

# SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY

As we see in God's work, human life is sacred from fertilization to natural death. The fundamental, infinite value of an individual rests solely on their human identity, not on any perceived usefulness or quality of life.

While theology directs the sacredness of life, science and technology affirm life's start at conception and humanity's desire for love and acceptance.

## Human Life Is Sacred

*sacred: (adj.) to be holy; set apart*

Human beings hold a special place in the divine order.

This principle of sacredness, held to be true throughout scripture (for a list of pro-life scripture see page 1.5), is also echoed heavily within a secular framework, independent of religious context.

Social psychology holds a universal human desire to be unique, special, and different. To be set apart is a longing written on the human heart.

Natural law suggests universal tendencies in humans to nurture existence and provide for offspring, over and beyond that of other creatures.<sup>6</sup>

From the sacredness of each human person flows the reality that every human life has infinite value. Human life must be upheld, and great care must be given to the vulnerable, especially those who cannot speak for themselves.

## Sacred From Fertilization...

The sacredness of human life begins when human life begins—at fertilization.

**Definition:** Fertilization is the process of a male gamete (sperm) combining with a female gamete (ovum). The product of fertilization is a new organism called a zygote. From the moment the zygote is formed, it is unique and genetically complete. He or she has a one-of-a-kind set of DNA that contains all of the genes they will have over the course of their entire life (over 30,000). From the moment of fertilization, the new being is considered to be self-directing.<sup>7</sup>

The value of an individual is NOT determined by:

**Size.** An individual cannot reasonably be deemed more or less valuable based on his or her physical size. Many men are physically larger than many women, but this does not mean they are worth more or deserve more rights.

**Level of Development.** Humans are often characterized by various stages of development: zygote, fetus, toddler, adolescent, adult, etc. Humanity cannot be reasonably dictated by level of development, as older individuals cannot be considered more human than younger individuals.

**Environment.** Altering location does not alter value. If an individual is not already human in

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the womb, moving down the birth canal does not automatically give him or her value.

*Degree of Dependency.* Throughout life, the degree to which an individual may depend on another for survival may vary depending on any number of circumstances, none of which impact his or her fundamental human value. Could a healthy individual be considered more valuable than one who depends on insulin to regulate blood sugar? Is a teenager worth more than an elderly individual whose health is deteriorating, because he or she doesn't rely on nursing home staff for feeding and hygiene?<sup>8</sup>

## ... To Natural Death

Death became part of the human condition as a direct consequence of sin. Unfortunately, many people try to take control of their own death or encourage others to do so through euthanasia or assisted suicide. There are three points to consider here: life always overcomes death; God is sovereign; and every moment has value.

### **Life always overcomes death.**

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Because of Christ's obedience unto death on the cross and His resurrection, death does not have the final word over humanity. For more scripture on life overcoming death see page 1.9.

### **God is sovereign.**

Even for the individual who does not grasp Christian truth, there is a sense in which death constitutes the natural end of the human person's journey. Just as is the case in the beginning of an individual's life, the natural end of a human's life is beyond that

person's control. Because God has dominion over that entire process, to interrupt or disrupt it is to presume to act with God's authority.

### **Every moment has value.**

Each moment provides an opportunity to seek fulfillment. As the urgency of death increases, the desire for fulfillment is often heightened as well. For Christians, the path to fulfillment is recognized as seeking to know, love, and serve God throughout earthly life so that they may be eternally happy with God in the next life. Even for the non-believer, every moment provides an opportunity to love and be loved.