

A Biblical Worldview on Abortion

For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations. Thus says the LORD who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you, 'Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Psalms 139:13-14; Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 44:2; Genesis 1:26-27

INTRODUCTION

We are continuing our study on how to develop and use a biblical framework for our lives, taking what we know of doctrine and formulating what God would have us think.

The goal of this particular study is to address the vast philosophical divide in our country and our world today, and more specifically, the divide that has crept into Christianity. As we evaluate these difficult topics, the intent is not to equip you with arguments to take to your family or friends, but to ensure that you are comfortable in your biblical beliefs and won't be swayed by the world.

We must also recognize that this is an incredibly sensitive subject. Many people in our own circles have been impacted by abortion or the tragic loss of a child through miscarriage. Therefore, as we stand up for what is biblically and morally accurate, we must maintain a mental attitude of grace and understanding toward those who have faced these difficult situations.

MORALS VERSUS ETHICS

When approaching the issue of abortion, we must establish the root questions to ask from Scripture. Often, people will immediately present an extreme scenario to trap you in an argument, which forces the ethic before the moral. We must understand the distinction between the two.

The moral is the general standard of what is good, such as the command, "Do not kill." The ethic dictates what we ought to do in a specific situation, such as taking a life in self-defense to preserve your own life. Although morality is associated with ethics, they are not synonymous. When facing ethical dilemmas, we must always start from a proper moral standard; we do not start from the ethical dilemma to conclude a moral standard.

DEFINING ABORTION

Before examining the arguments, we must clearly define what abortion is. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, an abortion is a fetus or embryo removed or expelled from the uterus during the first half of gestation or born weighing less than 500 grams. We are specifically addressing a decision to manually remove the fetus. Some have attempted to add spontaneous, natural miscarriages to the definition in order to confuse the issue, but we thoroughly reject that inclusion.

A Biblical Worldview on Abortion

A BIBLICAL CASE AGAINST ABORTION: FIVE ARGUMENTS

Scripture presents the unborn child as a full human person from the moment of conception. Five clear ideas stand out.

1. God Himself forms and knows the child in the womb. Psalm 139:13-16 uses the Hebrew word **qanah** (to create, to acquire) for “formed” and **sakak** (to weave) for the intricate work in the womb. The psalmist calls this work “fearfully and wonderfully made,” the same language used for the rest of creation in Genesis 1. God sees the “unformed substance” (Hebrew **golem**) and ordains every day of that life before any of it has happened. This is not poetic exaggeration; it is the Holy Spirit’s description of personhood.
2. God relates to the unborn as a person with a calling. Jeremiah 1:5 states that God “knew” Jeremiah and “consecrated” him before he was formed in the womb. The Hebrew **yada** (knew) carries intimate, personal relationship, the same word used for God’s knowledge of His covenant people. The child is not potential; he is already set apart for God’s purpose. The same pattern appears with John the Baptist in Luke 1:41-44. Elizabeth’s unborn son leaps and is filled with the Holy Spirit while still in the womb. The Greek word **brephos** (baby) is used for both the unborn John and the newborn Jesus in Luke 2:12. The Scripture makes no distinction.
3. The unborn child bears the image of God. Genesis 1:26-27 declares that man is created in God’s image. Nothing in the text limits this to birth or to a certain stage of development. Since God forms the child in the womb (Job 31:15; Isaiah 44:2), the image is present from conception. To destroy that image-bearer is to attack what God has declared sacred.
4. Biblical law treats harm to the unborn as a crime against a person. Exodus 21:22-25 describes two men fighting and striking a pregnant woman. The NASB 95 reads: “If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined... But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life.” The Hebrew literally says, “and her children come out” (**weyats’u yeladeyha**). **Yeled** is the ordinary word for a living child after birth. The penalty structure is the same as for injury to any other person: if the child dies, it is “life for life.” The text does not treat the unborn as property or tissue; it treats the child as a human life with legal protection.
5. The command “You shall not murder” applies. Exodus 20:13 uses the Hebrew **ratsach**, which always refers to unlawful killing of a human being. Scripture consistently calls the shedding of innocent blood an abomination (Proverbs 6:16-17; Psalm 106:37-38). The unborn are the most innocent of all.

These five concepts together show that the unborn child is a person created by God, known by God, called by God, bearing His image, and protected by His law. Abortion therefore ends a human life that belongs to God, not to the mother or the state.

A Biblical Worldview on Abortion

POINTS FROM A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

When we evaluate abortion through the framework we have built—reality from Genesis 1, truth from Scripture, knowledge through revelation, and purpose to glorify God—the conclusion is unavoidable.

- Reality: The child in the womb is a real human being, not a potential one. Science confirms a unique human genome at fertilization; Scripture confirms personhood at the same point.
- Truth: God’s Word never distinguishes the value of life inside from outside the womb. The same God who said “Let Us make man in Our image” is the One weaving the child together.
- Epistemology: We do not decide personhood by personal experience, cultural opinion, or court ruling. We decide it by what God has revealed.
- Purpose: Every life exists to bear the image of God, glorify God. The unborn child already participates in that purpose, John the Baptist glorified Christ from the womb. To end that life on our own accord is to reject God’s declared purpose for that person.
- Ethics: The good is defined by God. Since the child is good in God’s sight (Psalm 139), destroying that child cannot be good. It violates the second great commandment as well: we are not loving our neighbor (the unborn child) as ourselves.

A BIBLICAL CASE DEFENDING ABORTION: FOUR ARGUMENTS

There is a massive divide between those who believe the biblical God exists and those who do not, but unfortunately, there are also individuals who claim the banner of Christianity while using the Bible to defend abortion. We are going to look at four main arguments that attempt to build a biblical case for abortion and address them using a biblical framework.

1. The first argument relies on silence. The premise is that abortions were known practices in the ancient world, yet the New Testament does not directly address abortion, leading to the conclusion that the issue is unimportant in the biblical framework.

To answer this, we must look at the culture of the first-century church. The early church adopted Hebrew moral standards, where children were viewed as a heritage and abortion was not a regular practice. Furthermore, the Greeks regularly practiced infanticide by discarding unwanted babies. The New Testament does not directly address infanticide either, yet we clearly understand that sacrificing infants is wrong. Because the overarching biblical moral against killing was already understood, a specific prohibition against abortion did not need to be explicitly detailed in the New Testament.

2. The second argument relies on Exodus 21:22-25. The argument suggests that if men are fighting and injure a pregnant woman causing a *miscarriage*, there is only a fine, but if the woman dies, the penalty is life for life. They use this to argue that the life of the fetus is less valuable than the mother.

The answer is that this argument is based on a poor translation found in the Revised Standard Version and The Message, which incorrectly use the word *miscarriage*. The Hebrew word for

A Biblical Worldview on Abortion

miscarry, "sakol," is not used in this passage. The word used is "ytsa," which literally means to "go forth," implying the child is born prematurely. The passage actually dictates that if the woman gives birth prematurely and there is no injury to the child, a fine is paid. However, if there is any further injury or death to the infant, the penalty is life for life. Rather than diminishing the unborn, this passage provides a biblical mandate that treats the child in the womb as highly valuable.

3. The third argument tries to define personhood. It asserts that the biblical portrait of a person begins with the creation of Adam and Eve as complex, many-sided creatures with the ability to make choices. They argue that a fetus does not meet those criteria.

The biblical answer to this is found in Psalm 139:13-16, which reveals the immense value of a person in the early stages of life. God actively wove us in our mother's womb and saw our unformed substance while we were made in secret. God's involvement happens at conception, far before a child develops the complexity to make choices. Additionally, if a child in the womb is not human and has no value, we would treat a natural miscarriage with indifference, yet it is universally recognized as a mournful tragedy.

4. The fourth argument is an appeal to poverty. The premise is that because the Bible says to care for the poor and marginalized, and most women who have abortions are poor, the Bible would be non-judgmental toward a poor woman who has an abortion.

This argument is entirely devoid of biblical logic. There is never any biblical justification to excuse an immoral act, such as taking a human life, simply due to the poverty of the mother.

ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND THE UNBORN

We all inherently understand that the overarching biblical moral standard is that killing is wrong because God desires life, not death. The crucial question then becomes: when is the unborn considered to be human? The biblical model leaves no room for arbitrary timelines such as heartbeats or viability outside the womb; humanity begins at conception.

There are, however, profound ethical dilemmas. In a fallen world, medical emergencies arise, such as an ectopic pregnancy, where the life of the mother is in imminent danger. In these tragic situations where an abortion is medically necessary to save the mother, an incredibly difficult decision must be made, ideally by the mother and father together. But what about conception in an evil circumstance such as rape? God's perspective on the life of the unborn remains unchanged; a child conceived in ill circumstances still possesses intrinsic value. We cannot justify the killing of an innocent child to resolve the horrific and evil actions of another.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Disposing of children is not the source, but rather the symptom of a deep spiritual darkness. We see this throughout history in pagan cultures that sacrificed their children. The modern fervor for abortion largely stems from shifting sexual mores. Much of our society desires to enjoy pleasure without consequences and use abortion as a post-conception birth control.

A Biblical Worldview on Abortion

As citizens in a constitutional republic, we have the right and responsibility to have a voice for the unborn who have no voice. However, as we advocate for life, we must never lose sight of the gospel, continually extending love, grace, and understanding to those who are hurting and have been involved in these horrors.

A BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LIFE: THE CASE FOR THE UNBORN

