



JASON B. LADD

ONE
OF THE
FEW

A MARINE FIGHTER PILOT'S RECONNAISSANCE
OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

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ONE OF THE FEW

*A Marine Fighter Pilot's
Reconnaissance of the
Christian Worldview*

JASON B. LADD



BOONE SHEPHERD

One of the Few: A Marine Fighter Pilot's Reconnaissance of the Christian Worldview

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CHAPTER 1 — THE WORST DAY

Phoenix, Arizona

March 2015



“What we call ‘after-birth abortion’ (killing a newborn) should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled.”¹

—Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva

“And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born” (Luke 1:15).

—Angel Gabriel to Elizabeth

March 17th, 2015

"This is a horrible, dreadful day. No good news at all."

The words came after a quiet entrance with little eye contact. The dimly-lit ultrasound room had already grown old since we entered it over an hour prior. The time between the technician's departure and the doctor's arrival was enough to worry ourselves to death.

The doctor extended his hand to my father-in-law and asked his last name. He assumed I was the husband. The doctor was dressed in a purple shirt with a plaid design mixed with grey, split by a paisley tie of purple swirls and flowers. His hair was grey and slightly waved, moving from front to back, slightly rising to form an almost-pyramidal cap to an overall solid structure. On his left hand, a golden ring, a black ring with silver trim on his right. I stared at his face, but my thoughts were already somewhere else.

My wife Karry remained sitting on the examining table. I stood beside

her, holding her hand. This is where we would all cry.

For ten years I had been developing my faith in Christ. And in ten years it had never been tested. Karry and I had five beautiful children and a strong marriage. Life was so good, we wondered why we had been so fortunate.

"Aren't you afraid that one day the bottom is going to drop?" Karry would ask.

"No," I would say. "That's not going to happen."

But the bottom was slowly dropping.

Our doctor began listing all the indicators seen on the pictures from the ultrasound: too much amniotic fluid, bone measurements indicating stunted growth, a heart defect, and perhaps the most recognizable indicator for a possible chromosomal anomaly, clinched hands.

Clinched hands.

The first indications were good. The shape and form of our 27-week baby was clearly seen. His spine looked straight, his legs and arms looked normal. He even granted us a clear picture of his nose and mouth, indicating no cleft lip or palate. His brain looked normal and free of excess fluid. She pointed to all his parts, calling them by name. His kidneys appeared normal.

Then they were looking bad.

A cyst on the umbilical cord was easy to see. Shaped like a circle and appearing black on the screen, it would become the least of our worries. The umbilical cord is supposed to have three vessels. Our baby's cord appeared to be missing one. Too much amniotic fluid dampened the feel of every kick and indicated a possible problem with the baby's ability to swallow. The technician spent a long time on his heart. I guessed that she was searching for any way to tell us it was normal. But in the end, she couldn't.

Karry often confessed an ominous feeling about the pregnancy. Now it was all coming true.

"I suspect your baby has a chromosomal condition known as Trisomy 18," the doctor informed us.

Also called Edwards syndrome and referred to as a "lethal fetal condition" in the medical community, it has a grim prognosis.

What do we do? What should we do?

Before our baby was born, we began preparing for him to die.

Oh my God. This is it.

¹ Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva, "After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?" *Journal of Medical Ethics*, BMJ Publishing Group Ltd & Institute of Medical Ethics, April 13, 2012, <http://jme.bmj.com/content/early/2012/04/12/medethics-2011-100411.full.pdf+htm>.