



STAFF AND LEADERS' RESPONSE TO THE OVERTURN OF ROE V. WADE

Over the past 50 years, under the shadow of Roe v. Wade, abortion has taken the lives of more than 63 million unborn American children.¹ While the recent United States Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade does not abolish abortion in the United States, a majority of the court ruled that individual states can determine their own abortion policies.

This decision shows that people in influential positions can enact change in alignment with Biblical values. We are not implying that those who voted for this change are true followers of Christ – that is not ours to judge. Nor do we assert that this ruling reflects the heart and conscience of the nation. However, because of this decision's significance in society and impending conflict, we believe that there must be a unified sound that emerges from our team.

OUR BELIEFS

The Mannahouse staff and leaders believe that human life is sacred. (Gen. 1:27, Ps. 139:13-16). In the Scriptures, we find that man is created in the image of God, that each person was “knit together in the womb” and that God “saw our unformed body” and numbered every day in His book. Therefore, all human life is divine in origin and begins at conception. Because life is sacred, it should always be protected and not unjustly harmed. (For further clarity on this subject, please see our Biblical position paper on Sanctity of Life²).

The Mannahouse staff and leaders care deeply about life. (Matt 6:26, John 13:34-35). As followers of Christ, we encourage staff, leaders, and members to ask God to give them a heart of compassion for all human life – children, both born and unborn, their mothers, their families - believer and unbeliever alike. This care can be expressed by withstanding policy or action that takes life, grieving with others when life ends, meeting practical and tangible needs, demonstrating God's love and mercy, showing compassion and care, providing counseling and encouragement, standing alongside the vulnerable, and speaking on behalf of the voiceless.

¹ www.nrlc.org/uploads/communications/stateofabortion2022.pdf

² <https://mannahouserresource.com/resource/sanctity-of-human-life>



The Mannahouse staff and leaders teach and encourage our members to act by being salt and light in society. (Matt. 5:13-16). We ground our position in the authority of the Word of God on the sacredness of all human life. We resist the hardness of heart or the drift of conviction that comes by being part of a culture that does not hold the same Biblical worldview about the sanctity of life (Eph. 4:18). Instead, motivated by Christ's love and mercy shown toward us, we desire to influence people in each sphere of society we are called to engage (e.g., church, business, arts, government, education) toward creating a culture that values and protects life. In practice this influence may look different for each believer: some will write policy, some will fund organizations, some will foster children, some will counsel, some will serve pro-life ministries, some will teach in classrooms, some will write books, and some will start businesses all with representing the Biblical value of preserving human life.

SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR OUR STAFF AND LEADERS AS WE RESPOND:

1. Mannahouse staff and leaders should begin their journey by studying the Word of God on this subject. Make sure that your thoughts, opinions, and convictions are based upon God's Word and not the cultural narrative. We ask all leaders to read the Mannahouse Sanctity of Life Position Paper and ensure that you align and are unified with it in both heart and spirit.
2. Mannahouse staff and leaders celebrate this monumental Supreme Court decision, as a ruling that is in alignment with Biblical beliefs and values, believing this decision promotes a culture of life. The team should refrain from publishing impersonal quotes, making large statements that only believers might grasp, criminalizing those that disagree, or emphasizing divisive, political statements. Each leader should carefully consider if their actions will bring glory to God or reflect well on His Church.
3. Mannahouse staff and leaders should not, in any setting, use this ruling as an opportunity to dehumanize people who do not believe similarly. Making brash or derogatory statements is incongruent with the life-giving culture of God's Kingdom. We can be grieved by those that would support or legislate taking innocent and defenseless life, but we must resist the positions of pride or anger (James 4:6; Eph. 4:26-27). We must not allow Satan any foothold in the church during this time.



4. MannaHouse staff and leaders should act justly (Micah 6:8) with mercy, love, and compassion toward abortion-vulnerable women and support laws, policies, and actions that both protect unborn children and do no harm to their mothers. In doing so, personal positions on public policy or laws may be varied even among those that hold the pro-life position (i.e., the national coalition of pro-life organizations that oppose policy initiatives that criminalize women who seek abortions³). We accept these tensions and respect individual freedom to advocate for moral laws.
5. MannaHouse staff and leaders should acknowledge that many men and women in our church have been involved in abortions and may carry the guilt and shame often associated with their decision. The tone of what we say and how we say it will certainly impact our congregation either positively or negatively.
6. MannaHouse staff and leaders should recognize that while the Church has historically taken a strong stance on abortion, it has not always been perceived to value other related life issues, such as care for mothers and/or fathers, disparities in access to medical care and education, the challenges of single parenting, financial assistance for raising children, adoption services, or burdens placed on the foster care system. Our local church should be a place where we talk openly about our responsibility to care for human life at every stage and humbly allow God to search our hearts on this matter.
7. MannaHouse staff and leaders should allow for open and respectful dialogue; giving room for members to share their viewpoints and maybe even disagree on points or methods. This does not mean that we cannot lovingly speak the truth, knowing that not all perceptions that others have are accurate. If a professing believer is resistant to the truth of Scripture, out of care for their soul they should be presented with truth and not allowed to influence others with false doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3-4). MannaHouse listens, serves, and prays with all people, yet our compassionate tone with all should not preempt a willingness to confront the one. This tone and model reflect the culture and heart of our church.
8. MannaHouse staff and leaders believe that human life, once it begins, should be protected, and not unjustly harmed. Birth control methods that stop conception (fertilization) do not transgress this biblical principle. Any method that prevents implantation of an already-fertilized egg would violate this principle by the wrongful termination of human life. Almost all contraceptives available primarily prevent egg and sperm from meeting and thus preventing fertilization. These include abstinence,

³ Open Letter by 74 Pro-Life National Organizations -

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1se2rn8Ad8jskr5wOqpVZTCrbG921RYdA-zmNXaqbMCM/edit>



condoms, spermicides, permanent sterilization (tubal ligation or vasectomy), birth control pills, morning after pill, Depo Provera injection, Nexplanon arm implant, and Intra-uterine devices. Some of these methods work by preventing an egg from being released altogether and some work by keeping the sperm from getting to an egg. Of these, some (birth control pills, Depo Provera injection, Nexplanon arm implant, and Intra-uterine devices) may impact a fertilized embryo's ability to implant in the uterus when the primary mode of action fails (though current studies are inconclusive). If prevention of implantation contributes to a contraception's effectiveness, such a method should be avoided in reverence for human life. Wise medical advice on the matter should be considered according to Biblical norms and values, keeping in mind that the word "conception" may be variously defined. Abortifacients (drugs that directly terminate life) are always immoral.

9. MannaHouse staff and leaders should not equate judicial rulings with the arrival or establishment of God's Kingdom rule. While we recognize God's work and eternal purpose are accomplished through any means He chooses to use, including government institutions, the Kingdom of God is ultimately extended in the hearts of mankind.
10. MannaHouse staff and leaders should pray. Pray for wisdom and sound policies for those in elected office to advocate for both the voiceless in the womb and their mothers. Pray that mothers and fathers would choose life. Pray against the work of Satan, the father of lies, who seeks to devour life. Pray that the Church is unified and not divided. Pray for strength for the life-affirming organizations that are on the frontlines of this debate.
11. MannaHouse staff and leaders should recognize that a change of law does not change the human heart. Rather, decisions like this are often polarizing and further harden the hearts of some people. The division between light and dark often becomes more prominent. We must be prepared to acknowledge the tension, if not vehement response, that this divisive issue will bring about. We should maintain hope in God and His eternal purpose.

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