

POSITION PAPER ON ABORTION

(Including partial critique of BioEthics: A Primer for Christians by Gilbert Meilaender)

By

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Introduction

Throughout human history, one of the things that have distinguished God's people from all others is their treatment of those who are vulnerable. In the Old Testament, God established laws for the protection of the poor and for the guardianship of foreigners living among the Israelites. In the New Testament, Jesus reaches out to the sick, rejected, and hurting. From there, the history of the Church includes the establishment of schools, hospitals, and orphanages. So why is it that the most vulnerable of those created in God's image, the pre-born, are not being afforded this same protection? The very fact that even within seminaries, the sanctity of all human life is not taught, but rather debated, should be cause for serious alarm. As one examines this question, one must be prepared to face the reality that this shift¹ happens to coincide precisely with secular society's growing acceptance and practice of abortion.

When Does Life Begin?

Does not the question, "when does life begin?" in order to justify abortion stem from the same motive behind the religious teacher who asked Jesus "who is my neighbor?" In other words, the real question being asked is, "how far can I avoid caring for another person's well-being before I cross the line?" Jesus makes it clear that the issue is not about how we define the other person but rather the issue is about mercy. Because of God's great mercy towards us, His servants are called to be merciful. At the root of any question that attempts to determine if/when a pre-born child's life should be protected is simply mankind's sinful desire to escape his responsibility to honor God and His creation.

¹ Only the Catholic Church continues to maintain an uncompromising stance against abortion whereas many Protestant churches are increasingly become more 'open' to abortion, at least under some circumstances (coinciding with the shift of opinion of society in general).

Still, the current legalization of abortion along with its raging debate – even among Christians – requires that we address the question. A basic definition of life taken from the field of biology, the study of living organisms, is “Life is a characteristic distinguishing objects having signaling and self-sustaining processes from those that do not, either because such functions have ceased (death), or because they lack such functions and are classified as inanimate.”² As such, plants, human sperm, and other biological organisms also have “life,” along with a distinct beginning. Perhaps the debate then, is not about when life begins, but rather when *human* life begins. But this question also is troublesome. From the moment a human egg is fertilized with a human sperm, a unique, self-directing, self-sustaining being with a one-of-a-kind human-DNA has come into existence that did not exist prior to that exact moment in time. If this organism is not a human being, what manner of being is it? A cucumber? A herring? A basset hound? Again, this does not solve the question, as it is quite clear that a member of the human species, in its earliest stage of development, has joined the human race. So if the question is not when does life begin, or when does human (vs. another kind) life begin, what is the question that the proponents and opponents of abortion are debating?

In order to embrace abortion, one must reject that the pre-born human being’s life is as valuable as other human beings at later stages of development. This is often done by arguing the zygote or fetus is not yet a “person.” This argument is attractive to pro-abortionists because personhood, unlike biological life, is an abstract concept. In effect, one can choose to define personhood anyway one wants. African-American slaves were considered non-persons until only a few decades ago, as were Jews targeted by Nazi Germany during WWII. Even today, India’s lowest caste, “the Dalits” are considered non-persons by many and the name Dalit is often translated “unborn” because, they are told, it would have been better for them had they never

² Definition of “life” as found on Wikipedia.

been born.³ So throughout human history, the definition of personhood has been used as a means for denying dignity to a select class of human beings for the purpose of exploiting (slaves), oppressing (Dalits), or destroying (Jews) them. Because advancements in science have exposed the lies of abortion proponents who previously insisted pre-born children were merely clumps of meaningless cells (even long after science proved otherwise), it should be no surprise that attacking the personhood of pre-born children is the new pro-abortion mantra. Yet at the same time that the personhood of pre-born human beings is questioned, debated, and even denied, “animal law is now widely taught in law schools in North America, and several prominent legal scholars support the extension of basic legal rights and *personhood* to at least some animals, such as bonobos and chimpanzees.”⁴ The problem with this line of argument is that it equates personhood with a creature’s capacities (i.e. an adult chimpanzee has a greater capacity to make decisions, for example, than a pre-born human child). Rather, personhood must always be understood as equivalent to a being’s *essence*. Meilaender’s short commentary on the matter is worth quoting in full:

“The personhood argument mistakenly assumes that these distinguishing characteristics constitute qualifications for membership in the human community. But to be a member of our community, with a claim for care equal to yours or mine, an individual need not possess these capacities. To ‘qualify’ for membership he need only be begotten by human parents. Those who never had or who have now lost certain distinctive human capacities should not be described as nonpersons; rather, they are simply the weakest...*members* of the human community... Each of our personal histories begins with very limited capacities and may end in the same way. Personhood is not a thing we possess only at some moments in that history; we are persons throughout it.”⁵

Even among the darkened minds of unregenerate men in a fallen world, we find evidence of the common grace bestowed upon man to understand the dignity of human life in all stages of

³ “According to ancient Hindu text - the Dalit is the ‘unborn,’ with no physical link with the supreme being.” – Dalitforum.com; also see DalitFreedomNetwork.com which states Dalits are “those called the ‘unborn,’ as it would have been better for them had they never been born.”

⁴ Taken from Wikipedia “Animal Rights” (Italics mine)

⁵ Meilaender, p. 34

development. In 2008, an excellent book was published called Embryo: A Defense of Human Life, written by two non-Christian academics.⁶ They write,

“Everyday people die for whom others do not grieve. This does not mean that they lacked the status of human beings who were worthy of full moral respect. It is thus simply a mistake to conclude from the fact that people do not grieve...that the embryo has less dignity or worth than human beings at later stages of development.”

How much more, then, should the Christian, to whom the Truth of God has been given, be able to recognize the inherent dignity—and seek to protect—all human life?

In brief, biological life exists from the moment of conception in any species. If the parents are human, the conceived life can be nothing but human life. Therefore, human life begins at conception. Because humans are the only species created in the image of God, personhood is also inherent in humans as God Himself is a Person. Further, because God has not created any other species in His image, *only* human beings possess personhood. Since a human being comes into existence at the moment of conception, so does his personhood: it is an inherent quality of being a human created in the image of God.

What does the Bible have to say?

Many assume to dismiss the most obvious argument clearly stated in the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shall not murder,” by referring back to the argument that no one knows when “life” begins.⁷ However, even if we stop here, the challenge must be raised: if we cannot be certain when, along the continuum of fertilization through natural birth, “life” has begun, should we not err on the side of caution and protect all pre-born children at least until a

⁶ George and Tollefsen, p. 136

⁷ When what they really mean is no one knows when personhood begins, which is really appealing to a pre-supposed arbitrary definition, rather than acknowledging the Creator who endows human beings with personhood, in order to avoid the very real problem of “killing.”

consensus is reached?⁸ Another argument from the Bible focuses on a single verse in the Old Testament, Exodus 21:22, where a pregnant woman is accidentally struck and delivers her child prematurely. The penalty includes “a life for a life.” People on both sides of the abortion debate use this verse to make a case whether taking the life of the pre-born child requires the death penalty for the person who caused the child’s death. If “life for a life” does pertain to the child, then God must view pre-born children equally valuable as born persons; however, if “life for a life” only refers to the mother, then the opposite case can be made. However, if there is no agreement as to the construction of the verse, would not fear of The Creator of Life and reverence for His Word dictate that we err on the side of caution?

But the Bible does offer an answer. The “life for a life” punishment for an accidental death is mandated *only* in the case of a woman giving birth prematurely. In Deuteronomy 19:4-6, the Lord declares that if a person *accidentally* kills another person, he may flee to another city in order to save his life. Therefore, not only is the person’s life spared, but measures are also taken to protect him. Scripture cannot contradict itself; further, God does not change. If the death of the woman, and not the child, is in view in Exodus 21:22, what is the purpose for the verse since the punishment for accidentally killing another person is dealt with in Deuteronomy? The only difference in Exodus 21:22 is the premature delivery of an unborn child. Surely, this makes a strong case that it is this unique circumstance that is in view. If a person’s life can be spared for accidentally killing another person but an altogether different punishment, even “life for life,” is mandated if his negligence involves the death of a pregnant woman or her pre-born child, then it seems God is enacting a *more* severe punishment in such circumstances. Theologian Wayne Grudem writes,

⁸ This statement is not intended to be taken literally. First, a consensus will never be reached, and even if it were, it would not last. Second, the dignity of human life created in God’s image is not determined by vote, especially among those who entered the world in the very same manner. Only God, Creator of us all, has any say in the matter.

“This means that God established for Israel a law code that placed a higher value on protecting the life of a pregnant woman and her preborn child than the life of anyone else in Israelite society. Far from treating the death of a preborn child as less significant than the death of others in society, this law treats the death of a preborn child or its mother as more significant and worthy of more severe punishment.”⁹

It is worth noting that this expectation for special, even greater, care and protection for pregnant woman was also expressed by Jesus Himself. In lamenting the worldwide suffering of the great tribulation to come, Jesus singles out one class of persons in particular—pregnant women and nursing mothers—a distinction which Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record¹⁰.

A third argument from the Bible stems from the various passages where God called, named, and/or described a person before he was born, demonstrating God knew the person before he was born, and often even before he was conceived:

- Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.” –Jeremiah 1:5
- John the Baptist “[she] will bear you a son...you are to call him John” –Luke 1:13
- Ishmael “you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael” –Gen 16:11
- Isaac “Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac” –Gen 17:19
- Jacob and Esau “The sons in your womb will become two nations” –Gen 25:23
- Jesus “you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus” –Luke 1:31

Other biblical passages reveal the author’s self-identification with his pre-born state:

- David “You have been my God from my mother's womb” – Psalm 22:9-11
- David “you knit me together in my mother's womb” –Psalm 139:13 (also 51:5; 71:6)
- Job “Did not he who made me in the womb...” –Job 31:15 (also 1:21, 10:18)
- Isaiah “from within the womb, He called me by name.” –Isaiah 49:1, 5

Finally, there is the promised Messiah (the “seed of the woman” promised in Genesis 3:15), who entered the world not as man, or a newborn, but as a fertilized egg. If the God of the universe saw fit to experience humanity from the very moment of conception, do we dare think He does

⁹ Quote taken from Grudem’s book, *Politics According to the Bible*, p. 160

¹⁰ Mathew 24:19; Mark 13:17; Luke 21:23

not view all conceptions as sacred? If we are unsure, once again: should we not err on the side of caution?

The common objection to this line of reasoning is that these were “special” persons, such as prophets, kings, and other “key” players in the biblical narrative. This objection either suggests that God is capable of pre-knowing some persons but not all (thereby denying God’s omniscience), or more likely that these are a separate class of human beings set apart by God. But what is it about being called by God for a purpose that presupposes God has not granted equal worth and dignity for the life of all persons, since all are created in His image? Even if we narrow the argument to include only the elect, there is no way to assess who those persons are in their pre-born state. Doesn’t prudence dictate that we err on the side of caution?

Finally, in Bible times, bareness was considered a curse whereas bearing children was considered God’s blessing. However, children do not arrive as newborns; they are first conceived. Therefore, their conception is inseparable from God’s blessing. In the case of barrenness, Scripture reveals that whenever God took away this public shame, it did not begin with a child’s birth, or even conception, but before that: when God “opens the womb.” If opening the womb *in order to* conceive and bear children is a blessing and gift from God, how much more treasured should the resulting conception and birth be? Should a Christian dare to step between God’s blessing and the *fruit* of His blessing?

- “Then God *blessed* them and said, ‘Be fruitful and multiply’” – Gen 1:28
- “The LORD saw that Leah was unloved, and He *opened her womb*.” –Gen 29:31
- “God remembered Rachel...and *opened her womb*. So she conceived...” – Gen 30:22
- “The Almighty who blesses you... *Blessings* of...the womb” –Gen 49:25
- “He will also *bless* the fruit of your womb” – Deut 7:13
- “the Lord *visited* Hannah, and she conceived and bore...” 1 Sam 2:21
- “Children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a *reward*” –Psalm 127:3

Pastor John Ensor warns Christians in his small but powerful book, Innocent Blood, that “If we are to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord then we must, when faced with the imminent death of the innocent, fear God more than man and let our faith in Him quicken into courage.”¹¹

Exceptions

There are number of situations commonly accepted as reasonable exceptions to the prohibition of abortion, even among Christians who otherwise claim they view abortion to be wrong. However, the very moment exceptions are raised, two things invariably have happened. First, they are appealing to the argument of “choice.” The only difference is that the ‘exceptions’ group wants to be those who determine who may be killed. Not only is this in effect the pro-choice argument, but there are any number of different exceptions or combinations of exceptions that one may embrace or reject. In the end, everyone is still arguing for choice – as long as the choice is theirs. Second, even if there were a consensus among Christians as to which exceptions are acceptable, the fact that they presume the right to declare that certain members of the human race created by God are disposable undermines the argument that *all other* pre-born children are valuable members of the human race and worthy of protection. They cannot have it both ways; in effect, they are seeking to take the place of God. Still, for the sake of argument, let’s look at the common exceptions.

What About the Handicapped?

Let’s consider the handicapped, including those born with Down Syndrome¹². Prior to a handicapped child’s conception or diagnosis, I think it is safe to say that no honest person would claim they desire to conceive a handicapped child. However, the effort to eliminate

¹¹ Quote taken from Pastor John Ensor’s book, Innocent Blood. p. 56

¹² Today in the US, over 90% of pre-born children diagnosed with Down Syndrome are aborted despite surveys reporting that 99% of parents love their children with down syndrome and 99% of children with down syndrome report being happy with their lives. (read the full article in USA Today <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2011-11-14/blood-test-down-syndrome/51202078/1>)

imperfections in the human race is the basis for what led to the Nazi Holocaust. Clearly, “perfection” is not only subjective (depending on what someone claims makes a person “perfect”) but may not necessarily always be a worthy goal. Further, God is Creator of all persons and only He knows the purpose for which He has created each one. Meilaender writes, “Our task is not to judge the worth of this person’s life relative to other possible or actual lives. Our task is to care for the life he has as best we can.”¹³ Jesus Himself spoke of the glory God received through His working in the life of a handicapped person. When the disciples asked who had sinned to cause a man to be born blind, Jesus answered, “Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be displayed in him” (John 9:3). Should a Christian dare to step between God’s work and the *glory* of His work? Meilaender rightly warns, “We ought not too easily accept the death of any human being; for each person is made for God, unique and irreplaceable in that relation.”¹⁴

Even in the cases of severe deformity where there is no reasonable hope short of God’s miraculous intervention that the child will live long after birth, stepping between the child’s appointed time as ordained by God is not our place. All parents have been entrusted with God to care for their children and none are informed how long that precious time will be. In these heartbreaking cases, parents should be counseled to arrange with their doctors for the best possible comfort for the child and a private time to say good-bye. The heartbreak and loss is not lessened by prematurely terminating the life of the child, but rather increased. Looking back, would not the parents (and other family members) one day find some solace in treasuring a birth certificate, naming their child, the memory of the time they had with the child, perhaps a funeral service honoring his or her brief life, and treating the child’s body with respect through proper

¹³ Meilaender, p. 85

¹⁴ Meilaender, p. 110

burial? On the other hand, what comfort does it bring to see the memory of their child reduced to a machine-generated line item on a hospital bill for the cost of an extra “medical procedure” and the body incinerated as disposable “medical waste?” When abortion is proposed in a case like this, the presumption is that it will somehow lessen the pain and loss. How? Not only is the child dead, but now the parents have to live with the reality that they took an active role. For the Christian, this decision in effect refuses to believe that God can carry them through the heartbreak, trusting that He has a purpose even if they do not understand it.¹⁵

What About Rape?

While pregnancies resulting from rape are rare, they do occur. This is also the most common exception readily accepted by many who would otherwise be opposed to abortion. No one argues that the woman has been the victim of a heinous crime. However, those who propose abortion in the case of a pregnancy resulting from rape are not offering counsel based on either wisdom or facts but rather responding from an emotional (albeit understandable) abhorrence to the thought of a child conceived in rape and the trauma the pregnancy is presumed to bring upon the already traumatized woman.

Rather than suggest counseling to help the woman overcome her fear that the child somehow “embodies the rape,” Meilaender, who otherwise presents a strong case against abortion for other reasons, succumbs to the pro-abortion rhetoric that it is understandable in this case for the woman to choose abortion. Surely Meilaender believes the child is innocent? Surely he does not impart more power to the lie that the child “embodies the rape” than the Truth that he is an innocent child created in the image of God? Surely he believes that God’s grace and power

¹⁵ There are a number of amazing stories of Christian (and non-Christian) parents who loved their pre-diagnosed severely handicapped children through pregnancy, childbirth, and within hours, death. Their stories inspire and astound thousands for their courage, faith in God, and love and dignity for their children.

is sufficient to carry the woman through the pregnancy and perhaps even to love her child? If he does, his voice is silent in cases of rape.

Meilaender's writing, which is otherwise to be highly commended, includes no suggestion for, or inclination of faith in, counseling that would help the woman in this case to overcome her fears (as painful and real to her as they are) and choose life for her child. In other words, his writing appears to suggest, through silence, that such women will suffer these fears, *and there is nothing that can be done to help them overcome them*, except to have an abortion. Tragically, the trauma of abortion and the resulting shame, regret, and guilt, often women suffer for years afterward, are never acknowledged or factored into the equation. The realization that the child is still as much her own child as a child she may willingly conceive will only surface later, subjecting the woman to further pain and loss.

Everyone agrees that rape is a horrific crime in which someone exercises his choice to violate someone else's body with no regard for the well-being of the other person. However, when a rape victim is counseled to seek an abortion, she is being encouraged to behave just like her rapist! Of course the malice is not there but the outcome is identical: choosing to violate someone else's body (even taking its life) with no regard for the well-being of the other person. While few would condemn such a woman who comes for counsel *after the fact*,¹⁶ the reality is that she will now need to be guided through the recovery and healing of not one, but two, emotionally devastating traumas, when at least one could have been avoided. Even if the pregnancy is assumed to be at least as traumatizing as the aftermath and regret of abortion¹⁷, thereby still resulting in the need to recover from two traumas, should not saving the life of an

¹⁶ Truly, condemnation has no place in Christian counseling under *any* scenario. "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1)

¹⁷ While tens of thousands of women suffer regret for having an abortion, none have reported regret for choosing life for their child, whether the child is raised by the biological mother/parents or adopted.

innocent child be factored into the “equation?” If this were not tragic enough, many also fail to recognize how abortion serves rapists by cooperating in covering up their crimes. This is especially common in cases where the rapist is a family member or is known by the victim, and will seek to coerce the woman into getting an abortion.

Excusing abortion for children conceived in rape also sends a message to those children, along with their courageous mothers, that they are unworthy to live. This would include Ryan Bomberger, Emmy Award-winning Christian Artist who was conceived in rape and then adopted, along with 10 other “unwanted” children, into a loving Christian home. Ryan is involved in various ministries promoting the message there is no such thing as an unwanted child. Other famous persons conceived in rape include Jesse Jackson, Ethel Waters (Gospel singer, Academy Award winning actress), Sherrie Eldridge (Christian Speaker and Adoption advocate), plus countless others.¹⁸

Sadly, here is where Meilaender, and many other Christian leaders, get it wrong¹⁹. On the one hand, he argues,

“The life of the child in the womb is God’s creation, and that child is part of the world Christ came to redeem. The worth and dignity of the child’s life are not therefore dependent on our evaluation—on whether at any given moment we ‘want’ that child.”²⁰

But in the case of rape or incest, Meilaender’s above assertion, for all intents and purposes, is thrown out the window. While his language is gentle and loving, and his hope is that “she may find the courage and strength to love and let live,”²¹ his message remains the same, which is that abortion, though not ideal, is understandable in cases of rape. By embracing the pro-abortionists’ argument (even if unintentionally) that for the woman, the pregnancy embodies the original

¹⁸ See more at <http://www.rebeccakiessling.com/famous-people-conceieved-in-rape.html>

¹⁹ Note: except for Meilaender’s stance on abortion in cases of rape, I truly applaud his writing; however, because his position does not grant children of rape equal protection, I could not recommend his book.

²⁰ p. 37

²¹ p. 36

attack, the victim is encouraged to abort rather than being encouraged, through wise and loving counseling, to consider that God has allowed her child to come into being for purposes she may not understand.

Further, allowing this exception weakens Meilaender's argument that the "worth and dignity of the child's life are not therefore dependent on our evaluation—on whether at any given moment we 'want' that child" because this position by its very nature declares one person's temporary suffering (as heartbreaking as it is) is to be of a higher concern than another person's very own life (a permanent suffering if there ever is one). The reality is that when rape occurs, which is sudden and horrific, the emotions of the other persons involved (medical staff, family members, etc.) are naturally heightened with a single-minded purpose to care for the wounded woman and alleviate her suffering. In the panic, however, it is easy to focus on the person's whose suffering is more visible and lose sight of the suffering of the child whose very life is in danger, as well as lose sight of the further suffering the woman will endure when she faces the reality that she took the life of her own child, a child that thousands of couples would readily adopt and love. But Meilaender's own words betray him,

"To make elimination of suffering our highest priority would be to conclude mistakenly that it can have no point or purpose in our lives. We should not act as if we believe that the negative, destructive powers of the universe are finally victorious. Those who worship a crucified and risen Lord cannot give themselves over to such a vision of life."²²

The reality that one views pre-born life as less valuable than other human life is evident when one asks himself the question whether his approved exception—whatever that may be—to take the life a pre-born child would likewise be used as a valid reason to take the life of a newborn child. If the answer is no but the exception for abortion still stands, the person has at once declared pre-born human life less valuable than born humans unless the pre-born child can

²² p. 8

demonstrate that, *in addition to being a human being created in the image of God*, it possess all of the qualifications that this particular person at this particular time considers necessary in order for the child to be declared “worthy to live.” Further, once this line of reasoning is accepted, there is no logical basis for limiting the exceptions to pre-born, versus human beings in other stages of life.

What If the Mother’s Life is in Danger?

There is one final exception where the lines of distinction are blurred, which is when the life of the mother is at risk. However, even here, there is no reason to reject that the life of the pre-born child is as valuable to God, and by extension should also be viewed as valuable by His servants, as the life of the mother. In reality, there are two realistic scenarios where the life of the mother could be at risk. First is the case of an ectopic pregnancy. However, this is hardly a case equivalent to having an elective abortion since the life of the developing embryo *cannot be sustained*. Because the developing embryo has failed to implant inside the uterus, one of two likely outcomes will result. Either the fallopian tube will expel the burrowed embryo naturally resulting in miscarriage²³ or, emergency surgery will need to be performed to either prevent or treat the inevitable rupture of the mother’s fallopian tube²⁴. Either way, the embryo could not have survived.

The other case most often cited is when life-saving treatment needed by the mother (such as for cancer) would invariably cause the pre-born child to die. However, once again, this is not an appropriate parallel to elective abortion. If the treatment is administered, the child would be miscarried but the mother’s life would be spared. If the treatment is withheld, the child would be spared but the mother’s life would be in danger or even sacrificed. In both cases, only one person

²³ According to Wikipedia, this occurs in approximately half of all ectopic pregnancies.

²⁴ The fallopian tube is the most common, though not only, location of an ectopic pregnancy.

can be saved. This is hardly comparable to an elective abortion where both lives *can* be saved but the choice is made to *take* the life of the child.

For families that are faced with such heart-rending decisions of whether to accept life-saving treatment that places a pre-born child at risk, the struggle is not because they seek the death of the child, but rather that they desire that both mother and child should live! These delicate decisions must be made by each individual family and however they decide, others should be supportive recognizing that the family was not granted an option that could save both, as is available to those who seek elective abortions. Therefore, whether the child could not have survived (ectopic pregnancy), or whether it is a matter of choosing one life over another (to administer life-saving treatment), neither scenario is an “abortion” as the term, and its motivation, is commonly understood and applied.

Are They Better Off?

Recently, after sharing my story of finding God’s forgiveness after abortion at a Christian women’s event, I was approached by a woman who asked, “I know abortion is wrong but aren’t the children better off? After all, don’t they go straight to Heaven?” Personally, I do believe aborted children go to Heaven; God Himself even blessed me with a vision of my child whom I lost to abortion as a teenager²⁵. However, even if the souls of aborted children do go to Heaven, this argument is dangerous on many levels. First, a perceived beneficial outcome never justifies sin. Would God have allowed His Son to suffer and die if God’s Law could simply be ignored and we would all still go to Heaven? Jesus paid an unspeakably high price because of our sin. To justify sin *for any reason* is to have no regard for what sin cost our Lord.

²⁵ Other women (and men) who have experienced abortion also have reported seeing a vision, or having a dream, of their lost child, most often after experiencing God’s healing and forgiveness.

Second, human beings were created by God to live on earth in a human body with other human beings for a period of time set by Him; if He wanted to create more angels, He could have easily done so; instead, He chose to make them human. Third, an aborted child whose life was stolen will never experience the precious gift of knowing Jesus as his or her personal Savior because the child never sinned; likewise, forgiveness and unconditional love (in light of sinfulness) will never be known or experienced.

Fourth, if Christians are truly convinced aborted children are “better off” because they go straight to Heaven, why wouldn’t we likewise take the lives of all our children before they reach the age of accountability? After all, rather than risking their future rejection of the Savior, their salvation would be “guaranteed.” Fifth, by taking the lives of children God created, we have stolen from Him countless persons who would have praised His Name here on earth; in effect, *we have stolen praise from God* for how can we know which aborted children would have embraced His salvation had they been given the opportunity to do so? Pastor Ensor exposes the spiritual battle behind abortion when he writes,

“Abortion targets the gospel by eliminating many who would spread it...[In China] where we see unprecedented growth of the church and a growing passion to complete the task of world evangelism, we also see a law [one-child policy] coercing parents to murder their children—each one a potential contributor to the spread of the gospel—in numbers never witnessed before.”²⁶

Finally, the assumption behind every abortion is that either the child is unwanted or unworthy to live (parents’ perspective), or his life would not be worth living (presumed perspective of the child). And yet, “unwanted” children are adopted, loved, and living full lives every day. Does God view adoption as less than ideal? After all, Moses was adopted, Esther was adopted, even Jesus was adopted! Were these “Plan B” or God’s plan? There are also the handicapped. If the life of a handicapped person is not worth living, why aren’t more

²⁶ Ensor, p. 97, 111

handicapped persons committing suicide? Could it be that God has granted them special strengths or characteristics to overcome their limitations and live a fulfilling life, which seems foreign to those of us who've never experienced it? Are their lives disposable? Do *they* consider life not worth living? In fact, we see quite the opposite: those who seem to have everything have some of the highest suicide rates.

How about children conceived in rape? Are they proclaiming their lives are not worth living? The reality is that when we justify abortion because we decide that someone else's life is not worth living or protecting, **we deceive ourselves**. If we could truly discern our heart's motives as God does, abortion is never about the quality of life we presume upon the other person since only that person can rightly make that assessment. Rather, the use of abortion stems from sinful man's fears of the threat to his own quality of life the pre-born child may introduce. Randy Alcorn, author of Why Pro-Life? drives the point home when he writes, "The pro-choice position always overlooks the victim's right to choose. Blacks don't choose slavery, Jews didn't choose the ovens. Women don't choose rape. And babies don't choose abortion."²⁷

Conclusion

The Bible declares that the ability to conceive and bear children is a blessing from God. When we lose respect for life, we've lost respect for the Creator of Life. While there are various scenarios often cited as reasonable exceptions to the objection of abortion, they invariably depend on the pro-choice argument, with the condition that "I" be the one who chooses the exceptions. Since God is Creator and sustainer of all life, how can anyone claim the right to question His judgment concerning the children He has allowed to be conceived and then to act on that judgment and presume the freedom to declare that they are not worthy to be born? And yet, those judgments happen 3,000 times each and every day. They happen in our schools, in our

²⁷ Alcorn, p. 64

neighborhoods, and in our churches. It happened to me. As we strive to teach and preach the Truth that every pre-born person is worth protecting, may we always be mindful of the countless persons, both men and women, in our midst who have been wounded by abortion. Who believed the lies, succumbed to the fears, and can never undo the choice they made. May we come alongside them and point them to Jesus who forgives all sin, even the sin of abortion that cuts to the very heart of God, the Creator and sustainer of life itself.

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:15-20)

Throughout human history, one of the things that has distinguished God’s people from all others is their treatment of those who are weak and without a voice. Today, there are both secular and Christian advocates fighting to end slavery, poverty, and other social ills. However, when it comes to fighting the modern-day holocaust against pre-born children, the bandwagon is frighteningly sparse. If there is any category of persons the Church should be fighting to protect, it is the pre-born, who have no other voice. It should be no surprise that we fight this battle alone for it is a spiritual battle rooted in Satan’s hatred of humanity simply because they are created in the image of God. Since the battle is spiritual, it can be fought only one way: with the Truth of God’s Word. Only the Church has the Truth. *Why then, is there such silence?* Concerning ‘The Absent Church,’ Brian Fisher writes, “A primary reason men do not rise up and protect the lives and well-being of women and unborn children is we don’t really believe in the sanctity of all human life.”²⁸

²⁸ Fisher, p. 146

While I am neither fond of nor in the habit of using disturbing images to persuade persons to recognize the truth that abortion is murder, I have to wonder why persons who claim to be Christian, including pastors and other leaders, who readily respond with compassion and sympathy to pictures of slaughtered animals or starving children, refuse to acknowledge and actively speak out against the slaughter of innocent human beings? Tragically, just as the Church did not recognize the reality of the Jewish Holocaust until after the pictures hit the news – when it was too late—I fear that the Church will not make ending abortion a priority until it *sees* abortion.

Human embryo aborted at 7-8 weeks gestation:



Next Page: A Poem “Before Me, You”

Before Me, You

by Shadia Hrichi

*Before I entered the womb you prepared for me,
You knew me.*

*Before I was born,
You looked upon me.*

*Before my first cry,
You whispered my name.*

*Before I could walk,
You carried me.*

*Before I turned to you,
You died for me.*

*Before I carried my cross,
You walked to Calvary.*

*Before I whispered your Name,
You cried out for me.*

*Before I looked up,
You rose for me.*

*Before I knew you,
You opened heaven to prepare a place for me.*

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