**Abortion - Murder or Mercy?**

In recent months the head of the midwives’ union, Cathy Warwick, caused controversy by stating that abortions should be allowed to be performed at full term. In other words, a baby could be aborted right up to the hour before its natural birth. This controversy has become a catalyst for bringing this subject into the light, by examining it through the lens of God’s word, to consider whether abortion is an act of mercy, or simply murder in disguise. The secular worldview is reinforced by such statements as:

*The BPAS’s “We Trust Women” campaign was launched in February and proposes, “the abortion time limit be removed from criminal law”.*

*RCM Chief Executive, Cathy Warwick, has come out in support of a campaign calling for abortion to be completely decriminalised and for the 24 week abortion limit to be “relegated to history”.*

*Royal College of Midwives backs abolition of abortion law that could see women terminate unborn child at any point*

The Emmaus Group doesn’t seek to judge or condemn, but we do seek to honour God’s word by highlighting His view on children, who are described as ‘gifts of God.’ On the Day of Judgment, man’s ideas and thoughts on this subject will count for nothing when weighed against God’s. For He is a God of justice, who sits upon His throne in the kingdom of heaven, and kingdoms are not democracies! His laws, precepts and statutes are non-negotiable. So when man violates them there are consequences and if abortion is murder - there will be consequences.

Let’s remind ourselves of the sixth Commandment in which it is written “*thou shalt not murder.*” - Exodus 20:13. This refers to the specific targeted killing of an individual without cause. According to the Crown Prosecution Service, the legal definition of murder is: “where a person of sound mind unlawfully kills any reasonable creature, including a human being.” Unlawful is defined as: ‘without cause, i.e. not in self-defense or other justified killing’.

Abortion certainly cannot be said to be an act of ‘self-defense’, but can it be ‘justified’? The act itself terminates life. Yet God says: ‘thou shalt not murder’. To gain some context, the original Hebrew used is ‘lo tirtzach’ which explicitly means do not murder, rather than, thou shalt not kill as in some bible translations. In Hebraic understanding of the Torah there is a very clear distinction between murder and killing. Therefore murder is the correct word for the sixth commandment, evidenced by the use of the roots R-Tz-Ch in the world *tirtzach*.

God is saying murder is a heinous crime, an evil act, a crime that unlike others is destructive of civilisation.
Matthew Henry’s commentary states:

The sixth commandment concerns our own and our neighbour’s life: “Thou shalt not murder; thou shalt not do any thing hurtful or injurious to the health, ease, and life, of thy own body, or any other person’s unjustly.” This is one of the laws of nature, and was strongly enforced by the precepts given to Noah and his sons (Gen. 9:5-6). It does not forbid killing in lawful war, or in our own necessary defence, nor the magistrate’s putting offenders to death, for those things tend to the preserving of life; but it forbids all malice and hatred to the person of any (for he that hateth his brother is a murderer), and all personal revenge arising therefrom; also all rash anger upon sudden provocations, and hurt said or done, or aimed to be done, in passion: of this our Saviour expounds this commandment in Matt. 5:22. And, as that which is worst of all, it forbids persecution, laying wait for the blood of the innocent and excellent ones of the earth.

Note Henry’s final sentence; it forbids laying in wait for the blood of the innocent. Can there be anything more innocent than an unborn child? Is abortion by its very nature not a premeditated (laying in wait for/pre booked in the diary) act? But is an unborn child a living thing that can be murdered?

God said to Jeremiah in chapter 1, "I knew you before you were formed."

When Mary the mother of Jesus went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, the unborn John in Elizabeth, ‘leaped’ in the womb at the sound of Mary's voice and the presence of the Consolation of Israel within her. “And it happened when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb...” Luke 1:41

How did the unborn John know that the unborn Jesus was in close proximity, causing him to leap? Jeremiah 1 tells us the answer: "for I knew you before you were formed, I knitted you together in your mother’s womb." God apportioned a spirit to Jeremiah, as He did to John, and as He does all people before they are formed. Humans we know from scripture are made in the image of God with a spirit, soul and body, before birth. God knows us before we are formed and knits us together in our mother’s wombs as living beings.

"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward, like arrows in the hand of a warrior so are the children of one’s youth. Happy is the man whose quiver is full of them." - Psalm 127

"And he (Esau) lifted his eyes and saw all the women and children and said, ‘who are these with you?’ And Jacob said the children whom God has graciously given your servant.” - Genesis 33:5

Children are a heritage, a reward and a gift from God, made in His image with a spirit, soul and body.
When man and woman come together in sexual union it’s the only time in their lives they can join with God in ‘pro-creation’. Man, woman and God, jointly create another tri-partite human being in alignment with God’s purpose for mankind to;

"Be fruitful and multiply" - Genesis 1:28

Yet in contradiction to God, the Chief of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, Ann Furedi, stated on June 29th 2016 that:

“Abortion may be an act of killing - but it kills a being that has no sense of life or death, and no awareness of itself as distinct from others.”

How can you kill something that has no sense of life? She says a foetus is a ‘being’ with no life. Yet in the story of Mary greeting Elizabeth, we see this is clearly not the case otherwise John would not have leapt in the womb at Jesus arrival. Her understanding is completely divorced from God’s ways.

Never were our ancient fathers told to kill unless in acts of war or for breaking laws, and even then only as instructed by God. Yet over 95% of abortions in the UK in 2013 were carried out in order to protect the ‘mental stability’ of the mother (this particular category does not include grave danger to mental health). 81% of all abortions during this year were from single mothers. Between 2003 - 2013 only 4 abortions were actually carried out because there was grave danger to the mother’s physical or mental health.

Therefore, abortion appears to come down to decisions based around lifestyle issues such as: how will this child affect my life, my job, my mental health and my finances. It could be argued that more natural concerns count such as raising a child as a single parent, which perhaps imply a bit more forethought was needed before conceiving, especially when we know the highest abortion rate in 2013 was for 22yr olds. This self-centered mindset replicates a similar type of self-centred ambition, one that motivated the early Canaanite cultists to ‘pass their children through the fire to Moloch’.

By giving the fruits of the womb to Moloch it was believed the land itself would give back much, bringing prosperity and personal benefit. Although the context has changed the spirit behind it has perhaps not?

Moses said to the Israelites "do not do as the pagans do." Do not sacrifice your children in the fires of Moloch. Such was a wicked and detestable thing in the sight of God, and because of this atrocity, and many others, the Canaanites were ethnically cleansed and the land given over to the Israelites instead. Yet today, we sacrifice millions of children to the god of expediency and convenience - so does it not remain a wicked and detestable thing in the sight of God?
"Thou shalt not murder": this is the word of the Lord. Yet man has created a raft of mitigating excuses to justify it on medical or social grounds, but God's ways are not like ours: such pleadings of mitigation may not stand on Judgment Day. The blood of the innocents cries out from the land just as it did with Cain and Abel.

To Cain God said: "The voice of Your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand."

The shedding of innocent blood brings a curse upon the land and as we sow, so we reap. We see this evidenced in part in that the very generation who legalised abortion is now being threatened by their children who wish to legalise euthanasia against them!

Truly it has come to pass: "now brother will betray brother, a father will betray his child, and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death." - Matthew 10:21.

Friends, it's time to name abortion for what it is in God's eyes: murder. It may be an inconvenient truth for our very secular liberal world, and as Jesus said we are not to judge those 'outside' the church. However, within the body of Christ, teaching on this matter must be clear. Abortion has no place among God's people. What the world does the world will have to give account for outside of God's grace and mercy. Yet what we the people of God do, we also will have to give account for on that great and terrible day of the Lord. This message has largely been lost in days when grace is seemingly taught as a license to sin. We are saved by faith yes, but we still have to give an account.

However, there is good news! For those who through ill advice, lack of knowledge or under forced circumstances had an abortion, you can be cleansed of all unrighteousness and forgiven. For our God is faithful and true. *If we confess and repent He is faithful and true to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. Jesus died to take our guilt and shame, but we still have to bring our sin into the light and confess and repent. Even though the sin of abortion is as scarlet, it can still be washed as white as snow.

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgives our sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us..." - 1 John 1:8-10

As we draw near to the day of the Lord's return, may all sisters in Christ who have been down this path bring their actions before the Father, to receive not only forgiveness, but a much needed healing of heart and mind. And for those men (fathers) who have pressured women to having abortions, you too must bring the matter before the Lord as the culpability starts with you.
For those who had abortions as a consequence of rape and violence, it still needs bringing before the Lord, as He particularly longs to set you free from pain, guilt and shame. Therefore:

"Let him who glories glory in this, that he knows and understands Me, says the Lord, that I am the Lord, exercising loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth, for in these I delight says the Lord." Jer 9:24.

Further information:
http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns-abortion
http://plam.org

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1 http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/670674/Abortions-full-term-Royal-College-of-Midwives
2 http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/18/abortion-term-limits-demeaning-pregnant-women-royal-college-midwives
4 Psalm 127
5 Luke 2:25
6 Genesis 1:26
7 1 Thess 5:23
8 https://www.lifesitenews.com/pulse/british-abortionist-abortion-is-acceptable-killing-because-theres-no-sense
9 http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/abortion.htm