



**DELICATE
DISCUSSIONS,
PART II**

reflecting on our world today
rooted in Jesus' compassion

life issues self defense Synod issues
political parties
... capital punishment cultural expressions of faith

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**DELICATE
DISCUSSIONS,
PART II**

reflecting on our world today
rooted in Jesus' compassion

Life Issues

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Groundwork

- Christian/biblical worldview
 - does *not* mean science is rejected but certainly *can* be questioned
 - God is final authority
 - We are disciples of Jesus, children of God by faith, filled with his Holy Spirit, and are obedient to him first in all things.
 - Where he does not explicitly speak, we are free to use our sanctified reason, and respectful disagreement is allowed.

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Life Issues: Overview

- goal: humbly discuss issues related to God's design for life and our role in sustaining & supporting it
- brainstorm
 - What kinds of topics fit into this framework?
 - What critiques are often leveled against the "pro-life movement"?

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting points
 - What is a human?
 - human = body + spirit
 - What do humans create? Humans, of course!
 - James 2:26
 - Psalm 51:5
 - Scripture doesn't question when a human *receives* its soul. Remember that separation of body and spirit (death) was not part of our original design.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting points
 - When does biological human life begin?
 - distinct organism with distinct DNA clearly begins at conception
 - distinct DNA = distinct human
 - **From both a theological and biological perspective, a complete and distinct human comes into being at conception.**
 - *Do not forget this crucial point!*

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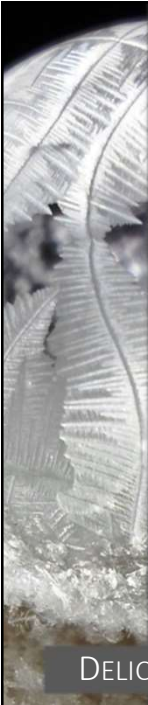


Life Issues: Beginning

- valuing life
 - ELCA, *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, “What Is Human: Shifting the Paradigm”, Kevin Powell, October 2001 (Volume 1 Issue 2)
 - “it seems hypocritical, even idolatrous, to attach so great a value to a microscopic collection of cells.”
 - your thoughts?



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Life Issues: Beginning

- valuing life
 - TED, “From Conception to Birth”, Edward Tsiaras, December 2010
 - your thoughts?

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Life Issues: Beginning

- definitions matter
 - fertilization = sperm + egg (a new human)
 - implantation = fertilized egg embeds in uterine wall
 - conception = “the process of becoming pregnant involving fertilization or implantation or both”
 - pregnancy = implantation and everything following
 - abortion = termination of a pregnancy (spontaneous or intentional)
- *All of these involve a new human.*

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Life Issues: Beginning

- definitions matter
 - contraception = against (preventing) conception
 - used loosely, though, to include preventing pregnancy (eg., NARAL, Planned Parenthood)
 - preventing conception = no new human
 - preventing pregnancy = possibly, not allowing new human to implant and grow

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Life Issues: Beginning

- definitions matter
 - birth control
 - used very loosely
 - can mean preventing fertilization (no new human)
 - can mean preventing implantation (new human)
 - Planned Parenthood categorizes all of these as birth control: fertility awareness, condoms, vasectomy, breastfeeding, emergency contraception, abstinence, etc. (“Birth control is how you prevent pregnancy.”)

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting a family
 - What fundamental points are ignored in these statements?


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Life Issues: Beginning

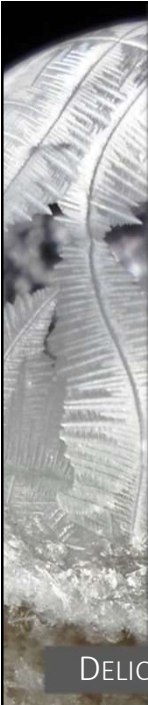
- starting a family
 - NARAL website



Everyone should be able to decide if, when, how, and with whom they start or grow a family.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting a family
 - NARAL Statement of Principals

As progressives, we stand united in understanding that policies that limit access to abortion and force medically unnecessary procedures are oppressive to women, especially low-income women and women of color.

As progressives, we stand united in the belief that a woman's autonomy over her own body is not a secondary issue or a "social issue," but rather a human right and a necessity in order to attain and preserve economic security in her life.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting a family
 - NARAL


Issues

Emergency Contraception

All Americans should have access to emergency contraception when they need it, without judgment or delay.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting a family
 - NARAL website

Emergency contraception (EC), sometimes called “the morning-after pill,” is birth control that significantly reduces the chances of becoming pregnant if taken soon after sex. It may prevent a pregnancy before it occurs. It has no effect on an existing pregnancy.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- starting a family
 - NARAL

Emergency contraception is safe and effective, and works best when taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex. Most types of EC can work up to three days after sex, and some prescription products can be taken up to five days after sex.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- God's truth about life/offspring
 - Genesis 1:28
 - Exodus 20:13
 - Exodus 21:22-25 (cp. v. 12)
 - Psalm 127:3-5 (surprising contrast to v. 1-2)
 - Psalm 139:13-16
 - Psalm 51:5
 - Psalm 51:7
 - John 10:10

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Life Issues: Beginning

- overpopulation
 - limited response: trust and obey God
- *in vitro* fertilization (IVF)
 - numerous concerns
 - one-flesh union
 - three-parent IVF
 - how many humans created vs. implanted, frozen, discarded

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - “Abortion presents a profound moral issue on which Americans hold sharply conflicting views. Some believe fervently that a human person comes into being at conception and that abortion ends an innocent life. Others feel just as strongly that any regulation of abortion invades a woman’s right to control her own body and prevents women from achieving full equality. Still others in a third group think that abortion should be allowed under some but not all circumstances, and those within this group hold a variety of views about the particular restrictions that should be imposed.”

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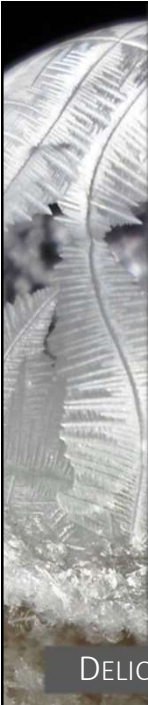


Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - “For the first 185 years after the adoption of the Constitution, each State was permitted to address this issue in accordance with the views of its citizens. Then, in 1973, this Court decided *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U. S. 113. Even though the Constitution makes no mention of abortion, the Court held that it confers a broad right to obtain one. It did not claim that American law or the common law had ever recognized such a right, and its survey of history ranged from the constitutionally irrelevant (e.g., its discussion of abortion in antiquity) to the plainly incorrect (e.g., its assertion that abortion was probably never a crime under the common law). After cataloging a wealth of other information having no bearing on the meaning of the Constitution, the opinion concluded with a numbered set of rules much like those that might be found in a statute enacted by a legislature.”

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - How was this decision reached?
 - “Until the latter part of the 20th century, there was no support in American law for a constitutional right to obtain an abortion. No state constitutional provision had recognized such a right. Until a few years before Roe was handed down, no federal or state court had recognized such a right. Nor had any scholarly treatise of which we are aware. And although law review articles are not reticent about advocating new rights, the earliest article proposing a constitutional right to abortion that has come to our attention was published only a few years before Roe.”

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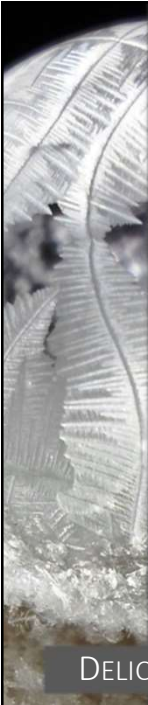
Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - How was this decision reached?
 - “Not only was there no support for such a constitutional right until shortly before *Roe*, but abortion had long been a *crime* in every single State. At common law, abortion was criminal in at least some stages of pregnancy and was regarded as unlawful and could have very serious consequences at all stages. American law followed the common law until a wave of statutory restrictions in the 1800s expanded criminal liability for abortions. By the time of the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, three-quarters of the States had made abortion a crime at any stage of pregnancy, and the remaining States would soon follow.

Roe either ignored or misstated this history, and *Casey* declined to reconsider *Roe*'s faulty historical analysis. It is therefore important to set the record straight.”

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - Yes, I'm incredibly thankful for and excited about the overruling of *Roe* and *Casey*!
 - What did this overruling do?
 - It did **not** ban abortion nation wide.
 - It **did** return the decision to the state.
 - status in Michigan

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - How was this decision reached?
 - 6-3 decision (with 5 signing the majority opinion and 1 signing another opinion to overrule)
 - *Roe* and *Casey* were unfounded decisions that looked more like legislation than legal judgments.

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - But, as I said on May 15, “Are you ready to love like never before?”
 - “How do we love the people in the pro-choice camp?”
 - Speak God’s revealed truth in compassionate love.
 - Call sin sin, but offer forgiveness and actual loving support (financial, emotional, situational).
 - We sacrifice for the sake of others!

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Life Issues: Beginning

- the post-Roe era
 - Must, should, or may Christians advocate for particular kinds of laws?
 - no; probably; absolutely
 - We ourselves live by God's law regardless of the civil laws.

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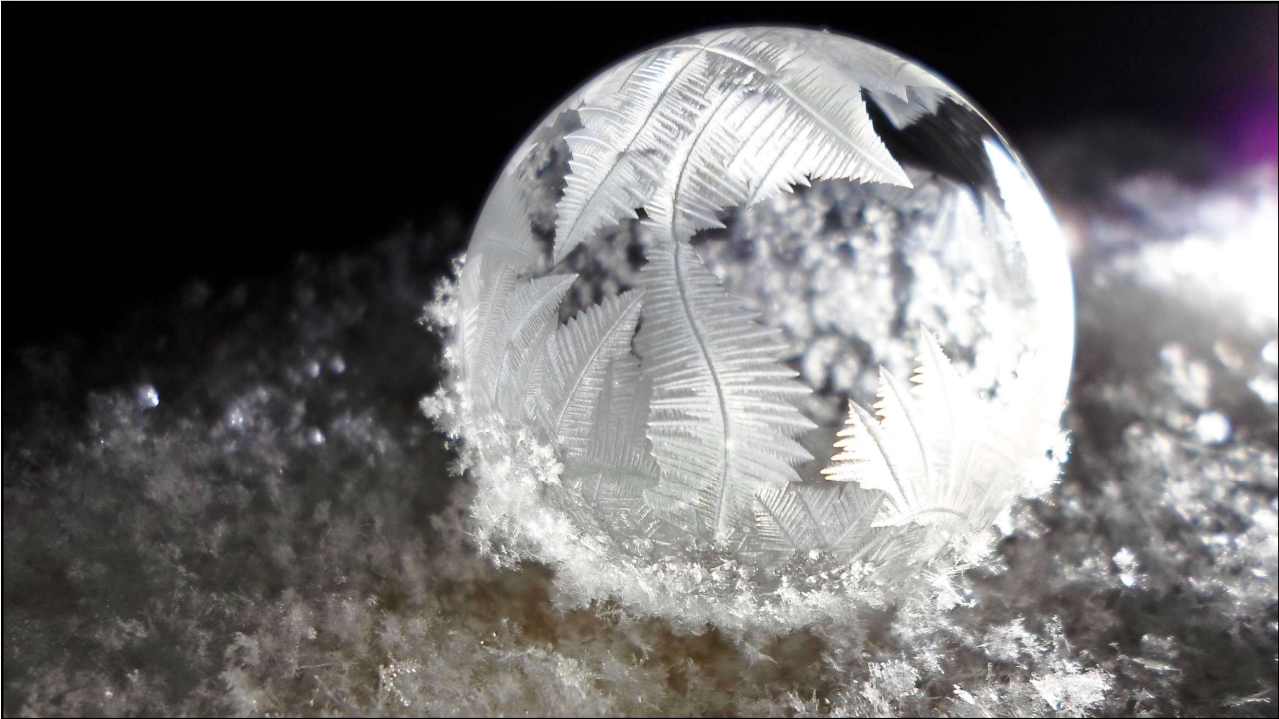


Life Issues: Beginning

- Do not forget God's forgiveness for yourself
- ...or for others!

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