



The War On Children
A Christian Response

Part 1

By

Mark McGee

We are in the middle of a **violent war** on children. Do you believe that? If not, I hope this series will demonstrate that the war is real and that you will become involved in fighting against it. If you do believe in a war against children, then my hope is the series will help you develop a proper response.

How should Christians respond to the war on children?

Defending the Children

I've been training children to defend themselves against physical, emotional and spiritual attacks for decades. Our **Grace Martial Arts** and **Faith and Self Defense** programs are also designed to train parents with their children. Parents are the first line of defense for their children, so it makes sense to train the entire family.

However, times have changed since my wife and I were children and since our children were children and their children were young children. We thought of most private and public institutions as having our backs as parents, but that is less true today. Something has changed and it has not changed for the better.

The War On Children

The “war on children” had an unusual beginning. It started before children even existed.

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply. Genesis 1:27-28

Children were God’s plan from the beginning. He created “male and female” and told them to “be fruitful and multiply.” Genesis chapter two takes us inside the process God used to create “male and female” and how they would “be fruitful and multiply.”

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being ... And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then

the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. Genesis 2:7, 21-22

The mechanics of how male and female will “be fruitful and multiply” is obvious. Adam, the male, understood and presented the process.

And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. Genesis 2:23-25

Adam understood that human sexuality would lead to fathers and mothers and that children would grow up to be men and women who would marry and “become one flesh.”

So, where's the war on children? Read the next verse:

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. Genesis 3:1a

Satan was waiting in the wings of the garden and Adam's words were his cue to enter.

And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'? Genesis 3:1b

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. Genesis 3:6-7

To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children. Genesis 3:16

Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return. Genesis 3:17-19

So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:24

Satan attacked the woman first, then the man, then the family. The way Adam and Eve would live after God drove them out of the Garden of Eden changed everything. They would suffer physical and emotion pain and eventually die. They would experience great heartache with their children. We see in Genesis chapter four that Adam and Eve's first child murdered their second child. How did that happen? We turn again to Satan's war on children:

So the Lord said to Cain, Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.' Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Genesis 4:6-8

Satan knew from the moment he spoke with Eve in the garden and how she responded to his deception that his war on children and the family would be successful.

The Relentless War

The war on children did not stop with Cain killing his brother. The killing continued and the war was relentless.

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. Genesis 6:1-2

Humans were fruitful and did multiply on the face of the earth. However, there was a big problem.

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ... The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. Genesis 6:5, 11

The war that began with the first family and children continued for several generations until there were many families and children on the earth. However, Satan's deception in the garden had done its work and the wickedness of human beings was "great in the earth" and "every intent of the thoughts" of their hearts were "only evil continually." How did that manifest itself? "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."

God responded by sending a great Flood to destroy those who lived on the earth. It was His earth and He had a right to respond in judgment. However, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). God saved one man and his family. Noah married and his wife gave birth to three sons. Their three sons grew up and married. God saved Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives from the Flood.

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. Genesis 9:1

Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood. Genesis 10:1

The wives of Noah's sons gave birth to children after the Flood. Did the war on children stop? It did not.

History of the War on Children

Wickedness and violence did not end because only one family existed after the Flood. Remember that wickedness and violence began when only one family existed after the Garden. God knew that "the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21b). The war on children began soon after the end of the Flood.

Genesis 10 is often called "Table of Nations" because it contains a list of Noah's descendants through several generations. Historians are able to trace those descendants to families that built nations around the world. So, how did the

descendants of Noah do in protecting the rights of children?
Not well.

The descendants of Noah eventually built kingdoms that controlled the lives of families. As we follow the lineage of each of Noah's sons (Japheth, Ham, Shem), we find civilizations that treated some children well and some poorly. While the children of nobility, wealth and higher rank were given property and other civil rights, children of poor families and slaves had few rights if any. Many of them were physically abused and even murdered.

It is difficult to know the exact number of children killed through infanticide (child murder), neonaticide (child murdered within 24 hours of birth), and filicide (murder of child by parent) since the days of Noah, but it is most likely in the hundreds of millions if not billions.

People living in ancient civilizations viewed children as omens from the gods. Parents sacrificed some of their children to appease the gods. We see that among so many of the ancient civilizations. Infants were often murdered because of physical deformities, being sickly or just being the *wrong* sex.

Sickly children were often left outside to die from exposure or be eaten by animals. Healthy children were sometimes entombed with their dead parents to provide them (the dead parents) with companionship. Many civilizations viewed children as a financial burden and allowed parents to murder some of their children soon after birth. Governments often gave fathers the legal right to make the decision about whether a child lived or died. It was common in many civilizations for a midwife to ask the father if he wanted to keep a newborn baby. If the father did not want to keep the child, the midwife would murder the child. In some civilizations, newborns were placed on the floor of a house. The father looked at the child and decided whether the infant would live or die. The father's decision was final and legal.

You might remember that one of Egypt's pharaohs told the Hebrew midwives to let the female children live but murder the male children. However, "midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive" (Exodus 1:17). That upset the pharaoh so he commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive" (Exodus 1:22).

We find evidence of legalized infanticide in every part of the world – both in the past and the present.

Today's War on Children

Civilized people can point to the ongoing war of murdering children in many parts of the world, but they are often not able to see their own culpability in the murder of millions of children now.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that about 125-thousand children are aborted every day around the world. That's about 875-thousand a week, 3.8 million per month, 45.625 million per year. That's based on countries, states and territories that are willing to report abortion numbers. Estimates from other organizations are even higher based on women who use abortifacients (drugs, chemicals that cause abortion). Those abortions are often not included in official reports.

Another issue in counting the number of abortions is that organizations that count often come up with different numbers. For instance, the [Guttmacher Institute](#) listed more than 926-thousand abortions in the United States for 2014,

while the **Centers for Disease Control** listed less than 653-thousand abortions for the same year.

The Guttmacher Institute is a pro-choice research organization. Their estimate for annual abortions worldwide is much higher than the World Health Organization. While WHO estimates 45.625 million abortions per year, Guttmacher estimates 73 million abortions per year.

That leads us to the next question. Which countries are responsible for the most abortions?

If we talk about abortion “rate” (abortions per 1,000 women), these countries are in the top ten:

Country	Abortion Rate	2021 Population
Russia	53.7	145,912,025
Vietnam	35.2	98,168,833
Kazakhstan	35	18,994,962
Estonia	33.3	1,325,185
Belarus	31.7	9,442,862
Romania	27.8	19,127,774
Ukraine	27.5	43,466,819
Latvia	27.3	1,866,942
Cuba	24.8	11,317,505
China	24.2	1,444,216,107

Credit: World Population Review

The United States ranked 15th with a rate of 20.8 per 1,000 women.

As for the sheer number of unborn children aborted, the United States is second only to China. China legalized abortion in the 1950s and has reported hundreds of millions of abortions since that time. While China's reported numbers are about ten million abortions per year, the actual number may be closer to **23-million** per year. More than 63-million children have been aborted in the United States since abortion was legalized in 1973.

The purpose of this series is to help parents defend their children and other children across the country and around the world. We have readers from almost 200 countries and territories and most tell us they have little voice in how children are treated.

As we mentioned in the first part of our series, Satan's goal has always been to destroy the family. It's part of the devil's war on God's plans for humanity and this planet. The deception began in the Garden of Eden and continues to this day. The question before us is about a proper Christian response to the war on children. What should we do?

A Reasoned Response

Our response to any attack on children should first be **reasoned**. That means it should be logically valid. It should also be informed and thoughtful. We'll get to those in a few minutes.

The first thing we need to do is understand why children are under attack. Why would anyone want to hurt a child?

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. Genesis 1:27-28

Satan knew that humans would be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, so he attacked that very mechanism of fruitfulness – the human family. By introducing sin into the human race through deception, the devil injected an evil poison into humans that would multiply across the earth even as people were fruitful.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 1 Timothy 2:13-14

Keep in mind that Satan is God's enemy. Satan's attack is toward God. It's personal. We learn in 1 John 3:8 that "the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Jesus came to earth the first time to accomplish what would lead to Satan's ultimate destruction (Crucifixion and Resurrection). Jesus will return to earth a second time to complete what He started (Rule and Reign Forever).

Reasoned, logically valid responses are difficult in the kind of world we live in, but that's the challenge before us. We need to take every aspect of the war and determine how to address them logically.

Before we start, let me add a warning. Much of the war on children makes no sense. It's illogical. Which means that many of the people behind the war are not logical or reasonable. Think about that for a minute. We need to respond reasonably to people who are often unreasonable. That will make our job harder, but not impossible. I find it helpful to be honest about the task before us.

So, what's next?

An Informed Response

Our response must be “informed.” What I mean by that is we need to know the facts before we respond. It’s easy to respond emotionally when we see bad things being done to children. That may be okay if we’re trying to save a child from a bully’s beating. We rescue the child from harm even if it means we have to hurt the bully. We don’t have to know why the bully is beating a child, we just need it to stop. However, before we enter into the public arena and attempt to be heard about the war on children we need to be armed with facts and the proper way to share those facts with people in position to change the outcomes of bad behavior (warring against children).

Whether the war on children involves issues about education, health, sex, identity, religion, crime, etc., Christians need to develop an “informed” response. That means knowing the truth about every issue and being able to present that truth with some specificity. Details matter when responding in the war on children.

A Thoughtful Response

Third, our response should be “thoughtful.” What I mean by that is *how* we respond to attacks on children. A good response will be reasoned, informed and thoughtful.

The concept of “thoughtful Christianity” is summed up well in Ephesians 4:15 where we are told to speak the truth “in love” and in 4:25 to “speak truth with his neighbor.” Christians should “speak truth,” but they should speak it “in love.” That’s part of presenting a thoughtful response that is reasoned and informed.

Christians also need to speak “with grace.”

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. Colossians 4:6

Speaking “with grace” means being gentle and kind. Proverbs 15:1 — “A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.” This doesn’t mean we don’t speak with passion. It just means that we share our passion compassionately and without being harsh. A harsh answer, if it’s true, often stirs up anger. As Paul wrote to the Philippians — “Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand.” (Philippians 4:5)

But It’s Emotional!

The war on children is often an emotional issue. People say and do things in the heat of battle that can be less than “thoughtful.” Take the abortion issue for example.

Legalizing abortion was one of the big stories I covered as a young news reporter in the late 1960s. Emotions ran high – very high. People on both sides protested publicly. Court battles raged. Even though the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of legalizing abortion, the war continues almost 50 years

later. Emotions continue to run high. Why? Because abortion is a war on children.

I know that many people will disagree with that statement. They believe that opposing legalized abortion is a war on women. The sides are clearly lined up against each other. One side sees a war against children. The other side sees a war against women. Is it one or the other? Or is it both?

How should Christians respond to the abortion war? Keep in mind that some Christians support legalized abortion while others oppose legalized abortion. That means Christians are often lined up across from each other in the war. How should Christians respond to an issue like abortion when they disagree with each other? They should all do the same thing:

- Respond reasonably (logical)
- Respond with information (fact-based)
- Respond thoughtfully (loving and kind)

Christians who disagree with each other need to take a step back from emotional responses and think before they speak. Can they develop a reasonable, logical response? Are they informed? Do they have truth on their side? Can they respond “in love” and with gentleness and kindness? If they can, then they’re ready to make their case. If they can’t, they should wait until they can.

We need Christians who can speak logically and lovingly in a world that is on a collision course with the family. The war on children and families is real. Christians should be able to respond to the war based on the truth of God’s Word.

That, unfortunately, is where things break down. Christians often disagree on what is true in God’s Word. For instance, many Christians can’t even agree whether Jesus Christ **rose from the dead** or is the **eternal Son of God**. If Christians can’t agree on facts that are basic and central to Christianity, is it any wonder that Christians often disagree about social issues affecting children and families?

Pray

So, how can Christians come together to fight a war when they are on different sides of the war? That makes it more difficult, but it doesn't change the way we wage the war. The Apostle Paul gave us some insight:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Paul addressed several major problems in the Corinthian church in what we know as 1 Corinthians. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to respond to their response. One group in the church responded as they should in obedience to Christ. However, a second group did not respond in obedience. How did Paul respond to that group?

Paul told people in the disobedient group that even though he was a flesh and blood human being, he did not war according to the flesh. Paul wrote that his weapons were not carnal (fleshly, worldly) but “mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

That’s good advice for Christians everywhere. We need to depend on God’s power and not our own. That means we look to God in prayer and not to our own fleshly devices. A vital part of our making a reasoned, informed and thoughtful response is to first depend on the power of God. Ask God to guide you as you engage in warfare for the souls of children and families.

The Abortion War

Christians line up on two sides of this emotional argument. Some Christians are opposed to abortion on grounds that aborting a child is murder. Other Christians support abortion on grounds that abortion should be a mother's choice. One side sees abortion as a war on children. The other side sees opposition to abortion as a war on women. Which is it? Might it be both?

Let's begin by getting some historical perspective on the issue. That should help us develop a reasonable (logically valid) response.

I remember a time in the United States when abortion was not legal. In fact, I remember when the debate began. I was a young reporter, talk show host and atheist at the time. Reporting about illegal abortions came up from time to time, but not often enough in a local broadcast market to give it much thought. Abortion was classified as a crime in most states, though legal under certain circumstances in some. The

issue of abortion was not something we debated in the newsroom at the time. That was until the case of **Jane Roe**.

It seemed like just another federal lawsuit at the time. Lawyers for Norma McCorvey (alias Jane Roe) filed suit in federal court in 1970 challenging abortion laws in the state of Texas. The case was known as **Roe v. Wade** (Wade was Henry Wade, Dallas County District Attorney at the time). The U.S. District Court in Dallas ruled in favor of Roe based on the 9th Amendment to the Constitution (*“The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people”*). The court relied on a US Supreme Court ruling in a 1965 case known as **Griswold v. Connecticut** where the justices, by a vote of 7-2, invalidated a state law that prohibited the use of contraceptives. They ruled that the US Constitution protected a person’s right to privacy, including the right to “marital privacy.”

Roe v. Wade headed toward the U.S. Supreme Court on appeal, but the high court waited to hear the arguments of Roe vs. Wade and **Doe v. Bolton** (a similar case) until they decided **Younger v. Harris** (dealing with the jurisdiction of federal courts in certain types of cases). They also were dealing with an abortion rights case in the District of Columbia known as **United States v. Vuitch**. Milan Vuitch was an abortion provider who had been indicted on charges of providing illegal abortions. Vuitch sued in federal court claiming a D.C. abortion law was unconstitutionally vague. Federal District Judge Gerhard Gesell ruled in favor of Vuitch, which was the first time a federal court declared that an abortion law was unconstitutional. That was in 1969. The District of Columbia appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and the high court narrowly ruled in favor of the District in 1971, though it was not a clear victory for those who opposed abortion rights. Though the justices voted that the District of Columbia's law was not "vague," they treated abortion as a medical procedure, which opened up the appeals from Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton.

Those appeals were scheduled to be heard by the full court at the end of 1971, but were delayed because of the retirements of two Supreme Court justices (Black and Harlan). At the same time, individual states were dealing with pro-abortion legislation. The issue of abortion was becoming a major issue for journalists. It was growing in importance as a news story, so how would we cover it? Like we covered every other story – objectively and fairly.

After the Supreme Court upheld *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, it opened a floodgate for legal abortions in every state in our country. As a journalist it meant that abortion was no longer a crime story, but that didn't mean abortion was no longer a story. Journalists have covered abortion legislation, legal appeals, court trials, protests for and against abortion, bombings of abortion clinics, and assaults, kidnappings and murders of abortion providers.

So, given the history of legalizing abortion, how should Christians respond now? With reason, information and thoughtfulness.

Abortion Logic

Christians have had 50 years to develop a logical response to the issue of legalized abortion. That seems like ample time for Christians to build a strong case in one direction or the other, but have they?

Christianity is a specific “worldview.” Christians are saved followers of Jesus Christ (by grace through faith) and are beholden to obey everything Jesus tells them to do (Matthew 28:18-20). They are supposed to see the world through the “view” of Jesus Christ. What is Christ’s *view* about abortion?

We know from the Old Testament that God created human beings and told them to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1 & 9). We also know that God told humans that life was precious to Him.

Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it. Genesis 9:6-7

We know from the medical procedure known as abortion that blood is shed as a baby's body is torn apart inside the mother. Abortion is the intentional death (murder) of a human being. According to the Old Testament, the people shedding the blood of the baby should be required to have their blood shed. Why? "For in the image of God He made man." Human beings have great value in God's eyes because of why and how He created them.

So, does the New Testament change that basic formula that God commanded Noah? Did Jesus or His apostles say that God's command in Genesis 9 was null and void? Some Christians will argue that Jesus and His apostles didn't address abortion and therefore had no problem with it. That is not logical. In fact, it's a "logical fallacy" known as **the argument from silence**. The Latin term, *argumentum e*

silentio, basically means drawing a conclusion based on the silence of someone else. A conclusion based on silence can be right or wrong, but there's no way to confirm it if the person in question is silent on the specific subject.

We have a small number of the words that Jesus spoke during His ministry. They are the words the Holy Spirit wanted us to know, but they are not all the words Jesus spoke during His earthly ministry. Based on research that shows the average male adult speaks about 15-thousand words a day on average and we have only a little more than 30-thousand unrepeated words of Jesus in the New Testament, it's easy to see that we have less than one percent of what He would have said during His earthly ministry (three to four years).

Interestingly, the Apostle John wrote this at the end of his Gospel account: "And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." The deeds and words of Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry go far beyond what we have written

in the Bible. That's important to remember when someone tries to use *argumentum e silentio* as evidence that Jesus did or did not believe and teach a particular thing. We need to treat that kind of logical fallacy with great caution. It can be very deceptive and lead a person to wrong conclusions. We need to hold fast to the Word of God as delivered to us by the prophets and apostles.

First, Jesus spoke very highly about children during His ministry:

Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.' Luke 18:15-16

We see Jesus blessing children speaking to men and women about the importance of family. Abortion was not an issue for the Jewish people when Jesus was on earth. Jews had stopped their practice of child sacrifice hundreds of years

earlier when God judged Israel for their sin of worshipping false gods (which included child sacrifice among other atrocities).

Jesus may or may not have addressed the issue of abortion in some discussion He had with His disciples or teaching to the multitudes. We can't know for sure because we don't have a record of everything He said. The logical fallacy of saying that Jesus didn't say anything about abortion so He must have approved of abortion doesn't prove anything. We can look to other things Jesus said to see His position on God's commands.

Jesus had a high view of Scripture. He told the devil that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:). Jesus told crowds of Jews who followed Him that they should obey what God had commanded. That would include His command to Noah and his sons along with what God commanded Israel through Moses and the prophets.

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Matthew 5:17-18

We see from Psalm 139 that King David revealed how involved God is in the formation of an unborn child:

For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. Psalm 139:13-16

God's involvement with a child begins when He says it does, not when we think it does. God is involved from the earliest moment in a mother's womb.

We know from Luke's Gospel that God the Father and God the Holy Spirit were intimately involved in the virgin conception of Jesus, God the Son:

Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I do not know a man?' And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Luke 1:34-35

Another evidence we have for how God views children in their mother's womb in the New Testament is how the unborn John the Baptist physically responded to the unborn Jesus of Nazareth. Luke 1:41-44 records how the unborn child of Elizabeth leaped in her womb when Elizabeth heard the

greeting of Mary, the pregnant mother of Jesus – “and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.”

The apostles also had a high view of marriage and family. They also had a high view of Scripture, which to them was the Hebrew Bible. The Old Testament continually affirms the value of all human life. Jesus and His apostles believed in the sanctity and dignity of life. That is clear throughout the New Testament. So, why don't all Christians see abortion in the same way? Good question.

Is God's Word divided on issues like life and death? Does God give a pass to women to determine whether their unborn children live or die? Is life and death a mother's choice or God's choice? It appears clear from an honest study of God's Word that He does not give them a pass on killing their unborn children. God opposed the killing of children in the Old Testament and the New Testament. He does not allow it without consequences.

We are looking closely at the war on children in our world today. We decided to begin at the beginning – the war on unborn children.

This series is about how Christians should respond, so we started by looking at what the Bible teaches about God's view of killing children. It's true that most non-Christians today won't listen to a response based on the Bible. However, it's unfortunate that many Christians won't listen to a response based on the Bible. We addressed that in the last part of our series.

What's a Christian to do if their response from Scripture is refused? Follow the process:

- Present a reasoned response (logical)
- Present an informed response (fact-based)
- Present a thoughtful response (loving and kind)

Science

People often say “follow the science.” As a journalist who spent his career following the science, I agree that science is a good place for Christians to visit to prepare a reasoned response.

First question we should ask is for a definition of the word *science*, since that’s what people want us to follow. The shortest definition is *knowledge*. Merriam-Webster defines science this way – “knowledge as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding.”

Our word *science* comes from the Latin *scientia* and means “knowledge based on demonstrable and reproducible data.” Notice the words *demonstrable* and *reproducible*. How is knowledge demonstrable and reproducible? Can knowledge do that by itself? Of course not. It’s done by people. Those people are often referred to as *scientists*.

Turning again to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a scientist is “a person who studies, specializes in, or investigates a field of science and does scientific work.” A scientist is someone who does scientific work in a particular category of science. Scientists are the people who research, study and investigate things and tell us what they think.

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines science as – “any system of knowledge that is concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and that entails unbiased observations and systematic experimentation.”

How can knowledge be concerned about anything? It’s just knowledge. Knowledge doesn’t have eyes and ears, hands and feet. Scientists are the people who are concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and observe and experiment systematically. Scientists have the eyes, ears, hands and feet. They determine what to research and how to share their findings with the public and the people who employ them.

When people say *follow the science*, what they often mean is *follow the scientists* they trust. If you don't trust the scientists we trust, then you are not following science. That's sad but true in our country today and has been for a long time. However, that's not how scientific investigation should work.

What we need to note carefully is the word *unbiased*. That goes in some part to why we have dealt with so much conflicting information about the science surrounding unborn children and abortion. If science is knowledge and knowledge is what's true, then why the conflict? It would seem that those people entrusted with researching, studying, evaluating and reporting scientific data might be a reason for conflicting information. Why would well-educated, highly-trained scientists view the same data differently? Might it be that scientific research is complicated with multiple ways to interpret similar data? Might it be personal, corporate or even political bias on the part of researchers?

Abortion Science

What makes a human “human”? The same thing that makes a dog a “dog” and a cat a “cat”. Part of the answer is **DNA** – deoxyribonucleic acid – the genetic code that determines the “kind” of living organism. I don’t have to wait until an organism is “born” or “hatched” to know what it is. I can know from looking at the “parent” and by taking a DNA sample from the unborn (unhatched) organism.

Paternity testing is a growing industry in our country. Women who have multiple sex partners and get pregnant often want to know which man is the father. As the American Pregnancy Association explains – “Different reasons to establish paternity include the need to collect support financially or emotionally, or simply for the peace of mind that accompanies knowing for sure.”

One thing we learn from DNA testing to determine paternity is that the DNA of the unborn child is not identical to the mother's DNA. The unborn's DNA is a combination of the mother's DNA and the father's DNA. Why is that important? Because it proves that the unborn child is not just another "part" of the mother and not a "parasite" in the mother. Those are a couple of the arguments put forward by pro-choice/pro-abortionists. However, modern DNA testing has proven that they're wrong. The DNA of an unborn child proves they are a combination of the DNA of two other "human beings," thus making them a third and separate human being. An unborn child is his or her own person. [We'll address the issue of the *personhood* of the unborn child in a future part of this series.]

The next question is – "when does the unborn become human"? DNA testing can begin as early as 10 weeks with **CVS** (chorionic villus sampling) and as early as 11 weeks with **amniocentesis** (though usually tested between 14 and 18 weeks). A relatively new non-invasive prenatal test known as **SNP Microarray** can be done on a mother as early as 9 weeks pregnant and the test has been confirmed 99.9%

accurate using a very small amount of DNA. Those 9, 10 and 11 weeks are still within the **first trimester** of pregnancy when abortions are **legal**.

Think about that for a minute. Current DNA testing can determine the identity of the human father of an unborn child at the same time it is legal to kill the child. Medical science has now proven that unborn “fetuses” in the first trimester of pregnancy are **human!** It would seem that scientific information would change the discussion among those who believe abortion does not end the life of a human being.

Another thing that modern medical science has given us is the ability to save a child’s life when he or she is born “premature.” A nine-months pregnancy that goes “full term” is usually about 40 weeks. A baby born three weeks earlier than that is classified as “pre-term” or premature. Some of the words used for premature births are:

- Late preterm – 34 to 37 weeks
- Moderate preterm (32 to 34 weeks)
- Very preterm (28 to 32 weeks)
- Extremely preterm (before 28 weeks)

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists also use the term “perivable birth” for children born between 20 and 26 weeks. Another term used is “micro-preemies.”

The life expectancy for “micro-preemies” has been increasing during the past 20 years. Why? Because medical science is getting better at addressing their special needs. That’s very good news! The work of doctors and nurses in NICUs (Neonatal Intensive Care Units) across the country are doing an amazing job. They deserve our appreciation and support.

It’s also insightful for our response on the issue of abortion. These premature births demonstrate the viability of “human” life at a very early age – an age where many states allow the killing of an unborn child. Modern science is proving that it can save the lives of preemies. The [Guinness Book of World](#)

Records recently recorded that the world's most premature baby, born at a gestational age of 21 weeks and two days and weighing less than a pound, celebrated his first birthday. The baby was given a 0% chance of survival, but he survived. Notice that I said "he" survived. Yes, the child was a human male. What would he have been if he was aborted instead of born prematurely? Human.

If I see a pregnant dog, my first thought is that the dog will give birth to puppies. I can verify that assumption by drawing a DNA sample from the unborn "organism." If I see a hen sitting on an egg, my first thought is that the "life" inside the egg is a baby chick. To make certain of my assumption I could draw a DNA sample and confirm, but I've seen thousands of eggs hatch at a hatchery and everyone of them had a baby chick inside. If I see a pregnant woman, my first thought is that she will give birth to a human being. I can verify that assumption by drawing a DNA sample from the unborn "organism." I can also verify that through experience having seen human babies born to women. In fact, I've never seen a woman give birth to anything other than a human being.

The pro-abortion community likes to use words like “embryo” and “fetus” to describe the stages of human growth inside the mother prior to birth. Why not call it a “baby” or “child”? Isn’t that what’s growing inside the human mother? a human being? If a human mother gives birth to her “fetus,” won’t it be a “human” baby? We don’t call birthed babies *fetuses*; we call them **children**. Why is an unborn “child” not human until he/she is born? Would the unborn child be something other than human if allowed to be born?

One of my friends called me about his pregnant wife going into the emergency room many years ago. She was only in the second trimester of her pregnancy. By the time I arrived at the hospital, she had given birth to a little boy. He passed away in her arms. We talked and prayed and cried together for more than an hour, each one of us holding the little baby in a small blanket. He was a human being. He weighed less than two pounds, smaller than many aborted babies, but there was no question that what I held in my arms was a human being. Little hands and fingers, feet and toes. Little arms and legs. Little ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Dark hair on his head.

He was human – as human as you and me. The mother and father named their little baby boy and buried him in a cemetery. Why? Because he was their child – their human child.

Other Responses

Here are some other responses from a scientific perspective when someone says that the unborn is just a blob of tissue, not a human being:

Like toddler and adolescent, the terms embryo and fetus do not refer to nonhumans, but to humans at particular stages of development.

Semantics affect perceptions, but they do not change realities; a baby is a baby no matter what we call her.

From the moment of conception, the unborn is not simple but very complex.

Prior to the first trimester, the unborn already has every body part she will ever have.

Every abortion stops a beating heart and terminates measurable brain waves.

Even in the earliest surgical abortions, the unborn child is clearly human in appearance.

Even before the unborn is obviously human in appearance, she is what she is—a human being.

No matter how much better it sounds, “terminating a pregnancy” is still terminating a life. EPM.ORG

We are looking at the first step in the war on children: killing children “before” they are born. The term we’re familiar with is “abortion.” Abortion was legalized in the United States in 1973 after years of legal arguments. I was a news reporter at the time and covered the arguments and the protests.

Christians were leaders in the protests before and after legalization of abortion. Is it time for Christians to give up and admit defeat in the decades-long war on children? I don’t think so because Christians and others opposed to abortion have strong **reasons** to continue the battle.

So far in our series, we’ve looked at how Christians can respond from both the Bible and medical science. We turn now to how Christians can respond to another pro-abortion argument. Keep in mind that we want our responses to be **reasoned, informed and thoughtful.**

Are the Unborn ‘Persons’?

One of the major aspects of abortion is the issue of **personhood** – when the “unborn” becomes a human person. The Pro-Choice/Pro-Abortion group has long claimed that an unborn baby is a non-person. That is why they do not believe abortion is murder, because the killing of a non-person is not murder. The Pro-Life/Anti-Abortion group has long claimed that an unborn baby is a person. That is why they believe abortion is murder, because the pre-meditated killing of a person is murder.

I remember this argument in the early days of legal debate in *Roe v. Wade*. Supreme Court Justice **Harry Blackmun** wrote this as part of the Court’s **majority opinion** – “If this suggestion of personhood is established, the appellant’s case, of course, collapses, for the fetus’ right to life would then be guaranteed specifically by the Amendment.” The longer quote from Blackmun’s majority opinion is:

“The appellee and certain amici argue that the fetus is a ‘person’ within the language and meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment. In support of this, they outline at length and in detail the well-known facts of fetal development. If this suggestion of personhood is established, the appellant’s case, of course, collapses, for the fetus’ right to life would then be guaranteed specifically by the Amendment. The appellant conceded as much on reargument.” University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law

This statement is often referred to as “Blackmun’s Hole.” Justice Blackmun seemed to be stating that if the personhood of an unborn child could be proven, then the baby would find protection in [Amendments to the U.S. Constitution](#).

Blackmun also wrote this about the medical implications of when a person becomes human.

Texas urges that, apart from the Fourteenth Amendment, life begins at conception and is present throughout pregnancy, and that, therefore, the State has a compelling

interest in protecting that life from and after conception. We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer.

It should be sufficient to note briefly the wide divergence of thinking on this most sensitive and difficult question... Substantial problems for precise definition of this view are posed, however, by new embryological data that purport to indicate that conception is a 'process' over time, rather than an event, and by new medical techniques such as menstrual extraction, the 'morning-after' pill, implantation of embryos, artificial insemination, and even artificial wombs. University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law

Notice Blackmun's words – “at this point in the development of man's knowledge.” Blackmun mentions “new embryological data” and “new medical techniques” that were part of **man's knowledge** in 1973: “menstrual extraction, the ‘morning-after’ pill, implantation of embryos, artificial insemination, and even artificial wombs.”

What about the last 50 years since Roe v. Wade? At what point are we in 2023 “in the development of man's knowledge”? Medical science has added DNA paternal testing and ultrasound to “the development of man's knowledge” as we addressed in the last part of our series. Even as the Supreme Court majority used the available scientific knowledge in 1973, shouldn't the Supreme Court of the United States now use the available scientific knowledge in 2023 to reconsider the earlier decision? It seems only right that if a majority of Supreme Court Justices used the available science of 1973 to determine the personhood of an unborn child, the current Supreme Court Justices should use the available science of 2023 to determine the personhood of an unborn child. Since much of Roe v. Wade was decided on

available medical science, it would seem that the Court would be sensitive to the advancement of science into the issues of pregnancy and personhood

Personhood

The definition of “personhood” is fairly simple – “The state or fact of being a person.” (Dictionary.com) The definition of “person” is even simpler – “human being.” (Dictionary.com)

As we shared in our last chapter, unborn children can be proven to be “human” during the **first trimester** of a mother’s pregnancy. DNA paternal testing was not available when the Supreme Court heard arguments in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, but it is available now and has been since the 1980s.

Extremely premature babies who were born during the second trimester and lived are legally viewed as human “persons” with human rights. As medical science continues to improve the viability of premature births, the possibility of babies being delivered even earlier could demonstrate an

even earlier legal “personhood.” Based on DNA testing and advances in Neonatal medical care, why doesn’t the Supreme Court reconsider its initial ruling from almost 50 years ago? It would seem to be a logical next-step “if” the Court and abortion proponents were really concerned about *following the science* as scientific knowledge expands.

Fact-Based Response

Following the science should mean following the “facts.” Here are some facts to consider when responding to people who are pro-abortion.

Fact: Medical science has advanced tremendously since the Supreme Court’s majority ruling in 1973.

Fact: DNA paternal testing proves that the unborn are human persons from the first trimester of pregnancy.

Fact: The U.S. Constitution and Amendments protect the rights of human persons.

Fact: Based on science and legal precedent, the U.S. Constitution and Amendments should then protect the right of unborn human persons.

What will the courts and pro-abortion advocates do with these **facts**?

As for **late term abortion** – how can the abortion of a child in the second or third trimester of his/her mother's pregnancy be anything but murder since DNA testing proves the child is a human person as early as the **first trimester**? It can't be anything other than murder. A human child in the first trimester of pregnancy doesn't somehow become a non-person in the second or third trimester. That's not logical, rational or reasonable.

Other Responses

Here are some other responses to the issue of the unborn's **personhood**:

Personhood is properly defined by membership in the human species, not by stage of development within that species.

Personhood is not a matter of size, skill, or degree of intelligence.

The unborn's status should be determined on an objective basis, not on subjective or self-serving definitions of personhood.

It is a scientific fact that there are thought processes at work in unborn babies.

If the unborn's value can be compared to that of an animal, there is no reason not to also compare the value of born people to animals.

Even if someone believes people are no better than animals, why would they abhor the killing of young animals, while advocating the killing of young children?

It is dangerous when people in power are free to determine whether other, less powerful lives are meaningful.

Arguments against the personhood of the unborn are shrouded in rationalization and denial. EPM.ORG

SLED

- *Size*
- *Level of Development*
- *Environment*
- *Degree of Dependency*

A WAY TO TALK WITH THOSE WHO ARE PROCHOICE ABOUT THE PERSONHOOD OF THE UNBORN

Questions

Abortion is a complex medical and legal issue. What we've shared with you about abortion should help you develop a reasoned, informed and thoughtful response to people who are pro-choice. However, you may run into some arguments that we have not addressed in this brief series. You can [contact us through email](#) or leave questions in the comment section of this post.

Resources for Reasoned Responses

Here are some links to resources for developing reasoned responses about abortion (alphabetical order):

[Expressing Pro-Life Views in Winsome Ways](#)

[Life Training Institute](#)

[Pro-Choice Arguments](#)

[Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments: A Complete Guide](#)

[Pro-Life Replies](#)

[Pro-Woman Answers to Pro-Choice Questions](#)

[Reaching Hearts on Abortion](#)

[The Best Pro-Life Arguments for Secular Audiences](#)

[The Five Minute Pro-Lifer](#)

[Why Pro-Life? – The Case for Inclusion](#)

The number of childbirths in the world each year is somewhere near 200 million. The number of abortions each year is more than 50 million. In previous parts of our study, we looked at how Christians can present reasoned, informed and thoughtful responses to those parts of the *war on children*.

We move now to the next phase of the war: the disruption (destruction) of the *nuclear family*.

Disruption Of The Nuclear Family

You may remember that Black Lives Matter (BLM) famously deleted a page from its website a few years ago that addressed the “nuclear family.” I saw it on their website one day and the next day it was gone. Fortunately, it is still available to read through webarchive.org.

We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and “villages” that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable.

*We foster a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking, or rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual (unless s/he or they disclose otherwise). **Black Lives Matter – What We Believe***

While this may seem like a strange idea, disrupting the nuclear family structure, it's actually been around for a long time.

Let's begin by defining "the nuclear family structure," then we'll look at the history of *disrupting* it.

a family group that consists only of parents and children — Merriam-Webster

a social unit composed of two parents and one or more children — dictionary.com

a group of people who are united by ties of partnership and parenthood and consisting of a pair of adults and their socially recognized children — britannica.com

Christians recognize this as how God designed the family structure:

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24

This *nuclear family* (from the word “nucleus”) has been the core unit of society for thousands of years. It is sometimes referred to as the *traditional family*. As we look through family histories in the Bible, we find the family unit described as a father, mother and children. As explained in Genesis 2:24 a child grows up, becomes an adult, leaves their father and mother, marries and begins a new nuclear family. That process is repeated throughout history and generations are brought into existence.

A *generation* is defined as – “a body of living beings constituting a single step in the line of descent from an ancestor” (Merriam-Webster). We understand the *generational family* from having grandparents and one day

becoming a grandparent. Members of the generational family can influence a nuclear family, but the nuclear family is primary to raising children.

Immediate family is often viewed as being those people who are those family members who are immediate (close) to you. That can include spouse, children, siblings, half-brother, half-sister, grandchildren, grandparents, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, step-family, mother-in-law, father-in-law, etc.

Extended family is often viewed as aunts, uncles, cousins, great-uncles, great-aunts, etc.

So, back to the nuclear family, when did the disruption begin and who was behind it? As for who was behind it, we saw in an earlier part of this series that Satan attacked the nuclear family almost immediately in the Garden of Eden. That attack continued and led to the first murder – brother killing brother. More murders would occur until the entire world was full of violence and God cleansed the earth and started again with one nuclear family. The sons of Noah and his wife grew up,

married and had children of their own. The nuclear family grew generationally into immediate families and extended families.

That brings us to the present time. Why the war on the nuclear family? What's wrong with it? Why would anyone have a problem with a man and woman getting married and raising children? The war on the nuclear family is also a war on children.

God's Design For The Family

Christians believe (or at least they should) that God's design for the family structure is better than any competing design. God's design for the growth of children is the nuclear family. Immediate and extended family members have a role to play, but nuclear family is God's primary plan.

God's plan is more than the physical structure of the nuclear family. Relationship within the nuclear family is vital to the health and wellbeing of every family member.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.
Proverbs 127:3-5

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
Exodus 20:12

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
Colossians 3:18-21

My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother. For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck. Proverbs 1:8-9

A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son is the grief of his mother. Proverbs 10:1

Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

Children's children are the crown of old men, And the glory of children is their father. Proverbs 17:6

Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. Deuteronomy 11:18-19

God's design for the family is clear from His Word. However, the enemy and enemies of the family oppose His design and have done everything they can to thwart it.

What The Enemy Wants

The enemy of the nuclear family wants something. Jesus Christ explained it this way:

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. John 10:10

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter 5:8

You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from

*his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.
John 8:44*

*So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old,
called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole
world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast
out with him. Revelation 12:9*

The enemy wants to steal, kill and destroy. The enemy is looking for people he can devour (destroy). The enemy uses lies and deception to get what he wants. That includes children and their parents.

Knowing that's what the enemy is doing, how should Christians respond to the war on children and the family?

Family Facts

We need to arm ourselves with facts about the family. We want our responses to be reasoned (logically valid) and informed (fact-based).

The “Western-prescribed nuclear family structure” that BLM and other organizations and movements want to *disrupt* (destroy) is on the decline and has been for the last 60 years. **Pew Research** did an extensive analysis of census data in 2014 and found that fewer than half (46%) of U.S. children younger than 18 years of age were living in a home with two married heterosexual parents in their first marriage. That was down from 73% in 1960 and 61% in 1980. Expectations for the 2020 census are that the percentage will drop even lower. Why? Pew researchers found several reasons.

More young adults are delaying marriage. Pew reported that while 68% of people in their 20s in 1960 were married, that number dropped to 26% by 2008.

The percentage of children born outside of marriage increased from 5% in 1960 to 41% in 2013. Pew found that 15% of children are living with two parents who are in a remarriage and that 34% of children are living with an unmarried parent. That's up from 9% in 1960. About 7% of children are living with cohabiting parents (unmarried). Pew also found that 5% of children are not living with either parent. Most of those children are living with a grandparent.

About 16% of children are living in what the Census Bureau terms "blended families" (step-parent, step-sibling or half-sibling). The National Center for Health Statistics reports that 63% of women in remarriages are in blended families. About half of those remarriages involve step-children who live with the remarried couple.

Pew Research also reported the family percentages by race:

- Asian children — 71% live with two parents who are both in their first marriage .. 11% live with remarried parents .. 13% live in a single-parent household .. 3% live with parents who are cohabiting
- White children — 52% live with two parents who are both in their first marriage .. 19% live with remarried parents .. 19% live in a single-parent household .. 6% live with parents who are cohabiting
- Hispanic children — 43% live with two parents who are both in their first marriage .. 12% live with remarried parents .. 29% live in a single-parent household .. 11% live with parents who are cohabiting
- Black children — 22% live with two parents who are both in their first marriage .. 9% live with remarried parents .. 54% live in a single-parent household .. 7% live with parents who are cohabiting

As for same-sex households the Census Bureau reported that the number almost doubled in the ten years from 2008 (slightly above 500-thousand) to 2018 (one million). The Family Equality Council reported in 2017 that between two million and almost four million children under the age of 18 have an LGBTQ parent and about 200-thousand are being raised by a same-sex couple. The report also stated that many of the children are being raised by a single LGBTQ parent or a different-sex couple where one parent is bisexual. Other studies show that as many as nine-million children in the United States have at least one parent who is gay or lesbian. **Pew Research** in 2019 found that having children was a very important or somewhat important reason for same-sex couples to get married (total of almost 70% of respondents).

The war on children stems from a war on the family. We addressed some of the challenges in the last part of our series.

As Christians we want our responses to be reasoned (logically valid), informed (fact-based) and thoughtful (loving and kind). It's easy to become emotional when children are involved, so Christians need to be convinced of the importance of a reasoned and informed response and committed to carrying out the response in a thoughtful manner.

Personal Conversations

The first opportunity a Christian may have to respond to the war on children may be in personal conversations with family members, friends, neighbors, fellow church members, co-workers, etc. The topics we've looked at so far, abortion and the destruction of the nuclear family, are regular topics in the news media and social media. That means they may also become discussion topics with people you know personally. It's one thing to talk about emotionally-charged topics with people who agree with your beliefs, but what about talking with people who don't agree with you?

Let's take the war on the nuclear (traditional) family for example. It's helpful to be well-informed about any topic you're going to discuss. As Christians, we need to know what the Bible says about the topic and what the world says about it. Many people in our circle of influence will not respond well to a conversation that includes the Bible. That doesn't mean Christians can't use the Bible in their response, but it does

mean we need to have a broader knowledge of the topic than just what the Bible says. Being able to discuss a difficult topic well from a fact-based position often opens an opportunity to be heard on what the Bible says as well.

We know what God's design is for the family from studying the Bible. We also know that much of the world is not following God's design from government and private research data and our own observations. Many people believe the Bible is very old fashioned and that the world is more progressive and has moved well past the traditional beliefs about family. We have come to a point in society where individual rights outweigh the rights of children. Abortion and the destruction of the nuclear family are two examples.

Dependent Children Need Dependable Parents

A newborn baby is completely dependent on dependable caretakers to meet their basic needs for food, water, cleaning and personal protection. Children will continue to be dependent on dependable people for many years as they grow up and eventually reach independent status. God designed parents (mother and father) to be those dependable people to raise dependent children.

You probably know children who have been impacted by divorce. It has a big impact on children from several perspectives: physical (health and safety), psychological (anger and depression), economic (less money for child's welfare), etc. God knew that when He designed the family. Divorce was not God's plan. He knew that the best family relationship is when husband and wife remain married for life. However, after sin entered into the heart of humans, couples divorced. That was not God's plan, but that's what happened. Men divorced their wives, sent them from their homes, leaving the wives in a position to marry again. The Pharisees used

that very situation in an attempt to trap and embarrass Jesus of Nazareth. His response to the Pharisees gives us insight into God's intent for marriage and response to divorce.

The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?' And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.' They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?' He said to them, 'Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and

whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.'
Matthew 19:3-9

In that same setting parents brought their children to Jesus so that He would place His hands on them pray for them.

Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'" And He laid His hands on them and departed from there. Matthew 19:13-15

Divorce and Children

The divorce rate in the United States is almost 50%. Many of the marriages that end in divorce include children in the family. In fact, more than a million American children suffer the divorce of their parents each year ([Family Research Council](#)). Divorce can seriously complicate life for the children. It is one of many complications known as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE).

The [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) says that ACEs “are potentially traumatic events” for children. They can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Children of divorced parents can experience toxic stress that can change brain development and how their bodies respond to stress. ACEs are also “linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance abuse misuse in adulthood.” The CDC went on to say that preventing ACEs like divorce, abuse, neglect and abandonment, “could reduce a large number of health conditions.”

One **group of childhood counselors** explained the divorce problem for children this way:

- It introduces intense feelings of uncertainty, often for the first time if it happens very early in a child's life
- It can cause an environment of chronic stress from anger, bitterness, and fighting
- It may cause economic strain on one of the divorcing parents
- It may separate the child not only from one parent but that parent's family members who may have been a loving and stable influence
- It may expose a child to a parent's new partners, which can increase risk of physical or sexual abuse

Another group explained the problem this way:

Divorce detrimentally impacts individuals and society in numerous other ways:

- *Religious practice: Divorce diminishes the frequency of worship of God and recourse to Him in prayer.*
- *Education: Divorce diminishes children's learning capacity and educational attainment.*
- *The marketplace: Divorce reduces household income and deeply cuts individual earning capacity.*
- *Government: Divorce significantly increases crime, abuse and neglect, drug use, and the costs of compensating government services.*
- *Health and well-being: Divorce weakens children's health and longevity. It also increases behavioral, emotional, and psychiatric risks, including even suicide.*

The effect of divorce on children's hearts, minds, and souls ranges from mild to severe, from seemingly small to observably significant, and from short-term to long-term.

None of the effects applies to each child of every divorced couple, nor has any one child suffered all the effects we will discuss. There is no way to predict how any particular child will be affected nor to what extent, but it is possible to predict divorce's societal effects and how this large cohort of children will be affected as a group. These effects are both numerous and serious.

Divorce can negatively affect children in every area of their lives: health, interest in social activity, emotional stability, behavior, academic performance, ability to adapt to change, as well as loss of faith in marriage and family.

Divorce affects children in three phases:

1. Pre-Divorce: Parental conflict that precedes the divorce
2. Divorce: Parents telling their children that they are divorcing and the actual process of divorce
3. Post-Divorce: Parents and children adjusting to the divorce

Childhood experts point out that one of the primary effects of divorce is the decline in relationship that children will have with at least one of their parents (the parent with whom they no longer live). Parents have to adjust to their own internal conflicts and being a divorced parent. Unfortunately, children in divorced families often receive “less emotional support, financial assistance, and practical help from their parents” (Paul R. Amato and Alan Booth, *A Generation at Risk* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 69.)

Cohabitation and Children

Another growing challenge for children is being born to parents who are not married. Here are the findings from one report published ten years ago:

Today, the rise of cohabiting households with children is the largest unrecognized threat to the quality and stability of children's family lives. In fact, because of the growing prevalence of cohabitation, which has risen fourteen-fold since 1970, today's children are much more likely to spend time in a cohabiting household than they are to see their parents divorce (see figure 2). Now, approximately 24 percent of the nation's children are born to cohabiting couples, which means that more children are currently born to cohabiting couples than to single mothers. Another 20 percent or so of children spend time in a cohabiting household with an unrelated adult at some point later in their childhood, often after their parents' marriage breaks down. This means that more than four in ten children are exposed to a cohabiting relationship. Thus, one reason that

*the institution of marriage has less of a hold over Americans than it has had for most our history is that cohabitation has emerged as a powerful alternative to and competitor with marriage. **Why Marriage Matters – Thirty Conclusions from the Social Sciences***

The report went on to define some of the problems children face with unmarried parents (cohabiting):

- Children are less likely to thrive in cohabiting households, compared to intact, married families.
- Family instability is generally bad for children.
- American family life is becoming increasingly unstable for children.
- The growing instability of American family life also means that contemporary adults and children are more likely to live in what scholars call “complex households.
- The nation’s retreat from marriage has hit poor and working class communities with particular force.

Public Conversations

Public conversations are different from private conversations in communication dynamics. Instead of being able to have a private, one-on-one conversation with back-and-forth dialogue, public conversations include multiple people communicating in a wider venue. Some people are better at public conversations than private conversations and vice versa. We are reminded in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 that God will use Christians effectively in both areas. Use your gifts in whatever way God leads you and thank Him for your gifts.

Some people are extroverted and do well speaking in public venues. Some people are introverted and do well speaking in private venues. God uses both and neither should look down on themselves or others. If you are quieter and prefer having private conversations, don't wish you had a public-speaking gift. That's questioning God's choice in gifting you the way He did.

The Bible shows us the importance of unity and diversity in the Body of Christ. Let's be smart about this. The war on children is big and growing bigger every year. We need Christians who are well-informed and able to present a logically valid response to the war in a thoughtful manner. Focus on the war against children and not on yourself. Whether you are having a private or public conversation, ask God to give you wisdom in the best way to share on the topic. I like to use a simple conversation tool that works well for both private and public conversations. I call it ALPS.

- A – Ask questions
- L – Listen to answers
- P – Pray silently for wisdom from God
- S – Share your thoughts kindly (seasoned with salt – Colossians 4:6)

Speaking about the war on children in public brings its own challenges that are different from private conversations.

- Know your audience (friendly, hostile, neutral, mixed)
- Know the environment
- Use ALPS where appropriate
- Present your thoughts in a reasoned (logically-valid) fashion based on an informed and thoughtful response
- Demonstrate respect for those who disagree with your response
- Be cautious about allowing yourself to be pulled into an emotional exchange .. that is a tactic that opponents often use in public conversations
- If you do become emotional or make a misstatement, apologize to the audience .. everyone makes mistakes and most people will accept an apology that is offered with grace and humility .. if an opponent will not accept your apology, don't belabor it .. the audience will recognize the opponent's poor manners

Wars are not usually won in a day. Your reasoned response is intended to help people think critically rather than emotionally. Public discussions often become emotion-based rather than fact-based. A kind response can sometimes defuse emotions, but there are situations where that is not possible because of some of the people in attendance. There are some people who have a different agenda than you and will throw emotion-filled responses at your informed and thoughtful ones.

The bottom line is that optimal parenting is following God's design for married couples. We can present the truth in love using both the Bible, research and statistics about the topic.

Our Number One Directive

Keep in mind that our number one directive from Jesus Christ is to “make disciples.” We do that through the preaching of the Gospel. It’s important that we do not lose sight of that when we are speaking about a topic like the war on children. The ultimate war is on the souls of men and women, boys and girls. Always keep that front and center in your personal and public conversations. Eternity must always be in clear view as we speak.

Next eBook

We'll take a closer look at how Christians can respond with truth and love to the “agenda” in the *war on children* in the next eBook in our series.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by
permission. All rights reserved.

Faith and Self Defense © 2022