

CONTRACEPTION IS NOT THE PROBLEM

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Abortion is deplorable and life at every stage, from conception to natural death, deserves to be cherished. Nevertheless, there is a branch of the pro-life movement that is more extreme than God's word warrants. Founder and President of Live Action Lila Rose posted to social media on December 9th, 2025: "Contraception is incompatible with Christianity". That statement is consistent with what she has said on other occasions, and what other pro-life Catholics teach, but is not consistent with Scripture.

It is helpful that Ms. Rose used the word "contraception" as that specifies what is under consideration. Had she said "birth control" there could be agreement, for no Christian should ever approve of controlling, that is preventing, birth. Once a child has been conceived, he or she must be allowed to be born. Pharmaceuticals marketed as "birth control" possess abortifacient properties whereby if the primary goal of preventing conception fails, the womb is rendered inhospitable to a fertilized egg, thus causing abortion. Accordingly, birth control is truly objectionable to all who comprehend the value of life made in God's image.

Contraception is different. By definition, contraception prevents conception from occurring. To oppose contraception is to object to barrier methods of preventing conception and to insist that all intercourse must have procreation as its goal. Neither of these notions can be sustained in Scripture.

Contraception is not tantamount to abortion because both the woman (Genesis 3:15; 4:25; 16:10; 24:60; Ruth 4:12) and the man (Genesis 15:5; 22:18; Leviticus 15:16-18) contribute "seed" when conceiving a child. If his seed never contacts her seed, then a child cannot possibly be conceived. If no life is formed to later be extinguished, then nothing homicidal has occurred. It is not abortion.

Furthermore, contraception is not sinful because reproduction need not be the objective in every sexual encounter. While the first command God gave man and woman, to "be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth" (Genesis 1:28), remains valid and necessary, producing offspring is not the only reason stated for sex in the inspired text. Between husband and wife, pleasure itself is a perfectly valid reason to copulate (Proverbs 5:18-19). Deterring temptations to fornicate is

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to read aloud.

What the Thessalonians were told to do with their letter was not unique. Paul gave similar instructions elsewhere. *"When this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea"* (Colossians 4:16). The Laodiceans were expected to read the Colossian epistle in church. This one is of similar length to First Thessalonians, placing sixteenth longest in the New Testament with 1,582 words in the original Greek and 1,979 words when translated into the New King James Version, and taking about 15 to 20 minutes to read out loud. The Colossians themselves were to read in church the letter that came from Laodicea, which, in all probability, is the letter to the Ephesians, which was being circulated. In terms of length, Ephesians places just above Colossians, being 2,422 Greek words long and 3,022 in the New King James Version. It takes about 20 to 30 minutes to read aloud.

Public readings were part of religious life in ancient Israel, as well. Moses *"took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, 'All that Jehovah has said we will do, and be obedient'"* (Exodus 24:7). A repeat of this reading was commanded forty years later when the people prepared to enter the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 31:11-13). When the captives returned to Judah after seventy years in Babylon, it was read again. *"He read from it... from morning until midday"* (Nehemiah 8:3), or about six hours.

Taking time in public assemblies to simply read Scripture aloud for its own sake has been commanded and exemplified in Old and New Testaments alike. Considering that entire books were expected to be presented to churches, the practice of reading one chapter at a time from those books is hardly a daunting task.

If it seems burdensome to include readings in the assemblies, ponder what it means to *"give attention to reading"*. The Greek verb translated *"give attention"* is defined by Vine as "devotion of thought and effort", by Thayer as "to turn the mind to", and by Strong as "to hold the mind". If modern technology has so dulled the attention span that the inclusion of a reading lasting several minutes is inconvenient, then the only appropriate action is to repent. Repent until it can be said in truth, *"Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day"* (Psalm 119:97).

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN ANY TRESPASS... RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

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another reason (1st Corinthians 7:2-5), and, really, that is only a specific way of saying that pleasure itself is sufficient. Children are blessings (Psalm 127:3-5), but every couple is capable of determining when the quiver is full.

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"GIVE ATTENTION TO READING"

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Reading, just reading aloud, has its own place in the assembly of the church. It need not be relegated to supporting points made during an exhortation or as a prelude to some other part of worship, such as the Lord's Supper or the collection. Reading, as a stand-alone act, serves its own purpose when the saints gather.

As he guided his young protégé Timothy the evangelist, the apostle Paul instructed him to *"give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine"* (1st Timothy 4:13). Reading is a distinct function to be undertaken next to exhortation and to doctrine, not merely as a part of exhortation or doctrine.

The church in Thessalonica was expected to hear the letter Paul sent read to the congregation: *"I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren"* (1st Thessalonians 5:27). The Thessalonians needed to hear what the apostle admonished before anyone else began preaching application from its content. They deserved to hear it without elaboration.

At about 1,480 words in the original Greek, or 1,837 words translated into the New King James Version, the book of First Thessalonians is a medium-length book, placing seventeenth out of twenty-seven New Testament books when listed by length. It takes about 15 to 20 minutes

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