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Is It Wrong for Pro-Lifers to Get Between a Woman and Her Doctor?

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#STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about ways to respond to the pro-choice slogan about “not getting between a woman and her doctor,” how we can blame a woman who aborts her own child if God is sovereign over miscarriage, and how to reconcile Psalm 139:13–16 with congenital disorders in babies.

* What are some good ways to respond to the pro-choice slogan about “not getting between a woman and her doctor”?

* If God is sovereign over miscarriage, then how can he blame a woman who aborts her own child?

* How can we reconcile Psalm 139:13–16 with the presence of congenital disorders in some babies?

Transcript

This is Amy Hall, and you're listening to Stand to Reason's hashtag, S-T-R-S-C-Podcast. And with me is Greg Gugel. Yes, hi, Amy.

Hi, Greg. All right, this first question comes from E. Fudd. Wait, E. F. Elmer? This is Elmer.

Okay, would you say E. Yes, this is... This isn't E. Fudd's first question, but I don't think he's asked a question in a while, so nice to hear from you again, E. Fudd. Okay, the latest pro-abortion euphemism is quote, not getting between a woman and her doctor. What are some good ways to break down this assertion? Okay, so I'm going to have to think about this a little bit.

Well, whenever you deal with a slogan like this, and I have to remind myself of this, you always want to ask a clarification question. What do you mean? Not getting between a woman and her doctor. Okay? To me, just as an aside, this is like saying, if you are getting between a person, a patron, and his banker, when you're robbing a bank.

No, robbing, don't interfere with robbing a bank. You're getting in between the patron and his banker. It's a silly statement, right? So when you have slogans that really turn out to be silly, you're getting in between a woman and her doctor.

Yeah. We are trying to prevent the doctor from killing her baby. I guess that's the way you could put it.

So, the first step is always going to be, I'm not sure what you mean. And then make the other person explain it. Okay? And the reason you do that is slogans have power because of a certain rhythm that they have or a rhetorical element that they have.

And when people are forced to explain the meaning of the slogan, they lose that rhetorical element. Okay? So, and that certain kind of rhythm, what do you mean? Well, I don't know what they'd say. I mean, I was trying to imagine.

They might say, well, you're saying a doctor cannot do a certain procedure on a woman. Really? Is that what I'm saying? Isn't there more involved here? Is it just the woman that the procedure is being done on? Another question. So, just clarification.

Well, what does abortion do? Well, abortion, you know, kills a fetus. Okay. So, what we have is one human being, the mother and another human being in the fetal stage, right? Right.

So, what we're talking about now is not getting between a doctor and a woman and a doctor. It's getting between the doctor and the unborn child the doctor wants to kill. So now all you're doing so far is clarifying.

That's all you're doing. And once you clarify these things, but by asking these kinds of questions, getting information from someone, now you're getting, you're taking the, taking the, the, um, the gill off of the slogan. There's lots of slogans that, you know, are like that.

They just, people are saying these things. And, and they, they have rhetorical force, but when you ask for explanation, then they lose their rhetorical force. And this is true of lots and lots of um, uh, pro-abortion kinds of things.

Like for example, they might ask you a question, don't you think a woman has a right to choose? And my response is, well, let me ask you a question first. Do you think a woman has a right to take? And they're going to say, take what? I say exactly. It depends on what they're taking, whether or not they have a right to take it.

And it depends on what they are choosing in order to, in order to determine where they have a right to choose. So when you say a woman has a right to choose, what is it you're saying she has a right to choose? Oh, she has a right to choose an abortion. Okay.

And what is an abortion? Well, that's we terminate a pregnancy. What does that mean? Notice these are all euphemisms. What does that mean? Well, you end the pregnancy.

How do you end the pregnancy? How does any pregnancy end? One of two ways, either birth or death. That's how our pregnancy ends. Now, birth isn't in view here.

Death isn't view. Okay. So are you saying that a woman should have the right to choose the death of her child? Now you've taken all the guild off of it, right? Oh, it's not a child.

Okay. Her human offspring. You can't take a exception with that.

It is her offspring that her body is producing and it is human. That's part of the genetic code, right? So the idea here is ask questions to disarm the rhetorical force of the slogan that's being used. Now, if a person wants to insist you are trying to get in the way in between a woman and her doctor, I'm going to say if I had to, I'd just say you're right.

What's wrong with that? Now, if they say, well, you should never interfere with that private relationship. What if your doctor wanted to perform a clitoric to me on your daughter? Do you think somebody should have a right to get in the way of him sexually mutilating your daughter? Well, of course. All right.

Why? Well, you don't do that to, you know, I think most listeners here could follow the rationale reasoning that I'm using right here, but you're going to ask these questions to take the question. To take the glow, the glitter off of the rhetorical force of the slogan because the slogan is meant to confuse. This isn't just intervening in a relationship.

This is a protective action to keep the doctor from killing another innocent human being. That's what's at stake. Now, that's the pro-life view.

If a person disagrees with that, then they have to disagree with the pro-life view. They just can't toss out the slogan where you're getting in between a woman and her doctor. And as far as I know, that's not even a new slogan.

That goes all the way back, but there are different ways that they employ that concept now. One thing that might help as you're in a conversation like this is to keep in mind that they probably don't understand what your position is. Just just go in there with the idea in mind, my goal is going to be when I leave this conversation, I want them to understand the pro-life view.

I don't have to convince them right now, but I want them to understand my objection to abortion. So when it comes to this slogan, I think what happens is the pro-choicers think, and I don't know how sincerely they think this, but I'm sure there are some that really do sincerely think. They think that the pro-lifer is all about controlling women.

That's their only understanding. They've never heard the argument that we think this is

killing a valuable human being, and that's why we're against it. They're convinced it's because pro-lifers want to control women.

So therefore, this slogan reflects that view. If you're getting between a woman and a doctor, it's because you're trying to control her. So that's what this is promoting.

And notice, by saying and her doctor and not and the abortion or killing the child, they're playing on, as you said, Greg, the rhetorical force of our understanding of a doctor. A doctor is someone who helps us, who heals us, who is acting for our good and making sure that we're healthy and well. So everything about this slogan is meant to make us feel like the pro-lifers want to harm the woman, control her and harm her by keeping her from someone who's going to make her well and healthy.

Well, you know, it's a tremendously charitable interpretation. That's what I would say. If that's what they really believe, I think this is culpable ignorance.

Because we've been talking about this for 50 years, aggressively, since Roe v. Wade. And it's hard for me to believe that a pro-choicer is deeply convinced that this is what's going on. Now, I think they are postured that way and they talk this way all the time.

But I don't think if they were really honest with themselves, that's really what they believe that we pro-lifers are trying to control women. Well, either way, when your questions, I think, were great, Greg, to help them to understand our position and to clarify each part of that slogan so that you, like you said, you take the, what did you say, the glitter off the off of the rhetoric yell. Yeah, because then you can help them to understand what your challenge is.

So, and then finally, after you make all those, everything you suggested, Greg. I think you might ask, well, what if a woman came to her doctor and hired her doctor to kill her born child? Should I come between her woman and her doctor in that situation? Is that okay? Because there you're seeing, she's coming to her doctor for a certain reason, as you pointed out, to kill the child. Is it okay to come between them if she's hiring him to kill someone else? And so, I think all those things might help you in a conversation with a child.

That's a variation of the sled argument, which says that the unborn is vulnerable, legitimately vulnerable in light of their environment inside of the womb, not outside of the womb. And that's a trivial location is morally trivial. It's unrelated to the real moral question here.

So, that's good. Good application of that concept. All right.

Here's a question from Dan Rick. How would I respond to the challenge? Quote, if God allows or arguably is sovereign over miscarriage, which ends alive and brings sadness to a woman, how can he blame a woman who personally decides to abort her own child? I

need to go deeper than Genesis 3. Well, again, sometimes I'm a little mystified by the challenge. Okay.

God allows people to die. Let's just speak very generally here. In God's sovereignty, he's over all of that thing.

People die all the time. Since people die all the time, if some people die at my hand, because I'm angry at them and I shoot them, then how could God find fault with me? So this is just a country. Yeah.

It proves too much. Exactly. This is a taking the roof off.

And that's the tactic. And we're just taking this point of view seriously and giving it a test drive and seeing where it takes us. And if it drives us off a moral cliff, we probably started in the wrong place.

Okay. We're on the wrong route. And this is the case here.

This challenge is not even remotely appealing to me or compelling because if God will allow one kind of thing to happen, then since he allows that thing to happen in the world, then it's okay for me to cause the thing to happen. Well, God allows all kinds of evil things to happen for his own reasons, for his own purposes. That doesn't mean it's okay for us to do those evil things.

That's why we call it evil things. The logic completely escapes me on this one. Well, like you said, Greg, it applies to every death.

Now, God actually has caused everybody's death because the death is part of the curse. It's part of our punishment. Every single person dies because that is God's punishment.

That there is death, right? Yeah, that there is death. So like you said, that would prove that you can murder anybody you want. But of course it doesn't.

And part of that is there's no parallel here between God as creator and judge and us. We have our role and responsibility and authority and God has his. And there's no parallel between God bringing about people's death and a mother killing the child that she's charged with protecting.

Right, exactly. There's there's just no parallel. It's not it's it's we're talking about two different things here.

It also, I guess, shows me how strong a person's commitment is to doing the wrong thing when their attempt at justification is so shallow. This persuades the person. I have actually said this sometimes to people what I'm talking to them.

I say, that's persuasive to you. Are you kidding? Really? I mean, I'm not trying to be rude,

but really that's persuasive. Well, you you're just not thinking hard enough about this issue.

That's all you know. I think a lot of times what happens is people who aren't Christian are trying to find loopholes in Christianity to help persuade people over to a materialistic worldview to persuade them to positions that follow from a materialistic worldview. And so you do get sometimes these kind of gotcha type things that you have to think through to realize, wait a minute, this there's nothing behind this.

Well, the morality of any murder is influenced by the materialistic worldview. It's not a murder. It's just a killing.

It's not something wrong. It's just what happens in a world with there's no purpose or there's just molecules clashing in the universe, you see. All right.

So let's go into a question from Richard. How can we reconcile Psalm 139, 13 through 16 with the presence of congenital disorders in some babies? Okay. The verses then in question 13 through 16 for you formed my inward parts.

By the way, this is a psalm about God's omnipotence. I'm sorry, omnipresence and his omniscience. He is personally consciously aware of every place and he knows everything.

And the verse says, you formed my inward parts. You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works. And my soul knows it very well. It's 14.

I got to turn the page here. My frame was hidden from you when I was made in secret and skillfully wrought. I was not in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes have seen my informed substance and your book in your book were written the days that were ordained to be when as yet there was not one of them. Now, I think what one has to keep in mind here is that this is a poem. All right.

So in poetry, there's a certain license that's taken with language to make broad general points that you cannot read with a wooden literality. So when I read the beginning here and it says, you formed my inward parts. You wove me in my mother's womb.

I don't think that David or the psalmist here is asserting that God is actively constructing each individual in the womb. So when a woman gets pregnant, it's God who's putting the cells together and building the body inside of her womb. So there's a biological process that God has ordained, very complex, obviously designed that God has ordained for that to happen.

And I think that's what the psalmist is referring to. This is an incredibly complex

enterprise that you that you are intimately aware of and intimately aware, not of just the process biologically, such that we acknowledge your ownership of the disease. And that's the concept of the design and process.

So we know it to be a biological process. But you also have an intimate awareness of the individual who is being formed in that womb. And it's a reflection on how amazing and wonderful the work is.

By the way, this is the case. It's obviously the case. Anybody who watches a birth cannot not be moved by it.

It's overwhelming. The ones I've seen, I've choked up in tears because it's just such a powerful thing to see happen. What a miracle people will often say is the miracle of birth.

And so that's what's being captured here and that God is the one responsible for this wonderful thing. Now, of course, this is in the context of a fallen world. So even though God's hand is evident in the process of making new individual and that individual is fully, in a certain sense, exposed to God's awareness from the moment of their existence.

He knows us. He has seen our unformed substance. The days in your book were written all the days that were ordained for me.

So there's a personal sense that God knows me. And I think that's what the solvus is getting after here. He's not saying that God is actually constructing each individual in the womb of the mother in a mechanistic way such that those who are born with congenital defects, well, those defects are constructed by God in the womb.

I think it's a misunderstanding of the genre, poetry here, and the point, the broader point that's being made. And the nice thing is that point applies equally to someone who has some sort of disability. And the idea is you are deeply known.

You weren't forgotten by God. God didn't forget you. It wasn't that you were just randomly, you know, have this problem and God doesn't know you and doesn't love you and doesn't deeply know you.

So even if God is not, you know, constructing someone with a disability, he's still sovereign over it. And so I think even in the sense that, I mean, in that sense, he is constructing them because he's sovereign over the whole process. But it's a slightly different sense.

It's more like when I think about, I think it's John 9 with the man who was born blind. And the disciples say, well, why was he born blind? Was it his son or was it his parents' son? And Jesus says neither. It was for the glory of God.

It was so that he could reveal himself to the world. And this man, because of his

disability, was able to help reveal God to the world, reveal Jesus to the world in a way that we're still blessed by it today. We read the story.

We see Jesus revealed because of this man's disability. So there's never going to be no purpose. It's never going to be wasted.

And it's never because God just doesn't care. And so you have to put all of these things together to understand kind of how God's sovereignty plays into this. And I can imagine there are people thinking, well, that's why would I want, you know, that's not fair.

Why is God, why was this man born blind for God's glory? Well, the truth is it wasn't just God's glory. It was also this man's good because participating in that was also for his good. God is working all things together for the good of his people.

He's making them like Jesus. And he's working in everyone's life. And the question is, do you think God's worth it or do you not? If you don't think God's worth it, then hearing that it's for God's glory is really not going to impress you very much.

So if that's your reaction, I encourage you to learn more about God because when you see him as he is, you'll see that this, the man born blind was blessed by that. He played a very important role that was, you know, being part of that was an incredible thing for him and for the world and for God's glory. And plus they were arguably, arguably at least, eternal consequences to that because this miracle happening to him was very compelling, I'm sure, for him to follow Jesus.

And I think there's narrative that follows that indicates that. And so he became a believer and therefore healed in a much more profound sense. Yeah.

Well, thank you for your questions. Richard and Derek and Eve Fudd. We appreciate hearing from you.

Send us your question on Twitter with the hashtag STRS or go through our website. And we look forward to hearing from you. This is Amy Hall and Greg Cogle for Stand to Reason.

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