Abortion, Choice, and Justification

by Earle Fox

Justification

American Constitutional law is most justly famous for guaranteeing equal opportunity (not equal results) to all persons. The founding fathers, however, did not deal with the sticky question of "Who or what is a 'person?'" — perhaps to avoid the impending issue of slavery.

The Declaration of Independence states:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, Liberty and the pursuit Of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

The Declaration has the same force of law as the Constitution *because it is a fundamental part of the Common Law tradition by which our constitution is interpreted.*

That means, building on the law of God that every American citizen, every person on American soil, has the protection of due process in any action brought against that person. It means, as Paul Hill, convicted of killing an abortionist, said, that an unborn child is granted by God and the Constitution the same protection of law and of directed force that a born child is granted.

The only way around that conclusion is to say either that the unborn fetus is not a person (a statement with no support of evidence), or that the solution to the mother's problems are more important than the life of the child in the womb. And "more important" means *in the mind of God* — not in the mind of the mother, the doctor, or the father. Or of the Supreme Court.

The word 'important' here is a moral word, the definition of which is dependent totally and without remainder on the will of God. God and God alone defines the meaning of existence and hence of all moral obligation.

Christians say that we are, or need to be, "justified," the meaning of which is tied to one's "reason for existence." My existence is what needs to be justified, and my reason for existence is my justification. To say that "I am justified" means to say that I have from God an acceptable reason for existing. To lose one's justification is to lose one's *reason* for existing — and thus one's *right* to exist.

My reason for existence, and hence my justification, come from God and God alone. And therefore any cancellation of my justification, my right to exist, must come from God. God and God alone is sovereign over life and death. No supreme court, no legislature, no king or president, may intrude on that sovereignty or take that sovereignty on itself. To do so is red-handed rebellion against the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

Every one of the founding fathers understood that principle.

Choice and rights

Those favoring abortion as a solution to a woman's "problem" pregnancy have hit upon the word "choice" as a means of evading the issue of murder; the unjustified killing of another person. It moves the emphasis from the taking of a life to the protection of an alleged "right."

A woman has a "right to choose," it is said, concerning her own body. She has "reproductive rights." In *Roe v. Wade,* the Supreme Court decided that there is a "right to privacy" which protects the woman's right to choose how her body shall be used. Hence the notion that her decision to bear or to kill the child belongs to her and to her alone.

Such a decision could have been taken only after the prior 1962 decision of the Court, *Engle v. Vitale,* to throw out prayer, i.e., to ignore the law of God. The Court in effect declared itself the supreme arbiter of the meaning of morality. *Roe v. Wade* could never have happened so long as the Court considered itself in any respect under the law of God.

The Court said in *Roe v. Wade* that we are unable to decide whether the fetus is a person — but then proceeded on the assumption that we have indeed decided that it is not. The Court was clearly not interested in knowing whether it was or was not. It had already made up its mind. It was not interested in knowing what the mind of God was on the matter, it has already made up its own mind.

The Court was interested in declaring itself the sole arbiter of moral standards for American law. And it "granted" to the mother the right to determine whether she would or would not bear her child. That it was or was not a child simply did not matter. The overriding concern was the "right" of the woman to determine the use of her own body "reproductively."

The mother was given the right to determine whether the child in her womb had a right to exist, a right to life, a justification for existence. If she decided "no", then the child stood before her unjustified; no right to exist, no sufficient reason for existence, and hence condemned to death.

On the grounds of privacy, the mother was given the role of God the Creator, with supreme jurisdiction over the life and death of another human being.

Why should that not be called self-centeredness, arrogance, and rebellion of the highest order against God?

Many mothers, of course, are persuaded to honestly believe that there is only a piece of "fetal tissue" in their wombs, not a person, and are perhaps thus innocent of intentional murder. But the Supreme Court is not "ignorant", and is thus guilty of the highest crime one can commit against God—open and deliberate rebellion. Could they really say, "I didn't know?"

"Problem" pregnancy

Mothers with "problem" pregnancies are shown a great deal of compassion and concern. And rightly so. Having a child is a monumental event in one's life, leading to extensive changes and responsibilities.But what constitutes a "problem" depends on what one sees as one's purpose in life. A pregnancy is a "problem" to one whose overriding purpose is to pursue a career, or a life of sexual promiscuity—because the pregnancy interferes with that purpose.

But what is *right* is decided by God, not ourselves. Only God can give me my purpose for existence. And that is the basis of all my moral decisions. I do not have a right to do what is wrong. My obligation is to discover and to follow my God-given purpose for existence — my "sealed orders."

I am thus obligated to call a "problem" only that which genuinely conflicts with my God-given purpose, not that which conflicts with my own independent and rebellious purpose. If my pregnancy is not a problem for God, then it should not be a problem for me. If God wants me to be a mother or a father, that is my sacred obligation. Anything else is rebellion.

So there is no right of privacy to do what I want with my body. There is rather an obligation to do with my body what God calls me to do.

There are no other rights or obligations, not for reproduction or anything else. That is the meaning of the sovereignty of God.

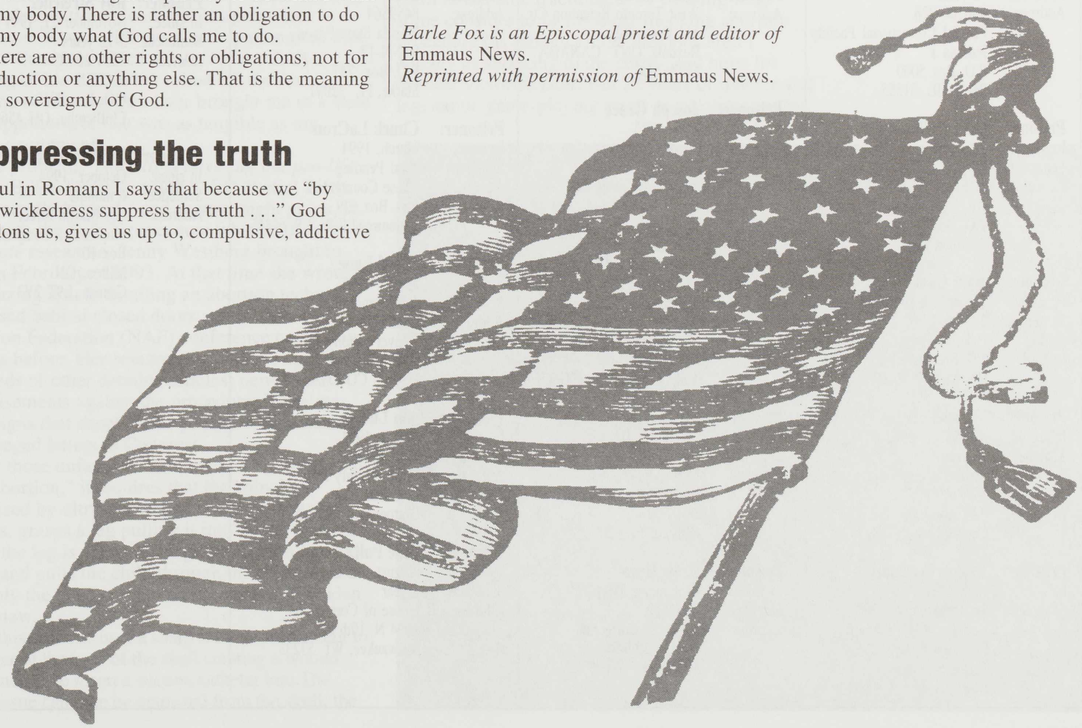
Suppressing the truth

Paul in Romans I says that because we "by [our] wickedness suppress the truth . . ." God abandons us, gives us up to, compulsive, addictive behavior. We then cannot stop hurting one another because we are driven by our unmet needs and our lusts for power, riches, and, currently — to "feel good."

No one, not mothers, not doctors, not the Supreme Court, has a "right" to do what is wrong. Rebellion against God, attempting to usurp His sovereignty over life, is always wrong and never right. And that can be accomplished only, as Paul says, by a deliberate suppression of the truth. One has to deny facts that are obvious and available for anyone who is interested in the truth: (1) the reality and sovereignty of God, and (2) the reality and meaning of personhood.

Denying the personhood of the fetus, and denying the sovereignty of God, is either dishonest or incompetent thinking. *Roe v. Wade* can stand only because enough people in America have suppressed the truth in their lives in order to protect their own comfort, their own power, their own position.

Christians are called to be truth-seekers and truth-tellers at any cost to ourselves. We are called to defend the lives of the innocent and helpless. The bloodguilt that rests upon America will be washed away only when those who use the name of Jesus Christ, and especially our spiritual and political leaders, stop their cowardly behavior and speak and act openly and unashamedly under the power and authority of God to deliver the helpless from the ravages of those who do not care about either truth or justice.

God is sovereign, and He will not be mocked. When we return to trust and obedience, America will see a renewal of life, liberty, and prosperity. But not before. ■

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