

Gregg L. Cunningham, Executive Director

December 2008

Dear Pro-Life Friend,

On December 1, 2008, we received an e-mail message from a twenty-one-year-old woman from Jacksonville, NC. She had just seen our aborted baby photos and wrote to tell us that:

I was a woman who supported abortion, I am ten weeks pregnant. In the beginning I thought about getting an abortion but after seeing this I have changed my mind and I am now very much against abortion. To think that I was about to end a life that is so precious to me is so selfish and unforgiving.

Pastors want to believe that people already know about abortion. But they don't. Even pastors don't. In one recent twenty-four-hour period, we received seven e-mail messages from people who were shocked by what they saw on our website regarding abortion: The first said "I had no idea...." The next said "...changed my mind completely...." Another exclaimed "Oh my God!" From a woman who admitted to two abortions, we read "More information should be made available (like this site). I am convinced it would have changed my mind." The next said "I was amazed This is so horrific...." Another said "I never knew" The last explained that "I always thought abortion was okay until I saw videos and photos." We get these kinds of messages all the time. Even people of conscience seldom appreciate the full horror of genocide until they see the atrocities with their own eyes. That is why perpetrators of genocide usually kill people who have cameras. Making the world understand crimes against humanity without using pictures is next to impossible.

On December 5, 2008, CNN.com/Europe published a series of articles as an adjunct to a documentary film on contemporary genocide titled "Scream Bloody Murder: The world's most heinous crime." The lead story begins:

They share a deep sorrow; an idealistic American who tried to protect the Kurds of Iraq, a Canadian general who refused to follow orders in Rwanda, a French priest who fought for the soul of Cambodia.

Each one tried to focus the world's attention on the world's most heinous crime; genocide. Each time, they were shunned, ignored or told it was someone else's problem.

Powerful, socially liberal "conservatives" also angrily shun us, ignore us and tell us abortion is someone else's problem. *The New York Times*, December 7, 2008 (Abortion Politics Didn't Doom the G.O.P.) quotes our pro-abortion "conservative" opponents:

... Christie Whitman, the former New Jersey governor and Bush Administration E.P.A. chief, explained after the election ... [Republicans] lost because ‘the party was taken hostage by “social fundamentalists,” the people who base their votes on such social issues as abortion.’

... [C]onservative columnist Kathleen Parker made the same point more vividly: ‘The evangelical, right-wing, oogedy-boogedy branch of the G.O.P. is what ails the erstwhile conservative party.’ The neoconservative writer Max Boot was diffident about the matter (‘I don’t think Republicans need to panic,’ he wrote but ‘one area where I do see some room for adjustment is on the issue of abortion’) and the right-wing humorist P.J. O’Rourke was blunt (pro-lifers should ‘give the issue a rest’).

Ms. Parker later defined “oogedy-boogedy” as the mistake of basing one’s opposition to abortion on scripture (NationalReview.com, December 5, 2008, “Them Oogedy-Boogedy Blues”) but even evangelical pastors want us to “give the abortion issue a rest.”

The following remarks were recently forwarded to CBR after being received by one of our long-time major donors from pastors of the large evangelical church he attends. Our donor asked me to propose rebuttals to the pastors’ arguments for not supporting a crisis pregnancy center ministry to which he has been urging them to contribute.

The pastors: “Why aren't people and ministries giving, and why does this appear (from your perspective) to be falling to ... [our mega-church] to ‘rescue’ the rescuers?” They then add that:

... the information I have heard would suggest that Dr. James Dobson (a heavy supporter and well-known champion of crisis pregnancy centers in the past) has decided that his research would suggest that Christians just will not support these kinds of organizations. Why? I'm not certain. They just don't.

Perhaps Christians don’t support crisis pregnancy centers (or any other pro-life ministry) in significant numbers because of weak leadership in the churches in which they worship. On September 25, 2001, The Barna Group reported nationwide survey results which revealed that only 12% of America’s Protestant senior pastors list “leadership” as a skill with which they perceive themselves to be gifted. There is nothing new about churches with weak leaders refusing to oppose injustice. Examples abound:

1. “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” Fredrick Douglass, 1852, (TeachingAmericanHistory.org):

The American church is guilty, when viewed in connection with what it is doing to uphold slavery; but it is superlatively guilty when viewed in connection with its ability to abolish slavery. The sin of which it is guilty is one of omission as well of commission.

2. *Abolitionism and American Religion*, McKivigan, (Taylor and Francis, 1999):

An "... examination ... [of evangelist Charles Grandison Finney's] ... theology and his antislavery activities reveals not only a firm commitment to abolitionism, but also a conviction that Christian indifference to slavery impeded the great work of spreading the gospel."

3. *Indifference Of The Church To Child Labor Reform*, Rev. John Haynes Holmes, 1910 (Sage Publications/American Academy of Political and Social Science):

... [I]t is a matter of no little surprise ... to find the Church named among the forces described as antagonistic to child labor reform ... [despite] what such a rich and powerful institution as the Church might do in the education and inspiration and direction of public opinion

4. *International Handbook of Violence Research*, Heitmeyer and Hagan (Springer, 2003), V. Coexisting with violence: The Bystanders, p.p. 157 – 158:

Only a small minority of [German] Protestant Christians openly rejected the persecution of the Jews. The weak resistance to the National Socialist persecution of the Jews was particularly apparent in the relative failure to assist Christians of Jewish descent, who, irrespective of their religious beliefs, were fully subjected to the persecutions

* * *

... Germany's Catholic bishops were unable to find the resolution to protest publicly against the persecution and murder of the Jews.

5. *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*, Jim Waller, (Oxford University Press, 2002), author interview, *Whitworth Today*, Whitworth.edu, "Failing to Meet Christ's Highest Ideals?", Spring 2007, speaking of the response of religious institutions to the Holocaust, Rwandan genocide and ethnic-cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina:

... [G]enocidal responses include sins of omission (silence and denial) and sins of commission (accommodation and active participation in killings). In the Holocaust, church hierarchies followed their own narrowly defined best interests Such interests were best advanced by silence and denial, rather than by protest or heroism.

6. In Light of Truth, "The Anthropocentric Predisposition of Revivalism," inlightoftruth.com, J. Seth Wallace, 2004:

Even recently, years after the Emancipation Proclamation, Reinhold Niebuhr urged Billy Graham to preach more about racism in a country where revivalism prospered in the midst of this great sin that was as prevalent among the 'born again' as those who were not. When the focus is on man, how he can be saved, how he can get help from God, and such, sin does not truly have to be confronted.

7. April 16, 1963, Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail":

... I have looked at the South's beautiful churches with their lofty spires pointing heavenward. I have beheld the impressive outlines of her massive religious education

buildings. Over and over I have found myself asking: ‘What kind of people worship here? Who is their God? Where were their voices ... when bruised and weary Negro men and women decided to rise from the dark dungeons ...?’

8. R.C. Sproul, Ligonier Ministries, April 2007 “Message of the Month”:

Of the books that I’ve written, over fifty, the one that went out of print the fastest was the book I wrote [titled] The Case Against Abortion. ... [Y]ou couldn’t give it away. And we would ask pastors, why won’t you use this series? And we heard the same answer again and again ‘We can’t do that. It will divide our church.’ Because our churches are as divided on this question as the nation is.

Matthew 24:12 says that as the end times near, “... the love of most will grow cold.” Thank you for keeping your love warm. Thank you for standing with us as we press the church to break its long and discrediting pattern of silence which encourages genocide.

The church has a long and terrible record of indifference where atrocities are concerned. But again and again, individual Christians intervened to stop evil while their pastors were preaching accommodation and appeasement. We understand why the Republican Party wants us to leave them alone. We understand why the universities to which we take our Genocide Awareness Project photo exhibits want us to leave them alone. We understand why the Planned Parenthood supporting corporations in front of whose retail outlets we will be displaying aborted baby photos want us to leave them alone. We even understand why churches want us to leave them alone. But by God’s grace and with your help, we aren’t going to leave any of these powerful institutions alone until abortionists finally leave the babies alone. The economy is getting tougher and our donations are slipping. We have reduced the size of our staff. We take some of the lowest salaries among major pro-life organizations. We have tried hard to avoid excess debt. We are doing our part to get through these difficult times without reducing our effectiveness. Please stay with us. We need you now more than ever.

Lord bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregg Cunningham', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gregg Cunningham
Executive Director

P.S. On December 12, 2008, a nineteen-year-old girl from Victorville, CA, said our photos had “... inspired me to do more about ... [abortion] instead of sitting back and letting it happen.” She will now save lives because you helped us spur her to action!