

# No More Weeping

by

Linda D. Bartlett





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## • ONE •

**“There is ... no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death”**  
(Romans 8:1-2).

**A**lienation from God began when the first man and woman doubted their Creator. How could this happen? Satan, who opposes God and despises the humans so dear to God’s heart, tempted Eve.

Satan knew the order of God’s creation. He knew that to man were given the instructions to resist evil, do good, and defend life. But a sly and cunning Satan ignored the man and approached the woman. He asked, **“Did God actually say ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”** (Genesis 3:1) In that moment, the woman doubted God and trusted her own reasoning. Instead of turning her back on Satan, she engaged him in conversation. Not only did she speak for God, she added words of her own, answering, **“We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die’”** (Genesis 3:2-3). Eve sinned when she failed to trust God and added to His Word (compare Genesis 3:2-3 with Genesis 2:16-17).

This is how temptation works. After we doubt God’s Word, we more easily reject it and then attempt to establish our own standard of right and wrong. We put ourselves in place of God.

Was the woman alone in her sin? As the head and steward of God’s creation, Adam was responsible for what happened, even though the woman was the first to disobey. The man failed to trust God’s Word for life and use it to resist evil. The eyes of man and woman were both opened when Adam ate the forbidden fruit. **“God called to the man and said to him, ‘Where are you?’”** (Genesis 3:9)

Alienation from God was felt immediately. For the first time, the man and the woman experienced self-consciousness in their nakedness. Sin and a new emotion of shame separated them from one another and from God. Adam and Eve attempted to cover themselves and hide.

There are always bitter consequences for sin. But even though Adam and Eve were sent away from the perfect garden into a sin-tainted world, God promised a Savior who is Christ Jesus the Lord.

Satan continues to deceive us today. When a woman is pregnant with a child she didn't plan, Satan asks, "Did God actually say that He creates each child in his or her mother's womb?" (Psalm 139:13-16) "Did God actually say that He knows us before we are born?" (Jeremiah 1:5) "Did God actually say that taking your child's life is murder?" (Proverbs 6:16-17) "Did God actually say that a woman's body is not her own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) "Did God actually say that He will care for both mother and child?" (Isaiah 40:11)

Satan alone is not responsible for our sins. He may actively try to seduce us and persuade us, but we are responsible every time we doubt God and want to become our own gods. It is a daily struggle: our will against God's will. Too often, fear is the driving force in our lives. We are tempted to make wrong choices when we fear being unloved, rejected, or out of control. After wrong choices are made, fear rises again. In shame, we fear that God will stop loving us.

But there is hope! Because of what Jesus has done for us, we are not captive to sin or fear. **"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"** (Romans 8:15).

There is hope! Even after the shame of abortion, hope comes anew in the Father's love. **"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness"** (Lamentations 3:22-23).

God does not want us to remain alienated from Him. We alienate ourselves by rationalizing or refusing to confess the sin of abortion. But, **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (1 John 1:9).

Dear Abba Father, with You nothing is impossible. Your only Son, Jesus Christ, paid the price for my abortion sin. Believing this, I do not have to fear separation from You. I am forgiven and set free to live a new life as your child. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## • TWO •

**“For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’ and you forgave the iniquity of my sin” (King David in Psalm 32:3-5).**

**D**enial is the way we avoid accepting responsibility for our sin, whatever that sin might be. A man or woman may deny their sexual sin and, if a child is conceived, they may continue their denial by scheduling an abortion. Denial continues when the death of the child is ignored or rationalized. But can anything ever be hidden from God (Hebrews 4:12-13)?

Denial following an abortion doesn't allow the woman to grieve. Instead, she may rush into activities that temporarily relieve anxiety. Following her abortion, “Ella” indulged in a lifestyle that was harmful to herself and her surviving family. She left her children with her mother while spending long hours in local bars in search of the “love” of men. Drug and alcohol abuse were attempts to wipe away the face of her aborted child.

Denial is hazardous to our spiritual health (Psalm 32:3-4). Unrepentant sin places us in danger of losing our salvation, which is the greatest tragedy of all. Denial is also physically and emotionally damaging. Labeling abortion as “a woman's right” protected by “law” encourages those who have abortions, those who perform them, and those who support them to be in denial of human sin and God's justice.

When we do not confess our sin, we live as paupers, denying ourselves all the riches of mercy and grace that God so generously pours out upon His disobedient but sorrowfully repentant children.

There are only two options following sin. We can cover our sin or confess it. If we say we don't sin, we make God a liar (1 John 1:10). If we confess our sin, denial is broken and healing begins. We confess by admitting we have sinned, agreeing with God about our sin, and turning away from those things that cause us to sin and be separated from God. Jesus Christ did all that was necessary to

make us right with God, but since we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him, a forgiven and right relationship with God is accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit.

When we are told that we've done wrong, our pride raises its ugly head. No one wants to be stained in the eyes of the world. Martin Luther said, "For not one of us would want his story written on his forehead." He also said, "Do not deny and flee from God; confess and flee to Him."

King David was caught in his sin with the married woman, Bathsheba. When the prophet Nathan confronted him, King David confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan said to David, "The Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die."

Dear Heavenly Father, forgive the sin of my abortion choice and, as you did with David, put it away. Surround me with Your love so that I have the courage to forgive myself. Give me strength to face tomorrow and, in Your time, use me to bring hope to others whose lives have been broken by abortion. In Jesus' name, Amen.



## • THREE •

**“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”**  
(1 John 1:9).

**G**uilt is what we feel when we have violated our own moral code. For the woman who knows that she consented to the killing of her unborn child, the burden of guilt can be oppressive.

Feelings of guilt, some say, are the fault of Christians who call abortion a sin against God. Christianity is the problem, some pro-abortion advocates insist. But this claim is weakened when we learn about the women who've had abortions in non-Christian cultures. In spite of decades of abortion “on demand,” Japanese women admit to feeling “anxious” following the act. In their words, abortion is something “very bad.” It is not uncommon to find little grave markers in Japanese cemeteries with fresh flowers laid in memory of an aborted child. Handwritten notes offer emotional apologies from mother to child.

When we violate our own moral code, the inner voice of self-condemnation often plays a repeating tape in our minds which strongly accuses. “You are defective!” “You are bad!” “You are incapable of doing good.” We may become anxious and apprehensive. The overpowering feelings of guilt build a barrier between ourselves and family or friends. A woman who is suffering from post-abortion syndrome (PAS) may unconsciously avoid being around babies or young children. Numbness, another symptom of PAS, may cause a woman to withdraw from any relationship that might place her in a vulnerable position. Guilt over an abortion can cause anger, fear, dependency upon alcohol or drugs, eating disorders, sexual promiscuity, depression, and even suicidal thoughts.

Guilt can be healthy, however, when it makes us painfully aware of our sin. We are not really in tune with God if we never feel guilt over sin. We are sinners! Guilt makes us realize that we are stripped of our pride and naked before God. We are in need of a Savior from sin, and that Savior is Jesus Christ.

In the words of Martin Luther, “Man is to be humbled, to creep to the cross, to sigh for Christ, to long for His race, to despair of

himself, and to base all his confidence on Christ. From Him he is then to expect the gift of a new spirit and a change of heart so that he will no longer fear death and hell, no longer seek to earn life and heaven, but gratuitously and freely love the law, passing his life and meeting his death with a good, quiet conscience.”

**“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit” (Psalm 51:10-12). Amen.**

## • FOUR •

**“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him” (Psalm 103:13).**

“**A**bstortion creates an immediate void in the parent,” writes Dr. Vincent Rue, “characterized by ambivalence, emptiness, and confusion. As the fetal child dies, so also does a part of the parent, male or female, married or not, minor or adult. Abortion is not just ‘pregnancy termination’ or ‘cellular disposal.’ It is a personal and relational amputation. Parents are parents forever, even of a dead child.”

It is common for those who suffer the trauma of abortion to experience sudden, distressing flashbacks to the abortion episode. Nightmares about babies in general or the aborted baby in particular may haunt the mother. She may even hear the sound of crying babies. All of these are signs of grief.

When we choose to disobey God, there will be pain and suffering. But rather than feeling overwhelmed by it, we can choose to deal with it through the eyes of faith. Consider Judas and Peter. Both men betrayed Jesus. Judas despaired in his grief and hanged himself. Peter, perhaps equally burdened, did not totally despair but claimed the forgiveness that was his and became a powerful man of God who brought many people to Jesus.

A woman who has chosen an abortion as the “solution” to her problem may depersonalize her child. In order to protect herself, she repeats the labels used by the abortionist, such as “unwanted tissue,” “product of conception,” or even “parasite.” She may convince herself that her abortion was “self defense.” When she moves into the stage of grief, she may ask questions that are not easy to answer such as, “Where is my child now?” This is the time to focus on God’s mercy and justice.

“It is important for the woman experiencing post-abortion syndrome,” writes Rev. Dr. Randall Shields, “to look back much further in time—to the cross and resurrection of Christ. It is here that she will find her strength and comfort, both the assurance that she has been forgiven and the wisdom of the Spirit to let go of the secret things.”

Satan wants us to wallow in the hopelessness of sin and despair. But Jesus says, **“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”** (John 10:10-11).

Unlike our own earthly fathers who too often fail and disappoint us, God the Father never fails or disappoints. Jesus says, **“Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts [sins], as we also have forgiven our debtors [those who sin against us]. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”** (Matthew 6:8-13).

Dear Heavenly Father, You have promised healing for the brokenhearted and hope for the hopeless. You see my tears and know my grief. Give me peace, Father, not as the world gives, but as only Jesus Christ can give. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## • FIVE •

**“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool” (Isaiah 1:18).**

“**I** was filled with grief, guilt, and remorse over the loss of my two babies. I was also consumed with anger over the lies I had been told.” With great sorrow and feelings of betrayal, many women discover the facts about prenatal life only after their abortion. It is not the custom of abortion providers to inform a woman about the development of her baby or prepare her for the very real sense of loss she may experience after the abortion. Anger becomes a strong emotion for the woman who suddenly realizes that she had the “right to choose” without first being guaranteed her right to know.

We often take the anger we feel over our sin out on those who should have stopped us from sinning. After all, we say, they knew better. Why didn't they warn us? With anger comes blame. “It was my boyfriend's fault. He said he would leave me if I had the baby.” “It was my parents. They said an abortion would prevent me from ruining my future.” We may even blame God for letting us do such a bad thing.

At some point, the anger turns inward. Personal disappointment may be a crushing weight, one that is seemingly impossible to remove. If ever anyone had reason to be angry and bitter it was Naomi. In the Book of Ruth, we discover that Naomi had lost her husband and both sons. But instead of returning to her homeland in total despair, she took her eyes off her problems and realized the great blessing God had given her in her daughter-in-law Ruth.

Rev. Edward Fehskens writes, “Paralyzing guilt can make self-condemnation or self-pity a prison of grief, sorrow, and depression that endures for years. Depression is also compounded when there is no outlet to express the profound remorse a woman (or man) feels at the loss of an aborted child.” Depression is fed with feelings of low self-worth and the knowledge that values were compromised. Self-punishment may be inflicted. “It isn't right that I feel good again. I must continue to suffer for the horrible thing I've done.”

There is also fear of judgment. “I wanted to confess my abortion to someone, but the fear of rejection and judgment kept me silent.” It

is not unusual for a woman to keep her “secret” for a long, long time until finally, she hears words of welcome and compassion that allow her to tell her story. Ultimately, our self-worth is not dependent upon the way other people view us; rather, it is rooted in the reality of God’s love for us. We may refuse God’s love, but He never withholds it.

During the process of healing after an abortion sin, a woman comes to understand that the past is not forgotten, but it can be put in the right perspective by the light of Christ. **“In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”** (John 1:4). It is the light of Christ our Redeemer that reveals the mercy of God our Father.

**“Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord”** (Psalm 25:6-7).

**“For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning”** (Psalm 30:5).

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for going to the cross where You took on the anger of God that I deserve. With that sacrifice, You set me free from having to remain angry and unforgiving of myself. You have called me out of darkness into Your marvelous light. Turn my heart and mind toward You so that the choices of my past do not hinder me from proclaiming the goodness of God the Father. In Your name I pray. Amen.

## • SIX •

**“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3).**

“**N**o one told me how I would feel after the abortion,” said one woman, “Mary.” “One friend reminded me that abortion is legal. Another friend assured me that what I was about to do was a ‘good thing.’ Even my dad told me that having the abortion was the ‘best choice’ considering the circumstances. And at the abortion clinic, well, everyone acted as if abortion was no big deal.”

But Planned Parenthood, the largest provider of abortion in the world, admits that nine out of ten women who have abortions suffer some trauma. This trauma is comparable to “post-traumatic stress disorder” experienced by many soldiers returning from war.

Faye Wattleton, the former president of Planned Parenthood, said, “Who believes that abortion is something other than killing?” Adrienne Asch, a former board member of the National Abortion Rights Action League, said, “It makes sense to perform abortions in the most humanitarian way possible, but there’s nothing especially humanitarian about death.” Even little girls know that mommies are supposed to care for their babies, not kill them.

Abortion is not natural. It goes against the very nature of a woman. A woman’s body is created to bear and nurture life. This is why so many women who willingly (or unwillingly) choose to have an abortion spend so long in denial. For some, it is a matter of months. For others, it is many long years.

Even the doctors who perform abortions and the nurses who assist them admit to feelings of guilt and remorse. Some hide the guilt so deeply inside that their hearts become hardened. But others express the greatest of sorrows. “I do feel you’d be an abnormal person if you could really honestly say that abortion didn’t bother you at all,” observed one abortionist. “It goes against all things that are natural. It’s a termination of life, however you look at it. It just goes against the grain. It must.” Many of those once involved in the abortion business have fled to the foot of the cross. It is there that they pray for God—and the women they have hurt—to forgive them.

C.S. Lewis wrote, “Every choice makes you into someone a little

different than you were before the choice.” When we make a choice contrary to God’s will, we can either continue to rebel against Him or we can seek harmony with God, others, and ourselves. Only the Holy Spirit can bring such harmony. Only the love of God can bring peace to our souls.

Regret for an abortion and the sadness that follows such a decision may never completely disappear. On the anniversary date of an abortion, it is not unusual to experience flashbacks or depression. Certain sounds may trigger memories of the procedure. Spring, with its burst of new life and hope, is often a time of depression for the mother of an aborted child. Some women, when in the presence of children, may wonder what their child would have looked like or what they might be doing today.

God promises to bring comfort and “bind up wounds.” Think of how faithful God was to His rebellious people, the Israelites! His own chosen people constantly disobeyed, and yet God said, “[F]ear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

There is no need for self-inflicted punishment. Instead, **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones”** (Proverbs 3:5-8).

Dear Jesus, thank you for reaching down into the pit of my life and rescuing me from despair. You won the victory over all that is evil. You cover me with mercy and love. Because of You, I have a future and a hope. In Your name I pray. Amen.



## • SEVEN •

**“I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins” (Isaiah 43:25).**

“**I** forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.’ Those were the words,” confided a young wife and mom, “that for a long, long time I did not believe could be meant for me. I was convinced that abortion was just too big a sin for even God to forgive. But now, when my pastor speaks those words, I know peace. There is peace with God... and with myself. It’s true! I am truly reconciled with God through Jesus Christ!”

Every experience with sin is different, yet the consequences are the same. There is guilt. Anger. Despair. Heartache. King David was a man of integrity, revered by his people, and chosen by God to lead with wisdom. But he committed a grievous sin (2 Samuel 11). **“[T]he thing that David had done displeased the Lord”** (2 Samuel 11:27b).

One sin led to another. There was adultery, conspiracy, and murder. As a result, David and his family experienced painful consequences. A child died (2 Samuel 11; 12:1-23). King David’s pain is recorded in Psalm 32:3-4 and Psalm 38:3-10. All was not right between David and the Lord. Sin brought physical illness, psychological grief, and spiritual despair to the house of David.

God did not want David to be lost in such pain and despair. Nor does God want the mother, father, or grandparent of an aborted child to be lost in pain and despair. God reaches out to all of us when we are the most unlovable and suffering from our own despicable behavior. Even in his pitiful state, King David had a choice. He could doubt God and continue to be “lord” of his own life, or he could repent of his sins and focus his eyes on God’s goodness, justice, and mercy. David chose to call upon the Lord God and repent. He was truly sorry for his sins.

God waits for us to call. Sometimes He waits a very long time. “I still feel guilty even eight years after my abortion.” “In ten years, I have not found the courage to talk about my abortion with anyone.” “My abortion was fifty years ago, and in all that time, I feared for my soul.” One of the ways that God reveals His goodness to us is

through His patience. He knows that abortion is a sin preceded by other sins such as adultery; living together outside of marriage; sexual promiscuity; patterns of selfishness; rebellion against parents; and refusal to fear, love, and trust God. During all of this, God is patient.

God does not want us to feel pain or experience despair but, far too often, that is what needs to happen before we fall on our knees and turn our eyes to heaven. At such a time, God wants us to confess our sins and express true sorrow, ask for forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and joyfully accept His response, **“Your sins are forgiven ... Your faith has saved you; go in peace”** (Jesus to the sinful woman in Luke 7:48, 50).

No man or woman can be satisfied with their goodness when standing in the presence of the holy God. But mourning our unworthiness and sinfulness should be of short duration because God has said, “I will not remember your sins.” If God, because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, will not remember our sins, should we carry their burden unnecessarily or leave it at the foot of the cross?

Forgiven by Christ our Savior, we are set free to become God’s instruments of hope. **“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope”** (Romans 15:13). What does it mean to abound in hope? It means to thrive, flourish, and even prosper. When we move out of darkness into light, it is almost certain that we will have a positive effect on those around us.

**“[I]f we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin”** (1 John 1:7).

Dear Jesus, You know my sins and my shame. You took upon Yourself the punishment I deserve and have set me free. I believe this, Dear Lord. Now help me to live my life as a child of God and in gratitude to You. In Your name I pray.  
Amen.

## For the days ahead ...

**O**nly God can heal the sin of abortion. As the Creator of life, only He can forgive the wrongful taking of a life. The Creator of life is also our Father and, unlike our earthly father who is not without sin, our Heavenly Father's love for us is perfect and without flaw.

You may feel very alone in the sorrow of your abortion, but you are not. There are many others who are grieving their abortion in silence. The Spirit of God helps in times of silent weakness. **“For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words”** (Romans 8:26). Through the Holy Spirit, all who are broken can claim God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit can and will work mightily in your life. He will help you get past your pain as you seek the Lord's plan for your life. It is then that you will be fully involved with life again. You will no longer need to defend your decision to abort your baby. You may continue to mourn the loss of your child, but you will be enabled to focus on God's mercy and justice for yourself and your child. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you can believe that God has forgiven you and, in turn, forgive yourself. Trusting that God has a good plan for your life, you can learn from your abortion experience and look ahead to a future of hope.

It is important not to hurry the healing process. As you grow in your relationship with Christ, you can be a source of comfort and joy to others—in God's own time.

**For help with hope and healing, contact Word of Hope (888.217.8679) or visit [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org).**

Also see:

[www.afterabortion.org](http://www.afterabortion.org)

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[www.hopeafterabortion.org](http://www.hopeafterabortion.org)

or your local caring pregnancy center.

Entrusting you to Jesus Christ,

Linda Bartlett



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