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Should Women Abort Their Babies?

During the 1980's and 1990's, there were roughly 1,550,000 abortions per year ("Abortion Services in the U.S., 1987-1988" 103). To abort means to terminate or end something. In this case, it is about the abortion of a woman's pregnancy. There are several different arguments about whether abortion is acceptable or not. Is abortion morally wrong or should a woman be allowed to abort her unborn baby?

First, let's discuss a few other definitions. To be alive means that a being is growing, maturing, developing, and replacing its own dying cells. Human means one of the biological beings who belongs to the species of Homo Sapiens. Human beings are unique from any other being. Humans have forty six chromosomes in each cell. Other living things such as cats or the fruit trees do not. Human life is one of the most important definitions to understand. From a pagan point of view, human life is the quality that distinguishes a vital and functional human being from a dead body. From a Christian point of view, a human life, created in the image of God, is a physical and spiritual being. The biblical account expresses this reality in a symbolic language when it says "then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Two questions that could be asked when trying to determine if a being is a human life are: is the being alive? And, is the being a human? If the answers are yes for both questions, then the being is a human life. If what is growing within the mother is not human life, then what is it? Is it simply a piece of tissue or a glob of protoplasm? If this is true, then perhaps this "being" deserves little respect or consideration.

Now let's consider some of the most common arguments about abortion. The first is whether or not a fetus is a living human being. When does human life begin? From the theological and religious point of view, one might say He (God) created the soul at conception, so human life begins at the moment of conception. There are several other opinions concerning the point at which life begins also. Many people argue that an unborn baby is not an individual living human being until it is born and is not completely dependent on its mother. If this is the case, then if an adult is involved in a serious accident and has to be put on a respirator in order to live, does that make him any less of a person? Of course not. Other people believe that personhood begins a few hours after conception when the ovum is split into two cells, 4 weeks after conception when the heart starts beating, six weeks after conception when there are brain waves being sensed, or four months after conception when the face is distinguishable. These arguments are interesting, but not logical. It is all of these factors that actually make the fetus a person. How can someone say that a being, which is obviously alive and growing, has forty six chromosomes in each cell, has a beating heart, by eight weeks has its own unique fingerprints, is susceptible to pain, and has all other main factors of life say that a fetus is not a living person? In the article "Abortion Is Murder," it is said that the fetus is an

individual immediately after conception. It has its own unique set of DNA, chromosomes and genes; there is no other being that ever has or ever will be identical. The scientific knowledge of fetal development has confirmed that the beginning of any one human individual's life, biologically speaking, begins after the father's sperm comes together with his mother's ovum, in conception or fertilization. After the process of conception, the human is alive and growing in his mother's womb. If, for some people, the fact that it is a living human baby growing in the mother's womb is still questionable, they should consider that a human woman could not possibly have a watermelon developing in her womb (another "living, growing thing").

The second argument is "what if the unborn child is unwanted?" Should it be alright to say that every child who is not wanted should be killed? Do parents kill their teenagers if they don't want them anymore? Think of what would happen if everyone killed the people they didn't want. People like Hitler would then be justified in killing people of different races or religions that they despised. Why is it okay then, for a mother to kill her baby if it is not wanted? Since the baby within the mother's womb is a living human being, wouldn't it be murder to abort that life? If it is illegal to murder a child or an adult, shouldn't it be illegal to murder an unborn baby as well? Then the "what if the baby is unwanted and will have to live in a foster home and be miserable all its life" question comes up. The answer to that is simple. Everyone can be happy; no person knows what kind of life the child will have or what great things could happen to that child later on in life. The composer Ludwig Van Beethoven was almost aborted, look what the world would have missed out on if he had been?

The third argument has to do with rape, but first lets understand that rape means one person being assaulted or forced by another person to have sexual intercourse. Should a woman be able to abort her baby if he is a product of rape? In cases like this, the woman has been subjected to a violent act and she needs love, support and help. Should she then be part of a second violent act, which would be killing an innocent baby? Even though the woman is deeply hurt and scarred and she might think that giving birth to the baby would make it harder and just remind her of the trauma more, the truth is she is going to remember the trauma no matter what and the knowledge that she killed an innocent baby in addition could effect her even more. This again brings up the argument of whether a woman can kill her baby if it is unwanted. The growing baby inside of the rape victim's womb, wanted or unwanted, is still a living individual person and should not be killed. The fourth argument and one of the most popular heard today is "It's the woman's body, she should be able to do what she wants with it." If a woman is pregnant with a boy, then he has male genitals. Clearly this is not part of a woman's body, they belong to her baby boy. This shows that he is a separate person from his mother.

Over all, the single and most important argument is whether a woman should have the right to choose if she wants to keep her baby or not. When should someone's right to live depend upon whether or not someone else wants them? If the mother should be able to decide whether she wants the baby to live or not, shouldn't the baby have a say in whether he wants to live too? Obviously the baby would choose life and although parents

routinely make the decisions for and about their children, it is only right for the parents to make the decision that is for their child's well being.

If a mother doesn't want her child or she has problems with feeding or supporting her child, she has the alternative option to put the baby up for adoption and this way the child has a chance to live life. Adoption is definitely a more loving way to handle the situation.

Many people are unaware of the four most common techniques abortionists use today are suction/aspiration, Dilation and evacuation, RU-486, and salt poisoning. In the suction/aspiration method, the abortionist inserts a hollow plastic tube with a knife-like edge into the uterus. The suction tears the baby's body into pieces. The placenta is cut from the uterine wall and everything is sucked into a bottle. The method of dilation and evacuation is a lot more gruesome. It is used on mid and late term babies, from 4 to 9 months. The abortionist inserts forceps through the cervical canal into the uterus and grasps one of the baby's legs, positioning the baby feet first, face down in a breeched position. The child's body is then pulled out of the cervix except for the head, which is too large to pass through. The baby is alive at this point and will most likely be kicking and flailing his arms and legs. The abortionist hooks his fingers over the baby's shoulders, holding the woman's cervix away from the baby's neck. He then jams blunt tipped surgical scissors into the base of the skull and spreads the tips apart to enlarge the wound. A suction catheter is inserted into the baby's skull and the brain is sucked out. The skull collapses and the baby's head passes through the cervix.

RU-486 is a steroid drug that is often called "the abortion pill." The University of Iowa Health Care explains, "the drug blocks the normal action of progesterone in the uterus. This prevents the implantation of a fertilized egg in the uterine lining or can cause shedding of the lining if implantation has already occurred."

Salt poisoning is one of the most common methods of late term abortion. In an article by Precious Life it is explained that, "a salt solution is injected into the amniotic fluid. The baby breathes and swallows this concentration and dies painfully over a period of hours from salt poisoning, dehydration, brain hemorrhage, and convulsions. The baby's skin is often burned off by the solution, and delivery occurs 24 to 48 hours after the baby dies. The skin of the babies is either completely burned or turned a cherry-red colour." Dr. Russell Sacco dryly observed that "If the abortion is well done, we don't have to watch the baby die. So we inject a salt solution. The result is like putting salt on a slug, but we don't have to watch it." Many women have reported that after injecting the saline solution they can feel the baby kicking and wiggling in agony.

Abortion has after effects that can lead to very serious mental and emotional illnesses. Studies show that within the first few weeks after having an abortion, between forty and sixty percent of women have negative reactions. Within 8 weeks after their abortions, thirty six percent had experienced sleep disturbances, thirty one percent had regrets about their decision, and eleven percent had been prescribed medicine by their doctor or psychiatrist (Ashton 1115-1122).

So is abortion morally wrong or should a woman be allowed to kill her unborn baby? There are over a million babies a year being torn apart and killed, and many women suffer in several different ways because of it. A baby is a human life and no woman, man, president, pope, or anyone should take it upon him or herself to choose if that baby should live or die. Abortion is selfish and cruel and should be made illegal. It is everyone's moral responsibility to protect and support our next generation.

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