



# *Newlife*

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Voice of the Pro-Life Tea Party

Movement for a Better America, Inc.

## ***Winning the Battle Against Abortion***

By Dennis Howard

The pro-life movement is unquestionably one of the most diverse movements in history, with literally thousands of groups of all types, sizes, missions, and religious affiliations scattered all over the United States.

They range from large, well-funded national organizations, each with its own mission, to thousands of state and local organizations right down to small women's resource centers serving local communities. Indeed, there is nothing else quite like it anywhere else in the world.

This diversity is one of the movement's great strengths, which lies in its unanimous opposition to abortion on demand and in its genuine grass roots character.

No matter what Planned Parenthood and the pro-abortion ideologists do, there is no way they will ever be able to eradicate our belief in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

One weakness of such diversity, however, is that when it comes to long term planning, innovative strategies, and preventive education, it

is often hard to get everyone moving in the same direction. It's like trying to get butterflies flying in formation. Planned Parenthood has 25-Year Plans. We're often lucky to have 24-hour plans.

As a result, we're very good at projects like protesting in front of Planned Parenthood, organizing prayer vigils, serving women with crisis pregnancies, and rallying the troops for crises.

These are all very good, but there are some important things that don't get done, like long term education, reaching out to parents, seminars for teens, outreach to small business, and expanding the tea party dialogue about economic issues to include the economic impact of abortion.

***Taken together, these could make a big difference*** between ending abortion in America some time in the distant future or realistically ending it within the next 20 years. That's a goal worth shooting for. If we're serious, we'll go for it.

Right now, abortions are declining at a snail's pace -- just 1.2% a year. At that rate, it could take 60 years to cut the number of abortions in half and 200 years to eliminate it altogether. At that pace, America itself might not survive.

However, with new and better strategies and greater unity and solidarity, we could realistically increase that rate of decline to 10% a year. If we achieved that, the number of abortions could be

cut in half in 7 years, and eliminated within 20 years. That's a worthy and sensible goal.

That's why we need fresh approaches that do not compete, but empower the whole pro-life movement. They would involve incorporating the ideas of management experts like C. Edwards Deming and Peter Drucker along with more traditional methods of evangelization. Notions like constantly improving performance and results-oriented management are worth trying as a way to improve the results of our mission.

However, it is essential we maintain our faith-based orientation because that is at the core of what the pro-life movement is all about.

Being both faith-based and marketing-oriented simply means that we take our marketing plan from the greatest marketing genius of all time -- Jesus in the Gospel Parable of the Sower.

In my opinion, that's the greatest marketing strategy ever written. Christ said: Stop wasting your time scattering your seed among the thorns and the rocks or along the road where it will be trampled under foot. His message was simple: Find the good soil, and sow your message there.

***This immediately avoids the temptation*** to waste time, energy, and money chasing after the impossible cases. People whose minds are stuck in reverse. Opponents who are only too glad to fight and haggle. Or litigious folk who like nothing better than long, expensive lawsuits.

Essentially, Jesus said: Put first things first.

His first effort was recruiting the Twelve, men who grasped what He was saying and who were willing to drop everything and come follow Him. He left the tough cases -- like the Pharisees and the money-changers -- until later.

## Getting Started

Jesus also limited His effort initially to small, manageable teams. I call that the "Principle of Twelve." He also said that "where two or three are gathered in my Name, I am there with you."

That's all it takes to form your own Pro-Life team -- two or three other like-minded people who are committed to our common goal of ending abortion in America within the foreseeable future. When the team grows beyond twelve or more, it is time to start new teams for new missions.

And that's where the thinking of management mavens like Deming and Drucker comes in.

Instead of saying that "if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly," as Chesterton unwisely said, Deming's view was that "if something is worth doing, it is worth doing better."

That a good working philosophy. So is Drucker's view that just because something is worth doing for altruistic reasons, that doesn't mean we can forget about results. In my lifetime, I have seen some great things go by the board. They failed, not because they were bad ideas, but because people were more concerned about feeling good than they were about results.

In other words, to succeed we must also be concerned with results and willing to try new ways to achieve them. Innovation is often the key.

Ending abortion in America within a foreseeable period of time is laudable goal, but it won't be achieved if we're willing to settle for a 1.2% annual reduction in the number of abortions. We need to find ways to double and redouble that rate of decline until we can achieve something like a decline of 10% a year. By using measurable targets, we make their achievement possible.

If our success rate is 1 out of 100, that won't do it. We have to apply our heads and find ways to raise that to 1 out of 50, then 1 out 25, and finally 1 out 10 or 12. And the key to achieving that is understanding what makes people change their minds about abortion, and reaching them early enough to make a difference.

## Prayer, Study, Action . . .

Pro-Life Teams will ideally follow a program of Prayer, Study, Research, Discussion, and Action.

We need prayer to get our heads on straight, to keep us centered, and to remind us that our task is to prepare the way. The results are up to God. Only He can trigger that final miracle of grace that marks a change of heart and mind.

We also need study, research and discussion to make sure we are not dissipating our efforts by going off in all directions at once. What are the enemy's soft spots? What is the right message? Who most needs to hear it? How can we present the consequences of abortion to make this person more likely to change his heart, mind, or vote.

Finally, what is the fastest way to build a genuine pro-life majority in this group? In this church? In this town? In this state?

**Now we're ready for action.** The time for talking is over. Notice that in the Gospels, Jesus

never performed a single miracle without asking for some kind of action. "Cast out into the Deep." "Take up your bed and walk." "Come, follow Me."

The same is true today. All the prayer in the world without action is like expecting God to come down and dig the ditch while we won't pick up a shovel. Faith without works is not enough.

Grab the shovel!

## **Targeting the right markets**

Results-oriented marketing begins by targeting the right markets. You can't make progress if you only talk to those who already agree with you. Or if you spend most of your time on those who oppose you. Both strategies violate what Jesus suggested in the parable of the Sower.

So what is the "good ground" Jesus talked about?

It is those who are hungry for the pro-life message and in a position to do something about it before it is too late. Clearly, the most important group are young people who are entering the age group where 80% of all abortions occur. If we can change the minds of just 40% of them, we can cut future abortions dramatically.

In addition, if we can convince young people in the middle to become strongly pro-life, we will be recruiting active pro-life evangelists who can be powerful influences on their generation.

This is no pipe dream, because this approach has already been proven and tested in the Movement for a Better America's Celebrate Life program. Typically, 50 to 100 or more teens would come together for 3-hour seminars on the life issue. We took surveys before and after each seminar and the results were clear.

**We found that pro-life education for young people works wonders.** The research confirms that you can increase the number of those who are strongly pro-life by 75%. Young leaders like these can have a major effect on their generation.

Another key group were the confused kids in the middle. Many held contradictory views -- like thinking that "abortion is always wrong, but it still should be legal." However, we found that at least a third of them can be persuaded to join the pro-life side. Such gains can reduce the number of future abortions significantly. The same approach should work with college students.

*So how can we reach this generation?*

**Church sponsored pro-life seminars** are one great way to do it, either for young people preparing for Confirmation or for those involved in a youth ministry. Planned Parenthood targets these kids. We should, too. At MBA, we'll be happy to share our experience with Celebrate Life seminars with any church that would like to schedule one. We'll also support Pro-Life Teams in promoting this approach in your community.

Just because young people are churchgoers doesn't mean they are immune to Planned Parenthood's lies. College pregnancy centers tell us that half the students who have abortions come from religious homes, and 90% of the time, their parents never even hear about it. In a crisis pregnancy, by definition, all young women are vulnerable. We have to prepare all young people for the challenges they lie ahead of them.

**Working with families** is another important avenue for preventive education. Parents are children's first teachers. I have yet to meet one who didn't want the best for his or her children. However, a great many just don't know what to do about it. We're here to help them.

Parent education programs can be organized through churches and schools, or they can be done by team members working one-on-one with parents of other children in your child's school. Parents are a natural community. Often the only other people in town families know are the parents of their children's friends. All the skills of normal social networking apply here.

Get to know the parents of your children's friends. Let your views be known in appropriate ways. Some will readily agree with you, and others can be persuaded with the right approach.

Keep the focus on what is best for the children. I had one angry parent call after we had just run a high school seminar. She was outraged that the school would let pro-lifers indoctrinate her son. I listened to her patiently, and let her know that I had children, too. Soon we were on a first name basis, and she finished by actually thanking me for what we were doing. It can be done.

**Tea Parties** are another important venue. They have become a major force for change in our society. Surveys show that 67% of Tea Part members are pro-life, but their major focus is on fiscal issues like taxes and spending. That gives us a major opening to talk about the economic impact of abortion -- 55 million lives lost at a cost of \$45 trillion in cumulative GDP. Tea Party people

quickly identify with the question: *How can we have a prosperous America with demographics like that?* The truth is: we can't.

This issue also resonates with investors and small business people and anyone else with a common sense knowledge of economics. Ditto for those who have to manage a household budget, save for retirement and children's educations, or simply survive in what often seems like today's "winner take all" economy.

**Common sense economics:** Our economic philosophy here at the Movement for a Better America is based on the common sense notion that families, not government or Wall Street, are the fundamental economic unit in society.

That's because families are the ultimate source of all supply and demand, and the wellspring for all the human resources that keep the economy ticking smoothly and efficiently.

Think about it. All the gold bullion in the world would still be sitting worthless in the ground if human beings hadn't discovered it and sweated to dig it up, refine it, and make it useful.

Ditto for human innovation. If not for all the inventions of the last 200 years, all of humanity would still be scratching dirt in a day-to-day struggle for survival. Machines didn't think themselves up. It took humans to do it.

Even Wall Street, banking, and government itself would not exist if not for the gift of human intelligence that we are freely given.

But it all begins with the family. The amazing way men and women join together to form new families . . . how life progresses from conception to maturity to natural death . . . These are the reasons humanity is still around after 500,000 years. Without families, there would be no such thing called the economy.

That's a very important message for today's world, where the family is being constantly devalued and dismissed as irrelevant.

**Pro-life Organizations** also need to hear this message to add depth and meaning to their cause, and richness to their message.

Whatever your mission, seeing it in this larger context will reinforce what you are doing and add depth to the message you are sending.

For example, why is an issue like Personhood so important? It's not just because of what the Founding Fathers said, but why they said it. They

were all believers in the natural law.

Frank Sheed once said, "No system can survive that violates human nature . . . that's why Communism's days are numbered." The same is true of America today.

For more than 50 years, the left has promoted an ideology that is directly contrary to human nature. We'll win that struggle because we were made in the image and likeness of God.

## Carrying the message . . .

The final step in the program is to deliver the message and take action. This is a program of prayer, study, and taking action, such as:

**Talking to your pastor** or youth minister

**Joining with other efforts** like a 40 Days for Life Vigil, or a local Tea Party meeting. It's a great way to make friends and influence people for life.

**Hosting a pro-life hospitality day** after church services on Sunday so people can find out more about your program.

**Arranging for an information table** in front of your local post office. You have a free speech right to be there, but a courtesy call on your local postmaster is a good first step.

**Organizing a team to write letters** to Congress and local newspapers, or make calls to call-in talk shows like C-Span, Rush Limbaugh, or Sean Hannity. Compile a list of frequently called numbers and addresses, and share it.

**Collect a file of talking points.** Members are welcome to quote us when calling talk shows. Learn to highlight quotable things you read in our emails, blogs or materials. Here are a few:

*"Families are the basic economic unit of society because they are the source of all supply and demand, and of all the human resources we need for economic growth. Without healthy, stable families, you can't have a healthy economy."*

*"People don't change until they experience the consequences of their behavior. That's why the economic impact of abortion is such a powerful force for change. When people are comfortable, they feel no need to change."*

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**For information about starting a pro-life team, or to make a donation, write to Movement for a Better America, PO Box 472, Mt. Freedom, NJ 07970 - or email us at [mbaforlife@gmail.com](mailto:mbaforlife@gmail.com)**