

# Innocent blood

*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. (See Genesis 9:5,6)*



This autumn we have probably the best opportunity in 40 years to change things

'40 years. 6.7 million abortions. Time for change!'<sup>1</sup> This strap line brings together churches, professional bodies and pro-life organisations to mark on Saturday 27 October the 40th anniversary of the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act.

6.7 million abortions. The numbers are staggering: more than the number of Jews who died in the Nazi holocaust. 420,000 Dunblanes.<sup>2</sup> 270,000 classrooms. 67 Wembleys. Over 10 million British citizens lost – many of the dead would now be parents! Britain has amongst the most liberal abortion practice in the western world. One in three women has an abortion. One in four pregnancies ends in abortion: one abortion every 2 minutes and 40 seconds, 600 per day, 200,000 per year.

There is now growing evidence that public (and parliamentary) opinion, especially on late abortion, is changing.<sup>3</sup> Why? High resolution ultrasound videos; media stories of babies born alive following 'botched' abortions; doctors being forced against their conscience to refer women for abortion; reports of late abortions flouting the existing law; testimonies from women damaged or coerced into having abortions; the growing evidence in the medical literature of the links between abortion and mental illness, prematurity and (possibly) breast cancer; the sheer volume of spilt blood. People are beginning to wake up to reality.

Abortion is an inevitable consequence of sexual immorality, the breakdown of the family, and the desire for a life unencumbered by dependents. But it is against the Hippocratic Oath, against the Declaration of Geneva, against the historical position of the British Medical Association.<sup>4</sup> And yet as a profession we are up to our necks in it. 6.7 million lives taken by British doctors and the BMA wants to liberalise the law even further.<sup>5</sup>

What does God think? 'You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...when I was made in the secret place... your eyes saw my unformed body' writes the Psalmist.<sup>6</sup> God hates 'hands that shed innocent blood' warns the writer of Proverbs.<sup>7</sup> God 'hides his eyes' from those whose 'hands are full of blood'.<sup>8</sup> He will demand 'an accounting'.<sup>9</sup> He was 'not willing to forgive' Manasseh who 'shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end'.<sup>10</sup> Scripture links sexual immorality and the killing of children to idolatry;<sup>11</sup> they are sympto-

matic of a nation which has turned its back on God. By contrast God calls his people to 'rescue those being led away to death'<sup>12</sup> and to 'speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves'.<sup>13</sup>

How then does God view us as Christian doctors; keeping silent; playing it safe; embarrassed by those who dare to speak out; rationalising our involvement in the 'difficult cases'; perhaps even oiling the abortion machinery and participating in the killing?

We can be certain that God will bring justice. Judgment will come. Innocent blood will be paid for. And yet God, the supreme judge, is also the God of mercy and grace who withholds judgment to give people a chance to repent, who grants us forgiveness that we do not deserve, who sends his own son to have his innocent blood shed by evil men in order to pay the price for our sin. Judgment falls on Christ the innocent rather than upon us the guilty.<sup>14</sup>

And in response to this mercy and grace he calls us to follow him by carrying his cross and embracing lives of love and obedience: risking the contempt of the politically correct by being advocates for the unborn child; bearing the cost of providing compassionate alternatives to abortion for those who will accept them; being part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

This edition of *Triple Helix* is devoted to vulnerable children both born and unborn. This autumn we have probably the best opportunity in 40 years to change things; to reflect, repent and reorder our priorities; to speak out; to be advocates for the voiceless; to offer women in crisis something other than a curette; to tell the truth about the consequences of abortion for children, women and society.

God's word reminds us that righteousness exalts a nation.<sup>15</sup> And warnings of judgment always come with promises of restoration and hope – provided we respond to God's call. The choice is ours.

*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

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## references

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5. Saunders P. Liberalising abortion law. *Triple Helix* 2007; Autumn:4
6. Psalm 139:13-16
7. Proverbs 6:16,17
8. Isaiah 1:15
9. Genesis 9:5; Jeremiah 19:3,4
10. 2 Kings 21:16, 24:3,4
11. Psalm 106:37-39; Jeremiah 19:3,4
12. Proverbs 24:11
13. Proverbs 31:8
14. Isaiah 53:5,6
15. Proverbs 14:34