

DAILY
DEVO
WEEK

Prayer



Faith with Action

DAY 23

Faith With Action

“Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” —James 2:15-17

HEART // Imagine that you have a friend who calls herself a musician. She is constantly talking about music. She goes to concerts almost every week and frequently reads magazines and articles that detail the makings of a great artist. Even after years of knowing her, though, you have never actually seen her play an instrument. You start questioning if she is even a musician at all! She may be highly educated and passionate about listening to the hums and strums of others—but she isn’t really a musician if she does not create music for herself.

As Christ followers, we often find ourselves in a similar conflict. We surround ourselves with the *sounds* of Christ-following—diligent devotionals, moving music, prayerful podcasts, spirited sermons.

These are good and godly things, but in order to live on-mission for Christ, we have to get past mere head-knowledge of Him. We must also overflow with the *acts* of Christ-following! If we never actually do what Christ did, how can people possibly know that we are His followers?

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Love, like faith, manifests itself in what we do. We cannot say that we love the lost or that we care for abortion-minded women and the unborn if we do no nothing to meet their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs (1 John 3:18).

As we enter this final week and final challenge of *Reimagining Pro-Life: 30 Days with Save the Storks*, let's review just a bit from our previous weeks! Letting go of our preconceived notions, judgments, past mistakes and fears gives us space to engage with this issue of life in our generation with love and compassion. As Christians, we are defined by love and compassion. This means being willing to “suffer with” another—seeing and staying with them in their process or pain.

We will spend our last week together remembering the various ways we can truly impact lives when we live with intentionality, on a mission to love others, as the collective Body of Christ!



WORK

In matters of faith and love, there is no such thing as a ‘passive Christian.’ This week, we want to encourage you to put your faith into action by empathizing with women who have found themselves in the predicament of an unplanned pregnancy, in particular.

For these women, the burdens that accompany this dilemma are real, but they are mainly social and economic situations* that, as a church, we can strive to impact in our own communities through generosity, teaching and discipleship. Many times someone facing parenthood when they don’t feel ready can’t shake feelings of loneliness, possibly being at odds with their partner, family or communities that had once stood by their side. They can also feel fear, not knowing how to navigate this unexpected turn of events, or experience great anxiety, questioning how they will be able to provide for their child. Can you imagine the burdens these babies would carry if they could understand the gravity of their parent’s decision to keep *or not keep* them—like the weight of being voiceless, unwanted, and without a defender.

So, here’s your fast for this week. To empathize with families considering abortion, **acquire an assortment of stones, rocks, or bricks.** Make sure they’re large enough to write on, because you’ll **write on them the specific burdens that abortion-vulnerable mothers carry.** Include anything that has come to your mind and heart over the course of your *30 Days with Save the Storks* so far. (Look back over your journal!) **Then, fill a backpack or bag of choice with the stones, rocks, or bricks you’ve named with burdens. Carry that bag with you wherever you go!**

It could be for an hour, for a day, or even for the remainder of our thirty days together—if you’re feeling strong and brave, that is! The point is to **stand in solidarity with women facing an unplanned pregnancy and the child they carry.**

As you do this, journal about what it would be like to spend every day carrying these physical, emotional, mental, relational, and/or spiritual burdens.



DAY 24

Bear Each Other's Burdens

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ...Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” —Galatians 6:2, 9-10

HEART // If you’ve resolved to put your faith into action, as yesterday’s verse (James 2:15-17) counsels all believers to do, then you’re probably asking yourself, “So, what’s next? How can I myself go on mission for Christ today?”

Today’s verses provide an answer fitting for all believers, on any day of the week. Even if you have little in your bank account, even if you’re running low on steam, you have the grand, life-giving privilege of bearing the burdens of others. Now, to the world, that statement is paradoxical. It’s downright crazy! Yet we know that “the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight” (1 Cor. 3:19), and so we cling to the truth that we find life when we give our lives away.

The apostle Paul’s challenge here makes so much sense when we see ourselves as part of the Body of Christ. Whenever one part of the family of believers is suffering, the health of the whole Body is impacted! Jesus gives us insight into the reality and power of this image when He prays for us, for all believers, near the end of His life on earth in John 17:20-23. He emphasizes unity for all believers, in the same way that He and the Father are unified. If we take these words seriously, then carrying the burdens of our fellow believers (and those we hope will become believers!) is of utmost importance.

In a 1983 sermon on Galatians 6, pastor and author John Piper said, “Here is a vocation that will bring you more satisfaction than if you became a millionaire ten times over: Develop the extraordinary skill for detecting the burdens of others and devote yourself daily to making them lighter.”* Now *that* is a special calling.

Devoting ourselves daily to detecting and lessening the burdens of our brothers and sisters (literally, or in the Body of Christ) can be as simple as the classic example of walking an elderly person across the street with their groceries. But it can also mean looking for the deep, systemic flaws in the systems of our world and working toward lifting those burdens, in any way we can, and encouraging others to do the same. If we truly believe that spending ourselves on behalf of others—in obedience to Christ and in line with His perfect law of love (John 13:34-35)—is the path to everlasting joy, then any opportunity to see a need and meet it is a beautiful gift.

//WORK

Yesterday, you began to develop this extraordinary skill, stepping into a Spirit-filled calling, as you acknowledged the burdens (in your rock-writing) with which a woman considering an abortion contends. As you continue to empathize with her physically, carrying that heavy bag throughout our last week together, we pray that you would not become weary. **Rather, ask God to open your eyes to the unique opportunities He has placed before you to bear the burdens of others.**

We want to invite you to do one other thing today, and it's going to be good. **Make a plan to talk to a mature believer sometime this week.** Make sure it's someone who's counsel you trust! When you meet with him or her, **ask that person about the ways that he or she lives out Galatians 6. Then, pray with that person,** asking God to guide you both toward more and more opportunities to bear the burdens of others.

Before you go, check out our short video of Thomas Kim, with Save the Storks, and his wife, Soo. They are a beautiful example of mature believers who show us through their passion and story that there are so many ways to serve! They remind us that as followers of Christ, we believe that every child deserves life and a loving family. It is our duty and honor to carry the burdens of those who have had the opportunity to be born, but are suffering in a system still lacking that loving family.

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DAY 25

Follow Me

“Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people.’ At once they left their nets and followed him.”

—Matthew 4:19-20

HEART //

When Jesus called the first disciples, He asked them to give up everything that they had ever known. And there must have been something incredibly compelling about His presence, His call, His invitation...because they immediately “left their nets and followed Him.” Here, a net symbolizes one’s career, income, ambition, and resources. In essence, for a first-century disciple to drop his net was for him to destabilize his entire life.

Why did Jesus’ first disciples risk everything for Him? Because any plans (even great ones!) we make, or we fall into, pale in comparison to the invitation to follow Him. There’s just nothing like the joy of being with Christ! (Phillipians 3:7-9)

Following Jesus has life-changing implications for everyone. He calls us to die to ourselves, finding a new identity and life in His Kingdom. After all, God sent His Son to the world on a rescue mission: Jesus came to bring hope to the hopeless, He came to seek and to save the lost, and He came to gather His people.

When Jesus called the first disciples, He was offering for them to join Him on this mission. He asks us to join Him, too. It’s an invitation to join Him on His rescue mission, and there could be no brighter, higher, or happier journey for anyone to take! Why? *Because we get to be with Jesus.* The Great Commission reassures us of this glorious truth. Jesus says, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

Have you dropped your net just yet?

So often, we only follow Jesus when it works for us. Sure, we enjoy glimpsing His glory in Scripture—but just on days that we have enough

'free time.' Yes, we pray—mostly when our pastors give us five quiet minutes before receiving communion. These are good, necessary aspects of the Christian life, but think about this for a moment: Could it be that we are compulsively grasping onto our nets, only going on mission when it feels safe enough for us?

If our obedience to Christ includes going to church, reading our Bibles, and regularly praying, yet we do not willfully sacrifice our lives for the good of others, then we are not following Jesus to the fullest capacity. He welcomes us to follow Him in doing crucial redemptive work in the most difficult of places.

As you carry a bit of an extra burden around this week, ask yourself: Have you followed Christ to every place He may be inviting you to bring light? Maybe to pray outside of an abortion clinic—asking the Holy Spirit to minister to those hurting women and impact their decision to end the life inside of them? We sometimes think, *That's for activists, not Christians*. By now, we hope that you have begun to see the way that championing the unborn is primarily Kingdom work. During the next few days of Mission Week, we want to explore with you what it means to walk with Christ and *like Christ*—leaving our nets behind us and stepping in love toward people who are hurting, or even people we may not relate to or agree with.

WORK

Today, spend a few minutes looking through the Gospels in your Bible (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and find a few things that Jesus called His followers to do. **Make a list of His commands in your journal so that you can keep adding to it throughout our last week together.** (If you need a headstart, check out Matthew 5-7 and John 13-15.)

Have you given your life to Jesus the way the disciples in the New Testament do? Many still worked, lived with families, and did all of the 'normal' things that those of us who do not live a life of full-time ministry do. Dropping your net doesn't always mean giving up the path God has you (and your family) on, but it at least means being willing to follow Him anywhere He asks. He may lead you into places that get the head-nod: vocations of choice, business success, generosity, and healthy relationships. He may also veer you toward the things this world may not understand—like personal sacrifice, costly compassion, and high standards of purity. The invitation is yours. Today Jesus is saying to you, "Come, follow me." What a moment, what a call, and what a King.

DAY 26

Bring Your Loaves

“Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, ‘Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?’ Jesus said, ‘Have the people sit down.’ There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.” —John 6:8-11

HEART //

When Jesus fed the five thousand, He took ‘not enough’ and made it into *more than enough*. At first, all that the disciples could see was a huge problem. Jesus saw an opportunity. He used the tiny offering of a little boy to make a monumental difference. The little boy had what we like to call ‘youthful enthusiasm’—the imaginative energy that children and young people often possess, even in the face of gloomy circumstances. He didn’t know what could come of his underwhelming offering, but he did something that many of us miss: he simply stayed close to Jesus. Carrying around his simple lunch, that mundane thing he was given, or worked for, or that he

needed for his day, *plus following Jesus* equaled a miracle.

He didn’t know what could come of his underwhelming offering, but he did something that many of us miss: he simply stayed close to Jesus.

It’s easy to feel like we do not have ‘enough’ to offer to Jesus: enough time, enough resources, enough energy, enough money. We often compare ourselves to others and ask why we even matter. What we

must realize is that He alone takes our short (and often, seemingly insignificant) lives and uses them in His cosmic plan to change the world! All that Jesus asks of us is to be willing. We must stay close to Him and readily give all that we have to Him, fully confident that He

is capable of doing great things with ordinary people. There is always enough to go around when Jesus is around. Because of the great God we serve, abundance can and should be our attitude—even if what we have to offer doesn't look like much!

All throughout Scripture, God uses normal—and even inadequate!—people to carry out His mighty works. He used a shepherd boy to lead Israel in His ways; He used a teenage girl to birth His own Son; and He used some common fishermen to start the early Church. Look to the Bible when you need a strong reminder of God's ability to make 'meager' into 'mighty.' He can take the most normal things in our hands and turn them into a miracle for us and for others.

So, what's in your hands?

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Often, God uses the overwhelmingly ordinary to bless the many. What small or ordinary things of yours—your talents, resources, or gifts—might God want to use as a blessing in the lives of others? Make a list in your journal. No matter how inadequate you may feel, you can be sure that God can and will use your small 'loaves' for the Kingdom. All you need to *DO* is to *BE* willing!

As you carry around your bag of burdens this week, remember how blessed you are. **Ask God to reveal the ways that you can give whatever simple gift you may be carrying in your life to help abortion-minded people or pregnancy resource centers in your area.** In order to best encourage women to make life-affirming choices, we have to be willing to come through for them practically. Being willing means our desire to offer hope and love leads to bringing ourselves and our resources into the lives of those in need. We encourage them to make a choice for life because we will come alongside them in that decision, by helping to sustain life through the variety of life-affirming options available at pregnancy resource centers and even through our own sacrificial giving. Get to know the pregnancy center in your community! Many offer more than just free ultrasounds and pregnancy tests, but

also diapers, baby clothes, formula, parenting classes, counseling or budgeting classes. Some even do free or low-cost prenatal care. How can you offer whatever is in your hands to whatever good work God may have already planted in your city?

Be encouraged—you won't be the very first 'ordinary' person that God will use to do extraordinary things in the fight for life. Read the story of Hannah, a mom who received a terminal diagnosis for her baby, and how simply caring for her child, come what may, is a powerful example of dignity, life, and love for all who hear their story.

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DAY 27

Hope for Two

“When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, ‘My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.’ So Jesus went with him... While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. ‘Your daughter is dead,’ they said. ‘Why bother the teacher anymore?’ Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe.’” —Mark 5:21-24, 35-36

HEART //

Can we really offer hope someone navigating the challenges of an unplanned pregnancy? Can we really make a difference in the lives of the unborn? Can we even make a dent in the abortion crisis? Often, these are the kinds of questions that pop into our minds as soon as Christ begins to soften our hearts toward the suffering of others. Negative statistics quickly overwhelm us, and we feel as if we cannot possibly effect change.

But, progress is being made!

The proportion of teen pregnancies that end in abortion has declined by a third from 1986 to 2008, from 46% to 31%. In 2013, the abortion rate among 15- to 19-year-olds was the lowest rate since abortion was legalized.*

And based on a recent survey, Roland C. Warren, president and CEO of Care Net, a Christ-centered pregnancy resource network said, “While much work needs to be done to equip the church to help women and men with their pregnancy decisions, there are positive signs that many churches will be receptive to efforts to implement programming that addresses this need.”**

Hope is alive. Jesus tells us, “Don’t be afraid, just believe.” In Mark 5, we watch Him make a life-changing difference for two different individuals: Jairus and his daughter. Even though a large crowd was pressing in all around Him, He zeroed in on Jairus’ plea on behalf of his daughter. Jesus could have been overwhelmed by the raucous of the masses or the busyness of His wider ministry across Galilee. He chose to focus instead on just two people in need. To them He gave His attention, and even when another need popped up along His path, and the timing seemed off and all seemed lost, Jesus was not too late to do what He wanted to do in Jairus’ family that day.

Every time that we provide hope to a woman who is tempted to believe that abortion is her only option, we are actually administering compassion-for-two, just as Jesus does in today’s verse. We *can* make a difference in the lives of others, even just one or two people at a time! God may not be calling you or your family to adopt ten children or to build a flourishing pregnancy resource center from the ground up. He *has* given you the resources to bring His hope and His healing to at least a few scared and confused pregnant mothers, though!

The award winning song, “When You Believe” (from the 1996 movie *The Prince of Egypt*) says, “Though hope is frail, it’s hard to kill.” As we reimagine the pro-life movement in our generation, we have much to celebrate, much to grieve and much to hope for in the future. Whether in the issue at large or in our own lives, sometimes hope can seem frail. When we miss an opportunity, make a mistake or feel the darkness creeping in as our light flickers, we may wonder where God is. But the answer is always the same. He is near. Even when Jesus was “not near enough” from Jairus’ perspective, and despair overwhelmed him, Jesus came through. Hope in Him and we may sometimes be frail, but total loss is truly impossible. Our timing may not be His, but in one way or another, He always comes through.

//WORK

Instead of getting bogged down by the seeming impossibility of countering the abortion crisis of today, we want you to focus on the words of Jesus in Mark 5: “*Don’t be afraid; just believe.*” With Jairus, let’s be fearless. Let’s believe that Christ is fully capable of doing miraculous things despite grave circumstances. After all, graves have nothing on our God.

Pause to watch the inspiring video of Hannah*, a young mother who made the brave choice to let go of unhealthy patterns, find her identity in God, and walk in unconditional love for herself and her child.

*This is a different Hannah than yesterday’s blog post

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Remember that for every abortion-vulnerable woman in the world who faces anxiety, loneliness, helplessness, or despair—God has a unique story for her as well as for that precious life that she carries.

Pray that God would remove your fears in the face of the travesty of abortion, replacing them with lasting hope and belief in Him. Light will rise in darkness. Hope will come. You are simply called to receive this sometimes frail hope in your own heart and then share it with others.

Bring light and hope to others today through prayer. **Open up the bag that you have been carrying around, and remove a few rocks, stones, or bricks from it.**

As you do, pray over the specific burdens that you wrote down on them, fully confident that God can and will bring light and hope to abortion-minded women around the world.



DAY 28

Speak Up!

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

—Proverbs 31:8-9

HEART // Speaking up for both the unborn and abortion-vulnerable moms is one way that we value all human life. Standing in the gap for the poor and needy means more than social media posts and going to the polls. It’s being the hands and feet of Jesus through the work of the local church and responding to the needs of our brothers and sisters facing unplanned pregnancies with the passion, forgiveness and love of Jesus.

Historically, the Church and those involved in the pro-life movement have struggled on top of a slippery slope—sliding down one side into hateful speech and judgment, or toppling down the other side, trying to please all parties with hopeless passivity. This balance can be hard to find, but is so important. In the early pro-life movement, we can look back and see that while our intentions were honorable, the aggressive methods used may have had unintended consequences of pushing people further away.

Dominick Brignola, Esq, Founder of Alight Care Center in Troy, NY beautifully and graciously shares his experience in finding this balance:

“The pro-life rescue movement of the 80s energized us to employ civil disobedience to close the doors of abortion clinics. At the time it was what we thought was needed to awaken the soul of our nation to the horror of abortion. There was never any hostility in our hearts or actions towards women seeking an abortion, but the way we went about closing clinic doors was confrontational and resulted in closed hearts. After a legal battle with Planned Parenthood and contemplating next steps for pro-life activists, I came to understand that if we were going

to follow Jesus' example, we had to figure out a way to start opening doors—*not closing them*. He said of Himself: “*I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.*” (John 10:9). That just stuck with me as something to model without exception.”

“...if we were going to follow Jesus' example, we had to figure out a way to start opening doors—*not closing them.*”

Now, in partnership with Save the Storks, Alight Care Center uses a mobile ultrasound van, and its sliding door is meant to be opened!

Dominick continues, “Behind that van door lies truth and nonjudgmental support from a dedicated staff looking to assist anyone facing an unplanned pregnancy.”

While we pray that abortion clinics doors will continue to close by the power of God, an attitude *exclusively* focused on “closing doors” can miss the opportunity to open doors to conversations, friendships, and changed hearts.

Today's verse reminds us that we are called, as followers of Christ, to defend the rights of those in need, but we are not alone! Jesus who died and was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also “interceding for us” (Romans 8:34). He is present with us even as we do the hard work of speaking up for justice in love.

Let's show up and speak up, like a light on a hill (Matthew 5:14). We shine most brightly as humble children of our Creator, who simply cannot stay silent on the topic of life in the womb.

WORK

We outwardly defend what we internally champion. Today, we want you to speak up, showing the God-given value of life in the womb. **Start a humble and open conversation with someone—one of your friends or family members about the burdens of moms and babies vulnerable to abortion.** You could share a statistic or an encouraging story. (We have plenty available on savethestorks.com) Use your voice, your words—and be sure it isn't on social media this time. As you carry the bag of burdens today, you could even use it as an opportunity to tell people about what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Pray that as people hear these things, you would learn something—and so would the other person. Pray that they too would be moved to value the voiceless. **Pray that they would be moved to act as advocates, just as today's verse instructs us to.**

Check out the follow up story on Hannah, who we met in yesterday's video! Her youth group is an amazing example of speaking up and serving in a meaningful way!

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DAY 29

Finish the Race

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.” —Acts 20:24

HEART // When Paul spoke these words in Acts 20, he surely did not mean that human life is worthless. Humanity bears a distinct mark of the Creator (Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 139), and our bodies are vessels capable of worshiping Him (Romans 12:1–2). Rather, what Paul expresses is the overwhelming value of the Lord Jesus in comparison to everything else! For him, Christ is all-satisfying. And so Paul wants to do nothing more than to show others that Christ is all-satisfying. That’s his only aim: to share the Good News.

All Christians are Gospel (‘Good News’) messengers. It’s a task that comes with both honor and humility. Honor, because there is no greater or more joyful duty for a human being. Humility, because ‘the Self’ has to get out of the way so that the glory of Christ can shine. We must take our work seriously (*honor*), but we must not take ourselves too seriously (*humility*). As Rick Warren once famously said, “Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. Humility is thinking more of others.”*

As *Reimagining Pro-Life: 30 Days with Save the Storks* comes to a close tomorrow, we pray that you leave entirely serious about taking the Good News of the Gospel to the most broken of places—spaces like the anxious minds of abortion-vulnerable women, or the pain-soaked hearts of post-abortive mothers or fathers.

President Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”** There is a race being run in each of our lives. It’s a task given to us by Jesus Himself. As you practice that task of sharing the Gospel, discern specifically how that plays out in your life and run with a perseverance that can easily forget the cares of this world. Anticipate the joy of joining Jesus in work worth doing (Hebrews 12:2)!

WORK

As we come to the end of our journey, on which we have learned to spend ourselves, one question probably remains for you: “How can I continue to go on mission for God once *30 Days with Save the Storks* ends?” Well, just read Acts 20:24 again! Be encouraged that no matter what your life looks next week, your task remains the same: share the Gospel.

Not only should we want the Gospel to spread far and wide, but we should also want it to expand for a long, long time! Therefore, we should be eager to impact current and future generations. Lord willing, young people have a lot of life to live, so they have much Good News to give.

How have the fasts changed the eyes of your heart? What have you learned about the reimagined pro-life movement? In what ways do you plan to continue your Kingdom work with the unborn specifically in mind?

Spend a few minutes journaling about your experience throughout the last thirty days. How have the fasts changed the eyes of your heart? What have you learned about the reimagined pro-life movement? In what ways do you plan to continue your Kingdom work with the unborn specifically in mind? After you’re done, **share your thoughts with a person younger than you. Ask how he or she has typically thought about abortion.** Through just

one conversation, you could positively impact a young person’s views on pro-life. Like a relay race runner, you can pass the ‘speaking-the-truth-in-love’ baton onto someone. Even after your race is complete, you can help another to continue running! Only God knows how many people he or she could bring His hope and light to in the future!

Enjoy our video of Thomas and Soo Kim sharing about the perspective and passion that come through experiencing a “culture of death”. Thomas’ work in the military, recognizing the importance and value of life in dangerous life and death situations fuels their involvement with the pro-life movement and has prepared them for serving the pro-life message with the Body of Christ in both the United States and in Korea.

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DAY 30

Mission Possible

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

—James 1:27

HEART // Our prayer is that today, as you wrap up *Reimagining Pro-Life: 30 Days with Save the Storks*, you would be *brave enough* to open your eyes and to continue asking yourself hard questions: “How can I remain pure in my devotion to God, willing to *let go* of all that hinders me? How is my *identity* influenced by the love of God? What people in my life and the world can I serve with *compassion*? How would my specific *mission* in life look if I were not so afraid or self-focused?”

It takes courage to open our eyes. As Karen Swallow Prior, professor at Liberty University points out, “One must be vulnerable to suffering some kind of injury in order to be considered courageous. If facing difficulty were the only thing required of courage, then all a would-be hero would have to do is create obstacles to overcome, and voilà!—courage would be born.”*

The many cultural and political opinions that surround abortion make it vulnerable for Christians to grapple with. Regardless, God *must* rule and reign over the issue. We hope that He has shown you how to be thankful for the truth and hope that He has given you. We also pray that you remember the ways that He has called you to be *compassionate* at the same time. Whenever we open our eyes to the complex world around us, God—His Word, His love—must remain the lens through which we look.

God has placed you where you are for a reason. He has given you gifts, talents, and passions to display His glory and to do good to those around you. Go to the office, study at school, and do work around your home with *your eyes fixed on Christ* and *your service centered*

on others. Stay energized and innovative in your efforts to bring Jesus Christ, who is the Living Water, to women—or men—struggling with an unplanned pregnancy. Continue to ask pro-life ministries near and far how you can use your life to bless them. Keep having those conversations with other believers about what it means to be and to act in a Christ-like pro-life manner.

We believe that you can stand up against the wave of cultural norms and political pressures (from either side!) that try to overtake you. You can help create a ‘new normal’ within your generation. You can

You can help create a ‘new normal’ within your generation.

let go. You can be secure in who you are in God—rather than needing to look successful or powerful in order to feel good about yourself. You can be strong enough to co-suffer with those in different circumstances than yours.

You can love well, serving God’s Kingdom, rather than just building your own. You can do all of this as a child of God—because in your weakness, He is strong (2 Corinthians 12:9). *This* is pure religion. It is giving life to the vulnerable and receiving a greater life than you could have imagined in return.



WORK

What are the big ideas God has taught you during your *30 Days with Save the Storks*? **Journal about them!** God has called you to a life that is spent on behalf of others. (Remember Isaiah 58:10 from Day 1?) How do you plan to take the lessons you have learned these thirty days and implement them in your life?

J. I. Packer once said, “Knowing God is a relationship calculated to thrill a person’s heart.”** As you have gotten to know more

of His heart through the reading of His word, we hope that your heart has been thrilled with energy, innovation, and truth. Throughout the past thirty days, we hope that God has inspired you to live differently. We pray that you feel ready and eager to bring His light, His nourishment, and His guidance to the people in our society that need Him the most.

How do you plan to take the lessons you have learned these thirty days and implement them in your life?

It’s up to you to take the next step. We challenge you to continue laying down your own life (that others might find life), all the while inviting others to do the same. We invite you to remember to prioritize truthful, loving speech that seeks to build others up amidst a culture that praises self-aggrandizing talk. We hope you will answer Jesus’ call to bear the burdens of those caught in the trap of believing that abortion is the only option for dealing with an unplanned pregnancy by speaking the truth to life: that the child that is inside of them is fearfully and wonderfully made and is worthy of being given a chance of life on this earth, and to do that not just for thirty days—but for a lifetime. Together, let’s reimagine a pro-life movement that inspires our culture to serve and celebrate every life, no matter the circumstance, through love, compassion and action.

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APPENDIX

Day 1

*based on 2017 numbers found at Guttmacher.org. (2019). Induced Abortion in the United States. [online] Retrieved from https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-united-states?gclid=C-jwKCAjwxt_tBRAXEiwAENY8hSyZ2UA1nnb35vEzgfqI7788mu-sIFmT10ZN51ALuyk2ebAddNvHN1RoC_h4QAvD_BwE

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Back Cover

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