

Bibles: Coming to a Planned Parenthood Near You?

Casey Mattox, Alliance Defending Freedom senior counsel, wrote the following open letter to Cecile Richards, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Dear Ms. Richards:

I recently learned that Planned Parenthood has published a "Pastoral Letter" which tells women:

"The truth is that abortion is not even mentioned in the Scriptures—Jewish or Christian—and there are clergy and people of faith from all denominations who support women making this complex decision."

It appears that this letter is no longer available on your website, but an archived version can be found here for your reference (page 3). While I disagree with Planned Parenthood's exegesis of Scripture, I am not writing to debate that point. Instead, I write to express my agreement with Planned Parenthood, reflected in the publication of this pastoral letter, that for many women their religious beliefs will be very relevant to their decision about whether to have an abortion.

On that common ground, on behalf of Alliance Defending Freedom, I would like to offer Planned Parenthood one free copy of the Bible for every Planned Parenthood facility in the country. Planned Parenthood could place these Bibles in their waiting rooms and permit women the opportunity to explore for themselves what the Jewish and Christian Scriptures have to say about abortion. There is no doubt that we are on opposite sides of this theological and moral question. But as we are in apparent agreement that Scripture and its teachings (or lack thereof in your view) on abortion would be relevant to many

women's abortion decisions, making these Bibles available to those women would certainly benefit your potential customers.

To allay any concerns you might have, the Bibles Alliance Defending Freedom would provide to Planned Parenthood would be new unmarked copies. For instance, we would not highlight Psalm 127:3 ("Truly children are a gift from the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward"), Psalm 139:13 ("You knit me together in my mother's womb..."), Psalm 22:10-11 ("You have been my guide since I was first formed . . . from my mother's womb you are my God") or Jeremiah 1:5 ("Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart").

We would not dog-ear Exodus 20:13 ("You shall not kill"). Nor would we even place a bookmark at Luke 1:41, 44 (where the "baby [John the Baptist] ... leapt for joy" in his mother's womb when the baby Jesus was nearby in Mary's womb).

Rather, we would make these Bibles available, unedited and without emphasis of any kind, allowing those women visiting a Planned Parenthood facility to review them themselves.

We look forward to assisting you in this effort to ensure that women are empowered to decide for themselves what the Bible teaches on this important question. Please let me know at your earliest convenience the addresses to which each Bible should be sent.

Sincerely,

Casey Mattox