



## What about Abortion?

Lutherans when they hear that some other Lutheran churches have not taken a strong stand against abortion. It is important for us to make clear that our church does not share the position of those church bodies that do not speak clearly against the sin of abortion.

### Isn't abortion acceptable in the case of rape or incest?

While the emotional arguments for abortion in these situations might seem compelling, the fact of the matter is that it is wrong to take the life of one innocent victim (the unborn child), and further burden the life of the other victim of these horrible situations, the mother. It is indeed a strange logic that would have us kill an innocent unborn baby for the crime of his father.

### What can we do for people considering abortion?

It is a sin for parents to counsel their children to have abortions. This is not an option for Christian parents. An unplanned pregnancy comes as a shock to all involved and abortion may be seen as a "quick and quiet" way to move past the problem, but it is not. It merely compounds an already sinful situation with another sinful choice.

A woman who is considering an abortion has the option to keep her child or to give it up for adoption. Adoption is a noble choice, for it allows a child who otherwise may not be well cared for to receive the love and attention he needs in a family that is able to care for him. Our pastors are aware of the various agencies that deal with adoptions.

### How can the church minister to those who have had an abortion?

A woman who has had an abortion may feel at first that she is free of her "problem." Her partner, either a boyfriend or a husband, may also feel that he is "off the hook." It may be soon after, or perhaps not until years later, that they realize what they have actually done: destroyed the life of their unborn child. Perhaps this realization comes as they hear God's Word correctly explained on this point. The Law of God reveals their sin to them and they feel guilt and great sorrow, and they begin to wonder what can be done about it or if there is any hope at all.

The woman who has had an abortion needs to hear that for this sin too the blood of Jesus Christ was shed, and that there is in Him now full and free forgiveness. This assurance needs to be given over and over; namely, that in Christ Jesus, there is forgiveness—complete and total forgiveness. This is how the church best ministers to those who continue to feel the burden of the sin of abortion, by again and again pointing them to the cross of their Lord Jesus Christ and assuring them

of the full and free forgiveness He won for them there, for all sins, for each and every one.

It is important then that people who have repented of their sin continue to remain close to their Lord through regular and faithful church attendance where they will continue to hear the Gospel proclaimed and where they will receive the Lord's Supper regularly. Private confession and absolution with their pastor is another powerful means by which God gives His grace, pardon and peace to a person feeling guilty over the sin of abortion. The grace and love of God is stronger than any human weakness and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). This is truly good news and the good news that can and must be shared with those feeling guilty.

### What resources are available?

There are many worthwhile resources available. Our church has a commission on the sanctity of life that has produced a number of helpful materials.

*That They May Have Life* is a useful summary of how Christians reflect and think about life issues. *Real and Abundant Life* is a broad theological overview of God's gift of life and the eternal life He offers to us in Christ our Lord. Both of these documents are available from Concordia Publishing House by calling 800-325-3040.

There is a video aimed directly at young people that helps them think about life issues. It is a movie titled, *Life: It's A Class Project*. You may obtain a copy of this video by calling Lutheran Visuals at 800-527-3211.

Lutherans For Life is an organization that also provides numerous resources to help Christians understand better a wide range of life issues. They may be contacted at their Web site: <http://www.lutheransforlife.org>.

You may write them at LUTHERANS FOR LIFE, 1229 South "G" Avenue, Building B / Suite 100, Nevada, IA 50201-2778 or call, toll-free, 888-364-LIFE.

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