

Reaching the African-American Man on Abortion

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Background

Executive Director of FVRI

Family Values Resource Institute, Inc. (FVRI), a 501(c)(3) family organization that has been operating in Baton Rouge, LA since 1992. Our programs include a crisis pregnancy center, adult learning & career development center, family counseling and parenting program, and future early childhood learning and youth center.

Founded by my Parents

Background

Next generation of FVRI Leadership with my wife, Chanell MSSW, Deputy Director

Family:

Cydnee (7 –Aug), Caidee (5 - Sept), Caia & Claire (3 –Dec),
New Arrival (July)

Why I'm pro-life?

General Framework for why I'm Pro Life

- Why people deeply embrace values and principles in life?
 1. Impactful life experiences
(“School of hard knocks” most impactful)
 2. Impactful Role Models
(Parents most impactful)
 3. Impactful reflection, understanding, and reason
(Faith is most impactful)

My Story- Pro-life Impacts that are not-so-typical for Black men

Bible-based understanding and reason from beyond typical “Black Church” teachings.

- As a youth, I Attended a diverse, non-denominational church that was very active in Pro-life Ministry.

My Story- Pro-life Impacts that are not-so-typical for Black men

Pro-life Advocate Parents as Models to follow

- My Parents founded a Pro-life Crisis Pregnancy center in our living room when I was 12 years old.

My Story- Pro-life Impacts that are not-so-typical for Black men

Challenging experience of Fatherhood while completing my Doctorate further cemented my pro-life views

- Starting family while completing a graduate degree goes against conventional wisdom...I would not remove my children from the situation to make achieving my degree easier if I had to do it again
- Later experience after earlier established pro-life values.

So, what does my not-so-typical story imply for Practical Strategies to Reaching the African-American Man on Abortion?

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES FROM FAITH, RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE
IN DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS

Understanding the “big-picture” of the problem

Both the God-created two-parent home with a man and woman (impactful role models), and how people maintain sound Biblical principles of their faith through adversity (impactful experiences) are ultimately, the outcomes of uncompromised Biblical instruction (impactful faith) that guides thoughts, and ultimately actions.

Aligning the practical strategy with the “big-picture” problem.

Practical Strategy starts with an addressing undermining of uncompromised Biblical instruction

- ...Which then undermines values for the God-created two-parent home that is Pro-life,
- ...and undermines how we heal and even grow stronger from past experiences, especially when we are wronged by others, such the racial tension in America that overshadows pro-life values in the Black Community.

Impactful Faith

John 10:10: [Jesus said] "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly" (NKJV)

- Protecting innocent life AND/OR Economic opportunity in "Black Church"
- Politicization of Black church stokes unforgiving resentment for past wrongs over compassionate protection of present (NOT FUTURE) life in the womb.

Impactful Faith – Practical Emphasis

Black Pastor Organizations such as with the Center for Urban Renewal and Education, and the Coalition of African American Pastors.

Impactful Faith – Reflections for Change

1. Is it possible for us to passionately embrace both purposes that Jesus came to affirm life based on God's hatred for the killing of innocent life (Proverbs 6:16-17) AND affirm abundance based on God's love for us to provide for us even more than he does for the birds of the air (Matthew 6:26)?
2. What is the Biblical perspective for needing to forgive in order to heal from the past without holding resentments and the need for discernment to avoid being a repeat victim of past ?

Impactful Role Models

Starts with Fathers who are prepared and equipped to instill promote a generational pro-life values in their families.

- Fathers who lack education and career opportunities, especially with criminal records, have more personal connection to social justice advocacy than pro-life advocacy.
- More affluent Black fathers who personally would not abort their child and hope their children would not either are not the same as Black men that advocate for life.

Impactful Role Models – Practical Emphasis

Faith-based counseling and career education initiatives for families on marriage, abstinence, parenting and life skills.

Impactful Role Models – Reflections for Change

1. Can pro-life advocacy be maximized through a holistic approach to also address the practical family challenges that can deceive a parent to believe that abortion is a better alternative?
2. Can there be a true both-and approach to protecting unborn life and educational/economic opportunities in minority communities?

Impactful Experiences

Must be Relevant and is only Beneficial with the faith to learn, repent, and/or forgive.

- Without faith and wisdom, Male and human nature is to focus concerns more on self than others (relevance) while looking to blame others before self (benefit).
- Now, add the fact that a Black man in America has to wrestle with the history of being enslaved, oppressed, intentionally torn from his family, and then incentivized to stay out of his family with government programs.

Impactful Experiences

Is a Black man more likely to deeply feel the pain of his unintended pregnancy or the real or perceived threats to his economic achievement (relevance)? Furthermore, what will he more likely attribute the problem, self or others (beneficial)?

- Although the Real stumbling blocks of America's racial past that have been rightly eliminated with constitutional amendments and civil rights legislation, for so many Black Men, they linger as Perceived stumbling blocks for many reasons.

Impactful Experiences – Stumbling Blocks of Past Experience

1. Blocks you can only overcome through supernatural intervention or natural revolution.
(discriminatory laws or regulations)
2. Blocks you have the legal or natural ability to overcome
(non-discriminatory justice, mutual arbitration/mediation)
3. Blocks you don't have to overcome at all
(self-imposed)

Impactful Experiences – Practical Emphasis

The stumbling blocks of Real racial tensions and disadvantaged experiences on local levels provide more relevance in real versus perceived factors that influence political perspectives of constitutional principle Nationwide, especially in regard to embracing pro-life issues.

Impactful Experiences – Reflections for Change

1. Where is the line between real and perceived racial insensitivities and injustices that can erode one's empowerment in competitive markets?
2. Where is the line between failing to forgive in order to heal from the past and the need for awareness to avoid a repeating of the past?

Call to Action

Both Healing of Forgiveness and Presence of Repentance to increase racial unity on protecting unborn babies.

Call to Action – Healing of Forgiveness

Black Men must truly embrace Bible-instructed forgiveness that takes no account for the magnitude of the offense and is not conditioned on the repentant actions of those that have committed past and even current wrongs.

Call to Action – Presence of Repentance

While the majority of White People in America have expressed genuine remorse for racial wrongs of the past and even effects still felt today, some Whites have allowed the unforgiving attitudes amongst some Blacks and, especially, the intentional stoking of those feelings for political agendas, to create a lack of Presence of Repentance.

Questions
