



I know a different Jesus

by Marie Bowen

Texas abortion provider, Hagstrom Miller, was asked in an interview if there was a “spiritual dimension” to her work. She described her background in a “liberal Christian tradition,” and imagined Jesus supporting a woman during abortion:

“The Jesus that I was taught about would be holding the hands of women inside the clinic; he wouldn’t be screaming at them. Acting on Christian principles is holding the hands of people at difficult times in their lives, and being supportive and nonjudgmental and kind..”

(<http://bit.ly/1XvwkGP>)

“nonjudgmental”—he is the only and ultimate judge for us all.

Jesus was known for exceptional judgement.

From the time he was 12 years old, found by his parents in the temple, Jesus astonished temple leaders with his keen judgment regarding Jewish law. He saw clearly the roots of sin in people’s lives and spoke straight to the heart of their need to change.

Consider Jesus’ response to the rich young ruler who obeyed the commandments, but made riches his priority (Luke 18:18-30). Jesus saw precisely all he had done and zeroed in on the one thing lacking in his life. Then he invited him to lay down his riches and “follow me.”

Consider Jesus’ insights into the Samaritan woman at the well—he saw all her sin and the spiritual thirst that drove her to seek love from men. His judgment was spot on, but he did not condemn. Instead he offered Himself as the Living Water for which

she thirsted. (John 4:1-25)

Jesus’ judged the blood thirsty crowd waiting to stone the woman taken in adultery. He challenged them to let the sinless among them throw the first stone and the crowd dispersed. He showed her the path to changing her life when he said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

Jesus is kind, but never passively accommodates our sin

I think it’s true that Jesus would not be screaming at a woman who was pregnant and desperately wanted to be rid of her child. (He might be inside the clinic overthrowing the operating equipment and tables instead.) I cannot see him silently holding a woman’s

continued on back

Miller’s view of Jesus is distorted by her desire to promote abortion as “a normal part of women’s reproductive lives” as she describes it. She is in the business of abortion and her rhetoric is designed to cloud the ugly reality that abortion destroys a human life in a bloody and painful procedure. She casts it instead as something positive for women. The picture of Jesus that Miller paints as someone who would sit passively in an abortion clinic and be ‘nonjudgmental’ demands a response from the Christian community. The Jesus Miller learned about, is a different Jesus than the one revealed in Scripture. Miller gets some things right. Jesus would be present. He would be kind. He would not scream at the woman, but he would never ‘support’ her abortion decision and Jesus was not

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Celebrating 6 million very special people worldwide. They are participants in our churches, families, workplaces, and schools. In 1983, those born with Down Syndrome had a life expectancy of only 25 years. Today average life span is 60 years and last week the oldest living person with Down Syndrome celebrated his 76th birthday! Learn more about Down Syndrome and prenatal testing (must reading for pregnant moms - everyone should read it) at <http://www.downsyndrometest.org/download-the-draft-here/> Down Syndrome pamphlet.

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hand while she has an abortion. But, I can visualize Jesus holding both her hands in his and looking into her eyes urging her to trust him with her life and the life of her child, telling her that life is a gift he has created and promising that his purposes for her and for her child are good and lead to blessing. Jesus is intimately acquainted with all our grief and desperation. His prayer at Gethsemane is a model for us in situations that demand more from us than we want to give—that require us to lay down control of our own lives and yield to Him. Jesus prayed, “Not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). Can you not see Jesus take the hand of an abortion-minded woman, look her in the eyes and confront her fears, any selfish priorities, her disbelief, and her lack of trust with the simple words, “Daughter, I love you. Follow me.”

Jesus loves and is present

Jesus would affirm his love for her and assure her of his presence. “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Joshua 1:5). A woman considering abortion usually sees it as her only option—she doesn’t really want an abortion. She really wants for the father of her baby to stand with her, to assure her of his love and his presence and ongoing support in parenting her child. She wants love, safety, provision, and protection. The father of the baby may not be

there for her—but *Jesus stands ready to be all that she needs to empower her to choose life for her child.* The Bible story of Hagar—a slave impregnated by her Master at his wife’s request and then abused and thrown out into the desert by her Mistress Sarah—reveals God’s heart toward a pregnant woman who is alone. An angel of God is sent to her at her most desperate moment. The angel reveals to Hagar God’s promise for her and her child. He sends her back into the difficult circumstance, but she is changed. No longer desperate she has hope that God will provide for her and bless her child and her child’s children. (Genesis 16)

I suspect most women seeking abortions are not expecting Jesus to show up, but if they were to encounter him I think he would say, “Choose life so that you and your children may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19). I believe Jesus would challenge her to let go of those things she is holding so tightly (career, education, money) and receive the incredible gift he offers—the life of a child, her child, his creation. With tears, I believe he would tell her he loves her, he loves her child, enough to have died for them both so that they might truly live!

I see Jesus also waiting outside the abortion clinic. As each woman, who has just aborted a child, exits, he stands ready to forgive her sin

of taking a human life, her disbelief, her fear, her lack of trust in God’s provision, and her act of putting her own will before his and before the life of her child. In the great love that took Jesus to the cross to die for my sins and yours, he would say to her, “My daughter, I love you. Follow me.”

“Praying Each Day of the Week”

By P. J. Southam



Several years ago I committed to praying daily for an end to abortion both in the United States and around the world. I found a helpful resource on the website of Priests for Life. You can find it at: <http://www.priestsforlife.org/prayers/day-ofweek.htm>

These prayers written by Father Terry Gensemer have helped me be focused and specific, rather than just vaguely general. (Though I think there is great power in the prayer: Father, stop this evil, now!)

The seven prayers are on these themes:

Sunday: Rescue the Pre-born

Monday: Spiritual Warfare

Tuesday: Kingdom Prayer (let your Kingdom come on earth)

Wednesday: Forgiveness

Thursday: Restoration of the Holiness & Protection of the Womb

Friday: For Governments (and those who govern)

Saturday: For an End to Abortion

I have each of these seven prayers in my daily prayer notebook. Seeing them (and my other prayer commitments) on a page before me helps me to keep my promises to pray. This morning I had a small inspiration. I had been offering regular prayers for Presbyterians Pro-Life. Very occasionally I have prayed for other Pro-Life organizations and people. Today, I have written them down on the page of my seven daily prayers to remind me to be praying more often for them, and for their ministries and work.

Please pray for the work of Presbyterians Pro-Life. As you know of other Pro-Life ministries please pray for them also. And may God give us renewal that we not grow weary in our commitment to prayer.

<http://www.priestsforlife.org/prayers/dayofweek.htm>