



■ Does wrongdoing nullify a good deed ?

Self justification and abortion* **or: The destructive boast**

This story was told to me by my friend P.:

“**I** am one of those children who escaped being aborted. **M**y mother, when I was an embryo, wanted to have an abortion, but in the end she kept me.

“**F**rom the moment I learned this, I always felt revulsion for abortions and sympathy for unborn children. **A**nd although for most of my life I was not a Christian, whenever I had the chance, I tried to dissuade others from that evil.

“**O**nce, a friend of mine told me that she was pregnant, and that because she would not have a partner to help raise her child, she was going to have an abortion. **I** tried to change her mind, saying to her: ‘**D**on’t worry! **K**eeep the child, and whatever you need, I will help you. Financially, and whatever else you need, come to me.’

“**S**o the woman kept the child. And when that child later grew up, she would often remind me that she had the child and rejoiced in it thanks to the support I had given her then. **Y**ears passed, and at some point I came to believe in Christ. **S**tudying the Christian faith made me sensitive to all those matters that had to do with my way of life. **C**omparing myself with Christ and His Saints, I felt unclean and worthless, and I could find nothing good in myself to resemble Him.

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“**S**o then, one day as I was feeling my sinfulness in this way, I wanted to **justify myself** before God. **A**nd I dared to say to Him the following:

“**I** may be whatever I am, but I can boast that I have at least done one good thing in my life! I saved that little child from being aborted.’

“**I** said this, felt vindicated, and went to my office. **T**here I discovered some problems caused by the negligence of my employees, and I



became irritated. **I** shouted at them and said: ‘**G**o look for another job, because with the way you’ve done things, we’re shutting this place down!’

“**A** few days later, as I was going to my office, I saw my secretary upset. I asked her what was wrong, and she told me that she had just had an abortion, and was distressed because she had wanted to keep the child, but had been forced to abort it. **I** asked her: ‘**W**hat happened that forced you?’

“**A**nd she answered that on the day I was shouting in the office that we were closing, and told them to look for work, she became afraid that she would not have the financial means to raise the child without a job, and decided not to give birth.

“**A**t that moment, I understood that just as I had once been responsible for a child being saved from abortion, now I was responsible for a child dying by abortion. **W**hatever good I had done, I had now undone.

“**V**ery soon after my attempt at self justification, God allowed me to wipe out my one good deed—the only good deed in my life for which I could boast—with an equal evil, and thus to find myself with no defense.”



(*) Translated from the Greek periodical “Orthodox Vigilance” (No. 34, January-March 2011), pp. 30-31. • **P**ublication layout ours.