



Clifford, the Big Red Church



A Moment of Silence

- First, to honor the loss of 164,000,000 aborted children since the 1973 Roe v Wade decision in 1973, and briefly contemplate the impact of that loss on America
- Now, let us pause to give thanks for the SCOTUS decision handed down on Friday, reversing Roe v Wade and opening the door to restore a pathway to protection for unborn children





Friday Was a Glory Day

- On Friday, we became the dog that finally caught the car
- My phone and Facebook were blowing up with people celebrating and praising God; rejoicing that 50 years of prayers and activism on behalf of the unborn had finally produced fruit.
- It is right and good to celebrate and give thanks for this momentous victory.....



Now, What's Next?

- What do you think is going to happen in the days ahead, as a result of the SCOTUS Dobbs decision?
- The Dobbs decision replaced one humongous problem with hundreds of new complex battles and problems.
- As a Church and as a Nation, we have now entered an even more complex Culture war and an even more urgent Caring Mission.



Let's Survey The Landscape

- Dobbs did NOT make abortion illegal in America. It only overturned the 1973 Roe decision that declared the right to abortion to be protected by the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.
- The debate is now returned to the states, where each state gets to make its own laws about abortion.
- The most likely outcome is that over half of the states will keep abortion legal, and in some cases make it legal deep into the third trimester, something not even Roe allowed.



Warning: Legal Jargon Here

- Also, through this decision, the Supreme Court pretty much blew up a major 700-year old legal doctrine known as **stare decisis** – the principle of legal precedent that says if a previous court has already ruled on a matter, it is settled in the law.
- By overturning Roe, the court significantly weakened this principle so that a future – liberal – court, could come back and reverse this decision and declare that abortion is protected by the Constitution after all



Culture War Drives Politics

- Pro-abortion advocates are clinging to one ace in the hole that could make Dobbs moot
- At any time in the future, if pro-abortion forces gain clear control of the House, the Senate and the White House (Obama first term) they could pass a federal law legalizing abortion nationwide and a conservative SCOTUS could not overturn it.
- Even in Texas, DAs in some counties are vowing not to prosecute abortion providers, which will at least slow down enforcement.



We Won A Big Battle, But ...

- The main thing it accomplished was for the Texas legislature, and other like-minded legislatures, to protect unborn children by severely limiting access to abortion in their state. That is a big deal! (one election cycle)
- And women who have resources can still go to New Mexico or some other state, and some businesses will even provide a new “health benefit” to cover 100% of that cost for their employees.
- And that brings us to the Caring Mission.



Unto the Least of These

- Women on the lower socio-economic scale sometimes feel trapped by unplanned pregnancies and many, out of desperation, chose abortion as a solution. Not defending that choice by any means, but it is not going to be there in Texas now.
- Which means that even more women with no income and no family support and no baby daddy support are going to be in desperate need of mercy and grace for themselves and their kids.



The System is Broken

- Social service agencies in Texas are already starting to panic, because they know there aren't enough resources to care for the tidal wave of new clients that are coming. They are wrong to think that abortion was the right answer, but they are not wrong that the situation is about to get more difficult.
- At HLCN we are starting to understand that the needs we are seeing with homelessness and the foster care system and hunger and poverty have a commonality – single moms with no skills and no means of support.



Dobbs Doesn't Help

- It doesn't do anything to provide single moms, broken families, and kids abandoned in foster care (abortion in slow motion) with the help and the hope and the love they need. A new wave is coming.
- Doesn't provide adequate housing or daycare or healing from addiction or good nutrition or life skills training or family counseling or adoption services or a transformational relationship with Jesus, who is the source of true help and healing.

You Know Who Can Help?



CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG



The Local Church (US) Is

- Uniquely called – Matthew 25:40, James 1:27
- Uniquely anointed – Isaiah 61
- Uniquely Commanded – Luke 10:27
- Uniquely Equipped – Ephesians 3:20
- This Caring mission will not only deliver our neighbors from generational cycle of suffering, it will provide the most powerful means of introducing them to Jesus



What If the Church Rose Up?

- The Body of Christ has a rich legacy of this type of ministry throughout history
- But too often the local church now hands the work off to a handful of dedicated service organizations and sends a monthly mission contribution
- But the true vision of Ekklesia – moving against the Gates of Hell in our community
- “You know the Kingdom of God has arrived when systemic poverty is overcome.” Ed Silvoso



The Situation Has Changed

- The SCOTUS decision will lead to more and more urgent needs
- Needs that only the LOVE OF JESUS flowing from His Church can help and heal
- The focus of HLCN is already shifting, and I believe God is calling us to shift our focus too. But the whole church must rise up.
- For now, I know we are called to pray and get ready.



This is the Great Commandment

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this all men will know that you are **My disciples**, if you have love for one another." Jn 13:34



Refocus Our Mission

A disciple is someone who keeps this commandment – to love like Jesus loves, and live like Jesus lived, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and fruit of the Holy Spirit, starting with the the love of Jesus – main fruit – this is our design, our ministry, our destiny



Jesus + Nothing = EVERYTHING

- deeply loved by God,
- fully accepted by God,
- completely and permanently forgiven by God,
- lavishly blessed by God,
- and eternally, perfectly embraced by God as his child; a child who brings Him unspeakable JOY