

**Case Study**

A 21 year old senior at JMU (Monica) and her boyfriend (Bill – a senior business major) have been dating for 6 months. After 4 months they began sleeping together. Yesterday, however, Monica discovered she is pregnant.

She is on the guard waiting for Bill to come meet her after class. She is uncertain how he will take the news. What if he's mad? Will he break up? Will he want to get married? What about the baby? Should we keep the child or abort?

You happen to walk by while she is thinking through these questions and she stops you and asks for your opinion. What will you say?

---

**Case Study:**

A young couple in your church finds out they are expecting. A few months into the pregnancy the doctor informs them that he is confident the baby has Down Syndrome. He encourages them to abort the baby. They ask your advice. What will you say?

**Statistics**

- Reporting is voluntary and not 100%.
- More than 3,000 babies are aborted in the U.S. each day.
- More than 56 million babies have been aborted in the U.S. since Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973.
- About half of all pregnancies, 4 in 10 are aborted.
- 21 percent of all pregnancies in the U.S. end in abortion.
- By age 45, one third of American women will have had at least one abortion.
- Approximately 47 percent of women get an abortion.
- Approximately 19% of all abortions in the U.S. each year are performed on teenagers.
- 86 % of all abortions are done for the sake of convenience
- Worldwide there have been well over a billion abortions since 1980.

## Reasons given for seeking an abortion:

- 21% inadequate finances
- 21% not ready for responsibility
- 16% woman's life would be changed too much
- 12% problems with relationships, unmarried
- 11% too young and/or immature
- 8% children are grown; she has all she wants
- 3% baby has possible health problems
- 4% other

## Terms

Spontaneous abortion – no outside intervention, missed implant, or miscarriage

Induced abortion – outside intervention

1. Therapeutic Abortion – for the mother's health
2. Eugenic Abortion – selective breeding, decision based on genetics
3. Elective abortion – parental convenience

## Forms of Abortion

**A. Dilation and Curettage** – Cervix is dilated, uterine wall is scraped. Body of the body is cut to pieces.

**B. Suction** – Cervix is dilated, suction tube is inserted into the womb. The suction tube tears the baby apart and the pieces go into a container for disposal.

**C. Saline Injection** – a needle is inserted into the “water bag” where fluid is removed and replaced with a concentrated salt solution. The baby is slowly poisoned and burned to death. It takes about an hour for the baby to die. The mother then delivers the dead baby.

**D. Hysterotomy** – this is similar to a C-section birth. The physician is permitted great latitude (to kill by neglect or deliberate action) if the fetus is still alive after being removed from the womb. Most often the head is crushed prior to removal to assure a dead fetus.

**E. Prostaglandin** – Drugs are used to cause premature labor. The baby is born alive (or partially birthed) and terminated through other measures such as crushing the head or saline solutions.

**F. Partial Birth** – (sometimes called D&X or “intact D&E”). Usually performed on women who are 20-32 weeks pregnant or even later. Guided by ultrasound, the abortionist reaches into the uterus, grabs the unborn baby’s leg with forceps, and pulls the baby into the birth canal, except for the head, which is deliberately kept just inside the womb. Then scissors are jammed into the back of the baby’s skull and the tips are spread to enlarge the wound. A suction catheter is then used to suck out the baby’s brains and the collapsed head is removed from the uterus.

**G. RU – 486** (“Morning after pill” or “abortion pill”) – functions to block the action of the hormone progesterone in a woman’s body. This hormone is critical at every stage of pregnancy. It prevents a fertilized egg (a conceived human life) from implanting in the uterus. If implantation has taken place, RU-486 causes the uterine wall to break down and triggers menstrual bleeding that causes the pregnancy to be aborted.

## **Right to Life**

(3 Theories)

**1. The Actuality Principle** – the individual comes to possess a right to life only when that individual possesses self-consciousness, thoughts of the future, and hopes and aspirations for that future. No person has the right to come into existence; they only have a right to remain in existence.

- Children, adults, the reversibly comatose and the less severely retarded would have a right to life

- fetuses, infants, the irreversibly comatose and the severely retarded would not have a right to life

**2. The Potentiality Principle** – Beings with either a developed capacity or a “natural potential” for conscious self-reflective intelligence have a right to life.

- fetuses, infants, children, adults, the reversibly comatose and the less severely retarded would have a right to life.

- the irreversibly comatose and the severely retarded would have no right to life.

**3. The Species Principle** – By virtue of our species membership, we all possess dignity and value. Only members of the human species who are conscious or have a potential for conscious existence have full moral standing.

- fetuses, infants, children, adults, the reversibly comatose, the severely retarded, the less severely retarded possess the right to life.
- the irreversibly comatose do not possess the right to life

The best way to debate the issues is not from "personhood" but from the "existence of human life" point.

### **From Science**

1. At the moment of conception the full genetic code and make-up of the child is present.
2. The nervous system begins by day 20
3. The brain is fully proportioned by day 30
4. There are spontaneous movements by day 45
5. Lips react to touch by 7 weeks
6. Eyelids and palms of hands react to touch by 8 weeks
7. Responds to touch, light, heat and noise by 11 weeks

This is all before the second trimester even begins.

### **From the Bible**

1. Man has value and dignity simply because he is made in God's image (Gen 1:27, Gen 5:1, Gen 9:6) Life is sanctified!

- Gen 9:6 – "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man."
- Exodus 20:13 – "You shall not murder"

2. God is the giver and taker of life

- Deut. 32:39 "Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive."
- Job 12:10 – "In whose hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."
- Job 33:4 – "The Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."

3. Clear Divine recognition of the unborn in the same way he knows a child or an adult.

- Jer. 1:5 – "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

4. God's knowledge of a person before birth (Jer. 1:5)
  - Is. 49:1 – "The Lord has called me from the womb; from the matrix of my mother He has made mention of my name."
5. The unborn are personal objects of God's knowledge
  - Ps. 139:13-16
6. The Greek terminology used for a born baby and an unborn baby is identical (Luke 1:41-44 and Luke 2:16)
  - the baby leaps in the womb

*Disputed Passage*  
*Exodus 21:22-25*

- Pro-choice argues the fetus is worth less than the woman.
- In some versions it says if it causes a "miscarriage" there is a fine but if the mom dies it requires life for life.
- However, the term for miscarriage is *shakal* and it is not used in these verses. Rather, the term *yasa* is used which is used in connection with the live birth of a child.
- So the verse properly translated and interpreted is saying if a man fights, hurts a woman with child, she has the baby prematurely, but no harm to the baby follows – then there is no fine. If harm comes to the baby then its life for life.

**How to respond to Pro-choice arguments:**

\*Remember debate from the baby being a living human.

1. Right to Life VS right to control one's own body
  - its against the law to do drugs or commit suicide
  - what about the baby's right to choose what happens to its body?
2. Right to Life VS unwanted children (society shouldn't force women to have unwanted children). Some might abuse the kids.
  - The worst case of child abuse is killing the unwanted child.
3. The Right to Life VS Right to Be Loved
  - if the lack of love can justify killing, then who is next?
  - they are also measuring love before they meet the child
  - unloved children can be adopted
4. Right to Life VS Right to safe and legal medical care

(If abortion becomes illegal we will return to the dangerous days of back-alley-butchers – So keep abortions safe and legal)

90% of all abortions before Roe VS Wade were done by legal doctors

5. Forcing women, especially poor ones, to continue their pregnancies will create overwhelming financial hardships. It is a form of discrimination.

- do we then have a right to kill poor people
- what if our children become a burden to us, can we kill them?

6. Society should not force women to bring severely handicapped children into the world?

- who gets to decide what is a handicap?

Most of these are “ends justifies the means” arguments.

### **Other Hard Cases**

1. Life of the mother is in danger (most common is ectopic pregnancy)

- not the health but the life is in danger
- Catholic position has been no
- Protestant position has been yes it's ok
- probably the most difficult and most controversial
- the actual number of cases is very small
- the argument that having an abortion will lesson the trauma has found itself unsupportable
- many studies have shown it to add to the trauma
- ultimately the argument must go back to is the baby a human life?

Focus must be on the baby.

- hard as it may be, holding the truth that God will some how work it for good

- adoption is an option

### **Ministering to those who have had abortions**

- refer to article – “Finding Forgiveness and Freedom After Abortion” by Randy Alcorn

<https://erlc.com/article/finding-forgiveness-and-freedom-after-abortion>