

Christmas Blessings

"A dead thing can go with the stream,
but only a living thing can go against it."
~ GK Chesterton

Dear Friends of Next Step,

The celebration and defense of life is alive and well in 2022! It is no longer just one issue of many - it is the battle of our time. And like many injustices in history, it is one more where good men and women finally stood up and said no.

I've long been intrigued and encouraged by the work of William Wilberforce (1759-1833), who was a Member of Parliament in England from 1780-1825. Not only was Wilberforce a politician and a philanthropist, supporting numerous causes, but he became a household name as one of the key abolitionists of the African Slave Trade. From the winter of 1786, William Wilberforce fought to abolish the slave trade by leveraging his position as a Member of Parliament to influence public opinion, but most importantly public policy. After a grueling 21 years, Wilberforce saw the long-fought for Slave Trade Act receive royal assent in 1807.

Like the slave trade Wilberforce fought so passionately against, abortion too is barbaric. And like slavery its acceptance happened in stages. First, they label it as a necessary evil or "safe, legal, and rare." Then when it is accepted it hides among the neutral categories as something that is private and judgement cannot and should not be passed upon it ("my body, my choice"). Finally, it is pushed as an obvious positive good in order to quash any efforts to limit or question it and ensure it is entrenched and protected at all levels of government ("Roe v Wade").

President Lincoln once proposed a question that still stands firm today, and were the word "slavery" be changed to "abortion," would still hold as true today as it did when he first spoke the words in 1860:

"What will satisfy them [the pro-aborts]? What will convince them? This, and this only: Cease to call [abortion] wrong and join them in calling it right. Silence will not be tolerated we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Holding as they do that [abortion] is morally right, and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it, as a legal right and a social blessing." (R.R Basler, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, pages 547-549.)

Like Wilberforce, Next Step, and you, dear supporter, have taken a stand. You have recognized something happening in our society and have called it for what it is - evil. But you have not stopped there. Despite very real ostracization, loss of friends, colleagues and sometimes family - you have stood your ground. Not only have you stood unwavering in the face of this adversity, but you have slowly and surely, inch by inch, moved against the rising tide. And progress has been made. Hearts have been changed. Lives have been saved.

"Let it not be said that I was silent when they needed me." ~ William Wilberforce

With Gratitude, Heather Vasquez

Peace Joy Love

