



Ramah's Voice

a ministry of Ramah International, Inc.

Sharing the Secret of Abortion

By Sydna A. Massé

Perhaps the greatest element preventing individuals from sharing the secret of their abortion is the fear that their confessions will lead to judgment and rejection. These unhealed hearts sit in silent prisons of pain longing for spiritual, emotional, and even physical release. The key to their prison doors lies in the testimony of others who shatter the myth that no one can forgive the sin of abortion.

To the confessor, sharing about their abortion can be liberating because a great deal of energy is exerted in maintaining this secret. Jesus was clear about the power of truth in John 8:31b, *"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* Whether the confession is on a public level, or privately revealed, it is powerful in breaking Satan's grip on wounded hearts.

Determining the Call to Speak Publicly

Rarely will public confessions benefit the flesh but they can do amazing things for the soul! God's calling to share - publicly or privately - can come in many ways. It has been my experience that most individuals know they are called but are afraid to obey. It could be your job to help them obey this calling and avoid "belly of the whale" experiences. For others who are not called to a public stage, they can be highly effective in one-on-one sharing with other hurting people or with those who are considering abortion.

Here are some points for a person to consider before speaking:

- Is it God who is calling you to speak?
- Are you seeking attention or reward?
- Do you have an uncontrollable fear of public speaking?
- Have you shared this story with family and friends first?
- Can you speak without being overwhelmed with emotion?
- Does your spouse, children and/or parents support your decision to speak?
- Will you focus your message on God?

Once a person has worked through a healing process and is considering a public testimony, they should complete some steps first. Regardless of the situation, family and friends must be told first. For many, this is a matter of timing. While they may be called to share, parental issues can delay the initial step. When the person's parents are elderly, ill or dying, an abortion discussion might not be recommended. On the other hand, fear could be crippling them. This is especially true when it comes to telling children. Pray with them for God's discernment in sharing with family members. If they are unable to confess to those closest to them, they cannot share on a public level.

Family support is also an essential element. If the spouse or children are against opening this secret to public attention, it's best to wait. The support of extended family members should not receive the same weight of consideration. For an example, a parent can be against their child's sharing because she will be "telling the world I'm a bad mother." Sharing needs to

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be a matter of prayer in every situation.

Preparing For the Public Event

I personally learned post-abortion speaking dynamics through “trial and error” because so few were sharing at the time. God promised that He would touch listeners and establish a new army of healed voices to join my own in sharing about abortion’s devastation. My hope with this article is to equip those of you are helping future speakers.

God does the talking – Jesus said in John 15:5 (NKJV), “*Without Me you can do nothing.*” John also talked about this in John 3: 27 and 30 – that, “*A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven,*” and “*He must become great; I must become less.*” In sharing our testimony, we must first understand that our main role is to allow the words of the Holy Spirit – and not our own – to flow through us. Only God can move hearts. Jeremiah 1: 9 relays this concept beautifully, “*Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations’...*” I begin every talk with a brief prayer asking God to use my words as His own. I also ask Him to prepare the hearts of anyone in the audience who may have experienced abortion to receive His message of hope.

Write it out first – Rarely do I suggest a person read their testimony to an audience. Yet an important first process in preparing to speak is to write out the story. As someone helping another speak, your goal is to verify that their message will be biblically based and tasteful. Most listeners are offended at the details of sexual relationships. There are tactful ways to state these facts. Once you both agree on the content of the talk, help them break the written word out into an outline form. They can have this summary in front of them as a prompt to the points they will cover.

Practice, practice, practice! – When the outline is complete, set up several “practice” sessions in front of small groups to help the speaker gain confidence. Recognize that confession to friends can be more difficult than sharing in front of strangers! Don’t judge their performance but provide reassurance. If possible, videotape these sessions so they can critique themselves. Never waste these practice sessions but set them up with individuals who need to be educated on the pain of abortion (i.e., new volunteers, board members, etc.). Tears are acceptable but if they are openly weeping to the point that they cannot speak, they are not ready for a public audience.

Time constraints – Having a set speaking time is often the most difficult aspect of sharing. Be clear on the amount of time available and try to keep within that allotment during practice sessions. Having a clock or watch on the podium is suggested to keep within time requirements. Assure them not to be discouraged if there doesn’t seem to be enough time to share everything. God has a unique way of multiplying minutes like He did loaves and fishes (see page 4).

God receives all the praise –I am careful to never take credit after speaking but give all glory to the Lord. My heart tells me that once I start accepting praise, the Holy Spirit’s power could be diminished. Should I receive praise through applause, I always point my finger to

Heaven and clap along. When people comment on my bravery or courage in sharing, I'm adamant that I don't deserve even that credit. I'm just a broken vessel that God has found fit to fix and use! This allows me the peace and enjoyment of God moving through me. C.S. Lewis put it this way, "In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him!"¹

Prepare them for the fact that no one may come forward - Post-abortion is a lonely topic. Many are afraid to approach a speaker because they fear "guilt by association." I have had countless people move towards me who proclaim loudly, "I've never had an abortion...." Other times I have seen the post-abortive in the audience and watch tears roll down their faces as I share. It is a great honor when they stay and share with me but this is rare. Those faces stay in my heart and I remember them in prayer. The speaker's primary role is to plant seeds. God may have other people set up along the way to water, fertilize and eventually harvest their souls. It may be eternity before they know God's fruits of their confession.

Debrief after the event - Encourage them with a hug and a warm smile immediately after the event. It requires a great deal of energy to share and normally they will be exhausted. It's wonderful to have someone whom you respect give you added encouragement. Wait a few days before you meet with the person to debrief and be very careful on being critical. Allow them to express their feelings about the talk. Most of the time you will hear, "I should have said this or that..." Remind them that God's message was perfect through them!

The Result

Sharing the secret of an abortion is perhaps the most powerful tool the pro-life movement has in stopping abortion from devastating lives. The post-abortive are still a small voice in this battle but the potential for victory from their stories is overwhelming - especially in the CPC counseling room. The myth that abortion is "good" for women can only be dispelled by the voices of those who have endured an abortion choice. The potential for regret is one of the main fears of those considering an abortion. When the post-abortive share their stories with the abortion-minded, many reconsider their choice. Our movement needs to be more active in enabling these individuals to share their testimonies - publicly or privately. I hope this information will encourage and equip those who are called to the public podium as well as those who will help them share.

¹ Reflections on the Psalms, chapter 9, paragraph 6, pp. 96-97.

The Purpose of Speaking

There are two goals in public speaking on abortion - To generate awareness of the impact of abortion, and to reach the wounded. The wounded will be watching everyone around them react to this testimony that is similar to their own. Here are several things to include in reaching out to these hearts:

- **Make a statement that touches their pain** - Here is an example, "there is no sin that God can't forgive. It took time in God's word, and the fellowship of a post-abortion bible study group to help me forgive myself."
- **Relay that abortion touches all of us** - Remember that mothers and fathers aren't the only ones affected by abortion. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and future children are also greatly impacted as well as anyone who has participated in an abortion decision.
- **Speak directly to pastors and church leaders about how they can help** - Here's an example, "While you may not believe this, statistics show that nearly half of all church audiences are post-abortive.² Please reach out to these hearts with the unconditional love of Christ. If you preach against abortion, always include a compassionate statement for us so we won't feel condemned."
- **Present information on your program** - Always present phone numbers, group start dates, and offer them an e-mail address for a confidential contact. Makes sure that no one leaves without knowing that you are there to help.

² (Facts in Brief: Induced Abortion.) The Alan Guttmacher Institute, Washington, D.C., January 2000 (www.agi-usa.org)





Extending Time

"But the word of God continued to increase and spread." Acts 12:24 (NIV)

In sharing a testimony, one of the most difficult aspects is to be limited by time restrictions. A few years ago I was given ninety seconds at a church service in Virginia to accomplish the following:

- Share about Ramah's mission,
- Educate on post-abortion trauma,
- Offer the hope of healing to the wounded.

The task seemed impossible given the time allowed and I admit to being frustrated. I'm glad the speaking wasn't up to me that day or the results would have been disastrous. Thankfully, God spoke through me quickly, succinctly, and within the time constraints.

Later I asked God about this seemingly useless speaking engagement. I couldn't comprehend what could have been accomplished in 90 seconds. Why did I have to fly so far from home for such a short amount of time? I didn't receive any answers but felt that He clearly had a plan that I didn't understand at the moment. It was time to trust Him.

Seven months later I returned to that city to speak at a crisis pregnancy center's banquet. Afterwards a woman who had earlier shared a testimony about how her baby was saved from abortion approached me. She asked if I had spoken at a local church several months earlier. I quickly responded, "Yes — for about 90 seconds." Her response humbled me. She said, "Well, I don't know how long you spoke but I had an abortion scheduled for the next day. After hearing your story, I couldn't do it and called this center for help. I think my son is one of 'your' babies!"

As I held her little boy I promised the Lord to never wonder about time constraints again! Clearly His word, through our voices, can be expanded beyond anything we can imagine.

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Ramah's Resource Corner:

2002 Post-Abortion/Pregnancy Care Outreach Training Conference Schedule:

1. Marianna, FL (between Tallahassee and Pensacola) – April 25-27
2. Memphis, TN — June 13-15
3. Kansas City, MO – June 27-29
4. Boone, NC – July 11-13
5. Pittsburgh, PA – August 1-3
6. Los Angeles, CA – August 15-17
7. Syracuse, NY – September 5-6

More details, and a registration form, is available on the Ramah International website: www.ramahinternational.org or call toll-free: 866-80-RAMAH (866-807-2624).

From the Word of God:

"Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory. But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends."

II Corinthians 10: 15-18