

PARENT QUESTION

TOUGH QUESTIONS – WEEK 10

HOW CAN I KNOW THAT LIFE BEGINS AT CONCEPTION?

This is the final Parent Q for the Tough Questions series. It can be a difficult one, too. “How can I know that life begins at conception?” How this question is answered can affect a person’s stance on abortion, contraception, and even God’s Word. Conservative, Bible-believing Christians have an answer to this question. It is very much related to the question that will be covered in the final lesson: “Are there times when abortion is okay?” Youth will be taught during the lesson that God’s standard to protect a developing life in the womb never changes. We should always do what is right – even when it will cost us, even when we have been thrust into a situation that is not our fault.

You may have a past (or have loved ones with pasts) that is connected to either abortion or the choice you had to make about whether or not to have an abortion. This question may become an opportunity for you to be transparent with your child. This honesty will allow youth to see that their parents are not perfect and that God is loving enough to forgive us when we deviate from His standards. Here are some notes on the subject of life at conception.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

Several verses of Scripture attest to the life of the child in the womb. One could argue that these do not specifically address conception itself. Those living during the time the Bible was written, however, would not have made the distinction – there was either a baby in the womb or there wasn’t (Maybe they were the ones who coined the phrase, “You can’t be a little pregnant”!). Either way, these show that God certainly understands the life in the womb as just that – human life! Passages are in the New International Version.

Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?

Job 31:15

Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.

Isaiah 49:1

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.

Jeremiah 1:5

But when God, who set me apart from birth [“from my mother’s womb] and called me by his grace, was pleased...

Each of these verses reveals the life that was already present in God's eyes while forming in the womb. Another passage, which youth covered during their part of the lesson, is Psalm 139:13-16, which details God's involvement in and plans for the life developing in the womb:

For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place.
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,
your eyes saw my unformed body.
All the days ordained for me
were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

God's Word reveals the truth that life definitely begins at conception.

BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The fertilized egg is called a zygote¹. This means, as we know, that the sperm meets the egg, and it has formed a new genetic individual. It is a single cell, and all of the resulting cells will all come from it. This process, unaltered, will lead to the birth of a baby. A pro-choice advocate will argue that it is okay to alter this process, because the embryo or fetus (he would not say "baby") merely has the potential to be human but will not be until birth. He may even say that cancer is also a natural process and that a pro-life person willing to interrupt the spread of cancer is being hypocritical. Let's keep in mind, however, that both pro-life and pro-choice adherents believe that human life is to be protected. This means that the cancer argument should not be relatable. Some have even used the argument that an embryo or fetus is like an acorn, which has the potential to be a tree; one cannot enjoy the shade of the acorn or climb its branches². The fallacy here is the same as above, but it is worse. The requirements put on the acorn belong to a mature tree, so that even a small sapling (analogously a baby or a child) could not fulfill the requirements of the analogy. This makes the analogy pretty disturbing! From a pro-life standpoint, there is very convincing medical testimony that life begins at fertilization³, and the website, Abort73, is chocked full of great resources.

¹ zygote. (2010). In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

Retrieved April 19, 2010, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/zygote>

² Huppi, Tom. Retrieved April 19, 2010, from <http://www.huppi.com/kangaroo/L-personhood.htm>

³ Abort73.com. Medical testimony retrieved April 19:2010 from http://abort73.com/abortion/medical_testimony.

This site is filled with great information to be educated on facts often shielded surrounding this controversy.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In all, the argument that life begins at conception, more specifically, fertilization, is incredibly strong, and it reflects God's design for humanity. Any pro-choice argument will involve a combination of depersonalizing the developing baby and over-stressing the desires or safety of the mother. God's standards do not change based on our situations. We are to honor Him in everything we do and respect His design for life.