

Gregg L. Cunningham, Executive Director

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Dear Pro-Life Friend,

On December 27, 2008, a woman from Millersburg, OH, who had just seen our abortion pictures, wrote to say: "I knew it was horrible but never saw any photos of it ... it is a lot worse than I had thought it was." These kinds of messages arrive virtually daily. When we drag concealed brutality out from under the rug beneath which so many are trying to conceal it, things change. You can't alter public policy until you alter public opinion.

John 3:19-20 quotes our Savior teaching that "... men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds are evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed." The great tragedy of abortion is that the evil men and women who preside over the abortion industry "fear that their deeds will be exposed" so they base their litigation strategy on a demand for "rights of privacy." "Privacy" in this sense is a legal term whose essence is secrecy. Abortion is an act so terrible that its horror must be concealed from aborting mothers or many will refuse to do it. It must also be concealed from the voting public or many will refuse to permit it.

Ephesians 5:11 commands Christians to "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them." Genesis 9:1 records God's command to Noah and his sons that they "Be fruitful and increase in numbers" "Fruitful" again and again in Scripture means pregnancy, and abortion destroys this "fruit" of a mother's womb. It is, in that sense, a "fruitless deed of darkness." The church perversely facilitates the abortion industry's desperate demand for secrecy when church leaders cover up the horror of abortion and even sabotage others' efforts to expose it. This means much more baby-killing and much less pro-life activism among Christians.

No one better understood the importance of the church "exposing the fruitless deeds of darkness" than Martin Luther King. He was not only an historically prominent civil rights activist but also an ordained minister and active church pastor. He saw the separation of social justice from the Gospel of Christ as a strange and artificial schism. In his "Letter From The Birmingham Jail," written to Birmingham clergymen who had publicly condemned his lonely protests, he wrote:

In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white churches stand on the sideline and merely mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard so many ministers say, 'Those are social issues with which the gospel has no real concern.' And I have watched so many churches commit themselves to a completely other-worldly religion which made a strange distinction between body and soul, the sacred and the secular.

Dr. King's heart was broken by the certain knowledge that God had given His church the power of life and death over the black community but even sympathetic white Christians largely refused to use that power in defense of their black brothers and sisters. Dr. King understood the importance of shock-photography as the only effective means through which to expose dark deeds. But he also knew that he would get little help from churches which had the resources to change the law almost overnight had they been willing to take

risks and make sacrifices. Like the priest and the Levite in Christ's parable of the Good Samaritan, they might have felt pity for the victim but unlike the Samaritan, they were unwilling to show him that pity.

So Dr. King was on his own but he knew that as long as racists were allowed to abuse black people outside the view of the national news media, most Americans would remain ignorant of the frequency and severity of the mistreatment and the abuses would never end. He too struggled in vain to rally the church against the brutalization of helpless victims. In another section of his "Letter From The Birmingham Jail," he described racial violence that, as is true of the violence of abortion, few Americans had been forced to view:

I doubt that you would so quickly commend the policemen if you were to observe their ugly and inhumane treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you were to watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you were to see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys; if you were to observe them, as they did on two occasions, refuse to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I cannot join you in your praise of the Birmingham police department.

It must have been maddening to feel powerless against attackers who had the initiative and could pick and choose the times and places of their assaults. Napoleon, when asked what kinds of generals he preferred, famously replied, "Lucky ones!" No axiom of armed combat is more venerated than that "fortune favors the bold." Boldness is more often associated with dynamic offense than static defense. Yet to this point, civil rights activists had largely been hunkered down on defense. They were essentially reacting to what their tormentors chose to do. Coaches and generals live by the truth that you can't score on defense. But at some point Dr. King had an epiphany.

What might happen if, instead of waiting reactively for inconspicuous attacks against blacks who were perceived to have gotten out of line, civil rights leaders might organize protests specifically intended to provoke the racists into making their attacks at times and places chosen by their victims? And suppose those times and places were carefully coordinated with sympathetic journalists who were eager to photograph and film the violence for publication and broadcast? Suddenly the public would be forced by the ugly pictures to confront the shame of racial violence. The civil rights movement realized it could use these shocking images to "shame America before the world." Richard B. Speed's review of Mark Kurlansky's book, *1968: The Year That Rocked The World*, describes this enormously successful strategy:

In discussing the impact of civil disobedience, Kurlansky relates a telling incident that took place during a 1965 march in Selma, Alabama. Martin Luther King apparently noticed that *Life Magazine* photographer, Flip Schulke, had put down his camera in order to help a demonstrator injured by the police. Afterward, according to Kurlansky, King rebuked Schulke, telling him that 'Your job is to photograph what is happening to us.'

And CBR's job is to photograph what is happening to the babies. Social reform is always about the pictures. No one wants to see these sickening images but until the public is forced to look, the violence can't be stopped. Dr. King and his associates had paid a terrible price for provoking these bloody attacks and without pictures to disturb the American people, their sacrifice would have been futile. Oppressors have always tried to suppress the evidence of their abuses. At JessieDanielsPhD.com (Thinking At The Interface) we read a quote by Gary Olson, speaking of slavery:

In his recent book, *The Slave Ship*, maritime historian Marcus Rediker documents the role played by emotional and especially visual appeals in ending the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The visuals were indispensable because, as the abolitionist James Field Stanfield argued, the terrible truths of the slave trade 'had been withheld from the public eye by every effort that interest, ingenuity, and influence, could devise.'

The public dare not be allowed to see the abuses lest they rise up and change the law. Sadly, it is often deluded Christians who enable the oppressors to hide their terrible truth. The churches in the South in the 1960s were as complicit in facilitating civil rights abuses as today's churches are derelict in their duty to demand an end to abortion. And like their slave-owning forbearers, 1960s racists quickly understood the dangers of news coverage; and journalists, especially those with cameras, invariably became targets. Harry F. Rosenthal, an Associated Press reporter who covered the James Meredith march to Jackson, MS, is quoted in the book *Breaking News*, Associated Press (Princeton Architectural Press, 2007): “‘We never knew who to be afraid of,’ he said. ‘Nobody wanted us there.’ He recalled that about twenty of the twenty-five cars that had been rented by reporters were returned damaged, many with bullet holes.”

The *Washington Post's* obituary of Mr. Schulke (May 17, 2008) chronicles the dangers the photographer experienced when taking pictures of Klansmen attacking civil rights marchers:

Mr. Schulke was threatened by white mobs, tear-gassed by police and locked in squad cars so he couldn't document demonstrations. He usually rented Cadillacs while on assignment in the South, he said, because they were heavy and could outrun the old pickup trucks favored by Ku Klux Klan members.

In the fall of 1962, he was in Oxford, Miss., where James Meredith was attempting to enroll as the first black student at the University of Mississippi. With federal marshals confronting an angry white mob, Mr. Schulke got onto campus hidden in the trunk of a professor's car. A fellow photographer was shot and killed by a sniper, shortly after Mr. Schulke urged him to take cover.

Mr. Schulke was hiding in the trunk of a car because Mississippi authorities had banned cameras from the streets of the campus (*Press-Telegram*, Long Beach, CA, October 1, 1962). They knew the world was watching and they didn't want pictures of literally thousands of Klansmen trying to kill a lone, brave black man.

The evidence that distressing pictures changed public opinion was undeniable. Associated Press photographer Jack Thornell was interviewed by *Smithsonian Magazine* (Smithsonian.com, “Down in Mississippi,” February 2005) about his photo of James Meredith, later writhing in the pain of multiple shotgun blasts on a march specifically intended to defy the Ku Klux Klan:

Of the many photographs that Thornell made of the incident, one shows the fallen man on dusty Highway 51 screaming in agony. It was published in newspapers and magazines nationwide and went on to win a Pulitzer Prize. The image suggests the very pain and frustration of being black in the Deep South of the 1960s. ‘When people saw scenes like this in newspapers and on TV—when they saw what was actually happening down South—they couldn't believe it,’ says Thornell, who is 65 and retired and lives in Metairie, Louisiana. He says his one lasting regret about that day four decades ago is that he didn't put his camera down to help the wounded Meredith.

Mr. Thornell says that when Americans saw his terrible pictures “... they couldn't believe it.” They couldn't believe that such a thing could be happening in America. That is exactly the reaction our abortion photos constantly elicit from the public. In one recent twenty-four-hour period we received seven e-mail messages from people who were shocked by what they saw on our website regarding abortion: The first said “I had no idea....” The next said “... changed my mind completely....” Another exclaimed “Oh my God!” From a woman who admitted to two abortions, we read “More information should be made available (like this site). I am convinced it would have changed my mind.” The next said “I was amazed This is so horrific....” Another said “I never knew” The last explained that “I always thought abortion was

okay until I saw videos and photos.” How much evidence do national pro-life leaders need to convince them that we will continue to lose as long as we continue to cover up the awful truth of abortion?

Pastor Rick Warren of Saddleback Church credits his wife with pushing him into the global fight against AIDS. ABCnews.go.com, Dec. 10, 2007, carried a feature titled “Kay Warren Finds Her ‘Purpose Driven Life’”:

‘I picked up a news magazine on my dining room table,’ Kay said on ‘Good Morning America’ today. ‘It had an article on AIDS in Africa, and I didn’t care. I thought it was a gay man’s disease; therefore, I didn’t have to care. I was ignorant and hardhearted.’

But Warren said the sight of helpless children captured in the magazine’s heart-wrenching pictures left her in tears and ignited a passion in her that made her want to help.

‘The pictures were so horrible. I tried to reduce the horror by looking in the smallest way, but I couldn’t escape it,’ Kay said. ‘Once I couldn’t escape it, I was toast.’

Ugly pictures. If news magazines published disturbing photos of aborted babies, I believe that many women like Kay Warren would respond as she responded to horrible but widely circulated photos of AIDS children. Photos of brutalized black children changed America in the 1960s and photos of neglected black children changed Mrs. Warren today. I believe that photos of aborted children have the same impact but again, since the press won’t show Mrs. Warren those photos, we must. If the church fought abortion the way Saddleback fights AIDS, the world really would quickly become a different place. That is why we are about to do everything in our power (by God's grace) to show Christians like Mrs. Warren another set of terrible pictures. Our goal is to persuade pastors to show their congregations these pictures from the pulpit but we will show them from the sidewalk if we must.

In trying to reach the entire Body of Christ, our initial focus will be on Saddleback for pragmatic rather than personal reasons. On May 30, 2005, The Barna Group, a public opinion polling and research organization, announced the results of a nationwide survey of Protestant pastors which revealed that the two books most often listed as the most influential books they had read during the previous three years were Pastor Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven Life* and his *Purpose Driven Church*. Pastor Warren’s influence on both Protestant and Catholic clergy can hardly be overstated.

Lord bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregg Cunningham', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gregg Cunningham
Executive Director

P.S. On January 6, 2009, a twenty-year-old man from Nottingham, England, wrote to tell us that he had just seen our abortion video: “Although I always knew an abortion must be graphic ... I had closed my mind to the situation.” He adds: “... I will never allow one to happen in my family....” That is a start. I am praying his memory of our pictures will finally persuade him to support a total ban. Thanks for helping start him on his way!