

Don't Give Up the Fight

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[0 : 00] All right, so now that the children are dismissed, for the rest of us adults, we are talking today about...

The A word, it's nasty. When you're talking about a... Whatever you do, don't straight up say what it is. Seriously, there are so many words and phrases you can choose to avoid being offensive. Why say a... When you can say... Empowerment. Empowerment. Words like coercion, killing, regret are not helpful. Just saying.

Stick to more uplifting terms, such as... Self-care, health-care, repro-right, or my favorite... Choice. Brilliant, really. So simple and yet so void of anything truthful.

Love it. A... Don't call it what it really is, because that's just too much. Nobody wants to think about that. Come on. I like this hat.

[1 : 10] It's a difficult subject, and it's one that we don't like to think about or talk about. But as I said to the youth on Friday evening, this is one of the most important social justice issues of our day.

Let's get some perspective. How many COVID deaths have there been in Canada in the past two years? If the numbers are accurate, about 40,000 people died, and COVID was considered a factor. That's over the past two years. That's over the past two years. That averages out to about 20,000 people per year. But abortion claims the lives of over 100,000 children every year here in Canada. Five times as many. As a culture and as a country, we bent over backwards to fight COVID and save lives.

We put all kinds of restrictions on people. We mandated that they make certain health choices or else suffer the loss of certain rights and freedoms, all to save lives.

[2 : 25] But for the 100,000-plus children each year that are being aborted in their mother's wombs, we say, Oh, it's not appropriate to make laws in this area.

It's the woman's personal health care choice. Let her do what she wants to do. And we'll provide the funding and the freedom for her to do it. This particular issue has come alive in recent weeks, ever since this U.S. Supreme Court leaked draft suggesting that Roe v. Wade could be overturned in the United States.

Now, we don't know what the final results will be of all that, but it certainly has shown us that we are in the midst of a battle over this practice in our two nations today.

And for that, I'm grateful. Because as Christians, I fear that many of us have simply given up the fight on abortion. We've stopped talking about it until now, some of us.

Or, if we still do talk about it, sometimes it's only to lament what's going on. But what are we doing about this terrible injustice still going on in our nation, even in our province today?

[3 : 43] And so I have a few goals with our time this morning. First, I want to help you look on the reality of abortion and what's happening in our nation today.

Because I believe that we will continue to be silent. We will continue to sit on the sidelines of this fight and watch things get worse until our hearts are gripped by the horror of what's happening.

And we can stand to be silent and uninvolved no more. Second, I want to point us to the cross of Christ and the matchless grace and mercy of Jesus and what it means for this issue.

Third, I want to give you encouragement about why it's still worth fighting for this seemingly lost cause. And finally, I want to call you to action and give you practical things you can do to join in the fight.

So first, I want to help you look on the reality of abortion and what's happening in our nation today. We will begin by listening to the testimony of a former abortion doctor in court, Dr. Anthony Levitino.

[4 : 56] During the course of his career, he performed over 1,200 abortions. Listen to what he has to say. This investigation of Planned Parenthood is based on false premises, one after another after another.

It's time to stop wasting time, get on it with meaningful work, and stop picking on women and trying to take their choice away. I yield back to the balance of my time. The time of the gentleman has expired. We welcome our distinguished witnesses today.

Do you and each of you swear that the testimony that you are about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? So help you God. And I'll now begin by introducing today's witnesses. The first witness is Dr. Anthony Levitino.

Dr. Levitino is a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist. Over the course of his career, Dr. Levitino has practiced obstetrics and gynecology in both private and university settings, including as an associate professor of OBGYN at the Albany Medical College.

And Dr. Levitino, we'll begin with you. Welcome. Thank you, Chairman and members of the committee. I only have five minutes, so I'm going to get right to it. Second trimester D&E; abortions perform between roughly 14 and 24 weeks of gestation.

[6 : 08] Your patient today is 17 years old. She's 22 weeks pregnant. Her baby is the length of your hand plus a couple of inches. And she's been feeling her baby kick for the last several weeks.

But she's asleep on an operating room table. You walk into that operating room scrubbed and gowned, and after removing laminaria, you introduce a suction catheter into the uterus. This is a 14-French suction catheter.

If she were 12 weeks pregnant or less, basically the width of your hand or smaller, you could basically do the entire procedure with this. But babies this big don't fit through catheters this size. After suctioning the amniotic fluid out from around the baby, you introduce an instrument called a sofa clamp. It's about 13 inches long. It's made of stainless steel. The business end of this clamp is about 2 1/2 inches long and 1 1/2 inch wide.

There are rows of sharp teeth. This is a grasping instrument. When it gets a hold of something, it does not let go. A DNA procedure is a blind abortion, so picture yourself introducing this and grabbing anything you can blindly and pull, and I do mean hard, and out pops a leg about that big which you put down on the table next to you.

[7 : 14] Reach in again, pull again, and pull out an arm about the same length which you put down on the table next to you. And use this instrument again and again to tear out the spine, the intestines, the heart and lungs.

Head in the baby that size is about the size of a large plum. Can't see it, but you've got a pretty good idea you've got it if you've got your instrument around something and your fingers are spread about as far as they go.

You know you did it right if you crush down on the instrument and white material runs out of the cervix. That was the baby's brains. Then you can pull out skull pieces. And you have a day like I had a lot of times. Sometimes a little face comes back and stares back at you.

Congratulations. You just successfully performed a second trimester DNA abortion. You just affirmed her right to choose. One more question, Dr. Levitino. Why did you end your practice of doing abortions?

I did over 1,200 abortions over a four-year period in private practice, not counting the ones that I did during my training. I met my wife during my first year of training at Albany Medical Center.

[8 : 17] We got married about a year later and found that we had an infertility problem. After years of failed infertility treatment and several years trying to adopt a child, we were blessed with adopting a little girl that we named Heather in August of 1978.

As sometimes happens in those situations, my wife got pregnant the very next month, and we had two children ten months apart. Two months short of my daughter Heather's sixth birthday, she was killed in an auto accident and literally died in her arms in the back of an ambulance.

Anyone who has children might think they have some idea of what that feels like, but unless you've been through it yourself, you have no idea whatsoever. I know people find it hard to believe, but what do you do after a disaster?

You bury your child and then you go back to your life. And I don't remember exactly how long it was after my daughter died that I showed up at Albany Medical Center OR number nine to perform my first second trimester D&E; abortion.

I wasn't thinking of it as anything special. This was routine to me. But I reached in, literally pulled out an arm or leg and got sick. Earlier on, I described stacking up body parts on the side of the table.

[9 : 29] It's not to gross people out, to use a simple term. When you do an abortion, you need to keep inventory. You have to make sure you get two arms and two legs and all the pieces.

If you don't, your patient's going to come back infected, bleeding, or dead. So I soldiered on and finished that abortion. And I know it sounds, as I said, hard for people to believe, but I'm telling you straight up my experience.

You know, after over 1,200 abortions, first and second trimester up to 24 weeks, and all the rest of it, and being very dedicated to it, for the first time in my life, I really looked. I really looked at that pile of body parts on the side of the table.

And I didn't see her wonderful right to choose, and I didn't see all the money I just made. All I could see was somebody's son or daughter. And I stopped doing late-term abortions after that, and several months later stopped doing all abortions.

Thank you. I find it heart-wrenching to listen to that description of a second trimester abortion, and I hope you do too.

[10 : 40] That's being done in Canada today. Now, some will point out here that the vast majority of abortions are medical abortions or chemical abortions using drugs, and happen well before 20 weeks.

The truth is, it's actually quite difficult to get accurate numbers in Canada today, because only hospitals are required to report abortions in Canada. For clinics, it's completely voluntary whether they report or not.

Even the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada admits that the numbers during the past several years of COVID were probably underreported for a variety of reasons. And then, of course, each province has their own unique system and regulations.

So take, for example, the data from 2020. This data comes from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, and it's freely available online to anybody. And this is just those reported by hospitals, which make up not very many of that approximately 100,000.

There were 14,815 abortions reported by hospitals in Canada, excluding Quebec. And as you can see from the first two numbers there, we know for sure that about 59% of them were first trimester abortions.

[12 : 00] If you look at the next couple numbers, we know for sure that about 18% were either second or third trimester abortions. And then there are 23% which are unknown.

Even if none of those 23% were second or third trimester abortions, 18% still means that in Canadian hospitals, 2,666 children were torn limb from limb in 2020, using the technique described by Dr. Levatino.

Now let's remember, that number, it doesn't include the abortion clinics, which operate in all but four Canadian provinces and territories now. And the clinics account for the vast majority of abortions in Canada today, which means that there are thousands of babies being destroyed in Canada every year in the manner described by Dr. Levatino.

Thousands of babies for whom just six months or less, and they could have had life outside the womb, grown up, enjoyed the same things that we all do, these were people, little people who were ripped apart.

Now one of the common pushbacks here suggests that first trimester abortions are okay because it's not yet a human being in the womb. Well let me ask you, if it's not a human being, what is it?

[13 : 37] And when does it become a human being? Almost everybody agrees that it's a human being after it's born. What about five minutes before it's born?

It's the same baby five minutes before it's born as it is five minutes after it's born. The only difference is location. Does our location make us more or less human?

Surely not. Well no, it's not location, it's level of development, people will say. It hasn't developed into a human being yet.

Okay? So at what point does it become fully human then in the pregnancy, in the womb? Here's a picture of Lila Stenzrud.

In this picture she is four years old, eating a Timbit. Here's another picture of her with her mom at a party. She was born in 2014, and this is a picture of her four years earlier.

[14:47] She was born in 2014 at just 21 weeks and four days. That's basically the halfway point of the pregnancy.

You can find her story all over the internet, it's even on major news sources, CNN. Look at this photo. Is she a human being? Is she less of a human being here than she is here?

She looks admittedly, maybe, to us, less human in this picture. I mean, we could look at skin color, we could look at the eyes, the kind of the shape of the head and kind of different things going on with the proportions of her limbs.

But at some point we need to ask the question, what makes a human being a human being? Is it how we look? Is it our shape? Is it the proportion of our arms and legs?

Is it whether we have two arms and two legs? Maybe, I'm not sure, some of you have heard of Nick, I can't say his last name, Wawoychuk or Wawoychuk.

[16:02] I was born in Melbourne, Australia, 1982 and my parents had no idea that I was going to be born without arms or legs.

I was the only one that I ever saw without limbs. My faith in Jesus Christ was sealed after seven years of wondering why, God, I was born this way.

He answered me very clearly through John chapter 9 and I gave my life to Jesus at 15 after reading about how he came across a man who was born blind.

And I'm like, hey, hold on a second, this looks interesting. And no one knew why he was born that way. I'm like, perfect. So I read on and in verse 3 of the ninth chapter, Jesus said, it was done so that the works of God would be revealed through him.

And I'm like, wow, God, if you had a plan for the blind man, you do have a plan for me. And that was the beginning of my personal relationship with Jesus.

[17:19] Jesus said, no arms, no legs, and yet he's happily married, has two children, and he has learned to do all kinds of amazing things, including swimming and preaching the gospel all over the world.

Being human is about more than just our shape. It's about more than our appearance. Lila wasn't any less human back in 2014.

when she was born than you or I were at that stage in the womb. Different things develop at different stages. It's not us becoming more human as we go.

Think about this. Is a toddler any less human than an adult? Of course not. It's just a different stage of development in the normal progression of a human being.

And so the question it really drives us to is not, when do we become human? But at what point does human life begin in the womb? Let's listen to what Tara Sander Lee, a molecular geneticist, has to say about when life begins.

[18:28] Do we really know when life begins? Some people think that it is a complete mystery and therefore abortion should be allowed.

They reason that a fetus is not a person or is somehow not a real human being or is just a potential life while in the mother's womb. But there are two problems with this kind of reasoning. First, even if it were true that we did not know when life had begun in the womb, that would be an argument against abortion.

Imagine you go hunting with a friend and the two of you become separated. You see some rustling in the bushes ahead but you don't know if it's a deer or your friend. Would you shoot? That would be criminally reckless if you did because there's a chance that behind that bush is a human life.

In the same way, if there is a possibility that there is a human life in the womb, it would be reckless to kill that life. But that's where we find the second flaw in this reasoning.

It's not merely possible that a human life has begun in the womb. It is a scientific certainty that life begins at fertilization. At the moment a sperm fuses with an egg known as fertilization or conception, a new unique human being that is genetically distinct from both parents comes into existence.

[19:43] Gender, ethnicity, hair color, eye color and countless other traits are determined at that moment. This genetic blueprint remains the same for his or her entire life. After conception, a developing baby grows at an extremely rapid pace, especially within the first trimester.

The baby's heart begins to beat in the sixth week of pregnancy, which is only a little over three weeks from the moment of conception. A new study found that the first heartbeat may occur even sooner, as early as the fifth week, which is about the same time a mother discovers she is

pregnant.

The baby's lungs and digestive system are also forming. At eight weeks, human brain activity can be recorded. In fact, the human brain will continue to develop and mature even after birth and well into the person's 20s.

At 12 weeks, the tiny child can swallow, scrunch hands into little fists, touch his or her face and scratch his or her head. The baby's fingers and toes are also complete with nails.

Fingerprints are developing by 14 weeks. At 18 weeks, the baby's ears can even hear music and recognize their mother's voice. Between 18 and 30 weeks, doctors can treat pre-born babies while still inside the womb with life-saving therapies and repair significant defects for certain diseases.

[21 : 03] And at 22 weeks, or even sooner, it is possible for babies to be born and survive outside the womb. It is also a fact that pre-born children exhibit behaviors that we do on a daily basis.

They smile, feel pain, cough, yawn, hiccup, respond to sound and light, sleep, and possibly even dream. Some researchers have even shown that babies may cry while in the womb.

So referring to the pre-born child as a zygote, blastocyst, embryo, or fetus at different stages of development does nothing to lessen his or her humanity. Those are just ways of referring to age.

No different from the terms infant, toddler, adolescent, or adult. It is also false for some to call the pre-born child a parasite or consider him or her as nothing more than a blob-like sea cucumber.

First, parasites are different in species from their host. And if a fetus were a parasite, then the mother's immune system would attack it. Instead, the mother's body undergoes dramatic changes to specifically provide nourishment and nutrients to her child.

[22 : 09] even pro-choice atheist philosopher Peter Singer admits that there is no doubt that from the first moments of its existence, an embryo conceived from human sperm and egg is a human being.

And there are thousands of biology and embryology textbooks, modern DNA studies, medical dictionaries, science professors, and medical researchers that all confirm that life begins at fertilization.

And every mother, like me, that has experienced pregnancy knows that with every kick and movement the baby makes, life is blooming for the child growing inside. So when does life begin? It is a scientific certainty that human life begins at the moment of conception. Therefore, every abortion kills an innocent human being. To suggest otherwise is to ignore the scientific facts and miss the miracle of life.

So whether it's the abortion pill in the first trimester or surgical abortion in the second or third trimester, it's all the same. Abortion takes the life of an innocent human being in the womb.

[23 : 16] And this is happening in Canada today to over 100,000 children every year. Let's go now to the cross. Maybe you or somebody that you know has had an abortion.

There is mercy and grace and more. There is cleansing and healing from sins for those who have committed them, all of us, at the cross.

God sent his son Jesus into the world to die on the cross and atone for our sins, including the sin of taking the life of a child in the womb.

There's a proverb of Solomon that catches my attention every time I read it. Proverbs 28, verse 17. Anyone tormented by the guilt of murder will seek refuge in the grave.

Let no one hold them back. There are lots of sins that we have no trouble with accepting that Jesus' death paid for it and I'm forgiven. But this particular sin has been known to haunt people who have committed it for the rest of their lives.

[24 : 29] So much so that before Christ came there seemed in many ways only one way to escape that guilt. But now, the good news is that someone greater than Solomon has come and there is a refuge for those tormented by the guilt of murder.

The perfect Lamb of God, the one who sacrificed himself to take away the sins of the world, Jesus Christ. Christ. In the words of Isaiah the prophet, we all like sheep have gone astray.

Each of us has turned to our own way. We've all blown it. We've all done bad things. We've all done evil. And the Lord, God, has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him.

And by his wounds, we are healed. This is just one passage of many which describes what the sacrificial death of Jesus has done for sinners of all different stripes.

[25 : 45] It has brought healing. It has brought the cure. It has brought the remedy for our guilt. Forgiveness, atonement, cleansing.

And so if you or someone you know has had an abortion, God's grace and mercy through Jesus at the cross is greater. The Bible tells us that if we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, you can be free of that guilt forever.

But there's more that we find here at the cross. Not just forgiveness for people who have had an abortion or performed an abortion, but forgiveness for all of us who have sat idly by and done nothing to stand up for the lives of the pre-born in the womb.

I don't need to convince you this morning that abortion is evil, that it's wrong. Every single one of us after hearing what's done in a surgical abortion and seeing what it really is in the womb even before the second trimester, we know deep down inside that it's wrong, that it's evil, that it's something that God hates, that it breaks his heart to see that happen.

The problem is that we all too often don't feel that way, the way that God does about abortion.

[27 : 21] We care more about what other people think about us than those children being slaughtered in the womb. And so we won't fly the pro-life flag.

We won't go march in the pro-life rallies. We've got more important things to do. But let me ask you this. Is there any more important action for us as Christians today in our society than action against this vile and barbaric thing happening in Canada today?

Listen to these words. James chapter 1 verse 27. Religion that God our Father accepts is pure and faultless is this.

To look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. What is James' point here?

He's saying a few different things but one of those things he's making the point that real faith in God takes action. It sees the need of the needy and it doesn't just sit there on the sidelines and watch.

[28 : 31] It gets involved in meeting that need. James returns to this again in chapter 2 verse 14.

He says, What good is it my brothers and sisters if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds?

Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them go in peace keep warm and well fed but does nothing about their physical needs what good is it?

in the same way faith by itself if it is not accompanied by action is dead. Real living faith in God in Jesus takes action.

It not only notices the need of the poor and the vulnerable but it takes action to meet those needs.

We are called by God every one of us to love our neighbor.

What did the Apostle John say about that in his letter? 1 John 3 verse 18 He said, Dear children let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

[29 : 45] We could consider the words of Solomon in Proverbs 24 verse 11. Rescue those being led away to death. Hold back those staggering towards slaughter.

If you say but we knew nothing about this does not he who weigh the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?

Or consider the words of King Lemuel in Proverbs 31 verses 8 and 9. Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. For the rights of all who are destitute.

Speak up and judge fairly. Defend the rights of the poor and needy. Many of us are guilty because we have not done this for the unborn children in our nation.

Some of us have been silent. Others of us have talked a lot about abortion but only to one another as a lament about how things are getting worse in our society and so we too must come to the cross for mercy and forgiveness.

[30 : 56] We have not loved our unborn neighbors as ourselves. We have not spoken up in the land for those who cannot speak up for themselves. We have not made efforts to rescue those who are being led away to death.

We have watched things get worse and worse and have said well I guess there is nothing more that we can do about it. It is pretty much a done deal in Canada right? Even if I was to fly the pro-life flag what would people think of me?

What if people are nasty to me? Listen if every single person in Canada thought that abortion was good and that those who oppose it are evil and hateful it doesn't change the reality of what is going on.

Taking the life of an unborn child in the womb is wrong. It's barbaric and if you and I are the only ones left standing up and saying that whatever the cost we do right and we honor the Lord who created every human being in his image.

Perhaps for some of us we just need to redefine success when it comes to the fight against abortion. Of course we want to win the cultural war.

[32 : 12] we want to see abortion outlawed in our nation but even if it goes the opposite way our duty as citizens of the kingdom of heaven is to stand against this evil and to act against this evil to speak up against it in whatever ways we can until it's gone from our land or the Lord takes us home.

That's what success looks like in the fight against abortion. It's not just about achieving certain political goals or societal reforms it's about being faithful where the Lord has put us with whatever wicked injustices are going on in our own neighborhoods.

Think about it this way if we all lived in some of those Muslim countries in another place in the world we wouldn't even be having this conversation. There'd be different stands to take.

There'd be other societal evils that we'd be talking about today because some of those countries don't practice abortion at all. It's looked down on by the whole society as a horrid and barbaric thing to do.

But this is the place that we live and this is the evil going on in our country. Now I know for many Christians in the evangelical church we've been really discouraged at how things seem to be trending especially when it comes to this issue of abortion.

[33 : 36] it seems like we're just continuously sliding farther and farther away from where we should be especially when it comes to the political arena. But we can't give up the fight on this one.

Innocent human beings are still dying. I know some have looked at the way things are just spiraling downward and looked at those warnings in scripture that say it's going to get worse at the end but we can't give up the fight.

So long as it's happening in our own land we cannot give up the fight. Many of you will have heard about the school shooting in Texas by now. We talked about it during prayer time and prayed for those people.

There's a lot of anger and outrage at how the police responded to the situation. Some people seem to agree that the right thing to do in this situation was for the police to just charge right in there and stop that young man as soon as possible even if it meant putting their own lives on the line.

That's their duty as law enforcement officers. Many are saying I mean how many innocent children's lives were in danger while that shooter was alive and firing things off in there.

[34 : 53] Nineteen of them were killed. Parents were outraged because it seemed to them like the officers were cowardly waiting on the sidelines for the specialists to come in while innocent children were in danger.

Whether that's the whole story or not I don't know. But I got thinking about that. How many of us are just like that when it comes to abortion? Waiting on the sidelines.

All too content to leave the fight up to someone else. Not wanting to take flack or put ourselves into the crossfire. But we have to get in there. We have to do whatever we can to put an end to this.

We don't know when the world will end. We don't know when Jesus will return. Think back to William Wilberforce and how he felt in the late 1700s as he looked at the slave trade.

The barbaric treatment of black men, women, and children. It was his faith that led him to fight the fight which by God's grace resulted in the abolishment of the slave trade.

[36 : 03] Can you imagine if instead William Wilberforce had looked at those passages of scripture that say that it's going to get worse and just thought to himself, well, I know it's evil, I know it's horrible what they're doing, but it says it's going to get worse and so it's a lost cause.

What would our society look like today? We don't know when the Lord will return or when the end will come. It could be another hundred years. Perhaps by the Lord's grace in answer to the prayers of his people, he will grant Canada a season of reform and renewal even if only on this one issue of abortion.

I mean, who of us here today thought that we would even be hearing news down in the United States of overturning Roe versus Wade? Who of us thought that today in the United States of America there would be whole states banning abortion almost entirely.

Oklahoma just passed a law banning abortion from the moment of fertilization onward with only one or two very rare exceptions and citizens are going to be allowed to file civil lawsuits against anyone

caught providing abortions in the state as a way to keep them from doing it on the sly. what this shows is that change is still possible even in our own nation. Even if our own nation continues to slide downhill morally in every other area we can still pray and fight for a Canada whose eyes have opened up to the evil of abortion just like Wilberforce did for the slave trade. [37 : 49] Let's not give up the fight. I've been at almost all of the local pro-life meetings for the past number of years. I was at the March for Life this year in Regina.

I went to the SAS pro-life convention a couple years back and there's one thing that's missing from all of these things. The evangelical church.

There's the odd few here and there but mostly the ones engaged in some form of action against abortion in Saskatchewan. They're almost all Catholic people. Where's the evangelical church of Saskatchewan?

In a province of a million people we had just 200 show up for the March for Life this year at the Ledge in Regina and those 200 were from all over Saskatchewan and almost all of them were Catholic.

And I wonder is it only the Catholics that see and care about what's going on? In our nation today? I'm told that at one time the local pro-life group here in Davidson had a whole bunch of people in it and that the Catholics were actually a minority.

[39 : 00] Now it's just seven of us and they're all Catholic except for me. Let me ask you something. You tell me.

why can't what just happened in Oklahoma happen here in Saskatchewan? I think it's because many of us are sitting on the sidelines and waiting for the specialists to come in and do it for us. So let me give you some practical encouragement this morning about how you can join the fight, about how you can participate in rescuing those being led away to death, how you can speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.

First of all, some of you will say, I don't have time. You need to make time for this. The lives of innocent children are at stake and surely there are other things in life that can be left undone.

Second, I'm not calling you to become the next full-time staff member of a pro-life organization. Each of us has different gifts and skills and abilities and responsibilities that we need to care for.

[40 : 16] What are yours? Have you figured out how you can participate meaningfully, effectively in this cause yet? For some of you it might be really obvious, for others it might be a bit of a journey, growing to understand what's going on and how you can meaningfully contribute to this cause.

And that's okay. I've been on that journey for myself a long time now. And with each passing year it's becoming clear what I can do and what I can't. You may be in a truly busy season of life in which everything is important and so maybe all you can manage is something small but regular.

Others of you may have a bunch of time to give but just you're not sure what to do. There are lots of opportunities. Let me just list off a bunch of them. First of all, make it your goal each year to do something for the unborn.

Maybe you're at the very beginning of this journey and your goal for this year is simply to get more information about the issue, about what's really going on and what the opportunities are. How can you do that?

You can come talk to me. You could come sit in on a meeting of our local pro-life group and ask questions. No commitment necessary. You can do some research online about what's happening with this in our province or our country.

[41 : 36] You can watch the movie Unplanned, sort of a docudrama following the story of Abby Johnson. There are lots of good websites that have good information about the issue and how to talk about it with other people.

You could attend an event or a conference on the subject that will help you see what's going on behind the scenes. In fact, our local pro-life group will do whatever we can to pay your way to go, including hotel fees if we can swing it.

We're a small group, but we would love to see people go and be informed on this. There are excellent books on the subject that you could read. And as you learn more about what's going on with this issue, you can begin to prayerfully make some goals about what fits for you, what you can manage to do that's regular and beneficial to the cause over the next year.

Let me just give you some ideas of what kind of opportunities exist. Wouldn't it be great to see the attendance at the March for Life explode from just 200 to suddenly 5,000?

Think about the message that would send to our province and our government year after year. It's one day a year. It's a couple hours of that day. Or maybe you know of a young single mother or a pregnant gal in our community.

[43 : 02] maybe you could simply offer to help that person out with babysitting every other week. For many young women, the deciding factor between getting an abortion or not is whether they have people in their life to support them and get and help them.

Perhaps you could be one of those people for them. I know of a young gal in a nearby community who not too long ago told a Christian woman that she was pregnant. She was thinking about getting an abortion.

And by talking to this Christian woman, the young gal decided to keep her baby and is very glad that she did. And it wasn't anything special that this Christian woman said to her.

She just encouraged her not to have an abortion, to think carefully about making that decision, to think about carrying the child to term and putting it up for adoption and offered to help her out however she could.

Simple conversation for women to have. Along those lines, even just building a friendship with a young person is a great way to participate.

[44 : 07] Maybe just do a fun activity with them, take them out for a round of golf or an ice cap from Timmy's, whatever you do, build a friendship with them. Guy or gal, both could be responsible for a pregnancy somewhere down the line.

And you could easily have opportunity to speak into their lives at just the right moment. They might even take what you say to them and speak that same wisdom and encouragement to their friends and offer their support to them.

Or, maybe you decide to make it your participation to pray every week about this issue for a year. prayer. Maybe you find another person to share that with and to keep accountable to that goal.

Or even better, meet with them and pray with them. Even if it's just 15 minutes a week, pray with them about it. God does amazing things in answer to prayer. Then there's the whole political side of the issue.

We need to get more pro-life butts in the decision-making seats in our province and in our country. And the amazing thing about this is, is that it can require very little effort sometimes.

[45 : 20] It can be as simple as taking out a cheap membership for a year and voting in a nomination race for a pro-life candidate or leader. In fact, there's such a race going on right now for the leadership of the Conservative Party.

And whatever you think about the Conservative Party and that whole thing going on, let me ask you this. Who would help the cause of the unborn more in Canada? Jean Charest or Leslyn Lewis, an unashamedly pro-life member of Parliament who has openly promised to bring it up in Parliament if elected?

Your vote can help make the difference between those two for ten bucks in a few minutes of your time. If you're interested in that, you'll have to get your party membership by next Friday.

Or if you're just interested in that in general, you can look up the pro-life organization right now. It starts right now, .ca. Their sole purpose is to connect pro-life people with those significant voting moments that can make all the difference in getting pro-life people into those positions in political parties and in the decision-making seats in our nation.

Maybe as you think of having conversations about this issue, you know that you struggle. You find it tough to talk about this with people, not sure what to say.

[46 : 44] But what if I told you that there were young men and women here in Canada today who aren't just having conversations with people about abortion all the time but are changing the minds of people about abortion all the time?

There are. What if you could enable them to have more conversations with people full-time through some regular monthly giving? Local pregnancy counseling centers are on the front lines and they need financial support.

Other groups like the Canadian Center for Bioethical Reform are training young people to engage our culture effectively with the truth about abortion. And they have countless stories about women who changed their mind, who made a different choice than they were planning to make, and kept their babies.

There are all kinds of ways to be involved. If you live on land outside of town, you can raise awareness by putting up a sign. We got a whole bunch of signs we just ordered. Charles is getting two of them.

They're great signs. We'd love to put one up on your yard by the road if you have land. We got the pro-life flag up at the back.

[47 : 56] That's the new international pro-life flag. We're going to fly that in the month of May. If you want a bumper sticker or a lawn sign of that flag, we can get you that. Or if you're online, if you are on social media and you regularly post things on there or share things on there, you could post and share the occasional video clip related to the issue.

I'm not talking news clips, but clips that are made to change people's minds. The Choice 42 satire clips, we watched a couple, are great. The live action clips are great.

The 3D animated clips of development in the womb are great. You never know what somebody will see as they're stumbling through your profile looking at stuff and oh, they watch this and that seed is sown in their minds.

There are so many opportunities out there and as I said before, it might take some exploration to find your niche, your thing, the thing that fits you.

But it's one of the worthiest causes in Canada today. The life of every child in the womb is absolutely worth fighting for. And so let's not give up the fight.

[49 : 11] Let's not sit on the sidelines and wait for someone else to come and do it for us. Let's get in the fray. Let's see if we can do something. I'm going to end with this.

On Friday evening, I gave a talk and led discussion on abortion with the youth. I gave them freely the opportunity to be honest and just tell me whatever they think about it.

What's their opinion? When is it okay? When is it not okay? Up till what point in the pregnancy? Most of them were somewhat okay with it up to a point in the pregnancy.

And one of them afterwards, a 15-year-old girl said to me, this was after the time, she said, you changed my mind. And I thought, if everything I've done and said and put into this saves only one life, it will have been worth it.

God's not asking us to change the whole world. He's just asking for us to be faithful and to lovingly move towards whatever needs we can in our neck of the woods.

[50 : 17] And there are some little ones in our neck of the woods who are deeply in need. Let's pray. Let's pray. Father in heaven, this is a heavy topic.

And we pray and ask that you would work with great power in our country. We pray for just laws that protect the life, the lives of human babies in the womb.

We pray for the change of hearts in people all across our society. And we pray and ask that you would show each one of us how we're meant to participate.

Lead us in that. Guide us in that. Give us wisdom. Show us how we can join in this fight. And we pray and ask that you would bring glory and grace and life through us.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.