

A publication of
Genuine Joy Ministries

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- After conception when do the dividing cells become a human being?
- Research shows very clearly that the baby is not part of the mother's body.
- The Bible says that God created 3 kinds of creatures.

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The Hard Questions

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Answers to Life's Hard Questions— Are You Ready?

Dear Joy,

Is abortion ever right for a Christian?

(From a reader in South Dakota)

Part 1 of 2



Let's start with what it means. According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary abortion is: the termination of a pregnancy after, accompanied by, resulting in, or closely followed by the death of the embryo or fetus as:

a: spontaneous expulsion of a human fetus during the first 12 weeks of gestation

b: induced expulsion of a human fetus.

I believe that abortion is never right for a true follower of Christ and I'll tell you why but first we have to look at some of the fine points surrounding the abortion controversy. The real argument between the two factions—pro choice and pro life—comes down to this: after conception when do the dividing cells become a human being? We know that even though the cells produced by conception immediately begin dividing there are not discernible features such as arms, legs, brain, heart beat. So is this just a bunch of rapidly dividing cells or a person who will one day be name Jacob or Emma?

Those of the pro-choice persuasion argue loudly and long that until a fetus emerges from the womb it's not a person. Therefore it can be summarily removed by whatever means. We must also consider many in the pro-life group believe we are animals, descended from apes so with no more or less importance than the field mouse scurrying across the pasture.



Science agrees with the teaching of Scripture. Dr. Alfred M. Bongioanni, professor of ob-

stetrics at the University of Pennsylvania, states, "I have learned from my earliest medical education that human life begins at the time of conception. I submit that **human life is present throughout this entire sequence from conception to adulthood** and that any interruption at any point throughout this time constitutes a termination of human life." Continuing on about the early stages of a child's development in the womb, Professor Bongioanni says, "I am no more prepared to say that these early stages represent an incomplete human being than I would be to say that the child prior to the dramatic effects of puberty is not a human being. This is human life at every stage."

Dr. Jerome Lejeune, genetics professor at the University of Descartes in Paris, states, "after fertilization has taken place a new human being has come into being." He says this "is no longer a matter of taste or opinion. **Each individual has a very neat beginning, at conception.**"

Professor Micheline



"Babies are such a nice way to start people."

~Don Herrold

Professor Micheline Matthews-Roth of Harvard University Medical School argues, "It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception."

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Pro choice says a woman has control over her own body so she can choose what to do about an unwanted pregnancy. Yes, she does control her own body but is the baby part of her body? No. In a fascinating 1998 paper, researchers at the Medical College of Augusta,

Georgia found that mice embryo produces a special enzyme, called indoleamine 2,3-

dioxygenase, or "IDO," which suppresses the mother's T cell reaction and allows pregnancy to proceed. Follow-up work in humans demonstrated the same effect, and it was also shown that the IDO was produced on the embryo side of the placental membrane (which separates mother from child) and not on the mother's side. Further work in mice showed that IDO production peaked during the formation of the placenta—the most crucial time for establishing that vital link between mother and child. And the most recent work in humans has established beyond doubt that IDO is a specific mechanism at the mother-child interface for preventing the mother's immune system from rejecting the child.

This research shows very clearly that the baby is *not* part of the mother's body. The baby has a unique genetic makeup (only half its chromosomes come from the mother, the other half come from the father, and each combination of chromosomes is unique) and that condition is sufficient to cause the mother's immune system to identify the baby as "foreign" and it mounts an attack via the killer T cell system. In the mouse experiments, when IDO production was artificially suppressed, the mother's womb rapidly rejected the embryos. It is only because the baby is normally well prepared for life in the womb by producing IDO and suppressing the mother's T cell reaction, that pregnancy can be healthy and go full term.

This research also highlights the fact that the child's individuality—its unique genetic makeup—exists from the moment of conception. At conception, the new person's genetic instructions come together for the first time—in a single cell called the zygote. But it is not until day 6 that IDO production kicks in. Why day 6? Well day 6 is a preparation for day 7, when the new embryo first attaches itself to its mother's womb so that it can draw nutrients from its mother's bloodstream. This is exactly the time when the mother's killer T cells would normally begin to attack and reject it—if not for the amazing

protection already provided by IDO production on the previous day.

The pro-life group, and most Christians are counted among these, believe that at conception these few rapidly dividing cells can be viewed as a person and the crux of this issue is when does the spirit enter the newly conceived life? The Bible says that God created three kinds of creatures:

- ◆ Creatures which possess bodies
- ◆ Creatures which possess bodies and souls
- ◆ Creatures which possess bodies, souls, and spirit

Most of God's creatures possess bodies only. Among these creatures are insects, worms, fish, etc. God defines the creatures possessing souls as being the birds, the whales, the predatory and domesticated land mammals, and human beings (Genesis 1:20-27). Creatures with a soul have the characteristics of a mind, will, and emotion. Most of us who have cats or dogs realize that these soulful creatures have all these character traits.

Therefore, the difference between human life and animal life is that, in addition to having a body and soul, we are

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."

Psalm 139:14 by David

endowed with a spirit, (1 Thessalonians 5:23), by which we can communicate with, love, and worship God. The Bible tells us that God forms this spirit within us, and we are endowed with a spirit before birth (Luke 1:15), which makes us fully human *before* we are born.

We will continue this discussion on abortion next month where we will consider what the Bible says about when the spirit enters the new life and what if you've already had an abortion? What then?

What Do You Know About Abortion? The Abortion Quiz*

True or False?

1. A human is not technically a human being until it is born. F - Psalm 51:1
2. The United States has one of the highest abortion rates amongst developed countries. T
3. The majority of women getting an abortion in the United States are under age 25. T
4. Most abortions are attributed to rape and incest. F
5. Legally, the father of an unborn fetus has the ultimate say in an abortion decision. F
6. The majority of abortions take place between 2 to 8 weeks of pregnancy. F
7. Women who have had an abortion during the first or second trimester have a much higher risk of breast cancer than other women. T
8. A woman who has a miscarriage has a higher risk of breast cancer than other women. F
9. An abortion can have serious emotional side effects. T
10. Abortion is just a women's issue. F
11. Abortion is not "murder" because an unborn fetus is not a human being. F - Psalm 139:13-15
12. The morning-after pill is just another contraceptive. F
13. A fetus cannot feel pain during an abortion. F
14. Most abortions are performed fairly quickly. F
15. Abortion clinics have a vested economic interest in performing abortions. T
16. Fetal tissue harvesting involves scientific testing on aborted baby body parts. T
17. In the United States, it is illegal to sell human tissue of body parts. T
18. Abortion is usually the best answer to a crisis pregnancy. F - Proverbs 14:12
19. Giving up a child for adoption is a long process. F
20. God can forgive someone who has had an abortion. T - Psalm 103:11-12
21. God will never forget the sin of abortion.
F - Isaiah 43-25

*The Abortion Quiz—Copyright© 2004 ChristiaNet® All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.

"A baby is God's opinion that the world should go on."
~Carl Sandburg



References & Info

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Sometimes you come up with really hard, tough questions that you don't have the answers to.

At times you're too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask your friends and family... and when you are brave enough to ask the questions, even they don't always have the answers.

You don't think you have anyone that you can talk to... well now you do.

Genuine Joy Ministries is dedicated to helping you find the answers to life's hardest questions.

Call us—Write us—Fax us—Email us

Just for Fun

Three men were hiking through a forest when they came upon a large raging, violent river. Needing to get to the other side, the first man prayed: 'God, please give me the strength to cross the river.'

Poof! ... God gave him big arms and strong legs and he was able to swim across in about 2 hours, having almost drowned twice.

After witnessing that, the second man prayed: 'God, please give me strength and the tools to cross the river.'

Poof! ... God gave him a rowboat and strong arms and strong legs and he was able to row across in about an hour after almost capsizing once.

Seeing what happened to the first two men, the third man prayed: 'God, please give me the strength, the tools and the intelligence to cross the river.'

Poof! ... He was turned into a woman. She checked the map, hiked one hundred yards up stream and walked across the bridge.



THE HARD QUESTIONS — DO YOU HAVE ONE?