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What's the Controversy if Aborted Fetuses Go to Heaven?

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#STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about why abortion is controversial if aborted fetuses go to Heaven and whether Americans will become largely pro-life after Roe v. Wade is reversed since they tend to connect legality with morality.

* Do aborted fetuses, no matter the stage of embryonic development, go to Heaven, and if so, what's the controversy?

* Will Americans become largely pro-life after Roe v. Wade is reversed since they tend to connect legality with morality?

Transcript

[Music] This is Amy Hall. I'm here with Greg Koukl and you're listening to Stantereasons. #STRaskPodcast.

Amy. Hi, Greg. All right.

We have a couple questions about abortion today and one of them is actually about Roe and so I just wanted to let people know that we're actually recording this a little bit early since you'll be on vacation. First to June. Oh, actually it's still May now of the 31st, so for the record.

So it could be that by the time this airs, we will know what has happened with Roe. So just so you're aware, listener, that we will be discussing this without knowing how that turned out. All right, Greg.

The first question comes from this is America. Do aborted fetuses, no matter the stage of embryonic development, go to heaven? If so, then what's the Controversy? If not, then why not? Well, this is a variation of a question we've answered before and there's actually two questions here and that is what is the fate of human beings who die before the age of accountability. Now, I'm choosing in my words carefully.

I'm not saying people or persons because these are rhetorically vague terms that are used illicitly, I think, to disqualify a certain class of human being from being bona fide members of the human family, okay, or human community, rather. They are already the human family, but not necessarily the human community. Just like during slavery, human beings were disqualified as being protected members of the human community.

So when does a human being become a human being when that human being becomes? It's true of any kind of being. They are what they are when they come into existence and when is that? That is that conception. Where's that in the Bible? It's not in the Bible, it's in science.

It's pretty straightforward. What's in the Bible is those human beings that exist as humans are made in God's image. We learn that each individual comes into existence when a sperm and a cell, part of being a unite to form a zygote.

That is the first moment of that individual's life and it continues to be that same individual throughout his or her entire life. All that changes is what that individual looks like as it develops naturally from one face to the other. By the way, that's not limited to what happens inside the womb.

That is true our entire lives. So when you think about it, there are four different times in life broadly where you look nothing like you do it other times of your life. When you're born, when you're a high schooler, when you're an adult and when you're an old person.

That's because living things change their appearance without changing what they are. It's the nature of living things. That's all to make the point that the unborn are humans at every stage of their existence and therefore made in the image of God and are therefore valuable.

The passage through the birth canal is not a metaphysically significant event. What is the difference between being inside the birth canal and outside of the birth canal? It's just a change of location. The individual is exactly the same just a couple minutes before as it is a couple of minutes after.

When the transition takes place, it's a change of location. This is all largely common sense. It shouldn't require heavy argumentation.

It's pretty straightforward. By the way, we know this. This is why "When is your baby due?" is a common question asked of pregnant women.

"When is your baby due?" Well, the baby kicked me today. I felt my baby move. This is a common acknowledgement of a common sense reality that the human child inside the womb is just growing and developing before it makes he or she makes their grand appearance on their birthday.

That should be without controversy. The question, theologically, is what happens to any unborn or postborn individual who doesn't survive long enough to be able to figure out right and wrong and all that other stuff? The Bible does not address this issue, but there are some indications that we've talked about this before that it's not until a child can understand right and wrong that any right and wrong issues can be attributed to their account, so to speak. They don't get praised or blamed.

In either case, if they can't make the distinction between right and wrong, and this happens sometime as they're going up, and I don't know when that is, and we can figure some things out, maybe, but it's a speculation. The important thing is God knows. Before a child does right or wrong, my view is, and it's not an uncommon view, is that if they die, they are saved by the grace of God regarding original sin, but they haven't committed any sins themselves.

If you look at Revelation chapter 20, the great judgment there, the judgment is made on the basis of the deeds that people have done. Children haven't done any moral deeds. They can't make the distinction there.

Children, younger ones, certainly not the unborn, and therefore, there are no moral crimes against their account, and by God's grace, then I think He takes them to heaven. That's my conviction, and I have some reasons, but I could be mistaken about that, because the Bible doesn't speak directly. But this then brings us to the next point.

The question is, well, if the unborn are human beings, made the image of God, and who go to heaven immediately, if there's a miscarriage, say, then what's the problem with abortion? Okay? That's the second part of the question. So I'm just going to move the date here forward a little bit to help people see the implication of their question. Okay? If a six-month-old baby dies and goes to heaven, what's the problem with infanticide? Now, I think the person who asked this first question, when counting and seeing infanticide will say, well, that's just wrong.

You don't kill a baby to get them into heaven. Yes, exactly. Even though the end is appealing, the means is not appropriate.

And in moral actions, there are always relationships between means and ends. You can have a good end and a bad means. You can have a bad means and a good end.

In order to have a good act, it has to be a good end and a good means. Okay? Just because some people, like myself are convinced that children or embryos who are boarded or miscarried go directly to heaven doesn't mean it is appropriate for me to take action against that embryo, that fetus, or that six-month-old to guarantee they get into heaven. That's God's business.

It isn't mine. In the image of God, God created man. And this is the reason why if you

shed man's blood by man, your blood shall be shed.

Now, this is Genesis 9-6. Very early, God initiates capital punishment as a punishment for taking an image-bearer. You take an image-bearer's life, you sacrifice your life in return.

That's lexically onus. That's an ifertion, a two-foot chute. That is the punishment is fitting to the crime there.

Okay? I don't know why it would make any difference if that human being in view is a six-month-old human being, which I hope at least every Christian person would acknowledge that that's wrong. I don't see the difference between that and a six-month-old fetus, same human being in question here, just different stage of development, that's all. And if it's wrong in the first case, it's wrong in the second place, all for the same reason that it is... We don't try to guarantee people getting into heaven by murdering them.

Duh. You don't even have to stop at the six-month-old. If you apply this principle to everyone, then it should be legal to kill Christians.

What's the controversy? That's right. They're going to heaven. Why should I care if you kill Christians? Especially if you're a minion and you think maybe allowing the line, they might lose their salvation.

When you're pretty convinced they got their salvation, let's knock them out, take them out, get them into heaven, sign-sealed and delivered, right? I think this... I always try to figure out why somebody would think this would be persuasive to a Christian. There are a lot of misunderstandings about who God is and our relationship to him, because what this comes across to me like is manipulating God, as if there's some sort of a loophole. Hey, there's a loophole.

You're wasting all your time telling people about Jesus when you could just be killing babies. And that's not how it works. First of all, we don't presume on God's grace.

I don't know that any baby that is saved is purely by God's grace, as you said, Greg. We should never presume on that and assume that, "Okay, we found a loophole, so now we can save ourselves a lot of time and just in their lives." We don't need apologetics. That's not how God has set up the world.

It is such an evil to say that we would send people to heaven by murdering them. Hopefully, if you're a Christian out there and you're listening to this, even if you can't explain why that's wrong, you can immediately think that doesn't seem right to me at all, because it's not right. We are, as you said, Greg, there are means that God has set the world up in a certain way for a reason.

We give the gospel for a reason. We're glorifying God. He's working in the world.

Our goal isn't simply to send people to heaven. It's to live out our lives in a way that honors God and promotes His kingdom. There's a lot more going on here, and God is not just someone who could be manipulated with loopholes.

That's a great way to put it. Let's go to a second question about abortion, Greg. This one is from Alo Kansen.

"Will Americans become largely pro-life after Roe v. Wade has reversed since most Americans regard the legality of an action as a proxy for its morality/virtue/goodness?" Well, it's hard to tell the impact it's going to have. I agree with the concept, have written about this, in fact, that the law is a tutor for us to form our conscience. This is why we train kids to do right, and we punish them if they do wrong.

We reward them to do right because we're trying to train their conscience about what is right and what is wrong. If it works for children, I don't see why it can't work for society. There is going to be a contingent that are never going to give up on this, because they are not interested in what is right and true and good.

They are interested in doing what they want. When a moral argument supports or can be seen to support what they really want, then they're going to use that. But when you show them that their moral justification is not any good, like in this situation, then they don't abandon their view about a portion to adopt what's good and right and true.

They just find some other kind of shallow justification for doing what they really want to do to begin with. If they can't find any justification, then they'll still do it. They say, "Okay, so I'm killing a human being, and blah, blah.

I'm going to do it anyway." The air is filled with rhetoric by pro-abortion people who are coming up with some shallow, vacuous justification for the righteousness of abortion. I just read one recently. I'm going to talk about it on the show later today, but just to read it turns your stomach.

Abortion is an act of love was the conclusion of this particular person. It's just bizarre. It's an act of love towards the child to kill the child.

There are actually a number of arguments that are advanced for abortion that are like this. The child's not going to be happy. It's unwanted.

Let's kill the child through abortion so it doesn't grow unhappy because it's unwanted. There's another variation of that. Of course, the only reason that the child would be unhappy is if the parents who didn't want the child treated the child poorly.

The lack of virtue was on the side of the parents. That's the problem here. Parents are

saying, "Well, I'm going to treat this kid terribly, and they're going to be miserable, so I might as well just kill them now." It's nonsense.

It's utter foolishness. But these are the kinds of things that people advance. Those kinds of people who advance, those kinds of arguments are never going to be persuaded.

They're just going to be angry. That's why maybe now as a matter of record, all kinds of violence has been committed against pro-life churches or organizations or crisis pregnancy centers or whatever in virtue of the change in the legal status of abortion to the reverse or *Roe v. Wade*, presuming that's what happens. But I know right now that that's already been happening in anticipation of it.

The violence against pro-life churches, for example. This is their response. This is the way that side responds.

It's our way or the highway. And if we don't get our way, even if we can't sanitize it with silly arguments, we are just going to take it. And if you take it from us, you're going to pay for doing that.

We're going to brutalize you. We're going to burn things. We're going to bomb things.

We're going to blow things up. We're going to hurt people. That's the way they work.

That is what they're committed to. They are not committed to virtuous things on balance. Now, there is the mushy middle.

The mushy middle doesn't know how to think about this. And so, if the law gets changed, then the mushy middle is going to be informed, I think to some degree, by the fact that it's probably not right if it's illegal and that will help educate their opinions. But the best way to educate their opinions is to help people see why it's wrong.

And therefore, ought not to be illegal. So they have some substance to it. I think a well, what I suspect is going on with the people who are reacting so intensely, I think a lot of this has to do with guilt.

I think people have had abortions and they've justified that in their minds. And anytime you have society, if they lose the support of society, they have to face the truth about what they've done. And that is impossible.

When I try to imagine trying to make my peace with that without the gospel, I couldn't even imagine how people would do that. And I think a lot of what's happening right now, the reaction has to do with that. Possibly even more than the fact that they won't have abortions in the future.

I think they have to protect this justification in their mind of societal approval. And so what I suspect will happen is as time goes on, and there are fewer people who have had

abortions, I think people will be more open to seeing the truth about it. Yeah, and it's interesting.

And we've seen, I mean, just think about slavery. Surely, I mean, there was obviously a very intense reaction at the beginning with people who did not agree that it was wrong. But of course, now all of our consciences are informed by the laws against slavery.

And you don't have anyone who's defending it because it's there. They have a personal stake in it. So both of those things.

Which is the way it was originally done. There's a personal stake in keeping blacks as slaves. I mean, this is the arguments that Lincoln had to deal with when debating this particular issue and the only condugless debates, for example.

And I'm sure there was guilt involved there too. You can't have people telling you that what you're doing is wrong. You can't admit that to yourself.

So you have to fight tooth and nail to keep the people enslaved and keep people believing that they're not valuable human beings. So I think both those things together, that the law will over time convince people, but partly because people will stop feeling the need to justify themselves as time goes on. And this is why I love that live training institute speaks to so many young people because I think we need to convince them before they start trying to justify actions they've already taken.

Oh, yeah. Yeah. LTI Scott Cluesdorf's organization, Scott, was eight years with us and then launched out his own enterprise and does a magnificent job.

Training up teachers and speakers make it all one of his team has spoken for us a number of times. So, yeah, that's right. We have to get the word out.

We have to do the training. And incidentally, this is another one of those issues that there's not hard biblically because if you look at Luke chapter one, there is John the Baptist in the second trimester, leaping with joy in his mother's womb because he's in the presence of Jesus, who is as I go inside of Mary. And one last thing, Greg, when you mentioned the, I don't know if that's an Instagram or a tweet that you mentioned where somebody was saying that they were doing the baby, they were doing good for the baby by killing them.

That reminds me of our last episode where we were talking about how love is informed by the truth that God's already revealed. That's right. By the law.

That's right. So we know because of the law, because of what God has said about the truth about morality, that it's not loving to kill someone. So again, when we start making up these ideas, well, apparently it's not that clear to people.

This is an example to me of a satanic scheme, vision six, where things are completely upside down and people just don't see it. And this is why, and this is just an encouragement to all those who are listening, we have to inform our consciences with the truth. That's right.

And that's what it says. I, is this, now I can't remember if it's Romans 12, which is the verse where it talks about how you renew your mind so that you can prove the will of God so you can know what the will of God is. That's through Romans 12 chapter chapter 12 verse one and two.

That's how we do it. Yeah. That's how the way we know right for wrong is by reading God's revealed word, seeing who he is, seeing his commands to us, the commands define love.

Well, I'm amazed at Amy is that I know where that verse is in Romans. Well, I wasn't sure. I wasn't sure if it was Romans 12, where there's another, there's another verse, I think in Hebrews that, and so I wasn't sure which one it was.

Oh, the Hebrews chapter, the end of chapter five beginning six, heaven, our senses trained. That might be, yeah. That's right.

So I, but, but that's the one I was thinking of was the one where it says you renew your mind so that you can know what the will of God is in terms of knowing what's right and wrong. Good and right and true. That's perfect as the way it puts it.

Yeah. And we are all in danger. If we do not do this, we're all in danger of hearing these, these arguments for things like killing your baby.

And we are following people. We cannot trust our own ideas about how to help people. I mean, to a certain extent, we can, but we can be easily swayed if it's in our interest.

Right. That's it. The self-interest part, and there's two aspects of it.

One of them is if, if you're the pregnant person who is facing a problem and now your self-interest is influencing your judgment on this, but there are also a self-interest. If you're not, when you have friends that are so pro-abortion, they're going to really give you trouble if you're pro-life. And this is what we face even now.

I don't even, where we sit on the timeline, we don't know yet what the official decision will be from SCOTUS. But we, you know, just the intimation that maybe Roe would be overturned is created all kinds of hostility towards pro-lifers in the public square. And so that's a hostility.

A lot of people, just Christians are not willing to live with when they should be counting it all joy. Jesus, Matthew 5, counted all joy when you experience persecution. You know, I

look at, I'm not saying this glidly.

I know that it's not easy to do that, but I'm trying, this is where, as you pointed out, Amy, our lives need to be informed by what the truth says, which is why I campaigned continually for reading through the whole Bible and then starting over again. In your whole life, you're just working through the Bible over and over and over again to get the full counsel of God. And I will say specifically, two books focus almost entirely on persevering in its Hebrews and 1 Peter.

And I had never really noticed before how much Hebrews is focused. That is the entire focus of Hebrews. And it's based on the idea that, look, Jesus persevered.

He did not give into temptation to walk away from the will of God. And so we need to do the same thing. And it's, the whole thing is an argument for that.

Not walking away from Jesus when you are persecuted or you're hurt. So those two books, I would recommend for anyone who wants to think more deeply about persevering and not giving into the temptation to walk away from God. Well, thank you for your questions.

We love hearing from you. We need to hear from you. So make sure you send those in on Twitter with the hashtag #STRask.

This is Amy Hall and Greg Cogle for a Stand to Reason.