

By Darla Weaver

Healing

For 17 years, Randy and Darla Weaver have been U.S. Missions chaplains to rodeo cowboys. They pastor Lone Star Cowboy Church in Montgomery, Texas. They have two children: Shiloh, 15, and Caleb, 13. Darla works at the local pregnancy assistance center and is the director for post-abortion counseling and education. This article is taken from a message she delivered at the Assemblies of God headquarters in Springfield, Mo., in 2004.

I was raised in a church-going family, but as a child I was sexually abused by three men outside of my immediate family. However, the hardest thing I have ever had to overcome was on February 26, 1983, when my oldest son, Joshua, was killed in an abortion clinic in Austin, Texas. I cannot tell you how many times I have given my testimony, yet this part breaks my heart every time.

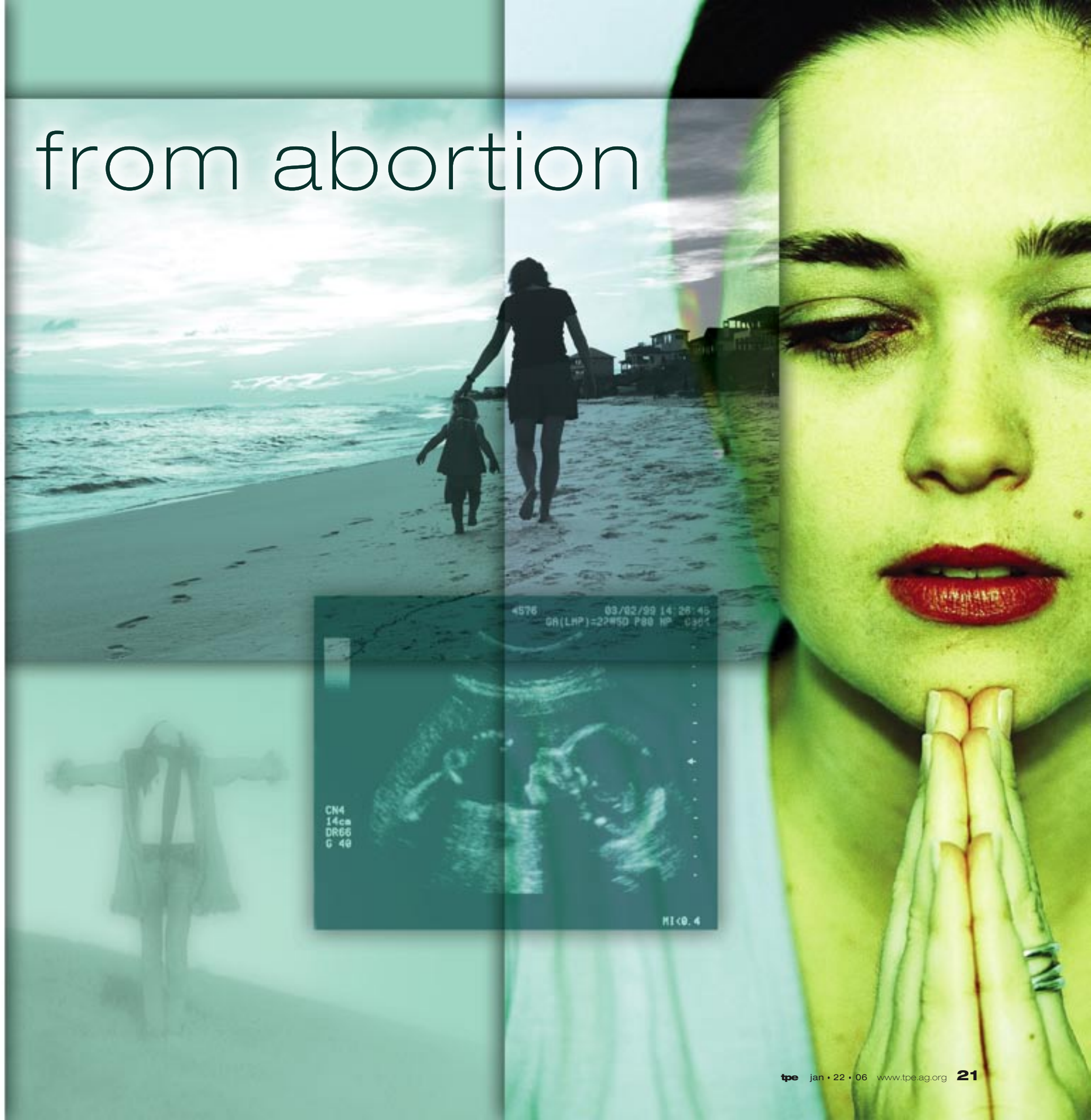
When my child died I wanted to die too, even though I was only 16 years old. Something inside of me snapped and broke, and I spent the next 18 years of my life with what I found out later was post-abortion syndrome.

When Joshua died, I knew he went to heaven and I knew I was going to hell. So he became the carrot on a stick that made me start looking for God. I gave my heart to the Lord in Temple, Texas, in a small Baptist church in 1985. Three years later I met Randy and we were married.

Randy had no knowledge of the life I had lived before I met him, so he had no idea what he was taking on when he married me. I am so thankful for a God-fearing man who is stable. When I was going up and down with my emotions and my problems, he stayed.

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from abortion



“Let Me heal you from the inside out. It is going to be ugly; it is going to hurt; it is not going to be pretty. But when it’s done you will be healed.”

Post-abortion syndrome

Post-abortion syndrome is defined as the “chronic inability to process the painful thoughts and emotions of a crisis pregnancy and abortion; it’s the chronic inability to process grief or loss; it’s the chronic inability to come to peace with yourself and others.”

Ministers’ wives do not have abortions — but I was a minister’s wife.

In my pain, I found it impossible

to love or to feel love because of the scars on my heart. I could pray for people and see them saved and healed. I could say everything I needed to say, and God used me.

However, inside the deepest recesses of my heart, there were doors that were closed and there were things I did not want to look at. Things I did not want to deal with because they were too painful; they just hurt too badly. Finally, I came to the point where I said, “God, break whatever is in-

side of me. I want to be broken.”

That is when the doors started opening. When you tell God to open up those doors in the deepest part of your heart, He is going to do it.

Open wounds

Randy’s dad had a horse that ran into a fence and sliced her leg wide open. He took her to the vet who sewed her up. A week later the wound was totally infected, so Randy’s dad took out the stitches.

The wound opened and began to ooze, which was the best thing that could have happened because it began to heal from the inside out. The horse healed and the scar is so small it is barely noticeable.

That is what God wants to do with us. He wants to take the stitches off the outside that peo-

ple see that make us look pretty. He wants us to open up and He wants to tell us, “Let Me heal you from the inside out. It is going to be ugly; it is going to hurt; it is not going to be pretty. But when it’s done you will be healed.”

Randy and I went to a Bible bookstore one day. I had just been praying, “Lord, I have had enough. I want to love people. I want to feel again. I have been numb toward people for such a long time. Help me!”

I looked down a row of books and said, “OK, God, give me a book on loving people and when I am finished reading it I will love people and they will love me.”

I saw a book called *Won by Love*. And I thought, *That’s it. I’ll win people by love*. I picked up the book. It was the Norma McCorvey story. She was the “Jane Roe” in *Roe v. Wade* (the court decision that legalized abortion), and the book told how she became a Christian. I just started shaking and said, “Oh, God.”

But God said, “Buy it.”

After I brought the book home it took me two weeks to get the nerve to read it. When I finally sat down to read it, I wanted to throw up. It was so hard. However, that is when my healing started. That is when God took the stitches off my wound and I was opened wide.

I called my local pregnancy center and talked with a counselor or as it suggested in the book. She said, “You are totally normal.”

I said, “I’m normal? It’s normal to hurt like this?”

She replied, “There are thousands of women like you who are hurting, and they don’t even know there’s help.”

In March of 2002, I joined the center’s post-abortion Bible study called *Forgiven and Set Free*. That was the best Bible study I had ever been through because I was able to deal with each level of my emotions individually. It was incredible.

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At the end of it God gave me a Scripture verse: "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isaiah 60:20, KJV).

New ministry

Randy and I have been in rodeo ministry a very long time, but in 2003 God said to me, "I want you to do something new." That is when I became the director of the post-abortion ministry in our county.

One in six women has had an abortion. Forty percent of those women have had multiple abortions.

Who are we who have had abortions? We are your moms. We are your ministers' wives. We are your aunts. We are your sisters. We are the women in the checkout lines. We are sitting in the audience right next to you. We are your neighbors. We are everywhere.

You do not even know it, because women are so terrified others are going to find out and judge them and reject them. And people do judge, I am sad to say.

What is the church going to do about these walking wounded women? At our church we are keeping it in front of the women and in front of the whole church. I am trying to implement the post-abortion ministry in other churches.

We have a memorial wall on our church grounds where women can place their babies' names after they go through the Bible study.

God wants healing. Through this wall, God gives these women a focus for their grief. They are allowed to name their child.

When they do name their child, their grief goes from something intangible to something tangible, and they can complete the heal-

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ing process. Every year we add names to our wall.

Inner healing for all

Galatians 6:1,2 reads: "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (NIV).

This is not about abortion only. This is about wounded people who cannot get past their shame. They show up for work, they come to the altar, they pray and they beg God week after week for healing. They go to their pastors for counseling. But to get help they need to open up. That is the hard part.

If you have had an abortion, if you have caused a woman to have an abortion, if you have been a part of an abortion, or if you have any hidden shame in your life, open up. Receive God's healing and be restored. Come back to the altar.

Then find someone else who needs restoration. **tpe**

E-mail your comments to tpe@ag.org.

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