

Hot Topics: A Closer Look at Abortion and Gay Marriage

Training Day – Feb 27, 2016
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How Did We Get Here?

A Brief Trip Through Worldviews



Theism

- Dominant view up till 1600s
- There is a God, who is infinite-personal, transcendent, holy, good
- We can *know truth*, about the world around us, and God himself
- Humans are made in the image of God
- Ethics is transcendent and based on the character of God
- History is linear, with a meaningful sequence of events
- Core Commitment: Glorify God and enjoy Him forever

Deism

- Late 1600-1700s
- Authority for knowledge shifted from Scripture to reason
- God is only a part of the “system” and relegated to a Clockmaker
- Moralistic Therapeutic Deism today:
 - God wants us to be happy
 - He is not involved in our lives
 - He makes no demands on creation
 - “Good” people go to heaven

Naturalism

- Started 1600-1750
- The universe is “matter” only, “minds” a sub-category
- Thus “mind” and “matter” were separated and we never recovered
- Universe is a closed, cause-effect, deterministic system
- So there is no free will (although the “sense” of it is not denied)
- Human personality comes only from chemical and physical reactions
- Ethics is constructed by humans and relativistic
- History is linear, but closed, deterministic, no overarching purpose
- Core Commitment: No particular goal, chosen by people themselves, most choose what is normal/acceptable within a society

New Age Spirituality

- To those not satisfied with naturalism and its pathways to nihilism and existentialism, eastern mysticism was possible, but too far
- New consciousness that's still Western
- Highly eclectic and borrows from every worldview
- No transcendent God, closed universe
- Idea of "evolutionary" change is important
- Rise of the importance of the "individual person"
- Self is the most important thing, its own "protected" universe
- Essentially, each person can do whatever he or she wants to

Postmodernism

- "Incredulity towards metanarrative"
- There is no single story, nobody has a monopoly on that
- At the heart is naturalism, matter exists eternally, God does not exist
- Shift from "being" to "knowing" to "meaning" (i.e. no "truth")
- All we can do is tell stories
- Our language "constructs" reality
- The only truth is a "pragmatic" truth; no truthfulness, only usefulness
- Committed to an "ending shift of whatever"
- Notice that the rejection of a metanarrative is itself a metanarrative

The Challenge

"The shift from modernity to postmodernity has not been pretty. In the end, relativism is a more deadly enemy than denial, for it rejects the very possibility of truth, even as it allows for infinite forms of meaning. This has made the apologetic task substantially more difficult.

"In the pre-modern age, the great issue was which supernatural claims are justified and true. In the modern age, the assumption was that no supernatural claims are justified or true. In the ethereal vapors of postmodernity, any supernatural claim is assumed to be true, whether justified or not. But no claim to truth can be absolute, universal, or exclusive."

- Albert Mohler

Hot Topics:

A Closer Look at Gay Marriage

A Biblical View and Response

How do you think we should respond?

Reminder How To Respond

1. Believer
2. Non-Believer

Reminder How To Respond

- Clarifying questions to understand where you want to guide conversation (not in any particular order):
- On a scale of 1-10 how sure are you that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?
- If you were to die today and you stood before God what would you tell him to get into heaven?
- Are you in a relationship? Do you engage in sexual activity? How long have you felt this way?

Scripture

- Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way *which seems* right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- 1 Corinthians 16:14 - Let all that you do be done in love.
- Proverbs 24:11-12 - Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back. If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?
- Isaiah 5:20 - Wo to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

More Scripture

- 1 John 3:7-10 - Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

More Scripture

- Galatians 6:1 - Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14 - And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.
- Matthew 18:15-17 - If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

How did Jesus respond?

- John 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 8:11 - She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."
- Matthew 7:3,5 - Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Marriage, Transgender

- Matthew 19:4-6 - And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH?' "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

Homosexuality

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11- Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. **SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU**; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Responsibility To Respond

- Commands:
- Genesis 1:28- God blessed them; and God said to them, "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."
- Matthew 28:19-20- Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Things To Note

- We must do the due diligence (1 Peter 3:15- But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect)
- The church is for sinners (Romans 3:23- For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.)
- The standard for our response is always truth
- Process with community how to communicate with grace and truth and when to initiate conversations
- Feelings are very real, but they aren't reliable
- Know that God's design for sex and marriage trumps our desires (Romans 1:26, "contrary to nature")

More Freebies

- The greatest sin is humans rejection of Christ (not knowing Christ)
- A believer must have an understanding of how OT ceremonial laws have been fulfilled by Christ. (Mt. 5:17)
- It's not your job to "win" someone over spiritually much less politically (John 16:8)
- Proverbs 18:2- A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.
- When culture is in favor of a sin there is danger
- There is no perfect opportunity or conversation

There is no formula

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11- Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. **SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU**; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.



Abortion

A Biblical View and Response

Why is it Important?

- Since the Roe vs. Wade decision in 1973, there have been over 58 million legally performed abortions. (<http://www.numberofabortions.com>)
- If abortion is in fact taking a human life, then this is one of the deadliest epidemics the world has ever seen.

Why is it Important?

- If abortion is in fact taking a human life, don't Christians have a responsibility to say something?
- Psalm 82:3 - Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.
- Proverbs 31:8-9 - Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Objectives:

- To interpret a Biblical stance on abortion.
- To equip Christians with knowledge and tools to stand against abortion

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- While the word "abortion" is not in the Bible, God still makes His point clear on the issue...

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- Jeremiah 1:5
 - Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- Psalm 139:13-16
 - For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- Exodus 21:22-25
 - "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if there is harm, [d] then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, bum for bum, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."
 - This passage simply illustrates the value that God puts on an unborn baby and how God considers them a human being.

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- Genesis 1:27
 - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

- Ultimately, God clearly considers the unborn in the womb to be human beings that He has made and places as much value on them as anyone else.

What Does Science Say about Abortion?

What Does Science Say about Abortion?

- Dr. Dianne N. Irving, M.A., Ph.D. –Princeton University
 - *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 1999, 19:3/4:22-36 (in press)
 - "The fusion of the sperm (with 23 chromosomes) and the oocyte (with 23 chromosomes) at fertilization results in a live human being, a single-cell human zygote, with 46 chromosomes the number of chromosomes characteristic of an individual member of the human species." (<https://www.princeton.edu/~prolife/articles/wdhhb.html>)

What Does Science Say about Abortion?

- Embryologists Keith L. Moore & T.V.N. Persaud state:
 - "A zygote is the beginning of a new human being. Human development begins at fertilization" and "marks the beginning of each of us as a unique individual."
(<http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>)

What Does Science Say about Abortion?

- Dr. Maureen Condic, Assistant Professor of Neurobiology and Anatomy at the University of Utah
 - "The critical difference between a collection of cells and a living organism is the ability of an organism to act in a coordinated manner for the continued health and maintenance of the body as a whole. It is precisely this ability that breaks down at the moment of death, however death might occur. Dead bodies may have plenty of live cells, but their cells no longer function together in a coordinated manner."
(<http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>)

What Does Science Say about Abortion?

- She proceeds...
- "From conception forward, human embryos clearly function as organisms. Embryos are not merely collections of human cells, but living creatures with all the properties that define any organism as distinct from a group of cells; embryos are capable of growing, maturing, maintaining a physiologic balance between various organ systems, adapting to changing circumstances, and repairing injury. Mere groups of human cells do nothing like this under any circumstances."
(<http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>)

So What?

So What?

- Taking an innocent life is wrong.
- The Bible and Science are in agreement: Human life begins at conception.
- Abortion, then, is taking the life of an innocent human being.

How Can You Stand for Life? (with someone of a different view)

How Can You Stand for Life? (with someone of a different view)

1. Keep the main issue the main issue.
Common Rebuttals:
 1. It's about trusting women to make their own personal decisions.
 2. It's a woman's choice to decide what to do with her body.
 3. It's a right to privacy.
 4. We shouldn't force our morality on others.

Simplify the entire debate by asking about the real issue:
IS THE UNBORN A HUMAN BEING?

How Can You Stand for Life? (with someone of a different view)

2. Use Science.
 - <https://www.princeton.edu/~prolife/articles/wdhbb.html>
 - <http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>
 - "The Case for Life: Equipping Christians to Engage the Culture" by Scott Klusendorf.
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/alexander_tsiaras_conception_to_birth_visualized?language=en

How Can You Stand for Life? (with someone of a different view)

3. Use Philosophy.
 - Stephen Schwarz' Acronym "SLED"
 - **Size:** You were smaller as an embryo, but does body size determine value? Of course not!
 - **Level of Development:** You were less developed as an embryo, but infants are less developed than teenagers physically and mentally. Do we think they have less value? Of course not!
 - **Environment:** Where you are has no bearing on what you are. Does an eight inch journey through the birth canal change the essential value of the unborn? Of course not!
 - **Degree of Dependency:** You depended on your mother for survival, but does dependence on another human determine value? Of course not! (Consider those with disability, or conjoined twins, for example).
 - In short, humans are equal by nature, not by function.
(<http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>)

Making a Pro Life Case in 60 Seconds:

- *"I am pro-life because the science of embryology establishes that from the earliest stages of development, you were a distinct, living, and whole human being. And there is no essential difference between the embryo you once were and the adult you are today that justifies killing you at that earlier stage of development. Differences of size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency are not good reasons for saying you could be killed then but not now."*
(<http://www.colsoncenter.org/images/content/colson2011/21-days-of-prayer-for-life-v2.4.pdf>)

How Can You Stand for Life?

4. Vote for Life

How Can I help Someone Considering Abortion?

How Can I help Someone Considering Abortion?

1. Love the woman first! Quickly try to help them feel loved, heard, and cared for.
 - Ask how they came to this consideration.
 - Ask them if they have a faith. If not, share the gospel.

This is an opportunity to share the gospel!

How Can I help Someone Considering Abortion?

2. Direct them to Watermark:
 - There is always (24/7) a pastor on-call for someone in this position.

How Can I help Someone Considering Abortion?

3. Direct them to the "Thrive Women's Clinic"
 - <http://thrivewomensclinic.com/>

Have You Had or Supported an Abortion?

Have You Had or Supported an Abortion?

You Are Loved!

Have You Had or Supported an Abortion?

Ladies:

- "Someone Cares" reaches out to women hurt by past abortions. Our goal is to see you fully restored, and for you to know that through Christ you are forgiven and fully accepted by God. Group facilitators are women who have experienced the painful aftermath of abortion and now walk in the assurance of the forgiveness they have in Christ. For information about the next sessions which will begin mid-March, please contact someonecares@watermark.org.

Have You Had or Supported an Abortion?

Men:

- Often when discussing the abortion issue, our culture neglects the men. Many men suffer from guilt and pain because of the abortions that they encouraged their girlfriends or wives to get. "[Forgotten Fathers](#)" provides a safe place for men to share and discuss their feelings about their role in a past abortion. Unfortunately, millions of men in the United States as well as across the globe have experienced the pain that abortion can cause. Please understand that healing is available, and that they are not alone. For help, please contact us via e-mail at forgottenfathers@watermark.org

What about Rape or Disease/Disability?

What about Rape or Disease/Disability?

- Rape

- We never want to expel the rape victim's feelings, or the guilt of the criminal. But, difficult circumstances, even in extreme cases, do not justify taking an innocent life.

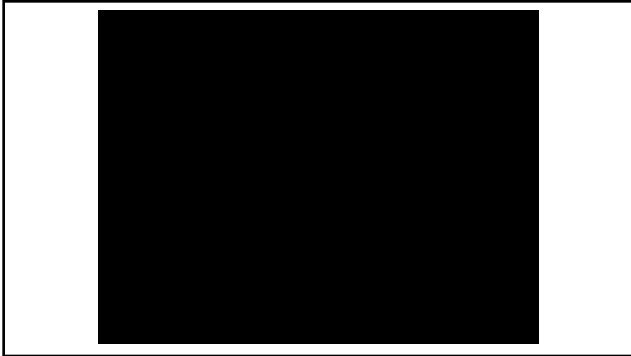
What about Rape or Disease/Disability?

- Disease or Disability

- Psalm 139:13-16
- Noah Smith
- Abel Paul Crawford

Abortion
A Biblical View and Response

The Gospel



Jesus, the Only Way

- **John 14:6**
 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- **Acts 4:12**
 - Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.
- **1 Tim 2:5**
 - For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus

The Way to Share the Way

- **Col 4:5-6**
 - Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone
- **1 Pet 3:15**
 - But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

Listen

- **Then:** Confrontational, Rational Arguments, Monologue Presentations, Salesman Tactic
- **Now:** Conversational, Relational Bridges, Dialogue Conversations, Co-Traveler Perspective
- **Reflective Listening:** "So what you're saying is..."
- **Mirroring:** "This sounds like something you feel strongly about..."
- **Find Common Ground:** "I can see how that's hard" or "This bothered me too"

Ask Questions

- **Columbo Tactic:**
 - What do you mean by that?
 - How did you come to that conclusion?
 - Have you ever considered..."
- **Ask thoughtful, open-ended questions:**
 - "Have you ever considered we were put here for a purpose?"
- **Ask for their story, tell stories yourself**

Bridge to the Gospel

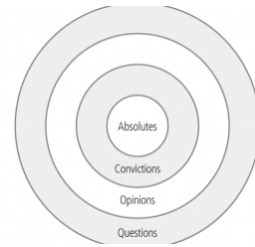
- **Find common ground, what do they care about, and relate the Gospel to what they care about**
- **Seek to actively, purposefully transition**
- **Ask for permission to share:**
 - "If you could know more about Christianity, would you want to?"
 - "May I share with you what true Christianity actually teaches?"
 - "May I share with you what the Gospel really says?"
 - "May I share with you what Jesus actually taught?"

The Gospel

- Use your own words
- Use Scripture
- Bridge Illustration / 4 Spiritual Laws
- Use Illustrations, tell stories!
- Always Pray!
- Always invite the Holy Spirit to go before you
- It is the Lord's work, not yours (John 6:44)

Theological Beliefs

- Absolutes – Core Beliefs of Christian Faith
- Convictions – Not Core Beliefs, but may have significant impact on the church
- Opinions – Generally not worth dividing over
- Questions – Currently unsettled issues



The Challenge

“To effectively reach the emerging postmodern generation, we must return to the basics: living out biblical principles before the unchurched, developing authentic friendships, caring for practical needs, and giving new disciples an opportunity to believe through belonging. We must live out our faith in walking shoes.” It is this kind of faith that postmoderns can accept—no, are attracted to—no, are dying for.”

The Challenge

“It is not enough for us to understand our world from a distance. It is not enough to have a strategy of how to evangelize. We need to wade in and rub shoulders with those we desire to reach for Christ. We need to be willing to live life with unchurched postmodernists on their terms, not ours. This will lay the foundation for real communication to take place. This will provide us with exciting opportunities to deepen our own faith and to allow the Holy Spirit to work through us.”

- Dr. Miroslav Pujic

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