



Learning From History To Transform Lives Today - Part 1

"Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

- George Santayana

Martin Luther King Jr. died tragically 40 years ago this month. Some of his statements about racial equality were so timeless that they apply just as well to the issue of abortion. From what I have seen we can learn so much from King Jr. as we push for basic human rights for the unborn. Below are several quotes from MLK Jr. and under them are some questions I want to ask to get us focused on how his wisdom applies today.

1) "Many were apprehensive of social ostracism. Certainly Birmingham had its white moderates who disapproved of Bull Connor's tactics. Certainly Birmingham had its decent white citizens who privately deplored the maltreatment of Negroes. But they remained publicly silent. It was a silence born of fear--fear of social, political, and economic reprisals. **The ultimate tragedy of Birmingham was not the brutality of the bad people, but the silence of the good people.**" (*Why We Can't Wait* - MLK Jr. - Pg 36)

How bad does the problem of abortion need to get before we are willing to be ostracized for standing up against it? Can we really be against a problem if we are completely silent about it in all our spheres of influence? What would happen if all pro-life people engaged their spheres of influence in a loving way about the truth of abortion?

2) "But though I was initially dissatisfied at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love...Amos an extremist for justice...Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel...So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice?" (*Why We Can't Wait* - MLK Jr. - Pages 76-77)

Are we worried about being labeled an extremist even though many of our heroes are called the same? Are we living out the truths and wisdom we glean from these heroes in this present struggle? **Are we willing to admit that silence is a very extreme response to the abortion controversy?**

3) "Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with."

(*Why We Can't Wait* - MLK Jr. - Pg 73) my analysis ---->

It will take an eternity for the unborn to defend themselves.

Do we shy away from talking about abortion because we think we are creating tension? Are we silent in our churches and Bible studies about abortion because we don't want to foster an environment where people are uncomfortable? Do we realize that the tension is still there when we ignore it and millions of people would still be hurting each year from abortion even if, due to apathy, there were less tension or no tension? Are we scarred to expose the truth about abortion even though honesty and honest dialogue in various settings could frequently result in healing?

4) "There was a time when the church was very powerful—in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society." (MLK Pg. 80)

Is this our reaction to the abortion issue, in our defense of the humanity of the unborn, and the value of all human life? Are we willing to be unpopular with friends and family due to a commitment to truth and a willingness to stand up for those who have no voice? Is your church equipping you to defend the unborn in a godly manner? Is your church teaching you how to push for justice while you love people who are pro-choice?

Three ways you step up right now!

1) Plead with the authorities that God has placed over you to do all they can to make abortion unthinkable in culture and to equip others to do the same.

2) Use the authority that you have. If you are a parent, youth leader, or Bible study leader you can make an impact by educating, encouraging, and mobilizing.

3) Use credibility that you have with your peers. Talk through the issue of abortion with your friends. Urge them to take a closer look at the severe injustice of abortion.



Amanda Joy Coles (Center, holding brochure) brought nine friends to our "Abortion: From Debate to Dialogue" seminars, had great conversations with students at Cal Poly, and urged her youth pastor to attend her pro-life ambassador group, promote the JFA training seminars, and to spread his influence in

many other ways as well. **Amanda is not yet 15 years old!**

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Prayer requests for this month

- Our Metro State-Denver trip/outreach is April 8-16.
- We have 3 seminars for over 200 total people this week.
- I have an increased speaking role in these seminars.
- We will meet many lost and hurting people in Denver.
- 88 of our helpers are from Focus on the Family Institute.

Defending Human Value together,

Jonathan Wagner
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