

An Unexpected Testimony at the Dentist

By Mary J. Ferrill Brown



In the summer of 2023, I was forced to visit a dentist for extraction of a cracked and infected tooth. Although I wanted to have the pain alleviated, the dentist's office is not one of my favorite places. I had been to this particular office before, but I had not met the dentist who was about to pull my tooth. I also had no idea of the opportunity that was about to unfold.

When the dentist walked into the room and introduced himself, he asked if my favorite color was purple... no doubt because I seldom leave the house without wearing purple clothes or purple accessories. I even have a purple Smith & Wesson pistol. I answered his question with my typical response: "If it's good enough for Jesus, then it's good enough for me." I have never experienced anyone posing a follow-up question before, but the dentist probed further by suggesting that Jesus was forced to wear the purple robe by the guards who were torturing him. I agreed but reiterated that I see purple as a symbol of Jesus. As he proceeded with the tooth extraction, the conversation turned one-sided since I was unable

to respond; but I couldn't stop thinking about our conversation. I decided to pray about it and come up with a better answer before my next appointment the following week. The Bible instructs us in 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV): *"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."* I decided I needed a better response to queries about my purple passion in the future.

Of course, for the next few days it was difficult to think about anything other than the large, golf ball sized (not an exaggeration) swollen mass on the side of my mouth and the accompanying pain. As my recovery progressed, I joined some visiting friends on a trip to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, which is definitely one of my favorite places to be. It's nice to live only a half hour away! While in the car driving to the happiest place on earth, my thoughts once again drifted to that conversation with my dentist, and

the Lord provided a bolt of inspiration. At my follow-up appointment to the dentist, I reminded him of our conversation about Jesus and the color purple. I went on to explain my new insight that the Roman soldiers intended for the purple robe and crown to be worn as a sign of humiliation and mockery, but our Lord wore it as a sign of His great love for all of us. The dentist still wasn't totally convinced, so I said I would write a comprehensive explanation as an editorial for a Christian Pharmacists Journal with which I happen to be affiliated, and I promised to share it with him.

The robe serves as a sign that Jesus took the weight of mankind's sins on His shoulders. He voluntarily took on the robe, the crown of thorns, the flogging (whipping), and the cross. According to Matthew chapter 26 (NIV), Jesus prayed two times the night before His crucifixion: *"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You*



will.” (verse 39). And again, in verse 42: “He went away a second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done.’” Jesus was not defying His Father’s will when He requested that the cup of suffering and temporary separation be removed. It was just the opposite: He reiterated His earnest need and desire to do His Father’s will by stating, “Yet not as I will, but as You will.” Jesus’ prayer discloses to us His horrible physical and emotional anguish. By being separated from God His Father, His suffering was actually worse than death. On the cross, God the Father treated Jesus as though HE had committed every sin of every person on the entire planet for all time. The sinless Son of God took our sins upon Himself so that anyone who believes in Him will be saved from an eternity of torment and separation from the Father. When John the Baptist saw Jesus he proclaimed and foretold Jesus’ death in John 1:29b (ESV): “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Jesus took away the sin of all mankind by His selfless act on the cross.

At any time, Jesus could have asked His Father to take Him away as He did when the Jewish Leaders tried to seize and stone Him for blasphemy in John chapter 10, NIV: “We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God” (verse 33) and “again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp” (verse 39). Since Satan knows Scripture, he quoted from Psalm 91 when he tested Jesus in the desert: “For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” (Luke 4:10-11, NIV). Jesus decided the timing of His death according to His Father’s will: “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.” (Matthew 27:50, NIV) and “Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ When he had said this, he breathed his last.” (Luke 23:46, NIV). No one killed Jesus; He willingly gave His life so that we would not experience eternal damnation and separation from Him, but instead we would have everlasting life with Him. The

purple robe that was intended to humiliate Jesus, ultimately exalted him as one more piece of evidence that He truly is the Son of Man and the Son of God.

I’m glad that my dentist questioned me further on my purple passion. I now can give a more articulate answer for my certainty that I will one day stand with my Lord and Savior (with no broken teeth or swollen, painful mouth). Since purple is also the color of royalty, it’s perfectly appropriate for me to wear it often, since I AM royalty! I am the daughter of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I have professed with my mouth that Jesus is Lord and I believe in my heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9); and by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone, I have been adopted into the royal family of God... “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” (Romans 8:14, NIV). If you’re a believer and follower of Jesus, then YOU are royalty, too... so go right ahead, be theologically correct and join me in proudly wearing purple.

Abortion, Mifepristone, The FDA, and Pharmacists: Life, Death, Conscience, and Silence

By Daniel A. Hussar

“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” Psalm 16:11 (NIV)

Abortion is one of the most polarizing topics in today’s society. It is with that recognition that I identify my following primary purposes in writing this commentary:

1. To recognize strong differences of opinion that exist, and to voice my own in a manner that is respectful of the rights of others to hold and voice different opinions;
2. To identify what I consider to be the responsibility of the FDA to protect the growth and development of the “products of conception” (which I choose to

identify as an “unborn baby”), as well as the health of the mother;

3. To support what I consider to be the rights of pharmacists and other health professionals to exercise conscientious refusal in declining to participate in actions that are contrary to their ethical, moral, and/or religious beliefs.

Within the last 75 years in the U.S., abortion has moved from an infrequent occurrence that was seldom discussed