

Value of Life on its Deathbed

by Brad Harrub

On November 4th, 2008 the people of America elected Barack Obama president of the United States. During his tenure our nation has seen many disturbing changes based on his political ideology. Many of these new laws and executive orders resulted in the further devaluing of human life—eliminating the need for parental consent for abortions, supporting federally funded embryonic stem cell research, and tacitly endorsing the market for aborted fetal parts. At the beginning of his term, Obama released a press statement saying, “I stand in full support of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act as I did when this bill was introduced and sent to the President’s desk in the 109th Congress. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill. I am frustrated by the opposition this bill has generated and saddened that we are preventing the advancement of important science that could potentially impact millions of suffering Americans”.

Politicians, the media, and influential Hollywoodites have waged a successful campaign to promote embryonic stem cell research only, often playing a trump card of “compassion” to intimidate those who object. Anyone not supporting embryonic stem cell research is painted as standing in the way of easing the pain and suffering of “millions.” These talking heads completely overlook or spin a web of lies regarding the peer-reviewed benefit of adult stem cell therapy. For instance,

in 2004, New York Times science author Gina Kolata wrote regarding adult stem cells: “There are no ethical issues in studying these cells, but the problem is in putting them to work to treat diseases. So far, no one has succeeded” (emp. added). At the time she penned that statement, I documented 61 peer-reviewed studies that successfully treated disorders using adult stem cells (See Harrub et al., 2004; See also “The Stem Cell Cover-Up,” Fumento, 2004). Whether Kolata’s statement came from poor research or ignorance is yet to be determined. But nevertheless the damage was done.

In discussing the obvious bias from the mainstream media, Michael Fumento correctly observed, “Yet when an ESC (embryonic stem cells—BH) so much as hiccups, it makes international news, while tremendous breakthroughs with ASCs (adult stem cells—BH) are as a rule ignored. Welcome to what’s been called ‘stem-cell wars,’ a deliberate effort to downplay the proven value of ASCs to attract more attention to the potential of ESCs. It is a war that is being fought partly over ethics, but mostly over money” (Fumento, 2004).

In May 2008, a selective hearing in the House met over stem cell research. The controversy surrounds the efficacy of adult stem cells and whether or not embryonic stem cells are needed or should be federally funded. In the 1990’s, many scientists were under the impression that ESCs had greater potential, being deemed “pluripotent” indicating they have the ability to become almost any cell in the body. These special

cells can become healthy heart tissue or nervous tissue which could potentially be used to treat congestive heart failure or various brain disorders. We know today embryonic stem cells are unnecessary.

Seven years before the selective hearing in the House, Rodney Rietze and his colleagues had already demonstrated that pluripotent stem cells could be harvested from an adult (see Rietze et al., 2001). While the media continue to promote the “potential” benefit of ESCs, they remain tight lipped about what is already being accomplished by adult stem cells. As Wesley Smith observed “It has been repeated so often that it is now a mantra: ‘Embryonic stem cells offer the most promise for finding cures’ for degenerative diseases.... But saying something 10,000 times doesn’t make it true” (Smith, 2006, “The Great Stem Cell Cover Up”).

The real controversy is not which stem cells are beneficial to mankind, as scientist have proven ASCs are superior in treating clinical conditions. The real controversy surrounds the origin and means of collection of the stem cells. There are four main sources: adult tissue, umbilical cords, aborted fetuses, and left-over embryos stored from in vitro fertilization. Two of these categories involve the destruction of a life form (aborted fetuses and leftover embryos). If we can obtain consent and harvest pluripotent stem cells from adult tissue, why use controversial methods that destroy life? Christians should support scientists harvesting stem cells for use in research or in procedures intended to help cure certain diseases when those stem cells come from either the umbilical-cord blood or adult bone marrow and/or brain tissue. Harvesting such cells does not kill an already-living human being. Sadly however, many scientists are obdurate regarding the use of ESCs.

Scientifically, it has been proven that ASCs can treat disorders—without the tissue rejection problems associated with ESCs. Yet, many appear determined to present a different picture. For instance, in the July 28, 2006, issue of *Science* authors Shane Smith, William Neaves, and Steven Teitelbaum wrote a letter stating, “By promoting the falsehood that adult stem cell treatments are already in general use for 65 diseases and injuries, Prentice and those who repeat his claim mislead laypeople and cruelly deceive patients” (p. 439). They tried to back this up by claiming that the FDA has only approved treatment in nine conditions. However, what Smith et al., fail to recognize is that medical

research conducted outside of the U.S. does not need FDA approval. Also, Smith et al., remained eerily silent on the successes of ESCs. The record stands for itself.

On June 20, 2008, William Beckman wrote an article titled “Media Cover Up Adult Stem Cell Research Success With Misleading Terms.” In it he referred to a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that led to headlines declaring, “U.S. doctors kill skin cancer with cloned T-cells.” Beckman goes on to point out: “However, since reporting of this stem cell research success never used the phrase ‘adult stem cells’—even though original cells were taken directly from the patient—confusion is very likely to occur for many readers, whether that confusion was intended or not.”

We must arm ourselves with the facts, not emotions or opinions. Wesley Smith observed, “Based on published science, there are 72 maladies for which human patients have received some benefit (which is not the same as being “cured”) from ASCs interventions. Meanwhile, ESCs have yet to demonstrate any human therapeutic use” (Wesley Smith 2006). David Prentice, William Saunders and Michael Fragozo have published an updated list of ASC success stories that upped that number to 73 different conditions (2007).

Christians cannot be tranquil in resolving the issues of life. The Bible is clear on such matters. Genesis 4:1 says, “Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived.” Some forty times the Scriptures speak of conception. It is no accident that the inspired writers mention this extraordinary moment—for it is only at that instant that chromosomes join to form the full complement of chromosomes that is capable of producing human life. James observed: “The body apart from the spirit (pneuma) is dead” (2:26). But the opposite of that statement also must be true—the body joined with the spirit is living. Jeremiah said God told him, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.” (1:5). Isaiah revealed the same idea (Isaiah 49:1,5). God knows each individually and personally from conception onward.

As to whether or not science should pursue embryonic stem cell research, I would point out: (1) that it is completely unnecessary, and; (2) that there are some things that science is inapt to answer. This is one such item. I encourage you to remember in Whose image we were made, and that ending human life is not solely about the advancement of science—it’s also about the value of human life.

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org

House to House, Heart to Heart

In Search of the Lord's Way

Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies

The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv

WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)

Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Ovie Mahoney passed away last Monday morning. She was living at St. Catherine's Nursing Home in Waco, TX. near her family, (their info. is on pg 3). Her arrangements were held at Griffin Roughton Fumeral Home on Wednesday morning.

Marilyn Schmidt has been having fainting spells and is scheduled for tests.

Hector Magana had shoulder surgery on Wednesday and is recovering.

Loris Mosley has returned home from her surgery.

Latonya and Derick Nathan, longtime benevolence customers, were involved in a bad car accident and have requested are prayers. Both are very shaken up and very sore. Their info is on pg 3 for encouragement cards.

Continue to Remember: James and Yvonne Ainsworth, Gayle Garner, Velma McDougald, Bud Moore, ,Henry & Eula Parrish, Patty Williams, Meagan Gould, James Welch

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart

Announcements

WOW Ladies Retreat reminder that the dates are 9/23-9/24 and sign in is at 4:30 pm. Location is at Summer Mill Conference Center, Salado, TX. (Directions are on back table).

Youth Group Devo is coming up Sunday, September 25th here at the building. 6th-12th graders are invited to come following immediately after the evening service.

The Eastside COC family invites you to their 83rd Annual Homecoming Gospel Meeting. Scheduled time is Sept. 25-28. "The Truth Shall Set You Free".

Fall Lectureship - October 9-12 "Righteousness Exalts A Nation".

Plan to spend **Thanksgiving Day** with your Westhill family (Nov 24 @ noon in the Outreach Center). Turkey, ham, dressing and gravy will be provided, but sides and desserts are welcomed. Come alone, or bring your entire family. Sign up today!

Young at Heart Seniors Group meets every Tuesday morning at 10:30am for Bible Study. Everyone is welcome!

Birthdays This Week

September 19 - Mike Drain, James Horn, and Katy Phillips

September 20 - Bel Williams

September 21 - Tracy Barham, and Dan Gibson

September 22 - Ben Baumgartner, Gene Wardlaw

September 23 - Zack Lewis, Kyle Slaughter, and Helen Strange

September 24 - Alex Cuellar

Next Week's Adult Class

"The Life of Paul"

Records for September 11, 2016

Bible Class	190
AM Worship.....	267
PM Worship.....	162
Wednesday	168
Contribution	\$8,415.25

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	David Baumgartner
Opening Prayer	Paul Slaughter
Communion Leader	Zach Drain
Communion Servers	
Darwin Thomas	Wade Braly
Wade Hall	Andy Parrish
Kyle Slaughter	Tanner Bearden
Bronny Watson	Thomas Saunders
David Shastid	Dan Gibson
David Dilbeck	Gene Steinkraus
Bryan Bearden	
Closing Prayer	David Mahoney
Nursery	Ashley Jones and Macie Bearden
Security	Scott Barham, David Baumgartner, Brian Hand
PM Song Leader	Tyler Baumgartner
PM Opening Prayer	Bryan Bearden
PM Closing Prayer	Kyle Slaughter
Wed. Song Leader	Justin Williams
Wed. Devotional	Brent Stewart
September Contact Elder	Darwin Thomas