

1 BRI/HM/Adhoc to AAS-ADCOM+GCDO19AC+19AC

2
3 145-19G STATEMENT ON THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF UNBORN LIFE
4 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ABORTION

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6 RECOMMENDED, To adopt the document, Statement on the Biblical View of Unborn Life and
7 Its Implications for Abortion, which reads as follows:

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9 Statement on the Biblical View of Unborn Life and Its Implications for Abortion

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11 Human beings are created in the image of God. Part of the gift that God has given us as
12 humans is procreation, the ability to participate in creation along with the Author of life. This
13 sacred gift should always be valued and treasured. In God's original plan every pregnancy
14 should be the result of the expression of love between a man and a woman committed to each
15 other in marriage. Every pregnancy should be wanted, and each baby should be loved, valued,
16 and nurtured even before birth. Unfortunately, since the entrance of sin, Satan has made
17 intentional efforts to mar the image of God by defacing all of God's gifts—including the gift of
18 procreation. Consequently, individuals are at times faced with difficult dilemmas and decisions
19 regarding a pregnancy.

20 The Seventh-day Adventist church is committed to the teachings and principles of the
21 Holy Scriptures which express God's values on life and provide guidance for prospective
22 mothers and fathers, medical personnel, churches, and all believers in matters of faith, doctrine,
23 ethical behavior, and lifestyle. The Church while not being the conscience of individual believers
24 has the duty to convey the principles and teachings of the Word of God.

25 This statement affirms the sanctity of life and conveys biblical principles bearing on
26 abortion. As used in this statement abortion is defined as any action aimed at the termination of a
27 pregnancy and does not include miscarriages or the spontaneous termination of a pregnancy.

28
29 *Biblical Principles and Teachings Relating to Abortion*

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31 As the practice of abortion must be weighed in the light of Scripture, the following
32 biblical principles and teachings provide guidance for the community of faith and individuals
33 affected by such difficult choices:

34
35 1. *God upholds the value and sacredness of human life.* Human life is of the greatest
36 value to God. Having created humanity in His image (Genesis 1:27; 2:7), God has a personal
37 interest in people. God loves them and communicates with them, and they in turn can love and
38 communicate with Him.

39
40 Life is a gift of God, and God is the Giver of life. In Jesus is life (John 1:4). He has life in
41 Himself (John 5:26). He is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25; 14:6). He provides abundant
42 life (John 10:10). Those who have the Son have life (1 John 5:12). He is also the Sustainer of life
43 (Acts 17:25-28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:1-3), and the Holy Spirit is described as the Spirit
44 of life (Romans 8:2). God cares deeply for His creation and especially for humankind.

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1 Furthermore, the importance of human life is made clear by the fact that, after the Fall
2 (Genesis 3), God “gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish
3 but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). While God could have abandoned and terminated sinful
4 humanity, He opted for life. Consequently, Christ’s followers will be raised from the dead and
5 will live in face-to-face communion with God (John 11:25–26; 1 Thessalonians 4:15–16;
6 Revelation 21:3). Thus, human life is of inestimable value. This is true for all stages of human
7 life: the unborn, children of various ages, adolescents, adults, and seniors—independent of
8 physical, mental, and emotional capacities. It is also true for all humans regardless of sex,
9 ethnicity, social status, religion, and whatever else may distinguish them. Such an understanding
10 of the sanctity of life gives inviolable and equal value to each and every human life and requires
11 it to be treated with the utmost respect and care.
12

13 2. *God considers the unborn child as human life.* Prenatal life is precious in God’s
14 sight, and the Bible describes God’s knowledge of people before they were conceived. “Your
15 eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days
16 fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them” (Psalm 139:16). In certain cases, God
17 directly guided prenatal life. Samson was to “be a Nazirite to God from the womb” (Judges
18 13:5). The servant of God is “called from the womb” (Isaiah 49:1, 5). Jeremiah was already
19 chosen as a prophet before his birth (Jeremiah 1:5), as was Paul (Galatians 1:15), and John the
20 Baptist was to “be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15). Of
21 Jesus the angel Gabriel explained to Mary: “therefore the child to be born will be called holy—
22 the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). In His Incarnation Jesus Himself experienced the human prenatal
23 period and was recognized as the Messiah and Son of God soon after His conception (Luke
24 1:40–45). The Bible already attributes to the unborn child joy (Luke 1:44) and even rivalry
25 (Genesis 25:21–23). Procreation occurs through God’s providence, and those not-yet-born have a
26 firm place with God (Job 10:8–12; 31:13–15). Biblical law shows a strong regard for protecting
27 human life and considers harm to or the loss of a baby or mother as a result of a violent act a
28 serious issue (Exodus 21:22–23).
29

30 3. *The will of God regarding human life is expressed in the Ten Commandments and*
31 *explained by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.* The Decalogue was given to God’s covenant
32 people to guide their lives and protect them. Its commandments are unchanging truths which
33 should be cherished, respected, and obeyed. The Psalmist praises God’s law (e.g., Psalm 119),
34 and Paul calls it holy, righteous, and good (Romans 7:12). The sixth commandment states: “You
35 shall not kill” (Exodus 20:13), which calls for the preservation of human life. The principle to
36 preserve life enshrined in the sixth commandment places abortion within its scope. Jesus
37 reinforced and broadened the commandment not to kill in Matthew 5:21–22. Life is protected by
38 God. It is not measured by individuals’ abilities or their usefulness, but by the value that God’s
39 creation and sacrificial love has placed on it. Personhood, human value, and salvation are not
40 earned or merited but graciously granted by God.
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1 4. *God is the Owner of life, and human beings are His stewards.* Scripture teaches
2 that God owns everything (Psalm 50:10–12). God has a dual claim on humans. They are His
3 because He is their Creator and therefore He owns them. They are also His because He is their
4 Redeemer and has bought them with the highest possible price—His own life (1 Corinthians
5 6:19–20). This means that all human beings are stewards of whatever God has entrusted to them,
6 including their own lives, the lives of their children, and the unborn.
7

8 The stewardship of life also includes carrying responsibilities which in some ways limit
9 their choices (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). Since God is the Giver and Owner of life, human beings
10 do not have ultimate control over themselves and should seek to preserve life wherever possible.
11 The principle of the stewardship of life obligates the community of believers to guide, support,
12 care for, and love those facing decisions about pregnancies.
13

14 5. *The Bible teaches care for the weak and the vulnerable.* God Himself cares for
15 those who are disadvantaged and oppressed and protects them. He “shows no partiality nor takes
16 a bribe. He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving
17 him food and clothing” (Deuteronomy 10:18, cf. Psalm 82:3–4; James 1:27). He does not hold
18 children accountable for the sins of their fathers (Ezekiel 18:20). God expects the same of His
19 children. They are called to help vulnerable people and ease their lot (Psalm 41:1; 82:3–4; Acts
20 20:35). Jesus speaks of the least of His brothers (Matthew 25:40), for whom His followers are
21 responsible, and of the little ones who should not be despised or lost (Matthew 18:10–14). The
22 very youngest, namely the unborn, should be counted among them.
23

24 6. *God’s grace promotes life in a world marred by sin and death.* It is God’s nature to
25 protect, preserve, and sustain life. In addition to the providence of God over His creation (Psalm
26 103:19; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3), the Bible acknowledges the wide-ranging, devastating,
27 and degrading effects of sin on the creation, including on human bodies. In Romans 8:20–24
28 Paul describes the impact of the Fall as subjecting the creation to futility. Consequently, in rare
29 and extreme cases, human conception may produce pregnancies with fatal prospects and/or
30 acute, life-threatening birth anomalies that present individuals and couples with exceptional
31 dilemmas. Decisions in such cases may be left to the conscience of the individuals involved and
32 their families. These decisions should be well-informed and guided by the Holy Spirit and the
33 biblical view of life outlined above. God’s grace promotes and protects life. Individuals, in these
34 challenging situations may come to Him in sincerity and find direction, comfort, and peace in the
35 Lord.
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1 *Implications*

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The Seventh-day Adventist Church considers abortion out of harmony with God's plan for human life. It affects the unborn, the mother, the father, immediate and extended family members, the church family, and society with long-term consequences for all. Believers aim to trust God and follow His will for them, knowing He has their best interests in mind.

While not condoning abortion, the Church seeks to support those who are confronted with the possibility of abortion, and believers are challenged to (1) create an atmosphere of true love; (2) enlist the help of well-functioning and committed families and educate them to provide care for struggling individuals, couples, and families; (3) encourage church members to open their homes to those in need, including single parents, parentless children, and children in adoptive or foster care; (4) care deeply for and support in various ways pregnant women who decide to keep their unborn children; and (5) provide emotional and spiritual support to those who have aborted a child for various reasons or were forced to have abortion and may be hurting physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually.

The issue of abortion presents enormous challenges, but it gives individuals and the Church the opportunity to be what they aspire to be, the fellowship of brothers and sisters, the community of believers, the family of God, revealing His immeasurable and unfailing love.