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WORDS FOR LIVING MINISTRIES

*To Encourage... To Inform... To Teach*

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## Spring 2021

Dear ones,

Spring is my favorite season. Even at the gulf coast, where the live oaks stay green and Camellias bloom in Fall, Winter and early Spring, many things go dormant in Winter, and there are periodic cold spells. Here at the farm, our Spring has its first warm spells in February when snow drops bloom, crocuses blanket the yard, and red maples open their red flowers, soon followed by red fruits, helicoptering to the ground. These are the overture; but the symphony with its extravagance of colors follows. Jesus has risen and Spring's symphony is here

*Tom*



Springtime at the farm

## Abortion and Infanticide in the Ancient World:

Four months ago I was thinking about the widespread slaughter of innocent babies—abortion and infanticide—and wondered how long it has been going on. Since then, I have learned a great deal.

I have traced abortion in Egypt back to the time of the Exodus, and I am confident that I will find it before the great flood. And infanticide (killing newborn

babies) was as common as abortion in the ancient world. **4th Century BC** - The oldest known manuscript of the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians says this: "Moreover, I will give no sort of medicine to any pregnant woman with a view to destroy the child."

Because we have been forced to reduce the size of our newsletter to half of what it was before, this article must be brief--largely a sequence of dates and documents. I intend to write an expanded article to be posted on our web site; for those who don't have computers, ask a grandchild to pull it up and print it for you.

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**1550 BC** Time of the Exodus) - Egypt, Ebers Papyrus, the oldest known reference to chemical abortion.

**1150 BC** - Temple inscription of an underworld demon performing an abortion on a woman, Angkor Wat, Cambodia.

**1075 BC** - Assyria, Code of Assura--The death penalty for a woman procuring an abortion against her husband's wishes.

**700-400 BC** - Epic Ramayana (India) - Description of abortions performed by physicians or barbers.

**4th Century BC** - The oldest known manuscript of the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians: "Moreover, I will give no sort of medicine to any pregnant woman with a view to destroy the child."

**40-80 AD** - The Didache, ("Teachings of the Twelve Apostles"), the oldest known Christian doctrinal statement, in which the original apostles summarized the teachings of Jesus: "do not kill a baby by abortion or kill a baby after it is born."

**3rd Century AD** - Christian theologian Hippolytus of Rome, in "Refutation of all Heresies, Book 9," wrote of the tragedy of women "tightly binding themselves around the middle" so as to expel what was being conceived."

Pray for an end to abortion. Pray also for the many groups and individuals who pursue this very

thing—40 Days for Life, Students for Life, Live Action, and the many compassionate crisis pregnancy centers serving women and infants in their communities.



### **Food for Thought: Cherry Tomatoes:**

**God and people are so much more than we realize.**

A certain little boy loved cherry tomatoes. One day as he was snacking on a few of the ones his mother had just rinsed and set aside, his mother said, "Do you know what those are?" He said, "of course—tomatoes!" She said, "Nope, they are...vitamins!" He laughed and then slyly put the remaining tomatoes in the shape of a smiley face and said, "Actually, they are a smile!" Then his Mom arranged them in a heart shape and said, "I think they are a heart." And so the game went on. They were tomatoes, yes, but they were also so many other things. Similarly, our Lord is so much more than we realize: He is Master, Friend, Lamb, Lion, Light, Pathway, Bread of Life, Prince of Peace, the Resurrection, the Good Shepherd.... He is all of those things and more. People too are not just one thing, and we tend to forget that. The man we know as an unremarkable bus driver may also be (unbeknownst to us) a gentle and excellent father who takes time to play with his children every evening. The woman we know as a bank clerk may also be an amateur gifted artist. The teenager we may know as a cut-up in class may be also the rare teen who regularly visits his grandad in a nursing home. There is so much more to God—and to people—than we think.

--Sally

### **Marty:**

My beloved wife Marty was recently diagnosed with far-advanced cancer. She is tough, but needs your prayers. She is very, very fatigued and fighting a variety of other symptoms as well. Please lift her up to the Lord. Here she is the day we wed. She is beyond price.

### **Milestones:**

Died: Margaret June Strong Johnson at Baptist Health in Madisonville, KY on 31 January 2021. Born in 1924, Margaret was widely known for her many years of service in the Marion Methodist Church and in the Marion, Ky community. Margaret's home was the meeting place of many sweet weekly Bible studies in my early years of walking with the Lord.

Died: Carolyn Coats Doyle in Union City, TN on 6 March 2021. Born in 1933 in Martin, TN, Carolyn was one of the first graduates from UT at Martin, an educator, and a homemaker. She was part of those very special Union City weekly Bible studies as well as the Believer's Retreats, and often found friends to bring along.

### **Pray for Bonnie:**

Please also pray for longtime WFLM secretary Bonnie Hunter, who is battling recurrent cancer. She too is a trooper, and she too needs your prayers.