

The Bible and Abortion

A fact sheet for those who oppose abortion

“I have always felt that it was only after a child was born and had a life separate from its mother that it became an individual person and it has always, therefore, seemed to me that what is best for the mother and for the future should be allowed.” **Rev. W.A. Criswell, First Baptist Church of Dallas’ pastor and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention**

As Christians, we are called to love God and love our neighbor, both mandates of which are equally important. The Bible gives us hints as to when a fertilized egg develops into a neighbor.

First, the Bible cannot be used to support the majority of current laws banning abortion. **In the Old Testament, life does not begin at conception or heartbeat but breath (Ezekiel 37, Genesis 2).** In addition to this—

- **In the Christian Bible, there is no text explicitly prohibiting the termination of a pregnancy**, even though it is a practice that has been in existence for centuries.
- **In Numbers 5** beginning with verse 11, **an abortion is performed by a priest.**
- **Exodus 21:22-25** demonstrates that **ending a pregnancy does not violate “Thou shalt not murder.”** Causing a miscarriage incurs a fine and is not subject to the ‘eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth’ penalty.
- **Jesus** never contradicted the definition of life beginning at breath.
- **Jesus** did not mention the termination of pregnancies in His teachings, including the consequential sins He describes in Matthew 25:31-45. Sanctuary for immigrants is rooted in this passage and 20+ other citations in the Bible; not so abortion. (See also Galatians 5:14.) **Of great concern to us as Christians is that many politicians who oppose abortion often actively support laws and policies that flagrantly violate Jesus’s consequential teachings.**

Second, most Christians who oppose abortion cite the beautiful ‘vessel verses’ which describe God ‘weaving’ or ‘knitting’ the vessel which may someday become a baby (e.g., Psalms 139:13, Jeremiah 1:5, or Isaiah 44:24). (God created a body where the majority of ‘post conception unborn babies’ leave the uterus without ever developing further.)

- God gives us dominion over creation, and we are to act justly and with mercy in all things. Requiring a woman to carry a doomed pregnancy and suffer the agony of feeling a fetus experience seizures continuously for weeks, then watching for 48 hours as her baby dies in her arms after struggling to breathe is not just or merciful.
- In Jeremiah, God knew the prophet before forming the vessel.
- Citing Psalms 139:13 to oppose abortion is problematic. Psalms 137:9, “Happy is the one who seizes your [enemies’] infants and dashes them against the rocks.”

In closing, the fetus which will become John the Baptist leapt in the womb when Elizabeth saw Mary. Sometime before that, Mary received word from the angel Gabriel that God had chosen her to give birth to Jesus. Gabriel at that time also told her that Elizabeth was in the ‘sixth month.’ This aligns with science that tells us that brains develop at 24 weeks.