



## Saying 'Yes' to Reproductive Justice is Living Out the Gospel

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Marching through the streets of New York City [the day Roe V. Wade overturned](#) became my birthplace in a deeper commitment toward reproductive justice. In the sea of 60,000 who marched, my most poignant memory is of the youth expressing their anger at religion. Seeing a clergy colleague and myself, they would share their stories and ask, "Are you going to fight for our bodies tomorrow?"

To advocate for all bodies tomorrow and onward, let's understand what reproductive justice is and then embrace what the gospel calls for us to do:

Reproductive justice intersects every human right. Reproductive justice seeks the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, social, and economic wellbeing of all bodies through the full protection of human rights.

Basic human rights and the multiple isms that threaten to strip those rights meet at the intersection of reproductive justice.

As [Fannie Lou Hamer](#), a powerful voice for civil and women's rights, famously said to the National Political Women's Caucus in DC in 1971 (two years before Roe V. Wade was passed in 1973 protecting abortion rights): "Nobody's free until everybody's free." Reproductive justice intersects and interconnects with race, class, gender, and sex; it is a justice issue that belongs to all of us and impacts every body.

When reproductive care is limited, human lives, families and communities are harmed. When reproductive care is absent, the harm ripples outward causing loss of life and damage to God's vast creation.

Mark 5:21-34 is my illumination text for

why reproductive justice—including access to reproductive health care—matters and belongs to all of us:

A woman who has been placed on the outskirts of society due to state law learns that Jesus is near. In immense pain, she finds Jesus and touches his cloak seeking healing ... and perhaps also, seeking to be seen. Jesus sees and speaks with her, a direct rebuke of state law in that time. Jesus affirms her pain, her bodily autonomy, and her need for care by healing her.

In this text, I see [Amber Nicole Thurman](#) who died from abortion complications when denied a lifesaving procedure because it violated a new state law in Georgia. She bled out for 20 hours and died in a hospital bed. She too needed to be seen, affirmed, and cared for—and so will the countless others at risk of similar loss or harm.

Jesus' response in Mark 5 reminds us that what is ritualized by state law can disguise the oppression and manipulation of human bodies. And our faithful response is to love, care for, and advocate for humanity despite such laws.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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