

Autumn, 2015

Vol. 3, Issue 3

# WARHORN

THE

Clearnote Fellowship  Clearnote Press

# A NOTE ON THIS ISSUE

What follows is meant to be read sequentially, from cover to cover. Each piece builds upon the last.

Our subject is abortion. Some of the pieces are short, some of them are long. Each one is the testimony of a Christian man or woman regarding his or her particular experience with America's holocaust. Each story comes from just one church. And there are many, many stories even within that congregation that remain untold.

Several of these pieces are grim, some of them horrific. Yet we don't say that this issue is not for the faint of heart. Actually, this issue was written by the faint of heart for the faint of heart. Our hope is that God will use these confessions, each one by a sinner whose only hope is the blood of Jesus, to encourage and embolden us all.

What you are about to read was partially written as a reaction to the work of David Daleiden and the Center for Medical Progress. For a thorough understanding of where this issue is coming from, you should be familiar with the work of these modern day Davids. Our prayer is that God will bless them as they continue hurling stones. And may they, and all of us, live to see the giant come tumbling down.

—THE EDITORS

## *I Killed My Baby*

Tim Bayly

Neither of them wanted to murder their baby. She was a sophomore active in a parachurch campus ministry. She'd had sex with a man also active in the ministry. She went home for Christmas, pregnant.

The story came to me weeks later, in February, after she'd returned to school from Christmas break. She set up an appointment and entered my office with a friend. She was in obvious grief as she confessed her sin of fornication. She explained how she had confessed her fornication to her father and mother when she arrived home for Christmas. Then, between sobs, she told how her father and mother had responded by telling her they wouldn't allow her to have her baby.

They told her to abort her child.

She refused, and so throughout Christmas break, she suffered constant threats and enticements pressuring her to shed her baby's blood.

She stood strong in her godliness and repentance, and refused.

Finally her dad told her he would not pay for any more college until she had the abortion, and that he would not allow her to return to college until her baby was dead.

After weeks of resisting her dad's commands, she finally gave in.

And now she sobbed: "My baby is dead! I killed my baby!"

## *I Was Weak*

Michael Lakes

*[Editor's note: some names in this story have been changed.]*

Once, I was driving on an icy interstate at 70 miles per hour, when I hit a pothole that lifted all four tires off the road. As I began to spin, I realized a) that I was a complete fool for driving 70 miles per hour on an icy interstate, and b) that my only option now was to hold on and hope that when the spinning stopped, I would be alive to learn from my mistake.

That's the closest thing to how I felt in the moment my roommate told me our mutual friend was getting an abortion.

If you had asked me during my sophomore year if I was a Christian, I would have said yes. Now I look back at my drunkenness, slothfulness, and complete lack of faith, and I am amazed at God's ability to change hearts.

In a life of partying and drunkenness, you meet a lot of people who like to party and get drunk. One such person was my roommate that year, Hal. Hal and I would spend our nights getting drunk together with other people in our apartment complex—often with a girl living at the end of our row of apartments named Jane.

I can't say Jane and I were close. Hal was my closest friend, with whom I would share everything, and vice versa. And Hal and Jane were good friends, so I would tag along. One night Hal confided in me that Jane was pregnant by her deadbeat boyfriend from high school, and she wanted Hal to drive her to the abortuary the next Thursday to kill her child.

I had no idea how to process the fact that my best friend was planning on helping murder a tiny baby in its mother's

womb. After Hal told me this he swore me to secrecy and I agreed, but my conscience had been pricked and I couldn't think about anything else for the remainder of the night. I went into my room and I began to weep. Yes, my heart was hard against God and His truth, but I had just discovered a soft patch that I didn't know I had.

I called some people from a church I attended in my hometown, and asked their advice. One woman who runs the Crisis Pregnancy Center there suggested I look for help somewhere more local, so I called a friend who had taken me to church two weeks before. I hadn't liked this church. Honestly, it made me angry. I was living my life contrary to God's Word and although now I know that the preacher at that church was simply being faithful to the Word of God—at the time the preaching was the stench of death to me. Still, somehow I knew that this church would be able to offer me counsel.

So I called up my friend, who told me he would ask one of the leaders of the college ministry to meet with me.

That morning when I woke up, I remember wishing it was some terrible dream. That evening, I met with Alex, a college Bible study leader from my friend's church. As Alex began to ask me about the details of the situation, I was torn to pieces. On the one hand, the brutal consequences of the life I was living were staring me in the face. On the other hand, I desperately wanted to cling to my life of sin.

After listening patiently for some time, Alex began to open up for me just how bad I really was, and I began to see that as ill equipped as I thought I was to address this, I was infinitely more ill equipped than that. He suggested that I talk to Hal and see if I could get him to speak to Jane and keep her from going to Planned Parenthood. As I headed home, I had every intention of following his advice. But when I got back, I was unable to muster the strength to talk to him about it. In fact, I could barely stand to speak. My stomach was tied in knots. I couldn't even eat that evening, so I went to bed and told myself I would talk to Hal tomorrow.

That next morning I woke up and I had no idea what to do—with Hal, with Jane, with Alex, with anything. My heart was sinking in despair, I just wanted to go back to my comfortable life where I didn't feel any responsibility for the people around me, and I had no regard for anything beyond how much I was going to drink on Friday night.

But God wasn't finished pulling me by the ear out of the muck.

I walked to the shuttle, where I knew I would see Jane as I did every Thursday morning. I hoped beyond hope that today she would miss the shuttle. By that point, I was totally and completely determined not to deal with this situation. I was so terrified I began to shake standing at the stop waiting for the shuttle ride.

Of course, Jane was on the bus that morning and in a moment we were sitting next to each other as we did every Thursday. I began our conversation as usual talking about the weather and the music on the bus that morning.

It was Easter week so I asked if she had any plans. She told me that she intended to go home and I realized I wasn't sure I would see her again before she did.

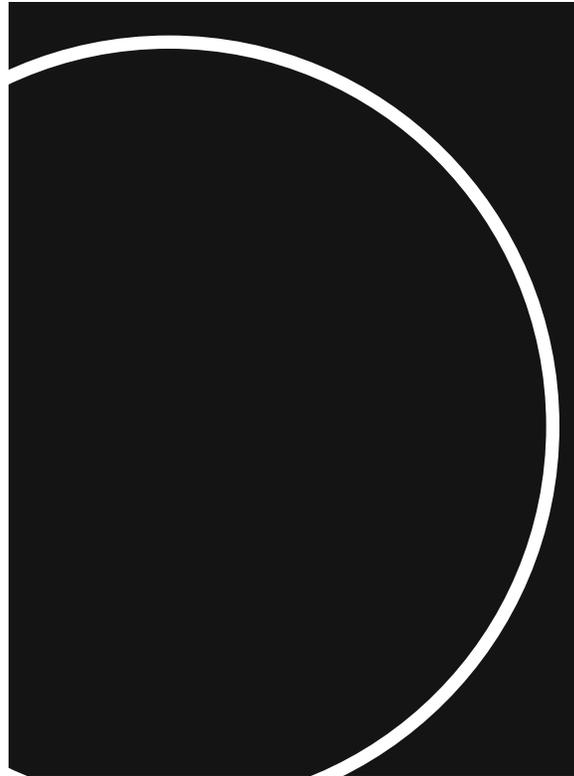
So I went for it. I told her I knew her situation and that I wanted to speak to her about it. I tried to be as kind as I could, but she basically shut down and stopped responding.

I realized just how right Alex was the night before—about me, about everything. I was infinitely ill equipped to be the person speaking to her. I felt like the weight of the world had been placed on my shoulders, and rather than rise to the challenge, I had buckled. I knew I had ruined this relationship and was going to be facing Hal's anger in the near future. The remainder of the shuttle ride was in silence.

I got off at my stop and as I walked to my class I vomited. I was nearly in tears. I could barely walk.

As class began, I received a barrage of text messages from Hal. The gist was that he was angry, he felt betrayed, and he was going to punch me in the face, repeatedly. I began to cry again as I felt this friendship, the cornerstone of my sophomore year, slip away.

I called Alex for some support. I can't imagine what he thought of the pathetic, weak, faithless fool on the other end of the phone, in tears because



he had just done the first act of a fledgling—almost non-existent—faith.

I had no idea what was going to happen. At that point I had already signed a lease with Hal for the next year. I was ready to go to the apartment and just allow him to punch me repeatedly in the face. It would make him feel better, and I thought I deserved it. Alex offered to go with me to speak to Hal, and be a sort of calming presence there, and, you know, help make sure I didn't get punched repeatedly in the face.

Alex picked me up from campus. I spent that entire ride in fear of what awaited me at the apartment. Not just the danger of physical harm, but also the severed relationship. I spent some of that ride asking Alex to lie to Hal about his knowledge of the situation. That's how guilty I felt about everything.

When we arrived at my apartment, I texted Jane to ask if she was still willing to speak to me about what she was planning to do. She informed me that she had no interest in hearing what I had to say and that she was quite upset at the fact that I knew. I texted back that I was willing to be there for her if she changed her mind. That was the last interaction I ever had with her.

We went up to my apartment. As it turned out, when we got there, Hal was not home. So we waited, my stomach churning.

Hal finally returned home. He had gone and played basketball with some friends and managed to cool off over the course of the day, so we began to talk.

I can't remember all the details, but I remember telling him a child is a human being. I remember telling him that a murder was going to take place.

He accused me of it being merely political, of seizing this opportunity to shove my conservative ideals down his throat.

No, I told him, God had placed me in this situation. I had to say something. And I wanted our relationship to survive this.

He said he was still upset with me for having done this without talking to him.

I told him I understood.

When we finished talking he got up and went to his room.

Alex and I walked outside. I was going home that weekend and there was nothing I wanted more than to be 100 miles away from everything that had happened over the course of the day. I told Alex that, but he admonished me not to run away from God, but to begin going to church

and actually start living in a godly way.

I had no response. My strength was gone. Every ounce of my energy had been sucked up by this day. When Alex further admonished me to be at Planned Parenthood next Thursday, when Jane went to murder her child, I didn't even want to think about it. And when Thursday came, I couldn't muster the strength.

Of everything that happened, that is my deepest regret. I wish I had been there. I wish I had been stronger. I wish I could go back and do it again.

But I was weak.

Still, I believe God used my weakness to display His strength. They killed that baby, but somebody stood up for him, however weakly, however badly, however sinfully.

I can't even say that at the end of that day I was a Christian. What I can say is that this was the beginning of God removing my heart of stone and giving me a heart of flesh. I was weak then, and in many ways I am weak now. But at least I have the strength now to proclaim with Joseph, "What man has meant for evil, God has used for good."

### *Out, Out, Out*

Jake Mentzel

**"I**'m going to kill it. I need it out. Out, out, out. It has to get out. I want it out, I need it out of me. I'm going to kill it."

She was drunk and hysterical and I had no idea what time it was.

"I'm not even going to tell the bastard. He'll hate me."

I came to my senses and managed to put the pieces together. I did my best to calm her down, to reassure her that God loves her and that I would help her find a way to take care of the baby.

"He never loved me anyway."

I told her that her parents would still love her and so would her church family. Which I knew might've been a lie, at least the church part.

"Please don't tell anyone. Promise me you won't tell anyone."

I told her to go to bed and promised to talk to her in the morning, knowing she might not even remember that we had talked, much less what

I said to her. Then I hung up.

I was a sophomore in college. She was still in high school. And yes, I promised not to tell. And yes, a baby is now dead because of my foolishness.

At first I was proud of myself. I talked her down over the following days. I pled with her, I reasoned with her, I cried with her. She agreed to have the baby.

But I also convinced her to tell her boyfriend, who then convinced her to go kill the baby. I didn't know about that until she was in the car on the way to Planned Parenthood.

"I'm halfway to Indianapolis. It's too late."

"What? Wait. No, it is not too late. Stop right now. Turn around. Come to Bloomington. Or I'll come get you. Don't kill your baby. I will h—"

*Click.*

Too late? She called just to tell me it was too late? I sat there staring at the wall in my dorm room.

Who could I call? Her mom? Did she even tell her mom? Why had I never talked to her mom?

I know why I never called her pastor. Just a few months earlier the youth pastor at her church had been fired for sexual involvement with students in the youth group. Her senior pastor patched things up and saw to it that he had a position in another church within the year. As a youth pastor.

And so I had no idea what to do. So I didn't do anything. I just cried.

*Horried*  
Nathan Alberson

I'm talking to a workmate of mine. We're pretty close. He knows I'm a Christian and he's told me he wants nothing to do with God.

One time I told him about how Jesus commands monogamous, heterosexual relationships. Only I didn't put it like that.

He proceeded to tell me if that's what Jesus wanted, Jesus could take a hike. Only he didn't put it like that.

Anyway, he tells me his girlfriend is pregnant. He seems scared.

"Are you going to keep it?" I ask.

"Of course I'm gonna — keep him!" he almost screams. The question is so clearly stupid that he's mad at me for a moment. Then the moment passes, and he says, "It's my kid, I wouldn't do that."

So here I was, the Christian, and I asked him if he was thinking about murdering his baby in the blandest, most neutral way I could think to put it.

And here he was, the proud pagan, two parts horrified that I thought so low of him and one part horrified that I was such a coward.

## *We'll Take Care of Everything*

Anonymous

The building looked more like a prison than the state hospital. The week before I had gone to the Planned Parenthood across the street from campus for a pregnancy test. They told me not to worry, it was okay, they would take care of me. They never said the word “abortion,” but we all knew what we were talking about.

“Go to the state hospital one week from today and we’ll take care of everything.”

They were offering a no-strings-attached, no-questions-asked, get-out-of-jail-free card. I should have felt relieved, even hopeful, but I didn’t. I felt worried and anxious.

I had a talk with my boyfriend. He was convinced we couldn’t have this baby. We needed to finish school. We were going to be important research doctors, and there would be time for a family later—after college and medical school. Just not now.

I begged him to reconsider, but I was also very afraid of him and was soon shut down by his anger. I was certain that if I didn’t go through with the abortion I would lose him.

Of course, I had my own reasons for not wanting to go through with the pregnancy, too. For instance, I didn’t know how I could tell my dad that I was pregnant. I thought he would kill me—literally kill me—and my boyfriend, too.

Over the next week I kept thinking of crazy ways to get out of having the abortion. I thought about disappearing for a while and having the baby and giving him up for adoption. No one would even have to know. I thought about disappearing, having the baby, keeping the baby, and coming up with some crazy story about a friend having a baby and wanting me to adopt her baby because she died in childbirth. Crazy, I know, but I was nineteen and desperate.

As the week went on, I couldn’t stop thinking of how to get around my “problem.” I convinced myself that something would happen to stop me, to make me change course, to pull me away from the trajectory I was on. But a week after that visit to Planned Parenthood, I found myself pulling up to the hospital, boyfriend in tow.

There were no protestors, no one warning of God’s judgment, no one pleading for my baby. And I probably wouldn’t have listened if there were.

It all seemed surreal at the time, like I was on a conveyor belt and couldn’t make myself step off. Everything was a blur: waiting room, paperwork, nurses, more paperwork. It wasn’t until they led me to the gurney that would take me to the operating room that I woke from the fog. I started panicking.

“Wait, wait, I thought we were going to talk about this. I thought there would be counseling. There wasn’t any counseling. I’m not sure about this.” I could hardly breathe. Even as I write this, my heart is racing.

“You’ve already decided. All the paperwork is signed. It’s too late,” the nurse said in a firm but not unkind voice as she pushed me down onto the gurney.

Those words—“It’s too late”—echoed in my head as the nurse bound my wrists to the metal rails. There were two or three nurses gathered around me by this time, and one was explaining that they were restraining me for my own safety. I was obviously not stable, they said.

Then they put a mask over my face and wheeled me down the hall toward the operating room. I was still trying to explain to them that there had been no counseling, no opportunity to talk about options. My mind felt heavy, like I was being dragged under water, and then everything went black.

When I awoke I was confused and disoriented. I didn’t remember where I was. I heard voices.

“Farther along than we thought . . .”

“We need blood, stat . . .”

“We’re losing her . . .”

The voices sounded far away, and I thought, hoped, that I was dreaming.

Slowly, the fog lifted, and I remembered where I was. I opened my eyes and struggled to sit up, but discovered I was still restrained.

What I saw horrified me. In a metal pan on a tray next to my gurney I saw parts of my baby. Was that a hand? A foot? Eyes? Why hadn't anyone told me this is what it would be like?

I screamed and screamed. I cried. I twisted and fought.

But the doctors were quick to put the mask on me again, and I slipped back into darkness. In those last moments, fighting to stay awake, I prayed that God would kill me, too. I didn't want to wake up ever again.

At that moment I knew—really knew—exactly what I had done. I was a mother and by my own selfish, evil hand, I had my own baby ripped into pieces. I was responsible for the murder of my own precious baby.

What kind of mother does that?

It will be 22 years ago this March that I chose to murder my baby. God didn't grant my death wish, but He did use my wickedness that day to show me my need for a Savior. Over time, he turned my heart to repentance for this and many other sins.

But repentance and faith and forgiveness and healing didn't come right away. For years after my abortion I resisted turning to God, and I struggled with depression and guilt. I felt guilty when I started a family and had healthy babies. I felt guilty when a friend struggled to have children. I felt guilty when I looked into the eyes of my kids and caught a glimpse of what their brother or sister may have looked like.

I missed my baby. I still do. Maybe that seems odd. Maybe you're thinking, "But you never met your baby—how can you miss someone you've never met?"

That's one of the great and beautiful mysteries about how God created mothers. We were created to know our babies and bond with them long before we ever set eyes on them.

I dealt with my guilt by judging the parenting of others. I tried to atone for my sins by being an over-achieving "supermom." I tried and tried and tried.

I kept silent for over thirteen years, letting the pain and guilt fester inside of me. I was haunted by the words I heard and the sights I saw in the killing room that day. I couldn't let it go.

At one point, I decided I needed to know exactly what had happened that day. So I sent for my medical records. What I found astounded me.

My baby hadn't been 11 weeks like I had thought. My baby was 17 weeks old. No one had taken the time to do an ultrasound. The doctors had proceeded as if my baby was much smaller than he really was, which, in the end, almost cost me my life that day. I was very close to getting what I had prayed for.

As I read the report tears streamed down my face.

"Fetal foot measures 2.4 cm, the hand measures 2.0 cm in length, there could possibly be residual spine left in the uterus."

It seemed so cold and sterile. I wanted to scream that these weren't body parts. This was my baby! But that is the great lie of abortion, isn't it?

It's just an operation—a normal, everyday occurrence. Everyone is doing it. Come on in, we'll take care of everything.

## *I Shouldn't Be Here*

Jake Mentzel

I met him in a little section of tables in the Wright Quad food court, hidden behind a wall covered with a ten-foot-tall inscription of Shakespeare's "To thine own self be true" speech. It's a nice place to meet—quiet, out of the way—especially when you know the conversation is likely to be tense.

He'd been to our church a number of times and he was upset. Why? Because, he said, every sermon was about abortion.

Just one problem. I couldn't remember the last time abortion had been mentioned in the pulpit.

As a pastor, you quickly learn that *Why is every sermon about x?* generally translates as *I have a bad conscience about x*. And back when I was a college pastor, I quickly learned to recognize the I'm Not Coming Back meetings. I was pretty sure this was my only real chance with him, so I decided to go for it.

"I can't remember the last sermon about abortion," I said. "The only reason for you to feel that way is because you have a bad conscience. So what's the deal? Do you know someone who's killed their baby?"

I wasn't sure what to expect. I braced myself for a fight or a retreat or something. I fixed on his eyes, hoping they'd reveal what the real issue was once he reacted. I was ready to abandon the whole tack.

But instead he started. Then he started to tear up. Then he looked in my eyes and answered my question. Directly.

"My mom," he said. "My mom killed her baby. I shouldn't be alive."

I didn't see that coming.

Over the next hour he told me about how he'd had an older brother that doctors anticipated would have severe developmental problems. Problems so severe, his parents would spend the rest of his life caring for him. So they opted to have an abortion. They wanted a healthy baby. They didn't ask for this.

"If they hadn't . . . killed my brother, I wouldn't be alive today," he told me. "They wouldn't have been able to take on another kid."

The fact was, this young man lived his entire life under the pressure of being his parents' golden boy—making the grades, getting the job. And why? He had to somehow make the death of his brother meaningful. To see to it that the sacrifice was worth it. Meanwhile, his conscience constantly told him it wasn't. It was all wrong. He felt guilty for being alive, for ever being born.

What an unbelievably oppressive burden.

His life, his very existence, had been bought with his brother's blood. Every breath he took was a guilty one. And every mention of abortion tore his heart open. He couldn't handle it.

"The worst thing of all," he told me between sobs, "is that I'm actually glad I'm alive. I'm glad I'm here. That's what I hate myself the most for. I replay it over and over in my mind, and I think I shouldn't be here. I shouldn't have been born. And I wish I had the strength to *wish* I had never been born, but I don't. So that means I'm glad they did it. I'm glad they killed my brother. If I could go back in time, I don't think I'd want to go and change it."

## *They Kill Babies There*

Amanda Mentzel

**B**eing there has a way of changing how you see things. This is reality. Life, death, hell, sin. Everything matters. This isn't pretend.

I had been down to Planned Parenthood a few times before, praying and watching, mostly. That was before I had a baby of my own. After Peter was born, I started calling out to the women as they went in, their bellies full of life. And as they left.

Being down there with your firstborn son has a way of making all those realities come through with even more intensity and clarity than they did before. I had taken Peter with me before, but it had been awhile, and I guess it all added up to making this time different. I strapped him into the car seat and started to drive home.

"They kill babies there," I told him. My voice was shaking.

*What am I doing? He's eighteen months old. He can't even understand me.*

"God makes every baby and He puts them in their mama's belly so they'll be safe and warm."

*Is this what moms are supposed to do? I mean, good moms? Do good moms tell their baby boys about things like this?*

"But sometimes the mama doesn't want the baby so she goes to that place, and then they kill the baby."

*How am I supposed to help this boy become a man? The kind of man that will be able to do something for these littlest ones?*

"It's really sad, and it's wicked."

We passed the hospital where Peter was born, headed home. I didn't know what else to say. I think I might have prayed for him to grow up to be strong and courageous. I hope I did anyway.

## *They Are My Sons*

Joseph Bayly

**"T**he black one?" I laughed.

I was in the middle of the Ethiopian bush. Aside from the missionary who had driven me out here, I was likely the only white person for a hundred miles. Certainly, everybody else in the small Christian village of about 40 households was black. And he wanted to know if I had met the "black man"?

I pointed to my skin and then his. Laughing, I said, "You're black."

"No, *he* is black," he said, pointing to one of the farmer-pastors who had walked for days to attend the missionary's Old Testament Survey class. Sure enough, the man's skin was much darker than my new friend's.

I was there to complete our second adoption. Our new son had been found eighteen months earlier, abandoned by the side of the road just after being born. The policeman who picked him up called him Surprise Find. We named him Moses.

In America, our sons are considered black, even if they wouldn't be in Ethiopia. And in America their skin color will affect how they are treated, just as it would have in Ethiopia. Sometimes it will be positive, but undoubtedly often it will be negative.

People will make assumptions about them, some true, some false, some positive, some negative. Some will even think that their lives don't matter. Thankfully, the law now reflects the truth of their full humanity. Yes, Moses will suffer because of his skin color, but who could have ever predicted the great reversal that God wrought in the life of this Ethiopian orphan before he was two years old?

## *That Thing with Feathers*

Nathan Alberson

Some people say that my sons are fortunate to be in our family rather than stuck in Ethiopia. I say they were fortunate to be conceived in Ethiopia rather than the USA. In America, unwanted children—especially unwanted black children—are murdered before they ever see the light of day.

This is why today's fight against abortion is a necessary continuation of yesterday's fight against slavery. It is a fight against dehumanizing any of God's children. It is a fight to give all men full protection and equal treatment under the law.

As white parents of black children, we regularly have the opportunity to discuss both racism and abortion. Trans-ethnic adoption humanizes "them"—the people we thought didn't matter. It puts a face to the blob and a name to the face.

They aren't unwanted tissue, better off dead. Nor are they thugs and drug dealers, better off dead. They are my sons, and I don't want jaded, gun-happy police anymore than I want jaded, scalpel-happy "doctors."

Yesterday's fight isn't over. May God give us eyes to see His dignity in all men.

*I*'m going to tell you what I said to God when the first video came out. Then I'm going to tell you everything that happened in my brain since then. Then I'm going to tell you what I'm saying to God now.

Here's what I said to God after the first video came out:

Father, you are holy.

Father, you are righteous.

Father, I'm afraid.

Father, don't make me hope. I'd really rather die.

Don't get me wrong. Those videos were kind of cool, and I always knew they were kind of cool.

I mean, for a moment, the enemies of God had to shut their mouths.

The liars and the flatterers, the blasphemers and the pontificators, the smooth talkers and the braggers—their tongues rotted in their throats. The noise stopped. For a moment I could hear the murmur of my own will and my own heart. It frightened me but I sort of liked it.

These videos came out, and God's enemies were naked. They had nowhere to hide. Everybody could see their shame.

And everybody did. I mean, like, everybody in America. And everybody knew: they were small. God's enemies were so small.

They weren't doctors or high priests or professors of anything. They certainly weren't standing for anything higher than themselves—not women's rights or the Modern Age, or the death of the old gods, or anything like that. They weren't magnificent demons, they were deformed little pigs. They weren't grand and seductive madams, they were fifteen-dollar whores. They were small.

They were abortionists, which is to say, they were baby killers. They were tradesmen and their "good" was slaughtered little bodies. But even the magnitude of their evil didn't make them special. There weren't any Hitlers or Stalins or bin Ladens in those videos. No satanic majesties. These were just people.

Even in nice suits eating nice meals, they were equal parts gruesome

and banal. They were no better than grave robbers. Actually, they were grave robbers. Their only innovation was to create a grave inside a womb, and rob that. Many of them were doing it for the money.

We think God's enemies are so big. But they're small.

God's enemies broke the silence immediately and started jabbering. That's one thing that God's enemies know how to do—talk and talk and talk. So they lied and prattled and tried to cover it back up. But everybody knew. And people wanted to talk about it. Even *The New York Times* published a big op-ed piece from a man who said,

These are dead human beings being discussed on video today: Human beings that the nice, idealistic medical personnel at Planned Parenthood have spent their careers crushing, evacuating, and carving up for parts. . . . You can turn away. But there will be plenty of chances to look, to see, to know.

He was right. Everybody had the chance to see. Some people tried to look away. Some people tried to forget. But those videos were about as easy to forget as a cupboard full of maggots.

The word was out. God's enemies at Planned Parenthood were wicked baby killers, who chopped pieces from the tiny corpses and sold them for money. I guess everybody always knew that. But we're stupid and we're sinful. Sometimes we only see things when they're in

# 44 POINT COMIC SANS.

I never felt hope before. I didn't know what hope was. So much so, that I didn't know I never felt it. It was only when I first recognized it pushing through the soil in my heart that I also recognized its profound and utter absence at any point in my life before.

I'm like a guy who didn't know he was hungry until he smelled steak

and onions. Or maybe I'm like a guy who didn't know what sweetness was until he took his first sip of Coca-Cola.

I don't know what the right metaphor is. I just knew that when those videos came out I had never felt any hope until then. And here's the thing:

Hope is the most excruciating feeling in the world.

Before now, I thought America was Sodom or Babel or Old Jerusalem. I thought, in the cosmic scheme of things, we were toast.

I never thought we might be Nineveh. Or Old Israel on one of those occasions when they got themselves a good king who smashed all the idols to pieces.

Here's what I prophesized:

Sometime in my lifetime, God would judge America for the crime of murdering babies. And we're not talking, like, gas goes up to twenty dollars a gallon. We're talking judgment judgment. Iran-uses-the-nuke, China-invades-the-West-Coast, California-falls-into-the-ocean, Manhattan-gets-hit-by-a-meteor, Detroit-keeps-being-Detroit type judgment.

Or maybe it would be more biblical. A book of Revelation type deal. Oceans of blood welling up from the ground—geysers and cascades and rivers of blood, soaking the earth and swallowing the trees and beating the cities down. And mingled in that blood, the bodies of the dead. Little arms and little legs and heads with sightless eyes and mouths silently screaming.

Because Blood may be buried, Blood may be hidden, Blood may be mopped up and sanitized and swept down a drain. But Blood cries out.

I imagined a sea of little corpses, crying out their accusations. I saw myself among the accused. And I saw myself beg for mercy because I was not the one who had planted those bodies in the earth and watered them with bucket upon bucket of their own blood. But I couldn't distance myself from the crowd of the accused. I didn't deserve to. I couldn't escape the sins of my country. I was like everybody else. I had built my whole life on that mountain of little corpses.

Sure, I had denounced their murders one or two times when it was easy for me, said a couple prayers, done a few laps around the courthouse square once a year. Sure I'd felt bad about it, but I was in a Christian crowd where it was fashionable to feel bad. I didn't have any more depth of feeling about it than a celebrity doing a commercial on the horrors of mistreating cats.

I always looked away when I could. I always forgot when I could. I was guilty as anybody. I'd fed on the thousand fruits of convenience and

pleasure that grew in the compost of those corpses. I was totally damned. I guess I would have told you that Jesus would forgive me in heaven. But here on earth, when the tide of blood and bodies came, when Iran got the nuke, or China attacked, or whatever God selected as His final judgment, I was going to be washed away. We all were. We had to pay for the sins of our nation.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, it says. And I guess it must be true since it's in the bible.

Hope is the thing with feathers, Emily Dickenson said. I guess she was pretty smart.

But the more I thought about those videos, and the more I thought about people's reactions to those videos, the more I felt sick. Something in me was alive for the first time and it made me want to puke my guts out.

Here's the honest truth. Before I sat down to write the first draft of the piece you are reading right now, I cried for forty-two minutes.

Why did I do that?

I don't care about abortion that much. I never have. It's too big. It's too unstoppable. It's like the Holocaust or Hiroshima or Hurricane Katrina. I don't feel bad about any of that stuff. I feel bad when somebody stubs his toe. I feel bad when a kid takes a lick off his ice cream cone and the scoop falls onto the sidewalk. And yeah, I feel bad when people die or people are cruel to other people. But it helps if they're people I know. And it helps if it's one or two of them at a time. How do you feel bad for 57,762,169 aborted babies?

I know those babies were made in God's image. I know they feel hurt and fear as they are ripped into pieces. I know a body and soul are ruptured. But when it's 57,762,169 and counting, and when there's not a thing I can do about it, where do I even start? Why should I even bother? So I never thought too much about it. I marched around the courthouse with my church friends and I hoped nobody I knew would drive by.

One time one of my best friends took an axe and smashed up our local Planned Parenthood. Because, y'know, they kill babies there. He couldn't take it anymore. He did it at night when nobody was there, but he still lost his job, was convicted of a felony, almost went to jail, and owes the government thousands of dollars in restitution. A few weeks later the

Planned Parenthood was fixed up and ready to start killing babies again.

I guess he sure showed 'em.

The day after it happened, a pastor from our church called me to make sure I wasn't going to get any funny ideas. Like maybe I would be inspired to follow in my friend's footsteps. Maybe all my pent up guilt and rage would boil over and I would snap and put on my secret Batman costume and go and, I dunno, throw bricks through the windows of abortion doctors.

I almost laughed at him over the phone. I wanted to say, "Dude, you don't get it. I grew up right outside of Auschwitz. Everyday I breathed in the black smoke from its death-mills. I'm living there still. I never expect to live anywhere else. I never expect to breath any other air. Sure, it's sad. Sure we're all going to be judged. Sure these modern day Nazis are Bad People. But there ain't no Allied Army marching to our rescue. This is the world we live in. I made my peace with it a long time ago. Because I didn't want to go crazy, and I didn't want to do nothing but cry all the time, and I certainly didn't want to ever think I could break some glass and knock over some computers and make a difference."

And maybe just a sprinkling of piety to conclude: "God will sort it all out in the final judgment. But that's all we can hope for."

Cut to now.

I keep thinking it over. And I'm not the same guy that wanted to say those things to his pastor. That's why I cried for forty-two minutes before I wrote this.

Those videos made people notice. They made people think. They made the bad guys look foolish and stupid and, well, bad. And people, my people, Americans, really did have to face what abortion was, if only for a moment. I mean, like, it was all over Twitter. It was all over Facebook. *The New York Times* published that op-ed.

Mobs didn't storm the streets. Babies will die today and most people will go to work and have dinner and not give it too much thought.

But when those videos came out, people noticed. People cared. And God's enemies had to go on the defensive, just for a moment. It was odd. I'd never seen anything like it in my lifetime.

Yet by the time this is published, it may all be forgotten. The American public, as a rule, has about as much memory and cultural sensitivity as the

average dachshund. Why else would we have Planned Parenthood in the first place? And we all have a vested interest in keeping baby-murder legal so women can keep going to school and work, so our economy doesn't collapse, so men don't have to provide for women and kids, and, also, because SEX.

I'm not an idiot. I see how things are.

The more I pray and the more I think, the more I know that this is probably just the silence before the trapdoor is sprung on the gallows. It probably is too late.

Even if our country decided to repent, it would take too long for a behemoth like America to get down on its knees. Revivals don't happen overnight. Revolutions take centuries to simmer. Great Awakenings aren't as great as they're cracked up to be.

We've made our bed, now we have to lie in it. The only thing to do is wait for judgment. My prophecy is probably right. If people's consciences have been pricked by these videos, they will scab over. Probably God didn't ordain the Center for Medical Progress as ministers of mercy. Probably He sent them as prophets of doom. Already the scoffers and mockers are decrying them. And people are forgetting. Even as they release new videos, people aren't talking as much.

I mean, the people who felt something watching those videos can't go on feeling that same thing forever. Even good people have to get on with their lives.

And here's another thing. In showing us those freezers full of "fetal tissue" don't the videos feed our taste for sickening spectacle and desensitize us just a bit to the whole idea of dead babies? Sure, we were revolted by what we saw. But didn't a little part of us have to die just to keep watching? And in the end, when nothing really changes, might that not be the legacy of the videos? That they were just another step in the hardening of people's hearts?

And let's not forget that the murderers and their lackeys are the aristocracy of a billion-dollar empire of blood. That's the clincher. Too many people stand to make too much money for there to be any hope of change. For there to be any hope, period.

That's why I cried. That's why I get sick just thinking about hoping.

And yet.

And yet.

And yet, what?

And yet I don't know.

I don't know how to pray.

I don't know how to ask.

I don't know how to think. I really don't.

But here's what I say to God now:

Father God,

What if you hear prayer?

What if when I'm on my way to work and I say a prayer in the car, I'm not just saying it to the vinyl seats? What if when people get down on their knees in their bedroom, they're not just praying to the ceiling? What if when little kids ask Jesus to help their kitty-cat's paw get better, Jesus is a real person who hears those prayers too?

What if You're up there right now? What if You exist? What if all the stuff we tell ourselves about You is true? What if You are listening right now, Father? What if You can hear me? What if You know me? What if You know every hair on my head?

What if everything You say about Yourself is true? I mean really true?

What if You laid the foundations of the earth? What if You split the sky and the sea and laid the boundaries of both?

What if You hear the songs that the stars sing?

What if You see into the darkest depths of the sea and the farthest depths of the sky? What if You marshal the morning, and command the night? What if You swaddle us with light and swaddle us with darkness as easily as a mother swaddles a newborn?

What if You are the God of Lightning and the Father of Thunder and the Begetter of Dew? What if You send the snow and stir the wind? What if You make the dust particles swarm, and the clods of earth stick together? What if You provide meat for every hatchling of every raven who ever tastes a worm?

What if, when You told old Job You did all that stuff, You weren't a trickster or a sprite or some oriental demon, but You were, quite simply, the Almighty Revealed?

What if You hate sin as You say You do? What if You actually mean to shatter the teeth of the wicked? What if You are a refiner's fire, and all evil will be consumed on the great and terrible day of Your coming? What if, on that day, all the kings and false priests and abortionists really will plead with the mountains to crush them? What if the glee of the baby killers will turn to horror in the moment they find themselves forever burning in a real place called Hell?

What if You—the God that I pray to on the way to work, the God that kids pray to for their kitty-cat's paw to get better—what if You are the same God who wiped out the whole world in a flood? What if You are the God who splintered our tongues at Babel? What if You are the God who rained fire on Sodom?

And what if You are the same God who told Abraham He would spare Sodom if ten righteous men were found there? What if You are the same God who stayed His hand when Nineveh repented in sackcloth and ashes? What if You were the still small voice that told Your despairing prophet seven thousand had not bowed the knee to Baal?

What if You are the same God who loved this world so much that You sent Your only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but would have eternal life? What if that verse is true?

What if the blood of Christ is powerful enough to wash away the tide of all the blood we've shed as a nation?

What if there's still time for my country, which I love, to repent? What if we can still ask for mercy?

What if we had a great bonfire of all our butcher's tools and poison pills? What if in every city the houses of horror were torn down, and replaced with memorials to all the victims of our collective self-actualization?

What if no girl ever had to be frightened that her mother or father might make her kill the dear one living inside her?

What if the oppressors were overthrown? What if the scorners of life and those who profited by death were punished? What if the mockers choked on their own spit?

What if the murderers were the ones who had to be afraid?

What if I didn't have to be afraid? What if young girls, pregnant too soon, didn't have to be afraid? What if women with precious ones in their bellies didn't have to be afraid? What if fathers and mothers with no money didn't have to be afraid? What if the law of the land defended people from

their own fears and doubts and selfishness and anger? What if nobody had to be afraid of killing their own child, or being made to kill their child, or being complicit in the killing of another's child, because, once and for all, we as a nation tore down the apparatus of death?

What if the murderers were the ones who had to be afraid?

And what if we loved the little ones again? What if we nurtured them? What if we protected them? What if every little baby that cried out in the darkness had a mother or father or brother or sister to hold and comfort it? What if, in every child, even the tiny, even the weak, even the feeble, we saw the reflection of the light of God? What if, in the laugh of every toddler, in the coo of every newborn, in the heartbeat of every unborn, we heard the voice of God? And that voice said:

I am the Lord.

I am the Giver of life.

I am the Father of lights.

I am the Father from whom all fatherhood gets its name.

These are My precious ones.

Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God.

Father, what if these things happened in my lifetime? What if your servants at the Center for Medical Progress weren't prophets of doom? What if revival happened? What if your anger was abated?

What if all the people, my people who I love very much, woke up? What if they saw? With you all things are possible. You have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. You want them to repent and live. You are a God who is angry with the wicked every day, but you are also a tender and loving daddy. How these things go together I don't have a clue, but You have testified this about Yourself, and I believe it.

So, Father. Heavenly Father God. Lord Almighty. Daddy.

I don't know what's coming. I don't know if it's good or bad.

But I'm doing it now. Maybe for the first time. Help me to do it please. Because I want to do it.

I won't always know when and how to do it. I can't promise to do it well. But I will do it if you will help me.

I will hope.

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## *Who We Are*

Clearnote Fellowship is a small, like-minded body of reformed and evangelical churches dedicated to building God's Kingdom. We plant churches, train pastors, and provide local churches with biblically sound and culturally astute resources like those featured in this issue of *The Warhorn*.

Your tax-deductible gift goes to support Clearnote Pastors College, Clearnote Missions & Church Planting, Clearnote Campus Fellowship, Clearnote Songbook, and more.

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Publisher: Clearnote Press, Bloomington, IN

Editor: Jacob Mentzel

Associate Editor: Nathan Alberson

Production: Philip Moyer, Alex McNeilly

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