

Read the following six statements, from a variety of sources (some Christian, some not). Next to each statement, put two marks – a tick, cross or question mark to show whether you think the statement corresponds with what you have learned about the Bible’s approach to abortion, and then another tick, cross or question mark to show whether or not you agree with the statement.

‘Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person – among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life. Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable.’

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

‘The Anglican view on abortion is that although the foetus is to be specially respected and protected, nonetheless the life of the foetus is not absolutely sacrosanct if it endangers the life of its mother.’

(Church of England, Human Fertilization and Embryology, 1984)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

‘The decision to terminate a pregnancy is so important that it can only be made by the person most involved – the woman. Women must always have a choice and never have the decision forced upon them. Free abortion facilities should be available on the NHS for every woman who needs them. We believe that the right of women to control their own fertility is a fundamental human right. Women will only be able to take a full and equal part in society when we can all decide for ourselves whether and when to have children.’

(National Abortion Campaign)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

‘Since human life begins at conception, i.e. fertilization, and since all human life should be equally protected by the law from conception to natural death, whether or not the human being concerned is wanted or handicapped, it follows that the destruction of unborn life is always wrong.’

(LIFE campaigns)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

‘Never mind the vicious nonsense of claiming that an embryo has a “right to life”. A piece of protoplasm has no rights and no life in the human sense of the term. One may argue about the later stages of a pregnancy, but the essential issue concerns only the first three months. To equate a potential with an actual is vicious; to advocate the sacrifice of the latter to the former is unspeakable.’

(Ayn Rand, novelist and philosopher 1905-1982)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

‘Abortion is always destructive, it always takes a life, and affects the mother as well. But I recognise that in a fallen world, there are going to be circumstances where abortion is the least worst option. It’s a tragedy and it’s very difficult, but I think we have to be realistic. The law is being re-examined at present and I think there is a move to bring in a bill to ban eugenic (the improvement of species) abortions, but there will be clauses in cases where babies and children will spend many months or years dying of a disease or a condition.’

(Revd Joanna Jepson, Church of England minister)

- Agrees with the Bible**
- My opinion on the statement**

Write a few sentences to sum up your understanding of a Christian response to the issue of abortion.

Write a few sentences to sum up your own views on the issue of abortion.