

# Pro-Life is More Than a Vote



## **IMMANUEL** **BIBLE CHURCH**

July Seminar  
(2023 Summer Breakout  
Series)



# Agenda

- Seminar Goal
- Church and Abortion
- Relationships are Key
- Creating a Safer Place
- Abortion Recovery Care
- Supporting Pregnancy Centers
- Discipling Those in an Unplanned Pregnancy
- Implementing a Fatherhood Program
- What we can do...



# Seminar Goal



- To educate about IBC's sanctity of life initiatives and challenges



- To create a safer place for women and men to discuss abortion decisions



- To present how we can:
  - Come alongside
  - Offer healing
  - Provide discipleship
  - Support pregnancy centers
  - Implement a fatherhood program



- To encourage men to embrace biblical fatherhood

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# Church and Abortion



This means that **54% of women** having abortions identify as **Christians**.

Source: Guttmacher Institute.



NEARLY  
**2 OUT OF 5 WOMEN**

Were attending a church once a month or more at the time of their first abortion

Source: Care Net/Lifeway 2015 National Survey



MORE THAN  
**5 OUT OF 10 MEN**

Were attending a church once a month or more at the time of their first abortion

Source: Care Net/Lifeway 2021 National Survey

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# Church and Abortion (continued)

- Do people seek out the church first?
- Abortion providers market themselves as a “compassionate care” alternative to the church
- The church is often perceived to be judgmental
- We need to show those in need a “better way”
- Create entry points into the church community facilitating the transition from decision to support

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# Church and Abortion (continued)

- Unplanned pregnancy and abortion are 'taboo' subjects
- Single-parenting is often avoided or frowned on
- Supporting those experiencing an unplanned pregnancy
- Living out John 10:10 (i.e., abundant life)
  - The gospel offers repentance
  - Guilt is a tool of the enemy
- Christianity is all about relationships

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# Christianity is relational...

- Relational with the Father
- Relational with the Holy Spirit
- Relational with our Lord and Savior
- Relational with our immediate family
- Relational with our brothers and sisters in Christ
  
- Satan doesn't mind religion if there is no relationship with Jesus Christ

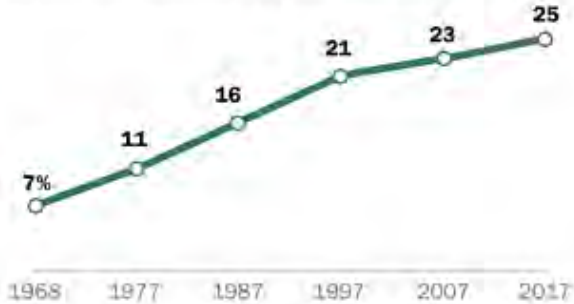
“...the manger family is the modern family” – Roland Warren



# The Profile of Unmarried Parents

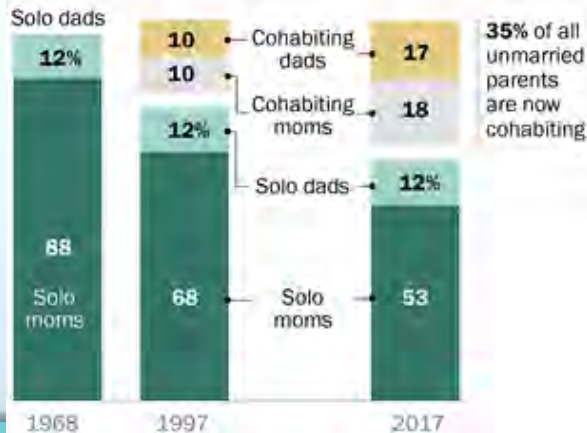
## One-in-four U.S. parents are unmarried

*% unmarried, among all parents living with a child*



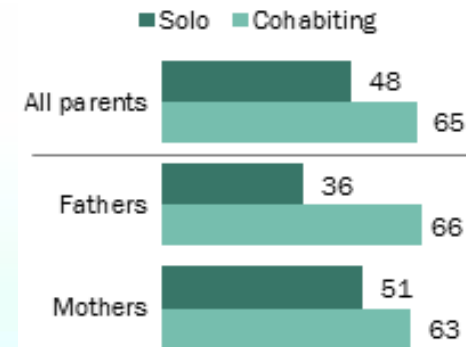
## Growing share of unmarried parents are cohabiting

*% cohabiting/solo, among all unmarried parents living with a child*



## About half of solo parents have never been married

*% never married, by parent type*



Note: "Parents" are all U.S. parents living with at least one child younger than 18.

\* Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2017 Current Population Survey March Supplement (IPUMS). "The Changing Profile of Unmarried Parents" [Facts On Unmarried Parents in the U.S. | Pew Research Center](https://www.pewresearch.org/facts-on/unmarried-parents-in-the-u-s/)





# Creating a Safer Place

- Reaching out
- Confidentiality is crucial
- Understanding the trauma
- Offering compassion, not judgment
- Promoting healing and help for all impacted (Mark 2:17)
- 'Building out' the necessary organizational infrastructure
- Becoming the "compassionate care" alternative to abortion providers and the secular culture

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# Abortion Recovery Care

- What does it mean to have an abortion experience?
- Offers hope and the healing process for those who have had an abortion experience
- Facilitating discussions to enhance a healing journey requiring a relationship with Jesus or a seeking heart (sin, repent, moving forward)
- 'Separate' women and men healing courses
  - Forgiven & Set Free
  - Reclaiming Fatherhood
- Making it known to, and available to the congregation

Forbidden grief—a secret sorrow that cannot be shared or confronted



# Abortion Recovery Care - Women

- “Forgiven & Set Free” (F&SF)
  - Who? For any woman of faith who has had an “abortion experience”
  - What? Ten-week Bible-based healing course
  - Why? Physical, psychological, and spiritual side effects (aka Post-Abortion Syndrome)
  - How? Processing through the grief model—relief, denial, anger, depression, forgiveness, and acceptance—within a Biblical framework
  - Result? Redemptive healing, wholeness, and freedom in Christ

Forbidden grief—a secret sorrow that cannot be shared or confronted



# Abortion Recovery – Care Women (continued)

- “Forgiven & Set Free” (F&SF)
  - When? Spring 2024
  - By whom? Experienced IBC facilitators
  - Interested? Email Jane at [jpfuller03@gmail.com](mailto:jpfuller03@gmail.com) for a confidential conversation
  - A recent participant who had an abortion 40 years prior said the experience, “provided me with the support, encouragement, love and acceptance I needed to process and grieve.”
  - Another said, “I had no idea how much I needed to process my abortion experience...no idea how much I had buried...no idea of the deep sorrow and grief I had never addressed.”

**Forbidden grief—a secret sorrow that cannot be shared or confronted**



# Abortion Recovery Care – Men

- No one emerges from an abortion clinic unscathed and the impact on men can be profound
- “Fatherhood Reclaimed”
  - Looking through ‘Shattered Glass’ – your perception is fractured; you can see but you can’t see clearly
  - Who? Those of faith who have had an “abortion experience”
  - What? Eight-week Bible-based healing course
  - Why? Physical, psychological, and spiritual side effects (aka Post-Abortion Syndrome)
  - How? Processing through the grief model—relief, denial, anger, depression, forgiveness, and acceptance—within a Biblical framework

Abortion – a public topic, but a personal secret



# Abortion Recovery Care – Men (continued)

- “Fatherhood Reclaimed”
  - Result? Redemptive healing, wholeness, and freedom in Christ
  - When? Spring 2024 (providentially)
  - By whom? Looking for 1-2 experienced IBC facilitators with their own redemptive abortion stories
  - Interested? Email Duane at [duaneporch@gmail.com](mailto:duaneporch@gmail.com) for a confidential conversation
  - “I thought the pain would go away, but it didn’t. It manifested itself in anger, disgust, self-hatred, and anxiety.”
  - “Being in community with other men was vital to the healing process.”

Men ‘stuff’ emotions and cling to the façade they are ok



# What are Pregnancy Centers?

- Life-affirming organizations serving women and men vulnerable to abortion
- IBC collaborates with Assist / Metro Women's Center
- APC envisions every individual in our community choosing physical life for their unborn child, eternal life through faith in Christ, and abundant life by walking in obedience to Him
- Primary Functions: medical services (pregnancy testing, ultrasound, etc.), options counselling, and support for women and men during and after pregnancy

"...move to a whole life agenda vs. term life." - Dr. Tony Evans



# Assist Pregnancy Center Touch Points

- Assist is an approved / supported "mission" under the oversight of Pastor Michael Conner
- Many from IBC, including Pastor Jesse Johnson, are involved with Assist
- Individual IBC members contribute time, treasure, talents, and prayer. IBC offers space, supports fundraising, etc.
- IBC's Making Life Disciples (MLD) program prepares church mentors to engage with and support Assist clients
  - The MLD ministry advocate is the Director of Evangelism, Sean Mornan

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# Church and Abortion



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# Making Life Disciples @ IBC

A pregnant woman with curly hair, wearing a white t-shirt, is shown in profile, looking down at a card she is holding in her hands. The card has a picture of a person on it.

## *making* LIFE DISCIPLES™ 2.0

Immanuel Bible Institute (IBI)

CARE  NET®



# Making Life Disciples is

"...moving to a whole life agenda vs. term life." - Dr. Tony Evans

- Making Life Disciples...
  - Equips the church to watch for and reach the abortion vulnerable in their midst
  - Equips the church with sensitivity to and healing resources for those with an abortion in their past
  - Builds bridges that connect pregnancy center clients with local church discipleship
  - Offers a practical, non-political “basic training” to equip a group of first responders in the church
- IBC started implementing MLD in 2022

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We like to say, "life decisions require *LIFE SUPPORT*."



**THE CHURCH**  
LONG-TERM  
SUPPORT



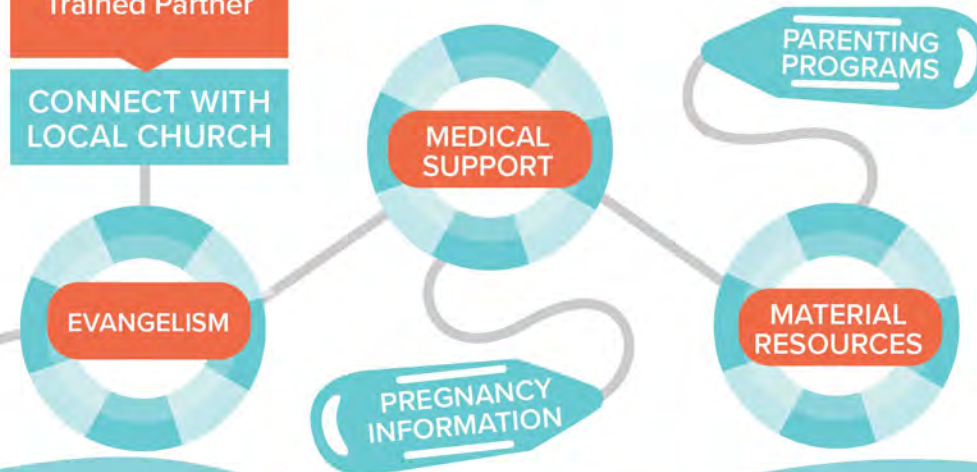
DISCIPLESHIP

*making LIFE DISCIPLES*  
2.0

Prepares Your Church to Work with Centers as a Trained Partner

CONNECT WITH LOCAL CHURCH

**PREGNANCY CENTERS**  
SHORT-TERM  
SUPPORT





MUCH

HUSBANDS AND FATHERS SUPPORT

GOD'S DESIGN

**NEEDS:**  
 Physically  
 Emotionally  
 Spiritually  
 Socially

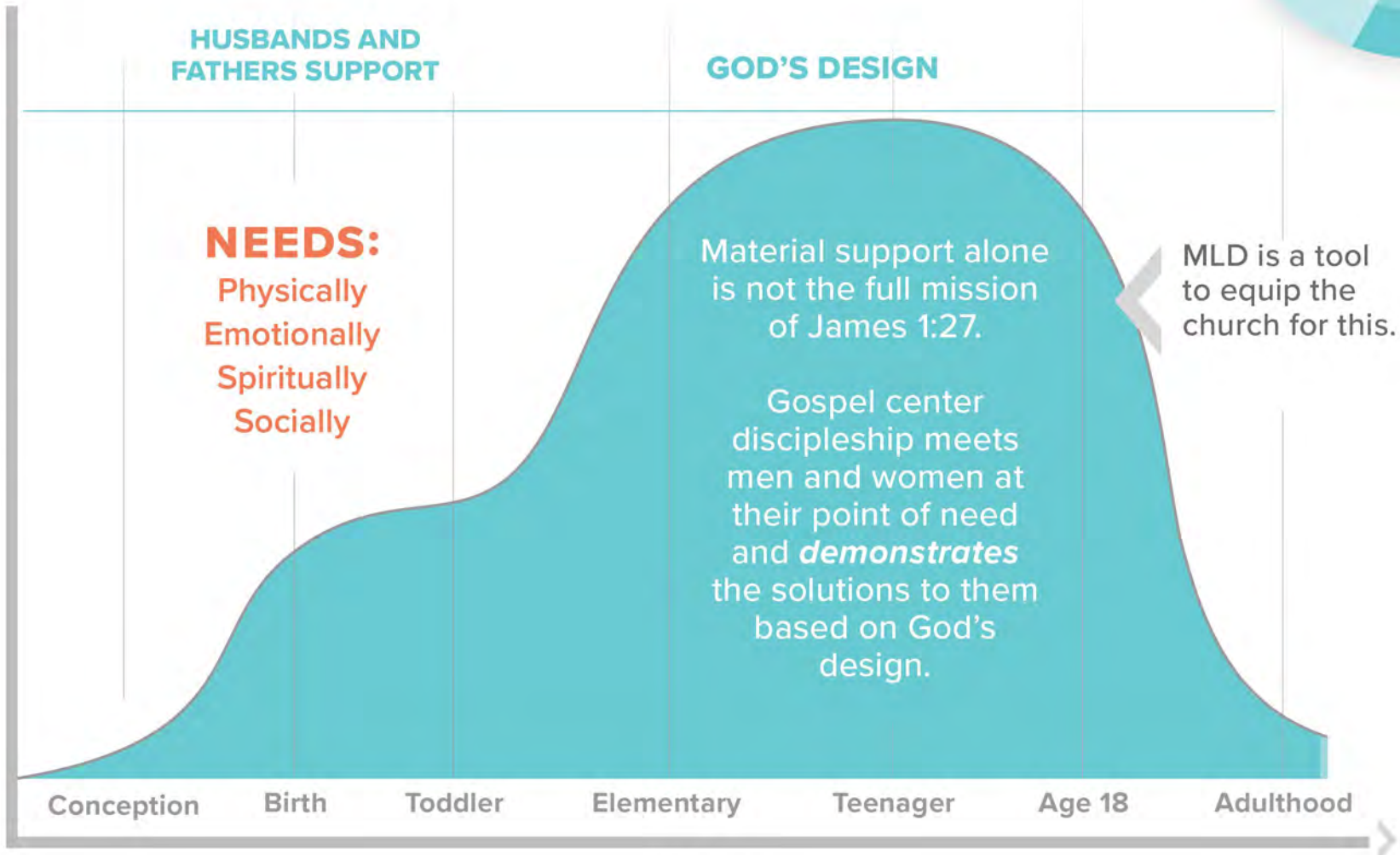
Material support alone is not the full mission of James 1:27.

Gospel center discipleship meets men and women at their point of need and *demonstrates* the solutions to them based on God's design.

MLD is a tool to equip the church for this.

NEED

LITTLE



Conception

Birth

Toddler

Elementary

Teenager

Age 18

Adulthood

TIME



***Making Life Disciples*** will help your church establish a team to walk alongside women and men facing pregnancy decisions and to build a unified, holistic, kingdom response to abortion.

**It turns your church into a central point of compassion in your community.**

Moreover, MLD enables your church to form meaningful partnerships with your local pregnancy centers so that you can create “***kingdom connections***,” forming a network of support for people at risk for abortion.



# 'Life Disciples'

- Four Traits of a Life Disciple
  - Authenticity
  - Acceptance
  - Humility
  - Empathy
- Create a Cadre of Life Disciples who...
  - Rely on the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit
  - Show up, build trust, and provide Christ-centered and compassionate support
  - Realize that outcomes resulting from help provided are in God's hands
  - Protect confidentiality, and respects decisions made

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# Fall Semester MLD Course

- An eight-week Training Course starting in September and finishing in mid-November
- Presented in 1 ½-hour to 2-hour sessions once a week
- Meet 7pm @ IBC in Room B207 (weeknight TBD)
- Study materials are \$15/student
- Certified Instructors
  - Cindy Hopkins
  - Duane Porch

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# The Father Absence Crisis in America

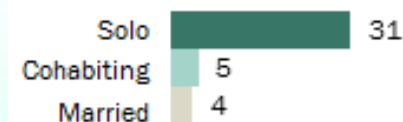
- In 2022 18.4 million children, more than 1 in 4, lived without a father in the home<sup>1</sup>
- Research shows<sup>2</sup> when a child is raised in a father-absent home, he or she is affected in the following ways...
  - 7X more likely to be a pregnant teen
  - 2X more likely to drop out of high school
  - 2X greater risk of infant mortality
  - 2X more likely to suffer obesity
  - 4X greater risk of poverty

## About three-in-ten solo dads are living with their own parent

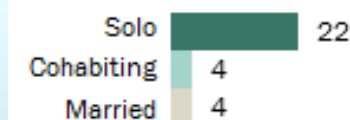
*% of parents living with their own parent, by parent type*



### Among fathers



### Among mothers



1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2022)

2 National Fatherhood Initiative® 2019.

“Whoever owns the family owns the future” – Dr. Tony Evans

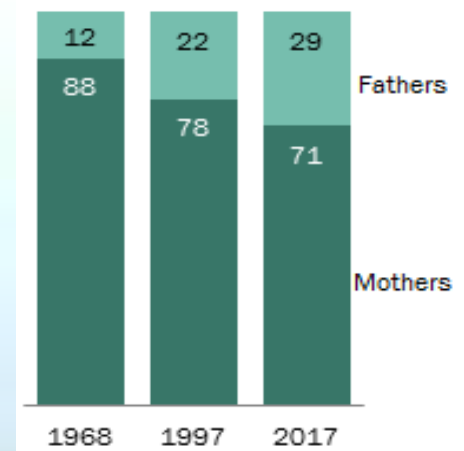


# Embracing Biblical Fatherhood

- Being “intentional” about teaching the next generation
- Identifying, tailoring, and implementing a program
- Fathering Resources
  - National Fatherhood Initiative® [Father Involvement Programs for Organizations and Families | NFI \(fatherhood.org\)](https://www.fatherhood.org/)
  - [Dare to be a Dad 05052023.pdf \(savethestorks.com\)](https://www.savethestorks.com/)
  - [Fathers.com - National Center for Fathering](https://www.fathers.com/)
  - [Home - Focus on the Family](https://www.focusonthefamily.com/)
  - [Programs \(care-net.org\)](https://www.care-net.org/)
  - [AFA.net - Home](https://www.afa.net/)

**Share of unmarried parents who are dads has more than doubled**

*% of unmarried parents who are ...*



“A good father is one of the most unsung, unpraised, unnoticed, and yet one of the most valuable assets in our society.” – Billy Graham



# National Fatherhood Initiative<sup>®</sup>

➤ NFI –7 steps to starting a successful fatherhood program:



- 1. Making the Case for a Fatherhood Program
- 2. Assessing the Father Friendliness of Your Organization
- 3. Focusing Your Efforts on the Type(s) of Fathers You Will Serve
- 4. Selecting the Right Resources and Programs
- 5. Preparing for a Sustainable Fatherhood Program
- 6. Funding Your Fatherhood Program
- 7. Launching Your Fatherhood Program and Measuring the Results

“Whoever owns the family owns the future” - Dr. Tony Evans



# Hearts...

- Government influences decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- Politics influences decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- Money influences decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- Culture influences decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- The arts influence decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- Desires influence decisions, but doesn't change hearts
- Friends influence decisions, but don't change hearts
- Family influence decisions, but don't change hearts
- The Gospel changes hearts

...the manger family is the modern family" – Roland Warren



# Pro-Life is more than a vote...

- Be willing, open, and honest to discuss abortion
- Leading with compassion, love, and understanding
- Investing in the ministry, inviting others, and including leadership
- Putting the message into “all” the church’s communications
- Adding sanctity of life perspectives in other church areas such as:
  - Youth group discussions and awareness
  - Women and men’s bible studies
  - Fatherhood classes

Engaging those in the pregnancy center, the pew, and the pub

# Questions?

