

## “The Greatest Destroyer of Peace and Love”

“I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? . . .

“By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. . . . Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.”<sup>1</sup>

Mother Teresa of Calcutta  
Presidential Prayer Breakfast  
Washington, DC, February 12, 1994

## Arguments and Answers

- **Argument:** “Abortion is not morally wrong.”  
**Answer:** Since human life begins at conception, then abortion by choice becomes premeditated murder.  
*“You shall not murder.”*  
(Exodus 20:13)
- **Argument:** “The fetus must reach a certain level of consciousness for it to be considered a person.”  
**Answer:** If consciousness is used as criteria for personhood, then a man who is knocked unconscious or one who is in a coma must not be considered a person.
- **Argument:** “A fetus should not be regarded as a baby.”  
**Answer:** According to God, a fetus is not a “mass of tissue.” God’s Word does not distinguish between a “potential baby” and a “newborn baby.” In the Bible, the same Greek word *brephos*, which means “babe,” is used to describe . . .  
— a fetus: “When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb.” (Luke 1:41)  
— babies: “People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them.” (Luke 18:15)

## Questions and Answers

**“What is the first thing someone who is considering an abortion should do?”**

When faced with the decision of whether to have an abortion, check what God says first. Many have never heard or read God’s Word to find out God’s heart for the unborn. It may be that those who favor abortion believe a lie because they have not been exposed to the truth.

In the Bible God says, “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart*” (Jeremiah 1:5).

**“Is a developing human fetus a human being (a person)?”**

Yes. A human being is defined as a member of the species *homo sapiens*. Each individual human being has its own genetic code (DNA) that is singularly unique and established at the time of conception. The DNA of a human fetus is distinct not only from animals, fowl, and fish, but also from the mother’s DNA.

*“All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another.”*  
(1 Corinthians 15:39)

**“How can a fetus that is incapable of sustaining life outside the womb be a viable person?”**

To define viability as the ability to survive without assistance is dangerous because a person’s viability can be lost as a result of age, illness, or serious injury. A three-month-old girl cannot sustain life on her own. A sixty-year-old man on a respirator cannot sustain life on his own.

But do their situations mean that they are not viable persons? No! Should they be candidates for destruction? No! Those who insist on a viability standard remove protection from those who need it the most.

# How Can a Fetus be a Person . . . A Human Being?

## Scientific Evidence

The eminent geneticist Professor Jérôme LeJeune, M.D., Ph.D., at the René Descartes University of Paris Faculty of Medicine states:

“If a fertilized egg is not by itself a full human being, it could never become a man, because something would have to be added to it, and we know that does not happen.”<sup>2</sup>

## Medical Evidence

The Hippocratic Oath is a code of ethical values that has governed the medical profession since ancient times. Since 400 BC, this oath has read . . .

“The regimen I adopt shall be for the benefit of my patients according to my ability and judgment, and not for their hurt or for any wrong. I will give no deadly drug to any, though it be asked of me, nor will I counsel such, and *especially I will not aid a woman to procure an abortion.*”

## Biblical Evidence

The personhood of the unborn child is demonstrated by John the Baptist, who “leaped for joy” while still in the womb (Luke 1:44). A person has emotion; a “blob of tissue” has no emotion.

God is actively involved at the earliest point of a person’s development, even before the unborn looks like a baby.

*“You [God] created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. . . . All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”*  
(Psalm 139:13–14, 16)

## When Does Human Life Begin?

### Human life begins at conception.

*“This is what the LORD says—  
your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:  
I am the LORD, who has made all things.”*  
(Isaiah 44:24)

### First Month

- Immediately upon fertilization, cellular development begins. Before implantation, the gender of the new life can be determined.
- At implantation, the new life is composed of hundreds of cells and has developed a protective hormone to prevent the mother’s body from rejecting the unborn as foreign tissue.
- At 17 days the new life has developed blood cells.
- At 18 days occasional pulsations of a muscle occur—this is the heart.
- At 19 days eyes begin to develop.

- At 20 days the foundation of the brain, spinal cord, and entire nervous system has been laid.
- At 21 days the heart begins beating.
- At 28 days the backbone and 40 pairs of muscles are developing along the trunk of the new life. Arms and legs are forming.

### Second Month

- At 30 days regular blood flow is evident within the vascular system; the ears and nasal development have begun.
- At 40 days the baby’s heart is beating faster than the mother’s heart and produces almost 20 percent of the energy of an adult heart.

### Week 6

- The baby is one-half inch long.
- At 42 days the skeleton is complete and reflexes are present.
- At 43 days electrical brain wave patterns can be recorded. This is usually ample evidence that “thinking” is taking place in the brain. The new life may be thought of as a thinking person.

### Week 7

- The baby is three-fourths of an inch long.
- At 49 days the fetus has the appearance of a miniature doll with complete fingers, toes, and ears.

### Week 8

- At 56 days all organs are functioning—stomach, liver, kidneys, brain—all systems are intact. The new life has all of its physical parts and now needs only nourishment. All future development is simply that of refinement and increase in size until maturity at approximately age twenty-three. This stage is approximately two months before “quickening,” or the mother’s feeling movement. The mother will usually not feel the child’s movements until four months after conception.

### Third Month

- The baby is now two inches long. Fingerprints appear.
- At 9 and 10 weeks the new life squints, swallows, and retracts the tongue. The contour of the face and body look more like a baby’s, and the physical characteristics are obvious.
- At 11 and 12 weeks arms and legs move, while fingernails and toenails appear. Along with thumb sucking, the new life inhales and exhales amniotic fluid.
- At 13 weeks hair appears on the baby’s head.

### Fourth Month

- At 14 weeks, the baby brings both hands together and sucks on the thumb.
- At 16 weeks genital organs are clearly differentiated. Hands are able to grasp. The new life swims, kicks, and turns somersaults, although movement is often still not felt by the mother.

### Fifth Month

- At 18 weeks the baby is 12 inches long, and the mother can feel her baby move. Vocal cords are working. . . . The new life can cry.

### Sixth Month

- At 26 weeks the sensory organs are all working—the baby is able to hear, see, taste, and touch.

## What Is the Root Cause of Wrong Decisions?

**Wrong Belief:** “Abortion is a simple procedure designed to remove a mass of tissue from a woman’s body, and a woman should have the right to determine what happens to her own body.”

**Right Belief:** “The unborn life within a pregnant woman is a separate, unique human being, created by God at conception. A woman does have rights over her own life, but she does not have the right to destroy an innocent life.”

A woman should have the right to control her body, but in pregnancy there are . . . <sup>3</sup>

- two different **bodies**
- two different **heartbeats**
- two different **brain wave patterns**
- two different **genetic codes (DNA)**
- often two different **blood types**
- often two different **sexes**

A woman should have the freedom of choice over her own life, but not the freedom to destroy the life of the developing human being within her.

For it is the Lord who said, “*I have set before you life and death . . . Now chose life, so that you and your children may live*”<sup>1</sup>  
(Deuteronomy 30:19).

## What Is the Source of Hope?

The Hope Diamond is the largest deep blue diamond in the world (measuring 45.52 carats) and considered priceless by many.

Within your body you have something like the Hope Diamond—you have a unique, priceless, unborn baby designed by God for a specific purpose. Not only does God have a plan for your baby’s life, but also a plan for your life to be filled with hope—hope that is found in a secure relationship with God.

“*For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”*  
(Jeremiah 29:11)

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Although the editors have sought to eliminate errors, some may have been overlooked. The considerate reader would render us a great service by calling our attention to such inaccuracies.

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1. Mother Teresa, “We Must Give until It Hurts: Mother Teresa Condemns Abortion as ‘the Greatest Destroyer of Love and Peace,’” *World*, February 12, 1994, 22–23.

2. Professor Jerome Lejeune and Edward C. Freiling, *The Position of Modern Science on the Beginning of Human Life* (Faxon, VA: Sun Life, 1983), 18, quoted in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *When Does Life Begin? And 39 Other Tough Questions About Abortion* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), 10.

3. Adapted from Ankerberg and Weldon, *When Does Life Begin*, 21.