stop preaching as for his refusal to apply for a preaching license — because it implied that the right to preach was granted by the state and not by God. Obeying higher laws came with a high price for him. The Bedford jail was no Sedgwick County Hilton; the cells were damp and the winters cold, and his means of supporting his family was through the sale of shoelaces he made while locked up.[11]

Over the centuries since Bunyan's death, most Protestant evangelical Christians have revered Bunyan's example of heroism, comparing him to the apostles and early Christians who suffered for their faith. I wonder though, sometimes, if Bunyan's situation were contemporary, would the church in America today be supportive of his cause? I can hear now the ecclesiastic disapproval of his disrespect for the law, irresponsibility for family needs, and stubbornness for refusing to simply obtain a preaching license. In light of the reactions I've heard in recent years to rescuing the unborn and some utterly shameful excuses for the need to submit to the authorities in this matter, I am afraid that many, if not most, would disapprove of Bunyan's actions. Several well-known Christian leaders would probably voice their opposition to his ministry "tactics" and do what they could to distance themselves from the man's situation — especially if the media had been true to form and convinced everyone that he was a fanatic. Civil disobedience has a way of being heroic until it's knocking at your own church door.

The example of Bunyan has been of great encouragement and comfort to me on many occasions, especially when standing before magistrates or hearing the loud clang of the cell door slamming behind me. I hope that it will be the same for others today who wish not only to believe the truth, but act on it. The truth is that in our land millions of little ones are getting their little heads sucked off and squashed in vacuum machines and God says that they are our responsibility. "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

I'm not implying that only those who risk arrest are rescuing the unborn, but it is this group I wish to challenge and encourage with the example of John Bunyan. For I believe that it is their efforts which have and will continue to experience the greatest assault from the enemy.

The days ahead do not look "good" for rescuers in the United States. It is impossible to predict what's in store, but if God allows the threats of the wicked to be fulfilled, we're in for some heavy-duty jail terms. It's not going to be the picnic we had in Wichita. It's going to be long, hard, and lonesome.

The question is, will we be faithful despite the consequences? I don't think that was even a question for Bunyan. He had his sights set on his Lord, on the truth, and living by the truth. The consequences and his ability to endure were in God's hands. He simply did what he knew was right, and in the process loved his Lord more than his own life or even his family. Nothing in all his writings indicates that he lived to regret it.

The faithful visits of his blind daughter, Mary, always brought comfort to Bunyan's soul—and a mug of soup to his stomach. Unfortunately, Mary did not live to see her father's release.

The Bible speaks of individuals who were willing to endure the sharp iron teeth of a saw tearing through their stomachs; history tells of others who gave up their flesh to be punctured and torn by the fangs of famished lions; in Scotland, the faithful were put on their knees as a steel blade severed the heads from their necks — and all did it for the sake of truth, truthful living, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who declared himself to be the Truth. Are we willing to give up ten years of our earthly lives in a jail cell for the truth? Fifteen? Twenty?

May we pray for the courage of a John Bunyan, should that day come.

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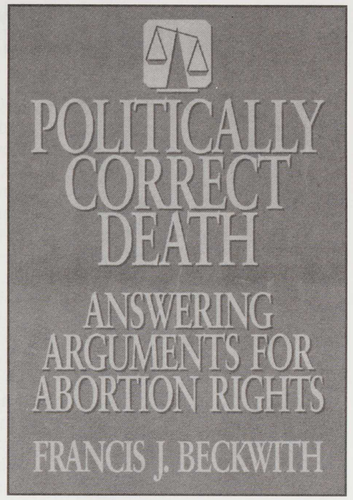
[1] "Christian History" Vol. 5, No. 3, 1986. Published by the Christian History Institute. Worchester, PA.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] History of Christianity, L.S. Latourett, Harper & Brothers, New York 1953. Page 824.
[6] Sketches from Church History, S.M. Houghton, Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA, 1980. Pages 162-163.
[7] The Church in History, B.K. Kuiper, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1966. Pages 254-255.
[8] "Christian History." Vol. 5, No. 3, 1986. Published by the Christian History Institute, Worchester, PA.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.

Politically Correct Death

A book by Francis J. Beckwith



Politically Correct Death stands apart from most of the missives I've seen on the abortion debate — and I do stress the word "debate."

Francis J. Beckwith attempts a difficult task and succeeds. He tries to take the argument against abortion out of the field of bumperstickers (on both sides) and argue strictly from logic and philosophy and, for all that, to make it readable to the average man.

Unlike Randy Alcorn's excellent *Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments*, Beckwith's treatise scrupulously avoids the "religious" arguments until the reader reaches the chapter designated for it. This, he says, is helpful because many of the people with whom we debate may believe in one or another kind of morality, but have no use for religion *per se*.

It also deals with some of the more philosophically sophisticated arguments in favor of abortion.

The interesting thing about *Politically Correct Death* is that It takes away from pro-lifers some of their more treasured arguments — using exactly the same reasoning that takes away some of the pro-aborts' favorite arguments.

There is one recurrent theme: Are the unborn fully human?

This question is skipped by most of the standard pro-abort rhetoric — and many of the pro-life answers.

When the pro-aborts, Beckwith relentlessly points out, bring up the issues of the dangers of illegal abortion, financial burden, poverty, population, rape, incest, fetal deformity, and many others, it begs the question of whether the unborn are fully human. These arguments assume what they are trying to prove (i.e. Abortion is necessary because it is so . . . well, necessary.). If the unborn are fully human, he argues, none of these things matters. This question must be answered first.

But the same question-begging goes on from the pro-life side. We answer with statistics about how many abortion-related deaths *really* took place before *Roe v Wade* or the fact that we are willing to help women in crisis pregnancies. However, even if NARAL were right about the pre-*Roe* death rate, would it make the babies less valuable? Even if no one would help a pregnant woman, does that justify killing a fully human person?

Beckwith plays the question like a one-note Samba throughout the book because it is, in fact, the central question with which we are confronted. For all our talk about "keeping the focus on the babies" we are often as guilty as the pro-aborts in focusing on the mother. And the pro-aborts — well, they want to focus on *anything* but the baby.

Beckwith even presents philosophical arguments in favor of protecting the unborn *even if they are not fully human*. This is an interesting and possibly effective ploy.

There are, though, some pro-abort arguments out there which concede that the unborn are fully human, but that, for various reasons, it is not protected as much as the mother. Beckwith explores these arguments and uncovers the logical fallacies in them.

For most people, this book will be slower reading than they are accustomed to. But *Politically Correct Death* is good precisely because it is slow reading. It is an exercise of what Hercule Poirot calls "the little gray cells" that we could all use. It stretches the brain. It makes us look more carefully at what they — and we — say. Analyze a little more where our "pro-life commitment" comes from.

CORRECTION
The phone number given to order Randall Terry's new book, *"Why Does A Nice Guy Like Me . . . Keep Getting Thrown In Jail"* in the August issue was in error. The correct number is 1-800-323-LIVE Life Advocate regrets the error.

Woman to Woman: That Blob of Tissue

by Terry Schlossberg

One of the most beautiful descriptions of the unborn anywhere is in Psalm 139:13-16. I was reflecting recently on how hard we work to emphasize the human characteristics and appearance of the unborn. Shari Richards has a videotape of a baby doing back flips in the womb while teenagers watch in amused delight. Many of us wear tiny gold feet to make visible how perfectly formed is the ten week old unborn baby.

The Scripture makes a point of our "unformed substance"

But when I examined the beautiful language of the Psalm, I was struck by the absence of the perfectly formed unborn child. The word of the Psalm is "unformed": "your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me when none of them yet existed."

That language doesn't apply to the beautiful Lennart Nilsson pictures of the unborn sucking his thumb. In fact, as I study the pictures, I see that even a six week old unborn human already has too much "form" to be the subject of this Psalm.

I think of the Psalm when I read geneticist Jerome LeJeune describing the single cell that was the beginning of all our lives. He says that at the moment when the sperm unites with the ovum to create the zygote, "the full genetic information necessary and sufficient to express all the inborn qualities of the new individual, is gathered." LeJeune points out that the first cell has in it everything we need to become an adult, everything that makes each of us unique. It's all there, what we're going to be, in that first tiny cell.

The words of the Psalm warn us not to thwart God's intent

The Psalmist sheds the light of God's truth on what some say is just "a blob of tissue." As poetic as the words are, they contain a serious warning: God is at work knitting that little one together in the womb. It is at our own peril that we thwart that work of God. This is how the Psalm ends:

> ***Search me, O God, and know my heart;***
> Test me and know my thoughts.
> See if there be any wicked way in me,
> And lead me in the way everlasting.
> ***Psalm 139:23,24***