immediate needs of a born child, but they somehow believe that this excuse allows them to neglect the unborn.

I am not suggesting that we should neglect the preaching of the gospel in order to defend the unborn. But I am saying that we should not neglect the unborn to preach the gospel. This is not an either/or proposition—the two go hand in hand; the one is an essential to the other: as practicing the golden rule is to preaching it.

The third chapter of Ecclesiastes tells us: "There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven" (vs. 1). In His providence, God has appointed, "A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build up" (vs. 3); "A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together..." (vs. 7a); "A time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace" (vs. 8). Thus, there is a time for all the various duties in life, including going to war, tearing down, and killing. When the appointed time for a particular responsibility arrives, whatever it may be, the other duties of life should be temporarily set aside. When mass murder has been legalized, and thousands are being slaughtered each day, that is the time, in God's providence, to take the action necessary to protect these children.

To help us view our various duties in their relation to one another, God has summarized and categorized them in the Ten Commandments. The last six of the Ten Commandments require you to honor your neighbor, defend his life, chastity, property, good name, and to have a loving attitude towards him. It is clearly more important to preserve someone's life than to preserve his reputation, property, or chastity. Since the performance of all the duties of love to your neighbor are contingent on his being alive, it is worse to allow him to be murdered than it is to allow him to be raped, robbed, slandered, or disrespected.

If you were able to choose between saving someone's soul and saving his physical life, it would be more important to save his soul. But you don't know when, or if, sharing the gospel with someone will result in his salvation. It is certain, however, that if you allow someone to be murdered, his ability to respond to the gospel, or perform any other duty in this life, comes to an abrupt and irretrievable end. Also, if you miss an opportunity to share the gospel with someone today, you, or someone else, may have a similar opportunity in the future. But if you neglect to save someone's physical life, and he is killed, there is no future opportunity to save his life, or share the gospel with him. This is why no one ever neglects the pressing physical needs of a child, and claims that sharing the gospel is more important (at least when it comes to born children). As bad as it is to neglect an opportunity to share the gospel with your neighbor, it is worse to neglect to save his life, or the life of his unborn child.

It is obviously necessary to interrupt the proclamation of the gospel, and come to the aid of the needy, under numerous pressing circumstances: e.g., if someone is choking on food at a restaurant, if a child runs into a busy street, when a truck filled with explosives is about to detonate under a towering office building, or in numerous other situations where people are

otherwise about to be unjustly killed. When there is an immediate threat to the innocent, especially if numerous people are involved, there is an overwhelming responsibility to lay aside the ordinary duties of life, including the duty to proclaim the gospel, and save those who are in danger.

Christians commonly have the attitude that, while legal abortion is a great injustice, it does not require the same drastic response that would be appropriate if the government were to forbid public worship or the preaching of the gospel. But this is incorrect. It is bad to forbid people to worship the Lord, but it is worse to sanction their murder. It would have been a great injustice, for instance, if King Ahasuerus, in the book of Esther, had forbidden the Jews to worship the Lord, but it was an even greater injustice for him to legalize their slaughter. (The freedom to worship or preach the gospel is of no use to dead people.) Since all the duties of life are contingent on being alive, an immediate threat to life takes precedence over all other duties. Of what use is the freedom to bring your child, or your neighbor's child, to church if you cannot prevent them from being murdered?

The problem isn't that we lack a cognitive understanding of these things, the difficulty is our carnal reluctance to apply them, at great personal cost, to people with whom we have no close association. This is the problem Christ addressed in the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). Those who give the immediate help required are the ones who prove themselves to be neighbors to the needy. By providing this help, the Samaritan showed that his priorities were in order. We should respond similarly to the immediate needs of the unborn.

There is, thus, a critical need for us to reexamine the priority we assign to ending legal abortion, and our excuses for not devoting ourselves to this task. There is no excuse for tolerating mass murder. Our persistent neglect of this duty, as millions are being slain, is an inexcusable and extremely heinous sin.

Called to Kill?

The Scriptures record a variety of responses to governments that legalize horrific injustices. The book of Acts, for instance, records the responses the early church offered to a law forbidding the proclamation of the gospel. At times, the apostles openly preached the gospel when they knew it would result in their arrest. At other times, they hid themselves to avoid arrest: as Peter did following his miraculous release from prison (Acts 12:3-19). During the persecution that arose after Stephen's martyrdom, some fled Jerusalem while others remained in the city (Acts 8:1). Those who did not flee persecution often went underground, and hid their beliefs and practices from authorities. Believers, thus, initially avoided Saul after his conversion (Acts 9:26-27).

But this diversity of practice does not mean that there are no biblical norms for responding to oppressive governments. The Westminster Larger Catechism provides eight rules of the right understanding of the Ten Commandments (Q.99). The fifth of these rules provides an excellent summary of our duty to God when the government requires sin by either commission or omission: "That what God forbids, is at no time to be done; what he commands, is always our duty; and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times" (A.99.5).

The first principle set forth in this rule, "That what God forbids is at no time to be done..." is consistent with the biblical teaching that we are never allowed to sin by commission (Daniel

3:18). For instance, if the government were to require citizens to abort their children, it would always be sinful to comply.

The second principle contained in this rule, "...what he commands, is always our duty and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times..." sheds light on the believer's duty when the government forbids an obligation of the Moral Law. The duty forbidden by the government (in this case, the duty to intervene with the means necessary to defend the unborn) remains in effect, but since, ". . .every particular duty is not to be done at all times..." it is not always sinful to omit this duty. For example, when the early Christians were forbidden to preach the gospel, this duty was still obligatory, but not everyone was necessarily required to preach the gospel until they were arrested. They wisely omitted this duty, at times, to avoid arrest.

Not only is it permissible (under some circumstances) to omit the defensive duties owed to the unborn, these duties should only be performed by those who, in God's providence, are in a position to do so. For instance, when Ahab and Jezebel slew the prophets of God (I Kings 18:4), they did not require every citizen to kill these prophets, but they did make it illegal to take the action necessary to protect them. A sin of omission was required, but not everyone who failed to protect a prophet thereby sinned by omission. When Obadiah protected these prophets, he performed this duty according to his calling and providential circumstances in life. But, in his case, if he had failed to act when he did, he would have likely sinned by omission.

Not everyone, therefore, is called by God to intervene in defense of the unborn. In matters like this the Christian must follow his own conscience as it is informed by the word of God. Some may choose to keep their beliefs on this subject private (as Obadiah did), while quietly aiding those who stand for this duty. Other hearty souls, like those who have openly justified my actions, may give credence to their beliefs by suffering mild forms of persecution (some who have supported my actions have been forced to change their employers). But, as a general rule, everyone should promote and maintain the moral obligation to use the means necessary to defend those who are being threatened: in this case, the unborn.

Those who lack the calling or ability to kill, or take other forms of direct defensive action, should not necessarily consider themselves to be cowards, and dismiss themselves from the duty to uphold this aspect of the Moral Law. You don't need to be an ex-marine, or have a Ph.D. in philosophy, to discuss these things with your family, friends, and associates. Not only should pulpits be ablaze with these principles, they should also be the subject of much everyday discussion among people of every sort and station in life. Virtually everyone willing to serve can play a vital role in promoting this duty as they consecrate their various God-given talents and abilities to this task. A body cannot function without the use of all of its members—even the ones that seem insignificant.

The crying need is for large numbers of people to support this aspect of the Moral Law as it applies to the unborn. This is the key to ending legal abortion. You can hardly expect the government to protect the unborn on your behalf if you lack the courage to stand up and assert this duty—even at great personal cost. You need not wait for this principle to be understood and accepted by the masses, or for anyone else to take defensive action. If enough people were to openly promote this duty, legal abortion would soon come to an end. It is, therefore, imperative that you prayerfully consider taking this step.

Sinful Negligence

In order to gain the sacrificial zeal needed to rise to this duty, we must recognize how extremely sinful it is to neglect the means necessary for stopping an ongoing holocaust. The Westminster Larger Catechism lists and categorizes some of the aggravators that make some sins more heinous than others. We are told that sins receive their aggravation: "1. From the persons offending...; 2. From the parties offended...; 3. From the nature and quality of the offense...; 4. From the circumstances of time and place..." (Answer 151). Let us consider how these aggravators compound the sin of neglecting the defense of the unborn.

Not only is it sinful to neglect the defense of the unborn, this sin is greatly aggravated when the "persons offending" are in positions of authority. Those who hold such leadership positions are often of ripe age and experience, and frequently possess eminent gifts and offices. Their example, thus, is likely to be followed by others, in this instance, into sin. The greater the knowledge and ability a person has, and the higher the position he attains, the greater his culpability for neglecting or denying the duty to defend the unborn: "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment" (James 3:1).

The primary party offended by neglecting the defense of the unborn is God Himself. He has many attributes that are directly impugned by those who are guilty of this neglect.

God is life, and has created human life to reflect Him in a unique manner. Since those at war with God cannot harm Him physically, they often vent their murderous fury on those made in His image, including the unborn. To deny the duty to defend these helpless children is an affront to the One in whose image they are made.

It is common to decry force against abortion providers as being unloving. But God often displays His love for the needy by defending them through human instrumentality. Those who truly love the unborn with a godly love should be willing to affirm the means necessary to save them—even at great personal cost.

Also, to confuse murderous killing with defensive killing is an affront to God's ethical nature. To fail to distinguish between just and unjust force is to offend the perfect righteousness and justice of God: "He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 17:15). Denouncing the force necessary to prevent murder on this basis, thus, incites God's righteous indignation against those stained with the blood of encouraging this neglect.

Those who neglect or deny the duty to defend the unborn impugn one of God's attributes which affirm Him as Lord, King, and Sovereign: His omnipotence. God is not an impotent king; He has an abundance of power to enforce His will. He is El Shaddai, God, the Omnipotent One (Genesis 17:1); the One with invincible strength and might. When Christians will not maintain the means that the Lord has ordained for carrying out His will, but bow in servitude to the devil, it brings a reproach on the Almighty God whom they profess. By not defending the Lord's little ones, believers misrepresent the King of kings as being an uninvolved and impotent deity. One reason, therefore, God is so terribly angry about our neglect of our duty to defend the unborn is because tolerating mass murder is a direct contradiction of His being and attributes.

The human party most directly injured by this neglect is the unborn. Their helplessness and total reliance on us to defend them from their assailants greatly aggravates our neglect of this

duty. The more helpless the people being assaulted, the greater the duty to come to their aid, and the greater the sin if the defense needed to preserve them is not provided.

Don't forget that our Lord Jesus Christ, at one time, was an unborn “fetus.” We should show our love to Him by nurturing and protecting His little ones as we would the Lord Himself.

Our close relationship to the unborn aggravates our neglect of their defense. It is bad to neglect those in foreign and distant lands who are being slaughtered, but many have aggravated their guilt by failing to defend their own countrymen (men have stood by as children from their own community, and even their own household, have been put to death). The closer your relationship to those you neglect to defend, the greater your guilt for neglecting their defense.

The sin of neglecting the duty to defend the unborn is also greatly compounded by the heinous nature of the sin that is being tolerated. The more atrocious the sin being committed, the more heinous it is to tolerate that sin. It would be bad, for instance, to acquiesce to the legalization of rape, but it is much worse to tolerate the legalization of murder.

The circumstances of time, and the large number of people killed by abortion, also make allowing this sin to continue even more heinous. It is bad to allow a few people to be murdered on a given day, but it is much worse to allow many people to be murdered, not only day after day, but also decade after decade. If it is horrible to allow 60 people to be murdered, how much worse is it to allow 60,000 or 60,000,000 to be murdered?

Neglecting the defensive duties of the Sixth Commandment, in this instance, is made more heinous due to the consequences that result from this neglect. Denying, or neglecting, the duty to prevent the murder of the unborn sets a precedent of tolerating worse atrocities. Submission to this form of murder encourages submission to more offensive types of murder. Bowing to an injustice of this magnitude also encourages submission to a untold number of lesser atrocities. These aggravators, as well as many others, make neglecting the defense of the unborn an extremely heinous sin in the sight of God.

Honorable Defense

Moreover, the magnitude of this sin should be held in sharp contrast to the virtue of maintaining the defensive duties of the Moral Law. The Westminster Larger Catechism tells us that, “...some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others” (Answer 150). And not only are some sins more heinous than others, the opposite is also true. Some duties, in themselves, and by reason of several augmenters, are more meritorious in the sight or God than others.

Several factors serve to augment the virtue of defending the unborn. If it is virtuous to preserve someone's good name, property, or chastity, how much more honorable is it to preserve someone's life? If it is good to save someone's life with the government's approval, how much better is it to save someone's life when the government threatens its condemnation? If it is commendable to save one child, how much more laudable is it to directly save scores of children, and indirectly save thousands, or perhaps even tens of thousands?

Saving one person may result in that person's being able to perform many good deeds, and beget numerous children who may also become productive citizens. Saving many people's lives can be expected to bring enormously good results that will continue to transform the world throughout all generations. Not only, therefore, is it a gross sin to neglect someone as he is being

murdered, and seek to justify this neglect by claiming you have more important duties, it is also a great virtue to postpone lesser duties in order to save someone from being murdered. The more heinous the murder being committed, and the greater the sacrifice needed to prevent the murder, the greater the virtue involved.

And just as neglecting the unborn enables the cycle of sin, misery, and death to continue and accelerate, so upholding the duty to defend the unborn breaks this cycle, and produces extraordinary results. Upholding this duty opens a whole new perspective on the abortion controversy to view and unleashes previously unharnessed potential. It opens people's eyes to the immediate relevance of God's Law and their former complacency. It also provides a practical way of putting one's beliefs about abortion, and the Bible, into action. Maintaining this duty inspires people to make the sacrifices necessary to stop abortion, shuts the mouths of scoffers, and ultimately brings glory to God.

Therefore, considering the incalculable amount of sin and misery occasioned by neglecting the defense of the unborn, and the even greater amount of righteousness and reward occasioned by maintaining this obligation, there is an overwhelming responsibility to lay aside the many ordinary duties of life to promote the duty to defend the unborn.

Anti-Abortion Wall Building

Our current neglect of the unborn is a modern version of the indifference to injustice that was denounced by Isaiah, Ezekiel, John the Baptist, Christ, and the apostles. People are standing by as a gross injustice is taking place, and lack the courage to uphold the duty to stop it.

Ezekiel's bold example of exposing the false prophets of his day (Ezekiel 13), rebukes us for not taking a similar stand at the point of the enemy's current attack:

Thus says the Lord God, 'Woe to the foolish prophets who are following their own spirit and have seen nothing. 0 Israel, your prophets have been like foxes among ruins. You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on the day of the Lord' (vs. 3-5).

When Ezekiel declares, "You have not gone up into the breaches..." (vs. 5b), he is exposing the neglect of the false prophets. True prophets (as with true shepherds) identified themselves with the people, and stood with them—even at great personal peril. When an attacking army made a breach in the wall of a city, repairing that breach was an assignment of greatest danger. False prophets and false shepherds refused such dangerous duties.

Ezekiel ridicules the errant teachings of the false prophets, and their support of such errors, by portraying them as plastering over poorly made walls: "It is definitely because they have misled My people by saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace. And when anyone builds a wall behold, they plaster it over with whitewash..." (Ezekiel 13:10). Rather than applying God's solution to the calamities of their day, the false prophets whitewashed the problems with ineffective remedies.

Many of today's pastors have responded similarly to legal abortion. Rather than following their example, and plastering over an incomplete approach to legal abortion, it is imperative that we clear the debris and base our repairs of this breach on a solidly biblical foundation. It is not enough to identify abortion as murder, we must declare the duty to resist murderous force with

force. If we believe that abortion is murder, and that it is forbidden by the Sixth Commandment, we must also embrace the defensive duties required by this Commandment.

Our previous efforts to whitewash our inadequate and unbiblical response to legal abortion have at least demonstrated the futility of this approach. But this has wasted precious effort, and fostered a spirit of defeat. It's discouraging to pour yourself into a project that is sure to crumble and collapse.

Those who have neglected the duty to defend the unborn bear a staggering weight of bloodguilt (much like the blame borne by the false prophets in Ezekiel's day). Considering the magnitude of this bloodguilt, we must rend our hearts and prostrate ourselves before the Lord with deep and profound repentance. We must also bring forth deeds in keeping with our repentance.

Clearing ruins and building a solid wall in the midst of a battle is more difficult and dangerous than plastering over rubble, but it offers the promise of lasting success. And while few people are willing to expose themselves to such dangers, God can use even a few such men to fill this gap with a solid and biblical wall.

Faith, Prayer, and Defensive Action

The most urgent need of the hour is prayer: earnest, dependent, believing prayer. There is no question that ending the slaughter of the unborn is a matter of paramount concern to the Lord. This is certainly consistent with His revealed will. Our duty is to come to Him in total dependence, with deep and sincere humility, and to pray in faith, believing. And once we have thus prayed to end abortion, we must rise from our knees, and uphold the means necessary to stop it.

The struggle to end abortion is ultimately a spiritual battle between fear and faith. People naturally tend to fear for themselves and their families. We must learn to overcome our fears and proceed in faith, as David did when he killed Goliath. The army of Israel was afraid of Goliath because of spiritual negligence; rather than turning to God and His word in faithful and believing prayer, they focused on Goliath and fainted in fear. They were awestruck at the size and strength of the giant, and lost sight of the omnipresent, omnipotent God. If we are to defeat abortion's Goliath, we must similarly focus on God—not the problem of abortion. He is infinitely stronger than all those who support abortion combined. When God raises His voice, the earth melts (Psalm 46:6). He could wither all those who support abortion with a single blast of His breath (Isaiah 40:24). But before we can expect God to hear our prayers, we must humble ourselves and turn to Him in sincere repentance.

The primary sin of which we must repent, if we expect the Lord to hear our prayers on behalf of the unborn, is our failure to maintain the right of the unborn to be protected with the means necessary. God accomplishes His will through the use of means. He often uses weak human means to produce great and glorious results (so He will get the honor), but He virtually never accomplishes anything on earth without the use of means. The ordinary means for restoring the right of an oppressed minority is for people to assert the right that is being denied: in this case, the right of the unborn to be protected with the means necessary. We can no more expect to restore protection to the unborn, while denying their inalienable right to this protection, than we could have expected David to defeat Goliath if he had been in denial about the duty to defend Israel, and kill Goliath, with the means necessary.

The Lord does not want us to trust these means, but He does require us to be willing to use them. To neglect the means God has appointed for defending the unborn, and expect Him to work apart from them is to mock and tempt God.

It is certainly possible to pray in faith that God will end legal abortion, yet have no vision for the means He might use to accomplish this. But a biblical understanding of the means God ordinarily uses to prevent murder serves to invigorate faith and hope that He will use these means—one way or another—to abolish legal abortion.

However, it is doubtful that people will catch a vision for using these means until they become willing to make the sacrifices that these means require. Until you, by faith, become willing to sacrificially obey God’s will, there is a sense in which you cannot truly understand it (John 7:17). For instance, if David's faith had not been in God, or if he had been unwilling to fight Goliath, he would not have had confidence that Goliath could be killed with the feeble weapon he used. We must have a similar active and sacrificial faith if we are to believe that God will use our proclamation of this aspect of the Moral Law as a means to end legal abortion.

The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) is of use to guide our prayers on behalf of the unborn. Our Father's name is hallowed when we manifest His attributes by defending the unborn as we would ourselves. He is also honored when we love and defend our neighbors in spite of men's laws that forbid it.

It is certainly God’s will that the unborn be defended with the means necessary. If we want God’s kingdom to come, and His will to be done, we must entreat the Lord to empower us to protect the unborn, as required by His revealed will.

It is not enough for us to pray for the hungry born children of the world; we must also pray for the protection of the unborn: that they may live and receive their daily bread.

We must pray that the Lord will forgive us for not maintaining the duty to defend these children with the means necessary, and deliver us from the temptation to persist in this neglect. We should pray these things in Christ's name, for His own glory and honor.

It is essential that we ask the Lord to raise up laborers who will uphold this aspect of the Moral Law, that people may be convicted and brought to faith in Jesus Christ. The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. A large percentage of the world's population has been stained by the blood of the unborn—either by omission or commission. The need is for people with the conviction and courage to proclaim the defensive duties of the Sixth Commandment that repentance and revival may begin. There can be no true revival apart from people loving and defending the unborn as they would themselves, and praying to this end.

God is moved with compassion by the groanings of the afflicted. He is especially touched by tears shed on behalf of those who are in need. If He hears us when we cry to Him on our own behalf, how much more attentive is He to our tears for the unborn? Since the unborn cannot understand their plight, or plead that God will save them, we must do so on their behalf. If we don't, the rocks may soon burst into tears.

By crying to the Lord on behalf of the unborn, our shameful defeat can be turned into victory. This was the result when Hezekiah prayed to the Lord about the Assyrians who had invaded Judah and threatened Jerusalem:

But King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven. And the Lord sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in shame to his own land
(II Chronicles 32:20-2la).

God's power is not limited. He can provide similar protection for the unborn—if we will repent of neglecting our duties to the unborn, and seek His face in prayer.

God's ultimate purpose in this battle is to manifest His attributes and glory. We will never stop this holocaust in our own wisdom and might. We must, therefore, rely on Him to save the unborn, through even the most feeble of instruments, for His own glory and honor. God can and will overcome legal abortion through us, but first He must make us willing to trust and obey Him. Nothing is impossible with God.

World-Transforming Truths

The most powerful weapon for overcoming the world's apathetic response to legal abortion is to advocate the means necessary for resisting this atrocity (as required by God's Law). God uses the application of His law to the lives of both Christian and non-Christian alike to show people their duty and convict them of sin. God intends for us to examine ourselves in the light of His law so we can be convicted of our corruptions, humble ourselves before Him, and also understand the need we have for Christ, and the perfection of His obedience.

Untold millions of people throughout the world are suffering agonizing pain and guilt as a result of their involvement with abortion. Most of the remainder of the world are deeply stained with the guilt of not taking a consistent stand against this atrocity. What better way to convict those who have violated and neglected God's law than for Christians to uphold the law in question at great personal cost? If believers will rise up and maintain the duty to defend the unborn, in spite of the opposition, God may use this as a means for bringing profound conviction and repentance to those stained with the blood of the unborn.

The tremendous power behind using force to defend the unborn does not lie in the particular explosive used, or the wits of those who use it. These are simply means that God has blessed, throughout history, to manifest His attributes and reveal His will. He often uses these means to cut to the heart of those suppressing His law—either hardening or softening them. When joined with the other dynamics of the gospel, God can use these means to transform entire cultures, much as He blessed the use of force in the book of Esther, and brought great revival:

And in each and every province, and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them (8:17).

Many non-Christians are looking for practical answers to the issues that confront them in the daily news, including the abortion controversy. Taking a credible stand on defending the unborn with force (rather than denying this duty) can serve as a point of contact for presenting the truths of the gospel to these unbelievers. This position can open the door to asserting the demands of God's law, the substitutionary death of Christ, and the necessity of submitting to Him in every aspect of life. This position also demonstrates the proper relation between faith and

works, the high cost of discipleship, and can serve as a stepping stone to all the other principles of Christianity. Thus, a consistent stand on defending the unborn is essential for exposing the evil of abortion, and transforming men's hearts and lives. Without this, it is impossible to understand abortion in a biblical manner.

As Christians begin to use the means necessary to save the unborn, and suffer the resulting persecution, this will bear witness, not only to the humanity of the unborn, but also to the reality of these people's faith in Christ. This will cause more people to take Christianity seriously, and result in both increasing persecution, and converts who have counted the cost. This will also help people to distinguish between true converts and false professors.

Upholding these principles may soon cause more conviction and repentance than the exposure of those who murdered Christ. When men begin to trumpet forth these notes of truth, it should cause the walls of legal abortion to come crashing down. These truths may shake the earth's kingdoms to the core as the sword of God's Spirit slays and revives millions.

In the years since abortion has been legalized, millions of people have developed deep and passionately held convictions that this bloodshed is an intolerable outrage. For several reasons, these convictions have seldom broken out in consistent action—thus far. But the dam containing the holy and righteous fury people feel about this injustice is now cracked. It is only a matter of time before it crumbles and the terrifying consequences of decades of legalized murder sweep through the nations of the world.

Of this we can be certain, God's word does not return void; it accomplishes what He desires. "'Is not my word like fire?' declares the Lord, 'and like a hammer which shatters a rock?'" (Jeremiah 23:2a). If we smite the rock of people's apathetic response to abortion with the hammer of God's word, we can expect God to produce results.

God's arm is not short. He is able to bless the application of this duty far beyond all we could ask or think. If only a few show the commitment required, He could turn the tide on legal abortion and begin a worldwide transformation. Victor Hugo has written, "One can resist an invasion of armies, but not an idea whose time has come." Defending the unborn with force is considerably more than an idea whose time has come; it is a biblical duty whose time has come. If Christians will take a bold stand on this duty, regardless of the cost, the Lord will fight for us, and triumph through us for His own glory and honor.

Objections Answered

From a pro-life perspective, it is self-evident that both born and unborn children should be defended with the means necessary. Nevertheless, people continue to suppress this truth in unrighteousness, and raise numerous objections to justify their neglect of the unborn. All of these objections appear absurd when applied to born people, and when they are viewed in the light of the Golden Rule. No other response actually needs to be given. However, I will reply to some of the most frequently used objections with pleasure; the truth is seen most clearly when its light shines on the contrasting error.

Some have tried to justify compliance with the government in this matter by objecting that the law does not require anyone to have an abortion. The assumption is, since the government is not forcing women to abort their children, that no one's rights, or will, are being violated, and no one is required to sin. But this simplistic understanding ignores several of the insufferable

consequences of legalized abortion. Legalizing this abomination encourages women to have their children murdered; it also encourages abortion providers to kill for hire. In addition to this, by legalizing abortion, the government requires the police to protect paid murderers, and for the population to sinfully neglect the defense of their unborn relatives and neighbors. Husbands who do not want their children murdered must stand by, and not interfere, as their own flesh and blood are torn limb from limb. Forced abortion, thus, is more heinous than legalized abortion, but this does not mean that legalized murder does not require the police and the population to sinfully neglect the obligation to use the means necessary to save the unborn.

Another common response to my actions is to assert that Jesus would not have acted as I did. Although we have no reason to believe that Jesus personally used lethal defensive force while He was on earth, this does not mean that such actions are forbidden. On the contrary, Melchizedek, a type of Christ, blessed Abraham's use of lethal force, and declared that God had delivered his enemies into his hand (Genesis 14:20). It is obvious that Jesus did not engage in many various actions and callings while He was on earth that are, nonetheless, sanctioned by God's word, and essential to the well-being of society. The relevant question, thus is not, "What would Jesus do?" but, "What would Jesus approve?"

Another possible objection is to question my use of Abraham's defense of Lot (Genesis 14) to support my position. It might be objected that Abraham was engaged in war in this incident—not individual defense. In response, rather than debating whether this incident is an example of individual defense, or just war, it is sufficient to assert that this passage demonstrates the inalienable nature of the defensive duties of the Moral Law. Abraham was not forced into battle by a government; rather, the individual duty to rescue Lot gave rise to Abraham's joining with others to accomplish this deliverance. Individuals are similarly obligated to defend the unborn, and join with others, if it is necessary to deliver the unborn.

My opponents might object that my position could result in people using force, not only against abortion providers, but also against the police and the government itself: many departments of the government are employed, either directly or indirectly, in upholding mass murder. They could assert that maintaining the inalienable duty to defend the unborn lays the basis, not only for individual action, but also for individuals joining together to use force against governments that sanction abortion. Some have charged that my actions lead to revolution and anarchy.

When a government legalizes mass murder, the population must be willing to go to war, if it is wise and necessary, to stop the bloodshed. As we have seen, the Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for protecting the innocent. War is, at times, a necessary means for protecting the innocent. The Sixth Commandment, thus, requires the use of defensive war, when it is necessary for protecting innocent people (Jeremiah 48:10 & Deuteronomy 20). A population's willingness to take this sort of costly action is essential to the defense of those threatened, and to ending an injustice of this magnitude. But, as we have seen, not every duty is to be done at all times. Wisdom is needed to determine what should be done under the circumstances.

While it would be just to go to war to stop the murder of our unborn neighbors, I do not think it is wise to advocate this duty—under the circumstances. It is illegal to advocate the overthrow of the government, and since this is not currently a realistic option, I think it would be foolish to do so, and have your voice silenced. Besides, virtually everything that needs to be said

can be said without advocating the overthrow of the government. We certainly have the freedom to discuss just war, and just revolutions, and consider when such actions would be morally justified. You may thus proclaim what the Bible says about the corporate defense of the unborn—so long as you don't step over the line, and advocate the overthrow of the U. S. government. (Those concerned are well advised to obtain informed and current legal counsel in this matter, and not rely on the legal advice I have received.)

As to the individual defense of the unborn, it is currently permissible to advocate this defense in a general manner. You may not incite a crowd to attack an abortion clinic, or an abortion provider, but you may, in a non-specific manner, uphold the duty to defend the innocent. It is illegal to threaten a specific person, or list of people, but it is permissible to maintain the duty to defend the unborn, in general terms. People, thus, should learn what the law allows, and stay within it—unless they are ready to face the consequences. Although I acted outside the law by shooting an abortionist, my strategy has been to keep my speech well within the laws of the land so my voice can be heard. Virtually everything I want to say can currently be said legally.

The crying need is for people with the courage to affirm that it would be just to go to war against, or otherwise overthrow, any government that legalizes abortion—even though war may not currently be wise. Since people should maintain duties like this under oppressive governments that do not tolerate such speech, how much more should such vitally important duties be asserted when there is freedom to do so? What is the use of having this liberty if no one has the courage to use it? Since, therefore, we should proclaim the duties of the Moral Law, even when the government forbids it (Acts 5:29), what excuse is there for remaining silent about these duties when the government sanctions their propagation?

The problem is not that those who apply the defensive duties of the Moral Law to the abortion holocaust are anarchists. The problem is that legalized murder is an atrocity of such magnitude that it demands the most absolute, courageous, and unequivocal resistance that can be mustered; yet, most people are afraid to even think consistently about this problem—much less take consistent action to stop it.

Those who claim that these principles lead to anarchy fail to distinguish between rebelling against men and rebelling against God. Those who legalize and commit murder are the anarchists in God’s eyes. Those who advocate submission to this atrocity may find favor from men, but they are rebelling against God.

It could also be objected that, to be consistent, if this aspect of the Moral Law should be enforced, the next step would be to insist that each of the other Ten Commandments also be upheld with force.

In reply, if the duty to keep this Commandment is not inalienable, then we have no king but Caesar, and regardless of the atrocity legalized, we must maintain the status quo. There is no neutrality on this or any other moral issue. Someone's concept of what is right will be enforced. The alternative to submitting to God’s law is bowing before men's lawlessness. It’s either God’s law or Satan's lawlessness.

In addition to the theoretical objections we have considered, some have objected that this approach will not work, but will rather harm the pro-life movement, and give it a bad name.

They object that this sort of action gives our opponents an occasion for labeling us as radicals—well out of the accepted mainstream.

But anyone who thinks in biblical terms should expect an effective remedy to abortion to be extremely costly, unpopular, and what many people consider to be radical. True spirituality is not only demanding, it also stands in stark contrast to the common wisdom of the day. God's law sets a lofty standard for obedience that puts us on a collision course with the compromised thinking of the culture that surrounds us.

There are, no doubt, at least a few prominent pro-life leaders who view my actions sympathetically, but who, nevertheless, have not publicly endorsed them. For instance, Hadley Arkes, the Edward Ney Professor of Jurisprudence and American Institutions at Amherst College, in his contribution to the "First Things" symposium on killing abortionists (December, 1994) discusses the perils of setting forth "a truthful discussion of this issue." He points out that any endorsement of my actions would be misunderstood by some as an endorsement for "lawless killing." He fears that publishing a truthful consideration of this issue may sweep away many earnest people's inhibitions and lead to "further acts of violence." And so, he writes, "...we bite our lips and hold back. . ."

Professor Arkes is quite correct: if the whole truth about the duty to defend the unborn were openly discussed, there would be widespread misunderstanding, and many sincere people would likely be moved to take defensive action. But his fear of "violence" against a relatively small number of abortion providers does not seem to be offset by a proportional concern for the ongoing violence against the unborn. He gives greater weight to maintaining the status quo, at the expense of the unborn, than to defending the unborn, in spite of the attending uncertainties and difficulties.

The apostles, in dealing with the Sanhedrin's prohibition against teaching in the name of Jesus, had to similarly weigh the propriety of maintaining the status quo against the duty to obey God. From our perspective, it seems obvious that the apostles were wise to directly disobey the authorities. Some day, it should be equally obvious that we should similarly observe the aspect of the Moral Law that is being forbidden in our day. If they had failed to uphold the Moral Law, they would have been guilty of the blood of untold millions of souls—much as people today are guilty of the blood of the unborn.

We don't know all that the future holds, and cannot foresee all the possible consequences of defending the unborn with force. Our job is to test everything by the word of God, discern what is right, and act in dependence on the Lord. It is also our duty to trust God to use our obedience to His revealed will to bring great results.

In the final analysis, we must walk by faith and not by sight. When the authorities require a sin of omission—as they did of Daniel, Jesus, and the apostles—there is tremendous practical pressure to lose sight of the revealed will of God, and conform to the practice of the day. Under such circumstances, it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can remain faithful to our Lord and His word.

Intentional Killing Forbidden?

The main objection raised to my killing Dr. Britton, used primarily by Catholics, is to claim that defensive killing is only justified when it is unintentional. For instance, John Cardinal

O'Connor (Archbishop of New York) took this position in the symposium on killing abortionists published by First Things in December, 1994. On the basis of the Catechism of The Catholic Church, he maintained that lethal self-defense is only justified when it occurs unintentionally. His position is consistent with the Catechism:

The legitimate defense of persons or societies is not an exception to the prohibition against murder of the innocent that constitutes intentional killing. "The act of self-defense can have a double effect: the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressors. . . The one is intended, the other is not" (2263)

It should be noted that this section of this Catechism forbids intentional killing in defense of both ". . . persons and societies..." This Catechism, thus, even forbids intentionally killing unjust aggressors if one is engaged in a legitimate defensive war. Under the heading "Avoiding War," this Catechism states: "The fifth commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life" (2307). (It should be noted that the Roman Catholic Church has a long-standing, and unbiblical, tradition of pacifism.)

While many of the teachings of this Catechism of the Catholic Church are scriptural, this prohibition against intentional defensive killing has no biblical basis. This Catechism does not and cannot provide scriptural proof for this position, since none exists. This teaching, along with many other teachings of this Catechism, is of human invention, and is in contradiction to the Scriptures. This teaching conflicts with Genesis 14:19-20, where Melchizedek blesses Abraham for his part in killings that were apparently intentional (Hebrews 7:1 refers to this incident as, "...the slaughter of the kings..." not the accidental slaying of the kings).

Are we to believe that these killings blessed by God in Genesis 14 (as well as the ones I carried out) were justified only so long as the lethal wounds were inflicted with a mental reservation that the intent was to wound but not to kill? How, in corporate or individual defense, do you intend to blow people's bodies to pieces, or intend to inflict a lethal wound, but not intend to kill? What practical difference would such a mental reservation make? If this means that neither the military nor the police may inflict a wound that they know will be lethal, since killing an assailant is often a necessary means of restraining him, would not this seriously impair their ability to defend the innocent (as required by the Moral Law)? If the Catechism of the Catholic Church is correct in this matter, would it not make those who use many of the practices currently employed by the police and the military, and who intentionally kill unjust assailants, to be murderers rather than justified defenders?

There are several texts that forbid intentional murder, e.g., Exodus 21:14 and Deuteronomy 19:11-13. While these passages forbid intentional murder, they do not speak to the issue of preventing murder with premeditation. The Scriptures justify lethal defensive force (Genesis 14) and nowhere forbid the intentional use of this force.

As we have seen, the Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for defending the innocent—under the circumstances. Intending to inflict a lethal wound is, under some circumstances, a necessary means for defending the innocent. Therefore, intending to inflict a lethal wound is, under circumstances where it is necessary, required by the Sixth Commandment.

We should, when it is necessary, intend to use lethal force, much as we should intend to keep every other duty of the Moral Law. If it is good to do a thing, it is also good to do that thing intentionally. While the premeditation of evil deeds (such as murder) makes them more heinous,

the premeditation of good deeds (like preventing murder) normally makes them more effective and free from sinful excess. (Ordinarily, spontaneous attacks on abortion clinics are not to be advised.) Failing to properly plan a lethal defense may amount to sinful negligence, as it may fail to effectively protect the innocent, or result in excessive or unjust injury.

When a sin is forbidden by the Bible, it is wrong to commit that sin in a premeditated manner. But when a particular duty is required by the Bible, it is good to perform that duty after premeditation. For instance, the principles of the Bible forbid premeditated adultery, because adultery is wrong. But premeditated marital sex is right, because marital sex is right. Similarly, premeditated murder is forbidden because murder is forbidden. But premeditated lethal defense is justified, because lethal defense is justified (when it is necessary). We should not be apologetic about either lethal defense, or marital sex, and believe they are only permissible when the occur spontaneously.

Most people recognize that there are circumstances under which it is justified to intentionally use lethal defensive force, but some mistakenly limit this type of defense to the armed services and the police. For instance, many recognize the need for police snipers (on occasion) to intend to inflict a mortal wound, but some deny this same defense to individuals. Under ordinary circumstances, citizens seldom need to premeditate a lethal defense of someone, as the police at times do. Under rare circumstances where a sniper is needed, the police normally perform this function on the people's behalf. But under the extraordinary circumstances where the police are not discharging this obligation for the people, but are rather using snipers to protect known and habitual murderers, the use of this means is not restricted to the government.

When the police intentionally use lethal defensive force, they do so on the people's behalf. It is not as though the citizens' duty to intentionally use less than lethal force is inalienable, but intentional killing is only legitimate when it has the government's approval. Both of these types of defensive force are derived from the Moral Law. If the police cannot, or will not, use the means necessary to defend the people's children on their behalf, this duty necessarily reverts to the people.

Thus, it is possible to prove that the government may intentionally use lethal force, but it cannot be proven that the people may not use similar defensive force, when it is necessary. This objection cannot be proven from the Bible since it is wrong.

If abortion were to be returned to its illegal status, it would certainly be unreasonable for a police sniper to shoot and kill an abortionist as he was arriving for work. The offender could easily be arrested and restrained to ensure that he did not continue to murder in the future. It is, however, easy to unwittingly assume that the same non-lethal means the police would use to arrest an abortionist, if abortion were illegal, are also sufficient to restrain abortionists when police gunmen are defending them. It is doubtful that many abortionists, or their bodyguards, would allow pro-lifers to put them under citizen's arrest.

If Christians were to use the same means the police used prior to 1973, they would be charged with felony kidnapping (assuming that those who tried to apprehend the abortionist were not killed in the attempt). How long could such an abortionist be held in "custody" before the police freed him and restored him to his work, bolstered by all the protection necessary to make him secure in his grisly job? Under these circumstances, the use of lethal force is far from unreasonable.

Since the circumstances play an essential role in determining the appropriate means for protecting the innocent, a realistic evaluation of the circumstances in question is essential for determining when lethal force is appropriate. Yet those who object to the intentional killing of abortion providers commonly base their objections on analogies drawn from circumstances that are unlike those that actually exist under legalized abortion. They commonly compare killing abortion providers to killing a household intruder, rather than to killing those who are slaughtering people in state-protected killing centers (like those that existed in Nazi Germany). It is wrong, therefore, to assume that the force that may be excessive in defending one's own household from an intruder is necessarily excessive under circumstances where people are being brought to secure locations and murdered under police protection. For instance, it would have likely been wrong for Abraham to have pursued and killed a thief if he had only invaded his tent and stolen some of his property. But, under the very different circumstance described in Genesis 14, Abraham was blessed by God for pursuing Lot's abductors, attacking and killing them by night, and pursuing them as they fled.

We must also give due consideration to the large numbers of children that are killed at the hands of abortionists who have been wounded, but have subsequently returned to their bloody business. Many abortion clinics schedule their abortions for a particular day in the week, and have an out-of-town abortionist come in to perform between 20 to 35 abortions on that day. Depending on his diligence, an abortionist may serve three or four clinics in a week, and easily kill over a hundred children in that time.. But even if he only averaged 75 abortions a week, he could take six weeks of vacation each year, and still be expected to kill about 3,450 children in a year! (Dr. Joseph Randall, a repentant abortionist, estimated that he killed about 32,000 unborn children in the decade he performed abortions.) If you wound, or otherwise temporarily restrain, an abortionist who is killing a similar number of children each year, the odds are that you will only save a small fraction of the total number of people he will murder in his lifetime. But if you kill him, you can be sure that he will never kill again.

Under circumstances where it is likely that merely wounding an assailant, rather than killing him, will result in that person later returning to murder numerous people, lethal force is justified. If killing, rather than wounding, an abortionist kept him from dismembering even one child, it would justify his death. If a wounded abortionist later returns to work for even a single day, he can be expected to kill between 10 and 35 people (depending on the type of practice).

Some have suggested that killing abortionists is excessive since they could be prevented from performing abortions, on a particular day, by a number of less drastic non-lethal means. People commonly assert that anything beyond the least degree of force that could be used to save a particular child is excessive—as though a defender of the unborn must ignore all the children an abortionist will likely murder in the future if he is not killed.

But the Bible does not annul force that is reasonable, under very pressing circumstances, nor condemn anything but the absolute minimum force that can be conceived by someone in a distant armchair. Rather, the Bible justifies, and as in Abraham's case, blesses the use of lethal force in circumstances where lesser degrees of force could have conceivably been employed. We should not replace God’s standards with men's inventions.

To reject anything but the minimum degree of force that could conceivably be used places an unreasonable burden on the defender that may endanger both his own life, and the lives of those he is defending. If one fails to use the means necessary to defend the innocent, for fear of

harming the attacker more than necessary, this may amount to culpable negligence, as it may result in the deaths of the innocent—even though the assailant's life may be spared. This is one reason why the police do not operate on this assumption.

When someone decides to kill people for a living, he thereby subordinates his right to be protected to the rights of his intended victims to be defended. When an innocent person's life is threatened, the primary goal should be to prevent the intended harm. Saving the life of a murderer should not be given priority over saving the lives of his intended victims.

If you condemn anything other than the least degree of force that could possibly be used, you condemn the overwhelming majority of defensive responses, whether personal or collective, that have taken place through the centuries, that have previously been considered justified. You also condemn God for justifying lethal defense in Exodus 22:2, and for blessing Abraham after the "slaughter of the kings" (Hebrews 7:1). (In both of these instances, a lesser degree of force could have possibly been used.)

Lethal force is justified against abortion providers since this is a means necessary for defending the unborn, and the Moral Law requires the use of these means. God wisely uses means in such a way as to accomplish His appointed ends; He requires us to do likewise in defending the unborn. The goal is to effectively protect them from being murdered—not to merely salve our consciences by offering a token defensive effort. Under the circumstances, killing abortion providers, and not merely restraining them temporarily, is an effective way of preventing them from ever killing again. (This also serves as a powerful deterrent to a diminishing number of abortion providers.)

Not only is this right, it also works (dead abortion providers don't continue to kill). Under these circumstances, lethal force is not right because it works, but since it is right, it works! Thankfully, God has not denied us the means necessary for our own, or our neighbor's defense; rather, He requires us to take the action necessary to save the unborn.

However, for the sake of argument, let us suppose that Archbishop O'Connor was correct in condemning my actions on the basis that defensive killing can only be justified when it is unintentional. This leaves open the option of intending to maim an abortionist; his death would, presumably, be justified if it were an unintended result.

It is reasonable to ask those who hold this position what degree of force may be used in defense of the unborn. If an abortionist should not be shot in the head, may he be shot in the hand? If it is wrong to in any way harm a murderer, in an effort to restrain him, may the property he uses to slaughter the innocent be destroyed? If individuals should not bomb abortion clinics, would it have also been wrong for individuals to have bombed the tracks that led to Auschwitz? If this is excessive, may a Christian overturn the tables in abortion clinics, and chase everyone from the premises—much as Christ cleansed the temple? If not, why not?

There are numerous direct means and methods that can be used to effectively prevent abortion providers from killing the unborn. Every abortion clinic in the country could be shut down with a relatively modest degree of force—if enough people were willing to employ this force. It's not as though there is nothing we can do to protect the thousands of children that are being killed every day.

There is a direct correlation between the number of abortion providers and the number of abortions performed. The more readily available abortion is, the more frequently women elect to

abort. If abortion is not available locally, many women will not travel outside their local community to abort, but will rather carry their baby to term. Thus, fewer abortion providers, and abortion clinics, result in fewer abortions.

Thus, in God's amazing providence, under the current circumstances, not only is it right to intervene in defense of the unborn, this also produces extremely good results: it saves babies! Regardless of whether you approach this from a theoretical or a practical perspective, intervening in defense of the unborn, as we would defend ourselves, is both right and good.

Even if it were granted that someone used excessive force in defense of the unborn, this would not abolish the moral obligation to defend these children with appropriate force. While there is a danger of using excessive force, this does not justify using inadequate force, or neglecting defensive means altogether.

The outrage is not that some people are using excessive force, but that most people deny the duty to use any direct means to save the unborn. If you think killing abortionists is excessive, please tell us which means for defending the unborn are justified by the Sixth Commandment.

An essential aspect of the Moral Law is at stake. Untold millions of unborn children are being slaughtered with lethal force. It is imperative that the force needed to protect these children be upheld in no uncertain terms! If you think premeditated lethal force is excessive, this is no excuse for neglecting the numerous lesser degrees of defensive force. The lives of numerous unborn children are directly dependent on the assertion of these defensive means.

We have considered the danger to the unborn of using insufficient defensive force, but we should not ignore the perils of excessive force. Zeal for this righteous cause might result in someone casting aside all restraint, and recklessly endangering innocent bystanders. A certain amount of collateral damage is often the unintended result of defending the innocent, but reasonable effort must be made to minimize the possibility of this damage.

Every effort must also be made to avoid discrimination that gives greater weight to protecting born people than to protecting the unborn. Perhaps the greatest danger is to undervalue the necessity of protecting the unborn, and to give greater weight to protecting innocent bystanders than to protecting the unborn. (A comparison between the number of unborn people killed, and the number of innocent bystanders killed by people defending the unborn certainly supports this assumption.) We must avoid the temptation to so absolutize the life of born people as to negate the duty to defend the unborn. But regardless of whether the people being protected are born or unborn, their defense is not dependent on the approval of a civil magistrate.

The Lower Civil Magistrate

Some object to individuals using force to defend the unborn on the basis of what is known as the doctrine of the lower civil magistrate. This doctrine has been derived from the many Scriptural examples of God raising up civil magistrates to lead those oppressed in overthrowing a tyrannical government. The book of Judges, for instance, abounds with examples of the Israelites revolting against their oppressors under the leadership of a judge, who served as a military leader.

Those who offer this objection view individuals who forcefully defend the unborn as if they were trying to overthrow the government. They grant that individuals may join with others,

under a lower civil magistrate, to overthrow an unjust government. But they view individual defensive force against abortion providers as a sort of personal war against the government, and condemn it on this basis. They have no place for individuals using force to resist any government-sanctioned injustice, unless that individual is under the authority of a duly established civil leader.

This position makes an important point: oppressed individuals should not, in a rash and disorganized fashion, try to overthrow a tyrannical government. Such opposition should be conducted in an orderly manner, and under proper leadership. But this should not be understood to contradict the biblical doctrine that individuals must obey God when the government requires a sin of omission (Acts 5:29). This is especially the case when submission to mass murder is being required.

The problem with this position is that it annuls the individual's duty to obey God rather than men when it comes to the defensive duties of the Sixth Commandment. They grant that individuals may illegally observe the other aspects of the Moral Law, without the permission of a lower civil magistrate, but they, without biblical warrant, deny the individual's duty to illegally defend his own or his neighbor's child.

It is important to distinguish between an individual defending himself, or his neighbors, and a group of individuals joining together under an appointed leader to overthrow the government. The former does not require a lower civil magistrate, the latter normally does. Individual defense may give rise to corporate defense, but those who illegally defend their neighbors are not necessarily trying to overthrow the government.

Those who raise this objection seek to annul individual defense by confusing it with corporate defense, and claiming it requires the corporate leadership needed in corporate defense. This obscures the inalienable nature of the individual's defensive duties, which is the basis upon which corporate defense rests. But the duty to defend the innocent, like the other duties of the Moral Law, is inalienable and does not depend on the approval of any human government. The right to defend children does not suddenly come upon citizens the day a leader who recognizes this right is inaugurated, or the day the highest court in the land allows it. Official approval, thus, is not required before you use the means necessary to protect your own or your neighbor's child.

The possible effects of this mistaken concept are far-reaching. Under this doctrine people could excuse inaction under even the worst of atrocities. No matter how many people were being robbed, raped, or murdered with the government's sanction, no one would be responsible to use defensive force—presumably even in self-defense—unless an opposing magistrate had been duly constituted. Thus, this teaching is not only unscriptural, it is also unreasonable. There are obviously many conceivable circumstances under which a powerful and oppressive government would not allow an opposing civil magistrate to be established, but under which defensive force would, nevertheless, be necessary.

Those who deny that citizens have an obligation to defend the innocent, unless a magistrate grants them permission, have put the cart before the horse. If the duty to defend the innocent is not inalienable, what would spur individuals to join together and appoint a lower civil magistrate who recognized this responsibility? If people deny they have a prior duty to defend their children, they would have no basis for asking the government to make abortion illegal, and exercise this duty on their behalf. How can we expect either the current government, or a

possible future government, under a lower civil magistrate, to defend the unborn on our behalf if we deny our prior duty to do so?

We see, then, that the individual duty to defend the innocent gives rise to the government performing this duty on the people's behalf, and to corporate defense. But when the government cannot, or will not, perform this obligation on the people's behalf, it necessarily reverts to the people. It is not as though you need anyone's permission, other than God's, before defending a needy child. This is an essential and inalienable duty of the Moral Law.

Southern Baptists Take A Stand

My killing Dr. Britton, 16 months after Dr. Gunn had also been killed in Pensacola, generated a considerable response from both pro-choice and pro-life proponents. For instance, Time magazine's August 15, 1994 issue carried an essay by Michael Kinsley titled, "Why Not Kill The Baby Killers?" In this piece, Kinsley asserted that killing abortionists is consistent with pro-life logic, and challenged the pro-life movement to own up to its own principles.

Perhaps the most noteworthy pro-life response to these types of assertions was offered by the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. David Gushee drafted a position paper that was revised by a drafting committee in Nashville on September 17-18, 1994. This committee consisted of several leading Southern Baptist ethicists, including Mark T. Coppenger, Ph.D., David P. Gushee, Ph.D., Daniel R. Heimbach, Ph.D., Richard D. Land, D. Phil., C. Ben Mitchell, Ph.D. (Cand.), and R. Albert Mohler, Jr., Ph.D., President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. They issued "The Nashville Statement of Conscience: Why the Killing of Abortion Doctors Is Wrong." Each of the six points in the "Abstract" of that document, together with my responses (in italics), follows.

"In July, 1994, abortion doctor John Britton and his escort James Barrett were shot and killed.

These vigilante murders have generated more rhetorical heat than light. The pro-choice and pro-abortion forces claim that such actions are the natural fruit of the conviction that human life begins at conception. The pro-life forces have objected strenuously, but have not fully justified their intuitive rejection of these murders. We hope that this statement, written from a Christian pro-life perspective, will help to clarify the grounds for this rejection."

It is certain that the innocent should be defended with the means necessary, and since the unborn are innocent, it is equally certain that they should be defended with the means necessary. Those who deny this are denying the obvious. The problem is not that we are unaware of this duty, the problem is, for various reasons, people suppress this obligation in unrighteousness.

This Commission's position is a radical departure from the word of God. It opposes well-known and historically orthodox positions taught by the Bible, and replaces them with man-made contradictions of the Scriptures that support today's status quo. Rather than exposing the sin of omission required by the government, this Commission has annulled an essential aspect of the Moral Law, and encouraged compliance with men rather than obedience to God. This negligence, as thousands are being slaughtered each day, has mocked God's law, bloodied hands throughout much of the world, and seared people's consciences to the point where they are blind to this aspect of the Moral Law.

This Commission wrongfully asserts that the abortionist, John Britton, and his escort, were murdered. They were certainly shot and killed, but not all killings are murder. Since the Moral Law requires the means necessary for defending the innocent, including lethal force, and since the unborn are innocent, the Moral Law requires the means necessary for defending the unborn, including lethal force (Exodus 20:13 and Genesis 14). It is bad for this Commission to neglect the proclamation of this duty, but it is much worse for it to condemn those who uphold God's law at this point.

"We maintain that:

1. The burden of proof is clearly upon those who would exercise deadly force. The Bible condemns murder in both the Old and New Testaments (Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:21) and designates government as the proper agent for maintaining order within society (Rom. 13:4)."

The Commission denies that it bears the burden of proof for a good reason: it cannot prove its assertion that the killing of abortion doctors is wrong. If these men could have proven their case, they would have done so. This Commission cannot even sustain its objections to killing abortionists, much less prove its position beyond a reasonable doubt. Since the Commission does not attempt to bear the burden of proving its position, but limits itself to unsubstantiated objections, its position remains unproved.

The Commission correctly understands the Sixth Commandment to forbid murder, but it has neglected to affirm the duty required by God under these circumstances. The Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for defending the innocent, including lethal force (Exodus 20:13, Exodus 22:2, Genesis 14:13-20, Esther 9:1-10). If someone uses lethal force to protect children from a known murderer, he should be presumed to have acted honorably, unless it can be proven otherwise beyond a reasonable doubt. (When mass murder has been legalized, and thousands are being slain each day, there is an overwhelming obligation to use the means necessary to stop these murderers.) Unsubstantiated objections do not prove guilt under any circumstances, much less under these compelling conditions.

The Commission is correct in asserting that the government should maintain order in society. But when the government legalizes, rather than suppresses, the murder of children, the duty to defend these children necessarily reverts to the people—otherwise the innocent will be left undefended—contrary to the Moral Law.

2. "As appalling as the wanton taking of unborn human life may be, it is protected by recent court decisions in America, and so is currently legal. Thus, we must work to protect the unborn through the legal and democratic processes."

It is appalling for the government to legalize mass murder, and forbid anyone to intervene to stop the bloodshed. But it is equally appalling, under these circumstances, for spokesmen in Christ's Church to neglect to uphold the duty to defend these children, in spite of the government's prohibition.

When a government legalizes murder, and thereby forbids the prevention of murder (as required by the Sixth Commandment), it requires a sin of omission. Under these circumstances, the people are not obliged to abide by the sin of omission being required by the government; rather, they must "...obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29b). As in the apostles' case, it is permissible to pursue legal remedies, but the primary duty is to put obedience to God before obedience to men.

3. "There are many praiseworthy and legal strategies to turn the tide of abortion, including abstinence-based sex education, ministry to women in crisis pregnancies, and a wide range of political and judicial efforts."

The apostles did not respond to the sin of omission required in their day by praising the legal options available to believers, as this Commission has done. If they had, they may have avoided persecution, but it would have exposed them, and their beliefs, to ridicule.

One strategy that they fail to mention, which is both praiseworthy and legal, is to uphold the inalienable duty to defend the unborn. This is not only praiseworthy; it is also the key to returning protection to the unborn.

4. "We affirm those physicians who refuse to perform abortions, recognizing that the vast majority of health care professionals abstain from this practice."

They commend the physicians who protect the unborn, but they fail to expose and reprove the government, and its agents, who protect murderers—rather than their victims. Not only must the police, who actually protect abortion providers, be unmasked, those who swear to uphold the murderous laws of our land—as many government employees are required to do—must similarly be exposed. Since the laws of our land sanction mass murder, it is sinful to swear to uphold the laws of our land. It is no less sinful to swear to uphold the law of our land, since the law sanctions mass murder, than it was to swear to uphold Roman law, when it sanctioned the murder of Christians. Far from swearing to obey the laws of the land, the apostles openly refused compliance, and declared their intent to obey God rather than men. We should similarly refuse compliance with the law in our day, since it sanctions mass murder, and declare the duty to resist this murderous force with force!

5. "Since human law may be in conflict with God's law, non-violent civil disobedience may be morally permissible, so long as the citizen willingly submits to the consequent penalties."

This Commission did not even declare that, by sanctioning murder, the government has contradicted God's Law, or that non-violent intervention is permissible. These things are stated as mere possibilities (no one can accuse them of fomenting social unrest). But as heralds of God's truth, they have a weighty responsibility to proclaim the whole counsel of God, especially when God's Law is put in question by the legalization of murder.

Legal abortion requires a gross neglect of the defensive duties required in the Sixth Commandment as thousands are being murdered each day. Under these circumstances, the duty being forbidden by the government must be asserted. As was the case with the apostles, Christian leaders should uphold the duty to obey God rather than men. To neglect this duty, under these circumstances, and merely affirm that "...human law may be in conflict with God's law..." is a sinful omission of immense proportions. Under these circumstances, to merely assert that "...non-violent civil disobedience may be morally permissible..." is to neglect to proclaim the whole counsel of God when millions of lives depend on it.

The statement that "...non-violent civil disobedience may be morally permissible so long as the citizen willingly submits to the consequent penalties" is also incorrect. While many believers have disobeyed unjust laws, and willingly submitted to the consequences, the Bible records many incidents where believers have obeyed God rather than men, and justly avoided the government's persecution (Acts 12:17-19, Exodus 1:15-22, I Kings 18:1-15).

Even if this statement by the Commission merely has the passive blocking of abortion clinics in view, it is still wrong. The permissibility of this form of civil disobedience is not dependent upon the citizen's willingness to submit to the consequent penalties. (A common strategy is for protesters to block entrance to an abortion clinic until they are about to be arrested. They then, on occasion, leave the area so they can block this or another entrance later, without suffering the delay, and deterrent, of being arrested)

6. "The unavoidable use of lethal force in an emergency to stop an assailant is quite different from the premeditated killing of enemies. Private citizens may be called upon to exercise the former, but not the latter. The premeditated use of deadly force is reserved to the government."

These statements have in view the norms that exist when murder is forbidden by the government. Under these normal circumstances, it is usually sufficient for a citizen to protect himself from immediate harm; citizens can ordinarily leave it to the police to arrest and restrain known murderers. But these statements ignore the truly extraordinary circumstances that exist when murder is legal, and the police are protecting—rather than restraining—known killers. Abortionists currently enjoy overwhelming police protection, as they methodically murder large numbers of children in secure locations.

The appropriate degree of defensive force is determined by a realistic evaluation of the circumstances, not a denial of these circumstances. Force that is excessive under one set of circumstances may be necessary under conditions that are more demanding. Extreme circumstances normally call for extreme measures. Would you think that you had done your duty if you merely wounded someone who was trying to kill your family if, afterwards, you had to sit in jail as the murderer returned, week after week, until he had killed everyone in your family?

Under circumstances where it is likely that merely wounding someone, rather than killing him, will result in that person later returning to murder numerous people, the intentional use of lethal force may be necessary, and therefore justified. Genesis 14 records an incident in which Abraham, and his men, attacked and killed a group of men who had taken Abraham's nephew, Lot, captive. God later blessed this slaughter through Melchizedek (a type of Christ), who declared that God had delivered Abraham's enemies into his hand. Under these circumstances, the intentional use of lethal force was necessary. It certainly prevented those killed from later regrouping and returning to threaten Abraham's family. A similar use of force against abortion providers prevents them from returning to their bloody work.

The Commission offers no Scriptural proof for its assertion that "The premeditated use of deadly force is reserved to the government." This is because none exists. Their position is unsubstantiated because it is untrue.

Since this is a duty of the Moral Law that comes directly from God, it is inalienable. In most instances, the government performs this duty on the people's behalf, but when it cannot, or will not, do so, the duty necessarily reverts to the people; otherwise, the people will be left without a means necessary for their defense. It is thus false to assert that this particular means of defense is reserved for the government.

The Commission concludes its six-point summary of its position with these words:

"We contend that the killing of abortion doctors is not a morally justifiable or permissible Christian response to abortion. We completely reject such conduct and call upon all Christian

people to join us in this rejection. We rebuke those who would seek to discredit the pro-life movement on the basis of the aberrant behavior of a handful of violent extremists.

"We reiterate our unshakable conviction that the life of each human being begins at conception, and we implore all Christians to oppose legalized abortion on demand and to work to reduce the number of abortions through legitimate means."

Not only do these assertions lack biblical authority, they positively annul the moral obligation (summarized in the Sixth Commandment) to use the means necessary to protect the innocent (Exodus 20:13, Exodus 22:2, Genesis 14:13-20, Esther 9:1-10). By annulling this weighty and important Commandment, upon which the lives of so many depend, and replacing it with their own opinions, the proponents of this position expose themselves to the rebuke of Christ:

"...And thus you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men'" (Matthew 15:6b-9).

(I do not believe the men on this Commission are hard-hearted hypocrites, as the men Christ rebuked were, but I do believe they are "...teaching as doctrines the precepts of men" [vs. 9b].)

Of this we can be certain: if someone of the Apostle Peter's caliber could sinfully comply with the Judiazers, and withdraw from Gentile Christians (as described in Galatians 2), it is possible for today's leaders to similarly comply with the status quo, and neglect the defensive duties owed to the unborn. Paul characterized Peter, and those who joined with him, as having "...played the hypocrite..." (Galatians 2:13, NKJV). Could it be that those who have denounced the means necessary for defending the unborn have also unwittingly "...played the hypocrite... "?

With all due respect to these men, it is imperative that they repent, and that they do so publicly. They have, by annulling a vital aspect of the Moral Law, led people into ethical error. For the sake of the thousands that are aborted every day, and ultimately for Christ's sake, I urge them to consider whether they may be on the wrong side of this unspeakably important issue. Hopefully, they will not persist in this error.

The Commission asserts that only the government (presumably through its agents) may premeditate a lethal defense. The Commission did not, however, set forth a position on defensive force that provides consistent answers to the following relevant and pressing questions:

A. Most people (in accordance with the Moral Law) believe innocent people should be defended with the means necessary; does the Commission concur with this position? Historic orthodox Christianity teaches that the Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for defending the innocent. Does the Commission, in essence, agree with this interpretation of the Sixth Commandment? If not, what is the Commission's position on the use of defensive force? If the intentional use of lethal force is unacceptable, are lesser degrees of force justified? Would it be justifable, for instance, for someone to overturn the tables in an abortion clinic, and chase everyone from the premises, much as Christ cleansed the temple?

B. Does the Commission believe that, by forbidding the defense of the unborn, the government has required a sin of omission (much as when Ahab and Jezebel killed the prophets

of the Lord, and Obadiah was prohibited from protecting the remaining prophets)? Should believers obey God rather than men when the government requires a sin of omission?

C. Is the citizen's duty to defend his child inalienable, or can this duty be removed by the government? If this is an inalienable duty, should the people expect the government to perform it on their behalf if they deny that the duty exists?

D. Does this Commission agree that the Moral Law requires the means necessary for defending innocent people, and that the unborn are innocent people? This means that the unborn have a right to be defended with the means necessary. Since the unborn have this right, and since Proverbs 31:9b requires us to "...defend the rights of the afflicted and needy," isn't this Commission guilty of neglecting to defend the rights of the unborn?

E. If we should passively submit to an atrocity as heinous as mass murder, should we similarly submit to lesser atrocities like mass rape or enslavement? If we should submit to legalized murder, is there any conceivable atrocity we should resist? If we are willing to tolerate the murder of over 4,000 people a day, day after day, haven't we taken a flying and irretrievable leap down the slippery slope of sinful negligence? If the line should not be drawn at the slaughter of over 4,000 children a day, where should it be drawn?

We see, then, that this Commission's response to abortion is unconscionable. There is no good reason for tolerating mass murder. Those who deny we should use the means necessary for defending the unborn, and encourage submission to this atrocity, are contradicting the Moral Law, and will give an account to God for annulling His commandments.

In addition to the objections raised by this Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, numerous other objections have also been offered by various authors and organizations. The biblical resolution to all these objections must begin with one putting oneself in the place of the unborn, and identifying oneself with them. View one of the unborn children who are murdered each day as you would view yourself, or your own born children. Then take whatever objection you may have to this position, and ask yourself: "Would this annul my duty to defend my born child with the immediate means necessary?" (Pro-lifers are well known for responding to difficult objections to the pro-life position by asking, "Would this objection be equally valid for both born and unborn children?" The same test should also be applied to defending the unborn with force.)

If someone is truly identified with a child (as most people are with their own children), no theoretical reason, apart from physical inability or calling, would keep most such people from taking the immediate action necessary to save that child (as required by the Moral Law). People will overcome, if possible, even the most formidable physical obstacles, and theoretical objections, in order to save the lives of their children. We should treat our unborn neighbors similarly.

You may legitimately excuse yourself from taking direct action to save the unborn on the basis of your calling or physical limitations. Apart from these considerations, however, if your objections to defending the unborn would not relieve you of your duty to defend your two-year old toddler, they should be reevaluated. Objections that cannot stand this test, or that of the Golden Rule, are likely nothing more than flimsy excuses, regardless of how lofty and convincing they may sound otherwise.

Let's face it, most people do not believe in defending the unborn as they would defend themselves because abortion does not threaten them the way it does the unborn. Those old enough to understand the threat posed by abortion also know that they will never be killed in this manner. If adults were being threatened, as the unborn are, they would overcome all reluctance, and virtually every possible objection to their defense. People would be busy defending themselves, not offering lame excuses for neglecting this defense. We must, therefore, lay aside our apathetic excuses, put ourselves in the place of the unborn, and defend them as we would defend ourselves.

Freedom from Abortion

Americans are generally agreed that our civic liberties are so essential to our well-being that we should be willing to fight and die, if necessary, to secure and preserve them. But one of the most glaring omissions of our Constitution is that it fails to establish a standard by which true liberty may be distinguished from sinful license. This opens the door to various understandings of liberty. Unbelievers hate God's law, and want to be free from its constraints (Romans 8:7). They frequently portray the sins they want to have legalized as human rights. But true Christians hate and detest sin, and dearly prize their freedom from the very sins that non-Christians want to legalize as their "right." In order to distinguish, thus, between right and wrong in civic life, it is vital that believers develop a biblical view of the civic rights and liberties.

The concepts of human rights and liberties are distinctly biblical, and should be viewed from a biblical perspective. The Bible repeatedly speaks of the rights of the afflicted and needy, and the importance of defending the rights of the poor: "Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all the unfortunate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy" (Proverbs 31:8-9). The Bible also has much to say about the Christian's liberty to obey God's law: "And I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:45).

The concept of being free is also in the Scriptures to refer to being released from bondage to sin to serve God: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:2). From a biblical perspective, the concepts of rights, liberties, and freedom are all related to God's law. Christians have the right, the liberty, and the freedom to keep God's Moral Law as summarized by the Ten Commandments.

The connection between freedom and the Ten Commandments is clearly made in the preface to the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Exodus 20:1). The tyranny that existed in Egypt, under Pharaoh and his enslaving laws, is here contrasted with the glorious liberty of being ruled by the True God in all of life, as summarized in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments, thus, should serve as a touchstone for distinguishing between liberty and slavery in civic life.

The primary function of the government is to uphold the Moral Law with the sword (Romans 13:3-4). Perhaps the government's most basic function is to protect and defend the lives of the people on their behalf. The individual's duty to defend himself and his neighbor (as required by the Sixth Commandment) is the basis for individuals joining together and appointing civil magistrates to perform this task on their behalf. The right of self-defense, thus, gives rise to the right of individuals to join together, form a government, and engage in defensive warfare. When necessary, such wars are required by the Scriptures (Jeremiah 48:10 & Deuteronomy 20).

If a government stops providing this corporate protection to a helpless minority, by sanctioning their murder, the upright citizens in the nation should uphold the right of those within this minority to defend themselves. They should also maintain their duty to come to the defense of this minority—as necessary to preserve their lives. This response serves several functions: it saves the innocent, and serves as a deterrent to those who are killing the oppressed; it bears testimony to the rights of the oppressed; it also bears witness to the people's refusal to submit to their neighbor's slaughter, and their determination to resist such an intolerable situation. The willingness of people to thus resist state-sanctioned murder (as required by the Moral Law) is a powerful incentive for the government to protect all the people, and not sanction the murder of any minority (as occurred in the book of Esther). But if the citizens in a nation fail to uphold the right of a threatened minority to be defended, the results could be catastrophic. Such negligence also brings bloodguilt on those who fail to uphold the rights of the oppressed.

Many Americans have the notion that as long as the people may freely elect their representatives (as in a democracy as opposed to a monarchy, or a dictatorship) that the nation will necessarily remain free from oppression. But the ability to elect one's representatives in a democratic nation does not ensure liberty. A majority can oppress a helpless minority much as a monarch or dictator can. While democratic governments are designed to prevent the abuses of a monarchical tyrant, this does not prevent a majority from becoming tyrannical.

If a majority in a democratic nation loses its moral bearings (as our nation has), and its respect for human life, this majority could elect representatives for the express purpose of cruelly oppressing and murdering a helpless minority—such as the unborn. Many pro-choice citizens vote with this very object in view. The more relativistic the people in a democracy become, and the further they drift from the Moral Law, the more they can be expected to elect leaders who will pass laws that permit them to indulge themselves at the expense of the helpless and needy. The form of government, thus, does not determine whether a government is oppressive or not: both democracies and monarchies can be either beneficent or oppressive. The degree of freedom or injustice experienced by any population is determined by the Moral Law, as summarized by the Ten Commandments, not by the particular form of government.

When any government, regardless of its form, requires people to sin, either by omission or commission, it becomes an instrument of evil and oppression. The degree of injustice is determined by the degree of sin being enforced. Since some sins are more heinous than others, the more heinous the sin, the more unjust it is to enforce that sin. For example, it is oppressive for a government to sanction slavery, or rape, but it is even more odious for a government to legalize murder. Since all the duties in life are dependent on being alive, the right to life is fundamental to all other rights, including the right to raise children and the right to preach the gospel. For citizens to be denied their right to life, thus, may be the worst form of physical oppression. Governments that sanction mass murder are grossly unjust; America's government has sanctioned mass murder; we must conclude, therefore, that America's government is grossly unjust.

Some object that threatening force in defense of the unborn is contrary to the democratic process, but the very opposite is true. The democratic process is based on people asserting their inalienable rights and duties—not denying that they exist. It is not as though people must decide between upholding the Moral Law at this point, and continuing to work within the law; the latter should be based on the former.

Some argue that individuals may not intervene in defense of their unborn neighbors so long as the government has popular support, and offers opportunities for legal reform. But this objection, and virtually all others, appears absurd when applied to a group of born people. When innocent people are being slaughtered, regardless of whether a majority supports the government or not, and regardless of whether the slaughter may eventually be stopped through legal means, there is an overwhelming moral obligation to use the means for stopping the bloodshed. The people's opposition to this atrocity, and the use of possible legal remedies, should be based on an assertion of this duty—not a denial of its existence.

Those who assert that legalized murder should not be resisted with force have abandoned the God-ordained means for resisting this atrocity. If we are limited to legal and peaceful responses, while millions are being slaughtered, we are enslaved to the government, and have thrown away the key to our shackles. The lives and liberties of the oppressed are not preserved by submission to governments that sanction murder.

True freedom for the Christian does not consist in neglecting God’s law in order to escape persecution, but in obedience to the Lord in spite of the opposition. The path of sacrificial service brings glorious liberty.

Men are naturally enslaved to the world's sinful way of thinking. This includes a carnal fear of men, especially towards those in positions of social or political power: “The fear of man brings a snare...” (Proverbs 29:25a). This enslaving fear of man can only be overcome by a greater, and truly liberating fear: the fear of God: “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28).

We should not fear persecution for defending the unborn; rather, we should fear submitting to unjust laws, quenching the Spirit, and provoking the chastening hand of God. Jesus did not bow in fearful obedience to men, and neglect the needs of those around Him; neither should we. We should joyfully accept any persecution that may come to us for defending the needy.

True freedom comes from denying your own fleshly advantage, dying to your own plans and projects, and following Christ in this world. For the child of God, freedom consists in sacrificially believing and obeying the whole counsel of God, especially at the point where men forbid it.

Like the apostles, we must prefer death to the defilement and misery of submitting to government-imposed sin. Such courage is requisite for casting off every type of fetter forged by tyrannical governments, including legalized murder.

It is not enough to be free from the threat of being murdered yourself. In accordance with the Second Great Commandment, true liberty consists in freeing your neighbors, and your posterity, from this threat—as you would yourself. James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), in the concluding two sections of his “Stanzas on Freedom” writes:

> Is true freedom but to break
> Fetters for our own dear sake,
> And, with leathern hearts, forget
> That we owe mankind a debt?
> No! True freedom is to share
> All the chains our brothers wear,

And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

Freedom from sinful oppression is so essential to God's glory, and man's good, that He never permits anyone to be forced to sin and thereby forfeit his liberty of conscience. Under oppressive circumstances, you may be forced to choose between liberty or death, but no one may be made a slave to sin except by his own consent. When forced to neglect the defense of America's children, the free and the brave should reply: "Give me liberty to defend the unborn or give me death." No land is free or its people brave if they lack the freedom or the courage to defend their children from a violent death.

Believers have been set free from those who require sin in either church or state in order to serve Christ alone. There is only one Lord of the conscience, and that Lord is not Caesar!

When the Supreme Court forbids the defense of the unborn, and Jesus Christ requires their defense, you must choose between oppression and liberty.

The price we pay in human blood for the peace and prosperity many Americans now enjoy is unconscionably high. What peace can there be as long as over 4,000 people are being murdered each day? The "peace" we currently experience is the result of tolerating mass murder, rather than resisting this atrocity as we would if our own lives were being similarly threatened.

You may not submit to murder and defend against it. You cannot serve Caesar by defending murderers, and serve Christ by defending their victims. Honesty requires the admission that allegiance to one is a repudiation of the other. If you believe you may neglect or reject the defense of the innocent, and remain true to Christ, you believe a lie.

People must stop groveling before the government in the blood of the unborn; this is a miserable price to pay for maintaining one's reputation in the world and one's current standard of living. Under these insufferable circumstances, it is no great honor to maintain the status quo.

It is, therefore, certain that when a government sanctions the murder of its people, that the people may do considerably more than continually petition the government for redress. Even the most indoctrinated people under communist dictators must surely know that when mass murder is sanctioned, and thousands are being slain every day, upholding the duty to defend these people, in both word and deed, is not only an option—it is a compelling duty.

Abortion Semantics

The pro-life community has long been critical of the euphemistic language used by corrupt governments to whitewash both the Jewish and the abortion holocausts. What many fail to realize, however, is that such governments not only twist the truth about the murderers in question, and their victims, they also misrepresent the police who defend these butchers, as well

as those who defend the innocent. The police who protect abortionists are currently called “peace keepers,” while those who intervene in defense of the unborn are labeled “violent extremists.” The defenders of murderers are styled as heroes, while those who defend the unborn are cast as crazed fanatics.

Those intent on eliminating weapons of mass destruction need not look beyond the borders of our own country. All one needs to do is to look in the yellow pages for the nearest abortion clinic to find instruments that cause mass destruction. The implements of destruction used in abortion clinics pose the greatest threat to America's population. Anyone genuinely interested in protecting America's people should begin by stopping the slaughter that is already underway—that continues each day.

It is also popular to call those who use force to stop abortion “terrorists.” Those who used force to resist Nazi atrocities were given similar labels by Nazi sympathizers. But abortion providers are actually state-protected terrorists, since they cause millions to fear for the lives of their unborn relatives and neighbors. The terror they cause is similar to the terror evoked by those who operated the Nazi death camps.

It is also common for people today to castigate those under Hitler's power who sang along with the government about submitting to the “powers that be”—as though they are not currently doing the same thing. But if we scorn the Germans who complied with the semantics used in their day to retain their positions in society, should we congratulate ourselves for responding similarly today? After all, they had a better excuse than we do. They could not challenge the euphemisms being used without fear of arrest.. We can. Considering the extreme violence that has currently been sanctioned, the government allows us an amazing degree of freedom to proclaim the very truths that it is suppressing—something the Germans who opposed the Jewish holocaust did not enjoy.

Since we have this freedom, it is imperative that we use it, and reject the semantic inversions employed by the government. Force to prevent abortion is not violence; it is the prevention of violence. Those who protect abortionists are protecting violence; those who protect the unborn are preventing violence. Weapons should be used to protect the unborn—not their assailants.

How much longer will people continue to use this obviously inconsistent rhetoric? If you condone those who defend born people from terrorists, you should not condemn those who similarly defend the unborn. Reasonable people should advocate the force necessary for restraining all murderers, not just those who murder born people.

It is insufficient to correct the twisted language about abortionists, and the lethal force they use against the unborn; we must also proclaim the truth about defending the unborn. If you believe abortion is lethal force, you should uphold the force needed to stop it. Force should be resisted with force!

Courtroom Controversy

Pre- Trial Proceedings

Soon after my arrest, the prosecution announced that they were seeking the death penalty. This forced me to decide whether I should try to resist their efforts to kill me. After some thought, I decided that it was my duty to do whatever I could to save the most people from being killed, and thereby bring the most glory to God. I didn't know for certain that my allowing them to kill me would result in fewer children being killed, but it seemed probable that this would be the result. I proceeded in the strength of this judgment.

About this time, I also decided to represent myself. I assumed that the courts would reject a defense based on the humanity of the unborn, and I did not want any well-meaning lawyer to offer a defense on any other basis. God, in His amazing providence, provided all the legal help I needed.

Michael Hirsh, a pro-life attorney formerly involved with Operation Rescue, presented a brief to the judge in my name. (Although, at that time, Mr. Hirsh was employed by the American Center for Law and Justice to represent me in another abortion-related case, his work on my homicide case was pro bono.) The brief Mr. Hirsh submitted was based on his 1993 Regent University thesis. This thesis had been modified into an argument defending Michael Griffin's killing of Dr. Gunn, and printed in the Regent University Law Review (it was withdrawn prior to circulation after I killed Dr. Britton). Mr. Hirsh then reworked the brief, using the particulars of my case, and submitted it in my name. The brief argued that my killing Dr. Britton was consistent with the Bible, and justifiable under Florida law. With the help of Vincent Heiser (another pro-life attorney who came to my aid), we reminded the judge that he might, one day, stand trial for upholding the abortion holocaust if he would not allow us to present the truth.

My trial was a classic example of judicial tyranny. It bore many similarities to the trials of those who protected the Jews from being murdered in Nazi Germany during World War II. It should be remembered, however, that soon after the war, many roles were reversed, and many who had condemned the defenders of the Jews were themselves condemned.

As anticipated, the judge rejected our brief, and would not allow me to either assume or prove that the unborn are human beings. The freedom to speak the truth, which every American should enjoy, was denied me during my trial. Even though my life depended on it, and 47 percent of the population believed that abortion is murder, my pro-life views were strictly excluded by the court. No words or concepts that would reveal the truth about abortion were tolerated; only the pro-death semantics approved by the court could be uttered (except during the penalty phase in which the judge allowed me some latitude). I was gagged by a court order that prevented me from speaking the truth. If I had begun to demonstrate that the unborn are human, or that the abortionist was employed in murdering them, the court would have used the force necessary to silence me.

If I had been allowed to tell the truth, it would have inevitably resulted in my putting the abortionist, and the government that protected him, on trial for participating in mass murder. I could have shown that not only the abortionist, but also the government, could have justifiably had force used against it. (Governments that sanction mass murder should be resisted, and those who are being victimized should be defended with the means necessary.)

Mock Trial

The judge had a reason for not allowing the humanity of the unborn to be demonstrated. If the truth had been allowed, it would have turned the entire trial on end. I could have used the same tactics that the prosecutor used with equally good effect.

The prosecution displayed large, bloody, and revolting pictures of the people I killed. As the jury looked on, they pushed long metal pins through life-size mannequins to show how the shot had passed through their bodies. A medical examiner testified, at great length, about the cause of death. I was portrayed as a heartless murderer with no regard for human life.

A fireman who had been called to the scene, and a man who drove by the clinic soon after the shooting, were held up as heroes for trying to "rescue" the abortionist, and restrain me, the murderer. Those who had lost relatives wept on the stand and vented their anger. During the penalty phase, the prosecutor told the jury he had studied the world's major religions, and none of them justified violence. A gun store employee also told how he had sold me the shotgun that I used.

If I had been allowed the same opportunities afforded the prosecutor, I could have turned the stomachs, and the hearts, of the jurors against the abortionist, and his bloody trade, much as the prosecutor turned the jurors against me. I would have exposed the semantic inversions employed by the government to cast abortionists, and their protectors, in a favorable light. I would have shown that those who protect abortionists are protecting terror and violence, and that those who restrain them are preventing violence. I had used a lethal weapon for its intended purpose—to protect innocent people—not their assailants.

Distinguished theologians could have borne testimony to the biblical basis for defensive force. The necessity of defending innocent people, especially under circumstances where large numbers of people are being exterminated, could have also been presented to the jury.

Experts in civil law could have traced the well-established precedent for justifiable homicide through American jurisprudence, and English common law, back to the Bible. Examples of judicial systems that recognize this principle could have been drawn from both biblical and modern civilizations, including our own.

I could have also subpoenaed the people who had sold the instruments with which the abortionist dismembered the unborn. Medical experts could have described, in painstaking detail, how numerous unborn children would have been killed that day if the abortionist had not been stopped. Realistic models of developing unborn children could have been contrasted with shocking pictures of children that have been maimed and dismembered by abortion.

The abortionist's motive would have also been brought to light. The author of the GQ article who had investigated the abortionist, Tom Junod, could have been subpoenaed to testify to the grisly facts: the abortionist normally killed 32 children in a day, and was paid $50 per head.

Several relatives of the children Dr. Britton had previously murdered could have been summoned to the stand to testify of their deep personal loss. Attention could have been directed to the potentially long and productive lives that had lain before the many children the abortionist had killed.

Evidence could have been presented to prove, as with the wounding of George Tiller (an abortionist in Wichita, Kansas), that if John Britton had merely been wounded, he would have likely returned to killing the unborn under even tighter security. (The day after George Tiller was shot in each of his arms by Shelley Shannon, he made a pointed display of returning to "work.") Various means could have been used to reveal the great lengths the police in Wichita have gone to, since Shannon shot Tiller, to prevent anyone from ever intervening between him and his intended victims again.

The records of the various clinics in which Dr. Britton had performed abortions could have been used to estimate the total number of children he had killed in his career. Consideration could have also been given to the number of unborn children he would have likely murdered after July 29, 1994, if he had not been killed on that date.

The deciding factor, however, would not have been the large number of people the abortionist had killed in the past, or would have likely killed in the future, but the injustice of allowing him to kill any innocent and helpless person, regardless of the number of victims involved. Justice demands that the lives of numerous murderers be taken if it is necessary to save the life of even one child. And if it is justified to kill several attackers to save a single child, how much better is it to kill one murderer, and his escort, to save numerous children. The scales of justice would have slammed down on the side of the unborn.

My trial raises some difficult questions for those who are pro-life. Based on pro-life assumptions, I should certainly have been allowed to demonstrate the humanity of the unborn to the jury. Since I obviously had a reasonable fear that John Britton was about the murder numerous people, I had a clear basis for arguing that my actions were justifiable homicide. The most reasonable objection to my actions is that they were excessive. But this objection could have been convincingly countered in court.

Suppose you had been the prosecutor in this trial. Many have dismissed what I did for trivial reasons, and have raised objections to my actions that can be easily resolved. But a court-appointed prosecutor must do more than this; he must formulate a specific charge and prove his claims beyond a reasonable doubt. What would you have charged me with? Could this charge have been proven from the Bible? Considering the numerous children I saved from this habitual murderer, it would have been especially difficult (should I say impossible?) to prove that I am a murderer, rather than a defender, beyond a reasonable doubt.

Not only could I have proven that I am a defender of the innocent, I could have done considerably more than raise reasonable doubt about a charge that I had used excessive force. I could have proven that I had a compelling reason to kill the abortionist: if I had not done so, he would, in all probability, have continued his practice of murdering unborn children—much as Dr. Josef Mengele tortured and killed the Jews—under police protection.

It is a gross injustice to even think in terms of accusing or prosecuting someone who acted as I did. You simply cannot put someone who kills a threatening murderer, at great personal cost, on the same moral plane with someone who murders people for selfish gain. The two are as different as day is from night, as right is from wrong. The problem is not that I defended innocent children, but that the government has legalized their murder. Those responsible for legalizing this atrocity should have been arrested and tried for murder—not me!

During the penalty phase, I addressed the jury for the first time, and made a short statement as my "closing argument":

You have a responsibility to protect your neighbor's life, and to use force if necessary to do so. In an effort to suppress this truth, you may mix my blood with the blood of the unborn, and those who have fought to defend the oppressed. However, truth and righteousness will prevail. May God help you to protect the unborn as you would want to be protected.

Soon afterwards, I was escorted to Florida State Prison's death row.

The legal team that argued my mandatory appeal before the Florida Supreme Court consisted of Mr. Michael Hirsh and Mr. Roger Frechette. Mr. Hirsh, both in legal briefs and oral argument, presented the legal precedent for justifiable homicide, and applied it to my actions in defense of the unborn—breaking new ground in American jurisprudence. As soon as the court upheld my death sentence, I waived all future appeals.

The Golden Rule Defense

The most penetrating Scripture with which to conclude our examination of the duty to defend the unborn is the Second Great Commandment. Christ committed the unborn into your care when He commanded you to love your neighbor as yourself, and applied this teaching in the story of the Good Samaritan. This story teaches that the command to love your neighbor as yourself extends to all your fellow men, especially those in need.

If your limbs were about to be torn from your body, would you defend yourself? If you couldn't, would you want someone else to? The Golden Rule teaches us to put ourselves in the place of others, so as to experience their feelings, and then to act in their behalf. If you were scheduled to be aborted, who would you rather have between you and the abortionist: someone who would intervene with the means necessary to save your life, or someone who, for whatever reason, would not take the action necessary to protect you? If you would want someone to defend you with the immediate means necessary, Christ's teachings require that you do the same for the unborn (according to your abilities and calling in life).

Don't deceive yourself; these children are your responsibility. Christ committed them into your care in the Second Great Commandment. Open your heart to them, spread your blanket over them, and own them as your own. Most of these children have been rejected by their parents; won't you adopt them as your own? Surely there is room in your heart for them.

Will you suffer when they suffer? Will you recoil as they do from the instruments used to dismember them? Rather than standing by as they are put to death, shouldn't we fight and kick for their lives as they do for their own?

Jesus said: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). If we truly love our unborn neighbors, shouldn't we at least be willing to assert the duty to defend them?

On July 29, 1994, Dr. Ronald E. Graeser, the County Medical Examiner in Fremont, Michigan heard, with the rest of the nation, of my shooting Dr. Britton and his two escorts in Pensacola. Later that day, and in the days that followed, many Christians scrambled to save their reputations and ministries by denouncing the shootings. But Dr. Graeser risked his reputation, and possibly his livelihood, by signing a statement justifying what I had done. Dr. Graeser was

not independently wealthy; he had college-aged children and a public position as a medical examiner. Some might say he threw it all away by justifying my actions.

News cameramen soon appeared at his doorstep, and thousands of television viewers saw Dr. Graeser uphold the duty to defend the unborn. This eventually resulted in his finding a new and better job, and joy unspeakable. We don't know how his stand affected everyone, but we do know how it affected one expectant mother who was planning to abort. She changed her mind. Dr. Graeser lost it all, and in doing so, he found it.

No one else was in a position to do as he did. Neither is anyone else in a position to do as you can. But everyone with a reputation, job, or family has been given that life that he might lose it.

Will you lose your life for Christ's little ones? If so, on that day, you will hear Him say, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father. . . Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.” Not everyone should take up arms, but if you believe that abortion is lethal force, you should uphold the force needed to stop it.

Appendix A: Jonathan Edwards, Defensive Action, and Revival

Many consider Jonathan Edwards to be “The Theologian of Revival.” He was one of the principal figures in the first great awakening. Remarkable revival occurred under his ministry in Northampton, New England, in 1734-1735, and spread in an extraordinary manner to 27 nearby towns. A similar second revival began in Northampton, Boston, and many other places, in 1740, and to one degree or another, prevailed in more than 150 congregations in New England, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvanian, Virginia, and Maryland between 1740 and 1744.

These revivals were opposed by those who scorned vital Christian (not surprisingly). But those who most ardently supported this revival also did much to hinder it by falling into various errors and mistakes that led to confusion and disorder. In order to promote and bear witness to the validity of this revival, and to check the excesses that threatened it, Pastor Edwards published his Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England, in 1740. This important work is currently kept in print by the Banner of Truth Trust and is contained in The Works of Jonathan Edwards.

As I read this remarkable treatise, I was enlightened about many important matters, and also convicted of having fallen into many of the same errors, in my zeal to promote the defense of the unborn, that appeared in some of the revivalist preachers. I commend Edwards’ entire treatise to the reader, and agree with all of it. I would, however (with the readers indulgence), like to present some of the highlights from Edwards’ treatise since they shed such important light on the current revival that has resulted from applying the defensive duties of the Moral Law to the abortion controversy.

Edwards held that Christian ministers should be well equipped and educated. He also counseled against unrestrained zeal, or anything that caused confusion and disorder. But he writes:

God in this work has begun at the lower end, and he has made use of the weak and foolish things of the world to carry it on. Some of the ministers chiefly employed have been mere babes in age and standing; and some of them not so high in reputation among their brethren as many others; and God has suffered their infirmities to appear in the sight of others, so as much to displease them; and at the same time it has pleased God greatly to succeed them, while he has not so succeeded others who are generally reputed vastly their superiors. Yea, there is reason to think that it has pleased God to make use of the infirmities of some, particularly their imprudent zeal, and censorious spirit, to chastise the deadness, negligence, earthly-mindedness, and vanity found among ministers in the late times of declension and deadness, wherein wise virgins and foolish, ministers and people, have sunk into a deep sleep. These things in ministers of the gospel, that go forth as ambassadors of Christ, and have the care of immortal souls, are extremely abominable to God; vastly more hately in his sight than all the imprudence and intemperate heats, wildness and distraction (as some call it) of these zealous preachers. A supine carelessness, and a vain, carnal, worldly spirit in a minister of the gospel is the worst madness and distraction in the sight of God. God may also make use at this day of the unchristian censoriousness of some preachers, the more to humble and purify some of his own children and true servants that have been wrongfully censured, to fit them for more eminent service and future honour (p. 366 & 367).

In SECT. III. of this work, under the sub-heading, We should distinguish the good from the bad, and not judge of the whole by apart, Edwards writes:

... How little do they consider human nature, who look upon it so insuperable a stumbling-block, when such multitudes of all kinds of capacities, natural tempers, educations, customs, and manners of life, are so greatly and variously affected, that imprudences and irregularities of conduct should abound; especially in a state of things so uncommon, and when the degree, extent, swiftness, and power of the operation is so very extraordinary, and so new, that there has not been time and experience enough to give birth to rules for people's conduct, and the writings of divines do not afford rules to direct us in such a stage of things!

A great deal of noise and tumult, confusion and uproar, darkness mixed with light, and evil with good, is always to be expected in the beginning of something very glorious in the state of things in human society, or the church of God...

The weakness of human nature has always appeared in times of great revival of religion, by a disposition to run to extremes, and get into confusion; and especially in these three things, enthusiasm, superstition, and intemperate zeal. So it appeared in the time of the reformation very remarkably, and even in the day of the apostles. Many were exceedingly disposed to lay weight on those things that were very chimerical, giving heed to fables (I Tim. i.4. and iv.7. 2 Tim ii.16 and ver. 23. and Tit. 1.14 and iii.9.) Many, as ecclesiastical history informs us, fell off into the most wild enthusiasm, and extravagant notions of spirituality, and extraordinary illumination from heaven beyond others; and many were prone to superstition, will-worship, and a voluntary humility, giving heed to the commandments of men, being fond of an unprofitable bodily exercise, as appears by many passages in the apostles' writings. And what a proneness then appeared among professors to swerve from the path of duty, and the spirit of the gospel, in the

exercises of a rash indiscreet zeal, censuring and condemning ministers and people; one saying, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos; another, I am of Cephas. . .The prevailing of such like disorders seems to have been the special occasion of writing many of their epistles. The church in that great effusion of the Spirit, and under strong impressions, had the care of infallible guides, that watched over them day and night, but yet, so prone were they, through the weakness and corruption of human nature, to get out of the way, that irregularity and confusion arose in some churches, where there was an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, to a very great height, even in the apostles' lifetime, and under their eye (p. 371 & 372).

SECT. IV

The nature of the work in general

. . . I suppose there is scarcely a minister in this land, but from Sabbath to Sabbath is used to pray that God would pour out his Spirit, and work a reformation and revival of religion in the country, and turn us from our intemperance, profaneness, uncleanness, worldliness, and other sins; and we have kept from year to year, days of public fasting and prayer to God, to acknowledge our backslidings, and humble ourselves for our sins, and to seek of God forgiveness and reformation: and now when so great and extensive a reformation is so suddenly and wonderfully accomplished, in those very things that we have sought to God for, shall we not acknowledge it? or, do it with great coldness, caution, and reserve, and scarcely take any notice of it in our public prayers and praises, or mention it but slightly and cursorily, and in such a manner as carries an appearance as though we would contrive to say as little of it as ever we could, and were glad to pass from it? And that because the work is attended with a mixture of error, imprudences, darkness, and sin; because some persons are carried away with impressions, and are indiscreet, and too censorious with their zeal; and because there are high transports of religious affections; and some effects on their bodies of which we do not understand the reason.. .(p. 374 & 375).

After Edwards described, in detail, the remarkable effect the revival had on a particular person in SECT. V. of this work, he begins SECT. VI. This work is very glorious, with these words:

Now if such things are enthusiasm, and the fruits of a distempered brain, let my brain be evermore possessed of that happy distemper! If this be distraction, I pray God that the world of mankind may be all sized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatifical, glorious distraction! (p. 378).

... There being a great many errors and sinful irregularities mixed with this work of God, arising from our weakness, darkness, and corruption, does not hinder this work of God's power and grace from being very glorious. Our follies and sins in some respects manifest the glory of it. The glory of divine power and grace is set off with the greater lustre, by what appears at the same time of the weakness of the earthen vessel. It is God's pleasure to manifest the weakness and unworthiness of the subject, at the same time that he displays the excellency of his power and the riches of his grace. And I doubt not but some of these things which make some of us here on earth to be out of humour, and to look on this work with a sour displeased countenance, heighten the songs of the angels, when they praise God and the Lamb for what they see of the glory of God's all-sufficiency, and the efficacy of Christ's redemption. And how unreasonable is

it that we should be backward to acknowledge the glory of what God has done, because the devil, and we in harkening to him, have done a great deal of mischief! (p. 380).

PART II.

SHOWING THE OBLIGATIONS THAT ALL ARE UNDER TO ACKNOWLEDGE, REJOICE IN, AND PROMOTE THIS WORK; AND THE GREAT DANGER OF THE CONTRARY.

SECT. I.

The danger of lying still, and keeping long silence, respecting any remarkable work of God.

There are many things in the word of God, showing that when God remarkably appears in any great work for his church, and against his enemies, it is a most dangerous thing, and highly provoking to God, to be slow and backward to acknowledge and honour God in the work. Christ's people are in Scripture represented as his army; he is the Lord of hosts, the Captain of the host of the Lord, as he called himself when he appeared to Joshua, with a sword drawn in his hand, Joshua v~ 13-15. The Captain of his people's salvation: and therefore it may well be highly resented, if they do not resort to him when he orders his banner to be displayed; or if they refuse to follow him when he blows the trumpet, and gloriously appears going forth against his enemies. God expects that every living soul should have his attention roused on such an occasion, and should most cheerfully yield to the call, and heedfully and diligently obey it. Isa. xviii. 3. “All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth; see ye when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth the trumpet, hear ye.” Especially should all Israel be gathered after their Captain, as we read they were after Ehud, when he blew the trumpet in mount Ephraim, when he had slain Eglon the king of Moab, Judges iii. 27,28. How severe is the martial law in such a case, when any of the army refuses to obey the sound of the trumpet, and follow his general to the battle! God at such a time appears in peculiar manifestations of his glory; and therefore, not to be affected and animated, and to lie still, and refuse to follow God, will be resented as a high contempt of him...

At a time when God manifests himself in such a great work for his church, there is no such thing as being neuters; there is a necessity of being either for or against the king that then gloriously appears. When a king is crowned, and there are public manifestations of joy on that occasion, there is no such thing as standing by as an indifferent spectator; all must appear as loyal subjects, and express their joy on that occasion, or be accounted enemies... So in the day of battle, when two armies join, there is no such thing for any present as being of neither party, all must be on one side or the other; and they who are not found with the conqueror in such a case, must expect to have his weapons turned against them, and to fall with the rest of his enemies (p. 380).

SECT. III.

The danger of not acknowledging and encouraging, and especially of deriding, this work

That was a glorious work which God wrought for Israel, when he delivered them from the Canaanites, by the hand of Deborah and Barak. Almost every thing about it showed a remarkable

hand of God... But what a dreadful curse from Christ did some of God's professing people Israel bring upon themselves, by lying still at that time, and not putting to a helping hand! Judg. V. 23. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." ... It seems the inhabitants of Meroz were unbelieving concerning this great work; they would not hearken to Deborah 's pretenses, nor did it enter into them that such a poor defenseless company should ever prevail against those that were so mighty. They did not acknowledge the hand of God, and therefore stood at a distance, and did nothing to promote the work; but what a bitter curse from God did they bring upon themselves by it! . . . (p. 384).

As persons will greatly expose themselves to the curse of God, by opposing, or standing at a distance, and keeping silence at such a time as this; so for persons to arise, and readily to acknowledge God, and honour him in such a work, and cheerfully and vigorously to exert themselves to promote it, will be to put themselves much in the way of the divine blessing. What a mark of honour does God put upon those in Israel, that willingly offered themselves, and came to the help of the Lord against the mighty, when the angel of the Lord led forth his armies, and they fought from heaven against Sisera! Judg. V. 2, 9, 14-18. And what a great blessing is pronounced on Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for her appearing on the Lord's side, and for what she did to promote that work! "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent."... What a particular and honourable notice is taken in the records of God's work, of those that arose and appeared as David's helpers, to introduce him into the kingdom of Israel! I Chron. xii. The host of those who thus came to the help of the Lord, in that glorious revolution in Israel, by which the kingdom of that great type of the Messiah was set up in Israel, is compared to the host of God (ver. 22.)" At that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God."... .(p. 386).

PART IV.

SHOWING WHAT THINGS ARE TO BE CORRECTED OR AVOIDED, IN PROMOTING THIS WORK, OR IN OUR BEHAVIOUR UNDER IT

... If we look back into the history of the church of God in past ages, we may observe that it has been a common device of the devil, to overset a revival of religion; when he finds he can keep men quiet and secure no longer, then he drives them to excesses and extravagances. He holds them back as long as he can; but when he can do it no longer, then he will push them on, and, if possible, run them upon their heads. And it has been by this means chiefly that he has been successful, in several instances, to overthrow most hopeful and promising beginnings. Yea, the principal means by which the devil was successful, by degrees, to overset the grand religious revival of the world, in the primitive ages of Christianity, and in a manner to overthrow the Christian church through the earth, and to make way for the great Antichristian apostasy, that masterpiece of all the devil's works, was to improve the indiscreet zeal of Christians, to drive them into those three extremes of enthusiasm, superstition, and severity towards oppressors; which should be enough for an everlasting warning to the Christian church...

Since therefore the errors of the friends and promoters of such a glorious work of God are of such dreadful consequence; and seeing the devil, being sensible of this, is so assiduous, watchful, and subtle in his attempts with them, and has thereby been so successful to overthrow religion heretofore; certainly such persons ought to be exceeding circumspect and vigilant, diffident, and jealous of themselves, and humbly dependent on the guidance of the good

Shepherd. I Pet. iv. 7. “Be sober, and watch unto prayer.” And chap. v. 8. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about.” For persons to go on resolutely, in a kind of heat and vehemence, despising admonition and correction, being confident that they must be in the right because they are full of the Spirit, is directly contrary to the import of these words, be sober, be vigilant.

It is a mistake I have observed in some, by which they have been greatly exposed to their wounding, that they think they are in no danger of going astray, or being misled by the devil, because they are near to God; and so have no jealous eye upon themselves, and neglect vigilance and circumspection, as needless in their case. They say, they do not think that God will leave them to dishonor him, and wound religion as long as they keep near to him. And I believe so too, as long as they keep near to God, so as to maintain an universal and diligent watch, and care to do their duty, avoid sin and snares with diffidence in themselves, and humble dependence and prayerfulness. But not merely because they are receiving blessed communications from God, in refreshing views of him; if at the same time they let down their watch, and are not jealous over their own hearts, by reason of its remaining blindness and corruption, and a subtle adversary.—It is a grand error for persons to think they are out of danger from the devil, and a corrupt, deceitful heart, even in their highest flights, and most raised frames of spiritual joy. For persons in such a confidence, to cease to be jealous of themselves, and to neglect watchfulness and care, is a presumption by which I have known my woefully insnared. However highly we may be favoured with divine discoveries and comforts, yet, as long as we are in the world, we are in the enemies’ country; and therefore that direction of Christ to his disciples is never out of date in this world, Luke xxi. 36. “Watch and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (p. 397 & 398).

SECT. I.

One cause of errors attending a great revival of religion, is undiscerned spiritual pride

The first and the worst cause of errors, that prevail in such a state of things, is spiritual pride. This is the main door by which the devil comes into the hearts of those who are zealous for the advancement of religion. It is the chief inlet of smoke from the bottomless pit, to darken the mind and mislead the judgment. This is the main handle by which the devil has hold of religious persons, and the chief source of all the mischief that he introduces, to clog and hinder the word of God.—This cause of error is the main spring, or at least the main support, of all the rest. Till this disease is cured, medicines are in vain applied to heal other diseases. It is by this that the mind defends itself in other errors, and guards itself against light, by which it might be corrected and reclaimed. The spiritually proud man is full of light already, he does not need instruction, and is ready to despise the offer of it. But, if this disease be healed, other things are easily rectified. The humble person is like a little child, he easily receives instruction; he is jealous over himself, sensible how liable he is to go astray, and therefore, if it be suggested to him that he does so, he is ready most narrowly and impartially to inquire. Nothing sets a person so much out of the devil's reach as humility, and so prepares the mind for true divine light without darkness, and so clears the eye as to look on things as they truly are; Ps. xxv. 9. “The meek will he guide in judgment. And the meek will he teach his way.” Therefore we should fight, neither with small nor with great, but with the king of Israel. Our first care should be to rectify the heart, and pull the beam out of our eye, and then we shall see clearly...

The corruption of nature may all be resolved into two things, pride and worldly-mindedness, the devil and the beast, or self and the world. These are the two pillars of Dagon ‘s temple, on which the whole house leans. But the former of these is every way the worst part of the corruption of nature; it is the first-born son of the devil, and his image in the heart of man chiefly consists in it. It is the last thing in a sinner that is overborne by conviction, in order to conversion; and here is the saint's hardest conflict; the last thing over which he obtains a good degree of conquest, that which most directly militates against God, and is most contrary to the Spirit of the Lamb of God. It is most like the devil its father, in a serpentine deceitfulness and secrecy; it lies deepest, is most active, and is most ready secretly to mix itself with every thing.

And of all kinds of pride, spiritual pride is upon many accounts that most hateful, it is most like the devil; most like the sin he committed in a heaven of light and glory, where he was exalted high in divine knowledge, honour, beauty, and happiness. Pride is much more difficult to be discerned than any other corruption, because its nature very much consists in a person's having too high a thought of himself. No wonder that he who has too high a thought of himself, does not know it; for he necessarily thinks that the opinion he has of himself has just grounds, and therefore is not too high; if he thought such an opinion of himself was without just grounds, he would therein cease to have it. Those that are spiritually proud, have a high conceit of these two things, viz., their light, and their humility, both of which are a strong prejudice against a discovery of their pride. Being proud of their light, that makes them not jealous of themselves; he who thinks a clear light shines around him, is not suspicious of an enemy lurking near him unseen; and then, being proud of their humility, that makes them least of all jealous of themselves in that particular, viz., as being under the prevalence of pride. There are many sins of the heart that are very secret in their nature, and with difficult discerned. The psalmist says, Psal. xix. 12. “Who can understand his errors,? Cleanse thou met from secret faults.” But spiritual pride is the most secret of all sins. The heart is deceitful and unsearchable in nothing so much as in this matter; and there is no sin in the world, that men are so confident in. The very nature of it is to work self-confidence, and drive away jealousy of any evil of that kind. There is no sin so much like the devil as this for secrecy and subtlety, and appearing in a great many shapes undiscerned and unsuspected. It appears as an angel of light; takes occasion to arise from every thing; it perverts and abuses every thing, and even the exercises of real grace, and real humility, as an occasion to exert itself: it is a sin that has, as it were, many lives if you kill it, it will live still; if you mortify and suppress it in one shape, it rises in another; if you think it is all gone, yet it is there still. There are a great many kinds of it, that lie in different forms and shapes, one under another, and encompass the heart like the coats of an onion; if you pull off one, there is another underneath. We had need therefore to have the greatest watch imaginable over our hearts with respect to this matter, and to cry most earnestly to the great searcher of hearts for his help. He that trusts his own heart is a fool

(p. 398 & 399).

The eminently humble Christian is as it were clothed with lowliness, mildness, meekness, gentleness of spirit and behaviour, and with a soft, sweet, condescending, winning air and deportment; these things are just like garments to him, he is clothed all over with them. I Pet. v. 5. “And be clothed with humility.” Col. iii. 12. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.” Pure Christian humility has no such thing as roughness, or contempt, or fierceness, or bitterness in its nature it makes a person like a little child, harmless and innocent, that none need to be afraid of;

or like a lamb, destitute of all bitterness, wrath, anger, and clamour; agreeable to Eph. iv. 31. With such a spirit as this ought especially zealous ministers of the gospel to be clothed, and those that God is pleased to employ as instruments in his hands of promoting his work. They ought indeed to be thorough in preaching the word of God, without mincing the matter at all; in handling the sword of the Spirit, as the ministers of the Lord of hosts, they ought not to be mild and gentle; they are not to be gentle and moderate in searching and awakening the conscience, but should be sons of thunder.

The word of God, which is in itself sharper than any two-edged sword, ought not to be sheathed by its ministers, but so used that its sharp edges may have their full effect, even to the dividing asunder soul and spirit, joints and marrow. Yet they should do it without judging particular persons, leaving it to conscience and the Spirit of God to make the particular application. But all their conversation should savour of nothing but lowliness and good-will, love and pity to all mankind; so that such a spirit should be like a sweet odour diffused around them wherever they go. They should be like lions to guilty consciences, but like lambs to men's persons. This would have no tendency to prevent the awakening of men's consciences, but on the contrary would have a very great tendency to awaken them. It would make way for the sharp sword to enter; it would remove the obstacles, and make a naked breast for the arrow.—Yea, the amiable Christ-like conversation of such ministers in itself; would terrify the consciences of men, as well as their terrible preaching; both would co-operate to subdue the hard, and bring down the proud heart. If there had been constantly and universally observable such a behaviour as this in itinerant preachers, ten times as much as all the invectives and the censorious talk there as been concerning particular persons for their opposition, hypocrisy, delusion, pharisaism, etc. These things in general have rather stupefied sinners' consciences; they take them up, and make use of them as a shield, wherewith to defend themselves from the sharp arrows of the word that are shot by these preachers. The enemies of the present work have been glad of these things with all their hearts.—Many of the most bitter of them are probably such as in the beginning of this work had their consciences something galled and terrified with it; but these errors of awakening preachers are the things they chiefly make use of as plaisters to heal the sore that was made in their consciences.. .(p. 401).

SECT. II.

Another cause of errors in conduct attending a religious revival, is the adoption of wrong principles.

One erroneous principle, than which scarce any has proved more mischievous to the present glorious work of God, is a notion that it is God's manner in these days, to guide his saints, at least some that are more eminent, by inspiration, or immediate revelation. They suppose he makes known to them what shall come to pass hereafter, or what it is his will that they should do, by impressions made upon their minds, either with or without texts of Scriptures; whereby something is made known to them, that is not taught in the Scripture. By such a notion the devil has a great door opened for him; and if once this opinion should come to be fully yielded to, and established in the church of God, Satan would have opportunity thereby to set up himself as the guide and oracle of God's people, and so to lead them where he would, and to introduce what he pleased, and soon bring the Bible into neglect and contempt.—Late experience, in some instances, has shown that the tendency of this notion is to cause persons to esteem the Bible as in a great measure useless.

This error will defend and support errors. As long as a person has a notion that he is guided by immediate direction from heaven, it makes him incorrigible and impregnable in all his misconduct. For what signifies it, for poor blind worms of the dust, to go to argue with a man, and endeavour to convince him and correct him, that is guided by the immediate counsels and commands of the great JEHOVAH? This great work of God has been exceedingly hindered by this error; and, till we have quite taken this handle out of the devil's hands, the work of God will never go on without great clogs and hinderances.—Satan will always have a vast advantage in his hands against it, and as he has improved it hitherto, so he will do still. And it is evident, that the devil knows the vast advantage he has by it, that makes him exceedingly loth to let go his hold.

It is strange what a disposition there is in many well-disposed and religious persons to fall in with and hold fast this notion. It is enough to astonish one, that such multiplied, plain instances of the failing of such supposed revelations in the event, do not open every one's eyes. I have seen so many instances of the failing of such impressions, that would almost furnish a history. I have been acquainted with them when made under all kinds of circumstances, and have seen them fail in the event, when made with such circumstances as have been fairest and brightest, and most promising. They have been made upon the minds of apparently eminent saints, and with an excellent heavenly frame of spirit yet continued, and made with texts of Scripture that seemed exceeding opposite, yea, many texts following one another, extraordinarily and wonderfully brought to the mind, and the impressions repeated over and over; and yet all has most manifestly come to nothing, to the full conviction of the persons themselves. God has in many instances of late, ion his providence, covered such things with darkness, that one would think it should be enough quite to blank the expectations of those who have been ready to think highly of such things. It seems to be a testimony of God, that he has no design of reviving revelations in his church, and a rebuke from him to the groundless expectations of it...

And why cannot we be contented with the divine oracles, that holy, pure word of God, which we have in such abundance and clearness, now since the canon of Scripture is completed? Why should we desire to have any thing added to them by impulses from above? Why should we not rest in that standing rule that God has given to his church, which, the apostle teaches us, is surer than a voice from heaven? Any why should we desire to make the Scripture speak more to us than it does? Or why should any desire a higher kind of intercourse with haven, than by having the Holy Spirit given in his sanctifying influences, infusing and exciting grace and holiness, love and joy, which is the highest kind of intercourse that the saints and angels in heaven have with God, and the chief excellency of the glorified man Christ Jesus? (p. 404).

There are many ways by which persons may be misled and deluded. The ground on which some expect that they shall receive the thing they have asked for, is rather a strong imagination, than any true humble faith in the divine sufficiency. They have a strong persuasion that the thing asked shall be granted, (which they can give no reason for,) without any remarkable discovery of that glory and fullness of God and Christ, that is the ground of faith. And sometimes the confidence that their prayers shall be answered, is only a self-righteous confidence, and no true faith. They have a high conceit of themselves as eminent saints, and special favourites of God, and have also high conceit of the prayers they have made, because they were much enlarged and affected in them; and hence they are positive in it, that the thing will come to pass. And sometimes, when once they have conceived such a notion, they grow stronger and stronger in it; and this they think is from an immediate divine hand upon their minds to strengthen their

confidence; whereas it is only by their dwelling in their minds on their own excellency, and high experiences, and great assistances, whereby they look brighter and brighter in their own eyes. Hence it is found by observation and experience, that nothing in the world exposes so much to enthusiasm and spiritual pride and self-righteousness.

In order to drawing a just inference from the supposed assistance we have had in prayer for a particular mercy, and judging of the probability of the bestowment of that individual mercy, many things must be considered. We must consider the importance of the mercy sought, and the principle whence we so eagerly desire it; how far it is good, and agreeable to the mind and will of God; the degree of love to God that we exercised in our prayer; the degree of discovery that is made of the divine sufficiency, and the degree in which our assistance is manifestly distinguishing with respect to that mercy.—And there is nothing of greater importance in the argument than the degree of humility, poverty of spirit, self-emptiness, and resignation to the holy will of God, exercised in seeking that mercy. Praying for a particular mercy with much of these things, I have often been blessed with a remarkable bestowment of the particular thing asked for. From what has been said, we may see which way God may, only by the ordinary gracious influences of his Spirit, sometimes give his saints special reason to hope for the bestowment of a particular mercy they prayed for, and which we may suppose he oftentimes gives eminent saints, who have great degrees of humility, and much communion with God... (p. 406).

Another erroneous principle that some have embraced and which has been a source of many errors in their conduct, is, that persons ought always to do whatsoever the Spirit of God (though but indirectly) includes them to. Indeed the Spirit of God is in itself infinitely perfect, and all his immediate actings, simply considered, are perfect, and there can be nothing wrong in them; and therefore all that the Spirit of God includes us to directly and immediately, without the intervention of any other cause that shall pervert and misimprove what is from him, ought to be done. But there may be many things, disposition to do which may indirectly be from the Spirit of God, that we ought not to do. The disposition in general may be good, and from the Spirit of God; but the particular determination of that disposition, as to particular actions, objects, and circumstances, may be from the intervention or interposition of some infirmity, blindness, inadvertence, deceit, or corruption of ours. So that although the disposition in general ought to be allowed and promoted, and all those actings of it that are simply from God's Spirit, yet the particular ill direction or determination of that disposition, which is from some other cause, ought not to be followed.

As for instance, the Spirit of God may cause a person to have a dear love to another, and so a great desire of and delight in his comfort, east, and pleasure. This disposition in general is good, and ought to be followed; but yet through the intervention of indiscretion, or some other bad cause, it may be ill directed, and have a bad determination, as to particular acts; and the person indirectly, through that real love he has to his neighbour, may kill him with kindness; he may do that out of sincere goodwill to him, which may tend to ruin him.—A good disposition may, through some inadvertence or delusion, strongly incline a person to that which, if he saw all things as they are, would be most contrary to that disposition... (p. 406).

I make no doubt but that it is possible for a minister to have by the Spirit of God such a sense of the importance of eternal things, and of the misery of mankind—so many of whom are exposed to eternal destruction— together with such a love to souls, that he might find in himself a disposition to spend all his time, day and night, in warning, exhorting, and calling upon men;

and so that he must be obliged as it were to do violence to himself ever to refrain, so as to give himself any opportunity to eat, drink, or sleep. And so I believe there may be a disposition, in like manner, indirectly excited in lay-persons, through the intervention of their infirmity, to do what only belongs to ministers; yea, to do those things that would not become either ministers or people. Through the influence of the Spirit of God, together with want of discretion, and some remaining who have great degrees of humility, and much communion with God... (p. 406).

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Another wrong principle, from whence have arisen errors in conduct, is, that whatsoever is found to be of present and immediate benefit may and ought to be practiced, without looking forward to future consequences.. .It is the duty of ministers especially to exercise this discretion.

In things wherein they are not determined by an absolute rule, and not enjoined them by a wisdom superior to their own, Christ has left them to their own discretion, with that general rule, that they should exercise the utmost wisdom they can obtain, in pursuing that which, upon the best view of the consequences of things, will tend most to the advancement of his kingdom. This is implied in those words of Christ to his disciples, when he sent them forth to preach the gospel, Matt. x. 16. "Be ye wise as serpents."

The Scripture always represents the work of a gospel minister by those employments that especially require a wise foresight of, and provision for, future events and consequences. So it is compared with the business of a steward, which in an eminent manner requires forecast; as, for instance, a wise laying in of provision for the supply of the needs of a family, according to its future necessities. So it is compared to the husbandman, that almost wholly consists in things done with a view to the future fruits and consequences of his labour... So the work of the ministry is compared to that of a wise builder or architect, who has a comprehensive view; and for whom it is necessary, that, when he begins a building he should have at once a view of the whole frame, and all the future parts of the structure, even to the pinnacle, that all may be fitly framed together...

And particularly, ministers ought not to be careless how much they discompose the minds of natural men, or how great an uproar they raise in the carnal world, and so lay blocks in the way of the propagation of religion. This certainly is not to follow the example of the zealous apostle Paul, who though he would not depart from his duty to please carnal men, yet, wherein he might with a good conscience, exceedingly laid out himself to please them. lie avoided raising in the multitude prejudices, oppositions, and tumults against the gospel; and looked upon it as of great consequence. I Cor. x. 32, 33. "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." Yea, he declares that he laid himself out so much for this, that he made himself a kind of servant to all sort of men, conforming to their customs and various hurnours in every thing wherein he might, even in the things that were very burdensome to him, that he might not fright men away from Christianity, and cause them to stand as it were braced and armed against it, but to the contrary, if possible, might with condescension and friendship win and draw them to it; I Cor. ix. 19-23. . . (p. 407). And I also believe that if the rules of Christian charity, meekness, gentleness, and prudence had been duly observed by the generality of the zealous promoters of this work, it would have made three times the progress that it has; i.e. if it had pleased God in such a case to give a blessing to means in proportion as he had done.

Under this head of carelessness about future consequences, it may be proper to say something of introducing things new and strange, and that have tendency by their novelty to shock and surprise people. Nothing can be more evident from the New Testament, than that such things ought to be done with great caution and moderation, to avoid the offense that may be thereby given, and the prejudices that might be raised, to clog and hinder the progress of religion. Yea, it ought to be thus in things that are in themselves good and excellent, and of great weight, provided they are not things of absolute duty, which though they may appear to be innovations, yet cannot be neglected without immorality or disobedience to the commands of God. What great caution and moderation did the apostles use in introducing things that were new, and abolishing things that were old, in their day! How gradually were the ceremonial performances of the law of Moses removed and abolished among the Christian Jews! And how long did even

the apostle Paul himself conform to those ceremonies which he calls weak and beggarly elements! Yea, even the rite of circumcision, (Acts xvi. 3.) that he might not prejudice the Jews against Christianity! . . . These things might be enough to convince any one, that does not think himself wiser than Christ and his apostles, that great prudence and caution should be used in introducing things into the church of God, that are very uncommon, though in themselves excellent, lest by our rashness and imprudent haste we hinder religion much more than we help it.

Persons influenced by indiscreet zeal are always in too much haste; they are impatient of delays, and therefore are for jumping to the uppermost step first, before they have taken the preceding steps; whereby they expose themselves to fall and break their bones. They are delighted to see the building rise, and all their endeavour and strength is employed in advancing its height, without taking care proportionably of the bottom; whereby the whole is in danger of coming to the ground. Or they are for putting on the cupola and pinnacle before the lower parts of the building are done; which tends at once to put a stop to the building, and hinder its ever being a complete structure. Many that are thus imprudent and hasty with their zeal, have a real eager appetite for that which is good; but like children, are impatient to wait for the fruit, and therefore snatch it before it. is ripe. Often in their haste they overshoot their mark, and frustrate their own end; they put that which they would obtain further out of reach than it was before, and establish and confirm that which they would remove. Things must have time to ripen. The prudent husbandman waits till the harvest is ripe, before he reaps. We are now just beginning to recover out of a dreadful disease; but to feed a man recovering from a fever with strong meat at once, is the ready way to kill him...

Another error, arising from an erroneous principle, is a wrong notion that they have an attestation of Divine Providence to persons, or things. We go too far, when we look upon the success that God gives to some persons, in making them the instruments of doing much good, as a testimony of God’s approbation of those persons and all the courses they take. It has been a main argument to defend the conduct of some ministers, who have been blamed as imprudent, and irregular, that God has blessed them, and given them great success; and that however men charge them as guilty of wrong things, yet that God is with them, and then who can be against them? And probably some of those ministers themselves, by this very means, have had their ears stop against all that has been said to convince them of their misconduct. But there are innumerable ways by which persons may be misled, in forming a judgment of the mind and will of God, from the events of providence. If a person's success be a reward of something in him that God approves, yet it is no argument that he approves of every thing in him... God was pleased in his sovereignty to give such success to Jacob in that which, from beginning to end, was a deceitful, lying contrivance and proceeding of his.. .And therefore we cannot safely take the events of his providence as a revelation of his mind concerning a person's conduct and behaviour; we have no warrant so to do. God has never appointed those things to be our rule. We have but one rule to go by, and that is his holy word; and when we join any thing else with it, as having the force of a rule, we are guilty of that which is strictly forbidden, Deut. iv. 2. Prov. xxx. 6. and Rev. xxii. 18. They who make what they imagine is pointed forth to them in providence, the rule of behaviour, do err, as well as those that follow impulses and impressions. We should put nothing in the room of the word of God. It is to be feared that some have been greatly confirmed and emboldened, by the great success that God has given them, in some things that have really been contrary to the rules of God’s holy word. If so, they have been guilty of presumption, and abusing God’s kindness to them, and the great honour he has put upon them.

They have seen that God was with them, and made them victorious in their preaching; and this, it is to be feared, has been abused by some to a degree of self-confidence. This has much taken off all jealousy of themselves; they have been bold therefore to go great lengths, in a presumption that God was with them, and would defend them, and finally battle all that found fault with them.. .but finally all must be brought to one rule, viz., the word of God, and that must be regarded as our only rule (p. 408-409).

SECT. III

A third cause of errors in conduct, is, being ignorant or unobservant of some things, by which the devil has special advantage.

And here I would particularly notice some things with respect to the inward experiences of Christians themselves. And something with regard to the external effects of experiences.

Inward experiences. There are three things I would notice with regard to the experiences of Christians, by which the devil has many advantages against us.

1. The first thing is the mixture there oftentimes is in the experiences of true Christians; whereby when they have truly gracious experiences, and divine and spiritual discoveries and exercises, they have something else mixed with them, besides what is spiritual. There is a mixture of that which is natural, and that which is corrupt, with that which is divine. . .1 have often thought that the experiences of true Christians are very frequently as it is with some sorts of fruits, which are enveloped in several coverings of thick shells or pods, that are thrown away by him that gathers the fruit, and but a very small part of the whole bulk is the pure kernel that is good to eat.

The things, of all which there is frequently some mixture with gracious experiences, yea with very great and high experiences, are these three; human or natural affection and passions; impressions on the imagination; and a degree of self-righteous or spiritual pride. There is very often with that which is spiritual a great mixture of that affection or passion which arises from natural principles; so that nature has very great hand in those vehement motions and flights of the passions that appear. . . The novelty of things, or the sudden transition from an opposite extreme, and many other things that might be mentioned, greatly contribute to the raising of the passions. And sometimes there is not only a mixture of that which is common and natural with gracious experience, but even that which is animal, what is in a great measure from the body, and is properly the result of the animal frame... So, in the love true Christian have one to another, very often there is a great mixture of what arises from common and natural principles, with grace. Self-love has a great hand; the children of God are not loved purely for Christ's sake, but there may be a great mixture of that natural love which many sects of heretics have boasted of, who have been greatly united one to another, because they were of their company, on their side, against the rest of the world; yea, there may be a mixture of natural love to the opposite sex, with Christian and divine love. So there may be a great mixture in that sorrow for sin which the godly have, and also in their joys; natural principles may greatly contribute to what is felt, a great many ways, as might easily be shown. There is nothing that belongs to Christian experience more liable to a corrupt mixture than zeal. Though it be an excellent virtue, a heavenly flame, when it is pure; yet as it is exercised in those who are so little sanctified, and so little humbled, as we are in the present state, it is very apt to be mixed with human passion, yea with corrupt, hateful

affections, pride and uncharitable bitterness, and other things that are not from heaven, but from hell.

Another thing often mixed with what is spiritual in the experiences of Christians, is an impression on the imagination; whereby godly persons, together with a spiritual understanding of divine things, and conviction of their reality and certainty, and a deep sense of their excellency or great importance upon their hearts, have strongly impressed on their minds external ideas or images of things. A degree of imagination in such a case, is unavoidable, and necessarily arises from human nature, as constituted in the present state; and often is of great benefit; but, when it is in too great a degree, it becomes an impure mixture that is prejudicial. This mixture very often arises from the constitution of the body. It commonly greatly contributes to the other kind of mixture mentioned before, viz., of natural affections and passions; it helps to raise them to a great height.

Another thing that is often mixed with the experiences of true Christians, which is the worst mixture of all, is a degree of self-righteousness or spiritual pride. This is often mixed with the joys of Christians. Their joy is not purely the joy of faith, or a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, but is partly a rejoicing in themselves. There is oftentimes in their elevations a looking upon themselves, and a viewing their own high attainments; they rejoice partly because they are taken with their own experiences and great discoveries, which makes them in their own apprehensions so to excel; and this heightens all their passions, and especially those effects that are more external. There is a much greater mixture of these things in the experiences of some Christians than others; in some the mixture is so great, as very much to obscure and hide the beauty of grace in them, like a thick smoke that hinders all the shining of the fire.

The things we ought to be well aware of, that we may not take all for gold that glistens, and that we may know what to countenance and encourage, and what to discourage; otherwise Satan will have a vast advantage against us, for he works in the corrupt mixture... (p. 411).

2. Another thing, by which the devil has great advantage, is the unheeded defects there sometimes are in the experiences of true Christians, connected with those high affections wherein there is much that is truly good...

For the better understanding of this matter, we may observe, that God, in the revelation that he has made of himself in the world by Jesus Christ, has taken care to give a proportionable manifestation of two kinds of excellencies or perfections of his nature, viz., those that especially tend to possess us with awe and reverence, and to search and humble us; and those that tend to win, to draw, and encourage us. By the one, he appears as an infinitely great, pure, holy, and heart-searching judge; by the other, as a gentle and gracious father and a loving friend... A defect on the one hand, viz. having a discovery of his love and grace, without a proportionable discovery of his awful majesty, his holy and searching purity, would tend to spiritual pride, carnal confidence, and presumption; and a defect on the other hand, viz., having a discovery of his holy majesty, without a proportionable discovery of his grace, tends to unbelief, a sinful fearfulness and spirit of bondage. And therefore therein chiefly consists that deficiency of experiences that I am now speaking of...

From these things we may learn how to judge of experiences, and to estimate their goodness. Those are not always the best which are attended with the most violent affections, and most vehement motions of the animal spirits, or have the greatest effects on the body. Nor are they always the best, that most dispose persons to abound in talk to others, and to speak in the

most vehement manner, though these things often arise from the greatness of spiritual experiences. But those are the most excellent experiences that are qualified as follows: 1. That have the least mixture, or are the most purely spiritual. 2. That are the least deficient and partial, in which the diverse things that appertain to Christian experience are proportionable one to another. And, 3. That are raised to the highest degree. It is no matter how high they are raised if they are qualified as before mentioned, the higher the better.. Experiences, thus qualified, will be attended with the most amiable behaviour, will bring forth the most solid and sweet fruits, will be the most durable, and will have the greatest effect on the abiding temper of the soul.

If God is pleased to carry on this work, and it should prove to be the dawning of a general revival of the Christian church, it may be expected that the time will come before long, when the experiences of Christians shall be much more generally thus qualified. We must expect green fruits before we have ripe ones...

3. There is another thing concerning the experiences of Christians, of which it is of yet greater importance that we should be aware, than of the proceeding, and that is the degenerating of experience. What I mean is something diverse from the mere decay of experiences, or their gradually vanishing, by persons losing their sense of things; viz., experiences growing by degrees worse and worse in their kind, more and more partial and deficient; in which things are more out of due proportion, and also have more and more of a corrupt mixture; the spiritual part decreases, and the other useless and hurtful parts greatly increase. This I have seen in very many instances; and great are the mischiefs that have risen through want of being more aware of it.

There is commonly, as I observed before, in high experiences, besides that which is spiritual, a mixture of three things, viz. natural or common affections, workings of the imagination, and a degree of self-righteousness or spiritual pride. Now it often comes to pass, that through persons not distinguishing the wheat from the chaff, and for want of watchfulness and humble jealousy of themselves—and by laying great weight on the natural and imaginary part, yielding to it, and indulging it, whereby that part grows and increases, and the spiritual part decreases—the devil sets in, and works in the corrupt part, and cherishes it to his utmost. At length the experiences of some persons, who began well, come to little else but violent motions of carnal affections, with great heats of the imagination, a great degree of enthusiasm and swelling of spiritual pride: very much like some fruits which bud, blossom, and kernel well, but afterwards are blasted with an excess of moisture; so that though the bulk is monstrously great, yet there is little else in it but what is useless and unwholesome... Nothing in the world so much exposes to this, as an unheeded spiritual pride and self-confidence, and persons being conceited of their own stock, without an humble, daily, and continual dependence on God... (p.412&413).

SECT. VI.

Of errors connected with singing praises to God.

.The devil, in driving things to these ‘extreme, besides the present hinderance of the work of God, has, I believe, had in view a twofold mischief, in the issue of things; one, with respect to those that are cold in religion, to carry things to such an extreme in order that people in general, having their eyes opened by the great excess, might be tempted entirely to reject the whole work, as being all nothing but delusion and distraction. And another, with respect to those of God’s children who have been very warm and zealous out of the way, to sink them down in unbelief and darkness. The time is coming, I doubt not, when the greater part of them will be convinced

of their errors; and then probably the devil will take advantage to lead them into a dreadful wilderness, to puzzle and confound them about their own experiences, and the experiences of others; and to make them to doubt of many things that they ought not, and even to tempt them with atheistical thoughts. I believe, if all True Christians over the land should now at once have their eyes opened fully to see all their errors, it would seem for the present to damp religion. The dark thoughts that it would at first occasion, and the inward doubts, difficulties, and conflicts that would rise in their souls, would deaden their lively affections and joys, and would cause an appearance of a present decay of religion. But yet it would do God's saints great good in their latter end; it would fit them for more spiritual and excellent experiences, more humble and heavenly love, and unmixed joys, and would greatly tend to a more powerful, extensive, and durable prevalence of vital piety. I do not know but we shall be in danger, after our eyes are fully opened to see our errors, to go to contrary extremes. The devil has driven the pendulum far beyond its proper point of rest; and when he h as carried it to the utmost length that he can, and it begins by its own weight to swing back, he probably will set in, and drive it with the utmost fury the other way; and so give us no rest; and if possible prevent our settling in a proper medium. What a poor, blind, weak, and miserable creature is man, at his best estate! We are like poor helpless sheep; the devil is too subtle for us. What is our strength! What is our wisdom! How ready are we to go astray! How easily are we drawn aside into innumerable snares, while in the meantime we are bold and confident, and doubt not but we are right and safe! We are foolish sheep in the midst of subtle serpents and cruel wolves, and do not know it. Oh how unfit are we to be left to ourselves! And how much do we stand in need of the wisdom, the power, the condescension, patience, forgiveness, and gentleness of our good Shepherd! (p. 420).

PART V.

SHOWING POSITIVELY, WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE TO PROMOTE THIS WORK.

SECT. I.

We should endeavor to remove stumbling-blocks.

And, in order to this, there must be a great deal done at confessing of faults, on both sides. For undoubtedly many and great are the faults that have been committed, in the jangling and confusions, and mixtures of light and darkness, that have been of late. There is hardly any duty more contrary to our corrupt dispositions, and mortifYing to the pride of man; but it must be done... And if God does now loudly call upon us to repent, then he also calls upon us to make proper manifestations of our repentance. I am persuaded that those who have openly opposed this work, or have from time to time spoken lightly of it, cannot be excused in the sight of God, without openly confessing their fault therein; especially ministers. If they have any way, either directly or indirectly, opposed the work, or have so behaved, in their public performances or private conversation, as to prejudice the minds of their people, against the work; if hereafter they shall be convinced of the goodness and divinity of what they have opposed, they ought by no means to palliate the matter, or excuse themselves, and pretend that they always thought so, and that it was only such and such imprudences that they objected against. But they ought openly to declare their conviction, and condemn themselves for what they have done; for it is Christ that they have spoken against, in speaking lightly of and prejudicing others against this work; yea, it is The Holy Ghost. And though they have done it ignorantly and in unbelief, yet, when they find

out who it is that they have opposed, undoubtedly God will hold them bound publicly to confess it.

And on the other side, if those who have been zealous to promote the work have in any of the fore-mentioned instances openly gone much out of the way, and done that which is contrary to Christian rules, whereby they have openly injured others, or greatly violated good order, and so done that which has wounded religion, they must publicly confess it, and humble themselves; as they would gather out the stones, and prepare the way of God's people. They who have laid great stumbling-blocks in others' way, by their open transgressions, are bound to remove them by their open repentance (p. 421).

I would like to interrupt these excerpts from Edwards' work to openly confess my own public transgressions. On numerous occasions, both prior and subsequent to my arrest, I publicly gave vent to natural passion and inordinate degrees of intemperate zeal that were inappropriate, under the circumstances, and, at times, disrespectful to those I was addressing do heartily repent of these sinful and errant excesses, and am resolved to refrain from such imprudent behavior in the future. I do not want to encourage anyone, by my bad example, to act inappropriately, or to treat others with disrespect.

And as such an extraordinary time as this does especially require of us the exercise of great forbearance one towards another; so there is peculiarly requisite in God's people the exercise of great patience, in waiting on God, under many special difficulties and disadvantages they may be under as to the means of grace. The beginning of a revival of religion will naturally and necessarily be attended with a great many difficulties of this nature; many parts of the reviving church will, for a while, be under great disadvantages, by reason of what remains of the old disease, of a gencial corruption of the visible church. We cannot expect that; after a long time of degeneracy and depravity in the state of things in the church, all should come to rights at once; it must be a work of time. And for God's people to be over-hasty and violent, in such a case, being resolved to have every thing rectified at once, or else forcibly to deliver themselves by breaches and separations, is the way to hinder things coming to rights as they otherwise would. It is the way to keep them back, and to break all in pieces. Indeed the difficulty may be so intolerable as to allow of no delay, and God's people cannot continue in the state wherein they were, without violations of God's absolute commands: but otherwise, through the difficulty may be very great, another course should be taken. God's people should have recourse directly to the throne of grace, to represent their difficulties before the great Shepherd of the sheep, who has the care of all the affairs of the church; and, when they have done, they should wait patiently upon him. If they do so, they may expect that in his time he will appear to their deliverance: but if, instead of that, they are impatient, and take the work into their own hands, they will betray their want of faith, will dishonour God, and have reason to fear that he will leave them to manage their affairs for themselves as well as they can. If they had waited on Christ patiently, continuing still instant in prayer, they might have had him appearing for them, much more effectually to deliver them. He that believeth shall not make haste. And it is for those that are found patiently waiting on the Lord, under difficulties, that he will especially appear, when he comes to do great things for his church; as is evident by Isa. xxx. 18. chap. xl. at the latter end, and xlix. 23. and Psal. xxxvii. 9. and many other places (p. 422).

SECT. II

What must be done more directly to advance this work

... We who are ministers, not only have need of some true experience of the saving influence of the Spirit of God upon our heart, but we need a double portion at such a time as this. We need to be as full of light as a glass that is hold out in the sun; and, with respect to love and zeal, we need to be like the angels, who are a flame of fire. The state of the times extremely requires a fullness of the divine spirit in ministers, and we ought to give ourselves no rest till we have obtained it. And in order to this, I should think ministers, above all persons, ought to be much in prayer and fasting, both in secret and one with another. It seems to me, that it would become the circumstances of the present day, if ministers in a neighbourhood would often meet together, and spend days in fasting and fervent prayer among themselves, earnestly seeking extraordinary supplies of divine grace from heaven...

Two things are exceeding needful in ministers, as they would do any great matters to advance the kingdom of Christ, are zeal and resolution. Their influence and power, to bring to pass great effects, is greater than can well be imagined. A man of but an ordinary capacity will do more with them, than one of ten times the parts and learning without them; more may be done with them in a few days, or at least weeks, than can be done without them in many years. Those who are possessed of these qualities commonly carry the day, in almost all affairs. Most of the great things that have been done in the world, the great revolutions that have been accomplished in the kingdoms and empires of the earth, have been chiefly owing to them. The very appearance of the thoroughly engaged spirit, together with a fearless courage and unyielding resolution, in any person that has undertaken the managing of any affair amongst mankind, goes a great way towards accomplishing the effect aimed at. It is evident that the appearance of these in Alexander did three times as much towards conquering the world, as all the blows that he struck. And how much were the great things that Oliver Cromwell did owing to these! And the great things that Mr. Whitfield has done, every where, as he has run through the British dominions, (so far as they are owing to means,) are very much owing to the appearance of these things which he is eminently possessed

of. When the people see these in a person, to a great degree, it awes them, and has a commanding influence upon their minds. It seems to them that they must yield; they naturally fall before them, without standing to contest or dispute the matter; they are conquered as it were by surprise. But while we are cold and heartless, and only go on in a dull manner, in an old formal round, we shall never do any great matters. Our attempts, with the appearance of such coldness and irresolution, will not so much as make persons think of yielding. They will hardly be sufficient to put it into their minds; and if it be put into their minds, the appearance of such indifference and cowardice does as it were call for and provoke opposition.—Our misery is want of zeal and courage; for not only through want of them does all fail that we seem to attempt, but it prevent sour attempting any thing very remarkable for the kingdom of Christ. Hence oftentimes, when any thing very considerable is proposed to be done for the advancement of religion or the public good, many difficulties are in the way, and a great many objections are started, and it may be it is put off from one to another; but nobody does any thing. And after this manner good designs or proposals have often failed, and have sunk as soon as proposed. Whereas, if we had but Mr. Whitfield's zeal and courage, what could not we do, with such a blessing as we might expect.

Zeal and courage will do much in persons of but an ordinary capacity; but especially would they do great things; if joined with great abilities. If some great men who have appeared in our nation, had been as eminent in divinity as they were in philosophy, and had engaged in the

Christian cause with as much zeal and fervour as some others have done, and with a proportional blessing of heaven, they would have conquered all Christendom, and turned the world upside down. We have many ministers in the land that do not want abilities, they are persons of bright parts and learning; they should consider how much is expected and will be required of them by their Lord and Master, how much they might do for Christ, and what great honour and glorious a reward they might receive, if they had in their hearts a heavenly warmth, and divine heat proportionable to their light (p. 422-424).

SECT. III

Of some particulars that concern all in general.

And here, the first thing I shall mention is fasting and prayer. It seems to me, that the circumstances of the present work loudly call upon God's people to abound in this; whether they consider their own experience, or the riches of God's grace...

So is God's will, through his wonderful grace, that the prayers of his saints should be one great and principal means of carrying on the designs of Christ's kingdom in the world. When God has something very great to accomplish for his church, it is his will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayers of his people; as is manifest by Ezek. xxxvi. 37. "I will yet, for this, be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them:" (see the context.) And it is revealed that, when God is about to accomplish great things for his church, he will begin by remarkably pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication, Zech. xii. 10. If we are not to expect that the devil should go out of a particular person, under a bodily possession, without extraordinary prayer, or prayer and fasting; how much less should we expect to have him cast out of the land, and the world, without it!

I am sensible that somewhat considerable has been done in duties of this nature in some places, but I do not think so much as God in the present dispensations of his providence calls for. I should think the people of God in this land, at such a time as this is, would be in the way of their duty while doing three times as much fasting and prayer as they do; not only, nor principally, for the pouring out of the Spirit on those places to which they belong; but that God would appear for his church, and, in mercy to miserable men, carry on his work in the land, and in the world, and fulfill the things he has spoken of in his word, that his church has been so long wishing, and hoping, and waiting for. "They that make mention of the Lord," at this day, ought not to "keep silence," and should "give God no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth;" agreeable to Isa. lxii. 6, 7. Before the first great out-pouring of the Spirit of God on the Christian church, which began at Jerusalem, the disciples gave themselves to incessant prayer, Acts 1., 13, 14...

God seems at this very time to be waiting for this from us. When he is about to bestow some great blessing on his church, it is often his manner, in the first place, so to order things in his providence, as to show his church their great need of it, and to bring them into distress for want of it, and so put them upon crying earnestly to him for it.

There is no way that Christians in a private capacity can do so much to promote the work of God, and advance the kingdom of Christ, as by prayer... Let persons in other respects be never so weak, and never so mean, and under never so poor advantages to do much for Christ and the souls of men; yet, if they have much of the spirit of grace and supplication, in this way they may have power with him who is infinite in power, and has the government of the whole world. A

poor man in his cottage may have a blessed influence all over the world. God is, if I may so say, at the command of the prayer of faith; and in this respect is, as it were, under the power of the people; as princes, they have power with God, and prevail. . . (p. 426).

But another thing I would mention, which is of much greater importance that we should attend to, and that is the duty incumbent upon God's people at this day, to take heed, that while they abound in external duties of devotion, such as praying, hearing, singing, and attending religious meetings, these be a proportionable care to abound in moral duties, such as acts of righteousness; which are of much greater importance in the sight of God than all the externals of his worship. Our Saviour was particularly careful that men should be well ware of this, Matt. ix. 13. "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." And chap. xii. 7. "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."

The internal acts and principles of the worship of God, or the worship of the heart, in love and fear, trust in God, and resignation to him &c. are the most essential and important of all duties of religion whatsoever; for therein consists the essence of all religion. But of this inward religion there are two sorts of external manifestations or expressions. To one sort belong outward acts of worship, such as meeting in religious assemblies, attending sacraments and other outward institutions, honouring God with gestures, such as bowing, or kneeling before him, or with words, in speaking honourably of him in prayer, praise, or religious conference. To the other sort belong expressions of our love to God, by obeying his moral commands, self-denial, righteousness, meekness, and Christian love, in our behaviour among men. The latter are of vastly the greatest importance in the Christian life; God makes little account of the former, in comparison of them; they are abundantly more insisted on, by the prophets of the Old Testament, and Christ and his apostles in the New. When these two kinds of duties are spoken of together, the latter are evermore greatly preferred; as in Isa. i. 12-18. and Amos v. 21 &c. and Mic. vi. 7,8. and Isa. lviii.5, 6, 7. and Zeh. vii. ten first verses, and Jer. li. seven first verses, and Matt. xv.

3, &c. Often, when the times were very corrupt in Israel, the people abounded in the former kind of duties, but were at such times always notoriously deficient in the latter; as the prophets complain, Isa. lviii. Four first verses, Jer. vi. 13, compared with ver. 20. hypocrites and self-righteous persons do much more commonly abound in the former kind of duties than the latter; as Christ remarks of the Pharisees, Matt. xxiii. 14, 25-34. When the Scripture directs us to show our faith by our works, it is principally the latter sort are intended; as appears by Jam. li.from ver. 8, to the end, and I John 2d chap. ver. 3, 7-11. And we are to be judged, at the last day, especially by these latter sort of works; as is evident by the account we have of the day of judgment, in the 25 of Mtt. External acts of worship, in words and gestures, and outward forms, are of little use, but as signs of something else, or as they are ?a profession of inward worship... We cannot express our love to God by doing any thing that is profitable to him; God would therefore have us do it in those things that are profitable to our neighbours, whom he has constituted his receivers. Our goodness extends not to God, but to our fellow-Christians. The latter sort of duties put greater honour upon God, because there is greater self-denial in them. The external acts of worship, consisting in bodily gestures, words, and sounds, are the cheapest part of religion, and least[contrary to our lusts. The difficulty of thorough, external religion, does not lie in the. Let wicked men enjoy their covetousness, their pride, their malice, envy, and revenge, their sensuality and voluptuousness, in their behaviour amongst men, and they will be willing to compound the matter with God, and submit to what forms of worship you please, and

as many as you please. This was manifest in the Jews in the days of the prophets, the Pharisees in Christ's time, and the Papists and Mahometans at this day.

At a time when there is an apparent approach of any glorious revival of God's church, he especially calls his professing people to the practice of moral duties, Isa. lvi. 1. "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.".. .(p. 428).

God's people at such time as this, ought especially to abound in deeds of charity, or alms-giving. We generally, in these days, seems to fall far below the true spirit and practice of Christianity with regard to this duty, and seem to have but little notion of it, so far as I can understand the New Testament.—At a time when God is so liberal of spiritual things, we ought not to be strait-handed towards him, and sparing of our temporal things. So far as I can judge by the Scripture, there is no external duty whatsoever, by which persons will be so much in the way, not only of receiving temporal benefits, but also spiritual blessings, the influences of God's Holy Spirit in the heart, in divine discoveries and spiritual consolations.. .That this is one likely means to obtain assurance, is evident by I John iii. 18, 19. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."

If God's people in this land were once brought to abound in such deeds of love, as much as in praying, hearing, singing, and religious meetings and conference, it would be a most blessed omen. Nothing would have a greater tendency to bring the God of love down from heaven to earth; so amiable would be the sight in the eyes of our loving and exalted Redeemer, that it would soon as it were fetch him down from his throne in heaven, to set up his tabernacle with men on the earth, and dwell with them. I do not remember ever to have read of any remarkable outpouring of the Spirit, that continued any long time, but what was attended with an abounding in this duty (p. 428 & 429).

Appendix B: Why Southern Baptists Are Wrong To Neglect the Defense of the Unborn

In response to my killing Dr. Britton in July of 1994, The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention issued "The Nashville Statement of Conscience: Why The Killing of Abortion Doctors Is Wrong." Each of the six points in the "Abstract" of that document has been responded to in the preceding text. This appendix quotes the entire 12-page document issued by the Commission in September 1994, and provides a point-by-point response.

The original title of this Commission's document, that is still retained in its publication, is "The Struggle Against Abortion: Why the Use of Lethal Force Is Not Morally Justifiable: A Statement of Conscience."

Although this Commission asserts that "...the use of lethal force is not morally justifiable..." in defense of the unborn, it is certain that lethal force is morally justifiable in defense of born people. All the discerning readers must do, in order to see through the numerous objections this Commission raises, is to apply the objection to defending born people. The position paper presented by this Commission demonstrates the lengths people will resort to in

order to obscure and deny this duty; it also shows that their denunciations of this duty are the product of human invention, and lack biblical proof. Those interested in examining the efforts of this Commission, and testing them in the light of God's word, have both sides laid out before them.

Every biblical duty can be presented in a clear and compact manner and held in sharp contrast to its opposing error. But those seeking to obscure the truth avoid such sharp and searching contrasts. As the reader will notice, rather than exposing my alleged error, and asserting the contrasting truth, this Commission clouds and confuses both sides of this debate. Rather than draining the swamp, this piece drowns the reader with confusing rhetoric.

1. Preamble

1.1 Acts of lethal violence recently have been used in an attempt to stop abortion doctors from performing abortions. Such violence has been perpetrated, in some cases, by those who seek to justify their acts on the basis of Christian moral principles. Dozens of violent incidents of other sorts have also occurred in and near abortion clinics over the past fifteen years.

The semantics used by this Commission reflect the same perspective adopted by Herod toward the slaughter of the innocents (Matthew 2:16-18). He did not view the soldiers who killed the male children as murderers. From Herod's perspective, these soldiers were upholding the law of the land. If a citizen had resisted these soldiers with force, Herod would have considered him a "violent" offender. This Commission similarly reserves the term "violent" for those who defend the unborn; abortion providers are never cast in this light. They never describe abortion as murder—much less do they call abortionists murderers, but they refer to the killing of abortion providers as "vigilante murders." The deference with which they treat those who abort the unborn is so great that they call them "abortion doctors" in this piece—never "abortionists."

This inverted perspective, which they strive to maintain throughout this piece, must be adopted for their arguments to gain a semblance of cogency. Since their perspective is false, and in denial of reality, the conclusions that they infer from it are also false. All that is needed to view their arguments, throughout this piece, in their true light is to put both those who murder the unborn, and those who defend them, in their proper and biblical context.

If defending the unborn with lethal force is murderous aggression, rather than faithful defense, then Abraham's defense of Lot (Genesis 14) should be characterized as murderous rather than defensive. The Jews who slew their Persian enemies, in the book of Esther, should similarly be condemned as radical, violent men.

1.2 The aftermath of these violent acts has made it clear that the views of the perpetrators are not merely idiosyncratic, but instead reflect the perspective of a small number of Americans, some of them Christians, who are strongly opposed to abortion.

The men on this Commission rightly oppose abortion, but their eyes are not yet fully open to all the radical and far-reaching implications of government-sanctioned murder. Under the current circumstances, it is hardly surprising that only a "...small number of Americans..." relatively speaking, understand the practical implications of defending born and unborn people similarly. In time, no doubt, these things will become clear to the masses, but as yet, most people's eyes have not adjusted to the darkness that descends when the government so radically departs from the light of the Moral Law. This radical reversal in the law must necessarily result

in a similar reversal in the Christian's relation to the law, and the government that enforces it. To encourage submission to the government in this respect, as this Commission does, is to encourage obedience to men, rather than God.

1.3 Representatives of a wide range of "pro-choice," "pro-abortion," and "pro-life" positions have offered public statements condemning such use of deadly force and the moral justification of such acts. It has been a rare instance of agreement. We join in condemning these killings.

These men say they are pro-life, but when forced to choose between protecting abortionists and protecting the unborn, they joined forces with those who are pro-choice. This is no great honor.

1.4 However, the divergent reasons that pro-choice and pro-life groups have offered for this moral rejection of such acts as the Pensacola shootings, and of the moral claims that undergird such acts, bear witness to the continuing and seemingly unbridgeable gulf between these polarized parties to the abortion conflict.

No response.

1.5 We who offer this statement speak from a Christian pro-life perspective. Even though we share the moral condemnation of the killings that pro-choice groups and leaders have expressed, we have yet to read a statement from such persons that reflects our point of view concerning why such killings are not morally justifiable.

They claim to speak from a "Christian pro-life perspective," but they not only annul the biblical duty to defend the innocent with the means necessary, they also directly contradict the Scriptures in this matter.

1.6 In particular, some claim that unborn life is not fully human life, and thus that it is wrong to use lethal force in an attempt to prevent abortion. We strongly disagree with the claim that an unborn child is not fully human life, deserving of full protection. We will reject the killing of abortion doctors on other grounds.

This Commission believes that the unborn are fully human, and that they deserve full protection but, as we shall see, they fail to consistently maintain this position.

1.7 At the same time, we find the response thus far from the pro-life community deserves more elaboration and depth. We are glad to see that all responsible pro-life groups and leaders have condemned such killings, as do we. We believe that the point of view of persons advocating violence against abortion doctors requires serious moral reflection and engagement, more serious than has thus far publicly occurred. A number of profound questions of Christian morality and Christian citizenship are at stake.

No Response.

1.8 As pro-life Christians, we are concerned about the possibility that some of our fellow pro-life Christian friends and colleagues will drift into an embrace of violence directed against abortion providers. Lack of serious engagement with the views of persons who advocate the use of violence will only increase the risk that this drift will occur. We are equally concerned that such violence will lead pro-life Christians to withdraw from morally legitimate forms of action to prevent abortion.

No response.

1.9 This statement, therefore, is intended as a moral analysis and rejection of the killing of abortion doctors, offered from a Christian pro-life perspective. It is at the same time intended as an urgent plea for intensified Christian involvement in all morally permissible forms of anti-abortion activities. We offer this statement in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to any who will listen, and especially to our fellow laborers in the protection of the unborn.

Considering the untold millions of lives at stake, this Commission's willingness to seriously engage this issue is commendable.

2. Murder in Christian Perspective

2.1 Murder, the culpable killing of a human being, is an extraordinarily grave offense against civil law as well as against the moral law of God (Ex. 20:13) on which all morally legitimate civil law is ultimately based.

Since they assert that murder is a "...grave offense against civil law...," this Commission must not have abortion in view, since murder by abortion is legal.

2.2 The Bible teaches that each human life is sacred, for every human being is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). For this reason, each human life bears divinely granted and immeasurable value. Human beings are not free to take the lives of others, for those lives belong to God, their Creator. This is the meaning of the divine prohibition of murder in the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt not kill" means that God prohibits the unjustified taking, and mandates the protection, of human life.

No response.

2.3 In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21ff.), Jesus affirmed the prohibition against murder. Indeed, He warned of God's judgment even on intense expressions of anger and contempt for others, while calling His hearers to seek reconciliation with any persons from whom they might be estranged, even their enemies (Matt. 5:43-44). Jesus also proclaimed God's special favor upon those who make peace (Matt. 5:9). While wholeheartedly committed to the spread of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 6:10, 6:33), Jesus personally rejected the use of violence to accomplish even this holy aim.

*Jesus **did not** condone the use of force under **all** circumstances (John 18:11), but as God, and the One who inspired all Scripture, Christ did condone lethal force under **some** circumstances (Genesis 14, Jeremiah 48:10, & Deuteronomy 20). Christians should work to end violence, but in our fallen world force or the threat of force is often necessary to prevent unjust aggression. Peace comes after unjust aggression has been stopped, not by tolerating this violence. Peace and true liberty must often be purchased at a high price.*

2.4 The Apostle Paul frequently reaffirmed the centrality of peacemaking and reconciliation, even describing God's saving act in Jesus Christ as an act of divine peacemaking between those who had once been enemies—an act that not only reconciled God to humanity but also reconciled estranged human beings to each other (Eph. 2:11-22).

No response.

2.5 Paul also argued that the governing authorities of this world have been established by God. Their mandate in a world deeply marred by sin is to serve God by deterring wrongdoing

and bringing punishment on wrongdoers, thus protecting the innocent (Rom. 13:1 -7). In this work, Paul writes, the authorities do "not bear the sword in vain" (Rom. 13:4). Most Christians have understood this to be a divine authorization of the use of force by governing authorities, even deadly force at times, when such force is finally required to accomplish government's divinely mandated purposes. Through the centuries, strict criteria have been developed for the just employment of such force.

No response.

2.6 In Christian theology a historic split has existed between those who believe that the witness of Scripture prohibits any taking of human life under any circumstance by any person or institution, and those who believe that under the conditions of sin the taking of human life is in a very small number of tragic circumstances morally justifiable and thus morally permissible.

No response.

2.7 Those taking the former position could ground a rejection of the killing of abortion doctors in their uniform and absolute rejection of any killing of any human being under any circumstances by any person or institution. This point of view would be coherent and consistent, and no further argument would need to be made.

This Commission knows full well that the pacifist position is to be rejected since the Scriptures so clearly teach the moral necessity of using defensive force. The Commission admits that it rejects this position, but it nevertheless raises it as a possible option. The effect is to muddy the waters. Rather than clearing obviously unbiblical objections to the defensive duties of the Moral Law, this Commission, time and again, throughout this paper, does all it can to obscure this essential and well-known duty. It does this by raising objections that are either invalid, or do not negate the defensive duties of the Moral Law, but appear to do so. The modus operandi of this Commission is to cloud, rather than clear, the vital issues at stake.

2.8 While respectful of this position, we believe that the overall witness of Scripture, including Romans 13, leads to the latter conclusion— that there are indeed a small number of tragic and exceptional circumstances in a fallen world in which the taking of human life can be morally justifiable.

One of the most remarkable things about this "Statement of Conscience," and the particular paragraph before us, is what it does not say: it neglects to uphold the clear and overwhelming moral obligation to defend the unborn with the immediate means necessary. This Commission boldly asserts that "the killing of abortion doctors is wrong," and tries to support this position by claiming that is it wrong to ***intentionally*** *kill an abortionist. They also acknowledge that nonviolent civil disobedience "...may be seen as morally* ***permissible****" but they do not even address the many various degrees of defensive force that exist between these two extreme ends of the spectrum. The obvious question is, "What about all the other forceful means commonly used to protect the innocent?" Considering all the abortion clinics that have been bombed and burned, and the abortion providers who have been threatened and harmed—but not killed—this Commission's focus on intentionally killing abortion providers, while overlooking the numerous lesser degrees of force most commonly used, speaks volumes. Their silence on this subject is deafening. Considering the compelling moral obligation to defend these children with the immediate means necessary, their neglecting to maintain and proclaim this duty of the Moral Law is a sinful omission of immense proportions!*

2.9 However, from our perspective, the Bible established a profound presumption in favor of preserving life rather than ending it. God wills that human beings should make peace with each other, should be reconciled, and should treat every life with the respect its divine origin and ownership demands. There is at the very least a prima facie moral obligation to refrain from killing. This means that an extraordinarily stringent burden of proof is imposed upon any who would seek to justify the taking of a human life.

No response.

2.10 To the extent that United States civil law reflects the divine moral law, it likewise is structured both to deter and to punish severely the unjustifiable taking of a human life. Civil law does generally recognize that under certain unusual circumstances normally involving defense of self or third persons against deadly force, the taking of another human life by a private citizen might be justified. A stringent burden of proof in every case rests on those who would justify any taking of life.

To say there is a "...prima facie moral obligation to refrain from killing" is misleading. This is true of murder but not of all killing. Under circumstances where it is necessary to kill a murderer in order to protect his intended victims, there is a prima facie moral obligation to do so. If someone is about to murder numerous helpless people, this places a stringent burden on those concerned to save the intended victims, even if, in order to do so, the assailant must be killed. When someone kills an assailant under these circumstances, he should be considered innocent until proven guilty, not guilty until proven innocent. The burden of proof falls on the accuser.

It is obvious that you should not kill people—except under extraordinary circumstances. The question concerns the killing of known and habitual murderers who are protected by the police. There is a strong prima facie moral obligation to use the means necessary, including lethal force, to prevent these murderers from continuing to kill. There is a profound presumption in favor of saving the lives of the innocent, rather than their assailant. Under these circumstances, the burden does not rest on the one who spares innocent people, at the cost of the life of their assailant, but on those who would save the assailant if it results in the deaths of large numbers of innocent people.

Since this Commission has taken it upon itself to assert that "the killing of abortion doctors is wrong," it is reasonable to expect them to at least attempt to prove this assertion from the Scriptures. But, as we shall see, they fail to do so. They make plenty of bold assertions, and quote Scripture on peripheral matters, but when it comes to proving their fundamental point from the Bible, they do not even attempt to do so.

2.11 United States civil law is also structured to recognize the broader mandate of government to use force and the threat of force, judiciously and carefully, to deter and punish evil and to protect the innocent from wrongdoing. The government protects its citizenry from domestic wrongdoers through the law enforcement and criminal justice systems, and from foreign wrongdoers through the armed forces. Private citizens rightly are barred from authorizing themselves to perform these functions.

God's law requires the individual and corporate means necessary for protecting the innocent (Exodus 20:13 and Genesis 14). The individual's inalienable duty to defend himself is the basis for individuals joining together in corporate civil defense. When the government, thus,

protects individuals with the police, or the entire nation through the military, it does so on the people's behalf. If the government neglects these duties they necessarily revert to the people—otherwise the people will be left undefended. Thus, you do not need the government's permission before defending your own or your neighbor's child; this duty is inalienable, and cannot be removed by the government.

2.12 Those advocating acts of lethal force against abortion doctors claim that such acts qualify as morally justifiable homicide, despite the current status of civil law in the United States.

When the government requires sin, either by omission or commission, we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29b). This is especially true when mass murder has been legalized, and helpless people are being slaughtered. Since we would defend ourselves, and our families, under these circumstances, with the immediate means necessary, the Second Great Commandment requires us to similarly defend our unborn neighbors (Matthew 22:39).

2.13 This assertion requires Christian consideration of the moral and legal status of the act of elective abortion, as well as the moral obligations of Christians living in a democratic society that by statute permits elective abortion under most circumstances.

No response.

3. The Moral and Legal Status of the Act of Elective Abortion

3.1 Since 1973, the United States Supreme Court has interpreted the United States Constitution in such a way as to create a right of a woman to choose to secure the services of a physician who is paid to "terminate her pregnancy"—that is, deliberately to end the existence of that life which is developing within her body. This state of affairs is justly called "abortion on demand" in that abortion is permitted on the basis of no criteria other than a pregnant woman's demand for an abortion. The abortion workers who have been killed or injured have been relying on this decisional law to justify their conduct legally.

No response.

3.2 The moral status of the act of elective abortion is arguably the most bitterly contested moral and, consequently legal, social, cultural, religious, and political question of our time. This is not the place in which to offer a rehearsal of the arguments that pertain to this question. We will instead simply state our position in the following way.

No response.

3.3. As indicated above (2.2), we believe that each human life bears a divinely granted sacredness. We believe that its sacredness begins at conception, when biological life begins. We believe that gestational life—life in the womb from conception to birth—must be understood as human life in its earliest stages rather than as pre-human, non human, potential, or any other less-than-fully-sacred kind of human life. We know that, if allowed to continuing developing without hindrance through a normal pregnancy, a gestating human life becomes a newborn baby. Thus, we are compelled to consider elective abortion the killing of a human being.

No response.

3.4 We have already argued that, given the sacredness of human life, the burden of proof is on any who would morally justify its deliberate extinguishing. The terrible flaw at the heart of

federal abortion law is that abortions are currently permitted while requiring a woman to meet only a minimal burden of proof which may be imposed by state laws. In terms of gestational life, the federal government has wrongfully abdicated its responsibility to protect the innocent and to establish and enforce stringent criteria for the justifiable taking of human life.

Unjust laws should be replaced with just and biblical laws. It is not enough to call for laws that are more stringent; the Jews in Christ's day had laws based on human tradition that were so stringent that they abrogated weighty provisions of morality (Matthew 15:1-9).

3.5 We recognize that for a woman (or for a couple), an unwanted pregnancy may well be a crisis pregnancy. We acknowledge that women seek abortions for a wide range of reasons. Tragically, these range from the most serious and justifiable (i.e., a threat to the physical life of the mother) to the least serious and justifiable (i.e., gender preference, interruption of vacation plans, and so on). The effect of current abortion law is that any reason for an abortion, or no particular reason, is as good as any other. The great majority of abortions in the United States are performed for what can best be described as reasons of convenience.

No response.

3.6 We recall the biblical principle that it is morally forbidden for a private citizen to end a human life except in the act of self-defense. Only in cases when gestational life poses a serious threat to the physical life of the mother, in our view, does elective abortion clearly meet this self-defense criterion. A significant number of pro-life Christians are willing to grant the possibility that abortion in the cases of rape, incest, and/or radical fetal deformity also ought to be included among those exceptions to the general prohibition of abortion that should be recognized by law. We disagree. But we recognize that rewritten abortion laws framed along those lines would still disallow all but a very small percentage of abortions in this country.

They say. "We recall the biblical principle that it is morally forbidden for a private citizen to end a human life except in the act of self-defense," but how can they recall a principle from the Bible that does not exist in the Bible? They offer no support for this assertion for good reason: no biblical support for it exists. The Second Great Commandment requires us to defend our neighbors as we would ourselves, and forbids the neglect of this defense (Matthew 22:39). They recall a nonexistent principle, but seem to have forgotten that they have already conceded that civil law permits individuals to use lethal force in defense of third persons (2.10).

3.7 Instead, our nation continues to operate under a law that requires no significant burden of proof for abortion. This represents a fundamental assault on the sanctity of human life. Human beings are not at liberty to lower the threshold for the taking of human life, but that is precisely what abortion laws have done. Lowering that threshold is one of humanity's greatest temptations—one to which human beings have succumbed all too frequently, especially in our own century of world war and genocide.

Our standards must be biblical. There is not only a danger of people lowering God's standard, so they can murder as they please, there is also a danger that when murder has been legalized, and mass murder is taking place, that God's people will add human tradition to God's law in an effort to exclude themselves from the duty to protect their neighbors (Matthew 15:1-9).

3.8 But we need not look elsewhere for examples. Our own violence-wracked nation bears witness each day to the devastating consequences of disrespect for the sacredness of human life. Truly the blood of the murdered cries out from the ground (Gen. 4:10; Lev. 18:28). We believe

that abortion on demand is the leading, but not the only, example of a broader national moral and social crisis of disrespect for human life.

Not only is it disrespectful to murder the unborn, refusing to use the means necessary to defend those children demonstrates profound disrespect, both for the unborn who bear the image of God, and ultimately for God Himself. This clears the way for the legalization of both lesser and more heinous atrocities. If we should passively submit to the murder of the unborn, should we not similarly submit to legalized rape, and the murder of born minorities as well?

3.9 From our perspective, then, the overwhelming majority of abortions represent a morally unjustifiable form of killing. It is a unique form of killing, involving several parties. An abortion is undertaken by a physician who performs abortions, at the request of an unborn child's mother. Often, a woman is pressured by the child's father to have an abortion. Pressure may also come from family members, friends, and others. Her decision is then permitted by the civil law of the United States. Each participant in this act of unjustifiable killing, including the government of the United States (and ultimately "we the people," who are the sovereign of this government and have elected its officials), bears a share of the responsibility.

Individual citizens certainly do bear responsibility for submitting to the murder of the unborn. Rather than continuing to shirk this responsibility, we must uphold, in both word and deed, the inalienable duty to defend the unborn with the means necessary. If we expect our fellow citizens, and the government, to recognize this responsibility, we must assert that it exists.

3.10 For twenty-one years, since the 1973 Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton Supreme Court decisions, abortion on demand has been the controlling interpretation of the Constitution of the United States. In that time over thirty million abortions have been performed in this country. We believe that this state of affairs can only be called a moral outrage.

It is outrageous for the government to sanction mass murder. But it is an even greater outrage for educated and informed believers, in leadership positions, to neglect and even deny the duty to defend the unborn with the means necessary (as we would ourselves).

3.11 We share the intense frustration of tens of millions of this nation's citizens who grieve each of the lives lost, the futures never realized, the human beings who unjustly have been prevented from ever "seeing the light of day" (Job 3:16, NIV). We also grieve for the many mothers and fathers who spend much of their lives profoundly regretting their choice to have an abortion, mourning the children they never had the chance to love and enjoy.

The "... intense frustration..." these men feel would be greatly relieved if they were to uphold, rather than neglect, the defensive duties of the Moral Law.

4. Legitimate Forms of Christian Response

4.1 Most Christians who believe, as we do, that the overwhelming majority of abortions are morally unjustifiable acts of killing, rightly feel the need to offer significant moral response. Indeed, millions of American Christians even today are engaged in activities that constitute such a response; most of these activities, in our view, are fully and morally justifiable and quite constructive. They are aimed at saving lives, and are directed at each of the participants in the abortion decision.

No response.

4.2 For example, many Christians are involved in supporting abstinence and values-based sex education programs in schools, civic institutions, and churches. The Southern Baptists Convention's "True Love Waits" program is an effective example. Such programs are rooted in the biblical moral norm that sexual intimacy is designed by God to be reserved for marriage (I Cor. 6:9-20; 7:9, etc.). It is obvious, but important to point out nonetheless, that the demand for abortion would decrease radically if God's intentions for sexuality were heeded. Abortions happen because unwanted pregnancies happen; unwanted pregnancies happen, most of the time, because of sexual activity outside of marriage. It is important to note again that it takes both a man and a woman to engage in such sexual activity, and both are responsible for the consequences.

No response.

4.3 Christians are also involved in helping pregnant women "choose life," that they and their children "may live" (Deut. 30:10). Christians have led the way in establishing crisis pregnancy centers and maternity homes. In such places pregnant women are cared for and prepared either to raise their children themselves or to give their children to others who can do so via adoption. This is a noble form of Christian ministry to women and their children. We give thanks to God for those women who avail themselves of these ministries and thus save their children's lives.

4.4 Pro-life Christians, especially those in the health care professions, are also on the front lines in the struggle over abortion as an aspect of medical practice. Such health care professionals bear witness to their convictions by refusing to "regularize" abortion as an aspect of medical care. They remind fellow health care providers of the "first, do no harm" provision of the Hippocratic Oath. This kind of witness—a witness of winsome moral persuasion and example, rather than invective and violence—is an important and appropriate part of the struggle against abortion. It is one of the reasons why very few physicians are willing to perform elective abortions.

No response.

4.5 Abortion on demand became law in our democratic society by the decision of persons who attained their office by legitimate processes, and remains lawful through the same processes. Christians, anguished at this state of affairs, are rightfully involved in the wide-ranging kinds of political engagement afforded us within the democratic process.

No response.

4.6 Such involvement includes voting, lobbying, campaigning for pro-life candidates, drafting legislation, writing letters to government officials, getting involved in political party platform drafting, running for office, initiating boycotts, and so on. We believe that there is no doubt whatsoever that such activity is our right as citizens and our obligation as Christians.

No response.

4.7 Some pro-life Christians are involved in lawful public witness in the vicinity of abortion clinics, such as the handing out of printed materials and the organizing of prayer vigils. We believe the public witness of this type is morally justifiable.

All of the legal means mentioned in 4.1 through 4.7 are in no way abrogated, but are rather confirmed and given added impetus, by maintaining the defensive duties required by the

Moral Law. The "need" these men feel "...to offer significant moral response" would, no doubt, be met if they were to uphold, rather than neglect, this vitally significant aspect of the Moral Law.

4.8 Some Christians have engaged in various forms of nonviolent, public, civil disobedience in the vicinity of abortion clinics as an aspect of their protest against legal abortion on demand. This kind of activity has been a matter of considerable debate in pro-life circles and concern in the broader society.

No response.

4.9 From a biblical perspective, Christians clearly are required to submit to and obey the governing authorities of the lands in which they live. This responsibility flows from the divinely authorized nature of these government authorities (see 2.5).

No response.

4.10 Scripture does recognize, however, that governments sometimes violate their God-given purposes, even to the extent of enacting laws and policies that are in direct and specific conflict with the divine moral law. History bears frequent tragic witness to the same reality. The Bible teaches that Christians are morally permitted, and sometimes even obligated, to violate a civil law that is in direct, specific conflict with the law of God (cf. Ex. 1:16-2:10; Dan. 6; Acts 4:1-13, 5:12-42).

Not only were the Hebrew midwives, Daniel, and the apostles "...morally permitted..." to obey God rather than men, they were under an overwhelming moral imperative to do so. There is a similar moral imperative to protect the unborn.

4.11 The burden of proof for justifying civil disobedience rests with those considering it. Besides being intended as a challenge to a morally illegitimate law or policy, such non-violent disobedience should follow the failure of a range of other, less radical forms of action; should have some likelihood of effectiveness; and should have positive consequences that are likely to outweigh negative consequences.

The burden of proof no more falls on those who intervene in defense of the unborn than it did the Hebrew midwives, Daniel, or the apostles. Under these circumstances, if anyone bears the burden of proof, it is not those who observe the Moral Law, but those who, for one reason or another, fail to do so.

In all the above-mentioned biblical cases, their violation of the unjust law in question was immediate and absolute. Their obedience to God was not contingent on this Commission's man-made rules: "...such non-violent civil disobedience should follow the failure of a range of other, less radical forms of action; should have some likelihood of effectiveness; and should have positive consequences that are likely to outweigh negative consequences." If we had responded to the legalization of murder in a biblical manner, rather than following the pattern this Commission suggests, people would view abortion in a very different light than it is seen in today. Imagine the consequences if Daniel, the midwives, or the apostles had obeyed this Commission's advice, rather than determining to immediately

"... obey God rather than men." Based on the principles this Commission advocates, Christians could continue to obey men rather than God indefinitely—regardless of the atrocity that has been legalized.

4.12 Christians living in a democratic society who make the grave judgment to engage in public, nonviolent, civil disobedience must willingly submit to the consequences of their actions. Thus, Christians involved in civil disobedience related to abortion should expect to be prosecuted. To break a morally illegitimate law, and to submit willingly to the consequences of doing so, is in fact an attempt to change civil law via moral witness—and thus, to affirm all morally legitimate civil law.

No response.

4.13 We believe that laws concerning access to abortion clinics and protests around abortion clinics function as a fence around the immoral law that permits legalized abortion on demand. Because the abortion law is a permission for private citizens to have and to perform abortions, rather than a mandate requiring behavior of one type or another, it is impossible to perform direct civil disobedience in the matter of legalized abortion on demand. This means that nonviolent civil disobedience, if it occurs, can only be directed at subsidiary laws.

No response.

4.14 We have outlined several lawful ways in which Christians can offer constructive moral response to the morally illegitimate law permitting abortion on demand. These can by no means be described as having been exhausted. There is much more to be done. This raises the question of whether nonviolent civil disobedience is justified.

No response.

4.15 On balance, we believe that acts of nonviolent civil disobedience related to abortion, thought not morally obligatory for Christians, may be seen as morally permissible. This is ultimately a matter of individual conscience before God.

This Commission has clouded and confused the relation between defending the unborn with passive civil disobedience, and defending these children with all the various means necessary. But this matter is actually easy to understand. The biblical foundation for both passive civil disobedience, and all the means used in forceful civil disobedience, is the same: The Sixth Commandment requires direct intervention with the means necessary, as required to save the innocent. To limit this intervention to passive means is consistent with unbiblical pacifism. To not merely accept passive intervention, but to also endorse all the forceful means necessary for defending the innocent is consistent with the just force position presented in the Scriptures. But it is inconsistent for those who believe in using all the means necessary for defending born children to deny a similar defense to the unborn, as this Commission has done. We are no more limited to passive means in our defense of the unborn than the Jews in Esther's day were limited to defending themselves with these means.

Not only does the Moral Law ***permit*** *the illegal means necessary for defending the innocent, it positive requires the use of these means, and* ***forbids*** *their neglect. There is a compelling moral imperative to use the means necessary to prevent murder. But not everyone is called to discharge this duty at all times. As with all the other continually obligatory duties of the Moral Law, they are not to be performed by all persons at all times. But, as a general rule, everyone is required to proclaim and maintain the duties of the Moral Law (this is especially true when mass murder has been legalized).*

Not only does this Commission fail to uphold the duty to defend the unborn with the means necessary, it even obscures and qualifies the duty to use passive means, so that it leaves the use

of these means in question. Far from asserting the moral imperative to use all the means necessary for defending the unborn, they are only willing to state that the use of passive means "...may be seen as morally ***permissible****." This falls far short of the duty required by the Moral Law, as exemplified in the book of Esther.*

4.16 Legalized abortion on demand has become deeply entrenched in our society. What many Christians once hoped would be a temporary aberration has become an institutionalized reality. We must acknowledge that this has occurred because significant portions of our society have wanted it to occur. The tragic and abhorrent legal reality reflects an equally tragic and abhorrent social, cultural, and moral reality.

No response.

4.17 Pro-life Christians should work to change these social, cultural, and moral realities in which legalized abortion on demand is rooted. It is a heart-by-heart, home-by-home, city-by-city, state-by-state struggle. We must greatly intensify our efforts in the morally justifiable anti-abortion activities described above. It is our moral obligation.

I concur that people must be won to the anti-abortion position on a heart-by-heart basis. The biblical way to accomplish this is to proclaim, in both word and deed, that the law of God forbids murder by abortion, and requires the means necessary for protecting the unborn. Using the law to thus convict people of their sinful negligence of the unborn paves the way for pointing them to Christ for pardon and transformation. This regeneration of heart, through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, is God's way of transforming individuals, and thus affecting every area of life through these renewed individuals—including civic life. To neglect or deny this aspect of God's law is to neglect an essential and relevant element of the gospel.

5. Why Lethal Force Is Not Morally Justified

5.1 The killing of abortion doctors by private citizens raises the important question of whether such an action is a morally legitimate Christian response to legalized abortion on demand. We strongly contend that killing abortion doctors is not a moral option for Christians, and respond to the various arguments as follows:

The Commission rightly emphasizes the weighty nature of this matter. It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of examining both sides of this issue so we can be certain that our response to an atrocity of these proportions is consistently biblical. Considering the lives at stake, if we fail to fully understand or perform God's revealed will in this matter, our degree of bloodguilt will be immeasurably great.

5.2 First, we reject the argument some have made that such killings are valid as an act of defending the innocent from harm. We reply that according to both civil law and divine moral law private citizens are permitted to use lethal force against another human being only if this occurs as an unintended effect of the act of defending oneself or another against an assailant's unjust attack. Private citizens are not allowed to intend to kill another human being and are not allowed to engage in premeditated acts of deadly force in order to accomplish what they intend. In other words, a private citizen can intend to stop, but not to kill, an assailant regardless of the final result. Attacks on abortion doctors fail this test.

These assertions sound convincing since they are presented in such a bold and straightforward manner, but they lack any support of any kind. They claim both civil and divine

law support their position, but they do not reference a single item of support from either civil or biblical law. This position is found in The Catechism of The Catholic Church. but it reflects the Catholic tradition of unbiblical pacifism. This is why neither The Catechism of the Catholic Church nor this Commission even attempts to prove this position from the Scriptures. (The Scriptures condone killings that were almost certainly intended, but nowhere condemn such killings [Genesis 14].)

I assert the exact opposite of what this Commission asserts, but I provide Scriptural basis and logical proof of my assertions. The Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for defending the innocent—under the circumstances. Intending to inflict a lethal wound is, under some circumstances, a necessary means for defending the innocent. Therefore, intending to inflict a lethal wound is, under circumstances where it is necessary, required by the Sixth Commandment.

This Commission, in its "Abstract" of this document, concedes that agents of the government may intend to use lethal force, but they make no attempt to show why citizens may not similarly defend themselves or others. But since this is a duty of the Moral Law that comes directly from God, it is inalienable. In most instances, the government performs this duly on the people's behalf, but when it cannot or will not do so, the duty necessarily reverts to the people; otherwise, the people will be left without a means necessary for their defense. It is, thus, false and unscriptural to assert that this particular means of defense is reserved to the government.

Under circumstances where it is likely that merely wounding someone, rather than killing him, will result in that person later returning to murder numerous people, the intentional use of lethal force may be necessary, and therefore justified. Genesis 14 records an incident in which Abraham, and his men, attacked and killed a group of men who had taken Abraham's nephew, Lot, captive. God later blessed this slaughter through Melchizedek (a type of Christ), who declared that God had delivered Abraham's enemies into his hand. Under these circumstances, the intentional use of lethal force was necessary. It certainly prevented those killed from later regrouping and returning to threaten Abraham's family. A similar use of force against abortion providers prevents them from returning to their bloody work. No one should take it upon himself to deny this defense to individuals lest he be guilty of annulling the commandments of God with man-made inventions, and thereby bring the guilt of innocent blood upon himself.

5.3 Furthermore, an act of homicide is unjustifiable if the attacker's victim could have been adequately defended in any way other than causing the attacker's death. We believe that the many pro-life measures outlined in Section 4 do offer a range of constructive (even if not fully adequate) forms of defense of the lives of the unborn, and thus, the killing of abortion doctors is unjustifiable.

This bald assertion is not only patently false, it flies in the face, not only of common assumption, and civil law, it also contradicts the Scriptures. The Bible does not annul force that is reasonable, under very pressing circumstances, and condemn anything but the absolute minimum force that can be conceived by someone in a distant armchair. Rather, the Bible justifies, and in Abraham's case, blesses the use of lethal force in circumstances where lesser degrees of force could have conceivably been employed.

By claiming that "...an act of homicide is unjustifiable if that attacker's victim could have been adequately defended in any other way than causing the attacker's death," this Commission has condemned the overwhelming majority of defensive responses, whether personal or

collective, that have taken place throughout the centuries, that have previously been considered justified. They condemn David for killing Goliath when the giant could have been restrained from harming the Israelites by merely wounding him, and then placing him in chains—as the Philistines did to Samson. They also contradict God as He justified lethal defense in Exodus 22.2, and blessed Abraham after the "...slaughter of the kings..." (Hebrews 7. 1). (In each of these instances, a lesser degree of force could have possibly been used.)

To reject anything but the minimum degree of force that could conceivably be used places an unreasonable burden on the defender that may endanger both his own life, and the lives of those he is defending. If one fails to use the means necessary to defend the innocent, for fear of harming the attacker more than necessary, this may amount to culpable negligence, as it may result in the death of the innocent—even though the assailant's life may be spared. This is one reason why the police do not operate on this assumption.

When someone attempts to kill an innocent person, he thereby subordinates his right to be protected to the rights of his intended victims to be defended. When an innocent person's life is threatened, the primary goal should be to prevent the intended harm. Saving the life of a murderer should not be given priority over saving the lives of his intended victims. This Commission's position spares the lives of abortionists, but it spells death to the unborn.

Under circumstances where it is likely that merely wounding an assailant, rather than killing him, will result in that person later returning to murder numerous people, lethal force is justified; as with Abraham's defense of Lot (Genesis 14). If killing, rather than wounding, an abortionist kept him from dismembering even one child, it would justify his death. If a wounded abortionist later returns to work for even a single day, he can be expected to kill between 10 and 35 people (depending on the type of practice).

Does this Commission believe that if the government were to sanction the murder of a born minority (as occurred in the book of Esther), and forbid them to protect themselves (unlike what happened in Esther's day) that these people's defense would be limited to legal and passive remedies? The very idea is absurd. All the means necessary for defending these people would be justified—including intentional lethal force. To say that we must limit ourselves to legal and passive remedies, when thousands of people are being slaughtered each day, is outrageous and blatantly immoral! Surely, this Commission would change its position if the minority being murdered were the Southern Baptists, rather than the unborn.

It is hard to understand how this Commission, which is supposed to maintain the truth, could assert such obvious error in this life-and-death controversy. But it is not surprising that they made no effort to support or prove their error: it cannot be proven with either reason or the Scriptures, since it is both unreasonable and unbiblical.

5.4 We believe, further, that the killing of an abortion doctor in actuality does not constitute a meaningful defense of unborn life. This is the case because an abortion doctor is only one of the participants in the act of elective abortion, and not the most important one. It is the woman seeking an abortion who drives the process. The killing of an abortion doctor does nothing in itself to diminish a woman's demand for an abortion. If abortion is legal, and she perceives no alternatives to abortion, she will find another abortion provider. As long as abortion is legal, if we wish to save the lives of unborn children, we must influence the actions of women who are considering abortion. The best and most Christ-like way to do so is to lovingly provide

her with viable alternatives to abortion. This does not absolve others, especially the baby's father, who may be exerting enormous pressure on the child's mother.

I doubt they would assert that "...the killing of an abortion doctor actually does not constitute a meaningful defense of unborn life" if their lives were the ones in question. Their assertion could hardly be more contrary to fact. Upholding the duty to defend the unborn with the means necessary is absolutely essential to providing a meaningful defense for these children. This enables us to see abortion in a consistent and realistic light, and understand how it relates to all the other truths and duties of the Bible. This puts pro-life rhetoric about defending born and unborn children equally into practice. It also bears witness to the full humanity of the unborn as nothing else can. It opens people's eyes to the enormous consequences of abortion—not only for the unborn, but also for the government that has sanctioned it, and those required to resist it. This convicts millions of people of their past neglect, and should spur them to future obedience. It also helps people to decide whether to join this battle on the side of those defending abortionists, or the side of those defending the unborn. Without an understanding of this duty of the Moral Law, it is impossible to understand abortion in a biblical manner.

The most powerful weapon, thus, for overcoming the world's apathetic response to legal abortion is to uphold the means necessary for resisting this atrocity—as required by God's law. Neither the world nor the worldly Christian want the searchlight of God's law focused on their neglect of the unborn, but these are the means God uses to produce genuine repentance.

Without a lofty ethic there can be no hearty repentance; without a sight of sin there is no need of a Savior. How can you expect to convict people of neglecting the unborn, and point them to Christ for pardon, unless the requirements of God's law are being applied to the abortion holocaust?

5.5 Second, we reject the argument that the killing of an abortion doctor is justifiable as a form of capital punishment. We reply that the moral legitimacy of capital punishment in contemporary American society is a point of dispute among pro-life Christians. More germane to the argument is the fact that whatever right there may be to execute a criminal is reserved exclusively to governing authorities, and is never the prerogative of a private citizen. A peaceful and orderly society can have no place for self-appointed executioners.

I agree. The goal should not be to punish abortion providers, but to prevent them from continuing their bloody business.

5.6 Third, we reject the argument that killing an abortion doctor is an act of violent civil disobedience made necessary by the gravity of the moral evil of abortion on demand. It is our conviction that no act of lethal force can be properly ascribed to the rubric of civil disobedience. Moreover, the contradiction between the use of lethal force and civil disobedience is especially glaring in a democracy in which so many alternative forms of activism for social and legal change are permitted. We contend that such an act is better described as an act of revolution than an act of civil disobedience intended to accomplish reform.

They contend that killing an abortionist should be described as "...an act of revolution..." Would the same be true if someone had shot and killed a Nazi concentration camp "doctor?"

In spite of their rhetoric to the contrary, when the government has legalized the murder of a minority, these people must be defended with the immediate means necessary. Democratic

governments are based on the people asserting their God-given rights, especially when it comes to defending the innocent, not denying these rights exist.

Governments that sanction mass murder are revolting against God. Those who advocate submission to such atrocities have joined the rebellion. It is not necessarily revolutionary, thus, to protect your neighbor from being murdered, but even if it were, wouldn't it be better to revolt against mass murder than to submit to it? Does not God require us to resist sin—even unto death?

When a government legalizes mass murder, the population must be willing to go to war, if it is wise and necessary, to stop the bloodshed. The Sixth Commandment requires the means necessary for protecting the innocent, including defensive wars (Jeremiah 48:1O and Deuteronomy 20). The unborn are innocent people who should be protected with the means necessary. Thus, the Sixth Commandment requires the use of defensive war, if it is wise and necessary for protecting the unborn. A people's willingness to take this sort of costly action is essential to the defense of those threatened, and to ending an injustice of this magnitude.

It is illegal to advocate the overthrow of the government, but it is legal to discuss just war, just revolutions, and consider when such actions would be morally justified. The crying need is for people with the courage to affirm that it would be just to go to war against, or otherwise overthrow, any government that legalizes abortion—even though war may not currently be wise. Since we should proclaim the duties of the Moral Law, even when the government forbids it (Acts 5:29), what excuse is there for remaining silent about these duties when the government sanctions their propagation?

The problem is not that those who apply the defensive duties of the Moral Law to the abortion holocaust are revolutionaries, or anarchists. The problem is that legalized murder is an atrocity of such magnitude that it demands the most absolute, courageous, and unequivocal resistance that can possibly be mustered; yet, most people are afraid to even think consistently about this problem—much less take consistent action to stop it.

It would certainly be just to go to war to stop the abortion holocaust. For unknown reasons this Commission has not asserted this biblical duty, and has rather fallen into obvious ethical error.

Passive civil disobedience is widely understood and accepted as a permissible response to unjust laws. This Commission is trying to prevent the mantle that covers the use of passive means from extending itself to cover the use of more forceful means. People commonly associate the term "civil disobedience" with relatively petty infractions of the law: like going limp in front of abortion clinics. But there is no logical basis for asserting that more forceful and serious infractions of the law should not also fall under the concept of civil disobedience. People use forceful means to defend the unborn, in violation of the law, just as surely as they use passive means. Over the years, people have employed all types of illegal and forceful means in defense of the unborn, including gluing abortion clinic doors, burning these doors (as well as the entire building), and using force against abortion providers. If these are not acts of civil disobedience, then why does the government prosecute them as such? In almost all these incidents, the object was not to overthrow the government, but to defend the unborn.

What degree of illegal force would this Commission exclude from the rubric of civil disobedience? They exclude lethal force from this category, but say nothing about all the lesser degrees of force that are commonly used.

5.7 Fourth, we reject the argument that a government that allows legalized abortion on demand has of necessity lost its legitimacy, and that in such a circumstance private citizens are free to resist it "by any means necessary. "

No response.

5.8 To this we reply that we accept the legitimacy of the government of the United States, despite its failure to protect the lives of the unborn and its sanction of access to abortion on demand. It is the people of the United States who have, in fair and free elections, selected the leaders of our government, and it is these duly elected leaders who have appointed judges to the Supreme Court and other federal courts. The actions and inaction of persons in all three branches of the federal government over more than twenty years are responsible for legalized abortion on demand. In turn, their decisions have reflected the pressures brought to bear on them by citizens of the United States, functioning through the democratic process.

No response.

5.9 From this we conclude that it is the people of the United States, acting through legitimate governmental institutions, who are responsible and ultimately accountable for immoral laws permitting and protecting the taking of unborn human lives. We do not believe that laws permitting abortion on demand remove the legitimacy of our government. Rather, the authority of our legitimate government has been perverted to allow and protect abortion on demand.

No response.

5.10 To us, legalized abortion on demand is the single gravest failure of American democracy in our generation. But we recognize it as a failure of a legitimate democracy rather than as the imposition or decree of an illegitimate regime. For this reason, we reject what can only be described as the logic of revolution that some have articulated. Instead, among our other pro-life efforts, we pledge intensified commitment to change the law through the democratic processes of the United States of America.

No response.

5.11 Fifth, we reject the claim that private individuals have a right to circumvent the processes of democratic government by using deadly force where the law sanctions abortion on demand. We realize that what is legal and what is moral are not always identical. Where they diverge, Christians bear a dual responsibility, first to act in accordance with the moral law, and second to respect and obey the legitimate authority of government. So long as a government retains legitimacy, and so long as opportunities for reform remain, individuals and groups must work within the democratic process and must resist the temptation to take the law into their own hands.

In 5.7-5.11, this Commission stresses the authority and "legitimacy" of America's current government, urges submission to its laws (even though they require sin by omission), and characterizes those who obey God in this matter as "revolutionaries." They urge submission to

and maintenance of the status quo even though the government is protecting those who murder thousands of people each day.

Their argument is that as long as America's government is legitimate, and does not become so oppressive as to become illegitimate, that people should submit to its laws. This raises two questions: (1) What makes a government legitimate or illegitimate? (2) When should people disobey unjust laws?

If, by asserting the legitimacy of America's government, this Commission means that the government conforms to the commonly established rules or principles of civil government, they are correct. America's current government is just as legitimate as its previous government under British rule, and the other established governments of the world. A government's "legitimacy," thus understood, is not removed if it sanctions gross injustices. America did not lose its legitimacy by legalizing murder any more than Rome lost its legitimacy by making Christianity illegal. Civil governments may be more or less just, but even grossly unjust governments, that sanction mass murder, may be considered "legitimate," so long as they conform to the commonly established rules of civil government.

But this does not mean that such "legitimate" governments should be obeyed if they require sin by omission or commission. Regardless of whether a government is defined as being legitimate or illegitimate, when it requires its citizens to sin against God, and violate the Moral Law, obedience to God is imperative.

5.12 We believe that a government may lose its legitimacy as it sets itself against divine law and loses the popular support of its people. Should such circumstances arise, and should that government preclude all opportunities for reform, then Christians, for sake of conscience, may be forced to consider more drastic measures. We deny that our nation is nearing or has reached such a crisis. Our goal must be reform, not revolution.

This paragraph shows where this Commission's true allegiance lies. Notice the degree of tyrannical and gross injustice they believe is required before Christians "...may be forced to consider more drastic measures." In addition to setting itself against divine law, and losing popular support, the government must have precluded all "...opportunities for reform..." This position is in blatant contradiction to God's word.

When the government requires sin of its people, by omission or commission, they must remain true to the Moral Law. This is not only true if the government forbids us to save our neighbors' souls, it also applies to saving lives. The appropriate response to an immediate threat is an immediate defense. This is an inalienable duty that cannot be removed by the government.

This Commission views those who defend the unborn with force to be violent individuals who are taking the law into their own hands to revolutionize a legitimate government. From a biblical perspective, these people are risking themselves to prevent the violence of abortion, in spite of the government's decision to revolt against God by legalizing mass murder.

Rather than maintaining the biblical duty to obey God rather than men when the government requires sin, this Commission has adopted a man-made invention that requires people to submit to unjust laws so long as the government does not "...preclude all opportunities for reform..." They disregard the inalienable duty to uphold the rights of the unborn as though this is contrary to the democratic process, and stress submission to the "powers that be." This radical subversion of God's word is both immoral and destructive to human life. If this

Commission is correct, then regardless of the atrocity that has been sanctioned, the number of people being murdered, or the duration of the slaughter, no one may use any defensive means other than passive resistance, so long as the government has not precluded "...all opportunities for reform..." But this is obviously wrong.

If you reject or ignore God's standard for disobeying the civil government, as this Commission has done, who is to say where the line should be drawn? This opens the door to everyone doing what is right in his own eyes (the right thing in this Commission's eyes is to encourage submission to the government). This shows that the practical alternative to submitting to the God of the Bible in every area of life is to trust the government for everything. The alternative, thus, to submitting to God's law is suffering Satanic lawlessness.

5.13 We understand that no government can allow laws against the taking of human life to become a matter of private interpretation without placing its own existence and legitimacy in jeopardy. A private citizen who makes the decision to use lethal force against human life contrary to established law is not merely breaking the law against murder, he or she is also assaulting and undermining the authority of the government itself. Thus, any private decision to break the law against murder—even where there is an intention to do good—is an act of rebellion that threatens the existing government authority, contrary to the will of God (Rom. 13:2). It is not simply an act of civil disobedience. It is certainly not an act of legal reform.

The Scriptures teach that God does not make obedience to the Moral Law contingent on the approval of any man or human government. Governments that rule contrary to the Moral Law set themselves against God and will suffer the consequences. Under these circumstances, private citizens must determine where their true allegiance lies. To deny and neglect God's law, in order to comply with the laws of men, is sinful rebellion against God (Acts 5:29).

5.14 The distinction between nonviolent civil disobedience and the private use of lethal force can be illustrated from American history. Many Christians felt compelled during the 1850s to violate the fugitive slave laws by participating in the Underground Railroad, which illegally assisted slaves in escaping to freedom. That was nonviolent civil disobedience. On the other hand, John Brown and his supporters fomented slave insurrection and rebellion against the state by lethal force. That was the advocacy and exercise of lethal force by private citizens and is beyond the prerogative of individuals, Christian or non-Christian.

I did not attack a National Guard Armory, and try to equip an army. Since the Moral Law requires the means necessary to protect the innocent, if John Brown had killed someone who was murdering dozens of slaves each day, his actions would have been justified, as were mine.

5.15 We wish to call attention to the fundamental difference between nonviolent and violent forms of action for social and legal change. We believe that the witness both of Scripture and of history affirms that a social movement's crossing over from nonviolence to violence is a most perilous, and almost always unjustifiable, step. One consequence of such a transition is that resistance to certain deeds, such as abortion, is often transformed into attacks on certain persons, such as those who perform abortions.

No response.

5.16 When the distinction between the wrong and the wrongdoer is obliterated, social change or resistance movements tend to focus on doing away with the wrongdoer rather than taking concrete steps against the wrong. The morally worthy original goal of the movement is

replaced by one that is new and unworthy. Any possibility of reconciliation with the wrongdoer, of conversion of that wrongdoer, and of peacemaking, possibilities at the heart of the life and ministry of Jesus, is eviscerated. Instead, efforts focus on how to kill rather than on how to make change occur. The people who are the intended recipients of this violence respond in kind. The devastating cycle of violence is intensified.

In these assertions, this Commission has abandoned both the pro-life perspective, and the Moral Law. If they had put a similar spin on the Jews' defense of themselves in the book of Esther, they would have ignored the threat the Persians posed to the Jews, and portrayed the Jews as having taken a violent "...and almost always unjustifiable, step." But if the Jews had neglected this defense, it would have resulted in violence rather than peace.

5.17 Once the bloodshed escalates, social movements embracing violence tend to slide rapidly along the continuum from violent resistance limited to specified targets toward unlimited violence directed at an ever wider range of persons (are judges and politicians going to be the next targeted?). Even at the first stage, innocent bystanders often are injured. One reason God wisely prohibits murder is precisely because of the incendiary effect of bloodshed on the minds and hearts of sinful human beings.

When millions of people are being murdered, the solution is not to downplay this bloodshed, and portray defensive force as "violence"—thereby confusing just and unjust force. Rather, it is essential that the duty to resist murderous force with defensive force be asserted.

One reason Satan promotes murder, and God requires the means necessary to prevent it, is if legalized murder is tolerated, then no atrocity can consistently be resisted. If legalized mass murder is tolerable, then what, may I ask, is intolerable? The position adopted by this Commission opens the floodgate to the even more precipitous downward cycle of unqualified submission to the state.

If we should submit to legalized murder so long as the government has not precluded "...all opportunities for reform..." should we not similarly submit if the government were to legalize rape and slavery? Absolutely not! God's law nowhere teaches that you must limit yourselves to legal and passive remedies when people are being legally enslaved, raped, or murdered. Under these circumstances, immediate and effective action is required.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Our conclusion is that the killing of abortion doctors is not a morally justifiable or permissible Christian response to abortion. We utterly reject such conduct as inconsistent with Scripture and call on all Christian people to join us in this stance.

They claim their position is based on Scripture but, as we have seen, this claim is false. Their position paper directly contradicts the Scriptures. The word of the Lord says, "Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all the unfortunate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy" (Proverbs 31:8 & 9). Rather than asserting the right of the unborn to the full protection of the Sixth Commandment, they have advocated principles that result in unbiblical and unjust protection for their assailants. God Almighty has declared. "Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow..." (Deuteronomy 27:19a). Since God's curse rests on those who distort the justice due an orphan or widow, this curse must similarly abide on those who deny the justice due to the unborn.

In order to maintain their position in support of the status quo, they have trampled underfoot the duties of morality required by the Son of God, and cleared the way for the continued slaughter of Christ's "little ones." Therefore, what they term "A Statement of Conscience" is better described as an unconscionable statement, since it allows this desolating abomination to continue.

6.2 We believe that Christians are, nevertheless, morally obligated to oppose legalized abortion on demand and to reduce the number of abortions through other, morally legitimate, channels. We must do so more actively and faithfully than ever before.

Rather than redoubling our efforts, while denying the moral imperative to defend these children with the means necessary, we should maintain, in both word and deed, God's means for resisting lethal force, and trust Him to produce good results.

There is a close relationship between maintaining the duty to intervene in defense of the unborn and moving people to allocate the time and resources necessary to stop this holocaust. People must become willing to sacrifice all that they are and have (in obedience to the Moral Law) in order to end this outrage. If we should be willing to die in defense of the unborn, how much more should we give our time and property to this cause? Apart from this perspective, it is impossible to think practically and consistently about legal abortion—much less call people to make the sacrifices necessary to stop it.

6.3 Pro-life Christians must act quickly and vigorously to prevent a small but vocal band of militant activists from destroying the credibility, effectiveness, and witness of the mainstream Christian pro-life movement. We pray earnestly that God will bless the efforts of all who employ morally legitimate means in order to save the lives of the most vulnerable among us, the unborn children. We are persuaded that this reflects the mind of Christ.

The battle over abortion is primarily spiritual. The question is whether we will respond to the legalization of abortion with what the whole Bible teaches on this subject (even though it is contrary to popular opinion, and will likely result in persecution), or whether we will water down our response lest people take offense. This Commission may have succeeded in staying within the bounds of "...the mainstream Christian pro-life movement," but they have strayed from the straight and absolute ethic revealed in God's word. They thus, need not fear that a "...small but vocal band..." will destroy their witness; no one can destroy their credibility any more effectively than they have by publishing this incredible statement.

They are persuaded that "...this reflects the mind of Christ." But their statements contradict an essential aspect of God's law and replace it with man-made traditions. In so doing, they have eviscerated the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by obstructing its convicting and converting power.

Any remaining objections or uncertainty raised by this Commission can be cleared by asking a simple question in accord with the Golden Rule:

"Would this objection to defensive action be valid if the government were to similarly sanction the murder of a born minority—such as the Southern Baptists?" I think not. Under such circumstances, this "statement of conscience" would appear in its true light, and people would begin defending themselves and their needy neighbors. We should maintain the duty to similarly defend the unborn.

Appendix D: “Stanzas on Freedom"

Men! whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers brave and free,
If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave?
If ye do not feel the chain,
When it works a brother’s pain,
Are ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed?
Women! who shall one day bear,
Sons to breathe New England air,
If ye hear, without a blush,
Deeds to make the roused blood rush
Like red lava through your veins,
For your sisters now in chains—
Answer! are ye fit to be
Mothers of the brave and free?
Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathem hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No! true Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!
They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

by James Russell Lowell (1819-1891)

The Final Solution to Abortion

Answers to the disturbing questions raised by abortion may be found in Jesus Christ and His holy word. The Scriptures hold Christ forth as the only one who can provide effective deliverance from the guilt, penalty, and power of abortion.

Once it is understood that abortion is murder, and neglecting to defend the needy is a grievous sin, an awakened conscience will accuse those guilty of these sins to deserve death, and the wrath and curse of God: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

But God, in His great mercy and love with which He has loved us, has provided a solution to the sin and misery caused by abortion: He sent His Son. The good news is that God became man in Christ and was born into the world.

Jesus demonstrated that He is God in numerous ways: He fulfilled numerous Old Testament prophecies, healed lepers, raised the dead, and walked on water. Both then and now, He marvelously transforms peoples' lives, setting them free from sin, and granting them new life.

Jesus was certainly not guilty of murdering anyone, or of neglecting the oppressed. He not only delivered the needy, He also suffered the penalty for every type of neglect when He hung on the cross: "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

On the third day after Christ's crucifixion, He rose from the dead. After appearing to many people in His resurrected body, He ascended into heaven, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father.

On judgment day, all men will appear before Him to render an account for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil. The only ones who will be saved on that day are those who have repented of their sins, and trusted in Christ: "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). To be saved from the wrath to come, you must confess your sins, turn from them, and trust in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He will pardon and cleanse you of all your sins, and give you a glorious new life, if you repent and look to Him as your Lord and Savior. Look to Christ alone to deliver you from the bloodguilt of abortion and you will be saved.

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