

**Group Study on Abortion**

*What you will need:*

* A print out of this document
* A Bible

*Read aloud the following excerpt and use your Bible to look up the passages cited in the text*

Human life is a gift from God. God is the creator and artist behind all creation, and humans, made in God’s image, have a special part in His created beauty (Psalm 8:3-4). Even at microscopic size, after conception, human life is considered valuable. The Bible gives us a glimpse at the miracle that God fashions. Hidden in the womb, each precious human is knitted together and, while still in secret, is known fully by God (Psalm 139:13-16). Children are considered gifts (Psalm 127:3); gifts that we are encouraged to receive with joy and love.

The Bible also teaches us that to take the life of another human is wrong (Exodus 20:13; Matthew 19:18). Jesus tells us that He has come so that all may have life; life to the full (John 10:10). As Christians we learn that it is not for us to take away life, but to accept all life as a gift from God.

There may be times when this biblical teaching challenges us. What about the forty-something-year-old parents with three teenagers who had ‘completed their family’ but find themselves facing a baby soon? What if a teenage romance has ended with break-up and a pregnancy? What about when doctors tell expectant parents that the baby, still in the womb, will have extensive abnormalities? What about rape?

In the face of fear, potential shame, loss of income, autonomy, and other real challenges, God calls on us to trust in Him for all that we receive. Jesus, who knew temptation and trial, taught us to walk a path of love and self-sacrifice, but mostly to take our fears and concerns to God. Our prayers, pleading and thanksgiving to God will be rewarded with peace for our heart and mind (Philippians 4:6-7).

And what about those of us who have had an abortion either from a sense of having no choice, or being coerced by family members or medical teams, or through fear of public shame or humiliation?

For some there may be no concern or regret after an abortion, for sin deceives us to believe that what is wrong is right and what is right is wrong (Proverbs 14:12). Many carry a powerful sense of regret, pain, and loss. For others there may be guilt that they enjoy a career or lifestyle because a pregnancy was ended.

Regardless of our motives, the truth is that we have all fallen short of what God intended for us. As Scripture tells us: *“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23). To address our guilt and sin, God became a human like us, and suffered punishment on our behalf by his death on the cross (John 3:16). He saves us from the death we deserve and instead gives us life, full forgiveness and an eternal future with God (John 14:1-3).

*Discussion questions*

* What could you say to a friend or family member who is struggling with an unexpected pregnancy? How could that lead you to talk about Christ and His love?
* Often, women turn to abortion because they feel that they have no other choice or option. In choosing to continue with the pregnancy, they sometimes think they are putting their lives on hold. How does a Christian understanding of the gift of life change this perspective?
* No matter what sin you have committed you can turn to God our Father and ask for mercy and forgiveness. How does this affect the way you feel about yourself and your past behaviour? Will it change the way that you approach future problems?
* In this new life in Christ, we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:14-21). Will this affect your behaviour to unexpected blessings that don’t always look as such, like an unwanted pregnancy? God took on the sins of the world for all people, that counts the unborn. Do they deserve the right to life and lifetime of grace and mercy?
* What is the closest pregnancy support centre near you?

*Close with prayer*

*Optional further research/reading:*

* Online article: “Finding forgiveness after abortion”: <http://www.epm.org/resources/2010/Jan/21/finding-forgiveness-after-abortion/>
* Book: ‘Why Pro-Life’ by Randy Alcorn. Full PDF of 2004 edition available for free here: <http://www.epm.org/static/uploads/downloads/book-resources/why-prolife-2004-edition.pdf>
* Book: ‘Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Questions’ by Randy Alcorn
* Book: Kathleen Winkler, ‘*When the Crying Stops: Abortion, the Pain and the Healing.’* (with Meditations by Lutheran pastor Harold L. Senkbeil) Northwestern Publishing House
* Book: ‘Giving Sorrow Words: Women’s stories of grief after abortion’ by Melinda Tankard Reist