

OVERVIEW

*Looking at ABORTION
through the lens of 2 John*

1. Jesus' command his followers to to follow his **example** of love for all whom God loves.
2. The **test** of that love is in the way they love those who 1) are not like them, 2) disagree with them, or 3) do not love them or God.
3. The world can **deceive** the heart and draw it away from the wisdom of Jesus and the Way of the Cross.

1

2 John 7-9

“7 For many **deceivers** have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 **Watch yourselves**, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. 9 **Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God**; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.”

***Don't let the world define
(agape) LOVE or (kingdom) LIFE.***

2

2 Peter 3

“17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard so that you are not carried away** by the error of unscrupulous people and lose your own firm commitment, 18 but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

***Is the white, evangelical, church
deceived, divided, & discredited
having redefined Christ's Love
and Kingdom Life?***

3

Lets talk about “abortion”. Did you know?

Spontaneous (natural) abortions (miscarriages) take place in 30-40% of pregnancies.

Induced abortions have long been practiced before quickening, 4th - 6th month of pregnancy. They were rare after that.

Opposition to abortion, including anti-abortion laws, came into being in the 19th century. Illegal abortions in the 1st two trimesters led to “back alley” procedures that resulted in the deaths of many women.

Roe v. Wade was concerned with 1) unsafe, “back ally” abortions and 2) clarifying the domain of authority to make the choice to abort a fetus.

Reversing Roe v. Wade does not eliminate abortions but returns the issue to the states, resurrecting a lot of the old problems.

4

Clarification #1

***Abortion became a hot button politically
for white evangelicals in the 1970s.***

“The Southern Baptist Convention passed resolutions in 1971, 1974 and 1976 - after Roe v. Wade - affirming the idea that women should have access to abortion for a variety of reasons and that the government should play a limited role in the matter.”

***Liberal abortion laws were used to
manipulate, for political reasons,
Roman Catholic and white evangelical
fears to consolidate conservative voters.
(Richard Nixon, Paul Weyrich)***

Rund Abdelfatah
Host/Producer, Throughline

5

Clarification #2

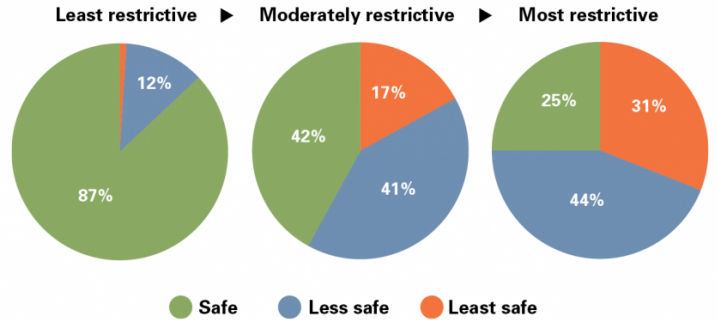
Roe v. Wade was presented as a woman's health issue.

- Under English common law, the cornerstone of American jurisprudence, abortions performed prior to "quickening" (4th month) were legal.
- By 1900 nearly all states had made abortions illegal because they were deemed unsafe for the women.
- By the 1960's abortions were legal under restricted circumstances in 16 states.

Roe v. Wade was a response to a women's health issue - "back ally" abortions.



Legal restrictions decrease mothers' safety in having an abortion.

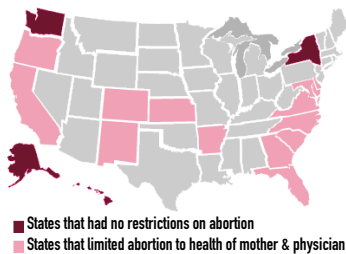


Clarification #3

Roe v. Wade was presented as a woman's rights issue.

- It did not address the ethics of abortion but rather the domain for decisions about abortion - federal or state / individual.

Roe v. Wade took the decision to abort away from individual states based on an assumption of "privacy" in the constitution.



Clarification #4

Roe v. Wade was intended to - protect the right of the woman's choice before "viability".

The Court said:

Before the child can survive outside the womb, the woman's right to abort outweighs the state's interest in the civil rights of the prenatal child.



Clarification #5

Roe v. Wade let each state govern the rights of the unborn child's life after "viability".



The Court said:

From the point of viability, the state's interest in prenatal life outweighs the mother's liberty interest (choice in abortion).

The Court ruled:

Before the point of viability, the state cannot ban abortions but after the point of viability, it can.

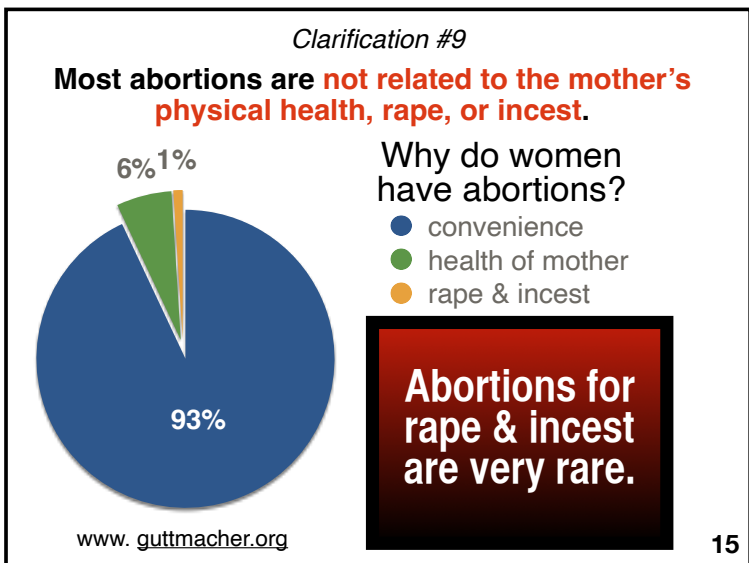
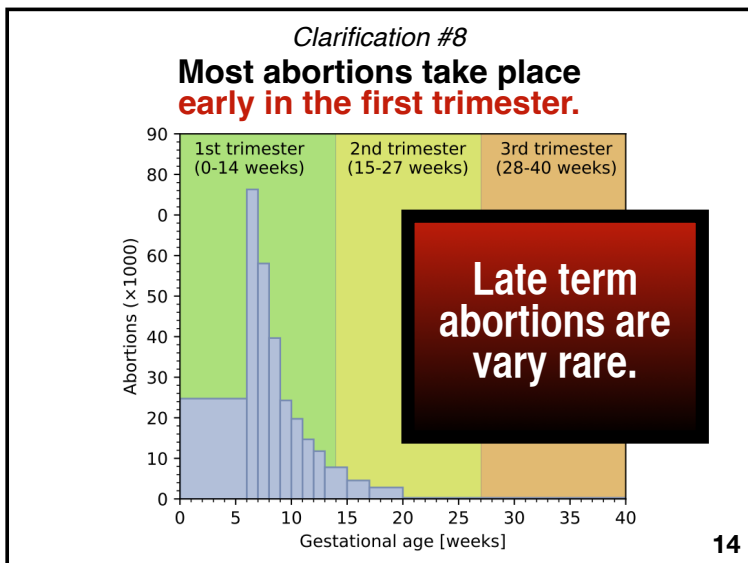
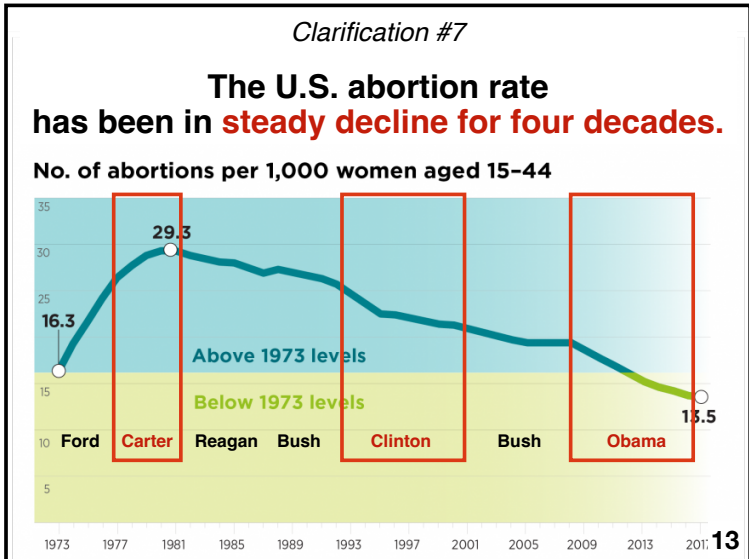
Clarification #6

North Carolina abortion laws as of Jan. 2021:

<https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-about-abortion-north-carolina>

- A patient must receive **state-directed counseling** that includes information designed to discourage the patient from having an abortion, and then wait 72 hours before the procedure is provided.
- Health plans offered in the **state's health exchange** under the Affordable Care Act can only cover abortion in cases of life endangerment, or in cases of rape or incest.
- Abortion is **covered in insurance policies** for public employees only in cases of life endangerment, rape or incest.

- The use of telemedicine to administer **medication abortion** is prohibited.
- The **parent of a minor** must consent before an abortion is provided.
- **Public funding** is available for abortion only in cases of life endangerment, rape or incest.
- A patient must undergo an **ultrasound** before obtaining an abortion.
- An abortion may be performed **at or after viability** only in cases of life endangerment or severely compromised health.
- The state prohibits abortions performed for the purpose of **sex selection**.
- The state requires **abortion clinics to meet standards** related to their physical plant, equipment and staffing. 12



Clarification #10

Scripture's teaching on prenatal life gives us hints but not dogma?

Psalms 139:13

“For Thou didst **form** my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.”

Isaiah 44:24

“Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and the one who **formed** you from the womb.

Poetic language is not intended to describe life scientifically.
(days of creation, hand of God, streets of gold, eternity, sun standing still, etc.)

16

Genesis 2:7

“Then the Lord God **formed** man of dust from the ground, and **breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life; and man **became** a living being (soul).

This passage suggests that the physical body was formed and distinct from its anointing as a living soul.

Zechariah 12:1

“Thus declares the Lord who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and **forms the spirit of man within him.**”

17

“Man is clay personally fashioned by God animated by breath manifesting the life of God, and in God’s image as a spiritual, rational, moral being.”



Bruce Waltke

- “Formed” is a Hebrew term used of a **potter molding a pot from clay**. It is a process but not a pot until it is fully formed.

Job 10:9

“Remember now that You have made me as clay; and would You turn me into dust again?”

- **When does a lump of clay become a pot? When it is able to function as a pot. (viability?)**
- **This suggests to some, that a human person’s development is a process that becomes a human person at viability.**

“Few now hold that there is a significant biological distinction between the late-term fetus and the newborn.”



Robertson McQuilkin

“It is impossible to prove conclusively from Scripture that the zygote or embryo is an immortal soul.”

Exodus 21

“22 If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that a **miscarriage** results, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman’s husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide. 23 But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life,”



- Does “miscarriage” = “**Give birth prematurely**” or “**still birth**”?
- Do different penalties for the death of the mother and miscarried child suggest that a fetus is not valued like the mother?

Exodus 21:22–23

Ancient Jewish interpretation relates this passage to a “miscarriage”, suggesting “God does not regard the fetus as a soul because of the penalty of a fine rather than death.

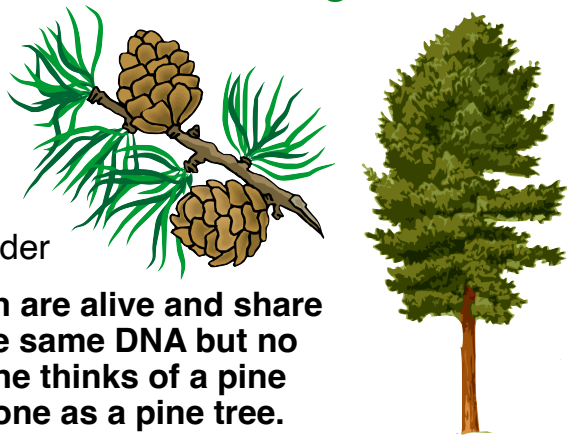
While the majority of scholars tend to read the text in this way, some modern scholars see it as referring to a “premature birth”.

Its meaning is uncertain.

Common sense suggests to some that the fetus is not a full person.

- ✓ Our age is marked by our “**birthday**” not “conception.”
- ✓ We celebrate **Jesus’ birth** not his conception.
- ✓ A mother is not considered a **mother** until after the birth.
- ✓ There are few **memorial services** for the 30-40% pregnancies that are spontaneously miscarried.
- ✓ **Twinning** occurs between the 10th and 14th day after fertilization. Does this mean that twins have 1/2 a soul?

What are the laws of nature and nature's god?



Consider

Both are alive and share the same DNA but no one thinks of a pine cone as a pine tree.

24

Clarification #11

Abortion was specifically forbidden in some early Christian documents (though not in Scripture).

“You shall not **slay the child by abortions (phtora)**. You shall not kill what is generated.” *Didache 2:2 (late 1st century)*

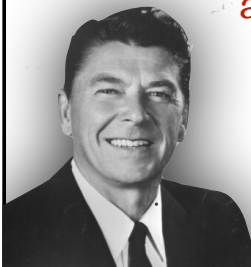
“You shall love your neighbor more than your own life. You shall not **slay the child by abortions**. You shall not kill what is generated.” *Barnabas 19.5.*

- St. Augustine canonized anti abortion as law in the 4th cent.
- Abortion was generally forbidden throughout much of church history (with debate about the exceptions in application).

25

“Anyone who doesn't feel sure whether we are talking about a human life should clearly give life the benefit of the doubt.

If you don't know whether a body is alive or dead, you would never bury it.”



Ronald Reagan

26

Roe v. Wade made sense to many Christians, in light of the broad cultural context?

Matthew 19

“7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?” 8 He said to them, “**Because of your hardness of heart, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.**”

What should we expect to tolerate in a pluralistic nation?

Matthew 22:21

“render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's.”

27

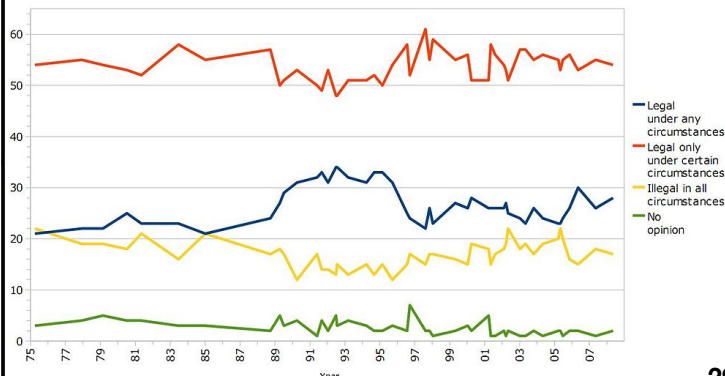
Roe v. Wade was a popular hybrid.

	Pro life	Hybrid	Pro choice
When does biological life begin?	Conception	Conception	Conception
When is that life a person?	Conception	Viability	Birth
When should the Law intervene?	Protect fetal life from conception to birth.	Protect right of women only before viability.	Protect right of women to choose before birth.

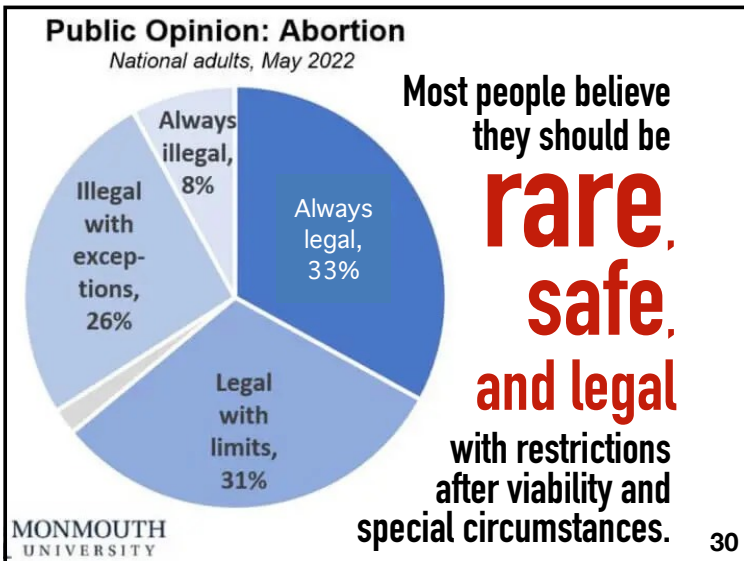
28

Clarification #12

Most Americans favor legal abortion with restrictions.



29



Some Christians see Roe v. Wade as a wise and reasonable policy in our culture.

- The health of the woman is protected.
- The dignity of the prenatal baby is left to the states.

Abortion permitted in restricted circumstances.

- Abortion should be rare, safe, legal (under conditions).
- All abortions are not necessarily murder.
- Abortion should not be justified in the following cases.
 - after viability (with very few exceptions)
 - as a means of birth control (after the fact)
 - for population control
 - for anticipated deformities

31

Three points of debate:

Respect for human life - (honoring the "image of God")
At what point do the unborn become human persons (with civil rights)?

Respect for civil discourse - (promoting civility as peacemakers)
What is our responsibility to promote peace?

Respect for political legislation - (rendering to Caesar as aliens)
What should be the law in a pluralistic society?

32

As Christians we carry a cross to a banquet.

- We acknowledge the ambiguity of Scripture, on abortion, while erring on the side of pro-life.
- We, with humility and love, seek wisdom as we work with those who disagree with us.
- We support laws that respect the complex stresses within a broken national culture.

A sermon for cross bearers
<https://newdenver.org/sundays/#messages>

33

