

Jentezen Franklin: This Will Be the Defining Election for America

What an extraordinary last few months of the 2016 election season we have all watched. Just when I think I've seen or heard it all, something else breaks and the flurry of media activity starts all over again. They say that this election season will go down as the most divisive in history. But for many, this will be the most defining election in modern history as two very different versions of America's future have been presented with no gray area between the polar opposite scenarios and directions. While there are millions who have locked in on a particular person running for president, there are millions more who have focused their attention, and their vote, not so much on the candidates but more so on the issues at stake. For example, when I see the candidates, I don't see so much this person or that person or their political parties. I look past the person and see the set of future Supreme Court justices each candidate will nominate. When viewed through that lens, it's easier to see what matters most when deciding how to cast my vote.

One such issue that is on the hearts and minds of so many voters, in every election cycle, is the tragic consequences of *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized the barbaric practice of abortion. Since its inception, this one landmark decision has not only legalized the death of over 54 million innocent babies, but has also destroyed the lives of millions of grieving and guilt-stricken women, unable to cope with what they have done.

The statistics associated with this tragic act read like a horror novel:

- Over 54 million babies have been “legally” aborted since 1973.
- Nearly half of all pregnancies are unintended, with 4 in 10 terminated by abortion.
- In a recent year, over million babies were aborted.
- In 2014, 12 percent of all abortions in the US were by teenagers while most are in their 20s.
- Twenty-seven percent of all abortions in the US are by women who declare as protestant or evangelical protestant.
- Fifty-nine percent of all abortions in 2014 were by patients who had already experienced at least one previous birth.
- One of the most common answers given for having an abortion were interference with work or school and an inability to care for the baby.
- Ninety-one percent of all abortions happen up to the 13th week.
- Thirty-four percent of all abortion providers perform abortions even at 20 weeks, and 16 percent will perform an abortion at 24 weeks.

In the third and final debate between the two presidential candidates the subject of abortion came up, leaving no margin for misunderstanding. The candidates proclaimed two entirely different views on this topic, but to my amazement, these two candidates took it one step further as the subject of late-term and partial birth abortion took center stage. When the horror and description of a partial-birth abortion was detailed in all its gory and horrific description, one candidate was horrified and in disbelief that one human could do this to another, while the opposing candidate stood firm in support and endorsement of this crime against humanity.

I remember praying, “My God, how far have we fallen?” Can the souls of 54 million babies crying out from their graves to their Creator go unnoticed by an all-knowing, all-present,

just and righteous God? And when I see clearly that one candidate pledges to oppose this murderous act, while the other pledges to keep it legal and accessible with my tax dollars, I do not see the two individuals. What I see is one path that leads to destruction while the other path pledges to stand against it.

When it comes to the Supreme Court vacancies and abortion, my vote will always follow policy and value lines rather than party affiliations. I will always vote my values and my faith over personality and personal preference. A few days after the final debate, many made their views heard on social media. I was stirred deep inside, both with pride and affirmation, when I discovered that my own daughter, Caressa, had made a Facebook post that was so profound and well written:

A few months ago I listened to my baby's heartbeat at just 5 weeks old... he didn't look like a baby then, or have the obvious physical characteristics he does now but he was very much alive and just as human as he is now at 36 weeks ...

I am horrified, disturbed, and disgusted at the things that have come out the last few weeks... as a woman and Christian I personally find it inexcusable on every level.

With that being said, there are things that are a part of the foundation of my faith that I can't ignore 'The sanctity of life.' I think anyone who has had the opportunity to carry a child in their womb and experience the greatest miracle that God allows us to have on this earth would agree it is just that- a miracle.

If this was the only reason why I have decided who to vote for, it's enough of a reason to me. I understand there are many other important issues facing our country today but I choose to vote on the most important one to me... my baby and his future.

I think any mother who has been used by God as a vessel to

bring life into this world needs to protect and value life at every stage... whether the baby is in the womb or out of the womb.

In a subsequent post in response to my daughter's post, her friend, a labor and delivery nurse, stated the following:

Watching the debate, as a nurse who worked labor and delivery for many, many years, I feel the need to point out if a mother's life is in danger at any time after 24 weeks, let alone in the 9th month, the infant can be delivered via c-section to save the mother. The infant is given a chance at life. It does NOT need to be killed to save the mother. NEVER in the 9th month would that ever be a thought for most healthcare professionals. That's not healthcare. That's murder.

Christy Lee Parker

In 1994 Mother Teresa delivered a no-holds-barred pro-life speech at the National Prayer Breakfast in front of a sitting president and his wife. This is an excerpt from her speech:

But I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts.

Jesus gave even His life to love us. So the mother who is thinking of abortion, should be helped to love, that is, to give until it hurts her plans, or her free time, to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, whoever he is, must also give until it hurts. By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And, by abortion, the father is told

that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion.

Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.

Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan was there and later wrote:

Well, silence. Cool deep silence in the cool round cavern for just about 1.3 seconds. And then applause started on the right hand side of the room, and spread, and deepened, and now the room was swept with people applauding, and they would not stop for what I believe was five or six minutes. As they clapped they began to stand, in another wave from the right of the room to the center and the left.

But not everyone applauded. The president and first lady, seated within a few feet of Mother Teresa on the dais, were not applauding. Nor were the vice president and his wife.

That president was Bill Clinton with his wife, current Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, sitting at his side. How prophetic were those words delivered by this humble messenger of God, and they ring as true today as they did years ago. These words still stand as a reminder today about just how important this single issue is in every election. While I do not and have not endorsed candidates or political parties, I can say with absolute certainty who I cannot vote for, and that is any candidate, in any race—federal or state—who stands for killing the unborn.