

# The value of human life and the attitude towards abortion

## *A christian and bioethic approach*

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**Abstract:** Abortion, the cruel reality of the contemporary mankind, bites with no mercy our life and lacerates the humanity face, relativizing life's ultimate value. We fight for the animal's lives and rights, but we kill our children in womb. We are confused and living up to the rules imposed by us, and we fail, because we do not see the „Light of the world” (John 8,12) - Jesus Christ, losing sight of the reference frame – the divinity. We have declared God dead [1], the fountain of life, and we put ourselves in His place. We lost indiscriminately the values of “as Gods” (Genesis 3,5) and “as God's image” (Genesis 1, 27) drifting on the gradient of big fails, as big as God we have chased but never listened. So, that, from the survival outlook and lacking of love in our life, the fight for survival targets against the somebody's else life, and no illustration is more eloquent and tragic as the mothers, families and society's fight against the procreation generally, and particularly against the unborn child.

**Keywords - abortion, right to life, life, homicide, murder, live, Christianity**

„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.”

(Psalms, 138, 13, 14)

“I see, in each and every human being, which has its beginning in their mother's womb, a person that God created out of His unlimited love for us. I see his longing to lead us from the moment of conception until the moment of death, when we would prepare for His kingdom, on the way to holiness, to all, not just one ... But I can also see His pain for each child killed in the womb, for the old or the who are sick euthanized. I see His pain to him who dies in sin, who does not confess their sins, who kill their neighbor, who kill their child or others' children, which helps encourages, or approves of stopping a human life.”[2]

We all want life for ourselves, for our own good. Once we are living our life, we do not want it to stop, that is

why, all his life, a man is struggling for life. Unfortunately, this battle, instead of being full of love and thanksgiving, directed towards harnessing this great gift, nor rarely it becomes a fight for survival and fulfillment in temporal life, succumbed finally to death, forgetting that the purpose of life in the flesh is not survival, but eternal life, which Jesus Christ Himself, our Savior was sacrificed.

The biological life begins simultaneously with the spiritual life. Human nature, after the primordial fall, involves the embryo involves state, as the beginning of life, and this condition begins with the fertilization of the egg cell, not with the adherence of the blastocyst to the uterine wall. Holy Scripture, the writings of the Holy Fathers, contemporary science, confess this, through the voices of true scientists.

This is the man: intellect in a useful and appropriate body (νοῦς καὶ ἐνδεχόμενος προσήγορο πρέπο σαρκί). He emerged from the maternal bosom (ἐν τοῖς μετροῖς πλαττεται κόλποις) sustained by the most reasonable and wise master, God almighty. He, in the time of birth pains goes towards the light in those dark chambers” [3].

St. Gregory of Nyssa, making a comparison with the grain of wheat which embraces all that plant's species, says: “... it's not fair to say that the soul is prior to the body” or that body is without a soul, but both have a unique beginning, according to His higher will, in God's primary purpose “[4].

Moreover, as St. Basil the Great accounts for (A.D 329-379), the placing of the soul into the body, or the condition of the fetus formation is not relevant for this traditional Christian judgment: “Women who deliberately kill their own unborn children are guilty of murder. From our point of view there is no analysis of whether the child was or not formed “(Letter 188, 1995, vol. VIII, p. 225)” [5].

Professor Balthasar Staehelin, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist in Zürich, Switzerland, said: “Our psychotherapy practice shows that the body is closely related to its psyche through the Spirit of God. Each man and each embryo carries with itself, since conception, the image of Christ. So, human liveliness occurs at conception, and not later in the pregnancy” [6].

Professor Erich Blechschmidt, a renowned German embryologist and anatomist from Göttingen, noted, in his work on the beginning of human life, that . The embryo does not become human, it is human from the very beginning. “He is a human being in every moment of its development from conception [...]. Already the first cell (the fertilized egg) is a human individual. This is demonstrated by research of nucleus and chromosomes contained in it” [7].

Professor Rudolf Ehmann, a gynecologist and director at Department of Obstetrics - Gynecology of the Stans Cantonal Hospital in Switzerland, said: “A child’s life belongs to him, and nobody else’s ; we do not have the right to decide on anyone’s life. I have no doubt that human existence begins at conception, during the fusion of the sperm with the egg cell. A scientific evidence for this is in vitro fertilization. Any other definition of the beginning of life is unfounded.” [8]

However, in the 60s, (the year when the hormonal contraceptives and the intrauterine device, the IUD, appeared on the market), the medical world decided to “assess”, as “beginning” of human life the blastocyst attachment to the uterine wall, and hence the beginning of pregnancy was considered to start in this point. This compromise consider new perspectives of medicine without God: the use of contraceptive methods, of abortion in the period of preimplantation, the techniques developed later (in vitro fertilization, the sick embryos which were considered sick were eliminated), the IUD use, and the use of chemicals for the elimination of healthy, but unwanted embryos, etc.

Thus, modern medicine easily exculpates from any charge and “when people have to be killed, they are first assigned, by definition, an inferior, non-human status. This is how the fetus is considered: to be able to legally kill it in their mother’s body, it is decided that it will not be attributed any specific human qualities. The idea also applies to the fertilized human egg up to its complete implantation, given that early human life was established purely out of utilitarian reasons, to be considered at the end of implantation “ [9].

**“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus.”** (Luke 1:31), are the words of the Annunciation for all humanity, sent to a maid who impressed heaven by her soul’s humility and purity. By these, man’s redemption begins, along with the whole creation, and they say **“you will bear a son in your womb”** so, in the womb of the Virgin, the Son, and not anything else, was conceived, from the very beginning.

“In those days Mary arose and went in haste into the hill country, to a city of the tribe of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby moved in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit “(Lk 1.39 to 41). Elizabeth’s unborn baby felt the presence of God and “rejoiced” (Luke 1.44), even though he was in his mother’s womb.

So, one can have a dialogue with God, since their womb life, which can be as effective as an adult’s dialogue with God, because they who are in the womb bear God’s the image from the moment of conception. Elizabeth, too, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and they all were happening “in those days”, i.e. immediately after the Annuciation, Jesus

Christ the Saviour being in the womb of the Virgin Mary, just conceived, with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Abortion means murder and there is nothing to justify it. Killing a life without the slightest possibility of defense from the victim’s part is abominable. And, more, when the killer is the very one who should have to defend it, wear it in the womb, help it to grow, love it, i.e the one that should be called **mother** , things become difficult to understand. Not even the most ferocious, bloodiest animals would do such a thing.

Not rarely, are material causes cited; however, “abortion can never be justified, morally, or in relation to other factors such as: the economical status of the family, misunderstandings between partners, career damage of the future mother, or her physical appearance.”[10]

The problems of human life cannot be solved by death, nothing which has to do with life finds the solution in death; the solution in none else but God’s kindness and mercy. We should be sure of that with life, God sends all that is necessary for this. Man must come with his share of love and sacrifice, while for other necessary things, it is only God that takes care of. No man can take, through death, which God gives them through life, so take heed!

“You look for happy life in the kingdom of death? It is not there. For how could happy life in a place where there is no life at all? “ [11]

In reality, material, family or social problems invoked are often exaggerated. Our grandparents used to grow as many children as God allowed in a much smaller house, as compared with ours today; with a plot of land not bigger than our wages they managed in hard times of war and natural disaster. Children learned to care for one another, to help, to love and become real, strong souls, with God in mind, whom they began to know from their mother’s prayers and stories. In our homes now have no place children, any more, and it is not the house which is the problem, not the low income, not the family disagreements, but our hearts that have become too small and cannot love any longer, cannot allow anyone else inside them, because we took God out of there.

Therapeutic abortion, a demonic death mask, hide sin and crime under the guise of a human right. *Therapeutic abortion for medical reasons* (healthy child and sick mother or sick child and healthy mother) or *social reasons* (healthy mother and healthy baby) is a criminal therapy that allows killing of the fetus even in advanced stages of intrauterine life.

“If the genetic investigation finds that an unborn baby will be abnormal, the recommendation is to give birth to that child, respecting his right to life, but the decision will be made only by the family, and only after that family was told about the moral and spiritual implications, both by the doctor and by the confessor. All these need to be resolved in terms in relation with the redemptional significance of the presence of a handicapped human being in the life of every person in the life of the community. “[12]

Community and man sometimes needs burdens, so as to make them strong, to make them learn sacrifice, love, and to help them carry their own crosses. If God decided

so, it is for soul's salvation, that child will be saved by the suffering and helplessness they wore, and along with him, those who received it as a challenge to love, as a gift God made them. It is neither simple nor easy, but Jesus, the Son of God Himself assumed human infirmities and bore them, to show how much he loves us. Moreover, there not few are the situations in which mothers chose to give birth to such children, and healthy children were born, which indicates that prenatal diagnosis was false, and it is likely to kill a healthy child.

"If a mother's life is at risk by pregnancy or birth, priority should be given to that woman's life, not because her life has a higher value in itself, but because of the relationships and responsibilities which that woman has towards other people who depend on her" [13].

It is the case of therapeutic abortion, having maternal causes, but even here, the woman must be very responsible ... There are mothers who understood that nothing is accidental, and chose not to oppose life, even in these situations, and go forward with any risk, assuming the sacrifice to the end; these women had the surprise and joy to bear healthy children, and they, themselves, were healed of their diseases and infirmities. This is where faith, obedience, prayer, God's plan of salvation for each of us intervenes.

In what social reasons are concerned, we can mention the case of schoolgirls or students who become pregnant, and resort to abortion as a desperate solution; the solution is not contraception, but an education based on Christian moral principles. If, however, they become pregnant, there is the alternative of adoption, since there are childless families who are willing to adopt them, to love them and raise them.

"Contraception is opposed to the divine command of Ec 1, 28: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Man slips slightly to extremes - on the one hand we have the example of Ham, who begot Canaan, in flood conditions, when abstinence was required (cf. Genesis 9, 18) and on the other hand, the example of Onan, who did not want to have children with his wife whom he had under the levirate (Genesis 38, 8-9). Today the same extremes are perpetuating, the same sinful guidelines, on the one hand, by exploiting the laws of procreation through in vitro fertilization, and on the other hand, abusing sexual pleasure without assuming responsibility for children born, through contraceptive measures (both abortive risks or with possible side effects of abortion). Christian theologians recommend moderation in sexual activity, in marriage, accompanied by birth of children, some admitting certain natural contraceptive measures, obviously with no danger of abortion" [14].

The woman "will be saved through childbirth, if she continues to abide in faith, in love and holiness" (1 Timothy 2, 8-15).

This is the fulfillment and mission of a woman, regardless of her social status, education, or training, because thus, she can make the most of love and can spread love around the family, and society, making her being an instrument of love, always filled with faith in God, the source of everything. True love begins with life and they just go together. If a

woman became aware of her extraordinary place before all creation, in which dignity was laid participating with God to create and to spread love, she would never abdicate give up this role.

*What is the man's responsibility, if he consents to an abortion?*

As a father, and a husband, the man is responsible for the whole family and should be concerned about its spiritual orientation. His duty is to love his wife and children as Christ loves His Church, until sacrifice.

When the woman comes and tells her husband that they are going to have a child, she is waiting for some sort of blessing from him, as a confirmation of love between them. A woman will never go to have an abortion if the child's father expressed his joy that a new life will be born, if he assumed responsibility to do whatever it takes to grow and educate it, and believed that God put hope for the fulfillment of these duties.

A woman needs confidence, stability, peace, and love; once she has felt these realities, she will never think of abortion. Creating this balance in a woman's life depends largely on the attitude of the man, because, no matter how different the feminist views are a woman, subconsciously wants to live under authority: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." (Genesis, 3, 16).

Therefore, man's attitude towards life, taking responsibility of the role of guiding the family to Christ will lead to a correct attitude of the woman towards all aspects of existence, "because the husband is the head of the wife as also Christ is the head of the church--he himself being the savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). Moreover, it strengthens the relationship between spouses in love, because through the birth of children, this love goes beyond life in the flesh, the mystery of love becomes creative, calling to life and tending toward more life and love; and we all know that love and life beat death, and conquer eternity

A man who consents to abortion, sending the woman to have an abortion, the man goes under his man status, or head of the family, leaving behind his authority; he is only a male interested in his bodily needs, and, from the perspective of this attitude, the woman is seen as an object of pleasure, lust. A man should not be surprised if, later, his children and wife will stand against him, and walk the path of disobedience, of infidelity, or lust. The cause is here in his disobedience to God, the fact that he considered his wife a whore, then, again, he should not be surprised that his daughter or wife, try to walk the path of unhealthy habits, that his son is against him, that there is not harmony and understanding among family members, at an age when he needs tranquility, peace and balance.

"Abortion is the deadly wound of love, he is the last stage of conviction in the disappearance of conjugal love, with the role of assassin of God's image, from the safest place, which is the womb of his mother, i.e. conjugal love temple" [15].

A woman is truly a woman when she remains as God created her, **virgin** and **mother**. **Virgin**, by behavior, moral standing, dignity, humility, obedience and **mother**, by love, wisdom, faith, by fulfilling her role in creation.

God Himself, the Creator and Providence need a virgin to make her a mother and to take flesh, and come into the world as its Savior. Heaven and earth are united in the womb of a Virgin, and thus, in the attitude (heart) of a woman begins the path of obedience, the way of salvation". Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1, 38); this was the answer that contains all beauty, greatness and responsibility of freedom. This answer supposed high risks, up to the stoning, after the Old Testament Law, but opened the door of eternity, and knotted the dialogue between God and man, in obedience, where Adam interrupted it by disobedience.

However, God does not reject the woman who had an abortion, and does not reject anyone who wants forgiveness and correction. "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. For I do not desire ... death of the wicked, says the Lord; So go back and live" (Ezekiel 18, 23,32).

Beyond sin, ignorance, weakness, unbelief, wickedness, deceit and urge of devil, and beyond tears and remorse there exist genuine hope of forgiveness and love and reconciliation.

God, through His sacrifice, reconciles us with Him, and, as a source of love, He can reconcile us with the children whom we killed. Let us try to find God, as our unique opportunity for eternity, and let us not despair. Sincere repentance, deep, sustained and conscious future involvement in the struggle for life, for the will of God in creation, hope in His mercy can be like a return to life, or a resurrection in the authority of Him who motivated repentance, God Jesus Christ, who has the power to restore our spiritual profile and gives us the strength to face those children hoping to be healed, and, at least at that time hoping to love them.

Therefore in order to get healing we should learn how to forgive; forgiveness should be sought, in the holy confession; no forgiveness can be given to a soul that is not clear of sins. By the Cross and His sacrifice, God, Jesus Christ, brought forgiveness, while through His Church, He brought healing.

Let's go, then, to God, Jesus Christ in our lives; let us be parents, mothers and fathers of our children and not their executioners.

"Behold, I have set before you today life and death, good and evil, life and death ... I have set before you today blessing and curse. Choose life, that you and your descendants to live" (Deuteronomy. 30 15, 19).

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