

Former Abortion Advocate Now Marches for Life

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—It is natural for individuals (who consider themselves to be prolife) to think throughout the entire year about the practice of millions of women killing unborn children. However, it is understandable for the same people to focus on the horror at this particular time of the year.

The reason? On Jan. 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court made a landmark decision in which the court ruled that the Constitution of the United States protects a pregnant woman's "liberty" to choose to have an abortion "without excessive government restriction"—with the decision called *Roe v. Wade*.

As every citizen knows, there is an annual rally and march (called March for Life) held in Washington, D.C., scheduled around the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. This year the March for Life was set for Friday, Jan. 21.

The purpose of this article is to introduce you to Abby Johnson, a former director at Planned Parenthood, who withdrew from that organization and became a participant at the march. More than that, she became a busy advocate for preborn babies.

To give you a brief idea about her life, I want to quote the following description titled "Abby Johnson" that is posted at focusonthefamily.com.

"Once the director of a Planned Parenthood clinic, Abby Johnson is now a passionate, outspoken advocate for the sanctity of human life of pre-born babies. During her stint with Planned Parenthood, she became increasingly disturbed by the organization's activities and reached a sharp turning point when she was asked to assist in an abortion in which she watched in horror as a 13 week old baby was killed. Soon afterward, Abby departed from Planned Parenthood and quickly became a well-recognized supporter of the pro-life movement. She travels widely as a public speaker and is the author of the national best-selling book, *Unplanned*, which led to a movie about her experiences also titled *Unplanned*. She and her husband have eight children and reside in Texas. Learn more about Abby at her website, abbyjohnson.org."

To complete this article, I now post the following two articles written by Mrs. Johnson for your edification.



Looking back to December 2021, an article by Abby Johnson titled "Understanding the Abortion Industry's Greatest Lie" was posted at foxnews.com on Dec. 1, 2021. Following is the article.

The greatest lie women have ever been told is that they need abortion in order to achieve their dreams, to have the career they want, to be the movie star they worked so hard to become, to keep their partner. I told this very lie to countless women in order to convince them to pay us at Planned Parenthood to get rid of that growing life inside of them. It is also the same lie that the abortion industry has built their case on in *Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

Women, don't believe this lie. At its very core, this lie demands you attain justice and equality at the expense of a human being who shares your DNA, who will have parts of your personality and physical qualities, and whose very existence is a miracle.

Women have achieved immense progress in the workforce, education, and in positions in government over the past 40 years. There are many more women as members of Congress, in state legislatures, as governors, presidents of universities, and Fortune 500 CEOs and board members than in the past 30 to 40 years, according to the Pew Research Center. While abortion has been legal and available this entire time, the number of abortions have been dropping steadily since the 1980s—the same time women were making their rise in the workforce. Women have also earned more bachelor degrees since men since the 1980s and American colleges and universities are currently enrolling six women for every four men.

One of the reasons this lie about abortion empowering women to have the life they want works so effectively is due to the lack of support women have at their place of employment, their school, and even within their families. Pregnancy is viewed as a hindrance to women, and the unborn child is a "problem" that needs to be "taken care of" because caring for a child is no easy task. This burden almost always falls on women. Have you ever heard of a man being asked by his company how he plans to balance his work/life responsibilities when he becomes a father?

I know what it feels like to believe the lie. I had two abortions myself and nothing I can do can bring those babies back.

New York Times columnist Ross Douthat argues that society needs to redistribute this burden between the sexes, holding men accountable for the children they father and giving mothers the support they need. He rightly asks, "Is it really necessary to found equality for one group of human beings on legal violence toward another, entirely voiceless group?"

It shouldn't be. I don't believe there is a middle ground on the issue that abortion violently takes an innocent human life. I do believe there is a middle ground on working toward solutions where women are at a point where they do not need to choose between the life of their child or their personal dreams.

I run a small ministry, *And Then There Were None*, that helps abortion workers get out of the industry and find new jobs. We have fewer than 20 employees, but we have offered 12 full weeks of paid leave when a woman has a baby since our inception in 2012. We have very low turnover among our staff. They know we put our money where our mouth is. If this small of a ministry can offer 12 weeks of paid leave, why isn't every corporation, Fortune 500 company, church and prolife group offering it? This should be a priority for all organizations that purport to support and empower women.

When I worked at Planned Parenthood, the saddest room was not the procedure room or even the room where we had to account for all of the body parts of the fetus: it was the recovery room. The women there were empty of the life within them that had existed just minutes before. They were crying, some softly, others not so soft. Many of them had blank stares or sat with their heads in their hands as they slowly came to realize what they had done. They had believed the lie and it was incredibly painful to watch.

I know what it feels like to believe the lie. I had two abortions myself, and nothing I can do can bring those babies back.

What I can do is help women in situations like I was in when I chose abortion to advocate for widespread maternity-leave policies, to stand outside the U.S. Supreme Court today and tell my story.

It is my hope that women will see through the greatest lie they have been told and come to understand how devastating it would be for them to believe it.



An article by Abby Johnson titled "I Quit Planned Parenthood and [Now I] March for Life; More Abortion Clinic 'Quitters' Join Me Every Year" was posted at foxnews.com on Jan. 20, 2022. Following is the article.

Looking into the vast crowd at my very first March for Life 12 years ago was terrifying. I had left my job as a Planned Parenthood clinic director only three months earlier and basically became overnight famous within the prolife community.

I had just undergone a radical conversion after witnessing the destruction of a 13-week-old fetus during an ultrasound-guided abortion. At the March for Life in Washington, D.C., there will be several former abortion workers in that big crowd, people who dispensed abortion pills to women may be in that same crowd or held their hand as they lay on the table or coerced them into something they knew was wrong.

I was wary heading to that first March for Life because I was on the opposing side of these people for years. I had angrily protested against them. I had said mean things to them, especially the people who prayed on the sidewalk outside my clinic.

- Would they judge me?
- Would they shove everything I had said back in my face?
- Even worse, would they say I wasn't worthy of redemption, that abortion workers should be hated and despised for what they did?

It didn't exactly go the way I had expected. At that first March for Life, many people had heard my story of seeing the ultrasound and walking out of the clinic. Women were coming up to me and they were literally falling on me crying and sharing their stories of abortion regret.

Yet I did hear that abortion workers don't deserve love, that we are despicable human beings for working in abortion clinics. This was especially prevalent in the early years after I left Planned Parenthood and began to put a face to the people who worked in the clinics. We are human too. We make mistakes, some bigger than others. But so many of us have had the courage to walk away and recognize the destruction we were causing to women, to their children, and to their families.

I believe it is the stories of these abortion workers, stories of heartache and pain and redemption, that need to be told. Why? Because of my experiences, and those of many former abortion workers who have come with me to the March for Life, I've learned our stories of repentance have the power to heal those affected by the tragedy of abortion.

Both men and women who have been hurt in some way by abortion needed to see our repentance because we represented so much to them.

- We represented those doctors who ended the lives of their babies.
- We represented the nurses that held their hands and told them, "It would all be over soon," or, in some cases, the nurses who physically held them down on the table when they screamed out in pain.
- We represented the clinic workers who lied and told them that their babies were "just tissue" and that they wouldn't regret their abortion.
- And, really, we represented a society that had regrettably normalized abortion—and these women didn't even realize how much they needed to see a repentant abortion clinic worker until they saw me.

It wasn't even me necessarily. But seeing someone who had a hand in their pain cooled a burning spot of anger in their lives that maybe they had been holding onto for many years. Some of them didn't even recognize the anger until they realized that it was gone.

Most of the former abortion workers we help get out of the industry and then who attend the March for Life feel like they will be judged by the attendees. But they aren't. Many people come up to them and thank them for their bravery and courage. Others offer to pray with them. It's an incredibly humbling experience.

Then there are the protesters, those who appear along the route or at the Supreme Court. They have shouted down former abortion workers, including

those who speak about the regret they have of their own abortion. It breaks my heart to watch this happen because I used to be on that side. I used to be screaming at pro-ifers. I was so, so angry.

But at every March for Life, I get the opportunity to say I'm sorry to the women who have abortions, that I'm so sorry for my work in the abortion clinic. And, afterwards, I see the peace in the faces of the women listening. They just want someone to acknowledge their pain and see them. And I do. All of us former abortion workers walking in the March for Life do.

We'll be there at the March, holding our signs that say we are "Quitters." Our stories are different but we, too, have our place in the movement. It's a special feeling to have walked away from our work at the abortion clinic and to now walk in solidarity with other proliferers who want to end abortion. It feels good to know we are finally on the right side.