

Did Wendy Davis' Pro-Abortion Filibuster Mark a Pro-Life Tipping Point?

"When facts change, I change my mind! What do you do?"—John Keynes, British economist

Fifty years ago this August, a 30-something crusader for justice shared his magnificent "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington. At that time, the most oppressed—defined as those receiving "unfair and cruel treatment by another"—group were black Americans. Today that designation belongs to pre-born Americans. In New York alone, 41 percent of pregnancies end in abortion.

Recently, a state senator in Texas, Wendy Davis, gained her seven minutes of fame by filibustering for 11 hours without eating, drinking or taking a bathroom break. The reason? She wanted to block the overwhelming majority of Texans' initiative for change regarding abortion. Her efforts failed, and in her own words, she was "furious."

Scripture directs, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves" (Prov. 31:8, NIV). With the abortion count over 55 million—just 5 million more and we'll hit 60; that's 10 times the number of Jews Hitler exterminated!—can we appeal to all fair-minded Americans that it's time to re-examine and reverse this 40-year holocaust?

Tragically, many have been lulled into silence while others say they've "evolved" on this critical moral issue, but I believe we need to pray and then persuade them afresh in a winsome and informed way.

Those who have reversed themselves should be asked to return to what they once believed in light of modern scientific breakthroughs. Influential people of faith—Catholics like Nancy Pelosi, Caroline Kennedy and Supreme Court Justice

Anthony Kennedy, and Mormons like Harry Reid: Can we respectfully request that you ponder why your church adheres to a sanctity-of-life ethic yet you don't?

If people are open-minded, undecided or changed their minds on the issue once, maybe with a charitable approach and prayer, God can move upon their hearts. In light of what is at stake, shouldn't we give our best efforts to freshly recruit on behalf of the unborn?

Consider someone like the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Let's rewind the tape and listen to words he once spoke:

"I was born out of wedlock (and against the advice that my mother received from her doctor) and therefore abortion is a personal issue for me.

"From my perspective, human life is the highest good, the *summum bonum*. Human life itself is the highest human good and God is the supreme good because He is the giver of life. That is my philosophy. Everything I do proceeds from that religious and philosophical premise. Life is the highest good and therefore you fight for life, using means consistent with that end.

"Life is the highest human good not on its own naturalistic merits, but because life is supernatural, a gift from God. Therefore, life is the highest human good because life is sacred."

Jackson also wrote an "Open Letter to Congress," in which he said, "As a matter of conscience I must oppose the use of federal funds for a policy of killing infants."

When I lived in Washington, D.C., for 24 years, we always participated in the annual March for Life to call for greater social responsibility regarding unborn children in the womb. At one March for Life event, Jackson asked, "What happens ... to the moral fabric of a nation that accepts the aborting of the life of a baby without a pang of conscience?"

Jackson's compelling statements resonated with me because I, too, could have been a statistic. I was born with a serious malady that, had it been detected through amniocentesis in the uterus, could have prompted a doctor to suggest abortion—though my mom would never have consented. Celine Dion, one of more than 10 children in her family, allegedly could also have been aborted, but a Catholic priest intercepted the counsel given her mom regarding abortion and reportedly saved her life. Same thing with a teen mom taking drugs, who was persuaded to not abort her baby, Justin Bieber. And how about Tim Tebow?

Constant Change Is Here to Stay

When more knowledge and information are discovered, isn't it good to make changes accordingly? And shouldn't we be loving ambassadors of that information by seizing every opportunity God gives us to help convince others there is a better way than terminating an unborn life?

The 1973 Supreme Court could plead ignorance after their ruling to legalize abortion on demand, saying it didn't have access to the scientific breakthroughs of the groundbreaking three-dimensional ultrasound images available today. New advanced medical technology provides us with ringside seats for the unfolding miracle of a little baby. Anesthetic is given to unborn children during fetal surgery. Babies begin to be able to survive outside the womb by about 23 weeks gestation. Technology now allows us to observe the miracle of developing lives with perfect arms, legs and thumb-sucking movements turning graceful somersaults in mama's cozy cocoon.

In light of the above, all of us in America truly have a wonderful opportunity to "press the pause button" and reassess our position on abortion. To deny the reality of this unmistakable human evidence would be outright dishonest. And to begrudgingly cast doubt on what is now obvious is like Japan's Emperor Hirohito offering his surrender at Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "The war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage. "

The abortion conversation is revving up again in America today. For the first time, a majority of Americans identify as pro-life, and youth are increasingly supporting the cause. Adoption is cool—my youngest son just adopted his second! And 75 percent of women seeking an ultrasound of their unborn baby now decide against abortion.

Additionally:

- Texas and 14 other states are now either endorsing 20-week abortion-ban bills or tightening standards for abortion clinics.
- Norma McCorvey and Sandra Cano, who were the central figures at the epicenter of the *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* rulings that legalized abortion, communicate today that they were “lied to,” “manipulated” and “used” in order for abortion to be legalized. They’ve become ardent supporters of justice for the pre-born and together dedicated the National Memorial for the Unborn in Tennessee built on the site of a former clinic where 35,000 abortions had once been performed.
- Lila Rose and her groundbreaking undercover Planned Parenthood visits have unmasked their deceptive and manipulative practices that are misleading girls nationwide. Scores are viewing her videos on YouTube.
- Black Americans are awakening to what their leaders are calling the “black genocide.” Planned Parenthood, which performs 330,000 abortions a year—one every 95 seconds—now takes more than \$500 million of our tax money through government grants and performs almost 60 percent of its abortions on African-American women, although African-American women account for just 6 percent of the population. Alveda King, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s niece, says this “has led the way in eliminating African-Americans to the point where one quarter of the black population is now missing because of abortion!”
- In our current situation in America, multitudes are

taking a fresh look at former President Ronald Reagan and his insights for leadership. In his classic book *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*, he stated, "The abortionist who reassembles the arms and legs of a tiny baby to make sure all its parts have been torn from its mother's body can hardly doubt whether it is a human being."

One Sunday evening, I sat down with my wife to watch *60 Minutes* and was startled by the timeliness of the statement made by a medical doctor serving 25,000 people in Darfur, where more than 400,000 people have been slaughtered in the genocide of non-Arabic people. The footage and description of the carnage we watched was mind-numbing.

"Why does this continue?" asked the CBS correspondent.

The response from the dusty, shaggy-haired physician was brief and to the point: "People say, 'I didn't know.'"

The television images were shocking but necessary to drive home the urgent need for justice amidst these atrocities. Growing multitudes feel the same about our responsibility to speak up for the unborn and our duty to recruit others for the cause.

In the past, some of the abortion controversy and conversation has been characterized by uncharitable conduct and mean-spirited rhetoric. In other cases, the focus has been more theoretical and personal. That's changing, as more and more people view sonograms and are increasingly being awakened to support a culture of life. The environment is ripe to engage people and ask them to consider that things have simply gone too far regarding permissive abortion.

Let's pause to state the reality: On this, the 40th anniversary year of the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion on demand, the number of unborn babies who have lost their lives now exceeds the equivalent of the combined populations of Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New

Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis and Washington, D.C.!

No longer can concerned citizens be silent. "Yes We Can!" shouldn't be a fleeting slogan but the anthem of an increasingly pro-life population that believes, "Together we *can* and *must* bring an end to abortion in America!"

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