

After the Overturning of Roe, Good News Can Be Found for All

Good news! The tragic *Roe v. Wade* decision that opened the doors for abortion in our nation has been overturned!

But not everyone thinks so. Rage-filled groups hit the streets to harass and even terrorize churches and crisis pregnancy centers. Young women lament their fears on social media, while many older women see it as a step back for women's rights.

As people of God, we can't react to their negativity and hate with fear and derision. We must remember that we are Good News people. Scripture urges us to live a different narrative. Hebrews 10:24 tells us to "consider how to spur one another to love and to good works."

How are we to respond in love and with good deeds to this present situation?

In Romans 12:4-8, Paul says we are one body with different parts, having different gifts. So, our personal responses may look different even though we all have the same goal—spreading the Good News of Jesus.

The abortion decision is now in the hands of each state. Many will lovingly advocate for the unborn in their states. Others will become foster parents for the likely increase in children entering that system. Some will be led to adopt unwanted children. Still others may come alongside and support pregnant women in crisis.

Crisis Pregnancy Centers need additional financial and other support. Young people need better sex education that encourages and celebrates abstinence. And people in our

communities need to see the love of God and God of love in many forms to negate the narrative of hate pushed by radical groups. Each of us has a part to play.

As we find our place in God's plan, we must also "spur one another on," encourage and even urge others to do the same.

The "love'" referred to in Hebrews is *agape*, selfless love. Throughout Scripture, believers are called to this type of love; above everything else. So, it is good to be reminded what *agape* love looks like:

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful and endures through every circumstance. Love will last forever" (1 Cor. 13:4-8a, NLT).

It's a tall order, but we are called to grow in *agape* love. With Christ living in us, the Holy Spirit working through us and surrounded by others of like mind, it is possible.

Put On A New Nature

Hebrews 10:24 says we must spur one another on to good works, too. When we operate in *agape* love, good deeds are the supernatural result. Since it's not natural for us, Isaiah 1:17a says to "learn to do good."

In our busyness, it is easy to ignore Holy Spirit nudges to do something. Instead of obeying, we may say a quick prayer, give a small donation, send a "caring" emoji or make an internal promise to do something later. But it is sin nature to focus only on our needs, wants and desires. We must put on God's new nature, which teaches us to live differently. "Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy" (Eph.

4:23-24).

Since it is unnatural for us, we need to encourage each other in this type of love and good deeds. Practice it; ask others to hold you accountable; don't participate in things that are divisive or negative; invite friends and family to join you in practical ways; expect good out of each other; honor others who are doing good and encourage others to practice it too. Learn together!

When I was in graduate school, some friends invited me to join an outreach to a drug-infested, low-income community. I had zero desire, but I attended an informational dinner to placate them. That night, God touched my heart, and I fell in love with the people. For the next seven years, long after I graduated, I spent hours every week teaching kids about Jesus, helping them with homework and mentoring them in life. Many accepted Christ, and when the first one went to college, I cried tears of joy! Those experiences changed me and pointed me to ministry, but it was the encouragement of friends that got me involved.

Simple obedience with humility, even when we don't *feel* love, allows the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts. God gives us His *agape* love when we obey Him in "learning to do good." A natural outcome of that *agape* love will be good deeds.

The Chicken or the Egg?

Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? Love or good deeds?

When your motivation and instinct are love, for family, friends, strangers and even pro-abortion protestors, you want to be truly helpful. Not for your sake, but for theirs. Love flows out of you in ways that are personal, practical and tangible—good deeds. And, when the Lord nudges us to do a good deed, and we do it simply out of obedience, He expands our heart of love for others.

Good deeds come in all shapes and sizes. They don't always lead to immediate visible results, but God will use them to work in us and others for His purposes, in His time.

In a world where division, egocentrism and hate are common, we will easily stand out. If we have an attitude of love and a desire to do others good—we'll be welcomed, and often can share the Good News of Jesus, too!

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