

# Christian Life Resources

## Position Statement on Abortion

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### PREAMBLE

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A Christian demonstrates thankfulness to a loving and forgiving God by doing what is good and avoiding what is evil. The Holy Scriptures proclaim God's will for what is to be done and what is to be avoided.

It is that same Word of God which compels Christians and Christian agencies to perform charitable work for the care of others. Christians and Christian agencies are also compelled to commend faithful living and point out error by proclaiming God's Word. It is the purpose of this statement to glorify God by proclaiming his truth, speaking against error, and advocating charitable work for the benefit of others.

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### ABSTRACT

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Human life exists already at conception. It is a gift from God. He also reserves for himself the authority to take human life. Aborting an unborn child for any reason, other than to preserve a human life, is a practice condemned by the Word of God and therefore is wrong.

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### BACKGROUND

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In 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Roe v. Wade* and its companion case, *Doe v. Bolton*, that a woman has the legal right to avail herself of elective abortion services. This right to abortion was to extend throughout the entire term of the pregnancy with only minor restrictions imposed as the pregnancy progresses. The practices of self-abortion and performing abortions on women have been around for centuries. Abortion for the purpose of saving the life of a mother has generally been accepted in societies. Its broader legalization in 1973 brought to the forefront the fundamental questions of life, individual rights, and freedom.

The issues which appear at the focal point of the debate for Christians are:

- The beginning of human life
- The competing interest between individual freedom and the right to live
- The spiritual welfare of the mother and child
- The extent Christian beliefs on an issue can be applied publicly

(N.B. Often euphemistic terms such as pregnancy termination, pregnancy reduction, and others are used in place of the word abortion in order to minimize the serious moral implications of the procedure.)

## TERMINOLOGY

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**ABORTION:** Abortion is the expulsion or removal of an unborn child from the womb resulting in the death of that child. Generally, there are three types of abortion:

**Spontaneous:** The action of the body in which a child, usually in the very early stages of gestation, dies in the womb and is naturally expelled. A spontaneous abortion is unintentional and is often called a miscarriage.

**Medically Necessary:** To intentionally terminate the life of an unborn child once it is determined continuing the pregnancy would end the life of both mother and child. Abortions for this reason are becoming rarer with the advancements of medicine, but they do occur.

**Elective:** To terminate the life of an unborn child for any reason other than the saving of the mother's life. This includes situations here the mother's health might be endangered but not necessarily her life.

**CONCEPTION:** That point when sperm fertilizes an egg and cell division commences.

**IMPLANTATION:** That point when a fertilized egg implants in the uterine lining and continues its growth.

**ECTOPIC PREGNANCY:** The result of a fertilized egg implanting itself outside the uterine cavity, most commonly in the fallopian tube, which is called a tubal pregnancy.

## THE ISSUES

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### SECTION 1: HUMAN LIFE

God's Word does not mention abortion in any place. The fact that Scripture neither mentions the word "abortion," nor addresses more directly the issues of spontaneous, medically necessary or elective abortions does not mean this matter is left to personal judgment. God establishes principles in his Word which reveal His will on abortion.

NOTE: Exodus 21:22-25 is omitted in the following list of passages because of exegetical difficulties. We have decided to cite passages that speak more clearly.

#### **Human Beings are Unique and Prized in All God's Creation**

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*  
(Genesis 1:26)

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*  
(Genesis 1:27)

God distinguishes human beings by giving them authority over all other living things. God further distinguishes human beings by the unique way he created them in his own image.

### **Human Beings Consist of Body and Soul**

*...and the dust turns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)*

*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matthew 10:28)*

Human beings on earth are further distinguished by their unique constitution of both body and soul. The possession of a soul is exclusively assigned to human beings.

### **Human Beings Exist in the Womb**

*People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. (Luke 18:15)*

*As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. (Luke 1:44)*

The gospel writer, Luke, was both an inspired writer of Scripture and a physician. He used the same word, baby, to describe the born and unborn child. Neither his medical knowledge nor the Holy Spirit's guidance moved him to make any differentiation between the two.

### **Protecting the Life of Human Beings is a Primary Concern**

*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. (Genesis 9:6)*

Even though human beings after the flood were permitted to take plant and animal life for food, they are not to take human life, because, unlike animal life, it was created in the image of God. God allows for the practice of capital punishment (see also Romans 13:4) as just retribution for an act of murder.

### **Human Beings Face an Eternal Accounting for Sin**

*If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. (Mark 9:43)*

*For the wages of sin is death . . . (Romans 6:23a)*

*... man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment... (Hebrews 9:27)*

*God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (2 Thessalonians 1:6-8)*

In contrast to animals and other forms of life, human beings are responsible for their actions and face eternal consequences because of sin.

## **Accountability for Sin Establishes the Beginning of Human Life**

*Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. (Psalm 51:5)*

As moral creatures God holds individual human beings accountable for sin. That accountability is already evident at conception. (NOTE: In the Old Testament the Israelites considered conception to take place at the earliest possible moment. The root for the Hebrew word “conceive” means “to burn” and is often used to describe the passion in intercourse. The entire procreative process is viewed as a unit concept, running from intercourse to delivery. Genesis 4:1 provides us with such an example.) We can say with certainty that human life exists at conception.

## **All Human Beings are Declared Forgiven and Righteous in Christ**

*God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)*

*But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:21-24)*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8,9)*

Jesus lived and died in our place. All people are declared righteous because of his perfect life and forgiven because of his all sufficient death. The individual receives this free gift of forgiveness through Christ, not by works, but only by God's gracious gift of faith.

## **Christians Seek to Glorify God When Making Decisions about Human Life**

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)*

*And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)*

*Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)*

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:10)*

Believers are called to do all things to the glory of God, that is, to do his will out of love for him. In a world of sin, doing God's will may involve facing difficult decisions which could carry with them unfortunate consequences. For instance, in those rare circumstances where a mother might die from her pregnancy, a mother and father may have to decide whether to terminate the pregnancy rather than lose the lives of both mother and child. Such decisions become even more difficult when the parents are confronted with the prospect of postponing potentially life preserving treatment for the mother so as to not endanger the life of the unborn child (ex.: treatment for maternal cancer which may prove fatal for the unborn child).

We caution that so called “exceptions to abortion” ought not broaden the criteria for a justifiable abortion. A Christian will not lose sight of the fact that taking a human life for any reason other than saving a life, is wrong.

Because of the high regard God places on human life we reject abortion for reasons of physical defects in the unborn child. God has demonstrated the high value he places on all human life, regardless of its varying degrees of quality of life. We also reject abortion as a so called “instrument of compassion” for pregnant victims of rape or incest. There is no biblical justification for punishing the unborn child with death for the sins of the father. Rather, we encourage compassionate care and assistance to such victims throughout their pregnancy and the process of determining whether she wants to continue caring for the child after birth or place the child for adoption.

### **Conclusion**

God’s Word instructs us that human life is his unique creation that is to be protected at all stages, including its earliest stages. Even when a medical abortion is sought to preserve a mother’s life, the Christian will always proceed with the intent to preserve all human life whenever possible. All other reasons for abortion fail to reflect God’s high regard for human life and our responsibility to protect it.

## **SECTION 2: PERSONAL RIGHTS V. THE RIGHT TO LIFE**

Even some advocates of abortion acknowledge that the unborn child is a life. Others call the child a potential life or a life with potential. However, the argument is not whether the unborn child is life, but where that life has rights under the law. The reasoning is that because the unborn child fails to have specific legal recognition, the mother has a compelling interest over against her unborn child. Abortion proponents readily acknowledge that upon birth there are constitutional provisions protecting that life, but the essence of protective constitutional mandates for the unborn child suggests a legal denial of “personhood” to the unborn child. The result, therefore, is that the mother may legally exercise her perceived constitutional right to privacy and abort her child if she so desires.

### **Christians Are Free From the Curse of Sin**

*Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (John 8:34-36)*

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)*

*Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (Romans 10:4)*

By fulfilling the law on our behalf, Jesus freed us from the eternal curse of sin.

### **Christians Express Their Freedom by Keeping God’s Will**

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed. (Luke 4:18)*

Our practice of freedom is to reflect our eternal freedom from sin and damnation made possible by the gift of Jesus Christ as our Savior.

### **Christian Freedom Finds its Expression in Keeping the Will of God**

*You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. (Galatians 5:13)*

*Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. (1 Corinthians 8:9)*

Freedom is not absolute, but subject to the will of God. Freedom finds both its beginning and end in God's Word and his will that we should love our neighbor.

### **Conclusion**

Christians express their freedom through the moral obligation of the law. Obedience to the moral law is an expression of love for God. That moral law guides us in sharing God-pleasing love to our fellow human beings. A Christian does not have the right to choose that which is contrary to God's will. Apart from God's expressed command, Christians cannot take human life, but rather, are obliged to protect it.

## **SECTION 3: THE APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN BELIEFS IN THE PUBLIC ARENA**

Abortion opponents are often accused of trying to push their religious views off on the rest of society, yet those who favor abortion do the same when they hope to push on all of society their personally held conviction which allows for abortion on demand. Aside from that illogic, God's Word guides us to recognize both the distinction between privately held convictions and the Christian's role in reflecting those convictions to the world.

### **God's Word Speaks Clearly Concerning the Taking of Human Life**

*"See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand." (Deuteronomy 32:39)*

*"You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)*

God condemns murder as sin. Christians can testify to that truth.

### **Man Has a Natural Knowledge of the Law That Can be Sensitized**

*Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. (Romans 2:14,15)*

Even unbelieving people have a blurred knowledge of God's law written in their hearts. Christians can appeal to that knowledge when testifying that murder is wrong.

### **When Others Need our Help we Cannot Remain Silent**

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:3-5)*

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." (Matthew 25:35,36)*

*"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. In stead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:13-16)*

*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. (2 Corinthians 5:14,15)*

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. (Proverbs 31:8)*

Motivated by their love for Christ, Christians will put their faith into action.

### **Christians Will Exercise their Legal Rights to Protect Life**

*"Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword." (Matthew 26:52)*

*Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. (Romans 13:1)*

*Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29)*

Christians are encouraged to use the legal avenues in society to reflect their love for Christ by protecting the lives of others.

### **Conclusion**

A Christian is to be a faithful witness to God's truth in this world. Therefore, he will publicly testify to the sanctity of human life and the sinfulness of elective abortion. In so doing, he protects human life and proclaims God's holy truths.

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## SUMMARY STATEMENT ON ABORTION

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God's Word teaches that life exists at conception and is to be protected from its earliest stage. To abort for any reason other than the preservation of another life is contrary to God's Word. Freedom of choice ends where compromising God's Word begins. Human beings, born and unborn, whether healthy or impaired, are of equal value in God's eyes. Christians will seek to protect the lives of mothers and children, care for them, and use God's Word to correct error and proclaim truth about life now and for eternity. Since this is God's position, it is therefore, the position of Christian Life Resources.

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## CHRISTIAN LIFE RESOURCES

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Christian Life Resources' ministry includes a 24-hour helpline, more than 15 pregnancy care centers across the U.S., a home for single mothers in Milwaukee, WI, online information and education at [www.ChristianLifeResources.com](http://www.ChristianLifeResources.com), Christian medical directives, speakers on life and family issues, our official publication Clearly Caring magazine that addresses life and family issues, and much more!

*“The mission of Christian Life Resources is to use life and family issues as bridges to convey the love of God and the message of salvation through Christ.”*

**Christian Life Resources**  
**Box 56, Richfield, WI 53076**  
**Toll-Free: 800.729.9535**  
**Email: [info@christianliferesources.com](mailto:info@christianliferesources.com)**  
**Website: [www.ChristianLifeResources.com](http://www.ChristianLifeResources.com)**