

## Newsletter May 2015

In this month's newsletter we shall utilize edited excerpts primarily taken from *Comprehensively Reformed Christianity* Book II, Chapter 16.2, *Beginning of Life Issues*, as we discuss feticide (the destruction of a human life in the womb) by means of surgical abortion from a biblical perspective. In last month's newsletter, we discussed the growing tolerance of sexual impurity in today's more liberal temporal churches leading to passive acceptance of fornication and homosexuality as alternative lifestyles for many of its members. The depraved thinking from which these sinful practices are derived inevitably leads to the acceptance of even more atrocious sins as well (cf. Ro.1:28-31). As a consequence of their tolerance of fornication, today's ultra-liberal churches have tacitly condoned the destruction of an unborn child (Latin: *fetus*) in the womb of its unwed mother as a lifeless by-product of fornication that has no intrinsic value. In doing so, they have largely bought into the feminist notion that the extermination of the unborn is merely a matter of a woman's capricious choice not to carry an unborn child to term.

The physical existence of human offspring unquestioningly begins at conception when the very first physical elements of a living human body come into being within the womb of the mother. However, an issue that must be carefully considered is whether the physical body growing in the womb has the spiritual properties associated with human life and the self-awareness of a human soul prior to birth. That is, does God breathe the breath of spiritual viability into the unborn child at conception, at some later stage in its development – perhaps when its heart starts beating – or still later at the moment of its emergence from the womb into the physical world? The spirit of life has long been equated with breathing since earliest biblical times; the spirit of man has been seen to leave the human body along with the last breath at death. In like manner, as the newborn baby takes its first breath of air following birth, it can be assumed that God simultaneously breathes the breath of spiritual vitality into the child much as He did Adam at his creation (cf. Ge.2:7) – such that the physical body only then gains the properties of a living soul. This is the position presented in Chapter 16.2 of *CRC* Book II as being probable from a biblical perspective.

While this view in no way violates the express teaching of Scripture, it has nevertheless lead to some terribly erroneous conclusions by today's worldly-minded culture. It is falsely assumed by many today that the fetus in the womb is only a “lifeless product of conception” until birth takes place. To the contrary, we find that there is a recognizable human form present that exhibits physical movement as evidence of life long before birth. Moreover, there is incontrovertible evidence that the human fetus has a sense of physical awareness in the womb – especially in the later stages of its development before birth. It can experience physical discomfort, and it reacts to external stimulus by moving about to avoid physical pain. The fetus is therefore in every respect a human body from its conception onward, not a lifeless mass of tissue.

It should be noted that an act of homicide only kills the physical body of a person, not their soul or spirit, which is eternal and not subject to death at the hands of man (cf. Lu. 12:4,5). Likewise, the intentional killing of a human body while in the womb whether or not it is yet spiritually viable with an eternal soul is an act of murder of the same order. The taking of human life while it is still in the womb whether deliberate or inadvertent as a consequence of committing a violent act against the mother is legally referred to as feticide. Because the Latin word *fetus* is used instead of its English translation, which is “unborn child,” the killing of a child in the womb is commonly viewed by the secular state as a lesser crime than murder. Inasmuch as a fetus is in fact a living human body, the sinful nature of this act does not differ in any way from murder in the mind of God as is evidenced in the Mosaic Law. In Exodus chapter 21 verses 22–25, we find feticide listed with other personal injuries that mankind may commit against a woman such that if the fetus is harmed by an act of violence to the mother the penalty for this act is similar to that which would be imposed for injuring a live breathing child. If the child suffered any serious injury as evidenced by physical or mental malformation at birth, a range of penalties would be levied against the perpetrator corresponding to the degree of the injury caused, and if the unborn child died as a consequence, the law also demanded life for life (Ex.22:23).

Therefore, the physical development of the human body from the moment of conception up to and including physical birth into the world must be carefully protected and held to be sacrosanct as the living physical vessel that when imbued with the spirit of life at birth holds the soul of a unique human being as

God has ordained. The mother must take exceptional care that she takes no undue risks that could cause it any physical harm. She must eat well and avoid the partaking of drugs, smoking, alcohol, or any other harmful substances that could impair the proper development of the unborn child (cf. Jud. 13:1–24). Any intentional violation of this responsibility is not only a sin against a woman's own created nature but also a clear violation of God's divine Law. Nevertheless, pregnant women and especially unmarried teenagers lacking proper means to care for a child are often directed to resort to feticide through surgical abortion by their unsaved husbands, wayward boyfriends, their parents, unsaved associates, and by the devious advice received from organizations such as *Planned Parenthood* and its supporters. Through them and their advocates, many young women are deluded into thinking that an unborn child is merely a lifeless “product of conception” much as if they had developed a tumor that must be cut out so that they can continue on with their own lives. Such organizations supply a continuous means of financial income for unethical “surgeons” who commit this butchery under the guise of it being a standard medical procedure, and they in turn support these organizations as their benefactors.

In opposition to *Planned Parenthood* and other abortion advocates, many pro-life women's clinics have sprung up in the hopes of saving unborn babies from this massacre as well as preventing young mothers from committing the terrible sin of feticide by revealing to them what is actually at stake through medical education. While some more conservative churches help support these pro-life clinics, they remain highly dependent upon the contributions of concerned individuals. Many of these better-funded clinics have access to ultrasound imaging that clearly reveals the presence of a living child in the womb that is not simply a lifeless mass of tissue. After viewing the living child in their womb many women decide to give birth and rear the child as a single mother with the continuing help and encouragement provided by these organizations. In the process, many unsaved women also turn to Christ as their eternal redeemer.

When civil laws opposing abortion are being considered, rape and incest are often brought up as acceptable grounds for surgical abortion. Rape is a violent act committed against a woman that is justly punishable by civil law whether or not pregnancy results. Incest constitutes a deceitful breach of trust between responsible adults and innocent children who should be under their care and protection. Nevertheless, when rape or incest results in conception, the fetus thus created is a living human body deserving the same protection as any other unborn child. Therefore, even rape or incest cannot justify surgical abortion since it only compounds sin with more sin. As an acceptable remedy, the child can be put up for adoption immediately after it is born. Adoption is a sound biblical concept that provides barren couples with a child that they can receive and love as their own, while the terrible stigma concerning the child's conception is not outwardly carried forth by the child – or by its natural mother.

A common issue that is brought up by advocates of surgical abortion is the matter concerning the health of the mother – whether married or unmarried. This is essentially a strawman. While there may be quite unusual instances in which the mother's life could be threatened by a pregnancy brought to full term, that situation is quite rare. In that event every available medical effort should be made to save the life of both the mother and the child – which admittedly is not always successful. Today, a false argument of self-defense is put forth for committing feticide on the basis of childbirth causing some supposed mental stress, minor discomfort, or inconvenience for the mother that in no way threatens her life physically. The Canaanites of old lived in a corrupt society where fornication prevailed. Cloaked in religion, their sinful desire to be rid of unwanted babies was readily accomplished by putting them in the arms of an idol of Baal that was heated red-hot by a fire built at its base. Not only was fornication and infanticide acceptable, it was religiously encouraged. It was that unredeemable and corrupt people that God ordered Israel to totally exterminate as they entered the land lest any trace of their sinfulness remain to taint them as well. That extreme order clearly demonstrates God's position on infanticide and indirectly on feticide – which could not have been undertaken in those days without also greatly endangering the life of the woman. God Himself (as the pre-incarnate Christ) was in command of the Israelites as they took the land of Canaan by force (cf. Jos.5:13–15).

Stranger still is the argument that an unborn child should be aborted for the sake of the child. Often it can be determined that some physical defect has occurred in the womb that would render the life of the child

difficult or impossible after birth has taken place. So advanced have medical procedures become that it is often possible to correct such a defect while the child is still in the womb or at least to repair the defect as soon as birth takes place. At other times, no remedy is humanly possible. In that event, a woman is often ill-advised to terminate the pregnancy through surgical abortion — thus killing the unborn child rather than having it suffer from a life-long disability. After the fall of Adam, the human body became subject to decay, disease, and various organic malfunctions that must ultimately result in physical death. This same imperfection is present within human reproductive organs as well — sometimes resulting in various malformations of the fetus in the womb. For that reason, God often brings forth a spontaneous termination of the pregnancy (miscarriage) when He deems that the malformation is sufficiently severe. However, if God, in his infinite wisdom, does not choose to terminate the development of a fetus, it is sinful for mankind to assume that they may overrule his will. Moreover, God can and does overrule human defects and imperfections in special cases when it is in his will to do so. The writer to the Hebrews declared that fact regarding the human body that Jesus occupied in this life as being specially prepared by God in the womb of Mary as a sacrificial offering for the sins of mankind (cf. He.10:5). As with a sacrificial lamb, his body needed to be perfect without blemish of any kind (cf. 1Pe.1:19). King David marveled as he contemplated the time that his own physical body had developed in his mother's womb, from the moment of conception to birth, as being in the providence, oversight, and will of God until his spirit came forth to occupy the body thus formed at the time ordained for him to walk upon the earth (cf. Ps.139:13–16). This development came about not only in the foreknowledge of God, but by his divine preordination.

Most often the decision to clinically abort an imperfect fetus is not based upon the supposed suffering of a child in bearing a life-long disability at all, but upon the imagined ordeal that the parents would face in rearing such a child and providing for its future. Thus, it is deemed acceptable for sinful man to commit murder to protect a lifestyle that has no place for the extraordinary. However, those parents that humbly accept the great responsibility that God has placed upon them through embracing such a child are often rewarded in ways that they could never imagine beforehand. Moreover, God has often supplemented various human disabilities with other extraordinary attributes and abilities that are highly beneficial to their parents and to mankind in general.

A hotly debated political issue today is the notion of a woman's right to choose how her own body will be used by another such that an unborn child in their womb can be viewed as an invader and violator of their personal rights. The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld such a strange notion as a constitutional issue based upon a person's right to personal privacy under the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Under this ruling (*Roe v Wade* 1973), to deliver or abort an unborn child must be left entirely up to the woman as a matter of personal choice up and until the fetus has reached physical viability to live outside the womb. The unborn child has no legal protection from its own mother under civil law prior to that stage of development, nor can it defend itself in any way. This ruling has led to the unmitigated slaughter of millions of healthy unborn children. Although the fetus is commonly considered to be legally viable when it reaches the third trimester of the pregnancy, this limit is often ignored or the fetus is killed through various chemical means while in the womb thus rendering it "un-viable" thus necessitating a surgical procedure to remove it from the womb. Some abortionists even practice what is referred to as "partial birth abortion" wherein the head of the fully developed child ready to be delivered is crushed when it first appears killing the infant in the birth canal just before it is delivered. Then its dead body is removed. This despicable procedure very closely borders on infanticide inasmuch as the fetus is only one breath away from becoming a living soul.

Availability of abortion on demand for all women who call for it is a core plank of the secular feminist movement that has also infiltrated so many of our more liberal churches. Feminists backed by powerful humanist legal organizations such as the *American Civil Liberties Union* even call for public funds to pay for this "procedure" if women cannot afford the financial cost. It is very concerning to note that those who favor abortion as a means of liberating themselves from the birth of an unwanted child prefer to call themselves "pro-choice advocates" as a politically-correct mask hiding their evil intent to commit murder of the unborn. Up to the moment of conception, a woman does have a choice not to bear children inasmuch as God has not specifically mandated that every woman must marry and bear offspring in an age in which the world is well

populated (cf. 1Co.7:34), as opposed to those particular times when Adam and Eve were its sole occupants and when Noah and his small family later emerged from the ark into an empty world following the great flood (cf. Ge. 1:28; 9:1,7). As conception takes place, however, that choice is immediately and irrevocably surrendered by the woman in favor of the divine imperative of the helpless unborn child within her to breathe in the spirit of life at birth. This surrender is in full accordance with her created nature, which God has established in all women from Eve onward.

A few of our more conservative churches have considered remolding the nation and ultimately the world into accepting a form of Christian ethic through forceful Christian political activism (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 465). This activism is especially seen in the United States through a continuing effort to reverse the Supreme Court's unbiblical ruling regarding abortion through congressional action and/or Constitutional amendment. This activity is without doubt sincerely undertaken with pure intent and purpose. However, such activism is clearly a case of trying to externally impose Christian values on a debased society that has no taste for it and will vehemently oppose it. In the end, all such political militancy must fail because the temporal church has been infiltrated by the world to the extent that the Christian activists are vastly outnumbered by unredeemed members of the secular society. As we briefly mentioned in last month's newsletter, such political warfare consumes efforts and funds that could ordinarily be used in reaching the unsaved masses with the Gospel of Christ. Moreover, this conflict adversely affects the purity of the church as it dirties its hands with worldly activities, affiliations, and methods while neglecting Christian evangelism motivated by the power of prayer – its most powerful recourse in eradicating the sinful ills of society including feticide.

Feticide and what amounts to de facto infanticide may often escape deserved punishment by human laws and even overlooked by many of today's decadent temporal churches, but the sinful nature of such violations does not ever escape the notice of God. The consequences of these particularly sinful acts demand the penalty of eternal death as does all human sin in God's sight. Many women and even some men suffer grief and sorrow throughout their lifetimes for the terrible act of feticide through surgical abortion that they have earlier committed, endorsed, or encouraged – whether ignorantly or willfully. Certainly, the ungodly men and even some women who enrich themselves by performing these deadly operations must bear the blunt of eternal judgment in the life to come.

The good news for those who have condoned or committed such wicked acts of murder is that God will forgive this terrible sin even as He will forgive all other sinful thoughts and acts we have all committed (cf. Ro.3:23) – if we humbly repent of them and turn to Him in genuine and contrite confession seeking his forgiveness. Although deep regret for the sin of feticide may linger on in the deep recesses of the human mind, the terrible overwhelming guilt can be healed by turning to the One who is the author of the divine law that was so severely broken. God is willing not only to forgive but also to redeem any sinner who turns to Him with a contrite heart, thus absolving them from all eternal penalty through an act of his divine grace (cf. Ps.51:17;Is.57:15). Only when the terrible sin of feticide is placed under the redeeming blood of Christ can there be any peace of mind and hope for the future – both in this life and the life to come.

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