

# When is Abortion Permissible? An Analysis of Morally Justified Abortion according to Traditional Christian Values

Selina Wang

## POSTER PRESENTATION

**ABSTRACT:** Is an abortion always a morally unjustifiable act of evil, or are there situations that make some abortions more justifiable than others? What are the effects of extenuating circumstances, and to what extent does the environment impact the morality of decisions related to abortion? In examining these questions based on literature published by traditional bioethicists such as Charles Camosy and others, research demonstrates that the Catholic Church provides no clear answer. In order to examine this topic, the researcher analyzed three different hypothetical situations where the moral object of abortion and the method of abortion came under question. The first situation involves a woman who became pregnant after being sexually assaulted. Christian bioethicists still have no clear judgement for such cases. The second example involves a woman who had uterine cancer. Because this is a case of vital conflicts, most Christian bioethicists believe that abortion may be permissible. The third example involves an embryo that has implanted in the fallopian tube; however, removal method is under question. Some bioethicists argue that removing the fallopian tube is acceptable because it is an indirect method whereas taking methotrexate is not acceptable because that is a direct abortion. Others believe that either method is acceptable. Because of varying opinions as to what type of abortion is morally justifiable, the debate continues on. Most Christian bioethicists agree that all fetuses are human from the moment of inception, but extenuating circumstances make the moral justification of abortions a topic of contention even today.

**FACULTY MENTOR:** Joshua Evans