

Abortion

by Sebastian R. Fama

There are a variety of reasons given to justify an abortion. They include such things as I can't afford a baby, a baby would interfere with my career, I have enough children, and the doctor said if we have this child it will be handicapped. We are told that every child should be a wanted child.

But does any of this really matter? The real question is not whether a child is wanted; the real question is whether or not what is growing inside the mother is a living child. If it is not a living child, a woman should be allowed to have as many abortions as she wants. However, if it is a living child, it should be allowed to live. If it is wrong to kill a ten-year-old because he/she is not wanted, it is wrong to kill a baby because he/she is not wanted.

Many abortion proponents will claim that a fetus is just a blob of tissue. Therefore, its elimination is no more significant than cutting and discarding one's own fingernails. Of course, this raises some curious questions. If a fetus is just a blob of tissue, why don't abortion proponents show pictures of this blob to debunk the arguments of pro-lifers? And why is it that abortion providers prefer that women not see their ultrasounds? The answer to both questions is obvious. A fetus is not just a blob of tissue. When women see their ultrasounds, they realize they are carrying a baby with moving arms and legs. Consequently, they are much less likely to end its life. In an article entitled *Saved by Sonogram* which appeared in *"Christianity Today,"* Mark Stricherz reported the following:

Evidence that ultrasound helps to persuade women not to abort came in an unpublished study by Eric Keroack, medical director of "A Woman's Concern," a CPC in Boston. Keroack compared two 18-month periods in the crisis pregnancy center's history and kept data only on women who expressed interest in abortion. Without a sonogram, about 60 percent of 366 tracked women had abortions. But with a sonogram, 25 percent of 434 tracked women aborted. He estimated that 125 babies were born who would otherwise have been aborted.

Abortion providers prefer to keep women ignorant of what is going on inside of them. That's because **being truthful would mean less money in their pockets**. One woman at a Dallas Planned Parenthood clinic was told that she couldn't see her ultrasound because, "That will only make it harder on you." Why would viewing a blob of tissue make it harder for a woman to deal with an abortion?

The evidence, which abortion providers are very much aware of, indicates that a pregnant woman carries within her something much more than a blob of tissue. For instance:

Immediately upon fertilization, cellular development begins. Before implantation the sex 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 it as a foreign tissue.

At 17 days, the new life has developed its own blood cells; the placenta is a part of the new life and not of the mother. At 18 days, there are occasional pulsations of a muscle which will become the heart. At 19 days, the eyes start to develop. At 20 days, the foundation of the entire nervous system has been laid down. At 24 days, the heart has regular beats or pulsations. At 28 days, 40 pairs of muscles are developed along the trunk of the new life; arms and legs are forming.

At 30 days, there is regular blood flow within the vascular system; the ears and nasal development have begun. At 40 days, the heart energy output is reported to be almost 20% of an adults. At 42 days the skeleton is complete, and the 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. At 49 days, the baby has the appearance of a miniature doll with complete fingers, toes and ears.

At 56 days all organs are functioning – stomach, liver, kidney, brain – all systems are intact. The baby

has lines in its palms. All future development of new life is simply that of refinement and increase in size which ends with full maturity (approximately 23 years). A new life exists with all of its parts needing only nourishment. This is approximately two months before "quickening."

In the 9th & 10th week, the baby squints, swallows and retracts its tongue. In the 11th & 12th week its arms and legs move, the baby sucks its thumb, inhales and exhales amniotic fluid, and nails begin appearing. At 16 weeks (four months), genital organs can be clearly differentiated; the baby grasps with its hands, swims, kicks and turns somersaults (still not felt by mother).

At 18 weeks, the vocal cords work. The baby can cry. At 20 weeks, hair appears on the head; weight – one pound; height – 12 inches. A fetus (little one, child, baby) is essentially no different at fertilization, ten weeks, twenty weeks or thirty weeks. A person is a person, no matter how small.

(Adapted from "*Diary of an Unborn Child*" Knights of Columbus 1993)

Babies in the womb are responsive to pain and touch and cold and sound and light. They drink their amniotic fluid, more if it is artificially sweetened, less if it is given an unpleasant taste. They get hiccups and suck their thumbs. They wake and sleep (A. Liley, *A Case Against Abortion*, Liberal Studies Whitcombe & Tombs, Ltd., 1971).

Some say that we shouldn't tell a woman what to do with her body. Fair enough. But we are not talking about the woman's body. We are talking about the baby's body. In an abortion a human baby is forced to die against its will.

Others justify abortion by claiming that babies in the womb are not viable. They define viable as being capable of independent existence. By that definition a one-year old baby is not viable, and neither are some handicapped adults. Such a standard should not be used as an excuse to end a life. A baby in the womb is fully alive and fully human and therefore should be allowed to live.

Abortion providers not only victimize babies but their mothers as well. It is not unusual for an abortion to cause physical complications. Complications such as infections, bleeding, blood clots, perforation of the uterus or bowel, and many others. Depression and lifelong guilt (Post-Abortive Syndrome) are also not uncommon.

Women who have abortions have a higher rate of premature births with subsequent pregnancies. When a baby is born full term, the cervix is soft and opens relatively easy. However, before the baby is full term the cervix is firm and must be forced open to perform an abortion. This can damage the cervix leaving it weaker for future pregnancies. It is true that measures are usually taken to avoid such damage, but they are not always successful. Full term delivery and adoption is still the safest route for the mother who carries an "unwanted" baby.

But what about women who become pregnant through rape? First of all, such instances are rare. Secondly, Re-victimizing the woman and killing her child is not the answer. As we saw earlier, abortion carries with it many dangers, both physical and psychological. Many rape victims who have had abortions end up being more depressed over the abortion than the rape.

Professor Stephen Krason points out that "psychological studies have shown that, when given the proper support, most pregnant rape victims progressively change their attitudes about their unborn child from something repulsive to someone who is innocent and uniquely worthwhile" (*Abortion: Politics, Morality, and the Constitution*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984, p. 284).

Unfortunately, all too many of our elected officials support the abortion industry in the interest of getting elected. They portray themselves as caring and compassionate but, they are nothing more than eloquent barbarians. They knowingly and willingly cooperate in the business of misleading and victimizing young women. What a sad turn of events. At one time kissing babies would get you votes. Now killing them does.