

What we believe... and Why.

Abortion

Because of the recent law enacted in New York (signed on the 46th anniversary of Roe v Wade), the issue of abortion has become more prevalent again.

"With the signing of this bill, we are sending a clear message that whatever happens in Washington, women in New York will always have the fundamental right to control their own body," – N.Y. Gov. Andrew Cuomo

The New York law:

- Removes abortion from the state's criminal code.
- Previously, someone who killed an unborn baby older than 24 weeks could be charged with murder.
 - This would protect doctors or medical professionals who perform abortions from criminal prosecution.
- The law also now allows medical professionals who are not doctors to perform abortions in New York.
- Allows abortions when, "The patient is within 24 weeks of the commencement of pregnancy, or there is an absence of fetal viability, or the abortion is necessary to protect the patient's life or health."
 - Previously abortions were limited to less than 24 weeks.
 - Now abortions can be performed up to delivery.
 - No clear definition of "health".

<https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2017/s2796>

Scriptures related to abortion:

- Psalm 139:13-16
 - 13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.
 - 14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.
 - 15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
 - 16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.
- Jeremiah 1:5
 - 5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

- Exodus 21:22-25
 - 22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.
 - 23 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,
 - 24 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,
 - 25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

NIV

Ex 21:22-23 "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. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,"

- Deuteronomy 24:16
 - 16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.
- Luke 1:39-42
 - 39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;
 - 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.
 - 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:
 - 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

- Leviticus 18:21
 - 21 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord.



- Early church writings:
 - You shall not kill the child by obtaining an abortion. Nor, again, shall you destroy him after he is born. Barnabas (c. 70-130, B), 1.148.
 - You shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill one who has been born. Didache (c. 80-140, B), 1.377.
 - “We say that women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder. And we also say they will have to give an account to God for the abortion. So on what basis could we commit murder? For it does not belong to the same person to regard the very foetus to the womb as a created being (and therefore an object of God’s care) „ÿ yet, when he has passed into life, to kill him. We also teach that it is wrong to expose an infant. For those who expose them are guilty of child murder” (Athenagoras. 175A.D.) The term ‘exposed an infant’ refers to the practice of abandoning infant children on the road sides, leaving them to die or taken up by people who raised them to be slaves or prostitutes.
 - “In our case, murder is once for all forbidden. Therefore, we may not destroy even the foetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier way to kill a human. It does not matter whether you take away a life that has been born or destroy one that is not yet born” (Tertullian, 197A.D.).
 - “Indeed the Law of Moses punishes with appropriate penalties the person who causes abortion. For there already exists the beginning stages of a human being. And even at this stage, [the foetus] is already acknowledged with having the condition of life and death, since he is already susceptible to both” (Tertullian, 210A.D.).

Unfortunately, quoting scripture or early church writings will probably not convince anyone who doesn’t believe in God or the truth of scripture.

So, how do we respond to people who support or advocate for abortion?

When talking with someone who uses any argument to defend the right to have an abortion, the best way to approach the conversation is always with care and love. There is no benefit to get into a shouting match with anyone. Escalation in volume tends to diminish the communication.

You have to be gracious in the way you speak. Never insert the words, “Oh yeah?!” before you respond. Little phrases like, “I’m not making fun of you, bear with me, but...” are your friend. We don’t just want to win debates, we want them to understand.

Common arguments for abortion:

- Rape/Incest
- My Body/My Choice
- Life of the Mother
- Personhood
- The Unborn Child Is Unfit/Unwanted
- If Illegal, Women would Die

Rape/Incest

- “If a child is conceived from rape or incest, why is it fair to subject the woman to nine months of pregnancy that involves a reminder every day of what she went through?”

Rape is violent crime, deeply wounding the victim.

Be careful not to minimize the harm inflicted on the mother.

It’s interesting to note that this is one of the most common arguments, but accounts for less than 1% of abortions. <http://www.operationrescue.org/about-abortion/abortions-in-america/>

- Response:
 - Should we kill another human being because we have been victimized?
 - Should we kill an unborn baby because once born, he or she may remind the mother of her attacker?
 - When did we become okay with killing another human being because he or she reminds us of a painful event?

My Body/My Choice

- “A woman has a fundamental right to control her own body.”
- “Government should not tell women what to do with their bodies.”
- “Keep your laws out of my uterus.”

Bodily rights arguments for abortion are frequently extremist arguments, at least in the way pro-choice people present them. No bodily rights argument leaves room for exceptions, but most pro-choice people do believe there should be exceptions, such as in the third trimester.

When a woman says 'this is my body' in talking about her decision, she’s usually speaking more out of fear rather than malice. She doesn't want to deliberately kill her child because she hates children.

This may seem obvious, but to some people it's not. Yes, a woman can do what she wants with her own body. If she really wants a mullet, or to rock that pink hair, by all means – she has a 'right' to that.

On the contrary though, a woman does not have the right to choose what is going to be done to another person. If you were forced into having pink hair, or forced to jump off a bridge – the person who made those decisions for you would have violated your rights. Everyone can agree with that.

When a woman makes a decision to kill her child by having an abortion, that decision doesn't affect only her body, but another person's. It involves killing another unique, genetically distinct human being that has his or her own body. That choice infringes the rights of the child for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

No person's rights are more important than another person’s rights.

- Response:

- Yes, I agree that it is your body and you have the right to choose what to do with it. But the baby isn't your body. It's another body inside a woman's body. Why should one person's rights be more important than another person's rights?
- If roughly 50% of the unborn children are female, What about their bodies? What about their choice?
- "The baby doesn't have the right to use the mother's body for nine months."
 - Does an infant have the right to nurse after he or she is born?
 - Does an infant have the right to be put to bed, carried, cared for, changed, or nurtured after birth?
 - Since when do we have the moral right to kill someone based on his or her degree of dependency on another person?
 - A toddler is more dependent than a teenager. Do we have the right to kill the toddler, but not the teenager?

Life of the Mother

- "Abortion is the only acceptable solution when the life or health of the mother is threatened."

Morally speaking, the life of the mother and child are both priceless.

In those very rare cases where the life of the mother is genuinely at risk, difficult decisions must be made. Prayer, comfort, support, and compassion should be extended to all during this time.

- Response:
 - Define "Life" or "health". "Health" is ambiguous and virtually impossible to define. Is it physical or mental? Is it temporary? Is it treatable?

"There's not a single fetal or maternal condition that requires third-trimester abortion. Not one. Delivery, yes. Abortion, no." – Dr. Omar L. Hamada (Tweet January 23, 2019)

All medical and spiritual options, tools, and procedures should be implemented to attempt to preserve BOTH lives. All life is precious, and all innocent life should be protected.

Personhood

- "It's a blob of cells (or tissue)."

Uniformly refuted by science.

At the moment of fertilization, a zygote is created. The zygote has DNA provided by both parents and, therefore, all of the genetic information to develop into more mature stages. The zygote period lasts about four days. He or she develops into a blastocyst for some 14 days, and then develops into an embryo. After nine weeks post-conception, he or she is termed a fetus.

From zygote to delivered baby, he or she is a human being. There is no point during development when he or she matures into a human or somehow “turns human.” He or she is a unique human being from the point of fertilization.

- “It’s a potential life.”
 - What does it mean to be alive?

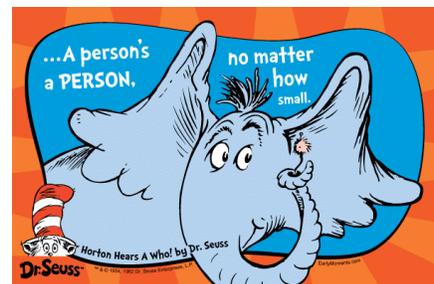
The most common criteria scientists use to determine life are if something has the capacity to grow, metabolize, respond to stimuli, adapt, and reproduce. From the time of fertilization, the zygote is alive because he or she possesses all of these qualities.

- “It’s not a person yet.”
 - What is the distinction between a person and a human being?
 - Is an African-American man or woman a person? At one point in our history they weren’t. It was wrong then. Could you be wrong?
 - Is a Jewish man or woman a person? At one point in the history of Nazi Germany they weren’t. It was wrong then. Could you be wrong?
- “When a fetus gets to a certain size, they are now a person.”
 - Since when does size determine value?
 - Is a toddler worth less than a teenager because the toddler is smaller?
 - What size determines our personhood and who determines that?
 - What is the distinction between a person and a human being?
- “We can abort a fetus before he or she feels pain.”
 - We agree that fetuses are less developed than we are, but should we kill them because they are so?
 - People on anesthesia, or with certain health conditions don’t feel pain. Can we kill them?
 - Why does level of development determine value?
- “When the baby is born, they are now a person.”
 - Since when does location determine value?
 - Am I worth more inside a house than I am outside on the lawn?
 - Why does environment determine value?
- “Before a baby reaches viability (the ability to survive outside the womb), they can be aborted.”
 - Does degree of dependency determine value?
 - Infants are completely dependent on others for sustenance. Can we kill them because they are dependent on us?
 - Why does viability outside the womb determine value?

Morally speaking, there is no difference in value between a zygote and an adult.

There is no distinction between a person and a human being.

In the words of the immortal Dr. Seuss, “A person is a person no matter how small.”



The Unborn Child is Unfit/Unwanted

This is actually the number one reason why women abort their children today. They simply don't want a child.

- "I don't want a child right now. I can't afford it."
- Response:
 - Affirm Her Concern. "You're right, some women are in terrible poverty and we need to help them as well as we can."
 - Brace Her for the Weird Question. "Can I ask you kind of a weird question, could you just go with me for a minute?" Assuming she says yes...
 - Create a Parallel Situation. "Imagine a woman has a toddler and she is really poor. She just lost her job and she can barely feed herself, much less a child. Should she legally have the right to kill her toddler because she is so poor?" The answer is usually no.
 - Describe the Logic. "Let me explain why I ask that weird question. I have a view that some people find really weird, but I have really good evidence for it. I think an embryo from fertilization is just as valuable a human person as you or I. Because I am so convinced of that, whenever someone argues for abortion, I have to ask myself, 'Would this be a good argument for killing a toddler?' And there just aren't any good reasons to kill toddlers. So if I'm right about the embryo being a human person, then we can't kill it because of poverty any more than we'd kill a toddler because of poverty. What do you think?"
- "If a baby has Down syndrome, she should be aborted. She will have a tough life anyhow, and her family will struggle with a special needs child."
 - Why not kill toddlers with Down Syndrome, too?
 - How about toddlers in wheelchairs, or toddlers with birth defects or cystic fibrosis?
 - If we are okay killing them in the womb, then why not kill them outside the womb as well?
- "Some babies shouldn't be born into harmful homes. It's better if they never have to experience that."
 - What about preschoolers who are living in those conditions now?
 - Why not kill them and save them years of pain and hurt at home?
 - Why is it okay to kill a child in the womb simply because of the potential that he or she may be born into a difficult home?

"Trotting out the toddler" forces the abortion advocate to defend why the unborn is less valuable than those of us already born.

ALL of these arguments are based on the assumption that life in the womb is expendable but life outside of it is not.

Make the abortion advocate define and defend why life in the womb is worthless.

It's an argument that can't be won based on science or ethics.

The premise of the pro-life position is that the value of an unborn child's life is not determined by whether or not her parents want her or will be good parents.

The value of the child's life is based on the fact that the child is a member of the human race, created by God with a special purpose and amazing potential — the same value as toddlers.

If Illegal, Women would Die

- “If you make abortion illegal, then women will die by the thousands in back-alley and coat-hanger abortions!”

This is one of the most rhetorically powerful pro-choice arguments. No one wants women to be hurt in illegal abortions and it's hard to deny that some likely would if abortion was made illegal (though whether it would be in the thousands, or in back-alleys, or with coat-hangers, is another matter). As much as we don't want anyone to be hurt in illegal abortions, we never apply this pro-choice logic to anything else. We wouldn't dream of making bank robbery, rape, or infanticide legal in order to make it safer for one of the perpetrators.

We don't want desperate women to hurt themselves, but it is foolish to legalize something evil because of the possibility of someone hurting themselves as a result. We shouldn't allow the law to be held hostage by a citizen threatening to hurt themselves. We shouldn't legalize infanticide even if a mother says she'll burn the house down with her and her child inside if you don't make it legal.

Another Consideration

When someone sees, or hears a description of what an abortion involves, it can be extremely powerful. A former abortionist, Dr. Anthony Levatino, has testified before Congress and developed videos describing these procedures at <https://www.abortionprocedures.com/>.

Lastly, is abortion forgivable?

Resources:

<https://www.humancoalition.org/2014/05/27/huco-helps-unravel-thorny-pro-abortion-arguments/>

<https://lifeteen.com/blog/its-my-body-how-to-respond-to-the-pro-choice-argument/>

<https://blog.equalrightsintitute.com/turn-tables-four-pro-choice-arguments/>

<https://www.liveaction.org/>

<https://www.abortionprocedures.com/>