

## Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, January 20, 2018

Thirty years ago, I wrote a poem that remains unpublished. I won't share it in total since some will find it too graphic. As you can probably figure out from the title, it deals with the controversial topic of abortion. My real passion for the right-to-life goes back nearly forty years to a bitter revelation shared by my Mom while we were traveling on a farm road in South Central Texas. We were reminiscing my Dad's last military assignment as Acting Base Commander at McChord AFB in Tacoma, Washington, USA.

I remember relating to my Mom about a conversation I overheard with our neighbor aborting her child around that time. Back then, I really couldn't comprehend the discussion, but carried it with me all those years. To my surprise, my Mom then flippantly stated that she went through three abortions, two before I was born and one between me and my younger brother! I did not know how to respond, but I must say that I was troubled for years by her revealing this long-time secret. I realized just how different my life would have been as the middle child of five instead of the oldest of two children almost ten years apart in age. It's time to share the opening lines of my poem *Before They Saw the Earth*.

*"They were sucked out before their time, Not even considered a crime. In these days in which we've been sent, So many little ones cruelly spent. Imagine the pain they must feel, Torn from the womb, the life they steal. Bloodied, suffering as did Christ, His world still bound in sin sufficed. Why Lord, before they saw the earth, were they taken short of their birth?"*

Let's stop for now. You surely get the picture just how I felt. But there's so much more to the story. A short time before I penned this poem, my wife was caught in an awkward discussion with my Mom. Janet shared with me that my Mom told her that she could have easily aborted me as she had three other children. I was astonished by her bold, apparently impenitent statement. Her comments provoked me to write the poem. I did share it with my Mom several years later and she stood her ground on the subject but accepted my right to express my heartfelt feelings.

The poem has been put in the hands of several people involved in the right-to-life movement, but to my knowledge it has never been published in any of their literature. That's fine, but I feel strongly the need to address the issue of abortion, since I know it is not God's will and I certainly have been affected by it as have many others in this world. I need to take this family story much further. Several months before my Mom's death, she brought up the topic one more time and she simply asked *"Jimmy, will I be able to see my babies in Heaven?"* Before answering her sincere question I first prayed and then answered confidently *"Mom, I'm sure you'll meet all three of them since they've committed no sin to keep them from entering Heaven."* I'll never forget the tears of joy that came over her that afternoon.

There's more I need to convey from that discussion with my Mom. She then disclosed to me for the first time that my Dad made her have those three abortions out of convenience for his military career. I did confront my Dad on this topic a few months before his death and let him know that he too would also have an opportunity to see his kids in Heaven one day, if he'd only get right with God before it was too late. Fifteen minutes before his death my cousin Mark was able to witness my Dad acknowledging Christ as his Lord and Savior. Let me now complete the last few verses of the poem.

*"Within a heart torn with remorse, We must steer them to the right course, That path God meant for all mankind, Christ is the answer they must find, He's our Shepherd in times like these, In all He did and how He'd please, Our forefathers who walked this earth. What if they took our precious birth? What if they took our precious birth?"*

I know God is not happy about the taking of any life before one of his children sees the earth. I also know that He is a forgiving Father Who knows that we all makes errors in judgment for selfish reasons as my parents did many years ago. I'm disappointed in our military looking the other way or perhaps blatantly demanding many in their service to have abortions before it was legalized in Roe v. Wade. Yet all that does not remove the sin and willful disobedience to what we all know is right and pleasing to God.

Let me end by simply saying that my Mom, my Dad and I all now have peace about what went down so many years ago. I pray that you too who have suffered likewise might find peace in Christ as well!

Passages to Ponder: Isaiah 44:24; 45:9-11; Psalm 127:3; 139:13-16; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; Ephesians 1:3-4

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**Isaiah 44:24** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>24</sup>“This is what the LORD says—  
your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:  
I am the LORD,  
the Maker of all things,  
who stretches out the heavens,  
who spreads out the earth by myself,

**Isaiah 45:9-11** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>“Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker,  
those who are nothing but potsherds  
among the potsherds on the ground.  
Does the clay say to the potter,  
‘What are you making?’  
Does your work say,  
‘The potter has no hands’?  
<sup>10</sup>Woe to the one who says to a father,  
‘What have you begotten?’  
or to a mother,  
‘What have you brought to birth?’  
<sup>11</sup>“This is what the LORD says—  
the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker:  
Concerning things to come,  
do you question me about my children,  
or give me orders about the work of my hands?

**Psalm 127:3** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>3</sup>Children are a heritage from the LORD,  
offspring a reward from him.

**Psalm 139:13-16** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>13</sup>For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
<sup>14</sup>I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.  
<sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
<sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
all the days ordained for me were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>26</sup>Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. <sup>28</sup>God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one may boast before him.

**Ephesians 1:3-4** New International Version (NIV)

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.