



Death Before Life

Lesson Subject: Purposeful abortion terminates a human life already recognized by God.

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On January 22, 1972, in a case involving Roe versus Wade, the United States Supreme Court liberalized restrictive abortion laws, making it possible to abort an unborn child for any reason during the first six months of pregnancy and for the sake of the mother's physical or mental health during the sixth to the ninth months. From that decision has come a flood of artificially induced abortions in this country.

What shall we call the procedure? Some physicians call it "fertility control." Attorneys may call it "abortion." God calls it "murder" and strictly forbids it in the sixth commandment: "*Thou shalt not kill*" (Exodus 20:13).

Abortion has become the most common crime and sin in human history. The following comments seek to show why abortion is a crime and a sin. The central truth is: "Purposeful abortion terminates a human life already recognized by God."

I. WHAT IS ABORTION?

Abortion is the birth (and thus the death) of a developing baby before it is able to live outside its mother's womb. As used in these comments, abortion is the purposeful removal of the fetus from the mother's womb by artificial means in order to prevent the live birth of the child. Sometimes there is a natural abortion in which the mother is unable to carry the fetus to delivery, but we speak of purposeful abortion induced to prevent a live birth.

II. WHY IS ABORTION A PROBLEM?

Abortion is a problem because it brutally denies a person (the infant)

the right to live and contradicts God's statement that all human life is sacred. Abortion is a problem because of its scope. One out of every four children conceived in America this year [1984] will die because of abortion, according to the present rate. Abortion is a problem because it is now the most common medical procedure among female patients in the United States (more than a million a year), and it often causes physical and mental problems for the mother later in life. Abortion is a problem because Americans now spend more than \$700 million a year for abortions in 350 abortion clinics and in hospitals. Three fourths of the abortions are in special clinics set up for that purpose. But, in spite of all that, abortion is a problem only if the fetus is a person with human life while still in the womb. If the fetus in the womb is only a mass of cells at two months, four months, or six months, then abortion is no more than removing a tumor or some other growth. But if the fetus has human life, abortion is murder. Abortion is a problem because the fetus is a person and has human life from the moment of conception. Therefore, abortion is a sin against God and a crime against a person.

III. WHY IS ABORTION A SIN AND CRIME?

There are three lines of evidence which indicate the fetus in the womb is a human being. Those are medical, legal, and biblical testimony.

A. Medical science has declared that a fetus is a person capable of being murdered. The official journal of the California Medical Association (1970) reported it as scientific fact that human life begins at conception. It noted such things as the fact that all twenty-three pairs of chromosomes are present and complete at conception. The body is formed within a few weeks of conception and the rest of the time is being refined and enlarged.

B. Legal authorities have declared that the fetus is a person before birth. Courts have awarded inheritance rights to unborn children. Personal injury rights have been rendered in favor of a child in the womb. The Fifth Amendment guarantees that life cannot be deprived without due process, and the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law.

C. Bible teaching declares that the unborn child is a person. (1) The same terms are used for a child in the womb and a child after birth. The Hebrew term *yeled* and the Greek term *brephos* are used to refer to the infant before and after birth (Exodus 21:22, and Luke 1:41, 44; cp. Acts 17:28, 29).

(2) God forms a person, not a non-person, in the womb according to Job 10:8-12; Psalm 51:5; 139:13-15. Notice the personal pronouns "me"

and “my” in those references.

(3) God consecrates persons to His service before they are born, while still in the womb (Jeremiah 1:5).

(4) To die in the womb before birth makes the womb one's grave, indicating he was a person before birth (Jeremiah 20:17).

(5) An unborn child has life while still in the womb (Exodus 21:22, 23).

(6) Jesus' physical body developed in the womb of Mary as do all human bodies (Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:17). Jesus was not a non-person in the womb, was He?

If the fetus in the womb is a person and there is human life in it, to cause that life to cease by artificial methods is a sin against God and a crime against humanity. But is there human life after all?

It is a living sperm that unites with the egg and produces conception. The life in the sperm is human life because it is produced by a living human male. The life in the fertilized egg is human life, the continuation of the life in the sperm. In fact, there is no point at which life truly “begins” as a totally new thing. God originated human life in the creation of the first man (Genesis 2:7). All humans born since then are simply the expansion of that original human life which God created. You and I live the same life as Adam and Eve. It has passed from them through all our ancestors and through us to our children. From the moment of conception, therefore, the fetus is a living human being.

IV. WHAT ARE REASONS FOR ABORTION?

A. Some abort their babies because conception has resulted from rape or incest. But less than 3 percent of abortions today are for that reason. The Bible says put the rapist to death and spare the infant (Deuteronomy 22:25, 26).

B. Some abort their babies because of danger to the life of the mother. The Bible makes no allowance for “therapeutic abortion.” There are other medical alternatives today, so some physicians report they have never seen a case where it was necessary to kill the baby to save the mother.

C. Some abort their babies because they want to choose the gender of the child. What a senseless reason to take a human life!

D. Some abort their babies because they want the child to be “wanted” by the parents and not be abused later in life. There is no evidence that abortion has lessened child abuse in our society. Child abuse results from adult failures.

E. Some abort their babies because they want “freedom of choice.” But let that freedom of choice be exercised before conception occurs.

F. Some abort their babies to prevent a child from being born with a physical or mental handicap. The Bible tells of a man born blind “*that the works of God should be made manifest in him*” (John 9:3). Medical science has now developed ways to correct many physical handicaps while the infant is still in the womb.

Not one of those reasons given above is reason enough to terminate the human life of an infant. Apply those reasons to the aged or physically infirmed and see how reasonable they are!

V. WHAT METHODS ARE USED IN ABORTION?

There are four common methods used in abortion. (1) A suction tube is inserted into the mother's womb and its contents are drawn out into a jar. Sometimes parts of the body of the baby are recognizable. (2) Dilation and curettage is used after ten or twelve weeks when the infant is too well formed to pass through a suction tube. An instrument is inserted which cuts the body to pieces which can be removed. (3) Fluid is removed from the amniotic sac and is replaced with a fluid containing 20 percent salt. It causes the baby to shrivel and die. Then the womb expels the now-dead baby. (4) A kind of abdominal surgery similar to cesarean section is used in the later stages of pregnancy. Either of those four methods is inhuman and barbaric.

It is depressing to review those methods of abortion. They are mentioned only that readers who are not familiar with the procedure may be stirred to action by such an evident violation of human life in such a brutal manner.

VI. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ABORTION?

Several principles are set forth in Scripture which apply in this area. The following facts should be reviewed with a Bible in hand. Each Scripture reference should be read with an open heart for God to show the truth about abortion.

A. God sees and knows all human life (Genesis 6:5; 1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 139:16), **even before birth** (Psalm 139:12).

B. God is with the child in the mother's womb (Psalm 139:13).

C. God forms the child in the womb just as He formed the first human from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7; Psalms 100:3; 139: 14).

D. God knew us when we were still developing in the womb (Psalm 139:15).

E. God has a record of us before and during our development in the womb, recognizing us as individual persons before birth (Psalm 139:16).

F. God thinks of us while we are still in the womb (Psalms 40:5, 17; 139:17; Jeremiah 29:11).

G. God moves in judgment against the wicked (Psalm 139:19; Romans 2:2), which surely includes those who murder innocent babies before their birth. It is our studied conclusion that abortion is a crime against human society and a sin against divine law. It is the murder of a human being.

The beginning of new life precedes the day of being born by nine months! Ancient Chinese declared a child to be one year old at birth because of it, life in the womb. From the first hour of conception the human cells are distinctly human and different from animals, fish, or fowl.

By the first month of pregnancy the body is formed with head, trunk, and arm buds, rudimentary eyes, ears, mouth, and brain. It shows human speciation in kidneys, liver, digestive tract, blood stream, and heart. The heart usually begins beating by the twenty-fifth day. And the mother does not even know she is pregnant!

In the second month the fetus is less than one inch long and weighs only 1/30th of an ounce, but it bears all familiar features and internal organs of a future adult. The rest of growth to adulthood is mainly dimension and a gradual refinement of the various parts.

By the end of the third month the fetus can kick the legs, turn the feet, curl and fan the toes, turn the head, squint, frown, open the mouth, and purse the lips. It frequently swallows and may begin to practice breathing by inhaling and exhaling movements. A distinct individuality in behavior is evident, and a likeness to parents may be indicated by this time. That is the person which may be killed at the whim of the parent. God deliver us from such a tragedy!

QUESTIONS

1. What is abortion?
2. How does Exodus 20:13 relate to abortion?
3. How does medical science say that a fetus is a person?
4. How does the Bible teach that a fetus is a person?

5. Why is there no point at which human life actually “begins”?
6. What is the Christian response to the reasons given for abortions?
7. What does the Bible say about the fetus in the womb?
8. How does the rapid development of the fetus speak against abortion?
9. What can you do to promote sanctity of human life?
10. Why is abortion a crime against humanity and a sin against God?