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III. Bringing an End to Abortion / E. A Biblical Mandate / 3. The Horrors of Abortion and Hell  
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## THE HORRORS OF ABORTION AND HELL

(from John Piper's *A Godward Life*)

I am frustrated that I have only one life to live for Christ. This morning after breakfast I was again distressed, very distressed, at the thought of the thousands of unborn children that are legally crushed to death by sterile medical instruments. I lay down on my bed and stared at the ceiling. The immensity of the horror of bloody little legs and arms and heads dismembered and piled on a clinic mat returned again and again.

For three years Noël and I lived a few miles from Dachau, the concentration camp outside Munich, Germany. Today it is open to the public. There are pictures. It is only because there are pictures that we believe it happened. Without the photographic record there would be no belief. We walked through the terrible chambers. We walked through the oven rooms. We walked between the stacked bunks. But that is not real. They are like props. It didn't really happen here in this very spot. Not really.

Then we saw the pictures. The pictures don't lie. Everything can lie but the pictures. We can escape anything but the pictures. Worldwide indignation came from the pictures. Without the pictures it is unimaginable; it couldn't have been like that. Or, yes, it could have, but I can't come close to feeling what I should feel-not without the pictures.

So it is with abortion. It is the pictures that stun me this morning-the incredible scenes from Eclipse of Reason and the photographs of legally mangled corpses. What shall I do? Would petitions and prayers really have sufficed in Nazi Germany?

Then I think of the immensity and horror of the sin of disbelieving God. I think of the offense against his immeasurable honor. I think of the reality of hell and the word pictures in the Bible: "And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night" (Revelation 14:11, RSV).

Suddenly, it hits me what an utter inconsistency it is to feel indignant as a Christian about the Holocaust of the Jews and the holocaust of abortion, but not about the holocaust of sinners perishing in unbelief. Killing babies is a horrendous evil and their destruction is hellish. But not trusting God is a more horrendous evil, and the destruction of unbelieving people is not hellish but hell. Therefore I am frustrated that I have only one life to live for the glory of Christ. One life should surely be devoted to stopping the carnage (we must speak graphically or we lie) of abortion. Another life should surely be devoted to saving people from hell.

What shall I do? What is the solution to my frustration? The solution is the diversity of the members of the church of Jesus Christ. I cannot go to all the unreached peoples of the world with the good news of salvation from sin. I cannot spend all the time I would like writing, speaking, traveling, and agitating for the cause of threatened children. The only solution I know is you! Which horror in the world today makes you ache most? Where will you pour yourself out in the few years you have before you give an account to the righteous Judge of all the earth?

John Piper, *A Godward Life*  
*Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2001, pp. 205-206*