

Honoring the Value of Life (Pt 1)

Series: Cracks – Navigating Our Divided Times
Brad Bailey – March 20, 2022

NOTE: The following notes are more extensive than what time would allow presenting, but provide both the main points and heart of the message. One will also find “further resources” with links and extensive footnotes that I hope can serve them.

Intro

Today we’re continuing in our series focused on navigating through our divided times. Our goal is to identify some of the issues which have brought division within our culture at large...but also within the general Christian culture...**to allow God to speak to us through the Scriptures. Our goal is not to settle every difference of perspective and policy... but to establish our common ground in the mind and heart of God.**

Today I invite us to engage an issue that has been among the most politically polarized for decades...and that is the issue of the **sanctity of life.**

How does God call us to be...**Honoring the Value of Life ... which includes the controversial and complex issue of abortion.**

The debate over abortion has continued throughout most of our lifetimes. Unlike other social issues...which tend to become less public after there has been some federal ruling ...the legality of abortion has never simply gone away.

When the Supreme Court made it’s ruling in the 1973 Federal Case of Roe vs. Wade ... the depth of concerns for both the rights of the unborn and the rights of woman have only grown.

For those who connect most deeply with the rights of the unborn... the nature of abortion cannot be accepted as merely reflecting one’s personal choice.... due to the belief that there is a second life which cannot speak for itself. And advances in medical science and technology have continued to reveal what many believe support a view that human life begins at conception. [1]

At the same time, the way in which women have been violated by men has finally begun to be heard throughout the cultural conscience... a reckoning captured by the #metoo movement and similar movements around the world. [2] Women have been subjugated to the wills and egos of men and are just finally finding enough voices joining together to stand up... to begin to have a voice that can stand up to power. And that a voice that needs to be heard. And that is a voice that is naturally going to want to defend the freedom related to their own bodies.

So it is not surprising that the issue has grown even more passionate and entrenched. **Some have passionate convictions to be a voice for unborn lives. Some have passionate convictions for protecting the rights of women.**

Into those passions... let me express a couple vital points... before even engaging the issue.

I want to invite us out of the political pep rally... and into the presence of God. My invitation is to shift positions... to shift from the political position...to the personal space...in which we come before the presence of God.

The problem with the mere political positions...is that they tend to focus on rights...rather than responsibility.

Whether you identify as “Pro-Choice” or “Pro-Life”... please know that you are welcome here. We’re not going to try to resolve the issue of rights.... but rather the responsibility that such rights lead to. And in this sense...I want those who may identify as Pro-Choice and Pro-Life... to be challenged...and hopefully to welcome the challenge.

Those who focus on the right to choose ...can tend to diminish the responsibility that such a choice involves.

Those who focus on removing the right to choose... can tend to consider their own personal responsibility to support and honor life... as a secondary matter.

So... engage the nature of honoring life... over two weeks... each week challenging one of those aspects.

And as we gather around Jesus... we gather in the presence of grace.

I know that some of us have participated in the decision to have an abortion... it may have been personal decision...or perhaps as a partner or parent alongside.

You know better than I, what that choice involved.

There may be choices you have never settled peacefully with God.

As we look to God’s Word for clarity of convictions, I pray I want you to know that in this place there is grace. Here is this house... we gather around the grace of God.

While our focus is more about helping to think through the common “positions.” my hope is that one may find value for the deeply personal process as well.

My hope is that we all come with a desire to become more deeply responsible persons.

PRAY

As I expressed before... I want to shift from the issue of rights.... to that of responsibility.

This week I want to challenge proponents of choice to realize that rights only lead to responsibility.

I believe we do well to embrace that we all share the common ground of our human nature which has been given at least the potential capacity to reproduce life... and that means we carry with us the capacity for all the related responsibility...as well as for the wonder and joy and disappointment and loss involved.

The Responsibility of “Choice”

For those who tend to identify as “Pro-Choice”... I believe that what is often “at the heart” of this position, is a righteous sense that women have not been respected at a fundamental level... and perhaps no violation is more personal that that of violating a woman’s own body. This may seem to infuse the “Pro-Choice” position with all the moral sensibility that it needs.

The challenge is to then embrace... the responsibility of the choice.

A lack of a clear basis for determining the value of the unborn life, or even the desire for such, suggests that one is choosing to value personal choice as more valuable than a life.

When it appears that the nature of this choice is celebrated with revelry in itself rather than the fitting thought and soberness that such a profound choice about life should reflect, I believe we must consider... at what point are we looking away from life because we value choice?

If our culture has grown to understand that the only true choice is an “informed choice”...why should this not be valued in deciding to end the life of what is potentially one’s own child? In the multiplicity of business and financial decisions, it has become clear that an “informed decision.” requires understanding the true nature and value of what is at hand.

With that in mind, I’d like to share ...

Reasons to embrace the responsibility that the unborn represent another life whose value we should honor.

1. The Bible communicates that God forms and spiritually endows life in the womb.

The issue of abortion was not a major medical choice in the Middle East or Roman world....so what we draw from the Scriptures...is how God speaks about the unborn. [3]

God is sovereignly involved in forming life in the womb.

God forming, naming and calling the child in the womb (eg Job 10:8-12; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:1-2, 49:1-5; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15).

King David illustrates this most beautifully in **Psalm 139.**

**¹³ For You created my inmost being;
You knit me together in my mother’s womb.
¹⁴ I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
¹⁵ 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.
¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in Your book
before one of them came to be.**

Without the benefit of modern science (ultrasounds, dating methods, OBGYNs, et al), David was able to put into words what the human heart instinctively knows: the unborn child is a human life.

And he’s not alone. Job agrees,

“Your hands shaped me and made me. Will You now turn and destroy me? Remember that *You molded me like clay... You gave me life* and showed me kindness, and in Your providence watched over my spirit” – Job 10:8-12

In Ecclesiastes, the writer says,

“As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything - Ecclesiastes 11:5 (ESV)

In these and other verses, the Bible affirms the life and value of unborn children. [4]

Admittedly, none of the biblical writers presumed to speak for science. They had never heard a baby’s heartbeat or had the privilege of seeing an ultrasound. Instead, what they testify to...is a respect for God being the source of life... with no reason to distinguish some stages from another.

And we hear not only the testimony of their understanding....but God Himself speaks through the prophets of His purposes being at work in the womb.

Jeremiah:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” - Jeremiah 1:5

Isaiah

Thus says the Lord who made you...and formed you from the womb. - Isaiah 44:2

None of you are an accident. God’s sovereignty holds a place for every life...with plans and purpose. Let that truth declare deeply in your soul that your existence is intended, and let it declare value to every life conceived.

God gives His spiritual nature to life in the womb.

How did God speak of the coming of the Messiah... of Jesus?

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Emmanuel... which means ‘God with us.’ - Isaiah 7:14 (cf. Luke 1:31; Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:39-43.)

When God chose to enter humanity...He did so not as an adult...not as a young child... but as an unborn child.

We do well to recall the words spoken to Mary regarding the one who would become the mother of Jesus [5]...

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God.” - Luke 1:35 (NLT)

And at around the same time... to the parents John the Baptist...who are told that..

“He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.” - Luke 1:15

And when Mary had just conceived life by God’s Spirit...she visits Elizabeth...and refers to the unborn child as “the Lord”...in only the first couple days of pregnancy!

These passages reveal that the womb is a distinctly sacred space. God who works sovereignly...and is able to work all for good... cares for those who face an unwanted pregnancy....but He will not define that life any different than any other. No life is inherently unwanted. Every life is both sacred and sinner... loved by God... who is always at work.

As such... the early Christian community identified with the call to defend the weak... those who could not speak for themselves. [6]

2. The Christian church throughout history has embraced a sacred responsibility to protect the unborn.

In the early church, Christians felt that they needed to take a stand because they were in an entirely different cultural situation. In the Greco-Roman world, both abortion and infanticide were widely practiced. The church unanimously and strongly opposed abortion from its earliest days:

- “Do not murder a child by abortion nor kill it at birth.” (Didache 2:1–2 [A.D. 70]).
- “You shall not slay a child by abortion.” (*Letter of Barnabas* 19 [A.D. 74]).

Athenagoras, a second century Greek apologist, wrote,

- “We say that women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder... [for we] regard the very fetus in the womb as a created being, and therefore an object of God’s care.” (*A Plea for the Christians* 35 [A.D. 177]).

In the early third century the African church father Tertullian wrote,

- “It does not matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to birth. In both instances, the destruction is murder.” (*Apology* 9:8 [A.D. 197]).

In the fourth century, Basil of Caesarea, wrote,

- “A woman who deliberately destroys a fetus is answerable for murder.”

In the same century, John Chrysostom, the most esteemed church father in Eastern Orthodoxy said,

- “Why do you abuse the gift of God... and make the chamber of procreation a chamber for murder?” (*Homilies on Romans* 24 [A.D. 391]).

The early church fathers remained opposed... Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose, Augustine... all maintained every life was sacred. This conviction eventually won the day and was adopted following the emperor’s conversion to embrace Christ or at least the teachings and worldview. This conviction has stood throughout Catholic history, and was held strongly by every reformer of Protestant tradition. (Calvin, Luther, later Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Bonhoeffer.)

There’s an unbroken chain of witness from the earliest days of the Christian church to the 20th century voicing strong countercultural opposition to abortion. [7]

3. The problem of identifying any distinction beyond conception. - There is increasing clarity that every human life’s distinct nature (DNA) is formed at conception... and increasing difficulty identifying any later defining moment in which a life “achieves” value (including “viability.”)

Virtually every bioethicist in the world agrees that human life begins at conception. However, in the last 50 years, many have sought to create a new category or distinction.

Some propose a distinction between human life and human beings... or between human life and human persons.

Abortion is premised on the idea that all human beings are not persons.... and therefore do not have the same rights to protection.

The distinction trying to be made seems difficult at best.

With the most recent discovery of DNA... has come the discovery of the code that distinguishes every life from another. And it is created at conception. At the moment of conception... an individual’s unique set of DNA is created, captured in a single cell. And rapid development and growth begins.

There was a time in which the world was steeped in pagan beliefs...and infanticide... killing infants and young children was acceptable. As the early Christians grew within the Roman Empire...they began to

go to those infants. They understood that life came from God and every life held sacred value to be loved. When that spread across the western world it brought an end to infanticide.

With the movement to accept abortion of the unborn, there is a need to identify some definable element which distinguishes value... or personhood.

No such distinction has ever been clear or compelling. The 1973 Roe vs Wade decision, recognized that dilemma...and chose to identify viability of the unborn to live outside the womb... to be the point at which a mother could not legally choose an abortion procedure. But was both arbitrary in its choice... and arbitrary in its meaning...because viability depends on the means to support the life.

It seems to become clearer that basic ideas about “viability” as a moral basis for protecting life... cannot provide any definition that is coherent or conscionable. As G.H. Breborowicz is often cited for stating,

“Viability exists as a function of biomedical and technological capacities, which are different in different parts of the world. As a consequence, there is, at the present time, no worldwide, uniform gestational age that defines viability.” - G.H. Breborowicz, former Chairman of the Board, Polish Society of Perinatal Medicine [8]

Younger and younger prematurely born lives are able to survive with some special care. At the same time, we have always known that no life is able to survive on its own well after birth. And even after birth a newborn remains dependent on protection and provision...and will not survive more than 3 or 4 days.

The stories of modern infanticide... children left in trash dumpsters ... strikes the majority as unconscionable even if it shares some moral parallels with defining “viability” as a basis for protecting life. The nature of “viability” has also often been recognized as raising moral implications for those with severe disabilities and late life limitations...in which they are dependent on the support of others for maintaining life.

Viability measures medical technology, not one’s humanity.

It becomes difficult to find any quality that perfectly distinguishes the inherent quality of a child before and after birth.

The debate is whether human life is endowed or achieved.

The idea that human life must achieve its value... should cause any of us to pause.

4. Recognition that another distinct human body is alive from conception. - It is increasingly clear that a new life is distinct from the mother at conception... and as such, there is no basis to consider abortion as simply the right to choose what one does with their own body.

I won’t presume to understand the experience of having another life alive within my body. It’s not hard to imagine why many women feel violated... both in the pressures that lead to pregnancy...but also the responsibility that comes with pregnancy.

When presented with the proposition that a woman should have the choice over her own body... anything but affirmation seems to perpetuate the violation already felt.

But what should be increasingly clear, is that *the issue of abortion is not simply about “a woman’s choice over her own body.”*

With his or hers own distinct human DNA... the unborn life is already biologically distinct.

Along with distinct DNA...the fundamental definition of biological distinction, consider some facts that highlight that the unborn represent separate bodies and separate people. [9]

- ***Every cell in the mother’s body has a set of chromosomal characteristics that is entirely distinct from every cell in the baby’s body.***
- ***When the unborn child anchors to the uterine wall, there is a concerted attack by white blood cells to defeat him, and he must defend himself. The mother’s immune system recognizes it as “non-self.” Therefore, it is not part of her body.***
- ***All mothers are obviously female. About half of their children are male.***
- ***The mother and baby frequently have different blood types.***
- ***The baby can be a different race from the mother.***
- ***The baby can die without the mother dying. The mother can die without the baby dying.***

What determines the potential rights of an unborn child’s body?

5. Recognition of sexual union in reproducing life - Sexual union is the potentially life creating act... which bears a fundamental right to be engaged only by choice...and a fundamental responsibility for the potential life created.

Sexual union is a potentially life creating act...that which bears the potential of reproducing of life... and should only be entered by choice...and understood as the fundamental choice to which we are responsible for the life created.

Associating “reproductive rights” to what is done with the consequences of reproducing, denies that the life creating act is the fundamental decision that should be protected as a choice. While the consequences of that choice may have not been prepared for, it is fundamentally a potentially life creating choice.

It’s not a matter of not valuing the right to choose whether to reproduce... it’s a matter of not denying how we reproduce life.

Regardless of what one may decide regarding the rights of the unborn... the overt attempt to shape the issue by the use of new language, is something I believe is worthy to pause and question.

To reduce the question of what is done to a new life to simply “terminating a pregnancy”...to “health care”...to the newest term... that of “forced pregnancy”.... are all fundamentally used to remove the presence of another life and of the choice that has already been engaged in. [9b]

A mature understanding of choice is not that which denies the responsibility because of difficulty of the consequences, but rather rises to face the significance of the choice, and bring compassionate help to support the consequences.

I believe this leads us to the most fundamental call to embrace our responsibility.

However one determines the right to choose how they relate to the unborn life... the choice only leads to the responsibility.

When we get beyond the issue of rights... and focus on responsibility... we can find that...

Honoring the value of the unborn life is not inherently that which violates women.

Rodney Stark, professor of Sociology and Comparative Religions at the University of Washington, wrote a groundbreaking book in 1996 titled *The Rise of Christianity*. In it, he said it was women in the Greco-Roman world who fueled the explosive growth of Christianity in its early centuries. Women did not flock to Christianity despite the church's opposition to abortion and infanticide. Rather, women flocked to Christianity precisely because of the church's opposition to abortion and infanticide. The Greco-Roman world, according to Stark, was a male-dominated culture, which held marriage in low esteem, held women in low esteem, and especially held girl babies in low esteem. Infant girls were the primary subjects of infanticide. In fact, according to Stark, "it was rare for a Roman family to have more than one daughter."

Nancy Pearcey explains the reason why women were so attracted to Christianity:

"A culture that practices abortion and infanticide is a culture that demeans women and disrespects their unique contribution to the task of reproduction. It does not treat women's ability to gestate and bear children as a wondrous and awesome capacity, but as a liability, a disadvantage, a disability. It does not value and protect women in their child-bearing capacity, but seeks to suppress women's bodily functions, using chemicals and deadly devices to violently destroy the life inside her."

As one woman described... she came to realize that abortion actually betrays the true value of women. She wrote,

As a one-time abortion rights supporter, I well know the temptation to see the right to abortion as a representation of women's equality. After all, bearing an unexpected child would seem to interrupt a woman's ability to design her own future according to her own goals and ambitions.

Abortion would seem to provide women with a practical response to the disproportionate responsibility sexual intercourse can lay at our feet.

But abortion, which is often the assumed solution to unexpected pregnancy in our culture, attempts to cure that sexual asymmetry: the biological fact that women get pregnant and men don't. It does this by putting the responsibility to care for — or dispense with — the life of a nascent, developing human being on women alone.

Abortion expects nothing more of men, nothing more of medicine, and nothing more of society at large. Abortion betrays women by having us believe that we must become like men — that is, not pregnant — to achieve parity with them, professionally, socially, educationally. And if we are poor, overwhelmed or abandoned by the child's father, or if medical expenses would be too great for us or for our child, social "responsibility" requires us to rid ourselves of our own offspring. [10]

It is helpful to remember that it was men like Hugh Hefner and other male advocates of sexual exploitation who were the strongest early advocates of permissive abortion laws so they could have sex without any consequences.

Honoring the value of the unborn life is not inherently about a political choice.

A lot of people feel that to support the unborn is so equated with political identity...that they may not feel the fit or freedom. Some may not identify with political conservatives or a Republicans....so they assume they can't value the honor the unborn.

The truth is that the pro-life movement in the 20th century had its origins not in the conservative wing of the Republican party, but rather in the liberal wing of the Democratic party. Pro-life was viewed as a human rights cause.

You don't have to be politically conservative to be honor the unborn. Political lines have shifted in history. They could shift again. [11]

How one honors the life of the unborn is most essentially a personal and not political choice.

CLOSING:

I believe that all human beings deserve the right to life...which is why I continue to be morally opposed to abortion.

But I don't believe this is an issue that will simply be resolved by determining rights...but by embracing our personal responsibility for the unborn that may be a part of our lives...and by supporting those who face the responsibility of the unborn in their lives.

My appeal... is to let God's Spirit speak to you.

If you have participated in an abortion... and feel unsettled with God... I would remind you of the Biblical words of the Apostle Paul...where he says...

But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:19-21

Here the apostle Paul describes the great spiritual reality in which we live; that there are **two realms or powers** at work in this world - the power of **sin** and the power of **grace**. > **AND THE POWER OF GRACE IS GREATER.**

I know that this is a difficult issue... it's contentious... it's complex... and what that contention and complexity needs is conviction and compassion.

Some of us more naturally feel a prophetic passion in their convictions to speak up for the unborn. Some of us more naturally feel a priestly compassion for those who have faced the hardship of difficult decisions in unwanted pregnancies.

May the Spirit help us become a people of compassionate conviction.

PRAY

For Further Reading:

10 Reasons Why I Oppose Abortion, Rich Nathan, January 26, 2019 - [here](#)

Abortion In The Bible By Kirstie Piper, September 23, 2021 - [here](#)

Third Time Around: A History of the Pro-Life Movement from the First Century to the Present by George Grant - the church's history of opposition to abortion - [here](#)
2019

Biblical Principles for Pro-Life Engagement: Personhood, Scripture, and Church History - David Closson - [here](#)

Notes:

1. The Federal Case of Roe vs. Wade did not legally resolve what determines the start of life. While "viability" of life (outside the womb) was deemed reasonable, the judges noted that there was simply no

consistent view from which to define when “life” begins, at least in terms of being associated with legal protection, and as such, there was no source from which to impose on a woman’s own right to choose. On that basis, it may be unlikely that this view will be overturned.

2. In 2006, Tarana Burke coined the phrase “Me Too” as a way to help women who had survived sexual violence. In early 2018, the phrase was reignited as the slogan of the anti-sexual harassment movement. This movement challenged many of the most powerful figure in media, entertainment, and more... and it’s timeline of confrontation with abuse continues. – For a good timeline of this movement, read: #MeToo: A timeline of events, By CHICAGO TRIBUNE, SEP 17, 2020 [here](#)

3. Note: The Biblical testimony may be deemed compelling, but it may not be entirely conclusive. We are not given as direct of an application to human development as we may want. As such, some will contend that:

- The “breath of life” by which God gives life cannot be established until the 28th week after conception when lungs form the capacity to breathe.
- That a moral nature is essential to bearing God’s image and cannot exist until there is some electrical activity in the brain.
- The degree of miscarriages / spontaneous abortions can raise the question as to how acceptable such loss of initial life is to God.

One passage of Scripture that has been debated in regards to it’s application to abortion is that of Exodus 21:22-25.

"If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. ²³ But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, - Exodus 21:22-24 (NIV)

This passage of Scripture is part of a list of laws about fighting and quarreling. It pictures a situation in which two men are fighting and the wife of one of them intervenes to make peace. She is struck, and the blow results in a miscarriage or pre-mature birth. Pro-choice reasoning assumes that a miscarriage occurs... and thus the consequences being required...in which the husband can determine a fair price...but if there is “harm”... presumed to be speaking of the woman, there is “eye for an eye, life for a life” justice. This suggest a clear teaching that the unborn are deemed as property and the woman is deemed a person. However, the language is unclear as to whether the child’s premature birth is a miscarriage and whether he “harm” refers to the woman or the prematurely born. Many, including Tertullian as one of the most respected minds of the early church, considered this to refer to the child, and this shows opposition to abortion.

While the passage is certainly significant, it is best not to base any position upon it due to the challenges in interpretation. Further engagement of this passage can be found at:

The Misuse of Exodus 21:22–25 by Pro-Choice Advocates by John Piper [here](#)

Exodus 21 And Abortion By David Jones [here](#)

What the Early Church Believed: Abortion - [here](#)

4. Other affirmations of God’s formative work in the womb.

The prophet Jeremiah writes, “He did not kill me in the womb; so my mother would have been my grave” - Jeremiah 20:17

Isaiah 44:24 talks about God as "your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb."

Jacob and Esau: “The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, ‘Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will

serve the younger.' When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb" (Gen.25:22-24).

Samson's mother was told not to eat unclean foods "for the boy shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines." Judges 13:3-5

Paul writes that God had set him apart "from my mother's womb." Gal. 1:15

5. Also - "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is *conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 1:20).

The Greek word translated "baby" in reference to the child inside Elizabeth's womb is the same word used for an infant outside of the womb.

6. "Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked" ([Psalm 82:3-4](#)).

"Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter" ([Prov.24:11](#)).

7. For a great list of examples of what early Christian writers had to say on the subject of the abortion, see "What the Early Church Believed: Abortion" - [here](#)

'Throughline' Traces Evangelicals' History On The Abortion Issue, June 20, 2019 [here](#)

Christian opposition to abortion remained unbroken into the twentieth century. In 1945, Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "To kill the fruit in the mother's womb is to injure the right to life that God has bestowed on the developing life." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, Volume 6, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN, 2009), 206.

This remained the view of every Christian denomination until around the 1960s

How Christianity Changed the World, by Alvin J. Schmidt (December 12, 2004) - [here](#)

8. Breborowicz GH (January 2001). "Limits of fetal viability and its enhancement". *Early Pregnancy*. 5 (1): 49–50. [PMID 11753511](#) Breborowicz has served as chairman of the main board of the Polish Society of Perinatal Medicine, a member of the Human Development Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and international associations gathering specialists in the field of perinatology.

9. *From "Shouldn't Women Be Able to Control Their Own Bodies?"* By Brian Clowes, PhD|May 27th, 2018

9b. Why Abortion Makes Sense, June 1, 2016, Jonathan Leeman • Matthew Arbo - [here](#)

David Livingstone Smith in his 2012 book, *Less than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave, and Exterminate Others* captured how people will dehumanize their enemies before enslaving, torturing, or killing them. The Hutus of Rwanda regarded the Tutsi as "cockroaches" and clubbed them to death by the hundreds of thousands. White Americans called Native Americans "savages," and African Americans "property," in order to justify rape, man stealing, and the piles of corpses. On and on the historical record reads, all the way back to ancient Chinese, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian literature. It's hard to kill or enslave your own kind, Livingston says. Easier to kill something subhuman, especially if it's systematic and legally sanctioned killing. A murderous regime doesn't only need power, it needs legitimizing, a moral argument, a sense of its . . . rights.

10. I'm a feminist and I'm against abortion By Erika Bachiochi. Published January 22, 2015 - [here](#)

For some related perspective on the reasons for women choose abortion:

A [Guttmacher Institute survey](#) of women in the United States seeking abortions found that 3 percent said the main reason was a fetal health problem, and 4 percent cited a problem with their own health.

The percentage of women seeking an abortion because they were victims of rape or incest was less than 1.5 percent. [here](#)

11. Drawn from Rich Nathan who further elaborates,
A lot of people struggle with being pro-life because of contemporary politics. They say, "Well, I'm not going to be pro-life because that would mean I'd have to become a conservative or a Republican and I consider myself politically progressive or a Democrat. I don't want to align myself with those people. So, I guess I can't be pro-life."

*Daniel Williams is an associate professor of History at the University of West Georgia. He wrote a book just a couple of years ago titled *Defenders of the Unborn: The Pro-Life Movement before Roe v. Wade*. He points out that the pro-life movement in the 20th century had its origins not in the conservative wing of the Republican party, but rather in the liberal wing of the Democratic party. Pro-life was viewed as a human rights cause. People tied the pro-life perspective onto President Johnson's war on poverty, protests against the Vietnam War, militarization of American life, and being anti-capital punishment. These were all seen as pro-life causes. The most famous liberal senator in Washington at the time, Sen. Ted Kennedy, was pro-life before Roe v. Wade.*

Senator Ted Kennedy said this in 1971:

"Wanted or unwanted, I believe that human life, even at its earliest stages, have certain rights which must be recognized – the right to be born, the right to love, the right to grow old. When history looks back to this era, it should recognize this generation as one which cared about human beings enough to halt the practice of war, to provide a decent living for every family, and to fulfill its responsibility to its children from the very moment of conception."

Other progressives like Jesse Jackson, Eunice Kennedy Shriver (the sister of John Kennedy), and a host of others were pro-life. In the early 1970's it was mostly Republicans who were pro-abortion. Nelson Rockefeller in New York vetoed a pro-life bill passed by the New York legislature. Senator Barry Goldwater was an early supporter of abortion rights. Ronald Reagan signed a very liberal abortion bill into law in California in 1976.

You don't have to be politically conservative to be pro-life. Political lines have shifted in history. They could shift again. There's a very strong feminist contingent among pro-lifers. In fact, a recent survey of pro-lifers discovered that a majority of women who are pro-life are decidedly egalitarian in their views of marriage and work.