

Position Paper on Abortion

Human life is a precious gift of God, deliberately and specifically sanctified by God apart from the rest of His creation. Human beings alone within creation are made in His image. The privilege of being a member of the human family, with the resultant right to life as a special creation of God, belongs to all human beings, from the moment of their conception¹, throughout the entire life process, irrespective of age, health or disability, functional status or level of dependence upon others.

This understanding of the nature of human life is affirmed both by God's inerrant Word and by the testimony of His creation:

- Biblical:
 - Gen 1:26-27 - Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
 - Psa 139: 13-16 - For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
 - Isa 44:24, Isa 49:1&5, Jer 1:5, Luke 1:39-45, Gal 1:15, Psalm 8
- Christological: Jesus was God's son throughout His entire development, not taking on an office at some time later in His maturation (Luke 1:39-45; John 1:1,4, Heb 2:17)
- Biological:
 - "Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical landmark because, under ordinary circumstances, a new, genetically distinct human organism is formed when the chromosomes of the male and female pronuclei blend in the oocyte." O'Rahilly & Muller, Human Embryology & Teratology, 3rd. Ed., 2001.
 - "Union of these gametes during fertilization produces a zygote or fertilized ovum which is the primordium or *beginning of a new human being*. (emphasis in the original text) Human development begins at fertilization....This highly specialized, totipotent cell marked the beginning of each of us as a unique individual." Moore & Persaud, The Developing Human: Clinically Oriented Embryology, 6th Ed., 1998.

Abortion is the deliberate destruction of a human being in the early stages of his or her life story, and therefore is contrary to the Divinely defined nature of human life. Abortion is performed by a variety of methods, including mechanical destruction and removal of the child from the mother's womb, poisons given to the baby in utero or to the mother (such as RU-486 or "morning after" pills), or means to prevent the implantation of an embryo in the womb after conception (such as IUDs and certain forms of birth control pills).

Therefore, we, as members of the Body of Christ, oppose abortion, in all of its forms.

- The single, rare exception, is to permit the saving of the mother's life when the continuation of pregnancy will with the highest level of certainty result in the death of both mother and child. This exceptional intervention should only take place after much prayer and counsel. It should be noted that in this extremely rare circumstance a choice is not being made between the value of the life of the child vs. the life of the mother, but is rather the saving of one that can be saved rather than the almost certain loss of mother and offspring.

We further commit ourselves to:

- Providing alternatives and solutions to the crisis of unplanned pregnancy (Matt 24:45), including, but not limited to:
 - Promoting and supporting adoption
 - Supporting crisis pregnancy centers (e.g. New Life Family Services)
 - Supporting financially, physically and spiritually women and families confronting an unplanned pregnancy, especially those pregnancies resulting from the trauma and violence of rape and incest
 - Supporting and providing abstinence education to youth and adults
 - Providing competent counseling to those facing the choice of abortion and its alternatives
- Working to reverse the current legal status of abortion on demand (Proverbs 24:11-12)
- Educating the church and the larger public on the issues of abortion and its alternatives
- Recognizing the reality of Post Abortion Trauma, which includes the extreme pain and suffering of those who are abortion's second victims, and supporting those victims with prayer, compassion and love (e.g. Healing Hearts Ministries) (Rom 5:5-8, Rom 8:1, Gal 5:1)
- Praying for an end to abortion by interceding for
 - individuals facing the choice of abortion
 - our national and world leaders and judges
 - providers of abortion
 - those individuals who have been blinded by the illusion of "choice"
- Witnessing our commitment to life in our financial investments and consumer and entertainment choices
- Demonstrating to **all** God's love for them by our love and compassion for them, including those who may differ with us in our commitment to life.

¹The act of conception is a complex process that transpires over 16-24 hours. It is when the genetic material from the father and mother finally fuse that a new, unique human being is conceived.