Is a Fetus Human?

Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations… – Jeremiah 1:4-5

The Bible does not directly refer to abortion. Of course, there are many other issues on which the Bible does not give a specific comment. However, in many cases, it is clear what the biblical position is. I believe the same is true with the subject of abortion. And the Bible does have a great deal to say about the status of life before birth. For example, in Jeremiah 1:4-5, we read: Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

God was giving a number of important pieces of information to the prophet. He made clear that He knew Jeremiah even before he was formed in the womb. Furthermore, He tells Jeremiah that his growth in the womb was as a result of being formed by God Himself. The passage implies that there was a personhood associated with the unborn Jeremiah. Therefore, the unborn child should be considered as a full human being, with all the implications for the value of his life that this entails.

The word fetus sounds impersonal, yet it simply means little one. Abortion kills the little one in the mother’s womb – the little one who has a personality already, given by God.


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