

Abortion and Politics

✘ I read a recent article by Marcia Pally, author of *The New Evangelicals: Expanding the Vision of the Common Good*, in which she discussed abortion and politics. Although she opines that evangelical opposition to abortion is firm, the evangelical vote is not fixed and many evangelicals were happy with Democrat wins. Since the mid-term elections, she says that evangelicals “have been developing nuanced ideas about ending abortion that will appeal to Americans across the religious and political range” and quotes Shane Claiborne, who she describes as the Elvis of younger evangelicals, as saying, “if I am going to discourage abortion I had better be ready to adopt some babies and care for some mothers.”

Ms. Pally goes on to state that because 73% of abortions are economically motivated, “abortion would drop significantly if medical, financial and emotional support were provided during pregnancy along with day care post-partum services.” She suggested that the abortion figures would drop further if changes were made in the adoption laws and “dealt with the values taught to our kids about the worth of others and of intimate relationships, and – especially for boys – about using others for one’s own pleasure.”

I agree with only a part of Ms. Pally’s position.

Yes, adoption laws should be changed to make it easier for people to adopt children in this country. Too many people remain on waiting lists (except if you’re a celebrity) for years to adopt children.

Yes, values should be taught to our children – but why haven’t they been taught all along. Are parents no longer teaching their girl children about self-respect and that it isn’t necessary to lie down with a guy on a Friday night because there’s nothing else to do?

My husband's legal practice involves mostly inner-city families. He knows and sees dozens of 14-year old girls who believe it's a badge of honor to be pregnant. Inter-generational out-of-wedlock children are commonplace. A client of his was 16-years old when she got pregnant, her mother was 16-years old when she had her, and her own daughter was 16-years old when she got pregnant for the first time. Obviously, many children aren't being taught that their actions have consequences, and, apparently, those consequences are not a big deal. And what about the boy children? They're clearly not being taught responsibility.

I don't agree that every aspect of medical, financial and emotional support should be provided during someone's pregnancy along with day care post-partum services – if that support is to be provided exclusively by the taxpayer. If you can't afford to have a child, then you should take the necessary precautions to avoid getting pregnant in the first place. If, on the other hand, the support is provided by churches or other faith-based or charitable organizations, I have no problem with it.

But, Ms. Pally goes on to quote Midwestern mega-church pastor Greg Boyd who said, "a person could vote for a candidate who is not 'pro-life' but who will help the economy and the poor." Sounds like code for spending a whole lot of money and more "cradle to grave" entitlement talk. Unfortunately, as I've written many times, the government is incapable of oversight and incompetent to determine who is truly needy.

No one seems to want to face the reality that it's a matter of personal responsibility and poor choices. Unless someone is raped or is pregnant due to the 1% of failed contraceptive use, no one has to have an unwanted pregnancy.

When I told my husband about this article, he immediately said, "Well, what about pregnancies that result when people are in the heat of passion?" Being a person who's never once

had unprotected sex when I didn't want to get pregnant, this was difficult for me to understand but I conceded, "Okay, the first time someone has sex without protection, I'll give them a pass." But after that, if you continue to be sexually active, every guy should have a condom in his pocket and every girl should have or be on some type of birth control. No ands, ifs or buts. Period.

Why should society be required to fix the problem that's left after people's irresponsible behavior by then providing medical, financial and emotional support? Why isn't the guy providing financial support for the child and why isn't the family providing the necessary emotional support to the mother? Why is it society's responsibility to provide "day care post partum services?" Sounds like a whole new bureaucratic form of welfare.

As I said, except in very few cases, there doesn't have to be an unwanted pregnancy, thus no need for abortion. Focus should be directed on the personal choices made by all sexually-active persons and not on finding politicians who are willing to spend more of the taxpayers' money on irresponsible people. Unwed motherhood should not be glamorized and men should be held accountable for their actions.

Bigger government is not the antidote for abortion; personal responsibility in avoiding an unwanted pregnancy is.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.