

AUTHOR Q&A ON

THE ALTERNATIVE TO ABORTION:

WHY WE MUST BE PRO ABUNDANT LIFE

Q: You have your own personal story on the life issue. How did it impact this book?

A: When I was in college, I got my then-girlfriend (now wife of more than four decades) pregnant. When she went to the campus health office, the nurse immediately recommended she get an abortion. As two poor college students, we had a choice to make – abortion or life. We chose life, and the reasons behind our choice have given me a perspective on the abortion issue that I think, sadly, has been lost in too much of the pro-life work being done around the country. In short, the fact that I was willing to be a husband to her and an involved father to the child growing inside of her was what made our unplanned pregnancy not become a crisis pregnancy. And it's the reason our son, who is now also a husband and father, is alive today. I wanted to instill those ideas throughout this book – that family, discipleship, and the gospel, not just politics, must shape the future of the pro-life movement. And when we can accomplish that goal, then we will have moved from being pro-life to Pro Abundant Life.

Q: What is the difference between pro-life and Pro Abundant Life? And why does it matter?

A: Being pro-life is a good, God-honoring, and noble thing to be. But for Christians, we have to realize that you can be an atheist and be pro-life, because it solves for saving the biological life of an unborn child. But in John 10:10, Jesus tells us that he is Pro *Abundant* Life – he wants us to have both biological life and an abundant spiritual life. As I started to decipher what that could look like, I was led to two foundational Biblical ideas that give us abundant life – strong, God-honoring families and discipleship through the Church. So, to be Pro Abundant Life is to approach pro-life ministry with the goal of not only saving a baby from abortion but ensuring two other things. First, that the mother and father are encouraged and helped to form a strong marriage and to be involved, responsible, and committed parents. And second, that we work to make them disciples of Jesus Christ so that their child also has the opportunity to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Thinking of pro-life ministry in this Pro

Abundant Life way changes the way ministries operate. I have seen it with my own eyes in my time at Care Net, and it absolutely transforms ministries and transforms the lives of the people they serve. It allows ministries to move from a transactional model to a transformational model, in which they are doing truly Biblical work (Romans 12:2).

Q: What do you hope this book accomplishes?

A: That Christians will see the pro-life issue differently. That they will realize that while the political aspect is important, it will never be the answer. Indeed, when Jesus stood before Pilate, a politician, he never expected Pilate to save him. He exposed for our sake the limits of politics. So Christians must understand that achieving true victory over abortion means moving a large part of our time, talent, and treasure away from legislative advocacy – while remaining appropriately engaged in it – and toward mobilizing the Church to provide compassion, hope, help, and discipleship to women and men at risk for choosing abortion. I want Christians to realize that this goal is achievable and that it is really the only way that the gates of hell will be overtaken on the abortion issue. Moreover, ironically, when Christians view the life issue in this pro abundant life way—see its connection to living out the Great Commandment to fulfill the Great Commission—they will vote differently as well. Sadly, a key reason that the pro-life movement has experienced significant legislative losses since the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* is because a significant number of Christians are pro-choice in the ballot box.