

Week 19

4/30/12

James: I'm holding in my hand a DVD that I wish every church would play to the entire congregation. It is called, *The Gift of Life*. Governor Huckabee is here on the front. It is presented by Citizens United and the Citizens United Foundation. It's on life -- how precious it is. They asked me to give my story; one of the center portions of the DVD. I really would encourage you to get it.

We have a very special guest that understands how precious life is, and at one point, didn't really see it quite that way. Her name is Abby Johnson and she's got a book titled, *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-opening Journey across the Lifeline*. Would you welcome a very compassionate, very courageous and very important woman, Abby Johnson? Would you welcome her to *LIFE Today*?

Abby, I'm glad you're here.

Abby: Thank you.

James: And you're going to have a baby here pretty soon.

Abby: I am going to have a baby very -- well, not very soon but soon.

James: And you'll be glad I'm sure. But you have a five year old?

Abby: I do. I have a five-year-old daughter; this one's a boy.

James: Well, I want you to just tell our viewers about your journey because you had quite a journey. It's been a little bit... let's say unlike what most people might imagine. Share it with our viewers.

Abby: Sure. I worked at Planned Parenthood for eight years and I ended up moving up the ranks in the Planned Parenthood Corporation and became the clinic manager. So I managed both the family planning and the abortion part of the Planned Parenthood business at a clinic here in Texas.

In 2009, in September of 2009, I witnessed a live abortion procedure. That's not common. That doesn't usually happen at Planned Parenthood because it takes a little extra time and it also exposes their lie. They don't want women to see what's really happening to their

baby in the womb during an abortion. But I was called in to assist, and my job was to hold the ultrasound probe on the woman's abdomen during the abortion.

What I saw was shocking, and it was hard for me to believe, honestly, whenever I saw it. I saw a 13-week-old child in the womb struggle and fight for his life during that abortion procedure. I left that day -- I went home that day understanding for the first time that everything I had believed in was a lie, and that I had betrayed thousands and thousands of women. They had come to me and they had asked me questions and had hoped that I would give them an honest answer but I hadn't; I had just looked back at them and lied.

I knew that one of the reasons that I had become such a cheerleader for Planned Parenthood, and for the abortion industry, was because I had my own abortion when I was 20 years old. I would like to say that when I found out I was pregnant I went through all the options and I thought, maybe I can place my baby for adoption or maybe I can do this. I'm in college but I can do this... but that never happened. I immediately thought, I have to have an abortion. I cannot let my parents find out about this. I cannot disappoint them.

It's interesting. I talked to a lot of young women now who are in college and they give me that same answer, "I have to have an abortion because my parents cannot find out. I do not want to disappoint my parents."

One of the things I ask them is, "Do you think your parents would be more disappointed to know that okay, you messed up and you were doing things you shouldn't have been doing but now there's going to be a baby that comes out this. Or do you think they would be more hurt and more disappointed to know that you took the life of their grandchild?" I think that really puts it in perspective for a lot of girls that are frightened about what their parents might think.

But that was me. That was the situation that I was in when I had my first abortion. And after I started working at Planned Parenthood, I found myself pregnant again in an unplanned situation and had my second abortion. I believed that it is kind of like if you're on a sinking ship and you're trying to get as many people on board with you, that's what it was like for me. I was trying desperately to justify my own sin and I did that for eight years.

James: When you saw a little baby, and I suppose being dismembered, and it shocked you. Tell me the chain of events after that.

Abby: It wasn't even the part of the abortion that was graphic; I knew that happened to

the children during the abortion. What really struck me and caused this change of heart in my life was seeing that child flee, seeing that child run from that abortion instrument. It really showed me the humanity that is in every unborn person.

I remember going back to my office after watching this and I was really trying to justify what I had just seen. I justified so many things that had happened over the course of my employment with Planned Parenthood and I didn't want to leave. I didn't want to leave my job. I didn't want to leave my friends. I didn't want to leave all the money I was making. I was very comfortable where I was, and very comfortable with what I was doing up until that point. I went back into my office and I just said, "I've got to make this right. Somehow in my mind I've got to make this right because I do not want to leave."

But once I had seen the truth in front of my face like that, I knew that there was nothing else to do, that I had to leave. There was no justification for what I had just seen. There was no justification for the lies that I had been telling for all of those years. So I had to leave.

James: You know Texas has the law to show the mother who wants to abort a sonogram image. What do you think about that?

Abby: Well, I think it's fantastic. I mean they need to have that option. I think -- we know that just in pregnancy resource centers that on average, 85% of women will change their mind and choose life for their child if they can just see that there is an actual baby growing inside of their womb. But the abortion industry, because they are trying to sell abortions -- we were selling abortions to the most vulnerable women and it is not difficult to sell a product like that -- to sell a product that is promised to take away their biggest problem and their biggest fear to women who are vulnerable, who are scared, who are alone, but we did it every day -- we were sales people. I think that being able to show the women the life that's inside of her, I think it's vital and it's something that Planned Parenthood doesn't want them to see.

James: You saw it as a business.

Abby: Absolutely!

Betty: Working there eight years, was it your place to put more emphasis on what a burden it would be if they didn't have the abortion? How it would change their whole lifestyle -- so the negative side of it is what you could --

Abby: Yes! And that was one of the ways we coerced them into having an abortion. Oh,

my gosh! You don't know how hard this is going to be. You're going to have to get up all night. You're not going to have anybody to help you. It's so expensive. You can barely take care of yourself. It's an easy sell, honestly, to women who come in the clinic.

I tell people, once those women are in those clinic doors it is very unlikely that they will leave without having an abortion because they are selling abortion; that is their job. It is all about the money for them; it is all about the bottom line.

Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in our country and in the last report that came out in 2010, they had performed almost 330,000 abortions in just one year; almost half a billion dollars came from our tax money. This is something -- one in three women are having abortions. This is something that truly does effect all of us, whether we know it, whether we realize it or not.

James: I think that one of the things I've tried to make clear to every person who has heard my story of being an unexpected pregnancy for my mother when she was 40 and never had a child and it was a forced situation, to realize how fortunate I was to be born and then all the people that God has allowed my life to bless, I can see the potential of a child, however unexpected or unwanted that child may appear to be. I've tried to make it clear that we need to -- all of us -- understand the potential and the preciousness of every life.

I know there are a lot of people who really believe that abortion is probably one of the greatest sins in our nation, and I would agree with that. I think once we devalue life, once you lower the value of a human life you are in essence immediately devaluing life period.

When you think about protecting the innocent, which is what law and government is primarily assigned to do -- good government, good law -- when you fail to protect the most vulnerable, the most helpless of all, then you have really damaged society -- you've damaged the culture. God has a lot to say in the Old Testament through the prophets about the shedding of innocent blood, and what it does to us; it sears our conscience as a nation. But if we're going to help, we're going to have to look at the woman that feels desperate. We've got to look at someone who was where you were, Abby and we've got to approach the women who have made the mistake with a love that heals and a compassion that heals because however brainwashed they were, however desperate they were, they made a decision that was not the best. It was wrong. They did take a life; however justifiable they might have seen it, it did happen. Many of those women bear incredible scars, not because someone told them that, but because of what is going on inside. I've heard the story after story but how do we best approach?

I know you had protesters outside the clinic where you were. There were people there that were praying. Somehow they actually had a positive effect on you. Am I right about that?

Abby: It wasn't immediate. I wasn't always the nicest or sweetest clinic worker inside of Planned Parenthood but every day, for those eight years they were reaching out to me. They were looking at me and telling me, "We're praying for you."

I was raised in church. I mean I became a Christian when I was eight. So I knew what it was to know God. I knew what it was to pray. I knew that really meant something for them to say that to me. They were not condemning; they did not judge me but they reached out to me with compassion, and with the mercy that Christ would show others. Every day for those eight years, they said, "If you ever want to leave, we will help you. If you ever want to get out of here, we will help you leave."

So after I saw that ultrasound-guided abortion, I took them up on that offer. I went to them and said, "I've been wrong. I don't know what to do. I don't know where to go from here."

They could have looked at me and said, "You know what? You need to apologize first because you have done some really ugly things to us. We need an apology." They didn't do that. They looked at me and they said, "Okay. It's over. The past is over."

James: That was a very special group. That was a very special group! I don't know who led you. God led you... but you became a part of a miracle. You're making headlines in heaven and you've made headlines with Abby. I want to thank you.

Many of you here in the audience are concerned about this issue, it's one reason you're sitting here. I believe people all over America are praying about it. It's one of the issues that Jay Richards and I addressed in the book, *Indivisible*, when we talked about the preciousness of life.

I think if every girl could see that -- you look at what God does with a little child that's not expected and sometimes one that's got physical challenges and even how much that child blesses the family, but God has a purpose.

Do you agree, Abby, that the most important thing for people to see in America is the value of life itself and how precious it is?

Abby: Absolutely! Because I think every other issue that we're concerned about as

Christians and as citizens, it all comes back to that one fundamental right to life, and without the right to life, so many other things are secondary. A third of our population is being killed by abortion, and they're hurting women. With every woman that chooses abortion, there is a man involved too, and we have millions of hurting men and women throughout this country that are in need of healing.

One of -- this is a statistic that I think surprises a lot of people, but 72% of women that choose abortion are Christians. They come from the church. I always encourage clergy and pastors to speak out on this issue, and not just talk about the sanctity of human life and not just talk about how abortion is wrong, but also call for healing because that is very important. Every Sunday that I worked at the clinic, I was in church but we did not talk about abortion; we did not talk about the sanctity of human life. There was no call for healing.

Abortion is not just about making the procedure illegal; it is about making it unthinkable. That's what we really need to be focusing on in the church. Laws will help but changing our culture from one of a culture to death to a culture of life, that is what will end abortion in this country, and we've got to do it with compassion and with love; that is absolutely how I continue to reach out to clinic workers that are still in the industry.

Three months ago I started a group to proactively reach out to abortion clinic workers and in just three months we've had 15 abortion clinic workers leave the industry and convert on the issue of abortion and come to Christ.

James: Don't you thank God for that! Isn't that positive!

Betty: It is about realizing how valuable and precious life is. As you were talking about seeing the sonogram and that's what really grabbed your heart, you saw the baby trying to get away from being aborted. I thought, the womb should be the most safe place for the baby. They should be able to feel safe while they're growing safely in the mother's womb and then they take that away from them.

Abby: And not only do they take it away, but they lie while they're doing it. They lie! They lie to these women. They lie about their children. I can tell you the most common question I got was, "Will my baby feel this?" Because the women are concerned; they know it is alive but they're lied to, and that's something we need to be vocal about as pro-lifers. It's not just about being pro-life here; it's about being pro-life here.

James: I just ask God, please help me know how to help others. I don't want any girl or

woman who made the choice that wasn't -- I don't think, the wise choice. I don't want you to feel trampled on; I want you to feel the healing, restoring, loving power of God. There is no sin, no failure, no misdeed that's too great for his grace.

Abby's story is really, really powerful. You get the book, *Unplanned*; it will bless you, encourage you because she told you she made the wrong decision and became part of the process of terminating lives, innocent life.

I want to show you some images right now that your first impulse -- and boy, how I pray you don't do this -- might be, "I think I'll turn away." Don't! -- Because your heart's going to be captured in a moment. I'll tell you what's going to happen to you. In just a moment you're going to identify with the heart of God. Yes, you are! You're going to feel God's heart. You're going to feel it very deeply. Watch closely.

James: I look at those little faces and I see them as so precious. I see little personalities. I see a future... a future hope. I see in the impoverished places there, I see that little baby as the greatest source of joy that mother has. It's her -- in so many ways her life. Then joy is taken because they're hungry, all they need is food. And we can, as we've fed hundreds of thousands, saved millions of lives, but if you just think in those large terms you don't understand it. We've got to have somebody who will say, "I'll take that baby. I'll take those three or five or I'll take that whole group that they're trying to get into a feeding line, I'll take them. I can feed ten. I can feed 100." That's how we meet the need, that's what our viewers do.

Betty: That's right, James. When I hear those cries, they're cries of hunger. Those little babies don't know anything else but that they're hungry. They don't know why they can't have food but they're hungry. But we know as we watch, we know what they need and we can fill that need. We can give them the food that they need for the nourishment for their little bodies. I hope you will help us.

James: What I want to ask you to do... and I've just prayed and prayed from the time our mission team came back. We got a text message from one of our team members that said, "We're watching two children die a day just trying to get to the feeding lines." It's desperate. It's not right. We can help them. The missionaries are so ready. They're so special, but they're no more special than you are because you're the ones that enable them to be there without empty hands.

We always tailor the feeding to meet the immediate need, whatever it is, to get them stabilized and we need your help -- \$30, \$50, \$100 feeds three, five, or ten children for the next months. Could you feed ten? Would you make a \$100 gift that will keep giving life for the next months? Would you do that for a child, for a mother? Could you give \$50 and help five -- or \$30 and help three?

Father, I pray everyone will help. Would you go to the phone and dial that number? It's a prayer line when you need prayer. Paid for by love... somebody loves you. Would you reach out and say, "I'm going to touch someone with the love of God. I'm going to be the hands of Jesus today and I'm going to give those children something to eat. I'm going to feed them." And help us feed as many as possible. Please do that.

If you want to go online, you can do that, *LifeToday.org* and make the gift. You write a check, make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're putting it in the mail and then mail it. Please! We really need to hear from you now. The situation there is so critical. You talk about an urgent need now -- we have that.

We have some gifts to bless the children in your family, and to bless you in your spiritual growth because we love you. But we're asking you to give life right now. Please call.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: At this very moment, a child is drawing his last breath struggling to stay alive due to a lack of food. Sadly, this impoverished child is not alone and without our help many like him face death as well.

Today you can make a difference -- you can help save a life. Life's mission feeding teams are in place right now, ready to answer the hunger cries of 400,000 suffering children in remote areas of Africa.

With previous food reserves gone and parts of Africa facing its worst famine and food shortage in more than two decades, we desperately need to replenish our supplies immediately! Your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift, we'll send you the *Jesus Storybook Bible*. This beautifully illustrated book will help your children discover for themselves that Jesus is at the center of God's great story of salvation, and at the center of their lives too!

With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed ten children, you may request our New International Version and New King James side-by-side Bible with a two-column format for easy comparison.

Finally, please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and save the lives of 100 children, and you may also request The Lion and The Lamb bronze sculpture. Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: You know we are sending the children's *Jesus Storybook Bible* to bless your grandchildren or your children... or maybe some neighbor's children as you help save the lives of these precious children.

The wonderful New International Version, the New King James verse parallel Bible side-by-side; this is the *LIFE Outreach* version. And if you would like to have *The Gift of Life* and show it to your Bible study group or your church, this is fabulous about how precious life is. We'll send this just to say thank you for any gift you make. I hope some of you will make large gifts and get the beautiful bronze.

I want to thank Abby Johnson. I want to thank God for what he did in your life. I want to thank God for those people that prayed because you became an answer to their prayers, and a lot of little babies are an answer to their prayers.

Would you say thanks again to Abby for coming? There's her web site if you want her to come and speak in your area. There's how you can get a hold of her. I think that would be wonderful!

Announcer: Tomorrow, a former abortion clinic owner uncovers the truth about the abortion industry.

>> Like a simple math telling me 40,000 abortions a year would make me a millionaire.