



The pro-life movement ignores the black community at its peril: jailed black pastor

by John Jalsevac

Fri Dec 06 5:43 PM EST

December 6, 2013 (LifeSiteNews.com) – If the pro-life movement is serious about ending abortion in America, it has no option but to start making a deliberate effort to reach out to the black and other minority communities, a prominent black pro-life pastor and his wife told a meeting of pro-life leaders in San Francisco last month.

“Why does black America say ‘no’ to the pro-life movement?” Walter Hoye asked. “The pro-life community has not asked us ‘Why?’ You have no idea why we’re saying no.”



Hoye is a pastor in Oakland who was famously so effective at sidewalk counseling outside a local abortion clinic, that the city passed an ordinance to stop his life-saving efforts – an ordinance he has repeatedly flouted, **earning himself jail time** in the process.

“The strategies that work in my community are different than maybe what will work in the larger pro-life community,” he told the gathered pro-life leaders. “There’s gotta be room at the table to talk about executing strategies that can start a conversation in the communities that are being targeted and are being slaughtered.”

‘A holocaust in our community’

Hoye’s wife, Lori, a trained statistician, pointed to the sobering statistics showing how disproportionately high the abortion rate in the black community is compared to the national average.

“Abortion is the number one cause of death in the African American community,” she said. “We lose over half a million lives in our community to abortion every year. If you combine cancer, heart disease, AIDS, diabetes, and any kind of violent crime, add them all up together, they don’t come even close to the lives we lose to abortion.”

“It’s a holocaust in our community,” she said.

The latest **abortion numbers** from the CDC, released just days ago, have only served to emphasize her point, showing that while the abortion rate among whites fell between 2007 and 2010, the rate jumped three percent among blacks, and eight percent for Hispanics.

During those three years nearly 36 percent of all abortions in the U.S. were performed on black children, even though blacks make up only 12.8 percent of the population. Another 21 percent of abortions were performed on Hispanics, and an additional seven percent on other minority races.

‘The brothers are blood guilty’

But the challenges facing a largely white pro-life movement in stemming the tide of abortion among blacks and other minorities are daunting, said Walter Hoye, who outlined four reasons why leaders in the black community, particularly the pastors, are unwilling to speak up about abortion.

Probably the most insidious and difficult to overcome, he said, is that most black pastors are post-abortion.

“The brothers are blood guilty,” he said. “There’s an abortion in their life somewhere. It’s their mama, it’s their wife, it may be their son, it may be their daughter. It may be a member of their congregation who they wrote the check for, or even drove to the clinic.”

Even though they may understand the Biblical arguments against abortion, when Planned Parenthood comes into their community and tells them that the unborn baby isn't a child but a "choice," a black pastor "embraces all that because it allows him to sleep at night," Walter said. "He needs to be healed."

But the need for healing presents its own challenges, added Lori, who pointed to the lack of any resources in the black community to provide such healing. It's also a catch-22, she added, because even when some black pastors have attempted to bring post-abortion healing ministries into their churches, few, if any, women have shown up.

"None of us are going to show up to anything that has that 'A' word in it," she said. "Because the shame level associated with having taken the life of my own child – and I'm sitting in church every week and praising the Lord and thanking him for everything he's done for me – but I have done something that I can't live with."

"You're dealing with a community that is in pain," she said. "There's no outlet."

Other reasons black pastors may be unreceptive to the pro-life movement, said Walter, can include outright reverse racism against a predominantly white GOP political class and pro-life leadership, as well the risk that if the pastors do speak up, they may lose their jobs.

'Will you help me?'

But Walter said his own experience shows the amazing things that can happen when a single black pastor takes a stand on the issue.

Before Oakland passed the ordinance preventing him from sidewalk counseling, Walter said he noticed that a surprising number of women were showing up at the abortion clinic on the day he did his counseling – more than could possibly be getting abortions in the space of time he was there.

"They found out that I was there, and I was helping women," he said. "They were making appointments, just so they could stop me at the public sidewalk and talk with me."

When women came to speak to him on that sidewalk, he said, they asked him three questions: firstly, "Is it true God loves me," secondly, "Is it true that God loves me *and* my baby?" and finally, "If it's true that God loves me and that God loves my baby, will you help me?"

"And she's talking about tangible, physical help," added Walter, who said he would have drained his church "dry" to provide physical support for the women he met outside the clinic.

Even a single pastor who brings the pro-life message to his congregation of 300 can have a massive effect, he said, because of the ripple effect.

'We don't have 40 years'

Hoye concluded with a sobering plea for an effort to build a "modern day Underground Railroad," to help save his community from literal extinction.

"Until we build a modern Underground Railroad, I'm concerned that we're going to still have the same problems we have now, and what motivates me and my wife is that the numbers against us are huge," he said. "We don't have 40 more years. At the rate we're aborting our children, we don't have 40 more."

"If the pro-life movement wants to work it out in 40 more years, that's great. I don't have that time," he said. "That's my people."