

Sanctity of Human Life

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The following material was adapted in large part from these two sources:

- <http://epcoga.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/Files/1-Who-We-Are/B-About-The-EPC/Position-Papers/PositionPaper-Abortion.pdf>
- <https://aq.org/beliefs/position-papers/abortion-sanctity-of-human-life>

Introduction

First Christian Church bases its understanding of the nature of human beings on the Bible, which reveals that God created the universe, the world, and all living things (Genesis 1:1,11,21,25). Therefore, human beings are responsible to bring the light of God's Word to decisions that bear on the sanctity of life. To this end, First Christian Church offers the following biblical perspectives. Note: all biblical citations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New International Version (NIV).

The Image of God

Scripture

Humans are the highest form of God's creative activity, and He is intentional in both their creation and destiny. To further differentiate mankind from any other living creature, we read: *"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them"* (Genesis 1:27). Unlike any other created being, Scripture also teaches: *"Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being"* (Genesis 2:7).

Meaning

By making human beings in His own image, God set them above all other forms of life on earth. The term "image of God" signifies that, like their Creator, men and women are personal and spiritual beings, rational and relational. It implies that humans are intended for eternal fellowship with their Creator and requires both sexes for full expression. Though marred when the first human pair fell into sin (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12), the image of God is still intrinsic to human nature

(Genesis 9:6), ensuring that men and women are capable of response to their Maker. Creation in the divine image is not only an expression of the incalculable value God places upon human life, it also signifies that God has sovereign power over life. He is both giver and sustainer of life; He alone has the power to determine its beginning and ending.

Commandment

The nobility of human beings is seen in the divine mandate: *"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground"* (Genesis 1:28). Superior to all other life forms, humans are to assume the role of responsible custodians of the earth.

Implications

Every human life, from conception through death, is therefore to be valued, respected, nurtured, and protected. Every human life is to be lived in obedience to God and His Word. The Bible describes a moral order to which all persons are responsible. At the end of life, all persons will stand before God to give account for their actions (Rev 20:11-15, 2 Cor 5:10).

Contraception

Scripture

The Bible teaches that in the institution of marriage, children are divinely ordered both to fulfill God's divine purposes for the race and for the repopulation of the earth. The mandate to the first pair was, *"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it"* (Genesis 1:28). Throughout Scripture, children are regarded as God's gift: *"Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him"* (Psalm 127:3). There are certain circumstances where couples may choose not to have children for good reasons. However, the use of contraception merely to avoid the demands of child rearing ought to be prayerfully examined in terms of the purity of one's motives and the personal implications of the divine mandate.

Official Stance

First Christian Church, finding no clear scriptural mandate, does not take an official stand on the appropriateness of contraception within a heterosexual marriage for purposes of regulating the number of children, determining the time of their birth, or safeguarding the health of the mother. These are matters of personal conscience as godly spouses prayerfully covenant with God and counsel within the family of faith about the growth of their families. While there are important ethical issues in determining to have a family, the prevention of pregnancy is understood to be qualitatively different from the termination of pregnancy since the sperm has not fertilized the ovum and human life has not yet begun. The biological processes themselves teach us that in God's creative design not every sperm or ovum is intended to survive and unite.

Responsibility

It should be noted, however, that some methods commonly regarded as contraception, such as the IUD and the morning-after pill, are actually agents that abort, rather than prevent, pregnancy. Therefore, First Christian Church recommends that every Christian couple review the following article prior to making a final decision regarding contraception: <http://christianfamilyplanning.org/>

In Vitro Fertilization

Scripture

From a study of the Scriptures, God's plan for human conception is sexual union between a man and woman in a legal marriage covenant. Children of such a covenant ought to be the result of a joyous and loving sexual relationship in which the husband and wife are responsible for birthing and rearing godly offspring. However, infertile heterosexual couples who have pursued without success all viable treatments may be confronted with a decision to utilize in vitro fertilization.

Ethical Issues

There are numerous ethical issues to be evaluated in such a process, including the financial costs, the harvesting of sperm and ova, and the nurturing of multiple living human embryos, not all of which likely will be implanted in the uterus. The disposal of unused embryos is an acute ethical issue since they represent the beginning of

human life. We oppose the practice of producing more embryos by in vitro fertilization than would be implanted in utero, which would either be destroyed immediately or stored frozen with the strong practical likelihood of later destruction.

Further, there may also be serious danger to the life of the mother in the event that multiple babies survive to full term, which might call for the selective abortion of one or more of the babies.

Official Stance

Given these grave concerns, it is imperative that those who elect this procedure prayerfully seek godly and knowledgeable counsel and engage medical professionals with compatible ethical standards. We disapprove any procedure that results in the destruction of unimplanted embryos. Further, we applaud and support those who have chosen to adopt unimplanted embryos, in order to bring them to full term.

Reproductive Cloning

First Christian Church believes that reproductive cloning is immoral and a matter of grave concern. In the cloning process, the person is not conceived from the union of the father's sperm and the mother's ovum. The genetic material is drawn from only one person and manipulated in the laboratory, with some risk of contamination, before implantation in the surrogate. There are also grave physical risks for persons who may be cloned. Animal cloning has demonstrated the potential for birth defects and premature aging. Scientists have no way of knowing what type of horrors may be visited upon cloned individuals or upon humankind at large through such a process.

Biomedical Research

First Christian Church affirms and encourages reverent and responsible scientific research intended to enhance the health and well-being of persons created in the image of God. Christian faith is not to be interpreted in ways that needlessly hinder greater understanding of the human body and the discovery of cures for and prevention of dreaded diseases and defects. However, there are many temptations

to pursue the life sciences for ignoble reasons. Therefore, all biomedical research should be monitored and regulated so as to ensure respect for the sanctity of human life and the essential dignity of human beings who are created in the image of God. All researchers are finally answerable to God.

Stem Cell Research

Stem cell research shows great promise for the cure of numerous diseases and should proceed under appropriate ethical guidelines regularly reviewed and revised. There are stem cells, such as adult stem cells, that are readily available for research and whose procurement does not compromise the sanctity of human life. However, the practice of cultivating stem cells from the tissue of aborted fetuses (embryonic stem cells) perpetuates the evil of abortion and should be prohibited. Likewise, the cultivation of stem cells from the unused embryos left with fertility clinics raises serious ethical concerns for human life. Great care must always be exercised in the cultivation of stem cells to ensure that the sanctity and dignity of human life are not compromised. We oppose the killing of human embryos through the extraction of stem cells for medical research or treatment.

Genetic Intervention

First Christian Church is supportive of morally responsible genetic research and therapies. Genetic research conducted with reverence for life appears to have great potential for the health of human beings through the identification of and intervention in the genetic roots of hundreds of diseases. By the same token, used for proud and selfish ends, genetic screening and intervention also have the potential to bring great harm to the entire human race. In addition, First Christian Church believes legislation is necessary to prevent intrusive genetic screening and resultant discrimination as well as misguided experimentation and termination of life. See <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/down-syndrome-iceland/> for an example of immoral handling of genetic screening.

Vaccines

The following articles provide a Christian perspective regarding the ethical development of vaccines, particularly as it relates to COVID-19, and were used for this portion of the paper:

- <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/does-acceptance-of-a-covid-19-vaccine-represent-endorsement-of-abortion/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-faqs-fetal-cells-covid-19-vaccine-treatments/>

Official Stance

First Christian Church supports the development and usage of vaccines to combat the ravages of disease. However, trade in human fetal remains persists in our society. Ethical alternatives are available for scientific research. Christians should oppose use of fetal tissue from aborted children as it is inconsistent with human dignity.

Considerations

A key consideration in whether using a vaccine which is manufactured using tissue from an aborted fetus is licit or immoral is whether there is material cooperation with the evil act of abortion. If the abortion were conducted in order to harvest tissues that were to be used for the vaccine, then it would clearly be immoral. However, if the fetal tissue is obtained from “immortalized” cell lines, the ethical concerns are lessened.

Immortalized Cell Lines

Immortalized cell lines are established by culturing fetal cells in such a way that they continue growing and multiplying in laboratory dishes indefinitely. Such cells can then be used for such activities as testing a drug’s ability to damage genetic material or to test the effects of specific viral infection. While immortalized cell lines began with fetal cells, they no longer contain fetal body parts, and no fetal tissue remains. No cells remain from the original fetal tissue, so they are not themselves a “fetal cell.”

For example, HEK293T is a widely used immortalized cell line that was made from fetal tissue acquired in the Netherlands in the 1970s. The records pertaining to the origins of HEK293T were lost, so it is not known whether the tissue came from a spontaneous miscarriage or an elective abortion. HEK293T was derived from cells that came from fetal tissue, but the cell line no longer contains fetal tissue cells.

Ethical Issues

If the abortion was conducted in order to harvest tissues that were to be used for the purpose of creating a cell line, then it would clearly be immoral. However, in the case of HEK293T, even if an abortion occurred it was not carried out for that reason, and the tissue was acquired after the child's death for the purpose of medical research. The use of the vaccine now will not promote further abortions for this particular purpose. Therefore, it can be argued that we are not morally complicit with the original abortion. This is the view of First Christian Church in the case of HEK293T and others like it.

Responsibility

Whether or not a particular vaccine should be administered remains a personal decision. We recommend that all Christians prayerfully seek godly and knowledgeable counsel and engage medical professionals with compatible ethical standards, in order to arrive at a wise decision.

Capital Punishment

Scripture

In Genesis 9:6 God requires the crime of murder ("*shedding blood*") to be repaid by the forfeiture of the criminal's own life: "*by man shall his blood be shed.*" God establishes the obligation to carry out the most severe punishment for the worst crime. This is significant because it took place long before the establishment of the people of Israel. Therefore, this principle has relevance for all humans for all time.

Official Stance

First Christian Church views the practice of capital punishment as a biblical requirement. However, given the practical issues within our justice system (e.g. eyewitness misidentification, the lack of attorney representation, misapplication of forensic evidence, false or coerced confessions, socio-cultural biases, the large number of exonerations, and the irreversibility of death) the extent to which capital punishment should be applied is not always clear. Therefore, Christians may respectfully disagree on this issue. For further details regarding the arguments on both sides, please refer to the following articles:

- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-i-support-capital-punishment/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-i-oppose-capital-punishment/>

Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide

The following article was used for this portion of the paper:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/euthanasia.html>

Scripture

Scripture teaches that life is a sacred gift from God (Gen 2:7) and that death is an enemy (1 Cor 15:26). Ecclesiastes 8:8 declares, *"No man has power over the wind to contain it; so no one has power over the day of his death."* Job 30:23 says, *"I know you will bring me down to death, to the place appointed for all the living."* God has the final say over death (see 1 Cor 15:26, 54–56; Heb 2:9, 14–15; Rev 21:4).

God's Purposes in Pain

Romans 8:18-25 explain that suffering is the result of the curse of sin in the world, resulting in "futility", "bondage", "corruption", "groaning", and "pains." Sometimes God allows a person to suffer for a long time before death; other times, a person's suffering is cut short. While we don't understand all the reasons, we know that God has a purpose for everything. Ephesians 1:11 says that God works all things according to the counsel of his will. James 1:12 explains that God intends to bring blessing through trials. Romans 5:3 teaches that tribulations bring about perseverance. Acts 4:27-28 and Gen 50:20 show how God uses the evil of human sin to accomplish his plans for good. In Romans 8:28-29 God promises to work all things for good for his children, including conforming us into the image of Christ. Therefore, it is not our place to question God's sovereignty. Rather, we must learn to exercise faith in God's purposes.

Official Stance

First Christian Church views the practice of Euthanasia and assisted suicide as evil. God alone is sovereign over when and how a person's death occurs.

Considerations

We should never seek to prematurely end a life, but neither must we go to extraordinary means to preserve a life. To actively hasten death is wrong; to passively withhold treatment can also be wrong; but to allow death to occur naturally in a terminally ill person is not necessarily wrong. Anyone facing this issue should pray to God for wisdom (James 1:5), seek godly counsel within the family of faith, and engage medical professionals with compatible ethical standards.

Abortion

First Christian Church views the practice of abortion as an evil that has been inflicted upon millions of innocent babies and that will threaten millions more in the years to come. Abortion is a morally unacceptable alternative for birth control, population control, sex selection, and elimination of the physically and mentally handicapped. Certain parts of the world are already experiencing serious population imbalances as a result of the systematic abortion of female babies. The advocacy and practice of so-called partial birth abortion of babies is particularly heinous.

Sexual Responsibility

Contemporary demands for abortion often flow from the practice of sexual freedom without corresponding responsibility. The Scriptures speak definitively against premarital and extramarital sexual intercourse and declare such activity to be sinful (Exodus 22:16; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9,13,18; Galatians 5:19). To add abortion as an after-the-fact birth control device is to deepen and compound the sin with resultant guilt and emotional distress. First Christian Church affirms the biblical mandate for sexual purity and responsibility that, when obeyed, will obviate and eliminate situations in which abortion might otherwise be contemplated.

The Personhood of the Unborn

The Bible does not distinguish between prenatal and postnatal life. It attributes human personhood to the unborn child. This extends to the unborn child ex utero as no less a human being than the child in the mother's womb. The Scriptures regularly treat the unborn child as a person under the care of God.

1. The Bible recognizes that a woman is with child even in the first stages of pregnancy. When the virgin Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus, an angel made this announcement to her: "You will conceive and give birth to a son [huios]" (Luke 1:31). The angel then informed Mary that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant: *"Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child [huios, "son"] in her old age"* (Luke 1:36). Scripture makes it clear that in the prenatal phase both Jesus and John the Baptist were recognized as males well before the time of delivery. Moreover, John before birth is recognized as a "baby" (brephos) (Luke 1:41,44). *"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit"* (Luke 1:41). This translates a Greek word used for children both before and after birth (cf. Acts 7:19). The Bible always recognizes the prenatal phase of life as that of a child and not a mere appendage to the mother's body to be aborted at will.

Even when pregnancy in Bible times was due to an illicit relationship, the sanctity and value of that life was not questioned. The daughters of Lot willfully became pregnant by incestuous relationships (Genesis 19:36), and Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon though her marriage to King David came about through an adulterous relationship (2 Samuel 11:5). In none of these cases is the life of the unborn considered to be unworthy and requiring an abortion.

2. The Bible recognizes that God is active in the creative process of forming new life. Concerning Leah, the wife of Jacob, Scripture says, *"When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive... Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son"* (Genesis 29:31,32). When Job compared himself to his servants, he asked, *"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).

That each person yet unborn has equal value and status before God is indicated in Job's declaration that God *"shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of his hands"* (Job 34:19).

God spoke through Isaiah: *"This is what the Lord says—he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant"* (Isaiah 44:2). *"Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the Lord called me; from my mother's womb he has spoken my name"* (Isaiah 49:1). And again, *"This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the Lord, who has made all things"* (v. 24).

David summed it up, *"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"* (Psalm 139:13–16).

3. The Bible recognizes that God has plans for the unborn child. Only He knows the potential of this new life. When God called Jeremiah to his prophetic ministry, He indicated the ordination was prenatal when He said: *"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). When Zechariah the priest was ministering at the altar of incense, an angel announced that his wife, Elizabeth, would give birth to a son who should be called John. Then it was revealed that God had definite plans for this child. He was to be a forerunner of Jesus (Luke 1:11–17). *"for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born"* (Luke 1:15 NIV).
4. The Bible recognizes that God is sovereign in all things, including the quality of life of the unborn child. When people reject God, they may more easily cheapen human life and make it relative. Some are considered worthy to live; others are considered expendable. Who but God knows whether someone destroyed in the Holocaust might not have discovered a cure for cancer. Who but God knows what blessing millions of children killed before birth might have brought to improve the quality of life. When people set themselves up as God to determine

if a life is worth living—whether before or after birth—they are usurping the sovereignty of the Creator. There are also things finite humans cannot understand. God’s ways are above human ways. While medical technology may now allow prenatal diagnoses of some medical conditions, it is critical to remember that God’s love is unconditional and above any consideration of physical or mental limitations. Thus, while it may be permissible to pursue prenatal testing so as to better provide for the needs of an unborn child, it is impermissible to use prenatal testing to determine whether or not an unborn child should be allowed to live.

The Killing of Innocent Persons

Scripture

God’s Word is very explicit concerning the taking of innocent human life. “*You shall not murder*” (Exodus 20:13) is not only one of the Ten Commandments, but also a moral imperative that recurs throughout Scripture (cf. Matthew 19:18; Romans 13:9).

God inspired Moses to include in the Scriptures a law that brings the sanctity of the lives of unborn children into focus. “*If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot*” (Exodus 21:22–24).

Implications

It should be noted that the value of the life of both the mother and the child is such that even if there is no critical and lasting harm to either, the responsible party must be fined. However, if either the mother or the premature child is seriously injured or dies, then the severe penalties of the law are to be applied, possibly in this case, those having to do with manslaughter (Exodus 21:13; Numbers 35:22–25). It is clear that the life of the unborn child is precious, and even a non-premeditated injury inflicted on the unborn is a serious crime.

Official Stance

God's attitude toward the killing of innocents is clear. No one is guiltless who takes the life of another, with the possible scriptural exceptions of capital punishment administered by a system of justice (Genesis 9:6; Numbers 35:12), unintended killing in self-defense (Exodus 22:2), or deaths occasioned by duly constituted police and war powers (Romans 13:4,5).

Danger to the Life of the Mother

In the modern era, situations in which pregnancy seriously and imminently threatens the life of the mother are exceedingly rare. If, however, responsible diagnoses confirm that childbirth is likely to result in the death of the mother, historic Christian faith usually has favored the life of the mother above that of the unborn child. Unlike the unborn child, the mother is a mature person with established family and societal relationships and responsibilities.

However, vague threats to the mother's physical or emotional health must not become an excuse to place the child at risk. Any intervention required must have the intent of saving the mother's life, not the prior intent of causing death to the child. As in any emergency, in such times God's children ought to fervently and earnestly pray for divine intervention. In doing so, the persons involved must prayerfully evaluate the medical diagnoses with the assistance of humane physicians and godly leaders and make, responsibly and with a clear conscience, what will be a very painful decision.

Rape or Incest

These atrocities do great damage to women and require a compassionate response on the part of the church. The father is guilty and should be held accountable by law. However, the child who is a result of the crime is completely innocent and should not be punished for the sin of the father. For the purposes of this discussion, the issue is not how the child was conceived. If the child in the womb is a human life, made in the image of God, then it is worth protecting. In such cases, adoption is a viable alternative to abortion.

The Emotional and Spiritual Toll

The abortion industry rarely advises pregnant women of the potential impact of abortion on their spiritual and mental health. Desperate women who find themselves in an acutely embarrassing or inconvenient position because of an illicit affair or an unplanned pregnancy, and who are often coerced by selfish lovers and/or embarrassed families, are led to see abortion as a “quick fix.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Women are usually unaware of the depression, guilt, and shame that may plague them for a lifetime. While God can and does forgive and heal the broken hearts of repentant sinners who come to Him for forgiveness, the actual deed can never be undone and probably will be remembered with pain and regret.

The Woman’s Right to Choose

In recent years, the argument is made that since the woman alone bears the physical consequences of pregnancy, she should always have the right to choose freely an abortion. The laws of many nations now guarantee that “right” within varying durations and circumstances of pregnancy. As this study has shown, however, there is no biblical basis for a pregnant woman to terminate her unborn child. The long historical tradition of orthodox Christianity prohibits abortion. The legality of abortion in modern cultures is rooted in concepts of individual rights, autonomy, and privacy pushed far beyond scriptural teaching. We therefore expressly deny that this supposed legal “right” automatically confers upon the pregnant woman the moral right to abort her unborn child.

Christian Obligation

Christians are called upon to be good citizens by impacting the State in positive ways. All citizens—Christians and non-Christians alike—must have freedom of conscience on all private moral and ethical issues, since God alone is Lord of the conscience. However, the issue of equal protection of life under the laws of the State is not a private but a public matter.

The Bible teaches that all persons and nations are responsible before God for their moral and ethical decisions, including those that relate to the preservation of human life. Whenever abortion and other immoral life-threatening practices present

themselves, Christians have an obligation to address these evils in public forums and to seek legislative and judicial redress.

Christian Action

We reject the lie that Christians only care about the preborn.

- Christians have led the way in caring for Adoption and Foster Care

<https://twitter.com/jdgreear/status/1352715821152428040>

- Since 1973, for every 1 abortion clinic in America, Christians have built 3 pregnancy centers to assist women in crisis – buying groceries, helping them get housing, and much more.
- In foster and adoption agencies the group represented most are Christians and their friends.
- Christians have built more hospitals in the world than any other single group—for a long time in sub-Saharan Africa there was not a single hospital that wasn't built by a Christian mission.

<https://adoption.org/who-adopts-the-most>

- According to EthicsDaily.com, 5% of practicing Christians in the US have adopted, which is more than twice the number of all adults who have adopted.
- A survey showed that 38% of practicing Christians had seriously considered adoption, while only 26% of all adults had.
- Most adoptive parents (73%) are non-Hispanic whites, according to the Barna Group. However, they are less likely to adopt a Caucasian child. Only 37% of children adopted are Caucasian.

<https://www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/the-role-faith-based-agencies-child-welfare>

- Barna research found that practicing Christians may be over twice as likely to adopt compared to the general population, with Catholics 3xs as likely, and evangelicals 5xs as likely.
- Practicing Christians are 50% more likely to become foster parents—and almost twice as likely to consider becoming a foster parent.

<https://cafo.org/> (Christian Alliance for Orphans)

- Christian giving to orphan care has grown roughly 3X faster than all charitable giving by Americans – 4 years in a row!

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-foster-care-became-christian-priority-just-time/>

- 437,000 kids are in foster care in the US
- The Church has responded to these needs by starting many recent faith-based agencies:
 - <https://www.project127.org/>
 - <https://thecallinarkansas.org/>
 - <https://www.4kids.us/>
 - <https://promise686.org/overview/>
 - <https://www.111project.org/>
 - <https://www.orphancarealliance.org/>
 - <https://safe-families.org/>
 - <https://www.waitnomore.org/> (Focus on the Family)

The Church's Responsibility with Respect to the Issue of Abortion

First Christian Church urges that the following steps (and others like them) be implemented to provide substantial support for those impacted by problematic and/or unexpected pregnancies:

- Provide compassionate guidance to a woman facing a problematic or unexpected pregnancy.
- Counsel the man involved regarding his personal responsibilities and obligations as the father.
- Come alongside the woman who chooses life and seek ways to support and care for the child.
- Support para-church ministries and faith-based agencies that promote adoption and foster care.
- Personally be engaged in adoptive and foster care in ways that fit with your personal resources.
- Compassionately minister to those who have had abortions or supported abortions (John 6:37).
- Pray earnestly for God's intervention, wisdom and courage to stop abortion.
- Teach that abortion should never be used as a convenience or a means of birth control.

- Vote for and support political candidates who fight for legislation to protect the unborn.
- Work through legislative and governmental agencies to oppose the destruction of life.
- Exert influence only in peaceable ways consistent with scriptural principles (1 Peter 2:11,12).

Conclusion

This paper cannot possibly address every single issue or dilemma that may arise. In rare and unusual circumstances where the Bible does not speak directly, affected individuals ought to prayerfully seek godly counsel from the Elders of the church and the guidance of the Spirit of God. All persons must finally give account to God for any actions that rob others of life, health, or dignity. With these eternal issues in view, First Christian Church intends to be both a witness to the truth of Christ and a healing and redemptive agency to assist, through its numerous ministries, those who may be caught in these dilemmas.