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Integration Essay: Abortion

The integration essay is about the issue of Abortion regarding its ethical and religious implications in society. The concept of abortion is gaining ground in recent times and now it has been declared legal in many countries under the influence of progressive approaches in medical sciences and in general ethics. According to the definition of medical terms, the process of abortion is the expulsion or removal of a human fetus before its ability to survive outside the womb. There are two main categories of abortion including induced and spontaneous ones. The spontaneous one is the natural process and a mother has no control in this situation. It occurs as a result of miscarriage or the expulsion of the fertilized egg from the body of the mother through her monthly periods. The other method is induced abortion, which imparts many outside interventions of medical practices to end the life process of a fetus. The statistical analysis shows that only in the United States, between one third to one-quarter of all the pregnancy cases resulted in abortion. Abortion has become the 2nd most common surgical operation in the United States. The basic question or theme of the debate is whether this process of destroying the fetus by external intervention is a moral dilemma or not. If there is a dispute on the issue of moral and ethical grounds, what are the religious and ethical responses regarding abortion?

In the history of Christianity, there are many views regarding the actual status of fetus and embryo. There existed a distinction about some of the consequent variations in analyzing the sin, about the status of the embryo and the local differences among people. The sin was sometimes associated with marriage and also with lechery in some cases and was used many methods to carry out abortion in those times. Those methods include the use of drugs, association of magic and also sometimes use of different techniques to impart danger. There existed many social reasons for this act and were well known from the best philosophers and the doctors but those reasons cannot be regarded as the justification for the abortion. However, generally, the central concern that was more closely connected to the Christian life was rejecting abortion.

The opponents and critics believe that this act is in accordance with taking the life of a human being. The concept of ‘future like yours’ can be presented as an account of the wrongness of killing. According to the Federal Victims of Violence, unborn babies are considered human beings and their disposing of or removal is considered as a murder. The unique genetic identity that does not change throughout a person’s life starts upon fertilization. This gives a fundamental right to that individual of life and this life must be protected. The opponents of this idea believe that during the procedure of abortion, the fetuses feel pain if they are more than 20 weeks of gestation. Dr. Bernard Nathanson who was previously a specialist doctor of abortion and later became a pro-life activist and started raising voice against abortion. He said that during the process of abortion, it is seen that the child’s mouth is opened and it screams, called silent scream. HE believes that a child feels immense pain during the procedure. The important notable point often presented by the opponents of these concepts is the promotion of a culture where a human life’s worth is undermined(Don). The legalization of this practice suggests that the message depicts that human life is of no value. The proponents and supporters of abortion feel that this act is legal as supported by the supreme court’s verdict in 1973, by declaring abortion legal and a fundamental right of the citizens (Rebecca). The women rights activists and leftists all around the globe generally support this notion of having a reproductive choice of whether or not produce children. They consider it as a symbol of women empowerment. Apart from that, modern procedures and techniques used are comparatively safe and reliable and are immune to result in long-lasting health disorders including infertility and cancer. One main important point that supports abortion id the choice for women to allow or deny the survival of the kid who is diagnosed with abnormalities which are profound.

The issue of abortion can be studied and analyzed by understanding the Christian concept of Liberation. The theology of Liberation is based on analyses of socio economic behavior of individuals in a society. The general maxims involved in the understanding of the concept are political liberation and social concerns for poor and oppressed people. It has its roots in Catholic church in Latin America as a moral reaction to social injustice and poverty. The theory suggests that one intend to do a crime or sin because of greed and rapacity (Stephens). It is important to eradicate theses tendencies of greed and fear of the future from a financial point of view. Abortion is one such crime in this regard, which may urge a person to remove fetus to prevent future financial expenses. Several religious doctrines and scriptures lay great stress that providing sustenance is the responsibility of the Almighty and one not to worry about future financial prospectus and shall not kill a human being because of such concerns.

Ethical Debate

Christian ethics are the subject of theology in which behaviors are defined. This is often termed as systematic or moral theology. For example, how the poor should behave in society and how a rich person should have a positive behavior towards the poor is all included in this discipline. Women and men are equal or not, children's development is essentially important to be completed in an ethical way and societal and communal norms should be designed for a prosperous society is a part of the debate which is included in Christian ethics. Various studies have shown that ethics is a significant part of Christian societies and communities. People living in this society are more organized and well-behaved however, different cultures have been found in the societies and is equally responsible to modify Christian ethics such as integrity, realism, and liberation. Ethicists are more concerned to develop a society according to the norms and cultures that have preserved for years. The society is being disintegrated into various levels through various activities and policies of communities. Treating children, women and war issues have changed the debate more towards peace and harmony. Christian society is more concerned about peace and harmony among communities.

The approach and strategy of virtue ethics are more popular in recent years. Christian ethics or theology is known to be formed or influenced majorly by Wesleyan Quadrilateral. The life of Christians is completely modified according to the Bible and its principles. Ethics of Christians are implemented in almost all aspects of life such as, alcohol, abortion, divorce, homosexuality, slavery and violence. According to various theories of ethics, it has been known that ethical principles are modified over time.

Virtues and Principles

The seven major Christian virtues formed from two sets of virtues that is theological virtues and cardinal virtues. The cardinal virtues are justice, restraint, courage and prudence. Theological virtues are hope, faith, and love. Prudence is a form of wisdom in the Christian ethics. Fairness and justness are included injustice. Courage and endurance are a part of fear and uncertainty in the life of Christians. Faith and hope is essentially important for Christian ethics to have trust and belief in God. Expectations to desire something is directly associated with receiving something and hope is an essential part of it. Charity is a form of love and is supernatural power to belief in God, to love God and to serve others to attain spiritual purity.

Abortion

According to the Roman Catholic Church, human life is important to be protected from its early conception. In Christian ethics, abortion was not denied in history nor it is prohibited in any ear however, they respect and admire human life. Though various concepts are present among Americans such as African Americans are more towards anti-abortion as compared to White Protestants. History has shown that there was no explicit prohibition of abortion in the early life of Christians. Human development starts even at its conception.

It is believed that human life is respected and admired among Christians of all ethnic groups. They have a concept that human life starts its growth from conception and nobody can have right to abolish its growth. Hospitals and healthcare facilities promoting abortion are often discriminated in terms of violating ethical principles while performing this activity. However, Christians projected principles that are in opposition to abort even at stage of conception. Christians have admitted that through chemotherapy and hysterectomy of a pregnant lady if causes the death of the fetus is morally and ethically acceptable. Scripture is often silent on abortion as various elements of Christians and their ethical opinions are present in scripture in different topics such as Genesis 4:1; Job 31:15; and Jeremiah 1:5, between others.

Christian ethics and principles are clear regarding abortion. Various studies have revealed that ethical concerns in abolishing pregnancy strictly prohibit abortion in Christian ethics. Abortion is considered a sin in ancient and modern Christianity. However, the debate has shown that there are various concepts in healthcare facilities regarding abortion. Numerous physicians and healthcare providers offered abortion services in cases that women's health is compromised and some are against abortion. Ethical principles are in favor of perceiving pregnancy rather a life-threatening condition occurs. Other principles and ethical views of Christian are against abortion as they believe that human life started from its early age that is conception. Medical and clinical studies have shown that human life starts its development from early conception time. Ethical principles are observed to be in favoring life to protect and admire human life. Scripture and other beliefs in Christianity are often observed silently in abortion issue whereas Christian ethical views are always in favor of preserving human life. Though there is no explicit prohibition of abortion in old and New Testament.  
According to Cannon, individuals who permit or attempt abortion will have ultimately automatic ex-communication from Church. ELCA opposes the concept of abortion whereas The Anglican Church of Australia is in a state of silence regarding abortion. Various individual Churches are observed to have different and diverse concepts regarding abortion however, the overall concept of abortion was prohibited subject to a serious complication of life to woman or child. Communities of Christian states that there are a diverse range of statements present regarding abortion and attempt to follow abortion. Various debates were performed and the dilemma continues whether to consider abortion a murder or ethically a simple medical procedure. Ethicist Benjamin Wiker, have compared the exclusion of abortion in advanced Christian civilizations with the convenience of abortion that was existent in former Roman civilization, quarreling that it reproduces broader disapproval of pagan practices.

Catholics disapprove of the concept of abortion that is morally wrong in any case whereas abortion is considered a medical procedure by many Protestants. Medical studies have proved that abortion is the death of the fetus as it starts growing from the early conception period. In medical science, abortion is recommended only in certain cases that are life-threatening states for women such as cancers, hysterectomy, and other related issues. Various physicians recommend abortion in cases they identified underdevelopment of fetus or fetal anomalies is evaluated. Numerous studies have been evaluated but the debate is a long ongoing process in which Christian ethics are recognized as moral obligations to be followed by the societies. Controversies are existing in abortion and ethical issues related to abortion. Abortion is a debate of moral, legal and ethical controversies however, ancient and modern Christianity also does not favor abortion and abortion principles. The Christian societies are in a phase of transition and transformation in which diversified information is shared among communities. Some are in favor of abortion ethically and morally whereas few are against this procedure considering it a sin.

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