

Life, Adoption & Truth: From Tragedy to Triumph

Featuring Ryan Bomberger

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TRANSCRIPT

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Welcome to Cornerstone University's Wisdom and Influence podcast. I have a wonderful friend of our university here today. He's one of our national fellows for the President's Fellows Program. He's been to chapel a number of times, speaking to our students, speaking to the President's Fellows. He was in our chapel this morning and gave a wonderful, wonderful presentation, a message to our students on our theme, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He's an Emmy award-winning artist, co-founder and chief creative officer of the Radiance Foundation, and a factivist, which I love. Please join me in welcoming Ryan Bomberger. Ryan, thank you for being with us.

Ryan Bomberger: Hey, it's great to be here again.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: It was so great to hear you this morning and what you said, and your story always resonates in powerful ways. And it was great to see a lot of folks who wanted to talk with you. And you minister to them. So thank you so much for all you do, not just for Cornerstone, but throughout the country, because you're everywhere.

Ryan Bomberger: Yeah, it's... Well, we try not to be everywhere all the time. But it's amazing the doors that God opens, and just trying to be obedient to that while also making sure that I'm preserving my life, 'cause you kind of have to take care of yourself.

Ryan Bomberger: Absolutely.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: At some point.

Ryan Bomberger: Absolutely. Yeah, it's really awesome the doors that God has opened and the things that we've been able to do for the kingdom.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah. It really is. Tell our listeners about the Radiance Foundation. I first heard of it when I was in Virginia many, many years ago, and heard you speak, and I was just a first-year dean at that time at another university. Then when I came to Cornerstone and we started the President's Fellows Program, I immediately thought, I need to bring Ryan Bomberger in. So tell us what the Radiance Foundation does, how — sort of how you birthed it or God birthed it in you, and you —

Ryan Bomberger: Right.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Ryan, about what it does, please.

Ryan Bomberger: My wife, Bethany, amazing wife Bethany, and I founded it back in 2009. I had just left a job with an organization, a relief organization. I won't mention the name. They gave me a severance package of three months, and it was our only income, and we had already filled out all the paperwork for the Radiance Foundation because we wanted to do three things. We wanted to illuminate, educate, and motivate. Illuminate the truth that every human life has God-given purpose. Educate on a myriad of social issues all tied to God-given purpose. And then motivate people, 'cause what good is our faith and knowledge if we don't put it into action? And so with that three-month severance package, we started the Radiance Foundation. Started a nonprofit that we didn't know anything about running a nonprofit. I was a creative director. My wife was a teacher in public and private schools. But we knew that we were called to tackle these culture-shaping issues and to equip Christians especially to be able to engage in these issues. And so that's when we started back in 2009. So it's, what, 17 years later, and God has enabled us to do so much through ad campaigns, messaging, even writing research for friend of the court briefs on a number of issues. And going into the Word and understand, when I say 1 Corinthians 13:6, "Love does not delight in evil, but it rejoices in the truth." But how many people want to speak the truth? And a lot of people don't like to be hated. Even though, Jesus did say, "Hey, if the world hates you, he hated me first." Yeah. You're in good company. But that's when we started the Radiance Foundation. We've been doing that ever since, and honestly, it's been an amazing vehicle to be able to illuminate that every human life has God-given purpose — planned, unplanned, abled, disabled. And just like here at this school, it's amazing to hear the stories of young people, and someone who actually served in our military this morning, who came up to me and felt reaffirmed in his purpose in life.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Mm.

Ryan Bomberger: Because of hearing my story. I didn't serve in the military, but it just goes to show you, God can use you in ways beyond your expectations.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah, yeah. I mean, I had some of those folks this morning just telling me, "Thank you for bringing Ryan here." And parents of some of our students, they were so excited and they even came to hear. So thank you for what you're doing and the work of God in your life. You said something in chapel this morning that was really, really profound, and you only spent a few seconds saying it, but you began with saying, "How many of you watched the State of the Union address last night?" And then you asked this really profound question about the state of the union as in regards to Jesus Christ. Talk to us about that, because you have the opportunity to travel and to see, in some ways, the Church, right? Throughout the country. What's the state of the union in regards to Jesus? Talk to us, please.

Ryan Bomberger: It's so interesting. One of the great things of being able to travel across the country is that a lot of people often feel like they're the only ones. I mean, we are the remnant. As Christians, as Christ followers, we will always be the remnant. But people feel even more isolated and more of a minority. But when I travel and I meet all these different people, every state in the Union, there are commonalities — that you're not the only one going through this, and this is happening over in Pennsylvania, and it's happening the same way in Texas. It's happening the same in New Hampshire. And so people get a sense of, wow, God is moving in all kinds of ways. So the Church is moving in powerful ways, yes. I will acknowledge that first, but there's also such a state of disorder and such a state of disengagement on things that matter the most. And how is it that we get a writer of a children's fantasy series, the, if I can say, the Harry Potter series — how can she have more moral clarity on the issue of gender than most US pastors?

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Agreed.

Ryan Bomberger: It blows my mind.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah.

Ryan Bomberger: And so this, our state of the union with Christ as a church, if there were to be a singular address, my question is, what would that be? What would it sound like? We have so many churches afraid to engage and afraid to be hated, afraid to be not accepted or lose their followers in real life and online, and none of that matters. What matters is bringing people into the kingdom, loving people enough to be able to speak those hard truths. And I mean speaking the truth in love, but it doesn't mean soft, doesn't mean compromise. But if the church did more of that, I think our state of the union with Christ would be very, very different here in America.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah, I mean, in the last few months I've been shocked, quite frankly, as an educator and now a leader of a university, seeing Christian universities who proclaim the name of Christ or say they are Christian also say, "We don't want any pro-life clubs on our campus because we don't want ideological things on our campus." And I think to myself, "What a travesty." What a travesty of a school that would name the name of Jesus and then say, "We can't talk about life because it's a political issue. It's a contested issue." It's not a contested issue.

Ryan Bomberger: Right.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Right? But they've made it so, so it's very, very sad. You speak about speaking the truth in love, and one of the things that you have done in your career, some of the ads — talk with us about that, because I remember seeing those and thinking, first of all, brilliant, beautifully done, and brilliant, which I think it's important for us as Christians to be excellent in the craft and callings that God gives to us. And so you've done those with excellence, but incredible insight. And at the same time, you've reaped a lot of antagonism and hatred.

Ryan Bomberger: Oh, yeah.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: But they were truth, and they were fact. So share with us a few of those for our audience just to know about those, because I think they were very important.

Ryan Bomberger: Right. Well, one of our first campaigns was our TooManyAborted.com campaign. Of course, our contention was one is too many. But we were dealing with the issue of race and abortion, which we didn't introduce. I mean, it's the abortion industry birthed in eugenic racism that combined both of those. But we launched these billboard campaigns in Atlanta, 60 billboards saying, "Black children are an endangered species. TooManyAborted.com. More endangered by death by abortion than," at that time, "the top 15 causes of death combined."

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Hm. Woo.

Ryan Bomberger: That started a whirlwind, yes. Oh, it was crazy. New York Times, CNN, CBN, USA Today. I mean, the whole news media apparatus didn't know how to respond, especially to me 'cause I didn't fit their narrative. Then we did other campaigns, like pregnancy campaigns. We would work with pregnancy centers, and one of my phrases, "Some of the best things in life are unplanned." And then we had billboards for pregnancy centers. Also on adoption, "Adopt. Be the hope." And it's amazing the way that certain things just resonate with people, because our challenge as an organization, the Radiance Foundation, is to figure out, "Okay, how can we say this differently?" When we say phrases like, "Love every human being, not every human doing," and then people are like, "Oh, yes. That's it. That's it exactly." But it's more than just that little phrase. It's really a mindset to take. How do we as Christians love the world well without affirming the brokenness? And so those are some of the campaigns. And yes, there's been some pushback, and colleges — thankfully not here — but some colleges have been smoke-bombed out. Thank you, Antifa. That was UT Austin, to be exact. But we're not loved everywhere, but

that's not why we are in this, to be loved, but we are in this because we love, and that's what motivates us. And honestly, I just thank God for the creativity. I consider them divine downloads, 'cause in a world where there's so much noise and so much clutter, how do you break through? And sometimes it's just by doing something or saying something a little differently.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah. You have your hand on the pulse of our country when it comes to life issues and right to life, and it's one of the most important issues of the day, perhaps the most important issue, and when it comes to policy in many ways, because it's about the imago Dei and human dignity, and we bear God's image, and sanctity of life, and it's a very profound issue. Talk with us about what you're seeing now happening. I think of IVF. It's a very serious issue. I think about the right to die, suicide, right? And now it's a movement that has — it's shameful, but also so destructive in Canada, and now it's coming here in this next wave over the Midwest of that policy move. But there's this battle and this war, really, spiritual and policy as well, against life in so many ways. And it's so easy for us as Americans, Christians in America, to be more influenced, I think, by democracy and the idea of let everybody be and do what they want than Jesus and the Word and what is true, beautiful, and good. So talk to us about what you're seeing in that world, and what we should be thinking about as Christians, in churches, in our homes, in universities, and here at Cornerstone University.

Ryan Bomberger: You know, the landscape has changed drastically, political landscape, since the Dobbs decision was released by the Supreme Court in 2022, which overturned Roe, and effectively overturned Doe. There were two decisions that same day that allowed abortion through the entire pregnancy up until birth. That's what Doe did. It added to Roe, and it clarified what life of the mother meant. And so we've seen in a way — one, that was capitulation on the Supreme Court's part, because when they brought us Roe v. Wade, they invalidated every state pro-life law. I'm sorry. When they brought us Roe v. Wade, they invalidated every state pro-life law. But when they gave us Dobbs, they're like, "No, we'll let the states decide." And that to me was total capitulation, 'cause life is not a states' rights issue, no more than women's rights. And women's right to vote, no more than Jim Crow or slavery was. If we left it to states, we would probably still have chattel slavery today. So that's where we're at now, where individual states are saying — one state's saying, "No, this is bad." The other state is saying, "No, this is good." And we have an administration that's kind of leaving it in the hands of states, and that's why it's a mess. We have ballot initiatives in state after state. Your state here, Michigan — that was devastating when that amendment was voted for allowing abortion through the entire pregnancy, and we're seeing this happen in states all across the United States. A lot of times Christians think, "Oh, well, the fight's over. Roe's been overturned." Oh, my word. Roe is over, but the fight isn't. In fact, it's even more intensified. And then you add IVF into the mix, and you've got a President Trump who was actually, from a policy standpoint, probably one of the most pro-life presidents we've ever had. Whether or not he's personally pro-life doesn't matter. His policies have been profoundly pro-life. But standing for IVF, which actually requires the killing of untold numbers of human embryos throughout the entire in vitro fertilization process — Christians should understand that every form of family formation is not moral. The means don't justify the end. And so my question would be: What's the difference between killing an unborn human being in an abortion clinic in utero versus killing an unborn human being in an IVF clinic? What morally is the difference? There is none. So we have this patchwork sort of thing going on politically, and we have unfortunately a lot of the church that is not engaged. I mean, I've talked about this at length. Many churches that I've visited here in Grand Rapids, and it's a beautiful community.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Been here for five years. But I can't tell you how many of these churches that I've visited never talk about these things ever.

Ryan Bomberger: Right.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: And the excuse is, "We're not gonna get political." Yeah. So I understand one definition of political, being it's everything's contested, we really don't know what's right or wrong. But this is a clear issue that's not a political issue, and that churches, if anyone, should be talking about, but so many don't. And you mentioned Michigan, so many who did not vote. And we've talked about it. How could this be?

Ryan Bomberger: Right.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Right? So the silence in the church is deafening and deeply disconcerting. What do we do? What can we do? What should we be doing? I've talked to some of my colleagues who say, "If you go to a church like that, stop going. Find another one." I mean, that's their solution to it. Those churches, you just leave them because they're dead.

Ryan Bomberger: Yeah, it's really hard. I mean, everything is first and foremost a spiritual issue, and then a moral issue. And thank goodness, the Civil Rights era depended on the political process to be able to change some of the things, so legislatively, obviously, great changes. Same thing with slavery. I mean, here we have churches apologizing, what, 100 years after the fact. "We're sorry we didn't engage." Because they also thought that slavery was a political issue. We don't talk about this in church. Well, that's the same approach they're taking to the most fundamental issue, whether or not you deserve to be alive, whether any human being deserves to be alive. And what do we do from this point? We've got to, as members of a church, we've got to challenge leadership. And I mean this in a way that's inviting, but challenge them. And maybe host an event or host a town hall. We've done a few of these things called Justice Town Halls, and we would go to different churches and we would talk about some of these issues, and we had representatives from the community.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: I think sometimes churches get overwhelmed because they don't know how.

Ryan Bomberger: They don't know how to start addressing it. You know, if you have a pastor who's not adopted a child, who feels like, "Well, I can't really speak to this," yes, you can. Not everyone is called to be an adoptive parent, but we're all called as the Body of Christ to play a role in taking care of the widows and orphans. And so I just encourage people, yes, maybe you do need to leave that church, but maybe try to invite the pastor, invite the leadership to begin discussing things. There are lots of great tools online. There are a lot of great videos — we have video, [radiance.life](https://www.radiance.life). There are a lot of great videos that could be played, and you can have conversations about that. But if your church is gonna be immovable on that, while they address all the — they're talking about immigration, they're talking about Black Lives Matter, they're talking about poverty, but they won't talk about the spiritual poverty of the violence of abortion, yeah, then maybe it is time to pack up and go to a church that's actually engaged. That's in large part why we are where we're at, because the local church does not see the destruction of those made in the image of God as being a paramount issue.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Let me ask you a question. As you were saying this, I'm thinking, I wonder if a significant part of the church, or I don't know the percentage, but has bought into, has fallen prey to, or is convinced somehow that life in the womb is really not life. That the baby in the womb is really not a human being. Not a baby, not a full person. Peter Singer would say that in a horrible way out of Princeton, right? And that therefore, it's really a non-issue. Maybe after they're born, but this is not... I wonder if that's what's part of what's happening, that they think it's just — God forbid they would say that — a blob of cells or not a person. I mean, it's not, so therefore, hmm, maybe not. I wonder if that's what's happening, too, sadly, in our churches. What do you think?

Ryan Bomberger: Well, I hear that. And I hear them talking about ensoulment. I'm like, "Wait a minute. Hold on." We know scientifically, it's not a religious belief to believe that life begins at fertilization. It is a

scientific fact. 95% of biologists all agree. I'm not sure what happened to the other 5%. But 95% of biologists all agree that life begins at fertilization, and so you have churches kind of parroting this ridiculous pro-abortion rhetoric saying, "Oh, we don't know. It's just a clump of cells, and we don't know. Maybe life begins at first breath." I'm hearing that increasingly now. If it's not life, then what in the world is growing? Something that's growing is alive. But we have churches bowing to this ridiculous rhetoric, but again, it's just a means by which they get to avoid their responsibility. Whenever you can dehumanize someone, then you can justify anything being done to them, and it's a shame that you hear churches who are supposed to be — I mean, the same churches that talk about fighting for the most oppressed, fighting for those who are persecuted, out of Proverbs 31:8-9, aren't being a voice for the voiceless. But they'll be a voice for others who are oppressed. So oppression is fine in one case but not in the other. But it's really easy when you pretend that you don't know that in pregnancy, in human pregnancy, there's a human being from the moment of conception onward. But I just feel like that's why Care Net and other organizations have developed some Sunday school curriculum for churches to be able to teach this, but we're still far away. There are also pro-abortion sources like the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. They're radically pro-abortion. They also create curriculum for churches. And these churches — more churches, I believe, teach the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice curriculum than something created by like a Care Net. We've got a crisis of priority and a crisis of biblically adherent churches.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah. We've spoken a lot on our campus, and we're working on this for next year and thereafter. In our curriculum and in many different places, we speak, and we're very deliberate on ensuring that a beautiful, biblical Christian worldview is at the core of all of our courses and all of our programs. I always say to people, "It's easier to say than to do it." It takes a lot of good hard work, and I'm so grateful for our faculty and our staff working on that and doing that. But then we've also talked a lot about ensuring that this campus, as one of our team members say, is saturated with the Scriptures in every part of the experience, the student experience. One of the things that I've appreciated are the great books and resources that you and your wife and the Radiance Foundation have published. Could you tell our viewers or listeners about those, some of the beautiful children's books that you've put out, the book with your story? I really want our folks to know in the community of these resources and where they can find them and how they can use them because I think they're very powerful tools, because stories tell powerful truth if you tell them well and they're true.

Ryan Bomberger: Absolutely. I think one of our first books was my book, *Not Equal: Civil Rights Gone Wrong*, which was born out of being sued by the NAACP for parodying their name and being denounced by the ACLU and Planned Parenthood. So that book talks about — it talks about the injustice of abortion, talks about family formation, talks about, of course, adoption, my favorite. Also talks about gender and all these other issues. That's *Not Equal: Civil Rights Gone Wrong*. Then we ventured into children's books. My wife, that's her passion. Children's lit was always her passion as a teacher, and so *Pro-Life Kids* was the first illustrated children's book that she created, and then we also have our books on gender, which I'm laughing only because it's so absurd that we're the ones who are — you should see the responses we get online. It's so insane. We created these books, *He Is He* and *She Is She*, which just celebrate beautiful biological girls, beautiful biological boys, and then there's a section in those books: what does science say, what does the Bible say? And the Bible, of course, reaffirms what's happening in science, or the other way around. And we also have another book coming out about self-esteem. It's called *Sweet Radiance*. That's in the works. And finally, my autobiography, which only started back in 2009. I never finished it. I'm now finishing it, and it's called *Should Have Been Aborted*. That gets released on May 5th, which is my birthday, and it's actually the birthday of my birth mom.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Oh, wow.

Ryan Bomberger: So it's a very special day for that release. And there's a documentary that is also the same name, a 30-minute documentary that just goes deeper into my life and the battles that my wife and I have fought, and it's really powerful. But these are the things that we like to create as tools to help people better engage in these issues, 'cause a lot of adults, especially with the kids' issues, are like, "What do we even say? How do we even approach this?" That's why we create what we create, because we want to equip you and give you the confidence, take away that fear and replace it with confidence in knowing here's the truth and here's how you can present it.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Well, thank you for doing that. I will tell you, when I go into a bookstore — at Barnes & Noble, for example — and you go into the children's literature section, the amount of books right that are offering, publishing, quite frankly, wicked things for children, and lies about biology and gender and identity, and they paint them in such beautiful ways. And it's such a perversion that's happening. So I'm so grateful that you're doing that and advancing that. How do we engage our culture? You have, I think, in culture what I call the real cultural antagonist warriors on every side of the aisle. And then you have the people who are carrying the burden of guilt and sin, and the burden of sin that has been done to them. Two different kinds of people sometimes. Right? And so talk with us — some apologetic tools, right? How do we engage this group, which is a very powerful group, who, as you've mentioned, they've built curriculum against the Christian worldview, against life, right? They're out there. They're loud, they're hard, they're tough. That's a whole different engagement strategy to deal with that versus the individual, whether it's in the pew or in the college classroom or in the coffee shop, that carries the burden of, "I almost was aborted," or "I've engaged in abortion," as a woman or as a man, or, "I was adopted, but I was abused." And the guilt of all that and the anger and the pain — a whole different group of people that we need to minister to and serve. How do we deal with both?

Ryan Bomberger: It's hard, 'cause sometimes you have mixed audiences. And trying to figure out, "Okay, how do I relay this message?" And that's why it's really important to be able to speak the truth in love and offer healing resources. For instance, we offer post-abortion healing resources, which are mostly at local pregnancy centers. But we have to understand that a lot of times people are acting out of that brokenness, even the ones who are these diehard activists. But it's because of that pain and that trauma, and they've not healed from that. And so I think it's always important to highlight that there are resources of help, even within those contexts. And also not being afraid to go into these venues, which is what I've done — college campuses that haven't exactly been friendly. But I think it's important to be able to go, and I always have these long Q&A sessions in these places. I mean, they're usually planned for, like, 20, 25 minutes, but they end up being an hour, an hour and a half. But I want people to have the opportunity not only to hear the questions, hear the counter to the truth, but then to be able to hear the truth from me in these Q&As. I'm always keeping in mind we have to as Christians, keeping that dignity of that person intact. Even when they are attacking you. Upholding them. And so being armed with Scripture, which is funny 'cause I spoke — I won't say the name of this Christian college, but I spoke at a Christian college, and there was a meeting after my event where the students were really upset. Very Christian evangelical college. They were upset that I was quoting Scripture. In fact, what they said, "He kept quoting Scripture." And I thought they were gonna say, "Out of context." Of course, I didn't quote out of context. They were upset that I was quoting Scripture. Well, yes, I'm gonna keep on speaking truth into that situation. And sometimes people will say, especially for the issue that we deal with primarily, with the issue of abortion, of course — we always deal with the issue of race, too, 'cause to me, a lot of times those things are inextricably tied together. But people will ask, "Well, why are you speaking to the choir? And why are you singing to the choir?" I'm like, "Well, sometimes the choir doesn't know the song." And that's why you have to keep going, and so I have to keep reminding them, here's what the Word of God says. Here's what's actually going on. How do we as Christians, how should we look at these things? But I'm always equipped with the resources of help, and that for me is important because I'm

there for a moment, and then I'm stepping out to go to the next thing. But there are resources there locally, and I'm always sure to be able to leave those kinds of resources so that there can be healing, and that those people who were once broken can then use their testimony. I mean, God has a way of using your own brokenness to bring breakthrough to others, and we enable that when I think we handle these situations with a little more care and concern than, you know, going in there with like a — I don't know — a bullhorn. Because then you don't really care about the person. You can disregard who and what they are, what they've been through. But it's not easy. It takes a lot more work. But that work is worth it.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Mm-hmm. You know, I'm thinking about the future of our country, and maybe this is a — I don't know, maybe not prophetic, but just asking you to do some forecasting, hypothetical forecasting. I wonder sometimes if in our country and our churches we don't think that there is such a significant social, cultural impact to abortion. I just wonder, right? Because it's so private.

Ryan Bomberger: Right.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Right? It's such a private thing. Now with the pill, it's even more private.

Ryan Bomberger: Oh, yeah.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: You can have it in your own home, in your own bathroom, and no one will ever know, right? And I just wonder if the machine behind abortion, the machine behind assisted suicide, the machine behind these things has made it so homogenized, right? It's so clean, right, so private that we think it's not an issue. It's a non-issue, right? I don't see it. I don't feel it. Eh, whatever. It's something out there. And they're not seeing, perhaps not realizing, the deep social, cultural, personal, human effects that this could have on us. So if we were to talk hypothetically 30, 40, 50 years, Ryan, and this continues, right? And pro-abortion continues to win more ground, now in all kinds of ways, right? What do you think this country will look like and be like? And tell our listeners that, because I think it's important to think about what this could do to our country, to our social, communal fabric.

Ryan Bomberger: Well, we see nations who embraced a lie, like the racial hygiene theory in Nazi Germany, and they first attacked the disabled, if people remember, and they were the first ones eliminated. And when you can diminish the humanity of any group of people, you can continue to constrict that spectrum of who gets to live and who doesn't get to live. And that's what I'm seeing happening right now with assisted suicide, when we talk about even IVF, which is, to me, there's no difference between killing an unborn human embryo in an IVF clinic versus an abortion clinic. It's the same thing morally, but yet we have been lulled to sleep. I think about slavery, 'cause when you talk about people not seeing it because it's been sterilized and because it's been very personalized with the chemical abortion pill, which is 62%-plus of all abortions nationwide. But you think of the treatment of slaves. That wasn't something that was known really to the community at large, and certainly not to northern communities, since slavery was not a thing for a long time in the northern territories, but states. But slavery itself, the abuse and the inhumanity that happened on that plantation — I mean, the same thing could've been said about slavery. "Well, it's a personal choice." And people say, "If you don't like abortion, don't have one." Well, does that work if you say, "If you don't like slavery, don't have a slave"? Of course not. But it's the mentality that people have because it's been sterilized, and we don't see it. That's the other thing. I do think it's appropriate in certain venues to actually show what abortion is. I don't think when little children are around — I don't think they should be exposed. But I think in certain events where you have adults, that I think sometimes we do need to be reminded of what this atrocity is. We need to be reminded of how women are brutally exploited by a multi-billion dollar industry. So what I'm seeing in this future, if the church does not awaken, we're gonna see more of these end-of-life issues continue to encroach on people, and for people to be written off because of either a real or perceived issue or illness. I mean, Canada, I believe they can almost have it the same day. It's terrifying, actually.

And so, you mentioned Peter Singer before. He also — he's an ethicist who believes in post-birth abortion.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yes. Shocking.

Ryan Bomberger: So there's more and more talk about that.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah.

Ryan Bomberger: So when we're silent, they're not a real human person.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: They're not a real human person, yes.

Ryan Bomberger: And who gets — whenever anybody gets to deem that some human being is less than human, it never goes well. And so we can't be silent while these voices and this dangerous rhetoric continues to rise. But I'm an optimist too. I'm an optimist in that I know the good I've seen from the church, from some churches, and I know that we can. And we've obviously seen throughout history when the church finally rose up, that it did change the trajectory of things. I'm just believing and hoping that Christ's church will rise and make a difference in this issue. I mean, how do you not fight for those made in the image of God? I can't comprehend it. I'm a little biased, having been conceived in rape, but adopted in love. I'm obviously very biased toward that, and also being an adoptive father. But man, we have to do more, or we're going to see this continual constriction. And for me, it will no longer be the America that promises, you know, the land of the free, home of the brave, if none of us are choosing to be brave so that others can be free.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Yeah, it would be a contemporary killing field, which is terrifying. You mentioned this well in chapel. I think that's true. All of these things really, really, at the core, are spiritual. Yes. I mean, and we have to remember that there's a spiritual war at stake here that we're fighting, and we have to be prepared for that rightly. And prayer and holy living and living our lives as living sacrifices matters in all that we do. Otherwise, you find the wrong solutions, or maybe the right ones in the wrong way. So talk with us about that part, the spiritual dimension and what we need to be doing. I had a pastor in this office in December come to me and say to me, "I've been praying for a revival in West Michigan." And he said, "It's in my heart, and I've been praying that it would start here at Cornerstone University." He said, "I love this place and what's happening here, and I really want this to be the epicenter of a great revival in West Michigan." I've been here for five years, and sometimes people describe West Michigan as the community of dormant evangelicals. That's how it's described, right? You know, lots of churches, lots of religious Christian publishing houses, but a lot of dormancy among them. It's the church. So I appreciate your call, but let's wake up. This pastor saying, "God, bring a revival." But as I think about America 250, right, our own 85th anniversary at Cornerstone, and thinking about, Lord, bring a great outpouring of your Spirit to move, and let's let it begin with us. It's easy to look at the other. Right? But so talk to us about that, because I think it has to begin with our churches, with us as followers of Jesus.

Ryan Bomberger: Yeah. It's time for, as someone said recently, it's time for us to really pick up the cross, our cross, and start walking. Yeah. I mean, as a father of four kids, I know how important just our spiritual lives are. That has to be the highest priority, and it's easy to get bogged down with your daily schedule and all the things that you have to do and your busyness. But without that spiritual focus, everything else goes out of focus. I mean, there are people who think that everything gets solved in the political realm. Like, that is so temporal. That is — I mean, it's great when you get politicians who are followers of Christ, and they get into office, and they maintain their integrity, and it doesn't always happen. But it has to happen on our knees. I mean, I know as a father of three teenagers and a 21-year-old, I'm constantly, constantly praying for my family. I'm making the time to do the devotions even when

they roll their eyes — not all of them. But even when they roll their eyes from time to time because that is the most important. That's how we get equipped. That's how we get our armor on. And so on the individual level, that's what we have to do. And then the wider, more collective level with churches — keep on praying. I keep thinking about how long it took for slavery to be abolished. I mean, it wasn't 10 years. It wasn't 50 years. It wasn't 75 years. It was hundreds of years of chattel slavery, and yet abolitionists, particularly those like, I think of Frederick Douglass, who relied on Scripture even though others were abusing Scripture like we see today, he relied on Scripture as being that liberating force, because if we don't first recognize that there are spiritual forces that we're fighting, we're fighting the wrong battle. And I just know for me, I've got to constantly check myself and where am I spiritually. Am I representing Christ well to my kids? And then that goes out to that macro level. But for that pastor who's been praying, like, don't give up praying. I mean, we live in an instantaneous society. Like, oh, it happens like this. It's like social media. It's... No, some things just take a lot more time, and I certainly hope it doesn't take a grave crisis to awaken the dormant evangelicals, to awaken the dormant Christians. I don't want that. But it's almost like Christians are just waiting for that. I don't know. I'd rather not wait for the crisis. I'd rather deal with the —

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Well, we are in the middle of a number of different crises.

Ryan Bomberger: I know what you mean. You don't want a meteor to hit you.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: No. Definitely not. Right, right. Well, so in closing, May 5th is the release of the book and the documentary. As I shared with you before the podcast, we would love to have you back. You're one of our fellows, so thank you for being a President's Fellow at Cornerstone, but why not — we have you back to showcase the film, do a Q&A, and then invite the community. I think we can pack it out and show the documentary. But give us the 30-second sort of commercial of the book and the documentary, please.

Ryan Bomberger: Yes. Well, people often ask me, "Do you have a book about your story?" And it's weird to say, "No, I don't." And now I will, but it's really my story of being conceived in rape, but adopted in love into a family of 15. But then it's the journey. It's a journey of our family, of battling racism, of my parents not listening to the naysayers, thankfully, of adopting kids with disabilities, and then it's my experience going through the world in both Black and white, being someone who is mixed and dealing with the racism of the world, and dealing with a number of other issues, going into my marriage, how I met my wife, how I was delivered from depression. I mean, there are so many parts of this journey. Getting married, being an instant father because my wife's daughter — it's her biological daughter, but I adopted her. Our adoption battle, our battles with Planned Parenthood, our battles with ACLU, our battles being sued by the NAACP. There are a lot of battles in this book and in the documentary, but showing each and every time how God has enabled triumph to rise from tragedy. And the lesson we want everyone to take away from this is that everyone is wanted by someone, and so that's what we want to highlight in both the book and in the documentary.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Ryan, thank you for all you do. Yeah. And thank you for being a part of Cornerstone University, and we look forward to having you back again, and thank you for being on the podcast.

Ryan Bomberger: Thank you so much. Blessings to you as you travel and you continue to serve. Thank you, Ryan.

Gerson Moreno-Riaño: Absolutely. Bless.

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