



# Ramah's Voice

a ministry of Ramah International, Inc.

## When They Abort Anyway...

By Sydna A. Massé

One of the leading reasons for “burn out” in pregnancy care centers and post-abortion ministries is the discouragement that results when clients abort despite understanding the truth of this choice. Some may have a hard heart or impossible circumstances and cannot see any other way out. In working with these individuals, our ministering heart can be broken in two and many don't know how to deal with the pain. Unless we can handle these tough times, we won't last long in this movement. It's important to be prepared for whatever outcome may occur and trust the Lord to move in these lives despite a possible abortion tragedy.

### The Lord's Plan in Tragedy

I remember a day early in my ministry at Focus on the Family when two women I had spoken with chose abortion despite knowing exactly what pain they would face. Even though a caller chose life that same week, that joy was overshadowed. One abortion can easily eliminate the joy of hundreds of saved lives.

While driving home I had a conversation with God. I was angry and asked Him, “WHY??!!! When will you step in, Lord, and stop this bloodshed?” There was no immediate answer but I was confident that God understood my emotions. Before I reached home I was determined to find another line of work because the pain was too overwhelming to endure on an ongoing basis.

During my devotions the next morning, God

opened my eyes to why He allowed these tragedies to occur. I started reading about the martyred saints in Revelations 6:9-11 (NKJV):

*“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”*

God clearly spoke to my heart that morning. It was easy to identify with the statement of the saints because my own reaction the day before. In giving them a white robe, God comforted them and asked for their patience. He had a plan when He relayed that more would die before His vengeance would be carried out completely.

I realized that since He created all life, He knew before they were conceived which children would be aborted. He asked me to trust Him in spite of the lost lives. My role wasn't to be successful in turning their hearts towards a life decision – that was the Lord's job. I had no right to question His will for these lives! My role was to be patient and obedient. Maybe their mothers would be the next person God would use to save other lives. With this realization, I found peace.

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## Stirring Emotions

When you work with a woman who aborts despite your Christ-like efforts, you need to understand that you have become post-abortive in a sense. You are connected to the aborted child through your heart and prayers on their behalf. While you had nothing to do with their actual death, it is normal to experience some aspects of post-abortion trauma. These stirring emotions are unexpected but need to be embraced to help you mourn this lost child.

### Grief – Give Yourself Permission

*“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed”. I Peter 1:6-7*

When they abort anyway, a child that you prayed for has died. No matter how long they lived on Earth, you know they are now with the Lord. This abortion was not a secret from you or God even though it may be for others directly related to that child's mother/father. God has given you the opportunity to embrace this grief. Doesn't this child deserve to be mourned? You may be the only other person who knows about his/her death so God is allowing you the opportunity to honor this child through your tears. Embrace the anguish and understand that this emotion is precious to the Lord and has a purpose in your walk with Him. It will eventually help build your faith and allow you to become more effective in the future.

### Anger – Keep Control

It's a normal human reaction to combat the feelings of grief with anger. Many times you are upset with the woman for making this choice. She knew better and had all the information to understand that she was taking the life of a baby. Her decision could have caused your pain. Sometimes your anger can be justified especially when it relates to unsupportive family or friends and even abortion providers!

These emotions need to be released in a healthy way. I recommend that you write out your feelings in letters that you never send. Sharing your anger with a ministry friend is also a good idea. Be careful and remember Proverbs 29:11 – *“the fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”*

### Forgiveness – It's Not Optional!

Jesus said in Matt 6:12, 14-15, *“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.... For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your father will not forgive your sins.”* Most times my struggle is to forgive the woman who had the abortion. We are not responsible for anyone's emotions but our own. Forgiveness is an act of the will and impacts one's intimate relationship with God. The act of forgiving **is not optional** as relayed by Jesus in His sample prayer above, which we refer to

as the Lord's Prayer. While you may not be called to continue to minister to her heart, your sincerity in forgiving her, and others who have caused this hurt in your heart, is critical.

## Releasing Them to the Lord

It takes only one abortion to belittle your confidence. Satan just loves to make us feel guilty and discouraged by whispering to our hearts that it is our fault this child died. We've all heard the enemy's accusations — "just give up. You are horrible at helping and the blood of that child is on your hands!" These thoughts come straight from the pit of Hell and need to be treated as such!

In working with these clients, build your response within those outlined in Galatians 5:22 (NIV): *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control."* You could be the only person praying for them in the years to come so be sure to remember them when the Holy Spirit places them on your heart. Encourage yourself that they could someday experience a Saul/Paul transformation!

If you are able, keep in contact. Be sure that you invite her to church and are willing to provide transportation. Many times the abortion can be the tool God uses to lead them to Himself! Even in the short amount of time you have with them before and/or after the abortion, allow them to see Jesus through you!



## Remembering the Children

An In-service Memorial Service for Client Advocates, By Karen Fifer (Ramah Affiliate from the Pregnancy Crisis Center in Wichita, KS)

*"I saw that baby. It was kicking around in there. I could see the little arms and legs. Now, that child is gone. I thought we had made a difference."* These were the words from a volunteer advocate who had attended her client's sonogram and had just discovered the client had aborted. We cried together for this lost child and then we prayed for the woman and our own broken hearts.

While attending a Ramah International training conference I learned that our volunteer crisis advocates often experience post-abortion trauma. When I later questioned the volunteers/medical staff, they confirmed their own personal grief when the client aborts anyway. Although we had always allowed them to debrief with us on their own pain, I had never considered that they might benefit from some of our post-abortion exercises.

During an in-service training meeting for volunteer advocates, we decided to hold a memorial service for these aborted children of our clients. Before the service, I asked whether they had "what if" thoughts about how they could have served the client better or assumed any guilt over these abortion decisions. After the abortion was discovered, had they:

- Lost sleep,
- Had a hard time eating,
- Cried themselves to sleep?

Many admitted they were over-zealous with the next abortion minded client. Some had almost become hardened, thinking, "Oh well, all I can do is speak the truth in love, now the blood is on her hands. I must forget about it and move on..." It was obvious that in spite of holding no guilt over the eventual abortion, her decision had affected them.

At this point I noticed tears beginning to fall. I asked, "What do you do with those overwhelming emotions of disappointment, grief and anger that you feel towards the woman when the wrong decision is made? You allow yourself to grieve and then forgive them as outlined in Colossians 3:13, *'Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.'*"

We began the memorial service by turning the lights down for privacy. We then recommended that they take time to:

- Reflect on the child (or children) who were aborted — their brief life and deaths,
- To consider the joy that child is beholding in heaven and to thank God for His provision of loving the child and preparing a place for him or her in heaven.

I encouraged them to consider naming each child the Lord brought to mind and to pray for the child's mother. Their prayers were to ask God, through the blood of Jesus, to reach out and find that mother and help her find the forgiveness and wholeness in Christ.

While a song played, they individually approached the front to light a candle for each child. As the tears fell and a candle was lit, a child was remembered. We read scripture and during the next song they again came to extinguish the candles. Afterwards we had a time of sharing, a chance to let out the agony of the heart. One of our nurses shared how she had participated in many abortions during her training but had never considered the deep impact and that they had really affected her until now.

We will continue to hold a yearly memorial in January. Through this simple service, a lost child was honored, the mother was prayed for and forgiven, and God drew closer to our hearts. I am sure as hard as it is, the opportunity to release the heartache and children in a loving manner will leave a lasting impact on our hearts that life really does matter.

## Scaling the Mountain of Faith

Matthew 17:20, *He (Jesus) replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

It was scary to obey the Lord in leaving my secure position at Focus on the Family to begin Ramah. While the odds against us seemed insurmountable, the Lord promised He would provide for our needs. A friend recently took a similar step in faith in leaving Focus to start a new work. After she was home, they discovered they really did need her income and she felt the first pangs of panic.

God built our faith by urging us to trust Him. With every supernatural provision, new spikes of faith were added to our feet to help us in the future climb. We can look back and remember His faithfulness when we encounter the next steep cliff. After a while, faith climbing gets easier!

In encouraging this friend, I felt high above her on the mountain looking down to see her beginning the ascent. The view isn't clear at the bottom so you must concentrate on the path and take encouragement from others ahead of you. It also helps to dream of the view from the top. Many stop because the climb is too hard while others simply topple to the bottom. Their faith was not strong enough to sustain them in the hike.

Where are you on the climb? Can you feel Him moving you forward and strengthening your faith through each trial or steep hill? As one hiker to another, dig your feet into the path and move forward with confidence – and call if you need encouragement! Strain your muscles and know God never sleeps. For the faithful few, His view from the top is exhilarating.

*Sydna A. Massé*

### Ramah's Resource Corner:

#### New Post Abortion Healing Video: Beyond Regret

Produced by Paraclete Video Productions, this video outlines the steps to healing by using the testimonies of several individuals. Sydna Masse and Steve Arterburn speak about their abortion experiences as well as those from women of all age groups and ethnic backgrounds. To order call toll free 1-866-80-RAMAH (866-807-2624).



### From the Word of God:

Mark 11: 23-25 (NIV) — *"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. <sup>23</sup>"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."*

