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Short Endorsement...

“We bring a small group of people from our church to the abortion clinic once per month as a part of our church’s outreach and evangelism efforts. It has done much for our fellowship, our ministry, our passion, and commitment to the Lord, the Gospel mission, and the local church. We are certain after involving ourselves in this ministry that it is one of the many ways churches are to fulfill the Great Commission, and something our Lord himself wants us to do. Who is more “least than these” than an innocent baby with no fighting power? I wish that every church in Charlotte would dare to experience the same, and commit once a month to bringing a group of Christians to a local abortion clinic: To pray, to engage in Gospel conversation, to sing, to counsel, to pass out helpful information, to step up and step in at the last possible moment of intervention; to be a *pillar and buttress of the truth*. 1 Tim. 3:15 Cities4Life is the answer many Pastors and Christians have been waiting for, marrying unapologetic boldness and real feet to the ground action with true Spirit-led ideas and resources. This organization makes it so easy for any church to get involved on some level with real Pro-Life ministry.”

Longer Article/Endorsement...

One Pastor’s Take on Christians and Abortion Clinics

Who am I? Bobby Wilkinson, a pastor/elder of a small church in the greater Charlotte region. I’m a nobody really, a sinner saved by grace, grateful husband and father, a church planter, and fellow pastor who has served 10 plus years in various churches and ministry work in the Charlotte area. I don’t pastor a huge church, or have thousands of people following me. I think I’m as normal as the next guy, and if anything good has ever come from these hands or this mouth, it came from Jesus, who spoke or acted in me while the Holy Spirit was holding back my fighting flesh. I want to help those like me realize that they and their church can make a huge difference in the lives of broken and lost families through prolife ministry. It only takes obedience.

Who are these crazy people? Cities4Life offers a variety of ways for Christians to fight the battle against abortion. For the purpose of this article, I want to focus on one, the one most people have an issue with; abortion clinic ministry. One of the greatest misconceptions about people who go to minister at abortion clinics is that it is a protest, made up primarily of radical, agenda driven, unloving and brash people who are an embarrassment to Christianity. Clearly, any ministry with a hint of confrontation might first attract those whom aren’t bothered by it, and sadly sometimes people are led by the flesh and not by Spirit, as in any area of life and ministry. All the more reason to get more “normal” church people like you in the game! But those “loose cannon” types are the unfortunate and rare minority, the ones who miraculously make it on to the news for all to

see, like the woman in the night gown and sponge rollers after the tornado hits the trailer park. The overwhelming majority of people that I have witnessed in action at clinics are just normal Christian people, from different churches and backgrounds, of various races and ages, gifts and abilities, burdened about the same thing; the Glory of God to overtake the destruction of souls and human life that happens at child killing centers.

So why must the church be so concerned with ministering at abortion clinics?

Abortion: A Gospel Issue – This battle is undeniably a Gospel issue, and everyone in God’s church should be concerned with the Gospel. At the very core of pro life ministry are two facts, the church has the Gospel, and those involved in abortion need the Gospel. What we must do is show up and give it to them, and when the church chooses to ignore the gospel opportunities that arise at killing centers, it misses one of the largest and whitest fields that America has to harvest. The cross Jesus carried to Calvary was the ultimate reason He came. His cross had to be carried as a result of an assault by the enemy on innocent, free people God created in His image. Free man of course chose poorly, and lost his innocence, and he died spiritually and eventually physically. Abortion is not much different, an assault by the serpent on the seed of the woman. His tactics haven’t changed, robbing the innocent of life and destroying the soul of the one who chooses death. Unlike Adam, this baby has no earthly voice for choice, but it has a divine one, blood that cries out to a just God. Precious preborn babies need Gospel representatives on earth to speak on their behalf, and we speak when we imitate Christ by picking up the cross of burden and responsibility and die to ourselves on it repeatedly for the Glory of God, the advancement of the Gospel, and the saving of innocent life. This is the mission of sidewalk counselors, prayer warriors and ministers of Jesus at abortion clinics. Do you have eyes to see that abortion is a gospel issue that the church cannot afford to ignore any longer? Though there are many strategies in winning this battle long term, none is more vital than the presence of the Church of God at the place where the battle for souls and lives physically manifests.

Don’t knock it til you try it – Many well meaning friends, sometimes the simple or uninformed, sometimes the status protecting leader types, will tell me, “How can yelling at people at an abortion clinic be loving, it seems unchristian like”, or “how effective is it really?”, or my favorite, “I don’t believe in protesting at abortion clinics.” Although there have been a few effective responses to these questions that I’ve used, I have to say the most common response I give now is simply, “What has been your experience at the abortion clinic?” It gets pretty quiet after that. After 10 plus years of frequenting abortion clinics and observing all that goes on there, I am able to say without apology that no Believer can truly assert that gospel ministry at an abortion clinic is a bad idea. I honestly believe the Church must unite at least over this basic principle, that the church of God must have a unified presence in real, feet to the ground, pro-life ministry. Every single Christian is not going to spend every single day at an abortion clinic, and that’s not what I’m asking. Only that *every single* Christian, and I mean every one, should support the idea of Christians ministering at an abortion clinic, and if they can’t go themselves, to speak very, very highly, and with gratitude for the ones who take the Gospel there, also blessing them with prayers, resources, and financial support.

Come once and pick up your cross - I have known many people to leap out in faith and come to an abortion clinic once to see what it’s like, and most all of them leave changed forever. It’s impossible to stand at a place where you physically see people walking in to a building where the very human life growing inside of them will be abruptly and violently

terminated, and then leave like you just finished a peaceful walk in the park. If you dare come once, you'll catch a burden. When Jesus says, "take up your cross and follow me", is there only one cross to bear initially at salvation, or is following Jesus more about a life of constantly identifying and picking up the same kinds of crosses that he bore? Jesus bore many figurative crosses at once, he carried many burdens, and clearly ones for orphans, widows, and little children. You may have a few crosses you're already carrying, but I believe there is a cross to bear for every single professing Christian. One that we have preferred for too long to ignore. I am urging you, if you have never been to an abortion clinic, just come once, and pick up your cross; it's waiting there for you. Come get your burden, then let God show you what to do with it.

What do you want from me!!! - By now, you're going, "dude, ok, we get it, normal Christian people can come see God do extraordinary things at abortion clinics; so, what do you want from me!?!?" The answer to this question is "nothing". I don't want anything from you, except to come once. So, the question is, what does the Holy Spirit want from you? I didn't give you the burden, the gifts, the calling, or the ministry, God did. How does he want you to use all the talents He has given you to wage Gospel war against the plans of the enemy to destroy life? There are so many ways to engage in active battle in this pro-life ministry. If you ask, He will make it clear. I am confident of this, that He who began this burden in you when you picked up your cross at the clinic, will be faithful to bring it to completion.

Don't tell me you're pro-life because you vote R at the booth. Show me you're pro-life by how you intercede on behalf of orphans in their distress. I have a friend who has yet to be able to come to the abortion clinic with me, but his family is in the process of adopting an older Latvian orphan. He's pro-life. Another friend has nowhere near the money needed to adopt, but he serves monthly at a clinic. He's pro-life. There are people who won't or can't serve at a clinic, but they fund and meet the needs of those who do. They're pro-life. A few families I know haven't come to the clinic, but they donated thousands of dollars worth of furniture stocking a home for moms who choose life and adoption. They are pro-life. My father works every day of the week except Sunday, but a somehow a couple times a year he makes it with me to pray and minister at a clinic. He's pro-life. A retired lady represents Christ 5 days a week at a local clinic, she's pro-life. Some print and distribute flyers, collect signatures for legislation, repeatedly contact senators and representatives, they are pro-life. Going to church, voting R, living in the south doesn't make you pro-life, by in large the church needs a little less talk and a lot more action.

Bright Churches and Dark Clinics - Local churches are light, local abortion clinics are dark, and will always remain that way unless the light chooses to come closer. No politician or political bill can extract murder from the hearts of an individual, only the Church has the answer through the Gospel. ***John 3:20*** *For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. 21But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.* When the Light comes close to the darkness, the darkness either flees, or comes to the light in repentance. ***Ephesians 5:11*** *Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.* We know about not partaking in sin, but how many of us have engaged in the role of exposing it? A simple application of these Scriptures to the idea of clinic ministry makes it

clear that we have a definite role in exposing sin and darkness, and on their turf obviously, for that's where the darkness is. We don't expose in order to "cast stones", but to cast nets, we're fishers of men, offering an invitation to Jesus, the only answer for the sin problem. We know that a heart can't trust Christ if it doesn't repent, and it can't repent until it sees the need, and it can't see the need unless the Light exposes the sin. Is there any concern in your spirit about the fact that broken, distressed, jaded, rebellious, ignorant, confused or lost people who die apart from Christ suffer in Hell forever? For a heart that doesn't see or understand that it is dark and lost will die and spend eternity separated from God. It is not always enjoyable shining the light of the Gospel on a person that is in an actual act of darkness, but how else will he or she come to Christ? Don't hide your little light under a bushel while your neighbors are in darkness, rather **Matt. 5:16** *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

The Role of a Pastor - Equip Saints for Ministry - I want to close by talking to fellow pastors. My admonitions to you are not wishful thinking; we have walked this out and know it to be true. If your church is even halfway healthy, there are evangelists in your church, do you know them? They are like the imprisoned warrior who has forgotten his own strength, being locked away so long he has lost his desire to even fight. All he sees are the walls around him, and he has submitted himself to the one with the keys, though he possesses the power to break free. Pastors, you are the ones with the keys, and let's be honest, we like the predictability, control, and exclusivity we enjoy by keeping our people at bay. Think I'm off my rocker? How many times a year do you preach at your church, and how many times a year do you let other able and qualified men in your church preach? Why do we have a senior pastor with deacons and lay people who serve beneath, instead of an abundance and plurality of qualified men leading churches with deacons who serve beside? Why are we more concerned with how many joined our church last year than with how many were sent out? Can you list all the teachers in your body, all the pastors, the evangelists, and the prophets, and the church planters among you? And if you have identified them, how are you equipping them for ministry in those offices? If we are honest, some of our churches are incredibly out of balance and can hardly be defined as Biblical. A pastor talking to a bunch of people who show up looking for a "hit" of Jesus each week so they can feel better about themselves is not a church. We will have a greater impact in pro-life ministry when the Church realizes again that it is one big body of many parts working together for the common good of the Gospel and the advancement of the Glory of God in all the earth. This happens in life on mission, not from 11-12 on Sunday morning. God is saying to you today, pastor, let my people GO!

I'm done preaching, pastors, you and I must literally be equipping the people in our church body for real ministry, actually living on mission with God, not satisfied until they are. It might not be your role to be at an abortion clinic every Saturday, but you have people at your church that would come for the rest of their life if you led them there just a few times. Same for many other ministries, gifts, and callings. If your church is larger than 100, I can assure you that there are some evangelists sitting around perfect for pro-life ministry, wishing someone would help them accomplish their calling. Don't leave your people in prison by never equipping them to be what they've been called to be. Let's put away the 3-point self help sermons and start calling God's Gospel army to holy war. Let's come down from our stage and pulpit, put on some commoner clothes, and lead the people in our

church out into places where dying people are. Into ghettos, street corners, shelters, door to door, abortion clinics, anywhere lost people can be found. Let's find out who in our church has what calling, what gifting, and what part of the Body they are, and equip and empower them to perform that calling. That's the job description Jesus gave you, not just preaching. A pastor/teacher is not someone who lectures well, but who's students become like Jesus. Christ does not measure us by how well we deliver the Truth on Sunday, but how well we demonstrate it every day of the week. Let's come down off the mountain and live, work, and minister alongside our people. That's how they are equipped, by watching you, not merely listening to you. If they are not equipped, it's probably because they have nothing to watch.

Your church can bring a team– If you want testimony and information on how we went about getting people from the pews to the sidewalks at Latrobe abortion clinic, email me, and I'd love to chat with you about our amazing journey. God is faithful!