

GLOBAL LIFE CAMPAIGN™

Can a Church or Christian Support Abortion? Part 1

Biblical and Unbiblical Church Positions on Abortion

Thomas W. Jacobson, Executive Director, Global Life Campaign (2020-08-26)

To begin to answer the question of whether a church or Christian can support abortion, I've been reviewing church doctrine and position statements on abortion. Some church denominations stand firmly on the Bible and corresponding scientific truth, and follow through consistently in opposition to killing a baby in the womb. But some church denominations are dualistic; that is, they take both Biblical and unbiblical positions to accommodate differences in opinions of their leadership and members. They affirm Biblical truth about God being the Creator of human life, but then depart from Scripture in their position on abortion. They may affirm that God commanded, "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13), but then support abortion before viability, which is the murder of an innocent, defenseless, unborn child.

In this month's *Truth About Abortion* (GLC Series), we will look only at two Baptist denominations, the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Church USA. Kamala Harris is a member of the second. If you read both statements, you'll understand why there are different opinions among Christians, why the Church is divided on the issue of abortion, and why Harris may think that she is acting consistent with being a "Christian" and a "Baptist" to support abortion – instead of recognizing that her support of abortion deeply offends God Himself and violates His unchanging, universal Law by which He judges – yes He still does judge with righteous judgment – individuals and nations.

Southern Baptist Convention Stands for Sanctity of Human Life:

The Southern Baptist Convention has several short Position Statements, such as this on life:

"Sanctity of Life. Procreation is a gift from God, a precious trust reserved for marriage. At the moment of conception, a new being enters the universe, a human being, a being created in God's image. This human being deserves our protection, whatever the circumstances of conception." (<http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/positionstatements.asp>)

The SBC has also approved 52 Resolutions that pertain to abortion. Its 2015 resolution "On The Sanctity Of Human Life," quoted fully here:

WHEREAS, Biblical revelation clearly and consistently affirms that human life is formed by God in His image and is therefore worthy of honor and dignity ([Genesis 1:27](#); [9:6](#)); and

WHEREAS, God alone is the Author of life and He alone numbers our days, from the moment of conception until natural death ([Job 14:5–7](#); [Psalm 39:4](#)); and

WHEREAS, The Bible commands us to honor our parents and the aged ([Exodus 20:12](#); [Leviticus 19:32](#); [Ephesians 6:2](#)); and

WHEREAS, The Baptist Faith & Message (2000) affirms that “children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord” and calls us to “speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death”; and

WHEREAS, An estimated fifty-seven million unborn babies have been aborted since the legalization of abortion in 1973 (Roe v. Wade); and

WHEREAS, Legislation or court rulings have effectively legalized physician-assisted suicide in several states and additional states are considering similar action; and

WHEREAS, Recent federal directives seek to compel religious organizations to provide coverage for abortifacient technologies and services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Columbus, Ohio, June 16–17, 2015, affirm the dignity and sanctity of human life at all stages of development, from conception to natural death; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our repudiation of the genocide of legalized abortion in the United States and call on civil authorities to enact laws that defend the lives of the unborn;

RESOLVED, That we welcome and commend legislation that ensures that all mothers will be fully informed by medical providers of the life development of their unborn children;

...

RESOLVED, That we call on our fellow citizens of good will to collaborate with us on behalf of justice, the protection of human life, and the cause of human flourishing; . . .

RESOLVED, That we encourage Southern Baptists to continue and to expand their local ministries that care for and protect the unborn, the vulnerable, and the aged; . . .

RESOLVED, That we call on Southern Baptist churches and entities to show the love of Christ through appropriate means to those women most vulnerable to the victimization of the abortion industry, and to show grace and mercy to those individuals who grieve with repentance over past abortions; . . .

RESOLVED, That we commend the efforts of our denominational entities, especially The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in the defense and protection of human life at every stage; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we pray and work for the repeal of unjust laws and inhumane practices that degrade human life, all the while looking toward the day when our Lord will make all things new and “Death will no longer exist; grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer, because the previous things have passed away” ([Revelation 21:4](#)).

<http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/2256/on-the-sanctity-of-human-life>

American Baptist Church USA: Dualistic View Supporting Abortion

AMERICAN BAPTIST RESOLUTION CONCERNING ABORTION AND MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH (8006.5:12/87)

“As American Baptists, members of a covenant community of believers in Jesus Christ, we acknowledge life as a sacred and gracious gift of God. We affirm that God is the Creator of all life, that human beings are created in the image of God, and Christ is Lord of life. Recognizing this gift of life, we find ourselves struggling with the painful and difficult issue of abortion. Genuine diversity of opinion threatens the unity of our fellowship, but the nature of the covenant demands mutual love and respect. Together, we must seek the mind of Christ.

“As American Baptists we oppose abortion,

- as a means of avoiding responsibility for conception,
- as a primary means of birth control,
- without regard for the far-reaching consequences of the act.

“We denounce irresponsible sexual behavior

“We grieve with all who struggle with the difficult circumstances that lead them to consider abortion. Recognizing that each person is ultimately responsible to God, we encourage men and women in these circumstances to seek spiritual counsel as they prayerfully and conscientiously consider their decision.

“We condemn violence and harassment directed against abortion clinics, their staff and clients, as well as sanctions and discrimination against medical professionals whose consciences prevent them from being involved in abortions.

“We acknowledge the diversity of deeply held convictions within our fellowship even as we seek to interpret the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Many American Baptists believe that, biblically, human life begins at conception, that abortion is immoral and a destruction of a human being created in God's image (Job 31:15; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44; Proverbs 31:8-9; Galatians 1:15). Many others believe that while abortion is a regrettable reality, it can be a morally acceptable action and they choose to act on the biblical principles of compassion and justice (John 8:1-11; Exodus 21:22-25; Matthew 7:1-5; James 2:2-13) and freedom of will (John 16:13; Roman 14:4-5, 10-13). Many gradations of opinion between these basic positions have been expressed within our fellowship.

“We also recognize that we are divided as to the proper witness of the church to the state regarding abortion. Many of our membership seek legal safeguards to protect unborn life. Many others advocate for and support family planning legislation, including legalized abortion as in the best interest of women in particular and society in general. Again, we have many points of view between these two positions. Consequently, we acknowledge the freedom of each individual to advocate for a public policy on abortion that reflects his or her beliefs. . . .

“WE CALL UPON . . .

Pastors and Leaders:

- To prepare themselves to minister compassionately and skillfully to women and men facing problem pregnancies, whatever their final decisions. . . .

“WE ENCOURAGE CONGREGATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:

- To engage in meaningful dialogue on abortion with openness and Christian compassion . . .
- To participate in organizations addressing abortion issues in ways that are consistent with their beliefs

“Policy Base

Policy Statement on Human Rights [editor note: no mention of right to life]

As American Baptists we declare the following rights to be basic human rights, and we will support programs and measures to assure these rights;

The right to human dignity, to be respected and treated as a person, and to be protected against discrimination without regard to age, sex, race, class, marital status, income, national origin, legal status, culture or condition in society.”

Conclusion: From these two church denomination statements, I hope you can see a primary source of the confusion and division in our nation over abortion; namely, there is division in the church, among the leadership, clergy, and members. The human conscience is vulnerable to deception, and we may discover that we are actually believing a lie to be the truth. The truth is always consistent with the Word of God, His Law, and nature, because He created everything and ordained the laws that govern. When church leadership, priests, pastors or rabbi’s fail to teach their congregations the Truth, or give them unclear or dualistic messages, or teach a lie as if it was the truth, then people who claim to be “Christian” may actually be holding views that are contrary to Christ and the Christian faith. A church that supports abortion is either not the church or is in direct conflict with the Head of the Church. A “Christian” who supports abortion is either not a Christian, or is supporting something antithetical to God Almighty, Jesus Christ, and the Christian faith. We have a very serious problem in the Church.

SDG and for the sanctity of human life,

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“If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods . . . or the gods . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15).