

**Question: I personally am opposed to abortion but I can't tell others what to do.**

**Quick Response: Our laws tell us what to do all the time. We have laws against murder, theft, and lying to name a few. The fact of the matter is that abortion kills a living human being. Just because abortion is legal does not mean that it is morally good. The Supreme Court also legalized slavery. Would you say that you are personally opposed to slavery but can't tell others not to own a slave?**

For years we have heard the phrase, "You can't legislate morality!" But we do it all the time. Our laws against murder, slavery, and fraud are all based on moral judgments. This is the only way a society can survive. Of course it would be imprudent for a secular society to legislate matters of sectarian religious interest like dietary laws. However, the "personally opposed" argument is always raised when dealing with a fundamental moral law, as in abortion. And here this issue transcends any religious difference.

We are opposed to abortion because it takes the life of a living human being, as the scientific facts prove. This is a statement of fact, not an opinion. A statement is either true or untrue. If it is untrue then there is no need for someone to even be "personally opposed." But it is true. Pregnancy is a healthy and natural process which results in the birth of human being. Abortion stops this natural process and thus ends the life of a living human.

There are many horrific events that were allowed to take place in history because of the "personally opposed" argument. Look at Pontius Pilate. He was "personally opposed" to condemning an innocent man to death; yet, he allowed Jesus to die on the cross. Also, look at the Nazi Holocaust in Germany. Millions of Jews were killed because of the "personally opposed" argument. Edmund Burke has stated, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

In the political realm we really have two questions to answer: 1) Are they human beings? and 2) Should they be recognized as persons under the law? The first question has already been answered. It is a matter of plain, objective science. EMBRYOS AND FETUSES ARE FULLY AND INDIVIDUALLY HUMAN FROM THE MOMENT OF FERTILIZATION ON. If not, then removing a fetus would just be like pulling out a tooth. But this isn't the case. If you looked up the word "person" in the dictionary, you would find something like this: "a human being" (from Webster's Dictionary). A person is a human being. This should be enough to guarantee protection under the law but it isn't. But when you look at American history there are at least two other instances in which specific groups of human beings were stripped of their rights of personhood: African-Americans and Native Americans. At one point black slaves were only counted as 3/5 of a person. The legal system has worked to remove such injustices but

today there remains one group of human beings for which being human is not enough: the unborn.

Outlawing abortion would not give unborn children more rights, it would just give them the most *fundamental* right in which no one can live without – the right to life. If a pregnant woman remains pregnant, what will she have to go through? She will have to go through sickness, fatigue, reduced mobility, an enlarged body, and a new wardrobe. Is this a permanent condition? No. However, if a pregnant woman is not to remain pregnant, then the unborn child must be killed. Abortion costs the unborn child his/her very own life.

### **Common mistakes to avoid when arguing this point:**

- 1. Don't allow the pro-abortionist to justify the "personally opposed" argument on the basis that this is a personal decision of faith or religion.**
  - I can not impose my beliefs on society as a whole.
  - Abortion is a personal decision.
  - The government or other people cannot tell a woman what she can and cannot decide for herself.
  - It is the woman's body and the woman's life. I can't decide what is best for her.
  - I cannot impose my beliefs on someone who does not accept or live out my faith/religion.
  - I am on the middle-of-the-road. I would never choose it but I can't force my faith or beliefs on others.
  - In order to find out if abortion is the violent taking of a human being's life, I do not need to consult a church. I need to consult a medical textbook.

When someone says that he or she is "personally opposed" to abortion, first ask "Why?" What is it about abortion that you oppose? Maybe the "personally opposed" argument could be used for such things as, "I'm personally opposed to smoking cigarettes." But this argument does not work for abortion. Why would someone be personally opposed to abortion? Is it because it ends the life of a human being? If this is the reason then it is more than just a mere personal opinion. If what is growing inside the mother's womb is not a human then there is no reason to be personally opposed in the first place. Someone could be personally opposed to cigarette smoking because it causes damage to one's personal body. However, an unborn baby is not part of the woman's body but is a separate biological entity. The unborn baby has its own distinct genetic code, different from the genetic code of the mother. When people use this argument, especially politicians, they are most often trying to justify their own actions. But this argument is not about personal faiths or religions but about scientific facts.