

Managing Conversations Dealing with Abortion

The Nature of the Challenge

Abortion has always been an emotional topic for both our guests and volunteers. As the laws around abortion are continuing to change in the U.S., we want to encourage you to have these conversations with grace and love.

An unwanted pregnancy can be a frightening experience for someone who is not emotionally, physically, or financially prepared for such a responsibility. Someone coming to us for discussion is an opportunity to share truth and hope. We must be extra-sensitive with conversations about abortion as guests can come to us with one of several different perspectives:

- those considering abortion
- those struggling with a past decision to abort
- those to debate the political or biblical issues around this topic.

The Biblical Response

Jeremiah 1:5 tells us that God knows us before He forms us in the womb. We see in Psalm 139:13-16, God's active role in our creation and formation in the womb. We also read in Exodus 21:22-25 that the same penalty—death—is prescribed for someone who causes the death of a baby in the womb as for someone who commits murder. This law and its punishment clearly indicate that God considers a baby in the womb to be just as much a human being as a full-grown adult.

For the Christian, abortion is not a matter of a woman's right to choose to have a baby. The baby is already present and living. Abortion is a matter of the life or death of a human being made in God's image.

We believe taking that life is murder, but we always want to be sensitive in how to frame that explanation. We always want to encourage people to trust God and honor all life created in the image of God.

The Question of Life - The question of when life begins has been falsely used to support abortion for years. Science has come a long way and is in almost universal agreement that human life begins at the time of conception. The official position of the American College of Pediatricians is as follows:

The predominance of human biological research confirms that human life begins at conception—fertilization. At fertilization, the human being emerges as a whole, genetically distinct, individuated zygotic living human organism, a member of the species *Homo sapiens*, needing only the proper environment in order to grow and

develop. The difference between the individual in its adult stage and in its zygotic stage is one of form, not nature.

From the moment fertilization takes place, the child's genetic makeup is already complete. Its gender has already been determined, along with its height and hair, eye, and skin color. The only thing the embryo needs to become a fully-functioning being is the time to grow and develop. It is simply false to claim anything other than life begins at creation when a human being is made as soon as he or she is conceived. Therefore, the question that abortion supporters must answer is ... If there is a living child in the womb, is there anything that justifies killing a living person?

The Question of Rape or the Mother's Life in Danger - A common argument against the Christian stance on abortion is "What about cases of rape and/or incest?" This is less than 1% of all abortions. As horrible as rape is the murder of the baby is not the solution. Two wrongs do not make a right. Every unborn child, including those who are a result of rape or incest, are loved by God as is the woman who was sexually abused. Regardless of how or why a child was conceived, he or she is as fully human as any other child. The circumstances of conception have nothing to do with the viability of the infant and they should not be punished for the evil act of his or her father. The answer may be offering the child for adoption, but it is not death.

Another argument often used against the Christian stance on abortion is "What about when the life of the mother is at risk?" Honestly, this is the most difficult question to answer on the issue of abortion. This scenario is equally rare with less than 1% of all abortions being performed to save the mother's life. Some medical professionals claim that we are now at a stage that abortion is *never* necessary to save the mother's life. We should also remember that God is a God of miracles. He can preserve the life of a mother and her child despite all the medical odds being against it. Third, even in the small percentage of abortions performed to save the life of the mother, most of those abortions can be prevented by an early induced delivery of the baby or a C-section. It is extremely rare that a baby must be actively aborted to save the life of the mother. Ultimately, if the life of the mother is genuinely at risk, the course of action can only be decided by the woman, her doctor, and God.

The Question of Care - Many mothers become pregnant unexpectedly or their circumstances change radically during pregnancy. They may feel like they do not have the financial, emotional, or physical capabilities to raise this child. As scary as that may be, the answer is not to take the life of the child.

There are multiple resources available to this person. There are organizations that will pay for and shepherd the mother through all the doctor visits and health-related issues. There are adoption agencies willing to help and many have couples waiting to adopt new-born children. There are also churches that will walk with women through this journey to ensure the child is cared for well. Every one of these options should be pursued without choosing to end a life.

A Loving Approach

We must always remember that many come to us with difficult stories. They may have been lost, pressured, or never fully understood the magnitude of their decision to abort. They may now believe their choice was sinful and unforgivable. We want to share with those tortured

souls that abortion is not the unpardonable sin. Abortion healing and recovery is possible through Jesus. Jesus died for all sin including abortion. When we come to Jesus in faith, confessing our sin and turning away from it, God offers a full pardon and all His love.

Even when the sin of abortion has been washed away by the blood of Jesus, the effects can remain. Women who have had abortions, and men that encouraged them, often suffer years of shame and regret. They may live every day with the knowledge of what they have done and are haunted by thoughts such as, "He would be six years old today," or "She would have graduated high school this year." We have all fallen short and need God's grace. Share God's love with every person enduring the pain of that choice and acknowledging their sin.

The ministry has a very direct position on life beginning at conception and scripture speaking clearly against abortion. However, we never seek to engage in political debates with those that simply want to advance a personal narrative or agenda. Our goal is to always share the Gospel. We want to help others understand how precious life is and that God loves all life including the unborn and the struggling mother-to-be. Share hope and grace without condemning past choices. Encourage every guest that God wants to walk with them through this difficult season and has a plan and purpose for every life including the unborn child and those who have chosen abortion in the past.

If you want to go deeper on this sensitive topic, we encourage you to read the following article - <https://www.jimdenisonlibrary.org/abortion-and-the-mercy-of-god/?all=1>