

SIMPLE TRUTH: Praying for Dear Life

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Abortion has been a moral atrocity in our nation for the better part of the last 50 years. During this time, tens of millions of babies have been aborted in the United States. Though experts on all sides acknowledge that the abortion rate is currently dropping, this is no time for the church's voice of truth to wane.

On December 1, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in a Mississippi-based case, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This case would prevent any abortion after the first 15 weeks of pregnancy, which would greatly limit the number of abortions since pregnancies often aren't known before this mark.

Practically, a positive ruling from the Supreme Court could virtually eliminate abortion in Mississippi and become a new precedent for dealing with the issue in other states.

This hearing is a critical moment in the spiritual battle in which we engage. Contrary to many thoughts, we are not merely in a cultural battle against secularism, nor are we fighting for a political perspective against human politicians and judges. We are engaged in a battle with principalities and

powers of the darkness! (Ephesians 6:12)

We should, therefore, rest assured that Satan has his eye on December 1 and will maneuver every ally to perpetuate the moral savagery of abortion. This is precisely why we have designated Sunday, November 28 in the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention as a Day of Prayer and Fasting for an End to Abortion.

The Apostle Paul reminded the Ephesians that the key to effective spiritual warfare is prayer (Ephesians 6:18), and Jesus enlightened the disciples that prayer is the only way of dealing with some forms of evil (Mark 9:29).

I'm often amazed at the number of good Christian people who are dismissive of prayer. As Americans, we've been conditioned to roll up our sleeves and do something, and prayer seems too passive to meet that expectation. However, Jesus set the example for prayer when he faced the cosmic clash that occurred at Calvary.

He regularly prayed during His ministry, spent the evening before His death praying in the Garden, and even prayed as He hung on the cross for those who carried out His crucifixion. Make no mistake: prayer is not a passive effort carried out by Christians who feel handcuffed to do little else.

Prayer is an active exercise that represents the frontline of spiritual battle. Adoniram Judson "A.J." Gordon (1836-1895), Baptist preacher and hymn composer, said, "You can do more than pray **after** you have prayed, but you can never do more than pray **until** you have prayed."

I want to encourage every pastor in the state to help your people focus on praying corporately for this matter. I also want to challenge every Mississippi Baptist to spend substantive time this Sunday in prayer and fasting, seeking God's intervention in the decisions of our leaders.

The developments of the next few weeks have the potential of impacting our culture for decades to come. Therefore, we ought not to be reticent in our requests for God to give sovereign guidance for the sake of His truth.

I'll be praying alongside of you and looking forward to seeing how God will work to make right an injustice that has scandalized our nation for the last half century. May our hearts be joined to His, and may His will be done!

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