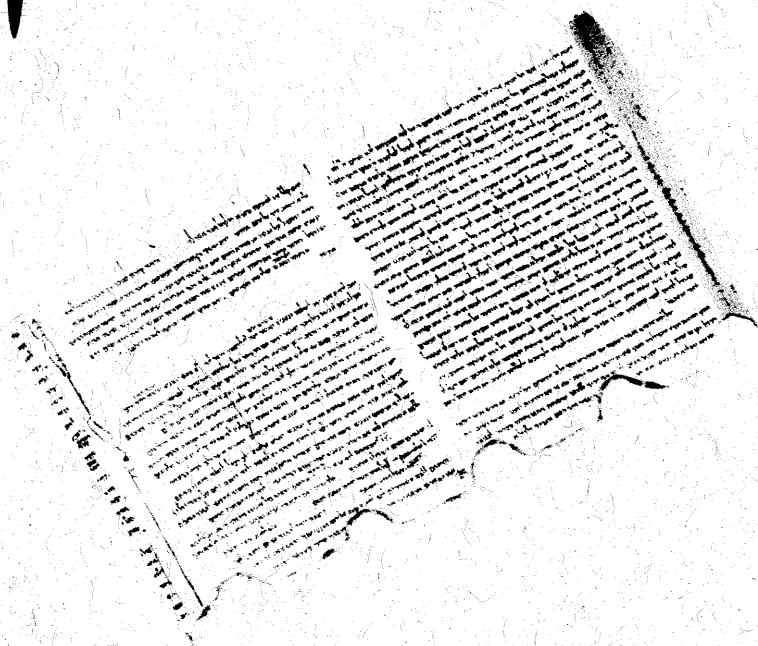




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A B O R T I O N

EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE*

The assignment given to me by the Conference is: "a brief exegetical study of Scripture passages dealing with the beginning of life and abortion and an examination of what role the church should play in asserting a fundamental Christian morality on the state." In the light of the recent Supreme Court decision to allow abortion-on-demand a further study may seem about as useful as reading first-aid procedures for artificial respiration three days after the funeral of your drowned friend. The fact is, however, that this study is more important now than ever. Now we have no choice but to face the problem and to come to some firm decision, for now abortion is available to all and could well become as common in our congregations as other "family problems."

There is deplorable ignorance regarding the real facts about abortion. The typical pregnant woman is characterized by the main character, Helen, in the book *ABORTION: THE AGONIZING DECISION*:

...I suppose the truth is that I really didn't want to know the facts about abortion. I just wanted some kind doctor to put me to sleep, get on with the job, and wake me up when it was all over. Then I would try to walk away just as if nothing had happened. ¹

After Helen had learned more about abortion from attending a one-day conference on the subject she said:

* Prepared as an assignment for the Southwest and Central Pastoral Conference, ELS March 26, 27, 1973

The big one (fact which disturbed me) was that a decision to seek abortion is a decision to take life...The friends with whom I have talked have made it seem a very trivial matter. I knew they were wrong, and I think they knew they were wrong. It was a kind of game to treat the whole thing superficially so as to avoid the real anguish that is involved. It wouldn't work -- I'd only go through the anguish afterward anyway...²

"Superficially" is the way the subject is treated on the street level. The average person is led to think of abortion as removing a piece of tissue from a poor girl who has been raped. We shall see from a more thorough study of the matter that much more is involved. The fact that Planned Parenthood of Minnesota estimates between 10,000 and 15,000 abortions will be performed in Minnesota in 1973 should alert us that something more is going on. (Robert W. McCoy, head of Minnesota's only abortion clinic and vocal advocate of liberal abortion, estimates the number will be 15,000 to 16,000. The Population Council estimates 1.6 million abortions will be done in the U. S. during 1973.)³

Unfortunately, the churches are not speaking clearly on the issue either. In 1970 the United Presbyterian Church and the United Methodist General Conference declared the abortion problem to be a personal decision.⁴ Other church bodies have followed their lead, especially in the light of the 1973 Supreme Court decision (Roe Vs. Wade). On the other hand, there are several church bodies which have been unbending in their opposition to abortion. The Roman church is by no means unanimously agreed on abortion, but officially it opposes it without compromise. An interesting thing about the abortion question is that it is an individual issue. Opinion does not divide into the traditional stereotypes like liberal/conservative, Protestant/Roman Catholic, etc.

Though this departs from the original assignment, the aim of this survey will be to acquaint pastors and church leaders with some of the implications of the present abortion situation in the hope that they will do much more study and be able to help inform others. Ignorance and inaction may be the greatest enemy of the unborn. The author does not pretend to cover all the implications of the abortion drama. Nor does he claim insight into all the problems. Anyone studying this subject is soon humbled and hence cautious.

I. WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT WHEN WE SAY "ABORTION"?

In order to understand the subject it is most helpful to have a basic knowledge of the "Story of Life." We will not deal with the reproductive aspect. We will assume the sperm and ovum have united in the fallopian tube. The process of growing begins at once. The new cell is called a zygote ("joined"). Although we speak of the sperm uniting with the ovum (egg), it is actually to the nucleus of the ovum that it is joined. The nucleus is about the same size as the sperm. The rest of the ovum is the food supply which the newly-formed zygote will use during the first few days. About the fifth day the zygote should arrive in the uterus (womb) where it will seek to implant itself to draw nourishment from the rich lining of the womb. At the point of contact between the mother and the baby, a special organ, called the placenta, is formed. Because the baby enters a new stage when it enters the uterus, it is given a new name, blastocyst. Two weeks after conception a third name is given, embryo, and after two months a fourth name, fetus. Although each of these names denotes a different stage of development, the term "fetus" usually is used in a wider sense to cover the time from conception to birth. We will use it in this wider sense throughout this paper.

During the implantation stage there is another operation in progress. A sort of balloon called the amniotic sac (bag of waters) is being formed around the baby where he will float freely. The

amniotic sac serves the two-fold purpose of separating the embryo from the mother and protecting him against injury.

During this same time there is a process of magnificent development. All the organs are developed in the embryonic stage (first two months). Only the finishing, perfecting and growing occur during the fetal stage. According to David R. Mace, a British sociologist:

By the end of the eighth week, when the embryo changes its name and becomes a fetus, it is one inch long, and now has full arms and legs, with well-formed fingers and toes. The brain is at work, because electrical activity can be detected by a machine doctors use for this purpose. It is sensitive to touch -- if tickled on the nose it will turn its head away! ⁵

It was carefully noted by Dr. Mace, upon whom the above description is dependent, that the conceived child is different from the mother. He showed how they have different bloodstreams (often even different blood types) and how the amniotic sac completely separates the child from the mother. Geneticists point out that the DNA factor is settled in the conception. This indicates that the conceived child is unique and separate from his mother. Yet another factor is the father's contribution to the child. It cannot be maintained on any medical grounds that the unborn child is part of the mother's tissue, not at any stage after conception. The "mother's tissue" argument is "street talk" and does not belong in the discussion among informed and ethical people.

Having this basic understanding of the "Story of Life," we are ready to consider the "Story of Abortion." David Mace defines abortion thus:

...the fact must be faced that what abortion means is the killing of the embryo or fetus. The use of this unpleasant word is avoided in most discussions of the subject. Even in medical books the writers speak of "evacuating the con-

tents of the uterus" or "removing the fetal tissue." But it is simply dishonest to evade the fact that the embryo or fetus is alive when the operation begins and dead when it is over. 6

The various methods of inducing abortions are well known. Normally the intention in these procedures, with the exception of hysterotomy, is to kill the fetus so it will come out. The four commonly used methods of abortion include DILATION AND CURETTAGE, SUCTION CURETTAGE, SALTING OUT, AND HYSTEROTOMY. Dilation and curettage involves dilating the uterus and with a sharp instrument scraping out the contents. In the suction curettage method the baby is torn from the wall of the uterus by a small but powerful vacuum cleaner affectionately called the "baby scrambler." The "salting out" method is the most popular method on babies over 14 weeks. A needle is inserted through the wall of the mother's abdomen into the bag of waters. Through the needle a salt solution is injected which slowly and painfully kills the baby so he will come out. Hysterotomy, not to be confused with hysterectomy, is basically the same as Caesarian delivery except the baby in this case is incinerated. 7

Because there is confusion about terminology we will define what we intend when we speak of various kinds of abortions. The first is therapeutic. Therapeutic abortions are those performed to save the life of the mother. In recent years this term has been interpreted in a wide sense to include also the mother's mental health, and under that pretext abortions have been performed for almost any reason. A second term is induced. This describes the artificially produced terminations of the fetal life. It technically refers to abortions other than therapeutic. A third type of abortion not often mentioned is the psychogenic abortion. These are psychologically induced abortions or miscarriages. According to Rushdoony this is more common than we realize, even among primitive tribes. 8

Rushdoony also delineates the three attitudes toward abortion, other than the Christian attitude,

which have been important historically. The first is the "statist concept common to Plato, Aristotle, and every current socialist or welfare state.

Whether such a state approves of abortion or not is secondary to its basic premise that the matter is within its moral jurisdiction in a legislative manner; that is, the state assumes that its considerations are basic, and its government over the life of man the fundamental and ultimate order for man. Hence the state can legalize or ban abortion as an independent and determinative moral arbiter." ⁹ This concept is employed by those who seek a super-race or who seek to eliminate certain diseases or "weak traits" from the population. It also is used from the standpoint of economics. One less baby is that much less welfare payment to that mother.

The second attitude, called the familist concept, makes the "family requirements" the ruling factor. This argument was used by the wealthy class at Rome which wanted to limit the number of heirs. It is one of the foremost arguments advanced for abortion in our country today. The idea is nursed that another child "at this time" will put a strain upon the other members of the family. Or it is thought that since another child would place a financial burden upon the family, he should not be allowed to be born.

A third approach is called atomistic humanism. It makes the individual the ultimate moral arbiter. It is typified in the argument of Women's Lib. "A woman ought to have the right to do what she wants with her own body."

The "Story of Abortion" is a long one dating back into history as early as Cir. 1500 B. C. The Assyrians forbade the practice of abortion, ascribing as penalty, death. Among the Greeks infanticide, abandonment and abortion were common. Plato and Aristotle advocated such measures for population control (statist concept). In Rome the wealthy resorted to abortion to limit the number of heirs among whom they would have to divide the estate.

Among the slaves, where life was not highly regarded anyway, abortion was common. Soranus, called the greatest of the Greek gynecologists, reported that women resorted to abortion for three main reasons: "to remove the evidence of adultery, to maintain feminine beauty, and to safeguard the life of the woman whose womb was too small to carry a child." ¹⁰ Hippocrates, on the other hand, included in the oath still taken today: "I will not give to a woman an abortifacient pessary. In purity and holiness I will guard my life and my art." ¹¹ In his historical review Dr. Lloyd A. Kalland makes the following citations:

Philo states that there was a terrible plight of parents who practiced infanticide, stranglings and drownings, exposing in the desert areas to wild beasts, etc. Justin claimed that these persons were killers of men. Moreover, in the APOL-OGY we read that Christians were forbidden to destroy even the fetus (9.8). In the Didache or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles this practice was looked upon as identical with the killers of children (5.2). In the Letter of Barnabas (early second century) we read, "Thou shalt not kill the fetus by an abortion or commit infanticide" (19.5). The same interpretation was made by Tertullian, Cyprian and others.

In the Eastern Church, in the basic legislation which was the Canons of St. Basel there was a condemnation without qualification of all women who committed abortion, whatever the state or development of the fetus. In the West Jerome also condemned this practice. This means that for all intents and purposes, the life-giving process was viewed as identical to life itself and it was equally wrong to kill a fetus as it was to take the life of a child. ¹²

The Roman Church to this day, following Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, regards contraception and abortion together as against nature and therefore equal to murder. The Reformers differentiated between contraception and abortion, forbidding the latter but not the former.

With such nearly unanimous agreement in the Christian Church until the present time that abortion was homicide, if not murder, one would expect the Scriptural evidence to be substantial. There is, however, only one mention of abortion in Scripture and that is under heated debate even among the evangelicals. Yet, the Scriptures do ring clear when taken as a whole, as we shall see.

II. THEOLOGICAL VIEWS OF FETAL LIFE.

A. The Sanctity of Life.

The value one assigns to human life will depend upon one's belief about man's origin. The humanist, for instance, who discounts the special creation by God, views man as a "highly-developed animal" or "rational animal." The distinction between beast and man is at least blurred. About life the humanist believes: "Man has given, and man has taken away, blessed be man."

From the Christian standpoint there is quite another view. To the creationist, life originates by the special creation of God. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7) Besides the special care God took in the creation of man, it is said that "God created man in his image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Genesis 1:27) Without discussing what the "image of God" means to various people, one conclusion cannot escape us: only of man is it said that he is created "in the image of God." The third distinguishing characteristic of man is that he was assigned to the stewardship of ruling over all the rest of the creation. In the Christian view, life is sacred first of all because it originates with God our Creator.

The doctrine of Redemption also emphasizes the sanctity of human life. The eternal Son of God entered into humanness, taking upon Him a human body, in order to redeem men's bodies as well as souls from everlasting death. Further, the resurrection of the

body emphasizes the high priority God has placed upon the human body.

Another dimension worthy of note is the individuality of redemption. We are not redeemed as a race but as individuals, all known and desired by the seeking Savior who is "not willing that any should perish."

When we consider the Scriptural view of man's life, we are put on notice that with human life we are dealing with something which is known and treasured by God. Any consideration of intervention with human life is strictly forbidden by God in a special commandment. Murderers forfeit their lives -- "Who-so sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Genesis 9:6).

With reference to the Christian view of the human body C. S. Lewis has observed:

Christianity is almost the only one of the great religions which thoroughly approves of the body -- which believes that matter is good, that God Himself once took on a human body, that some kind of body is going to be given to us even in heaven and is going to be an essential part of our happiness, our beauty, and our energy. ¹³

B. The Biblical View of the Fetus.

More pertinent to our study is the Bible's view of the fetus or the unborn. Does the Bible consider the fetus to be life coming under the protection of the fifth commandment?

One of the main texts involved is Exodus 21:22-23:

If men strive and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her and yet no mischief follow, he shall surely be punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life. (A.V.)

Two major interpretations have been offered:
(a) If a pregnant woman is injured by men fighting

so that she miscarries, gives birth to a stillborn baby, or is herself injured, a fine shall be assessed by the husband and arbitrated by judges. On the other hand, if "mischief" follows to the mother, that is, if she dies, the penalty of "life for life" shall be assigned. (b) The second view assumes that in some cases at least the child could be born prematurely, but unharmed. In these cases the penalty as the husband and judges determine shall be assigned as damages for the trauma. In all other cases where the fetus or mother do not live the penalty of "life for life" shall be assigned.

The controversy centers in the expression $\text{יָלַד בְּכֹחַ הַמַּלְאָכִים}$. A large number, if not the majority, of modern interpreters translate this "miscarries." If they are right in this translation, then, of course the fetus always dies and the fact that the "life for life" penalty is not always specified indicates a Biblical difference between fetal life and maternal life. The problem with this exegesis, however, is that יָלַד is never used in the Old Testament to describe an unformed fetus as in the case of a miscarriage. It always refers to the birth of a developed child, normal delivery. Hebrew does have a verb which means to miscarry (שָׂדַד) and which is used elsewhere by Moses (Ex. 23:26). But he does not use it here.

In other words, what should be understood from the ordinary and known use of the words is the birth of a living child brought on prematurely by the blow. In every case a fine would be imposed for the blow. But if either child OR mother or both are harmed or die, the guilty party shall be repaid in kind, "... life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth,..."

The idea of miscarriage even militates against the contextual evidence for it says in the first case "...and yet no mischief (harm) follow..." A miscarriage and subsequent loss of the child would have to fall into the category of "harm." The birth of a normal, live baby is the only thing that fits the linguistic and contextual evidence. Those who favor the miscarriage interpretation are forced to

add "other" or "further" to the second part of the verse to make it appear as though the text distinguishes between degrees of harm: "...so there is no further harm..." 14

Our conclusion is this: in prescribing the penalty of death for causing the death of the fetus this passage equates fetal life with maternal life. In so doing it comes to the same conclusion as modern medical science, namely, that when a new individual has been conceived it is a life, a human life.

Jack W. Cottrell writing in Christianity Today draws this significant conclusion:

...if this view of Exodus 21:22-23 is correct, then one can no longer find here a biblical justification for liberalizing abortion laws. And if it cannot be found here, then it can be found nowhere in Scripture, for there does not seem to be any other passage to which any serious appeal has been or can be made for this purpose. 15

Though Exodus 21:22ff is the only passage which treats of abortion directly, there are many passages which speak of the unborn.

For thou hast possessed (formed) my reins: thou hast covered me (knit me together) in my mother's womb. I will praise thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (in the womb). Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. (Psalm 139)

The last verse is mistranslated in the AV. In the RSV it reads: "Thine eyes beheld my unformed substance; in thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me when as yet there was none of them." The sense is that among the days of God's planning, there is one destined for the creation of David. The idea is that everything has

its beginning, development and completion according to God's creative counsel. The Psalm praises God for His omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. In His omnipotence He knew David even before He created him and while he was being created in the womb, even while yet "unformed." Even then David was a person, a person in the making perhaps, but a person nonetheless.

Other passages yield much the same thought:

Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again? Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews. (Job 10:8-11)

Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb? (Job 31:15)

Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb... Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb... (Isaiah 44:2,24)

The word of the Lord came to me saying: 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. (Jeremiah 1:4,5)

Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me. Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labor and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame? (Jeremiah 20:17,18)

In these passages personhood is reckoned from the time when the fetus was yet "unformed." Jeremiah even seems to speak of his origin with God as going back beyond his conception. He speaks of the womb as a potential grave, implying that the fetus

is a separate, living individual.

A unique but important thought is added by David in Psalm 51:3, where he traces the origin of sin in his flesh to his conception. ("Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.") Would anyone dispute that David viewed his beginning and conception as identical?

To this list of O. T. passages we should also add the important thought that conception itself was viewed as a gift of God. David Mace makes this observation:

It is an essential feature of the Hebrew belief about children that they are not simply the result of sexual union, but a direct gift of God... The Bible does not contest the fact that there is a causal connection between sexual intercourse and conception, but it denies that the effect is inevitable, or that parents possess the power to ensure it. ¹⁶

Thus Eve says: "I have gotten a man from the Lord..." (Gen. 4:1); Sarai, "...the Lord hath restrained me from bearing..." (Gen. 16:2); "God opened Leah's womb..." (Gen. 29:31); "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren." (Gen. 30:22).

The Hebrews regarded motherhood as the fulfillment of a woman's life. Pious Jewish women fondly hoped to become the mother of the promised Seed. Barrenness was regarded as a curse from God and reflected directly upon the woman. Children were a heritage of the Lord, not an unwanted inconvenience as we hear from our contemporaries.

From this study of O. T. passages we draw these conclusions: (a) All conception is regarded as God's gift. (b) God is recognized as the Creator of the fetus. (c) Personhood is not established at any point such as birth or "quickening" but is assumed from conception (or even before) in the sight of God.

In the New Testament the Incarnation of Christ

becomes the most convincing argument for the life of the fetus. His Incarnation had to begin when He was "conceived of the Holy Ghost." This is borne out too in that shortly after this miraculous conception Mary visited Elizabeth who was six months pregnant at the time. Another miraculous thing happened when the fetus (BREPPOS) gave recognition to the newly conceived Lord by kicking violently in his mother's womb. 17

The New Testament also emphasizes the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and election of us before our time. Our personhood is established with God from eternity to eternity. "According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will..." (Ephesians 1:4,5)

One summary statement will suffice. If any point of beginning other than conception can be determined on the basis of the New Testament or the Old Testament, it would have to be prior to conception and not after.

C. The Soul and the Fetus.

A theological question which is thought to have bearing upon the abortion issue is the question of when the soul enters the body. For some the whole matter finally hinges upon this. Dr. Criswell, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, said of the court's ruling: "I have always felt that it was only after a child was born and had 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." 18 We shall see later that R.F.E. Gardner, a British ordained clergyman and gynecologist, seems to decide the question also on the basis of when the soul enters the body.

There are historically two divergent views as to the origin of the soul -- Traducianism and Crea-

tionism. The former holds that the soul is passed on from parents to child as is the body. A variant of this is "spiritual" Traducianism, the view that the soul of the child is passed on from the souls of the parents. ¹⁹ Creationism is the opinion that at some time God specially creates the soul and that the time of creation is not necessarily connected with conception. Although most hold that the creation of the soul and conception coincide, many argue vehemently for a later time. Some place it as early as the fifth day (implantation), others at "quickenning," some relate the creation of the soul with the development of the nervous system and some believe ensoulment takes place when the baby takes its first breath. ²⁰

Aristotle had proposed the theory that in the early stages the unborn child had a "vegetable soul" (without sensation and movement). Later it developed an "animal soul" (with feeling and movement). Finally it came to possess a human or "rational soul." According to his theory the change from "vegetable soul" to "animal soul" took place after 40 days for the male and 80-90 days for the female. Possession of the "rational soul" was equated with the full formation of the body. ²¹

John Warwick Montgomery says that "creationism" is the position held by Pelagius, Peter Lombard, St. Thomas and the Roman Catholic ordinary magisterium, and by most Calvinists. "Augustine, in opposing the Pelagians and in his insistence on man's total depravity, held to generationism (spiritual Traducianism), as did Luther and most theologians influenced by him." ²² Lutheran theologians have held that the point of ensoulment is an "open question" which cannot be settled on the basis of Scriptural data. ²³

What must be avoided with respect to the ensoulment issue is what Dr. Gardner has done in deciding the case for abortion because of his creationist and late ensoulment belief. Dr. Gardner deserves our respect for his scholarship, for his association with both fields involved in the matter, theological and

scientific, and for his sensitivity. He permits abortion only in what he considers to be the most urgent cases. Nevertheless we beg to differ with this learned, reverent man when he determines late ensoulment because of these three problems: twinning, fetal wastage and in vitro conceptions. Twinning takes place up to two weeks after conception and opens the question of whether the soul also divides. Fetal wastage is the term describing the natural miscarriages which occur usually in the early stages of pregnancy and without the knowledge of the mother in most cases. Figures on fetal wastage range from 10 to 50% of all conceptions. In vitro conceptions are the successful fertilizations of an ovum outside the human body. Gardner's argument is that since up to 50% of all conceptions end in natural miscarriages, if the soul entered at conception, heaven would be full of unformed embryos. Such an argument would seem to be out of place since it could be applied as easily to other stages of life. For instance, will an old person retain his old wrinkled body in heaven? Will a baby be a grown person? Who but God can speak of such matters? The case made by the Scriptures for personhood even before conception bears more consideration, in the opinion of the writer, than these mysteries.

Dr. Alvin J. Schmidt's statement seems to put the soul question in perspective:

Whether the fetus inherits his soul from his parents (Traducianism) or whether the soul is created individually at some point between conception and birth (creationism or concreationism) cannot be decided from Scriptural data. Francis Pieper correctly calls it an open question. The important thing is not when God gives man a soul, but how God views the fetus during any stage of the gestational period.²⁴

It is the opinion of this writer that the traditional Christian position against abortion, except to save the mother's life (therapeutic), is correct in the view of Scripture. Medical knowledge of the fetus supports the Scripture. Never should abortion

be thought of as an operation to remove unwanted "tissue." It is the removal of an unwanted person. Genetically the fetus is unique, a combination of 23 chromosomes from the father and 23 from the mother. Its systems, even blood, are separate. It is without doubt living. What, then, could possibly be the reason for changing the law to permit the destruction of this new being? Does not this helpless fetus have the right to protection under the law? Is it not a transgression against God to interrupt the life He has created?

Although the answers to these questions may be clear to some, they are not clear to all Americans. The fact is that as a result of the January 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision (Roe vs. Wade) there are no laws restricting who may have an abortion during the first six months of a pregnancy. The only stipulations remaining pertain to where the abortion may be performed and who may perform it. Though the high court dismissed the central question saying: "We need not decide the difficult question of when life begins...",²⁵ it nevertheless did resolve this question setting an arbitrary "viability" at about 27 weeks.

Stripping the unborn of any rights whatsoever the court declared they do not qualify as "persons" under the U.S. constitution. On this basis the court could further conclude that, since the unborn are non-persons, to interfere with a woman's right to have an abortion is an encroachment upon her "right to privacy." "This right of privacy...is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy,"²⁶ Justice Blackmun wrote in the majority opinion.

All existing laws limiting abortion were struck down by the court's decision. The state may not interfere with a woman and her physician's decision to abort during the first three months of pregnancy. During the second trimester the state may only regulate the "abortion procedure to (the) extent that the regulation reasonably relates to the preservation and protection of maternal health."²⁷ (Emphasis added).

During the last three months of pregnancy the state may proscribe abortion "except when necessary to preserve the life or the health of the mother." 28 The wide interpretation given to the term "health of the mother" pretty well allows for abortion even to the end of the ninth month.

It appears from the court's decision that we are going to have to take a deeper look at what "human" means, when life begins, and whether or not society has the right to dispose of some of its members.

III. WHAT MAKES A HUMAN BEING "HUMAN"?

There are three schools of thought about what is human: the genetic school, the developmental school, and the social consequences school. The genetic school defines human life in terms of genetic makeup. For instance, the human being is distinguished from a species of monkeys because of its genetic makeup. This genetic makeup is present at conception, completely present. It distinguishes the individual from all other species and even from all others within its own species. It is obviously living. Therefore, it has humanness and life. It is human life.

The developmental school believes that human life cannot be defined only in terms of genetics. According to this view it becomes human at some later stage than conception. The U.S. Supreme Court seems to have adopted this theory in part by dividing the six month fetus from the later one saying that "about six months" the fetus becomes "viable," a term which was defined as able to have "meaningful life apart from the mother." This is by no means a new theory as we have seen from Aristotle's "vegetable, animal, human souls." Throughout history "quickening" has been equated with life and the "formed" or "unformed" classification has been the deciding factor for others. Advocates of the developmental school speak of the fetus as "potential life." Dr. M. O. Vincent, a doctor of internal medicine and psychiatry, whose essay "Psychiatric Indications for Therapeutic Abortions and Sterilization," is published in BIRTH CON-

TROL AND THE CHRISTIAN, evaluates the concept of "potential life" as follows:

This (potential life) appears to be the most common position among medical people today. However, I believe that most of the criteria for distinguishing potential life from actual life are extremely arbitrary. Other terms such as primitive life, unconscious life, insensate life are used to convey the thought that the fetus is not just an organ of the mother, but at the same time somehow is not really life. In this position, it is a purely arbitrary decision as to what point life is said to begin, whether it is at birth, 28 weeks, quickening, etc. ²⁹

Dr. Vincent notes that this "potential life" view is the one held by the majority of North American psychiatrists, too.

Dr. Paul Jewett asks a question which easily puts the "potential life" argument "on the ropes":

Since the potential for future development is already present in the fertilized egg as well as in the new-born child, should we permit intervention with an individual life at an earlier stage but not at a later one? And if so can we draw any line? ³⁰

If the developmental view is arbitrary, then the social consequences or "functionalist" view is totally without redemption for it adds whole new dimensions to the term arbitrary. It does not speak well for the fields of sociology and psychiatry, much less for the U.S. Supreme Court, that they should choose this nebulous route. What arrogance! Inherent in this definition is the decision to dispose of human beings who do not meet the intolerably arbitrary standards of "human life" laid down by the current set of "experts." Euthanasia and the elimination of other classes or races of so-called useless human beings is made acceptable by this whitewash.

John Montgomery is at his best in answering this view:

First, even from a totally secular viewpoint, the "functionalist" definition of man will not wash. What functions will be regarded as truly human -- assine quibus non for genuine humanity? Movement? (But what about total paralysis?) Intelligence? (But what degree of it?) Personhood escapes all such definitional attempts, and the reason appears to be that personality is a transcendent affair: The subjective "I" can never be totally objectified without destroying it. If this is true, then one can hardly look for the origin point of personhood anywhere other than at the moment when all potentialities necessary for its functioning enter the picture: namely, at conception.

Theologically, the argument is even stronger. Man is not man because of what he does or accomplishes. He is man because God made him. Though the little child engages only a limited range of human activities, Jesus used him as the model for the kingdom...Moreover, the Bible regards personal identity as beginning with conception, and one's involvement in the sinful human situation as commencing at that very point: "Behold, I (not "it") was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me (not "it")." For biblical writers, personhood in the most genuine sense begins no later than conception: subsequent human acts illustrate this personhood, they do not create it. Man does because he is (not the reverse) and he is because God brought about his psycho-physical existence in the miracle of conception. 31

Dr. Vincent, too, comes to this conclusion: "Conception is the great divide between non-life and life. Implantation, placentation and birth changes the form of nutrition, but not the character of the embryo." 32

It seems that unless you are not straining to find some way to avoid the obvious, you make your way back to the "genetic school" of thought. Perhaps it is true that human life cannot be defined solely

in genetic terms, but certainly this is the point where the beginning must be marked. In the past there was talk about "formed" and "unformed" in determining the beginning of life. But in this day, in the light of medical knowledge, there is hardly an excuse for the arbitrary terms like "viability." John T. Noonan, Jr., the famous authority of the Roman Church, defines life thus:

I myself know only one test for humanity: a being who was conceived by human parents and is potentially capable of human acts is human. By what other tests could you prove that an infant of one day was human?...In all these states -- infancy, insanity, sickness, sleep -- a man is not expressing his humanity by thought or rational action. We know he is a man because he came of human flesh and is expected, at some point, to be able to perform a human act, to think a human thought. ³³

Dietrich Bonhoeffer makes this lucid observation regarding the argument about "humanity":

....to raise the question whether we are here concerned with a human being or not is merely to confuse the issue. The simple fact is that God certainly intended to create a human being, and that this nascent human being has been deliberately deprived of his life. And this is nothing short of murder. ³⁴

Karl Barth, too, called abortion murder; "...one might almost call (it) the secret and open mass murder..." ³⁵ It is interesting to see the liberal New York pastor, Richard Neuhaus, speak strongly against abortion and for life saying: "How flexible we can be with regard to abortion is tantamount, I believe, to asking how flexible we can be with regard to taking human life." ³⁶

It would appear that the high court's argument that abortion is a matter of "personal choice" and the "woman's right to privacy," is, by medical standards, Christian morals and elemental justice, a scandalous crime. By their ruling the woman's rights count for everything and the fetus prior to "viability" has no rights whatsoever. Indeed, even the cap-

ricious whim of the woman is given greater consideration than the fetus. And even in the last three months no rights were guaranteed the fetus. The court ruled against the fetus. It did so on the basis of evidence that is controversial to say the least -- if not downright contradictory. Have not these same justices many times instructed timid juries that if there is doubt in their minds about the issue of guilt or innocence, they must acquit? In this decision the doubt in their minds served as the very basis for, or excuse for, the expedient choice. When the justices state, "We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins," one can hear echoes of Pontius Pilate: "I am innocent of the blood of this just Man."

IV. THE PRICE OF ABORTION.

The talk was that we had to have legal abortion to stop the "butchers." We had to have abortion all over to help the poor who couldn't go to New York. We had to have abortion to solve the wrenching problems in some families. The implication was that abortion was the only way out of our current dilemma, that it would solve our problems.

But what is the real price of the abortion solution? Of course, it is too early to tell all the ramifications of liberal abortion laws. But there are some signs on the horizon by which we can tell what sort of day it will be tomorrow. From our standpoint, that is, having the understanding of man's nature as we do from the Bible, it is inconceivable that we could escape catastrophic psychological consequences. The hand of God will be heavy upon many and their bones will wax old under their burden of guilt. (Psalm 32)

Determining the exact psychological price at this stage is difficult. There simply isn't enough data in America, and the studies done in other countries are confusing. In general, though, it is warned that in the push toward abortion on demand the psychological price was all but ignored. One psychologist described it as "deplorable" that so little attention was paid to this factor.

In evaluating the studies done so far in Scandinavia, England and Japan we can draw the following conclusions: (a) Abortion is very ineffective in solving psychological problems. Callahan quotes two Swedish studies done by Ekblád and Bengt Jansson:

EKBLAD: The greater the psychiatric indications for a legal abortion are, the greater is also the risk of unfavorable psychic sequelae after the operation. BENGT JANSSON: We thus have the paradoxical situation that it is in the cases in which legal abortions can best be justified from the psychiatric standpoint that the risk of mental insufficiency during post-course is greatest...It may be said, perhaps, that legal abortion stands out as a fairly ineffective therapeutic means. 37

(b) There seem to be problems in a high percentage of cases in which women, who have had an earlier baby aborted, give birth and keep a later child. They begin only then to realize what they may have done. One wonders about, or rather dreads the thought of, all the young girls who have been counseled and urged to have an abortion rather than face the predicament of pregnancy. (c) Gardner points out that a factor to be reckoned with in evaluating the studies to date is their disregard for the spiritual factor. He says: "It seems to the present writer that until the central bastion - the relationship of the woman to her Creator, Redeemer and Judge - is included in the exploration, the maps will be ill-drawn and virtually useless." 38 (d) Perhaps as frightening as anything is the fact that the more mature and motherly the woman, the higher the chance she will have psychological problems following an abortion, while the more immature, psychopathic, or unmotherly, the more the patient will be unaffected. Again we quote Gardner:

If the price of this is to have our womenfolk "immature, psychopathic or unmotherly," it will have been too high. It is clear that in the world of Orwell's 1984 no one would care a scrap about an abortion, nor would the moronic lotus-eaters of Wells' "Golden Age." Surely we want more con-

science, more responsibility, more integrity, more person not less. Let us look at the abortion price ticket very carefully; it may look like "Freedom" but when we get it home will we find it reads "Emotional and spiritual atrophy"? 39

The cost of abortion should also be figured in terms of population since many population experts are saying abortion is necessary to hold down overpopulation. It is generally conceded that we have many population problems such as overcrowded urban areas and in some countries populations which exceed their ability to produce food. But the question is whether man should take it upon himself to limit population growth by destroying unborn babies or should he seek more humane alternatives. And how far should we carry this utilitarian management of human life?

Without attempting to wrestle with the situation on a world-wide scale let us look at the recent figures to determine whether abortion is really necessary to hold down population. Is our population growing at an alarming rate? A recent release from the National Center for Health Statistics states that in 1972 the birth rate in the U.S. fell sharply to its lowest rate ever. We have fallen to the rate of 2.03 children per family.⁴⁰ Since it takes 2.1 children per family to replace ourselves and keep the population even, the U.S. would have actually lost population last year except for the 400,000 immigrants. And though population projections are hardly ever right, it would seem that with continued emphasis upon birth control and the unhealthy attitudes about children in this country the birth rate will go down more in 1973. The 1.6 million abortions will also have its effect. Actually, a strong argument can be made that our birth rate is going to fall far below the replacement level and that if this trend continues we may have at least one generation that is very "underpopulated." The generation being born at present will be hopelessly outnumbered; the great bulk of people will be beyond middle age. And when one considers that our economy is dependent upon growth, it is evident that we cannot stand a further decline in the birth rate without severe economic repercus-

sions in the next generation. But if there is any one fact that stands out it is this: keeping down the birth rate by abortion is not necessary at the present time for our survival.

What is most sobering of all is that abortion is merely the introduction to a "house-full-of-horrors" planned by some "experts." Julian Pleasants writing in COMMONWEALTH, June, 1967, made this sweeping observation: "It is not only a baby's life, it is our whole social fabric which is placed in jeopardy by the present demand for virtually unlimited abortion." ⁴¹ Is he right or is he just another alarmist reactionary? Let us look into the future a bit to ponder the stated plans of some thinkers.

Dr. Phillip Edgcumbe Hughes, in his essay "Theological Principles in the Control of Human Life," quotes Edmund Leach, Provost of King's College, Cambridge, in his evaluation of the aging members of our society. Dr. Leach says:

Modern medicine has given the doctor almost unbelievable powers to preserve alive creatures that nature would previously have destroyed, power to change the life prospects of children still in the womb, to alter the personality of the living, and to extend the life span of the senile. But if these powers of preservation are exercised in uninhibited fashion while, at the same time, we try to tackle the population explosion by reducing the birth-rate, then the outcome will be a very decrepit conservative society in which all the political and economic advantages lie with the very old. Most people will dodder on until they are nearly 100 and half the adult population will be past retiring age. ⁴²

Dr. Hughes further quotes and discusses the suggestions of Dr. Leach: Men, he (Dr. Leach) maintains, offered by science the total mastery over their environment and over their destiny, have become like gods; and it is the function of gods not only to create but also to destroy. "We too," he says, "must accept our dual responsibility and come

to terms with the fact that the total elimination of disease would be an entirely intolerable blessing." 43

Admittedly, the utopian optimism of Dr. Leach is too much to swallow from our standpoint. Because he dreams of man evolving and rising above all his problems, he can boast so openly of man's achievements. But even if we may not agree that we are going to realize this utopia, we must take men like Dr. Leach seriously for they will surely seek to lead society their way. There is much evidence in the abortion drama that they already have achieved their first objective. Father Granfield comments:

The traditional grounds that justified abortion are rarely resorted to today except as they have been broadly interpreted. The new grounds, however, have moved so far beyond the maternal exception that liberal abortion has become a new tool for social engineering. Perhaps the abortion crisis is not a medical crisis at all, but a social crisis. Perhaps for this reason, the abortion decision must be worked out, not in terms of medicine, but in terms of morals, politics, and law. For the abortion crisis presents us ultimately with a crucial decision about the right to life. Medicine may be its context, but human dignity is its core. 44

The uninformed citizen thinks abortion is a simple operation involving no risk. He thinks it is the proper way to solve the problem of rape, deformity, etc. The average person neither knows that the fetus is life, human life, nor does he realize what we are getting into when we accept the abortion alternative. It is becoming quite clear that the real proponents of abortion, the intellectuals, have gone far beyond the "women's libbers" who want abortion on grounds of "personal freedom." They have gone beyond the familist concept that some sociologists defend. Their belief is that it will be necessary for the state to require abortion for its wellbeing. The individual, and certainly the unborn individual, must yield to the State in all things. The needs of the society at

large as determined by humanistic assumptions are the guiding criteria. Abortion is only the beginning. Some have come to the point where they can rationalize as the character, Dr. Archer, in ABORTION: THE AGONIZING DECISION. He said:

You must all be aware that for a physician abortion presents a difficult problem. The practice of medicine is devoted to the saving and preserving of human life, and we doctors are dedicated to that goal. To perform abortions is not easy for us, and some physicians are unwilling to do it at all. But we have to face realities today. (Emphasis added) 45

This is the rationale of the humanist mind with its utilitarian approach to life. The humanist is committed to that "man is his own god complex." He feels the weight of human social problems and seeks solutions without consultation with a Transcendent Counselor. This "god-complex" is taking humanistic thinkers beyond abortion to the question of who should live and who may not. "After all," they say, "we don't like this responsibility, but we are forced to accept it." Since man can now control or at least influence genetics, some suggest that we will need to eliminate undesirable genetic traits by sterilizing all but a select few who represent the greatest excellence in physical attributes. Family and parenthood will be limited to those elite few. Others will just be given children from these "super-people." Within a generation or so all mankind would be super, super. Society would be regimented for the sake of the society (State) and the race. The individual would become expendable.

It is not within the scope of this paper to explore predictions of social engineers and philosophers; however, we should become informed about these frightening prospects so that we may exert ourselves more than ever in making known the ways of the Lord God and the Savior of troubled mankind.

V. *WHAT CAN WE DO AS CHRISTIANS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS?*

Perhaps we ought to begin by recognizing that the problems are very complex. For an example let us consider the case of a mother who already has seven children which she cannot feed and clothe on her welfare check. She has a real problem and it is not solved by someone who says, "She should have known better." Take the example of a Christian mother who finds out after she is pregnant that she has a serious heart condition. It is her doctor's opinion that neither she nor the child will survive the full pregnancy. She doesn't want to take her child's life, but what should she do? Or consider the case of a young wife and mother who learns from her doctor that her baby may be deformed or retarded. Painful human and social problems exist. No matter what side we take in the abortion drama we have to recognize that these painful problems do exist. Then, if we feel abortion is the God-pleasing solution only in cases where it is necessary to salvage the mother's life, we had better be prepared to deal with these problems and come up with acceptable solutions.

What it amounts to is this: Even when we have come to a theoretical conclusion about abortion our problem is not solved. There is a real tension between proponents of abortion-on-demand who are deeply involved in individual and social problems and the detached moralist or Christian who condemns but does not extend himself to get involved.

Before trying to propose some alternatives to abortion let us go back even further. Let us begin by asking what has happened to our society to bring it to accept the abortion solution. What has become of our "Christian country and Christian culture"?

Some years ago Dr. Carl F. H. Henry observed that "Jesus of Nazareth has been relegated to the position of an historical footnote." A Christ-less culture can hardly excel in Christian morals. Consequently, we see a rapid erosion of the standards once regarded as the minimum. Old immorality is now called "new morality." The Supreme Court of our land cannot define pornography, cannot countenance capital punishment, but can permit abortion-on-

demand. With consistency the high court is ruling against the Christian community. Government education carries on an anti-supernaturalism (anti-God) crusade daily in the classrooms of our state schools. Liberal theologians make ludicrous slurs against the Christian faith. What have we done to curse ourselves so? Why has the Christian community let these things transpire? Was there really nothing we could do? Our Lord said: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid... Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:13,14,16) The light of Christian witness in our society seems to have gone out completely. Where are the Christian voices? Where is the light and the salt?

Some may remember Whittaker Chambers who witnessed against Alger Hiss. In his book WITNESS WHITTAKER CHAMBERS, he tells of the secret of the communist power in the 20th century:

Their power which baffles the rest of the world, because in large measure the rest of the world has lost that power, is the power to hold convictions and to act upon them. It is the same power that moves mountains; it is also an unflinching power to move men. Communists are that part of mankind which has recovered the power to live or die - to bear witness - for its faith. And it is a simple rational faith that inspires men to live or die for it. ⁴⁶

It seems to this writer that some American Christians have been sitting on the sidelines long enough. The Christians who have been involved, have sometimes tended to be long on involvement and short on Christianity. But among conservative Lutherans and Evangelicals, on the other hand, non-involvement is too often a distinguishing mark. Our witness is often negative, not because we have acted as a con-

science, but because we have shunned involvement. We have defended this position theologically forgetting that the Savior and His apostles taught that theology is best understood by those who immerse themselves in works for the betterment of neighbor. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

One direction involvement must take is social. We must seek to influence society (and government) to pursue a more godly path. This is not imposing our morality upon others. This is just sticking up for what is right and just by God's standards. John the Baptist didn't say, "If Herod were a Christian I would tell him he should not take his brother's wife, but since he is not a Christian I can't impose my morality upon him." Instead John "laid it on him." What is right in the sight of God applies to all.

Gardner makes this observation about the church speaking out:

In this field of morals it is fascinating to notice the ambivalent attitude of the non-Christian about the great issues of the day. If the Church fails to speak out strongly on, for example, racial injustice, there is justified criticism. In fact it is usually the Church that does so speak. The part played by the Confessional Church in Germany before and during World War II should not be forgotten. When, however, in response to the same conscience, the Church speaks out against wrongdoing in society, it is castigated as an interfering busybody. Dietrich Bonhoeffer as the heroic pacifist who saw it his duty to plot against Hitler's life is widely and deservedly admired: I have not noticed his condemnation of abortion as murder quoted by the same admirers, although both beliefs must have been the result of his informed Christian conscience.

The Church has to be the salt in the world: salt purifies, but it stings! ⁴⁷

The church has always been deeply involved in social problems. Dr. Edwin M. Yamauchi surveyed the early church's role in social problems in an article

entitled: "How the Early Church Responded to Social Problems" (CHRISTIANITY TODAY, Nov. 1972). He said:

To treat ethical pronouncements on social issues as a substitute for Christ's redemptive message is a grave error -- even from a pragmatic, sociological view. On the other hand, to avoid social issues is to retreat into reactionary monasticism. 48

Dr. Yamauchi also treated the biblical basis for Christian charity and service as typified in the mission and life of the Savior. The early church followed this example responding to the social needs of the day. It influenced society and government, especially with respect to its regard for human life. Concluding his article, Dr. Yamauchi says: "...a review of the early Church's attitudes should force us to examine whether our attitudes toward social issues are as biblical as those of former generations." 49

The great Reformer, Martin Luther, did not regard it treasonous to the Christian faith for him to be deeply involved in social issues. On the contrary, Dr. N. S. Tjernagel pointed out in the 1972 Reformation Lectures at Bethany College that Luther was involved in "almost every social issue of his time."

At a time when conservative Lutherans in this country have a pathological fear that a social involvement will bring upon them the charge that they are dispensing a "Social Gospel," with all the dreadful semantic overtones with which that phrase is freighted, we shall do well to realize that Martin Luther became involved in almost every social issue of his time.

Dr. Tjernagel quotes Luther:

"Do unto your neighbor as Christ has done unto you, and let all your works, together with your whole life, be directed toward your neighbor. Search out the poor, the sick and all sorts of needy persons. Help them to the limit of your ability with body, property and honor. Let this be your daily habit." 50

In our day, too, the Christian voice must be heard. We cannot retreat into isolation and remain an anachronism. If there be any redemption for society, a society which in our day resembles the herd of swine running to their "cliff of destruction," it is not by the humanist's solutions, but by personal regeneration and reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ. Man's welfare depends upon whether he will return to the Lord God and to His ways. A case can be made that the Christian community which has the means to help others in distress, but turns away, is more worthy of blame than the humanists who are on the initiative.

Christians should regard it as their moral obligation to seek justice for all. We are one of those minorities today who are beginning to appreciate what it is like to lose all the time. We should regard it our duty to seek positions of influence, hold office, govern, lead and judge for the welfare of our fellow man. We should vote for candidates whose distinguishing mark is not their political party but their Christian insight. We should support our elected and appointed representatives with our prayers and make our wishes known to them often. We should encourage youth to seek a vocation that will serve the betterment of mankind, not just line the pocketbook. The days are gone in which others are going to safeguard our liberties and perform our Christian duties for us. And these functions are our Christian duties. In a democratic society the Christian bears personal responsibility, as Gardner says, "for misgovernment, bad laws, or wrong policies, unless he has played his full part in trying to get a better government into power, better laws on the statute books, and better policies adopted." 51

The church as we know it in our circles has limited experience in providing solutions to social problems. We are often so isolated in our middle-class homes and communities that we are unaware of the problems around us. A trip to the local welfare agency will shock most of us. We will find that in our towns or counties there are problems we have never heard of. We will find many people working

full time trying to help persons in need. The teenagers, the elderly, families, all segments of the population have their problems. And they bring these problems to the government office. Too often the church is not able to help them.

As Christians in the present American culture we are faced with a staggering challenge. Obviously we are not satisfied with the way the secular humanist is dealing with our social problems. BUT WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? We have two choices: We can let things go the way they are, or we can get involved up to our ears and make a real difference.

If we don't know where to begin this staggering task a good place to try might well be with developing alternatives to abortion. We might talk about a four-point attack. A beginning can be made by seeking to inform others about the facts of abortion. This will require both study and patient dialog, but it is the easiest of the four points of attack.

A second effort could be directed toward providing services to meet the needs of the woman with a "problem pregnancy." One such service organization is known as BIRTHRIGHT. Rather than devoting its efforts toward information and legislation BIRTHRIGHT seeks to counsel and help the troubled woman personally. While other agencies often direct her to the temporary escape of aborting her baby, BIRTHRIGHT tries to help her to a real solution which she can live with in the years to come. Sympathetic, compassionate Christian people are needed to make BIRTHRIGHT work. It takes love and sacrifice on our part.

A third point of attack might be what we would call a legislative approach. There is a growing movement in our country to pass a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to life to all no matter what their status. The proposed amendment this writer favors most is that of Senator James Buckley of New York. It reads:

Sec. 1. With respect to the right to life, the word "person," as used in this article and in the 5th and 14th articles of amendments to the con-

stitution of the United States, applies to all human beings, including their unborn offspring at every state of their biological development, irrespective of age, health, function or conditions of dependency.

Sec. 2. This article shall not apply in an emergency when a reasonable medical certainty exists that continuation of the pregnancy will cause the death of the mother.

Sec. 3. Congress and the several states shall have the power to enforce this article by legislation in their appropriate jurisdictions.

RIGHT TO LIFE groups and other similar organizations throughout our country are working toward the passage of an amendment guaranteeing the right to life. If they are to succeed they will need the dedicated efforts of all citizens who oppose the evils of liberal abortion. If we don't act we have no right to hold convictions. By their very nature convictions lead the holder to act accordingly.

Finally, perhaps the most difficult of all, we should work to improve the quality of life in America. There is much injustice, poverty, and inequity. There is despair and dependency. Society is impersonal and unloving. The expanded perimeters of sexual irresponsibility in our day create ugly problems which were barely known in the past. The overcrowding in some urban areas is a constant irritation. Pollution fills us with fears. The uncertainty of the economy puts a pinch on every home. Dishonesty in government makes us cynical about our leaders. Almost every possible bad thing has been said and is being said about the quality of life in America. The quality of life would seem to be at rock bottom. Planned Parenthood thinks it has part of the solution by recommending rigid family planning and abortion. Other agencies and organizations are also attacking the problems in ways which do not conform with our beliefs. We are quick to realize and concede that solutions to our problems are partly technological and partly wise planning, but we assert that the biggest factor is human nature itself. The quality of life will increase in direct proportion to

the decrease of evil. The real step toward improving the quality of life, then, is the regenerating Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the church we have a staggering responsibility to improve the quality of life. We have the responsibility to communicate the Gospel effectively. We have the responsibility to be true salt and light. It would be more convenient if we could just isolate ourselves from the world, if we could just take what we could get without giving. But WE ARE OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER.

May God in His Grace raise up heroes of faith who are true lights and true salt and who will spend themselves ministering to the poor, the oppressed, the forgotten, and even the troubled girl or mother who faces the abortion decision.

To God alone the glory.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mace, David R., Abortion: The Agonizing Decision, p. 85
2. Ibid, p. 86
3. Mankato Free Press, January 30, 1973
4. Christianity Today, June 1970, p. 24 (824)
5. Mace, op. cit., p. 40. (This discussion of the story of life was taken largely from Mace, pp. 32-40. See also Willke and Willke, Handbook on Abortion, Hiltz Publishing Co., and Callahan, Daniel, Abortion: Law, Choice and Morality, Macmillan, pp. 370ff.)
6. Mace, op. cit., p. 47
7. Applied Christianity, October 1972, pp. 34-36.
8. "Abortion," The Encyclopedia of Christianity, Vol. I, pp. 22,23.
9. Ibid.
10. Mace, op. cit., p. 53.
11. Ibid.
12. Spitzer, Walter O., and Saylor, Carlyle L., (ed.) Birth Control and the Christian, p. 427.
13. Quoted in Gardner, R. F. R., Abortion, the Personal Dilemma, p. 249.

14. The essayist is indebted to the Old Testament exegesis class and to Professor R. E. Honsey of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary for their thorough study of Exodus 21:22-23.
15. Cottrell, Jack W., "Abortion and the Mosaic Law," Christianity Today, Vol. XVII, No. 12. p. 8 (604).
16. Mace, David R., Hebrew Marriage, p. 12. (Quoted in Birth Control and the Christian), p. 202.
17. The evangelical scholar, Robert P. Meye of Northern Baptist Seminary, Oak Brook, Ill., rejects the Incarnation of Christ as an evidence for the personhood of the fetus saying: "But can this be understood as a scientific statement?" Birth Control and the Christian, p. 41.
18. Christianity Today, Vol. XVII, No. 10. p. 48 (516).
19. Spitzer, (ed.) op. cit., p. 78.
20. Ibid., p. 81.
21. This discussion of Aristotle's views on the soul is based on Mace, Abortion: the Agonizing Decision, p. 55-56. See also Montgomery, Birth Control and the Christian, p. 62.
22. Spitzer, op. cit., p. 79.
23. Ibid.
24. Schmidt, Alvin J., "Abortion: A Social Problem Confronting the Church," Sola Scriptura, Vol. I, No. 3.
25. Supreme Court Reporter, Vol. 93. No. 8. Feb. 15, 1973.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Spitzer, (ed.) Birth Control and the Christian, p. 205.
30. Ibid., p. 34.
31. Ibid., p. 81-83.
32. Ibid., p. 198.
33. Callahan, op. cit., p. 379.
34. Gardner, op. cit., p. 122, 123.
35. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 9.
36. Ibid.
37. Callahan, op. cit., p. 68. See pages 67-75 for survey of studies.

38. Gardner, op. cit., p. 210.
39. Ibid., p. 211.
40. Mankato Free Press, March 2, 1973. p. 13.
41. Quoted in Sola Scriptura, op. cit., p. 9.
42. Spitzer, op. cit., p. 112, 113.
43. Ibid., p. 113.
44. Branfield, David, The Abortion Decision, p. 121.
45. Mace, David, Abortion: The Agonizing Decision, p. 33.
- 46.
47. Gardner, op. cit., p. 95, 96.
48. Yamauchi, Edwin M., "How The Early Church Responded to Social Problems," Christianity Today, Vol. XVII, No. 4, p. 6 (186).
49. Ibid., p. 8 (198).
50. Tjernagel, N. S., "1972 Reformation Lectures," Lutheran Synod Quarterly, Vol. XIII, No. 1,2, p. 65.
51. Gardner, op. cit., p. 95.

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Rodger M. Dale

THE NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION

With over 200 reports and overtures to consider, Committee #2 on Theology and Church Relations was kept working overtime during the New Orleans Convention. In view of the extreme importance of the resolutions presented to the convention it is no wonder that less than half were acted upon. Resolution 2-12 asserting that Synod has the right to adopt doctrinal statements which apply the teachings of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions to controverted issues and that such statements are binding upon all members insofar as they are in agreement with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and Article II of Synod's constitution and Resolution 3-01 which declared President Preus' "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" to be Scriptural and applicable to today's issues consumed most of the time.

By this time you have no doubt read reports regarding these important and far-reaching resolutions

in various periodicals. It is not our purpose to repeat what has already been said, but we would like to comment briefly on Resolutions 2-12 and 3-01 and then give our reaction to them.

Resolution 2-12 says that Synod has the right and precedent to produce doctrinal statements relative to controversial issues. In a lengthy preamble (which all of us would profit from reading) it was pointed out from the history of the Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod that this has been the case. Quoting from the book "Theology of the Lutheran Confessions" these pertinent words by Edmund Schlinck remind confessional Lutherans that "even the most solemn reaffirmation of the Confessions may be a denial of them if the errors of the day are passed over in silence...At the very least the church, confronted with new heresies will have to furnish up-to-date and binding interpretation of her official Confessions." Then the preamble went on to show how the first generation of Lutherans explained the Augsburg Confession which resulted in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. After Luther's death the second generation of Lutherans had to explain the true and genuine meaning of the Augsburg Confession. The Formula of Concord was not intended to be a new confession, but a correct interpretation of the Augsburg Confession and applied it to current issues so that the common Christian with reasonable intelligence could discern the issues of the day.

The history of the Missouri Synod clearly shows that his procedure has also been followed. Toward the end of the 19th century Walther prepared nineteen theses on "Church and Ministry" to repel the attacks of Grabau. These theses were read and discussed at the 1851 Milwaukee Convention. The Synod approved them and ordered their publication. In their printed form they were entitled, "The Voice of Our Church on the Question Concerning the Church and Ministry." This book was the Synod's voice in this controverted issue.

Thirty years later when a controversy arose concerning the doctrine of election Walther pub-

lished a series of articles in Der Lutheraner on the doctrine in dispute. At the synodical convention in Ft. Wayne, 1881, these articles by Walther called the "Thirteen Theses" were adopted by the Synod as the doctrine of Scripture and the Confessions. The convention also stated that dissenters would eventually be expelled from fellowship.

The preamble also called attention to the 1971 Milwaukee convention where it reaffirmed "the desirability of the formulation of doctrinal statements which clearly set forth the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and apply them to the issues of our day." (Milwaukee Proceedings, Res. 5:24)

Resolution 2-12 was passed 653-381. The adoption of this resolution paved the way for adoption of Resolution 3-01 which had to do with Preus' Statement. This was declared to be Scriptural and in accord with the Lutheran Confessions and therefore expresses Synod's position on current doctrinal issues.

The preamble to this resolution quotes Luther who said that "the Word of God is and should remain the sole rule and norm of doctrine, and that no human being's writing dare to be placed on a par with it, but that everything be subjected to it." But Luther also went on to say, "This, of course, does not mean that other good, useful, and pure books, such as interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, refutations of errors, and expositions of doctrinal articles, should be rejected. If they are in accord with the aforementioned pattern of doctrine they are to be accepted and used as helpful expositions and explanations." Walther's "Thirteen Theses" and the 1971 Milwaukee Convention resolutions were also referred to in the preamble to the resolution on the Statement. One of the WHEREASES called attention to an evaluation of the Statement by the Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations as follows: "We find the doctrinal content of 'A Statement' to be in accord with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and to contain nothing contrary to them. We also find the doctrinal content of 'A Statement of Scriptural and

Confessional Principles" to be in accord with the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as it has been taught historically and expressed in the official doctrinal statements of the Synod" (Adopted 3 November 1972). In another WHEREAS attention was called to the "Thirteen Theses." "WHEREAS, the Lutheran Church in the past, when confronted with doctrinal controversy and crisis, has accepted expressions of belief which are in agreement with Scripture and the Lutheran Confession, e.g., the Thirteen Theses of Doctor Walther, 1881."

Resolution 3-01 was passed 562-455. As was to be expected this resolution provoked lengthy and heated debate. Supporters of it said that it was necessary to determine the doctrinal stance of individuals within Synod and to prevent them from going their own theological way. Opponents of the resolution argued that we don't need any more statements, we have the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and that is sufficient. Opponents of the resolution also contended that the Statement did not address itself to the issues of the day.

It should also be stated that the Committee came in with a resolution calling for suspension of ALC fellowship, but the clock ran out and there simply wasn't time to discuss this burning issue.

What shall we of the ELS say to these things? First of all, we should indeed be grateful that such action was taken at the New Orleans Convention. It is a rare exception when a liberal trend is reversed in the church. It was evident that the majority of the delegates knew why they were at New Orleans, they knew they had a job to do, and they were determined to do it. The adoption of such good resolutions certainly indicates that. For this we thank and praise God.

Secondly, we hope and pray that these good resolutions will be carried out. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof" certainly applies here. It is one thing to adopt fine resolutions; it is another thing to implement them. The "moderates"

have clearly let it be known that they are going to make this very difficult. We remember at the Congress in Chicago (Sept. 1970) how Dr. Francis Schaeffer warned the Missouri Synod against making the same mistake as the Presbyterian Church in an earlier day when they adopted strong resolutions at their convention aimed at stemming the tide of liberalism, but then failed to implement them. As a result the cancer spread and practically nullified that strong action taken on the part of the convention. Even Dr. Machen, who championed the conservative cause, was put out of the ministry by the liberals of the Presbyterian Church. We hope that it will not be said of the New Orleans Convention that after all was said and done, more was said than done.

President Preus has the tools to clean house. Not only does he have resolutions with real teeth in them, but he has, for the most part, conservative officials and boards to work with. Despite this, we foresee a long, bitter struggle within the Missouri Synod. A good start was made at New Orleans, but Missouri has a long way to go to restore her to that doctrinal stance of another day when we enjoyed fellowship with her.

In the meantime, our attitude should be "wait and see" and lend whatever encouragement we can to the conservative cause. That certainly is in keeping with the spirit of our own synodical resolutions "urging us to encourage and support concerned members of other Lutheran synods in their confessional battles." (Synod Report, 1971, p. 45)

In conclusion, I would like to call attention to a statement by Dr. Walter A. Maier, Fourth Vice-President of the LC-MS in the September issue of *Affirm* under the heading "Convention Afterthoughts of a Synodical Vice-President." The statement reads: "Had the synod taken hold of its doctrinal difficulties years earlier, settlement doubtless would have come more speedily; those holding minority viewpoints would probably not have numbered in the hundreds, as they did at New Orleans, and through prolonged discussion have held up the adoption of necessary doctrinal

resolutions normated by Scripture and the Confessions."

"Had the synod taken hold of its doctrinal difficulties earlier"; therein lies the problem. When liberalism makes inroads and is not combated immediately, it can only mean problems for a synod that wants to be confessional. How important that we continue to be faithful to the Word at all times! And as we carry out our Lord's command to make disciples of all nations, may we remember His full assignment which includes teaching only what He has commanded! May our constant prayer be: "Hallowed be thy name!"

W. Petersen

B O O K R E V I E W S

Manton, J. D., Introduction to Theological German.

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2nd edition, 1973.

This book presents an introduction or a thorough review of German grammar through the use of theological vocabulary, which one does not get in most German language courses. The terminology is taken from either the Bible or from recent German theological works.

The chapters contain explanatory notes on grammar usage and present a wide range of theological subject-matter. Since pastors have a background in Greek and perhaps Latin or a modern language, they will have no problem with the grammar terminology. The book may also serve well if used only for the appendix and vocabulary provided.

Anyone interested in reading theological German and has not had extensive background will find this book invaluable.

D. Soule

Banker, John C., Personal Finances for Ministers, Rev. & updated edition. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973. 114 pp. plus appendix. \$1.65. Paperback.

This booklet is one of those practical volumes directed to the pastor's management of his personal affairs. It stresses that he should be financially responsible. When establishing what his actual income is the pastor should make certain he has included all the unusual factors which pertain to his unique situation.

The author has some hints for the pastor's financial dealings, such as going into debt, living within one's income, and building up a savings account. He also has some good advice relative to insurance and investments. His 5-page chapter on retirement has some common sense suggestions which ought to be required reading for every pastor.

M. H. Otto

Hasel, Gerhard F., Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972. \$1.95. Paperback. 103 pages.

In this little paperback book the author, who is Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology in the Theological Seminary of Anderes University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, packs a considerable amount of information relative to current Old Testament studies. The technical presentation, coupled with the numerous and, in some cases, lengthy footnotes, does not make particularly enjoyable or easy reading. This reviewer would submit that a re-reading, at least in part, would be essential for most who would attempt to gain any sort of mastery of its contents.

Following a brief introduction, Prof. Hasel takes up the following five subjects in chapters that range in length from 15 to 20 pages: "The Question of Methodology." "The Question of History, History of Tradition, and Salvation History." "The

Center of the Old Testament and Old Testament Theology." "The Relationship Between the Testaments." "Basic Proposals for Doing Old Testament Theology." A bibliography, an index of authors and an index of subjects complete the book.

Among the many Biblical scholars whose views he presents and evaluates, Gerhard von Rad and W. Eichrodt appear to be most significant in this presentation. Like many other scholars not committed to the inspiration of the Bible, their views have been modified and changed over the years.

While using terminology suggestive of the higher-critical school, the author himself in a number of statements takes issue with that approach. His approach is rather the historical-theological one. He states:

"Biblical theology must be understood to be a historical-theological discipline. This is to say that the Biblical theologian engaged in doing either Old or New Testament theology must claim as his task both to discover and describe what the text meant and also to explicate what it means for today." (p. 81)

While he claims that the Old Testament must be the object of study (p. 89), he does conclude on the last page that it be done in relationship to the New Testament.

R. E. Honsey

THE PASTOR AND RESEARCH

As has often been noted, there is a certain joy in creativity. Pastors, as well as other persons, have hobbies such as painting, woodworking, gardening, cooking, etc., in which they exercise their creative proclivities. But in a very real sense, a pastor's chief work is creative, because he is creating something whenever he enters the pulpit, or delivers a lecture or a Bible study. But this means that to fill his mind, which is being so constantly drained in his profession, he must always be genu-

inely engaged in research. This is more than clerical or procedural work (although we have enough of that to do, too, and sometimes it is drab, dull work). "Research" is something one lives by in being a pastor. The result of research, put into a sermon or paper, comes from facts or opinions which the pastor has patiently assembled into a new order and given a unified and coherent expression. The end result becomes a fresh fact in itself, leading to new insights.

The term "research" covers a wide range of types of inquiry. It may mean only a search of literature, intended to reveal in an orderly way the present state of knowledge (or thinking) on a particular problem or doctrine. It may involve primary observation on a trend or a way of thinking and an organization of these observations. This would probably not only include an organization of observations but also an analysis and interpretation which might result in some kind of report, which ultimately might lead to a change in activities or to a new activity. Very often research can be a questioning of a stereotyped phrase, or a sentence, or a cliché. For example, someone, simply out of curiosity, and possibly because he doesn't really know what it means, wants to investigate with regard to the Lord's Supper the phrase "in, with and under". Since the phrase is so common today, what meaning does it convey? Is it used in the Lutheran Confessions? If so, where and why? Did Luther use it? Is there a Scriptural basis for it? etc. The phrase or statement may be in accord with the truth of Scripture, but it will become more than a cliché to you when you have investigated it step by step and seen to what the statement originally had reference.

So research is basically active inquiry. It necessitates the exercise of critical judgment in making decisions. It is an active learning process in which the researcher is attempting to discover what is known and what kind of judgments can be made from what is known. I want to emphasize that it is active and not passive. One tries to exercise intel-

lectual independence by independent study. And inquiry like this can develop a capacity for critical judgment, and it can help one to achieve a more mature understanding of theology, when one has learned to be precise in his investigations and to make inferences which are soundly based on what he has investigated.

Perhaps a few suggestions on planning and writing might be helpful. When one is about to begin, presumably the topic not only interests one but is pertinent and, of course, it is somewhat limited in scope. One would naturally do some general reading to get the feel of the topic and then would start looking around for hints as to where one could find material. There are, of course, indexes, reading lists, periodical indexes, concordances, dictionaries of theology, your own readings, general reference works. I would like to call attention to the fact that our seminary library has quite a few of these indexes, and it carries a Religious Abstracts magazine, which summarizes articles found in various contemporary magazines under organized headings. After one has a general overview of the subject, he will want to take notes on cards (I recommend 5 by 8 inch cards). It is important that you indicate the source from which you took your notes and indicate whether you are merely summarizing or presenting an exact quotation. Certainly one must develop the habit of distinguishing between fact and opinion, and we must be sure that our notes convey this distinction. Another caveat is that one doesn't let his material become too unfocused when he's taking notes. Keep your topic in mind, is the advice which is ususally given.

It certainly goes without saying that it is necessary to check out references and study where fact and opinion get blurred. As a case in point: When A.M. Harstad studied two books which purported to set forth Luther's attitude towards Scripture, it became evident that there were two distinctive opinions here about what Luther believed with regard to Scripture.

One might even wonder whether these two had read the same Luther.* If one looks at these two books, however, one will see that Pedersen quotes gobs of Luther directly while Pelikan tends to quote only secondary sources. As a matter of fact, one could probably find the key to the difference between the two in a secondary source, a book by a man named Ostergaard-Nielsen whom Pelikan highly praises and often quotes. Pedersen, on the basis of original sources, examines Ostergaard-Nielsen's thesis and finds that it is not in accord with the facts from Luther's writings.

After a person has pulled together all his research, he must be prepared to organize it into some kind of a coherent report. This would mean, first of all, that it is internally consistent. One would ask himself questions such as these: Is my report really in accord with all of my investigations? Did I start with a thesis and then arrange the facts to fit my thesis? Is it necessary to modify my thesis? Is my reasoning pertinent and logical, or have I just thrown together a series of unrelated facts? etc.

Many are concerned about proper documentation, and they feel that they can't very well do research work because they don't know how to document. Perhaps a word or two on that would be helpful. Certainly you don't have to document facts and opinions of general knowledge, but if you are questioning a phrase or statement, or someone else might be questioning it, you would document your investigations into the statement.

With regard to the matter of documentation and style sheet, I would highly recommend to every pastor that he follow the "MLA Style Sheet". There is a new revised edition, and I believe that our Lutheran Synod Book Company carries this. I believe that it is the most widely used one, and it is very helpful and there is nothing esoteric about its suggestions. Let me give a couple of quotations from the section on

* Cf. *"The Word of God in Luther's Theology"*, Lutheran Synod Quarterly, Volume XII, Nos. 3 & 4, p. 61ff

"Documentation", paragraphs 18 and 19: "In general, citation of sources for statements of fact or opinion, or of quoted matter, should be kept as concise as the demands of clarity and complete accuracy permit. If the reference is brief, insert it, within parentheses, in the text itself; if it is lengthy put it in a note. Let the test be whether or not it interferes seriously with ease in reading, remembering that the footnote number which teases the reader to look at the bottom of the page may be more of an interruption than such a simple reference in your text... The conventions of documentation are largely means to an end -- enabling the reader to check with ease -- and any practice which ignores this end may result in pedantry." If you're curious enough to read the paragraph on reference words and abbreviations in the MLA Style Sheet, you will note that the new trend is to do away with Latin phrases, such as, "infra, loc. cit., op. cit.". They note that many of these scholarly abbreviations have been abused and many editors today have expressed a wish to see them abandoned.

In general, whatever we do we certainly should try to do it in a workman-like manner, if for no other reason than self-satisfaction. With regard to punctuation, typing manuscripts, and all those externals, I would strongly urge you to use something like the MLA Style Sheet for your bulletin, your articles for Sentinel and the Lutheran Synod Quarterly.

In conclusion, it would be well for us to remind each other that the Lutheran pastor comes in the heritage of precise, scholarly study. Luther was a doctor of Scripture and very well trained in his technical studies. 1973 is the 400th anniversary of the completion of Martin Chemnitz's great work, The Examination of the Council of Trent. As you know, he was one of the greatest scholars of history. A third of this book has been translated and can be purchased from CPH, as can Chemnitz's book on The Two Natures in Christ. Chemnitz combines scholarship with true piety and devotion. He could be a real model for us in both these respects. If you

have his book, The Two Natures in Christ, and read, for example, page 64, on the meaning to us of the human nature of Christ, you will find it most elevating in its devotional piety. Yet it is precise and exact. I hope that you have purchased the book and will get fresh material for your Christmas sermon from it.

-- E. W. Teigen