The development of soul and the implications for medical ethics.

Stuart Wayne. Dawes

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUL

and

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR MEDICAL ETHICS

by

STUART WAYNE DAWES

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through the Department of Religious Studies in Partial fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Windsor

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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUL AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR MEDICAL ETHICS

by

Stuart Wayne Dawes

Modern day attitudes in medical ethics, specifically in such areas as abortion, euthanasia and genetic engineering, demonstrate a bias towards arbitrary decisions that are rooted in a secular humanistic philosophy which unfortunately has displaced the absolute values of the Judeo-Christian ethic. A "quality" of life ethic has replaced a "sanctity" of life ethic, with very little consideration for the value of personhood. If the unborn child or the senile adult, for that matter, is an ensouled human being, made in the image of God and destined for resurrection, then more careful consideration and guidelines must be used in the various areas of medical ethics.

It is my thesis that man is in the process of becoming; that the immaterial (soul-spirit) aspect of man is an integral part of a human being and that it develops in accordance with the body and all life functions. This concept finds support in such disciplines as Theology, Biblical studies, Philosophy and Psychology, as well as medical science. While
there is significant agreement that man in his "wholeness" is in a process of development, it must also be considered that any attempt, therefore, to point to a decisive moment of humanization is arbitrary and inadequate. Because no line can be drawn, with any confidence, which can mark when humanity begins and when it ends, i.e., when someone becomes a human person or ceases to be a human person, the benefit of any doubt must be given to those who cannot defend themselves or speak for themselves.

Decisions in medical ethics, then, must take into account the rights of the unborn as well as the handicapped, etc., as much as the rights of what might be considered the perfectly normal and desired human being. Arbitrary sociological law which has opened the door to such abuses as abortion and euthanasia for social and eugenic considerations, and other forms of medical violence and social engineering must be replaced with a system of values that reflects a loving and humane concern for man at every stage of development. A return to the absolutes found in Holy Writ and propagated in the historic Christian faith is essential to the prevention of the continuation of the present holocaust in medical ethics.
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I would like to especially thank Miss Thelma Mackness who cheerfully undertook the unenviable task of typing this manuscript from what most would consider to be undecipherable etchings - my handwriting.

To my wife, Mafalda, my best critic and greatest inspiration, I express my deepest thanks. To her and to my son, Dale, I owe a great debt of thanks for their patience and understanding.

Finally, I acknowledge my gratitude to my Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, whose gifts and callings are without repentance.

Stuart W. Dawes
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INTRODUCTION

"At the very least, I think it is arguable that who one is most fundamentally is a persona in-relationships and that any action which destroys or denigrates the capacity for meaningful acts of relationships is therefore destructive of self-hood or humanism as we know it."  

Ever since the Supreme Court’s landmark decision in 1973, Roe v. Wade, that a woman’s right to privacy outweighed all other considerations during the first three months of pregnancy and that abortion was a private matter between a patient and her physician, there has been a great deal of emotional debate over the subject of the right of the unborn and abortion. What are the issues involved? Daniel Callahan cites a number of them.

"It is a MORAL problem because it raises the question of nature and control of incipient life. It is a MEDICAL problem because the doctor is the person normally called upon to perform the abortion; both his conscience and his medical skills come into play. It is a question of USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS for the purported improvement of human life. It is a LEGAL problem because it raises the question of the extent to which society should concern itself with the unborn life, with motherhood, with family life, with public control of the medical profession. It is a SOCIOLOGICAL problem as it touches on "woman's" role in society, our social system -

family organization, and disorganization, national demographic policies, and the role of informal and formal sanctions. It is a DEMOGRAPHIC problem because at one level it raises the questions of whether abortion provides a useful, desirable and legitimate method of population limitation where such limitation is needed. At another level there is the fact that, for good or ill, it is already being used in many parts of the world. It is a PSYCHOLOGICAL problem because in one way or the other, the attitude of human beings towards conception, pregnancy, birth and child-rearing touches deep-rooted drives, instincts, emotions, taboos.

There is no doubt that there are many facets to the issue. As Plato has put it "...we ought to consider more carefully, for this is no light matter: it is the question, what is the right way to live?" 3

There is little doubt that the crux of the abortion issue is when (or even whether) a fetus is recognized as being a human being. Is the fetus a person? If the product of conception (to use a pro-abortion euphemism) is merely a lump of jelly or a blob of tissue, then what we do to the fetus is of little consequence; but if this object within the womb is indeed a person, then our views on abortion must be the product of careful consideration. Emotional rhetoric on the subject must not form the basis for our decisions. Rather, we must zero in on the main issues and after honest evaluation take our positions. "I stress this

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point because I think that moral philosophers cannot insist too much on the importance of factual knowledge and conceptual clarity for the solution of moral and social problems. The two besetting sins in our prevailing habits of ethical thinking are our ready acquiescence in unclarity and our complacence in ignorance.\(^4\)

In order for us then to come to intelligent, Christian decisions on the question of abortion, (and any other ethical issue) it behooves us to deal fairly with the relevant evidence. For the scientist dealing with the right to life, the discussion centres on blood pressure, heart beat, brain activity, etc. For the theologian the main issue has always been the question of ensoulment. This is not to say that all theological schools of thought would consider that ensoulment is the most important aspect of the abortion debate. Joseph Fletcher, for instance, would say that the overriding guiding principle for ethical decisions is love, although he seems to take ensoulment into consideration, taking a negative stand when he declares that the fetus has no claim to right of life because it is "not a moral or personal being since it lacks freedom, self-determination, rationality, ability to choose either means or ends, and

knowledge of its circumstances."  

One must question the validity of his position, as the same things could be said about a day-old baby, or an adult in a coma. For Fletcher, to speak of the rights of the fetus is no more appropriate than to speak of the rights of the appendix. Historically, however, the theological discussions have revolved around when a person gets or becomes a living soul. Based on the answer to this question, positions have been taken by the Christian church on the abortion issue. Indeed, if it is found that there is a human person before birth and perhaps even as far back as conception, then all other questions surrounding the abortion debate become pale in comparison.

It is my thesis that man becomes a living soul (Gen. 2:7), that the soul is an integral part of a human being and that it develops in accordance with the body and all life functions. If that is then, the case, there are some tremendous implications in the area of medical ethics, in particular with such issues as abortion and euthanasia as well as in the relatively new area of genetic engineering. It will be the purpose of this paper, to consider the whole area of ensoulment

from a Biblical and Theological perspective and to apply the findings to the ethical issues mentioned above.

While speaking from a conservative Protestant position, I concur with the words of Rev. James T. McHugh, speaking at the United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C.

"Roman Catholic moral teaching has traditionally held that human life begins when God infuses the soul, the distinguishing feature of human existence. Man's life and God-given destiny, then, are necessarily intertwined. From the first moments of his existence he is caught up into an ongoing personal relationship with his Creator, one that reaches fulfillment in final and eternal union."

THE CONCEPT OF SOUL AND THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

A. Old Testament

While it would be agreed that the Old Testament attests to God's love, concern and purpose for the child yet in the mother's womb, Old Testament scholars do not all agree on what the Bible has to say about the beginnings of life. It would be a lot easier if the Bible spoke more directly on the subject rather than mysteriously as the writer of Ecclesiastes does in 11:5 when he confesses ignorance of how a body is formed in the womb of a pregnant woman. Men like Harley Smith attempt to get more out of this verse than most would allow by quoting it from the New English Bible where it reads, "You do not know how a pregnant woman comes to have a body and a living spirit in her womb; nor do you know how God, the maker of all things, works." If this translation were sustained by the Hebrew, then we would have, a very unusual reference to human life in the womb. Most translations and commentaries opt for the translation that has the author making two parallel statements to show the limitations of human understanding. The N.I.V. says, "As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in the mother's womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker

7 I am indebted to Rev. Alvin Schindel, Sask. for some thoughts on this section.

8 Harley Smith, "The Bible and the Unborn Child" in The Right to Birth, EDS. Eugene Fairweather and Ian Gentiles (Toronto: The Anglican Book Centre) p. 28
of all things." Most translations take "ruah" to mean wind as the N.I.V. does, rather than to mean spirit as in the N.E.B. "Ruah" is, of course, translated both ways depending on the context. It is safe, however, to say that the Bible describes God as the source of all life (Gen. 2:7), that God somehow participates in the development of the individual before birth (Job 10:8, 9; Psa. 139:16), that sometimes He intervenes to allow childless women to conceive (Gen. 17:19; 29:21; 30:22), and that God has a personal interest in individuals from the time of conception (Jer. 1:5). For some, these Scriptures carry considerable weight. Others would point out that such recognition simply teaches that God is interested in humans at every stage of development.

To examine in more detail what the Old Testament says about the beginning of life, we turn to Ex. 21:22-25. This is a critical passage for us because it also bears on the subject of abortion. The Hebrew text reads: "v.22 If men strive together and strike a pregnant woman, and her children come forth, and there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband shall put upon him, and he shall pay with judges (what the judges decide). v. 23 But if injury happens, you shall give life for life, v.24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for
foot, v.25 burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." The commonly accepted view found in most translations and commentaries, 9 is that: (1) v.22 refers to a miscarriage, the death of the unborn, and (2) this death is the injury for which the guilty party is only fined. If further injury occurs, i.e. to the mother then 'lex talionis' would be invoked. This traditional position has in recent years been propagated by such men as Bruce Waltke 10 and is even supported by some evangelicals such as Wayne House. 11 Based on this view then abortion becomes permissible because God does not regard the fetus as a soul no matter how far gestation has progressed. If, on the other hand, it can be established that the reference here is to a premature live birth rather than a miscarriage and that harm done to either the mother or child invoked the principle of 'lex talionis' then the importance and value of the unborn is placed on

9 See: The New Bible Commentary, The Interpreter's Bible, The Beacon Bible Commentary, Lange's Commentary, Broadman, Wesleyan & Wycliffe Commentaries, etc. Also: Moffat's translation, Goodspeed, Berkley, Jerusalem, New American, Amplified and Douay Versions.

10 Bruce Waltke "The Old Testament and Birth Control", Christianity Today, Nov. 8, 1968, pp. 3-6

the same level as that of the adult. This view has been defended recently by Jack W. Cottrell and is supported by Kiel and Delitzsch, Umberto Cassuto, and the N.I.V. which translates Ex. 21:22-25

"If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."

Accordingly, then verse 22 refers, not to the miscarriage, as indicated by some translations, but to the premature birth of an otherwise healthy child. This would seem to be consistent with the most natural interpretation of the Hebrew text.

It is noted that in the phrase found in the A.V. "so that her fruit depart" the common Hebrew word for child yeled is used. The verb in this phrase is yatza which simply means to "go out" or "come forth" and is so translated in such Scriptures as Gen. 15:4, 46:26, I Kings 8:19, Isa. 39:7, Eccles. 5:15, Jer. 1:5, 20:18 etc. when reference is made to the ordinary birth of


a child. Also, if the resulting harm had been a mis-
carriage rather than a premature birth, one would
wonder why the specific word for miscarriage shachol
had not been used. It would seem then that to be true
to the text we must take the position that the unborn
child is considered to be a separate human being having
the same intrinsic value as the mother and offered
equal protection and therefore equal right to live. As
Montgomery points out, "To interpret the passage in any
other way is to strain the text intolerably, and efforts
at emendation (such as what S. R. Driver commended as
Budde's "clever" suggestions) are neither necessary nor
helpful. The original text places a value on fetal
life equal to that accorded to adult life, and in doing
so perfectly conjoins with the rest of Holy Writ."14

Another significant Scripture which deals with the
beginnings of life is Ps. 139:13-16. The abundant use
of personal and possessive pronouns used in this Psalm
indicates a sense of continuity and personal identity
throughout the various stages of life. The Psalmist in
talking about his condition in his mother's womb,
attributes his creation to God and acknowledges that
this work of God is awe-inspiring. As John Stott points
out, "Here is a plain affirmation that the growth of the
fetus is neither haphazard, nor automatic, but a divine

14 Montgomery, op. cit., p. 101
work of creative skill." The Psalmist rejoices in the fact that, though unseen by men, he was not hidden from God during this important stage in his development, and he finally expresses his confidence in a God who looked on him when he was unformed and at the same time either mapped out his days in advance or else planned the various stages of his embryonic development in advance. The Hebrew allows for either of the latter two ideas.

One interesting note brought out by Dr. Daniel Hinthorn has to do with the word "substance" in verse 16. The Hebrew word from which it comes is the noun, golem, and this is the only place where it is used in scripture. It probably comes from the Hebrew verb, galam, which is found in II Kings 2:8 where a reference is made to Elijah rolling or wrapping his mantle. This rolling or folding of the group of cells gastrulation, in the early development of the zygote takes place around the time of implantation of the fertilized ovum in the wall of the uterus. It is at this stage of development that the Psalmist declares that God writes in his book, either recording the days


of his life mapped out in advance or else stating that
the "embryonic members were likewise planned and known
before the many stages (day by day) of their develop-
ment".\textsuperscript{17} It would seem that in God's sight this is a
significant point in the gestation period and that he
shows a special interest in the individual at this
folded embryo stage. Hithorn believes it is at this
point that human life begins.

Other scriptures such as Jer. 1:5 which declares
that the prophet was set apart and ordained of God
before he came out of the womb, and similar New Testa-
ment passages like Luke 1:5-17 show that something
special is going on in the life of an individual even
before birth, and is demonstrated by this purposeful
choosing by God. Another interesting text which shows
God's creative activity in the womb is found in
II Maccabees 7 where the mother of the seven sons being
martyred for keeping the laws of their fathers, en-
courages her sons by saying "v.22 I do not know how you
came into being in my womb. It was not I who set in
order the elements within each of you. v.23 Therefore
the creator of the world, who shaped the beginning of
man and devised the origin of all things, will in his

\textsuperscript{17} Derek Kidner, \emph{Psalms 73-150} (London: Inter-
Varsity Press, 1975) p. 466
mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws."

Here we see not only the activity of God in creation but also we see a reference to the origin of all things and to the hope in the resurrected body (cf. 7:9, 11), subjects yet to be discussed.

We will now consider the Old Testament concept of soul. The usual Hebrew word for soul in the Old Testament is *nephesh* which occurs some 754 times with various shades of meaning. Initially it meant 'possessing life' as in Gen. 2:7 and as such it is sometimes used of animals as in Gen. 1:20, 24, 30; 9:12, 15, 16, etc. It also denotes the seat of physical appetite (Num. 21:5; Deut. 12:15, 20, 21, etc.), the source of emotion (Job 30:25; Ps. 86:4, etc.) and it is associated with the will and moral action (Gen. 49:6; Deut. 4:29, etc.). *Nephesh* is in effect the subject of personal life. "Therefore to the soul belongs the personality of the individual. The 'soul' longs, pants, desires, melteth for heaviness, fainteth for God's salvation, abhorreth dainty meat, loathes, is satisfied, is bowed down, cleaveth to the dust, quiets itself like a weaned child."¹⁸ This idea of individual, personal life is indicated by the Latin *anima* and *animus*.

"As anima, 'soul', the life inherent in the body, the animating principle in the blood is denoted (cf. Dt. 12: 23, 24).... As animus, 'mind', the center of our mental activities and passivities is indicated."19 It is important for us to note that the Hebrews had a very holistic view of man. The various words used to represent the different parts of man represented the whole man under different aspects. There was not a dichotomy between soul and body as in Greek thought. Indeed the nephesh or "soul" as opposed to pneuma or "spirit", which also represented personality, denoted individual life with a material organization or body. As Robinson says, "The Hellenic conception of man has been described as that of an angel in a slot machine, a soul (the invisible, spiritual, essential ego) incarcerated in a frame of matter, from which it trusts eventually to be liberated".20 He then cites Dr. Wheeler Robinson who in his book (The People and the Book, 362) expresses the Hebrew idea of personality as "an animated body, and not an incarnated soul". Davidson expresses it this way, "When united to the spirit, dust becomes flesh which may be defined living, or ensouled matter; and


spirit when united to the dust, now flesh, becomes soul, which may be called incarnate spirit.\textsuperscript{21}

B. Greek and Roman Attitudes

We have already made comment on the Greek concept of the soul. A little more needs to be said, however, on the Greek and Roman attitude towards the beginning and the sanctity of life before we deal with the New Testament. There is no doubt that our sources in this area are very limited. It would appear that while medical ethics was opposed to abortion, social and philosophical ethics to some extent endorsed it. The Oath of Hippocrates includes a definite promise not to perform an abortion, "I swear by Apollo the Physician, by Asclepius, by Health, by All-heal, and by all the gods and goddesses, that, according to my ability and judgment, I will keep this Oath and this stipulation... I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion."\textsuperscript{22} It is my understanding that this oath has now been modified for our modern day medical practitioners. In both Greek

\textsuperscript{21} Davidson op. cit. p. 203

and Roman civilization the exposure of newborns was a common occurrence. The father had complete power over his family and could do what he willed. It is not surprising that laws protecting the unborn are not to be found. The overriding factor at this time was the usefulness of the child to the father, the family and the state. Roman law did not view the fetus as a human being but rather as part of the maternal visura. This was a view held by the stoics. While a person might be punished for selling abortifacient drugs then, the reason would not be for fear of harming the fetus who had no rights but for possible harm to the mother. Both Plato in his *Republic* (5.9.) and Aristotle in his *Politics* (7.14.10.) condone abortion when 'necessary', the state's ideals and needs taking precedence over any rights of the unborn. As Michael Gorman states, "... concern for the unborn was minimal or nonexistent. The underlying legal principles in these attitudes were undoubtedly the continued though weakened importance of the paterfamilias, the traditional condemnation of poisons, the idea of a crime as fundamentally an offense against the state and, above all; the view that the fetus is not a human being - a Stoic notion given legal status according to the important Roman jurist Papinian

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23 See Justinian *Digest* 35.29.1.; 25.4.1.1.
(A.D. 140-212). One has to wonder then, whether the Greeks and Romans were very concerned about the origin and development of life or whether the importance of the city state did not take full priority and engulf any other criteria for the welfare of the child.

A brief word should be said about what has been termed the Alexandrian School which was greatly influenced by Greek philosophy and pagan thought. The Septuagint in the portion of Scripture Ex. 21:22-25 renders the word "ason" as "form" rather than "harm" — "if there be form, then shalt thou give life for life." The "lex talionis" principle is then applied to the fetus instead of the mother. While Plato believed life begins at conception and the stoics believed it began at birth, here we have the via media of Aristotle and a distinction being made between 'embryo informatus' and 'embryo formatus', a fetus not yet "formed" and one already "formed". Aristotle believed the human soul was infused into the fetus when it took on the human form and figure i.e. forty days for a male and ninety days for a female. In the case of a 'formed fetus' then the death penalty is prescribed.

In the apocryphal literature we can also see Hellenistic influence. In Wisdom 3:1, the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God. In Wisdom 9:15 a perishable body weighs down the soul. Pollution of souls is mentioned in Wisdom 14:26 and no healing can be found for the soul in Wisdom 16:9 so that it must perish.

This same influence is discernible in Josephus. Here we see the immortality of the soul and its true life separated from the body. cf. War 2, 154; Ant. 18, 18; War 2, 163; War 7, 341. There is little doubt that where men were caught up in a dichotomy of body and soul it was due to Hellenistic influence. One wonders if even Luke is not showing the influence of typical Hellenistic ideas in such stories as the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:23, and in the well known saying in Luke 23:43, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."

The fact that there is not a separate judgment of body and soul would point to a connection between the two. The typical Jewish hope is in a resurrection, and an eschatological judgment on both body and soul.

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C. The New Testament

"In the Christian doctrine of man the central idea is not psyche but pneuma. In Paul's exposition of it he modifies the Old Testament emphasis on nepes (LXX psyche) and switches to pneuma because he at once considered man from the viewpoint of his experience of Christ."26 This is Donald Guthrie's explanation of the difference of the use of the word psyche - soul, in Paul's writings as compared to the nephesh - soul of the Old Testament. Paul uses the term for soul only thirteen times and with a variety of meanings. In such Scriptures as Romans 11:3, 16:4; I Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 1:23; Phil. 2:30 and I Thess. 2:8 the meaning is life. In other texts eg. Eph. 6:6; Phil. 1:27 and Col. 3:23 desire is indicated and in I Thess. 5:23 the idea of emotion is predominant. It would seem that Paul's use of the word 'soul' is overshadowed by the word 'spirit', which stands in direct contrast to the flesh (sarx).

There has been some debate on Paul's usage of the terms 'body', 'soul' and 'spirit' in I Thess. 5:23, pointing to the possibility of Paul viewing man as a triad. As John Robinson says, however, "...there is no attempt any more than in the Old Testament, to regard man as

trichotomy or dichotomy of exclusive elements."  

Guthrie observes, "If the apostles' use of the terms elsewhere had been uniform there might well have been some support for the triad view. Since in this passage Paul is concerned with the preservation of the whole man, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the piling up of terms is for emphasis rather than for definition."  

For Paul the use of psyche and pneuma in the passage refers merely to the same immaterial part of man in its lower and higher aspects. Perhaps it could be said that, "the 'pneuma' is the outbreathing of God into the creature, the life-principle derived from God. The psyche is man's individual possession, that which distinguishes one man from another and from inanimate nature."  

McDonald puts it this way, citing Bultmann, "Even in the Pauline anthropology itself, 'Man does not consist of two parts, much less of three; nor are psyche and pneuma special faculties or principles (within one soma) of a mental life higher than his animal life. Rather, man is a living unity.' "  

Heb. 4:12 which talks of a dividing asunder of soul and spirit

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27 Robinson, op. cit., p. 27
28 Guthrie, op. cit., p. 165
29 Morris, op. cit.
poses a similar problem as I Thess. 5:23. Here the reference is probably to some conceptual division rather than some other discernable aspect of man's nature. F. F. Bruce commenting on this scripture says "That the word of God probes the inmost recesses of our spiritual being and brings the subconscious motives to light is what is meant." 31

The majority of the examples in the New Testament of the use of the word psychē occur in the narrative portions with 37 occurrences in the Synoptics, 15 in Acts and 10 in the Gospel of John. The remaining few references, apart from the Pauline epistles are found in Revelation, Hebrews, I & II Peter, James and I & II John. Throughout the idea of soul as meaning 'life itself' is strongly expressed, e.g. Mark 8:35, Luke 14:26, etc. The rich man in Luke 12:19 addresses his soul, i.e. he speaks to himself. In John 10:11 we see Jesus laying down his psychē for the sheep. cf. John 13:27. When Paul talks about people risking their lives for his, psychē is used. (Rom. 16:4) In I Thess. 2:8 Paul and his co-workers gives their 'souls' (total beings) for the work of the churches. We also see in the New Testament the equivalent use of the terms "my soul" and "I", a carry over from the Old Testament.

31 F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, (Grand Rapids, Mich., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1964) p. 82
"To such a degree is the soul the summing up of the whole personality, of the whole self of a person, that "soul" can be equivalent in meaning to "I myself" or "yourself". 32

D. Philosophical Concepts

It is impossible for us to give an in-depth analysis of what the philosophers have said about the soul. Such is beyond the scope and purpose of this paper. A few brief comments, relevant to our discussion, however, are worth noting. We have already seen how Plato is the spokesman for a dualistic view of man and that his thought has influenced the thinking of many other scholars. Aquinas and Descartes are only two of the great thinkers who have incorporated Platonic elements into their formulations concerning the soul. Indeed "...everyone who maintains that the mind or the soul is a substance, in the sense that it could significantly be said to exist alone and disembodied, is thereby Platonicizing, and everyone who identifies this putative substantial mind or soul as the real or true person is adopting a fully Platonic

position." 33 Aristotle, on the other hand, while not as dogmatic or as consistent as Plato is a defender of a monistic view. For Aristotle the unity of soul and body is like that of "the wax and the shape given to it by the die." Either way the traditional theories of the soul have involved its distinction from and relation to the body; body and soul usually being correlative terms, each affecting the other.

Two areas of specific concern that stand out in philosophical discussion, and that are of importance to our discussion, are the mind (soul)-body problem and the concept of the immortality of the soul. Certainly since the rise of modern philosophy in the seventeenth century and as a result of certain views held by the great French philosopher, René Descartes, various metaphysicians have tried to construct theories about the nature of mind and body and the connections between them. According to Descartes' (The Principles of Philosophy), the essential property of a mind is that it thinks, and the essential property of body is that it is 'extended'. The realms of thought and extension are completely different. But even Descartes who defined the soul, as Plato did, as an immaterial

entity having its own right and capable of existing by itself, did not ascribe to the human soul complete independence of the human body. Scientific evidence seemed to lead him to some conflicting and contradictory conclusions. He was impressed with the fact that a pin jabbed into the physical extended finger is followed by pain in the unextended mind. What was even more interesting to him was the fact that persons who had lost a limb could be led to think that this 'limb' was being moved, merely by a stimulation of the nervous system. Some kind of contact between the mental and physical worlds was established. Descartes' views were questioned, and he could give no satisfactory defense. He admitted the difficulty of trying to explain how mind and body were related. In June of 1643 he wrote a letter to an admirer, Princess Elizabeth of the Palatinate in which he throws up his hands in despair and tells her that the union of mind and body is a primitive and unanalyzable notion and is best understood by not thinking about it. While Descartes was not always consistent, his influence has been enormous. As Williams comments, "The Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid wrote that Malebranche, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume shared 'a common system of the human understanding' that 'may still be called the Cartesian
system, and this very true remark could be extended through the history of philosophy into modern times."\(^{34}\) Again he says, "The problems posed by Descartes' dualism remain at the heart of much contemporary philosophical inquiry, the work of Gilbert Ryle and Ludwig Wittgenstein, for example, being aimed directly against what are still very powerful Cartesian conceptions."\(^{35}\)

Other metaphysicians sought to find an answer to the mind-body problem. Thomas Hobbes developed a materialistic theory, maintaining that every idea of pain, perception and so on, is nothing but a set of physical events in the brain. Some thinkers today, including some behaviourist psychologists, hold to a modified form of this theory. Epiphenomenalism, one variation of the materialistic theory, says that our thought processes are not just physical states but rather the by-products of physical occurrences something akin to the spark from a wheel or the smoke from a fire.

In contrast to Hobbes, who reduced the whole life of the mind to physical motions, we have the Idealism of Bishop George Berkeley who insisted that everything is mental rather than physical. For Berkeley, the world had no objective existence apart from the mind.


\(^{35}\) Ibid.
Malebranche taught a theory that is called Occasionalism. This idea stressed a complete distinction between mind and body. Every effect in the world is caused by God. An event in one realm is the occasion for an act of God in the other.

Leibnitz held to a curious theory of parallel movements that he referred to as 'pre-established harmony'. This theory depends on every entity constituting an independent monad. All monads are in perfect order, and so, while being independent, work together in a total universal harmony. According to Leibnitz, there is no interaction between body and mind.

Spinoza, a monist, claimed that body and mind were aspects or attributes of the one and the same entity. While nature has an infinite number of attributes, mind and matter are the only two perceived by man. Spinoza identified God with the universe, a basic pantheistic position.

These various theories, including those of some more recent writers such as Gilbert Ryle (Concept of the Mind) and H. D. Lewis (The Elusive Mind), demonstrate some

of the difficulties involved in the mind-body problem. 37 Jerome Shaffer sums up his feelings on the matter in this manner:

"The mind-body problem remains a source of acute discomfort to philosophers. There have been many attempts to prove that it is a 'pseudo problem', but none has stood up under scrutiny. There have been many attempts to solve it, but at present no solution stands out as markedly superior to the others. Nor does it seem that new empirical information will furnish a decisive test for one theory or another. It may well be that the relation between mind and body is an ultimate, unique, and unanalyzable one. If so, philosophical wisdom would consist in giving up the attempt to understand the relation in terms of other, more familiar ones and accepting it as the anomaly it is." 38

It is not surprising that the question of the mind's relation to the body has occasioned hot debate through the centuries, for upon the decision reached in this area of philosophical thinking, may depend the conclusions reached on matters of theology and ethics. For instance, is the relation of mind (soul or self) to body an intrinsic one or can they be


thought of as existing apart from one another. The answer to this affects not only the concept of immortality but other fundamental theological questions.

It is exceedingly difficult to draw any kind of satisfactory conclusions from so vast a field (only summarily dealt with above). It must be obvious, however, that there is a close relationship between mind and body. This relationship though is not so close that the mind is completely dissolved into and inseparable from the body or vice versa. In consideration of the facts of experience, perhaps a dualistic interactionist view might be an acceptable compromise.

The idea of the immortality of the soul will be discussed more, later in the paper. Suffice it to say at this point that from Plato (Phaedo [115 c.d.]) to modern spiritualists, the concept of the immortality of the soul has been formulated in some manner. Plato's idea of course, being that of an independent soul escaping from the body and the view of spiritualists that of 'astral bodies' or a 'shadow man' concept held by some of the early church fathers including Tertullian (De Anima). Aquinas in his "Treatise on the Resurrection" is one of the few writers who deals at any length with the Christian doctrine of reconstitution, and the idea of sheer omnipotence, through the resurrection of the body, producing immortal beings. To this glorious hope we will turn later.
II. THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL

According to the Bible and the creation account of Genesis, the divine plan for humanity and the propagation of the human race was that man and woman "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth." Gen. 1:28. There is no doubt that through the procreative process new bodies are produced and brought into the world. The same process, with some variations can be seen throughout the animal kingdom. If, as would seem obvious from the evidence, there is another aspect to man, (the soul), how is it generated? What is its origin?

Traditionally in the Christian church, three main concepts of the origin of the soul have been debated. The reasons for the three are briefly stated by McDonald:

"The Eastern church, in its stress on the continuing kinship between God and man, sought to bring God into the closest relationship with the historical beginning and temporal existence of every person. The Western church, on the other hand, by emphasizing God's otherness from the created order, and the depths of the yawning gap between the human and the divine consequence upon man's sin, saw God's contact with man in the world as more distant, and more the appearance of an occasional Sovereign Intruder...Emphasizing man's essential spiritual nature, Origen conceived of the relation between God and man in terms of spirit with Spirit, and therefore as a relationship running back beyond its connection with the body in the space-time world."

1 McDonald, op. cit., p. 68
These views were expressed in three theories: The Pre-existence of souls; Creationism and Traducianism.

A. The Pre-existence of Souls

This theory states that the souls of men have existed in some previous pre-Adamic state where they were angelic in nature. In that state, some souls chose a course of evil and became demons; some chose a course of good and became God's providential emissaries in the present world. Those who took a middle course became men. As a punishment for their actions they are joined to material bodies in this world and are now passing through a disciplinary process with a view to restoration to their pre-existent angelic condition. As Strong says, "This view was held by Plato, Philo, and Origen; by the first, in order to explain the soul's possession of ideas not derived from sense; by the second, to account for its imprisonment in the body; by the third, to justify the disparity of conditions in which men enter the world." This concept is a leading tenet of Hinduism and it can be seen in more modern form in Theosophy. A number

2 Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology, (Westwood, N.J., Fleming H. Revell Co. 1907) p. 488
of modern advocates who have held this view, perhaps to account for inherited depravity, are Immanuel Kant (Critique of Pure Reason), Julius Muller (Doctrine of Sin) and Edward Beecher (Conflict of Ages).

There is little doubt that Origen was the leading proponent of the theory of the pre-existence of souls. The idea of a stock pile of souls existing before the Adamic race was never seriously considered by the early church, however, and Origen's views were condemned at the Synod of Constantinople 543 A.D. A number of problems are associated with the theory. Chafer points out, "Objections to this theory are threefold, namely, (a) the Scriptures are ignored. Though in his usual allegorizing method, Origen, who is said to be the 'sunrise and sunset' of the pre-existence theory, attempted to harmonize his ideas with the Word of God, his distortions of the Bible leave little semblance of its plain teachings. (b) the doctrine of original sin is discredited, though the fact of sin is recognized. And (c) there is no proof for the theory." Thieszen, who I think is


4 Example he uses are John 9:2; Mal. 1:2,3; Rom. 9:13

perhaps summing up Strong's objections 6 says "The theory has no warrant in Scripture. Indeed it contradicts Paul's teaching that all sin and death are the result of Adam's sin. The theory we are opposing holds that it is the result of sin in a previous existence; but we have no recollection of such a pre-existence. Surely, if we were personal entities in such an existence, we ought to be able to recall something about it; if we were not, it is inconceivable how we could commit sin and bring woe upon us in the present existence." 7

B. Créationism

The creation theory of the origin of the human soul argues that the soul, the immaterial part of man, is created directly and immediately by God at the time of birth or sometime before and that only the body is propagated from past generations. The essential view is clearly set forth by Lactantius (240-320) who is perhaps the first to formulate a specific statement of this theory. In his treatise

6 Strong, op. cit: pp. 489-491

"On the Workmanship of God", or, 'The Formation of Man (C. XIX)' he says, "For a body may be produced from a body, since something is contributed from both [parents]; but a soul cannot be produced from souls, because nothing can depart from a slight and incomprehensible subject. Therefore, the manner of the production of souls belongs entirely to God alone."

Among those who have supported this view are Ambrose, Jerome, Pelagius, Anselm, Peter Lombard, Aquinas and most of the Roman Catholic and Reformed theologians.

A notable exception to the latter is Dr. William Shedd, who holds to a Traducian theory. In modern times the argument for creationism has been set forth in a concise and interesting way by Tresmontant who defends his position against both the pre-existence of souls and Traducianism. He writes, "Orthodox Christian thought rejects also the doctrine according to which the human soul would be transmitted, if one can put it, by the parents, propagated by the parents, as if it were a material thing which can cut itself up, a material substance of which one can furnish a portion. Two living cells coming from two parents constitute, in uniting, a new and autonomous organism which is also a subject, a living and spiritual soul."
The materiality of two cells is not sufficient to account for this real creation of a subject, ontologically distinct from the parents. Orthodox Christian thought, following biblical thought, discerns, in the conception of a child from two cells which comes from the parents, a genuine and complete creation which can only have God himself for its author, directly.\textsuperscript{8} In effect, Tresmontant seems to be using the traditional argument that every effect must have a sufficient cause and for him the biological act of sexual intercourse is insufficient to bring about the creation of the soul. This must be an act of God.

Some of the Scriptures that have been used to support the creation theory are Numbers 16:22, Eccl. 16:7, Isa. 57:16, Zech. 12:1 etc., but as McDonald\textsuperscript{9} points out, these are Old Testament scriptures which refer to God's original creation. The arguments presented by Charles Hodge, however, are worth noting. I quote at length. His arguments are:

\begin{quote}
1. That it is more consistent with the prevailing representations of the Scriptures. In the original account of the creation there is a marked distinction made between the body and
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{9} McDonald, op. cit., p. 72
the soul. The one is from the earth, the other from God. This distinction is kept up throughout the Bible. The body and soul are not only represented as different substances, but also as having different origins. The body shall return to dust, says the wise man, and the spirit to God who gave it. Here the origin of the soul is represented as different from and higher than that of the body. The former is from God in a sense in which the latter is not: In like manner God is said to form "the spirit of man within him" (Zech. xii.1); to give "breath unto the people upon" the earth, "and spirit to them that walk therein." (Is. xiii.5.) This language nearly agrees with the account of the original creation, in which God is said to have breathed into man the breath of life, to indicate that the soul is not earthly or material, but had its origin immediately from God. Hence He is called "God of the spirits of all flesh." (Num. xvi. 22.) It could not well be said that He is God of the bodies of all men. The relation in which the soul stands to God as its God and creator is very different from that in which the body stands to Him. And hence in Heb. xii.9, it is said, "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" The obvious antithesis here presented is between those who are the fathers of our bodies and Him who is the Father of our spirits. Our bodies are derived from our earthly parents, our souls are derived from God. This is in accordance with the familiar use of the word flesh, where it is contrasted, either expressly or by implication, with the soul. Paul speaks of those who had not "seen his face in the flesh," of "the life he now lived in the flesh." He tells the Philippians that it was needful for them that he should remain "in the flesh;" he speaks of his "mortal flesh". The Psalmist says of the Messiah, "my flesh shall rest in hope," which the Apostle explains to mean that his flesh should not see corruption. In all these, and in a multitude of similar passages, flesh means the body, and "fathers of our flesh" means fathers of our bodies. So far, therefore, as the Scriptures reveal anything on the subject, their authority is against traducianism and in favour of creationism.

Argument from the Nature of the Soul.

2. The latter doctrine, also, is clearly most
consistent with the nature of the soul. The soul is admitted, among Christians, to be immaterial and spiritual. It is indivisible. The traducian doctrine denies this universally acknowledged truth. It asserts that the soul admits of "separation or division of essence." On the same ground that the Church universally rejected the Gnostic doctrine of emanation as inconsistent with the nature of God as a spirit, it has, with nearly the same unanimity, rejected the doctrine that the soul admits of division of substance. This is so serious a difficulty that some of the advocates of the ex traduce doctrine endeavour to avoid it by denying that their theory assumes any such separation or division of the substance of the soul. But this denial avails little. They maintain that the same numerical essence which constituted the soul of Adam constitutes our souls. If this be so, then either humanity is a general essence of which individual men are the modes of existence, or what was wholly in Adam is distributively, partitively, and by separation, in the multitude of his descendants. Derivation of essence, therefore, does imply, and is generally admitted to imply, separation or division of essence. And this must be so if numerical identity of essence in all mankind is assumed to be secured by generation or propagation.

3. A third argument in favour of creationism and against traducianism is derived from the Scriptural doctrine as to the person of Christ. He was very man; He had a true human nature; a true body and a rational soul. He was born of a woman. He was, as to his flesh, the son of David. He was descended from the fathers. He was in all points made like as we are, yet without sin. This is admitted on both sides. But, as before remarked in reference to realism, this, on the theory of traducianism, necessitates the conclusion that Christ's human nature was guilty and sinful. We are partakers of Adam's sin both as to guilt and pollution, because the same numerical essence which sinned in him is communicated to us. Sin, it is said, is an accident, and supposes a substance in which it
inheres, or to which it pertains. Community in sin supposes, therefore, community of essence. If we were not in Adam as to essence we did not sin in him, and do not derive a corrupt nature from him. But, if we were in him as to essence then his sin was our sin both as to guilt and pollution. This is the argument of traducianists repeated in every form. But they insist that Christ was in Adam as to the substance of his human nature as truly as we were. They say that if his body and soul were not derived from the body and soul of his virgin mother he was no true man, and cannot be the redeemer of men. What is true of other men must, consequently, be true of Him. He must, therefore, be as much involved in the guilt and corruption of the apostasy as other men. It will not do to affirm and deny the same thing. It is a contradiction to say that we are guilty of Adam's sin because we are partakers of his essence, and that Christ is not guilty of his sin nor involved in its pollution, although He is a partaker of his essence. If participation of essence involve community of guilt and depravity in the one case, it must also in the other. As this seems a legitimate conclusion from the traducian doctrine, and as this conclusion is anti-Christian, and false, the doctrine itself cannot be true." \(^\text{10}\)

As McDonald points out, \(^\text{11}\) Thomas Aquinas is quite definite that it is heretical to declare any other view than Creationism. Some of the Reformers regarded this view as the only viable account of the soul's origin. Calvin himself in a comment on Gen. 3:16 (cf. Institutes, I, XV, 2f., p. 159f) repudiates as a figment of some ancient writers the idea 'that souls


\(^{11}\) McDonald, op. cit., p. 71
are derived by descent from our 'first parents', another slap against Traducianism. But while creationism has had, through the years some very powerful supporters, some weaknesses in the view have been pointed out. Some have already been alluded to. Apart from weak scriptural support for this view, there is the problem of the tendency in all men to sin. If the sin principle is not passed on through the parents by the propagation of the soul, and the sinful soul is created by an act of God, then God is the direct author of sin. If a pure soul is created by God, but is tainted by contact with the body, then God is still involved as an indirect agent in the process. To make God the author of moral evil is untenable. As Strong quotes Kahnis, Dogmatik 3:250 - "Creationism rests upon a justly antiquated dualism between soul and body, and is irreconcilable with the sinful condition of the human soul. The truth in the doctrine is just this only, that generation can bring forth an immortal human life only according to the power imparted by God's word, and with the special cooperation of God himself." Another difficulty levelled at the creationist view is that of its failure to account for the fact that children not only take on

12 Strong, op. cit.; p. 493
a physical resemblance to their parents but also an intellectual and psychological resemblance. "Creationism regards the earthly father as begetting only the body of his child—certainly as not the father of the child's highest part. This makes the beast to possess nobler powers of propagation than man; for the beast multiplies himself after his own image." 13 Again Strong adds, "The new physiology properly views soul not as something added from without, but as the animating principle of the body from the beginning and as having a determining influence upon its whole development. 14 The passing on from parent to child what might be considered the soulish aspects of man, i.e. mentality, personality, etc. cannot be adequately accounted for by the creationist theory. As Mullins says, "If heredity explains similar bodily traits, it more satisfactorily accounts also for the spiritual resemblances." 15

Another aspect of Creationism that is personally disturbing, concerns the 'when' of the body being ensouled. Jerome speaks of God 'making souls daily',

13 Ibid p. 492

14 Ibid

but when are souls joined to the body? Polanus (5:31:1) says that God breathes the soul into boys, forty days, and into girls, eighty days, after conception. If this is the case then at least for the girls the allowable time of up to twelve weeks for abortions would not be too far wrong. A view taken more seriously though, than that of Polanus is that ensoulment takes place at the time of conception (fertilization). If it is true that an estimated one third of all fertilized eggs are spontaneously aborted, then one wonders why God would set in motion and be an integral part of a process of procreation that results in the death of such a large part of humanity before it gets started. Such could only be described as a dysteleological surd. Of course, similar problems are involved with any view of the origin of the soul that joins the soulish aspect of man together with the body at the point of fertilization. The Creationist view, however, involves an act of God in what would seem to be either a tragic biological accident or a part of the curse on sinful mankind.

C. Traducianism

While a definition of this theory has not yet
been given, the idea of Traducianism has already been introduced, along with some criticisms as well as support (some of necessity must be repeated). Certainly, many who have held to a creationist view have defended their ideas by condemning those held by the Traducianists. Traducianism is not, however, without its 'good points' and its strong scholarly support. Tertullian is responsible for the formulation of the theory of Traducianism, and the idea was implicitly held by Augustine. This theory holds that we derive both the body and the soul by natural laws of propagation, from our parents. The entire human race was immediately created in the first man, Adam. God breathed into man only once and now parents generate both the material and immaterial parts of man. Tertullian, meeting the philosophers on their own ground, uses the analogy of the growth of a tree holding that trees have not only vitality but also knowledge. "Even the infancy of a log, then, may have an intellect (suitable to it): how much more may that of a human being, whose soul (which may be compared with the nascent sprout of a tree) has been derived from Adam as its root, and has been propagated amongst his posterity by means of woman's generative organs, to which it has been entrusted for transmission, and
thus has sprouted into life with all its natural apparatus, both of intellect and of sense."¹⁵

Strong explains the theory this way, "Traducianism holds that man, as in species, was created in Adam. In Adam, the substance of humanity was yet undistributed. We derive our immaterial as well as our material being, by natural laws of propagation from Adam, – each individual man after Adam possessing a part of the substance that was originated in him."¹⁶

McDonald says, "Adam as a man was a single individual, but Adam was also man, humanity itself, and so the one root from which every propagating branch or 'layer' (tradux, so Traducianism) is derived. In Traducianism, then, the soul has its origin by the mediated activity of God through human parents, and is propagated with the body. What is produced by natural generation is a full human being; the one entity in the unity of soul and body."¹⁷ Shedd who takes over eighty


¹⁶ Strong, op. cit., p. 494

¹⁷ McDonald, op. cit., p. 73
who describes the traducianism of Tertullian in the following terms: "It was his opinion, that our first parent bore within him the undeveloped germ of all mankind; that the soul of the first man was the fountain head of all human souls, and that all varieties of individual human nature are but different modifications of that one spiritual substance. Hence the whole nature became corrupted in the original father of the race, and sinfulness is propagated at the same time with souls."\(^{18}\) It is important to note that from his concept of the origin of souls Tertullian developed his famous dictum, *Tradux animae, tradux peccati* - the propagation of the soul is the propagation of sin. This has become a popular defense of Tertullian's theory as it is felt by many that the difficulties pertaining to the propagation of original sin are best resolved by the doctrine of the propagation of the soul. While Augustine (*On The Soul*) was inconsistent in his view of the origin of the soul resulting in those (e.g. Bellarmine) who claim that he was a creationist and some (e.g. Melanchthon and Klee) who reckon him to be a traducianist, he is very strong in his opinion that original sin cannot be

transmitted in any other way. This particular theory would also account for the need of the immaculate conception, or in my opinion, more importantly the conception by the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:35, for if the Christ child was a product of the union of male and female then he would have inherited a sinful nature as the rest of humanity. In Rom. 8:3 it is stated that God sent his own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh". As Sanday and Headlam comment, "The flesh of Christ is 'like' ours inasmuch as it is flesh; 'like', and only 'like', because it is not sinful." 19 Scriptures that support the view that our sinful nature is derived by natural propagation are Job 14:4; 15:14; Ps. 51:5, 58:3; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; I Cor. 15:22; and Eph. 2:3.

In addition to the theological implications of this theory, the idea itself would seem to have strong Scriptural support. In Gen. 1:26 and 27 the designation of man for both Adam and Eve suggests the creation of the species in Adam. In Gen. 2 Eve's body is formed but not her soul as in the case of Adam, Gen. 2:7. Again in Gen. 46:26 there is a reference to the 'souls'

that came out of the loins of Jacob (cf. Heb. 7:9 & 10) and Acts 17:26 teaches that, "God hath made of one blood all nations."

We have already made mention of the apparent transmission of both mental and moral characteristics as well as physical characteristics from parent to child. If a holistic view of human nature is taken, it would seem that the Traducian theory would be the best explanation of the propagation of 'human nature' as a whole.

Traducianism is not, however, without its objections and its critics. Some of these have been referred to in our discussion on creationism. Augustine, who we have said, wavered in his statements on Traducianism, although I think we can safely place him in that camp, had some reservations, feeling that it led to a too materialistic concept of the soul and also removed God too far from His creation. It is believed also that this theory takes too literally the concept of the 'rest' of the Lord on the seventh day when Jesus assures us that His father is still very much at work, John 5:17.

It has been seen that all three views held by the church have their good points and their bad, their strengths and their weaknesses. This is
particularly true of Creationism and Traducianism. One has to wonder whether these are the only possible positions to take. While I would personally lean more towards the Traducianist view, mainly because of the Scriptural support and the answer it gives in regard to the transmission of the sin principle, I cannot easily dismiss the argument that is presented by such men as Tresmontant, i.e., that every effect must have a sufficient cause. Surely God cannot so easily be left out of the picture. Is it conceivable that He has totally opted out of the procreation process? If man has a spiritual aspect, must it not have come from God who is Spirit? My inclination then is to take a modified Traducian position with man being a co-creator with God. My thesis is that man's soulish aspect develops as does the physical and that there is an intimate relationship between the two. While this can be accounted for in a creationist view, particularly if one believes that God creates a soul at the moment of conception, the Traducian theory does seem to be a little more consistent. At the same time it is my belief that God is very much involved in some way in the act of procreation. While I would think that Myer Pearlman, because of his background would
be in the camp of the Traducians (although he does not state it explicitly) he would appear to suggest this via media position when he says,

"The origin of each soul may be explained by the co-operation of both Creator and parents. In the beginning of a new life, a Divine creation and a creative use of means work together. Man begets man in co-operation with "the Father of spirits: . God's power controls and permeates the world (Acts 17:28; Heb. 1:3) so that all creatures come into being according to the laws He ordained. Therefore the normal processes of human reproduction set in motion those Divine laws of life which cause a human soul to be born into the world."

There is no doubt that a complete and final answer to the origin of the soul eludes us. At the same time there is little doubt that the ideas associated with the subject which have been debated through the years still have great bearing on the discussions that revolve around medical ethics. McDonald's comment in this regard is worth noting.

"The discussion concerning the origin of the soul may appear to belong to another age and to have little relevance to contemporary thought. But this is not so. The strong opposition among Roman Catholics to abortion derives from the Creationist view of the beginning of human life by an immediate creative act of God which is general in the teaching of the church. From this standpoint, reason may be seen in the strength of its objection to any abortion laws. The same theological complaint is not available

20 Myer Pearlman, Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible, (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publ. House 1937) p. 106
to the Traducianist. Yet all Christians, whether they be Creationist or Traducianist, agree on the sacredness of every human individual; and it is in that light they have to consider the pros and cons of the abortionist issue."

21 McDonald, op. cit., p. 74
III. A DEFINITION OF SOUL

C. A. Beckwith expresses the traditional definition of the soul when he says, "The soul (Goth. saiwala, Hebr. nephesh, Grk. psyche, Lat. anima) signifies in general the life as it animates the individual material organism which is the medium of its action."¹ Pearlman, giving a similar definition says, "The soul is the life-giving and intelligent principle animating the human body, using the bodily senses as its agents in the exploration of material things, and the bodily organs for its self-expression and communication with the outside world."² In consideration, however, of the various ideas surrounding the concept of the soul, it would seem very difficult to come up with a satisfactory one sentence definition of the soul, and certainly it is dangerous to restrict the soul to merely the life-giving principle. While it is acknowledged that the soulish aspect of man primarily has to do with the emotions, the intellect and the will, for the purpose of this paper, closer


² Pearlman, op. cit., 103-104
consideration must be given to the soul in relation to the body and indeed to the concept of what it means to be a human person.

We have seen that there are those, following Plato, who would completely separate the soulish aspect of man from the body, i.e. the soul inhabits or is encaged in the body. Others would rather speak of a soul-body and would suggest, as does Colin Brown (p. 22), that the soul is the summing up of the whole personality, indeed the whole self of a person. What is the constitution of a human being, and what makes a human different from the beast of the field?

According to Gen. 2:7 man is composed of both the material substance - the body, and the immaterial substance or soul. A number of Scriptures, eg. Heb. 4:12 and 1 Thess. 5:23 would seem to indicate a composition of three parts, i.e. Body, Soul and Spirit. This apparent contradiction has been formulated in two theories, the Dichotomous and the Trichotomous. We shall look at the Trichotomous Theory first.

A. The Trichotomous View

Hodge says:

"This theory holds that man consists of three distinct elements, body, soul, and spirit. The body is the material part of our constitution;
51

the soul is the principle of animal life; and the spirit is the principle of our rational life. Some add to this last statement "and immortal" life. This can, however, not be made an essential part of the theory. Those who take this extreme view hold that at death the body returns to the earth; the soul ceases to exist; and the spirit alone remains to be reunited with the body at the resurrection."

Those who hold to this theory handle Gen. 2:7 by making reference to the Hebrew text which is found in the plural: "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives; and man became a living soul." It is noted that man did not become spirit and soul but rather the inbreathing of God made man a living soul. The fact that the word lives (plural) is found here would also tend to support a Traducean position of the origin of souls. It is also suggested that the three different occurrences of the word 'create' in Gen. 1:1, 21, 27 mark three separate creative acts of God, that of material world, creaturely existence, and self-conscious persons.

Other Scriptures used to support the Trichotomous theory, as already mentioned, are I Thess. 5:13 and Heb. 4:12. A threefold organization might also be implied from I Cor. 2:14-3:4. McDonald suggests a

3 Hodge, op. cit., p. 47
4 McDonald, op. cit., p. 75
number of examples supporting this theory. Plato, for instance, in his Republic likened the individual to the ideal state in which the three classes, the ruler, the soldier and the slave work in harmony, and as McDonald points out, "The Eastern theologians found in Plato a ready-made system into which to set a Christian view of man as a compound of three parts, body, soul and spirit." 5 Browning's poem, Death in the Desert, would also suggest a Trichotomous view of man. His description of man is that of body, soul and spirit—what does, what knows, and what is. Of course some of the arguments that are used to prove the Trinity of the Godhead could also be used to support this theory. Particular reference could be made to the Vestigium Trinitatis of Augustine. Support for this theory has also come from Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, F. J. Delitzsch and C. J. Ellicott.

In response to the Trichotomous idea, a number of things can be said. First of all, we see that the words 'spirit' and 'soul' are often used interchangeably in the Scripture, e.g. Eccl. 12:7; Rev. 6:9. A comparison of Eccl. 3:21 and Rev. 16:3 shows that both 'spirit' and 'soul' are used to describe brute creation. This close connection between 'spirit' and 'soul' is also

5 Ibid
evident in such Scriptures as Mark 12:30; Luke 1:46 and James 1:21 where the highest aspects of our faith (usually confined to the 'spirit') are attributed to the soul, and in Mark 8:36, 37 where to lose the 'soul' is to lose everything.

Reference has already been made to Robinson's evaluation of some of Paul's apparent references to a Trichotomous view. Scriptures such as I Thess. 5:23, rather than being taken as support for a threefold division of man, should be looked upon as a reference to man in his completeness. As Strong suggests, this verse is "not a scientific enumeration of the constituent parts of human nature, but a comprehensive sketch of that nature in its chief relations." 6 Similarly, when Christ tells us to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength", He is merely making reference to the totality of our beings rather than indicating a threefold division of man. 7 Other Scriptures used to support the Trichotomous view must be given a similar fair examination.

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6 Strong, op. cit. p. 485

7 Mark 12:30 similarly does not indicate a fourfold division.
B. The Dichotomous View

Simply defined, "The term, which signifies a division into two parts (Greek δίς, in two; τεμνεῖν, cut), is applied in theology to that view of human nature which holds that man has two fundamental parts to his being: body and soul." 8 McDonald refers to Tertullian as being the dichotomist par excellence because of his careful exposition of the doctrine in De Anima when he declares that 'the entire man consists of two substances.' 9 The weight of Scriptures would seem to be on the side of a Dichotomous view of man. Scriptures already mentioned which would oppose a Trichotomous view, could be cited, along with others, to support the idea that man is composed of only two elements. At death the body returns to the ground (Gen. 3:19), the spirit returns to the God who gave it (Eccl. 12:7). What happens to the soul? In addition to the evidence of Scripture, human consciousness would seem to call for a two-fold view of man. We are aware of our bodies (a material part)


and we are conscious of our souls (spirit) (an immaterial part). We cannot, however, discriminate between the soulish aspect and the spiritual aspect.

Neither of the above two theories by themselves answer the question of the constitution of man. While we might acknowledge that man is made up of only two substances, a material and a non-material, it must be acknowledged also that the non-material part of man has been given by Scripture two distinct names, the soul and the spirit. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they also seem to be distinct in terms of function. Strong uses the expression "higher and lower power" or a "lower and a higher portion". A more consistent and conciliatory view then would be a Dichotomous-Trichotomist position which would indicate a two-fold aspect as to substance and a three-fold aspect as to function. Pearlman observes, "Both views are correct when properly understood. Spirit and soul represent two sides of man's non-physical substance, or, to state it in other words, spirit and soul represent two modes in which the spiritual nature operates. Though separate, spirit and soul are not separable. They permeate and interpermeate each other."

10 Pearlman, op. cit., p. 101
This would seem to have been the position of Augustine who in his de Fide et Symbolo (X,23) gives formal recognition of the trio, body, soul and spirit, but even here, he unites soul and spirit as two aspects of the one entity over against the body. 11 So we are not talking then about man consisting of three substances or three component parts with the soul being as distinct from the spirit as the soul is from the body. We are talking rather of two components with the immaterial aspect having two functions. (The very close working together of all human functions is not to be neglected). 12 This via media position would seem to take the best of both the dichotomous and the trichotomous views and present one that is consistent with both Scripture and man's consciousness of himself. As Thiessen observes, "This variation from the traditional trichotomous view makes it possible to conserve the arguments for the dichotomous view, and yet explain how some Christians are "carnal" and others, "spiritual". It also agrees with the teaching that the present body is a "soul-body" and that the resurrection body will be a "spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44).

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11 As cited by McDonald, op. cit., p. 77

12 The various views presented are shown diagrammatically at the end of this section.
In other words, man's immaterial nature is looked upon as one nature, but as composed of two parts.\textsuperscript{13} "The pneuma is man's non-material nature looking Godward: and psychē is the same nature looking earthward and touching the things of sense."\textsuperscript{14}

Based on what has been said, it is important at this point to look at the difference between man and brute creation. The physical aspects of man as distinguished from other animals are obvious. Resemblances to some kinds of animals, for instance the ape, are of course noted. What though, distinguishes the immaterial part of man (soul-spirit) from the immaterial part of the rest of the animal kingdom? In non-theological terms, what is it to be man-human? This is not an academic question. T. Suttor, using the examples of Lorenz on aggression and Huxley on animal mating, notes the tendency to equate the soul of man with that of the brute. "In fact, much religious thought has put the brute soul more or less on a level with the human; cf. the theory of the transmigration of souls. Moreover, some western thought, in the centuries after Descartes, went to the opposite extreme of denying that brutes have any psychic life at all. Most modern psychological

\textsuperscript{13} Thiessen, op. cit. p. 227

\textsuperscript{14} McDonald, op. cit. p. 79
theory accepts that the brutes have the same external
and internal sense-faculties as man, and argues from
analogy with human experience to explain brute behaviour
and vice versa. There is no doubt that the brute
manifests to varying degrees a certain amount of intel-
lect, emotion and will — those attributes usually
considered part of the soulish element. However, as
Suttter points out, "Indications that animals have
'intelligence' reduce to three: they communicate by
signs; they profit from experience; they adapt means
(actions and objects) to ends. But their lack of
speech, their lack of diversity of languages or of
progress towards language shows that their communication
is passional and instinctive, not conceptual and vol-
untary. Their lack of technical progress, both in the
race and in the individual, shows that they learn by
association of images, not by self-criticism. Their
affinity with man must, therefore, not be mistaken,
for specific identity." 16 Man, therefore, in addition
to instinct, which is much more depended upon by the
brute, has such capacity as self-determination and
self-consciousness. We can think of Descartes' I

15 Footnote to St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologicae
Vol. II, Trans Timothy Suttter (London, Blackfiars, Eyre
& Spottiswoode, 1970) p. 15

16 Ibid, pp. 16 & 17
think therefore I am' or of Flynn's story of the
philosophy professor who when asked by a student, "How
do I know that I exist?", replied, "And who is asking?".\(^{17}\)
Man is able to turn upon himself reflectively and he is
also capable of deliberate action based on his reflection, his moral sense and his intellect.

Aquinas, who writes a great deal on the soul, dis-
tinguishes between the soul of brute creation and that
of man, bringing another aspect into focus. The sense
soul of the animal, he claims, is passed on by natural
generation. "The semen's power is to the animal nature
produced from the semen as the power in earthly elements
is to the animal natures produced from earthly elements
(as, for example, with those things generated by
putrefaction). Now in these animal natures souls are
produced by the power in the elements; as Genesis says.
Let the waters bring forth the creeping animals having
life. Therefore, the animal souls produced from semen
are generated by the power in the semen."\(^{18}\) He goes
on later to show that the intellectual soul comes from

\(^{17}\) Leslie B. Flynn, *Man: Ruined & Restored* (Wheaton,
Ill., S.P. Publications, Inc.; 1978) p. 34

\(^{18}\) St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Vol. 15,
Trans. M. J. Charlesworth (London: Blackfriars —Byre
& Spottswoode, 1970) p. 147
the outside, i.e. from God, the basic creationist position. The superiority of man over the rest of creation is mentioned in Gen. 1:26, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." An analysis of the various debates on exactly what is meant by the *imago Dei* in man is outside the purpose of this paper but as Fred Klooster comments:

"Man's special character lies in the fact that he is created in the *imago Dei*. While the other living creatures are created "after their kind"...The direct agency of God brings forth man in a way that differs from the creation of the animals. We perceive a dual creative activity when 'Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.' (Gen. 2:7)

It might be said that the image of God in man, through the fall has been marred and tarnished but it is still there. The coin lost by the woman in Luke 16 still bore the image. While the image of God might be tarnished, it will one day be restored. Man, unlike the

19 Ibid., p. 157

beast, is destined for resurrection when "we shall see Him as He is and we shall be like him." This distinguishes us from the rest of creation which can only groan awaiting a restitution. (Rom. 8) As Charlesworth so wittily puts it, "John Brown can (in a qualified sense) go marching on while his body lies a-mouldering in the grave, but the sense-soul of his dog, Fido, cannot." 21

It is then the possession of a spiritual aspect, a God consciousness, a capacity to worship God and to know Him in his fullness, that separates man from the brute. Animals have a soul of sorts but not a spiritual dimension. I think Strong sums up the difference when he says,

"In this more accurate use, pseuchē denotes man's immaterial part in its inferior powers and activities; - as pseuchē, man is a conscious individual, and, in common with the brute creation, has an animal life, together with appetite, imagination, memory, understanding. Pneuma, on the other hand, denotes man's immaterial part in its higher capacities and faculties; - as pneuma, man is a being related to God, and possessing powers of reason, conscience, and free will, which difference him from the brute creation and constitute him responsible and immortal.

Perhaps now is the appropriate time to make some

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21 Aquinas, op. cit. p. 147 See footnote.
22 Strong, op. cit. p. 484
further reference to the relationship between soul (soul-spirit) and the body. I am not sure that I am prepared to take the extreme monistic position of Robinson who says that, "Man does not have a body, he is a body...The soul does not survive the man—it simply goes out, draining away with the blood."23 Neither do I feel that a dualistic view has to be taken because of the Christian doctrine of resurrection.24 I am only prepared to say that the soul "...is intimately though not absolutely, connected with the life of the physical body."25 Mention has already been made of the holistic view of man, held by the Hebrews. Kitwood, commenting on the creative act of God, making man out of the dust of the earth says, "This bears the meaning of a unity in which the various functions of man are intimately fused. 'Soul' is not here used in the Greek sense of a spirit distinct from a body; it means, rather, a single functioning unit in which what we term physical, mental and spiritual interpenetrate one another completely."26

23 Robinson, op. cit. p. 14


25 Montgomery, op. cit., p. 86

This view, however, has been considered from more than a Biblical, Theological or Philosophical perspective. Harold Morowitz comments on the changing attitudes of science over the past 100 years saying,

"What has happened is that biologists, who once postulated a privileged role for the human mind in nature's hierarchy, have been moving relentlessly toward the hard-core materialism that characterized 19th century physics. At the same time, physicists, fused with compelling experimental evidence, have been moving away from strictly mechanical models of the universe to a view that sees the mind as playing an integral role in all physical events. It is as if the two disciplines were on fast-moving trains, going in opposite directions and not noticing what is happening across the tracks. 27

In the well-documented book, 'Psychosomatics', the authors devote at least one full chapter to the unity of the person, taking the position that we are one integrated being, functioning as a whole. Mind and body are one, they say. "Mental and physical phenomena are always interrelated. Your body and your mind are inseparable parts of a single bio-chemical unity, the sum total of which is you," 28

Dr. Lynn Gillis in a chapter entitled, 'The Body and the Mind',


in her book 'Human Behaviour in Illness', similarly, describes the close relationship between the mind and the body. Numerous examples are given in both of these books of the interaction of the material and non-material aspects of man and the effect that our emotions can have on our physical well-being and conversely the effect our physical health can have on our emotions. One only has to browse through the articles on soul, spirit, heart, and flesh in almost any theological dictionary (particularly Kittel's) to see the agreement between the theologians and the other disciplines on this point.

In view, then, of all that has been said from a Biblical, Philosophical, Theological and Scientific position, what conclusions can we come to in regard to a definition of soul and our understanding of 'personhood'? Again the difficulty of coming up with a satisfactory answer must be acknowledged. Karl Barth, comments on the difficulty the early church had in defining a 'person'. Indeed one only has to look at the problems the early church fathers had in formulating the creeds. If God is


three 'persons' then what is a person? If Christ is truly 'human' then what is it to be 'human'? A simple dictionary definition of man might be "a human being, distinguished from other animals by his superiority, in mental development, power of speech and upright position." 31 But this is not specific enough for the purposes of this paper. While I certainly cannot agree with all that he says on the subject of the soul, I find Richard Bube's definition of soul quite acceptable. He says that "The word 'soul' refers to the particular systems property of the totality of the life-system then active...capable of insight, rational thinking, self-consciousness, conscience, hope, God-consciousness, awe, reverence, appreciation for beauty; and the desire for understanding." 32 He also feels that the soul comes into being as the result of a gradual process of development. Keeping in mind the close interconnection between the body and (soul-spirit) and all that has been said in this regard, and using Bube's concept of the soul, we will now consider the development of soul. This will


give us an even better understanding of the soul and
also of the whole concept of personhood.

Differing Views on the Constitution of Man

**Trichotomous**

**Dichotomous**

**Dichotomous/Trichotomous**

(Soul) (Spirit)
IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUL

In trying to come to some understanding of the concept of the soul, I have taken a modified Trichotomous, i.e., a Dichotomous-Trichotomous position. While recognizing that the constitution of man is made up of a material and a non-material element, I have also taken the position, as is indicated by the various disciplines that have explored the matter, that there is a very close relationship between the material body and the non-material soulish aspect of man. This relationship is, I believe, of such a nature that as the body of man develops, so does the soulish aspect of man. Few, if any, would question the idea of the process of development of the physical aspect of man. Fletcher sets down, as one of the fifteen positive propositions or indications that prove humanness, the idea of change and changeability. He says, "It means not only the fact of biological and physiological change, which goes on as a condition of life, but the capacity and disposition for changing one's mind and conduct as well. Biologically, human beings are developmental: birth, life, health, and death are processes, not events, and are to be understood progressively, not episodically. All human existence is
on a continuum, a matter of becoming."¹ His phrase 'disposition for changing one's mind and conduct' and 'all human existence is on a continuum' could indicate a development of the soulish aspect of man as well as the body, although I would doubt that that is Fletcher's intent. Montgomery also would seem to allow for this kind of development when he says, "The intimate connection of soul and body in Scripture establishes a predisposition against the idea of a divine "superadding" of the soul to an already existent body."² This aspect of development of soul is alluded to as we have indicated by Richard Bube, though he does not explain his position to any great extent. When we think of what we consider to be soulish functions, the idea of the development of these functions in conjunction with the body seems obvious. If we look at the growth of a human being from conception to old age and trace that development backwards, it is very hard to indicate at what point a person is without 'soul' at least in some form.

Human life can be viewed as a continuum as follows:

¹ Joseph Fletcher, "Humanhood", Essays in Biomedical Ethics, (Buffalo, N.Y., Prometheus Books, 1979) p. 15
² Montgomery, op. cit., p. 86
Conception
4 - 10 days
4 weeks
6 - 8 weeks
8 weeks
11 weeks
12 weeks
+12 weeks

20 - 40 weeks
40 weeks Birth

1 year
2 years
7 years
9 - 15 years
18 years
70+

Human Life
Implantation
Heart action
Brain activity
Grabs
Swims freely
React to pain
Breathes (fluid)
Cries
Sucks thumb
Sleeps and wakes
All organ systems function, including mental

Baby in miniature
Nothing new develops, only growth and maturing

Viability
Exits from uterus
Breathes air
Swallows food

Walks
Talks
Writes and reads
Sexual maturity
Physical adulthood
Old age
At the various stages of physical development we also can detect soulish development at a certain level. For instance, as there is the soul of an animal, so there is the soul of a zygote, an embryonic soul, fetal soul, the soul of a new-born, that of a child, an adolescent then an adult and, dare we say that of the deceased, and finally the soul of the resurrected body. The soul does not develop in proportion to the size of the body as if the soul were something that took up a certain amount of space within a certain part of or within the whole of man. But rather it develops 1) in relationship to the development of those organs that have a more direct relationship to soulish functions, eg. the brain, 2) in relationship to the environment that allows for the development of soulish functions and 3) in relationship to the quickening (or making alive) by God's Spirit at times of deep religious experience, eg. conversion, resurrection. Soulish functions can also diminish or become inactive temporarily or permanently at such times as sleep or coma or in the case of brain damage. The development of soul in relation to the body can be shown diagrammatically as follows. The numbers on the diagram correspond to the comments that follow.
1. Conception: Prior to the first division of the zygote, the DNA molecular pattern is formed. The genetic code that fixes the individual's characteristics is in place. Human life, as opposed to vegetable or animal life, is present. "Cell division goes forward from fertilization and of course it is human, since any biologist could quickly identify even a blastula as of the species Homo sapiens - not as a monkey's or a rabbit's." There is a potential human being. Of course if a person takes a strict traducianist view, then there is ensouled human life, for the soul as well as the body derives from the parents. To say that there is an ensouled human being at the time of the fertilization of the egg poses some questions. The problem of the spontaneous abortion of some one-third to one-half of all fertilized eggs has already been mentioned in the discussion on creationism. If all of these are humans, then heaven would be full of aborted fetuses. This may not be a problem for some. Certainly heaven is big enough and it would be my position that a growth and development would continue in that existence. But associated with this idea is the problem of believing that God, who does all things well and who brings order and

3 Fletcher, Humanhood, op. cit., p. 11
beauty out of chaos, would set in motion a process of
creation which in effect destroys almost half of humanity
before it gets started.

If we say that there is a human being at fertiliza-
tion, then we must also take a strong stand not only
against therapeutic abortion, but also against certain
methods of contraception such as the (IUD) intrauterine
device which prevents the fertilized egg from implant-
ation in the endometrium. The "morning after" pill
would also be considered unacceptable. Along with this
would be the problem of having a (D & C), the scraping
of the womb to prevent implantation of the fertilized
ovum. This would be considered by many anti-abortion-
ists as a quite acceptable means of averting pregnancy
due to such things as felonious intercourse. If there
is full humanity at the time of fertilization, then a
(D & C) would be unacceptable. It would seem that the
Roman Catholics are the only ones who are consistent
in this regard.

Another problem concerns the case of identical
twins. After the fertilization of a single ovum by a
single sperm and the development of two or more cells,
there is a division resulting in the formation of two
human lives. If ensoulment takes place at the point
of fertilization, is there then a splitting of the soul, or does one twin receive a soul and the other not, or perhaps has to wait and receive a soul later on. The problem of course is predicated on the idea that the soul is indivisible (simplex). As Montgomery points out, "perhaps the soul is as divisible as is the fertilized egg! If the resultant identical twins show remarkable affinities in appearance, temperament, habits, etc., and if (as we have seen) Scripture sets forth an intimate soul-body relationship, perhaps one can legitimately speak of "twin souls" as of twin bodies!" 4

In view, however, of these and other potential difficulties, it would seem that a modified view of conception might avoid some of these problems. Many definitions of conception include the idea of implantation in the uterus or the enablement of the fertilized egg to form an embryo. Rather than looking at conception as a dot—the point of joining of sperm and ovum, I would prefer to look at it in terms of a process, a line beginning with fertilization of the ovum and being completed upon implantation in the wall of the uterus some four to ten days after fertilization.

4 Montgomery, op. cit., p. 89
It is only after this takes place that development and differentiation in terms of the different tissue and organs takes place. While before this time the genetic code has been established, development of human life cannot take place. As Jesus seems to indicate (John 12:24) there is no life until implantation of the seed.

2. **Implantation:** At implantation in the wall of the uterus at four to ten days after fertilization there is the possibility of development and differentiation of the embryo. In the section on the Old Testament, I mentioned the interesting reference in verses 15 and 16 of Psalm 139 to what might be the rolling or folding of the cells that takes place around the time of implantation. It is at this stage of development of the embryo that the psalmist declares, v. 16 "...in thy book they were all written even the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was none of them". In God's sight, this seems to be a significant point in the gestation period. Perhaps it is at this point that the creationist aspect of the origin of the soul comes into play. If this is the case, and ensoulment is "the" or "a" criteria for personhood, then from this time on, i.e. the very earliest states of pregnancy, consideration must be given to the unborn. The argument expressed by some, that the
unborn at this stage is not 'functioning' as a human being and therefore is not a human being, does not seem to me to be credible. The same can be said of a person while asleep or in a coma or it can be said of a newly born child. The importance of the unborn even in the earliest stages of development is expressed by Tertullian "In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the foetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a man which is going to be one; you have the fruit already in the seed." While acknowledging Tertullian's main apology to be against murder in any form, he does consider the unborn to be a human being and places the death of the unborn on a par with that of any other. This to me would be an even more acceptable position than that of the evangelical scholar, Dr. Kenneth Kantzer who writes (Eternity, Feb., 1971, p. 19) "The fetus is sacred and

valuable from conception, but the value increases in accordance with the investment of human life residing in the fetus, until at the time of viability only another human life could balance the scale." Surely any strict definition of 'functioning' or 'viability' evades us. If there is a chance in a million that even at these early stages there is a human being, then we must act as if there were. Montgomery says, "For the biblical writers, personhood in the most genuine sense begins no later than conception: subsequent human acts illustrate this personhood, they do not create it. Man does because he is (not the reverse) and he is because God brought about his psychophysical existence in the miracle of conception."  

3. The Development of Function: In his recently published book, Rites of Life, Dr. Landrum Shettles, holder of both the Ph.D. and M.D. degrees from John Hopkins University, takes great pains to show the scientific evidence for life before birth. At about one month there is heart action & the foundation of the nervous system is set in place. Brain activity can be recorded at approximately eight weeks and at eleven weeks there

6 Montgomery, op. cit., p. 94
is reaction to pain. The weakness of a good portion of Shettles' presentation, though, is that what he says about the physical development of human life can be said about the development of many forms of life in the animal kingdom. As Fletcher seems to indicate, to say something is human is merely to give it a species designation. But Shettles' arguments are not restricted to a biological survey. Indeed, to say that man goes through a process of physical development is to say very little. To say that a whole human person is in the process of development is to say a great deal. In his struggle to define when a fetus becomes a person, Lewis Smedes has suggested this as a possible position.

"The fetus develops into a person gradually, with no fixed turning point. The key idea here is process. There is no marvelous moment; instead, the fetal life gradually develops from the fertilized egg toward personal life as the organism becomes more complex and enters even more complex relationships with its environment... We cannot point to any moment in the process when we are sure that the fetus is not a person. Nor can we mark off a moment after which we know for sure that the fetus is a person, with the same right to life as a child dancing in the streets." 


I would like to suggest that the fetus-on-its-way must be treated as a human being. If there is one chance in a hundred or in a thousand that the unborn is a human being, then he (she) must be given the benefit of any doubt. Ramsay seems to indeed, draw no distinction between the individual unborn under development and the adult when he says,

"Indeed, microgenetics seems to have demonstrated what religion never could; and biological science, to have resolved an ancient theological dispute. The human individual comes in existence first as a minute informational speck, drawn at random from many other minute informational specks his parents possessed out of the common gene pool. This took place at the moment of impregnation. There were, of course, an unimaginable number of combinations of specks on his paternal and maternal chromosomes that did not come to be when they were refused and he began to be. Still (with the single exception of identical twins), no one else in entire history of the human race has ever had or will ever have exactly the same genotype. Thus it can be said that the individual is whoever he is going to become from the moment of impregnation. Thereafter, his subsequent development may be described as a process of becoming the one he already is. Genetics teaches that we were from the beginning what we essentially still are in every cell in every human and individual attribute....What is this but to say that we are all fellow fetuses? That from womb to tomb ours is a nascent life? That we are in essence congeners from the beginning?"

Shettles comments with a sense of awe, on the development and differentiation of the physical aspect

of life while at the same time hinting at the development of the soulish aspect at this early stage in the gestation process.

"During the first month, the new human life increases its size fortyfold; by the end of pregnancy, its weight will increase an estimated six-billionfold. From the one-celled zygote there will arise billions of cells, each of which must assume its rightful place and function, creating an integrated whole capable of making muscle and muscle and other expressions of "mind" - a self-constructing self-organizing process of differentiation that astounds researchers on the leading edge of molecular and cell biology." 10

To assign a point in the developing process when humanity begins is to succumb to arbitrariness. Is there a meaningful human being at the time of first heartbeat, at the time of measurable brain waves, at the first breath, when there is walking, talking, sexual maturity, or possibly 'graduation from Princeton'? "Man's life is a process of becoming. It would be arbitrary to point to any other moment in this process and say that here a human-being emerges. A human being is always emerging, and he is emerging from the initial genetic package which is in potency all that he ever...

10 Landrum Shettles & David Rorvik, Rites of Life, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1983) p. 44
will be."

I have spent considerable time on this section but I believe the possibility of an ensouled human being at this early point of development must be considered. If we deny humanity to the fetus because of a lack of 'function' or 'intelligence', etc. then we must deny humanity to those at the opposite end of the developmental process who have become old and senile as well as any in between who do not fulfill our arbitrary criteria for full humanity. Clifford Bajema comments:

"The game of playing god is getting more dangerous every day in this morally bankrupt and ill-fated society. The power elitists have spoken again. Who will be next to have the price tag on his life lowered because he has not attained or retained full status of humanity? How soon will the day come when the Court will tell us that although the term "person" "has application postnatally", it does not necessarily apply in every case of childbirth because some human progeny lack sufficient qualities (sufficient intelligence, ability to produce, sociability, or desirability) that they have decided to use as criteria for their definition of personhood?"

4. 12 weeks: At this point in the pregnancy the fetus is fully developed. All organ systems are represented and characteristics fully formed. There is no measurable


difference apart from size in terms of physiological life between the 12 week old unborn and the newborn. Indeed there is at this point a baby in miniature. The fetus as it is now called, continues to grow and mature. Who can tell what soulish functions take place during this period. One can only believe that as the unborn cries, sleeps and wakes, is sensitive to sounds and also experiences pain, that primitive soulish functions are taking place.

5. **Viability:** The period from twenty to forty weeks is often referred to as the viable stage, i.e. the time at which the fetus can sustain life outside of the mother's womb. This viable stage will change with advances in science and therefore becomes a very tenuous point. Younger fetuses have been kept alive and some carried to term. One has to also question whether, for instance, a two year old baby is truly viable. As Dr. Cal Stiller comments, (Pentecostal Testimony, Aug., 1971). "The baby is dependent on its mother for protection and life outside the womb as well, and without her, would die. Many individuals during their lifetime sustain injuries or illnesses which make them, for a period of time, or permanently, wholly dependent on artificial means to keep them "viable". This fact
does not make them any less human, and certainly does not give the physician or the nearest relative the right to terminate that existence." I might just make the comment that it would seem logical that it would be at this stage of development, or earlier, that the several Scriptures which refer to God's dealing with the unborn can be applied. Reference could be made to God's work of creation in Isaiah 44:2 & 24, to the sanctifying and ordaining of Jeremiah in Jer. 1:5, to the references of the unborn child, John, in Luke 1:5-17 and v. 41, and to the calling of the apostle Paul in Gal. 1:15-16.

5. Birth: The old idea, based on such scriptures as Gen. 2:7, Job 33:4, that a person emerges only when separated from its mother and begins to breathe by itself, seems to match more than any other idea the common notion today about a woman's right to her body and the freedom to abort at will. Our own position, however, is that a valued human being is in the process of becoming from the earliest stages of development. Smedes' comments, "The notion that a fetus does not become personal until birth, gets a jolt every time a live baby is born during an abortion. A breathing infant, intended to be separated from its mother as a dead fetus, confronts an aborting physician with a grim
paradox.\textsuperscript{13}

While I have taken the position of a developing humanity, it must be conceded that birth is a very important aspect in the stages of this development. Any book on human development would agree that man is not just the product of his genetic makeup, but is greatly influenced by environment and upbringing.\textsuperscript{14}

As a newborn child begins to interact with other people and the world into which it has been thrust, the soulish aspects such as emotions, intellect, will, etc. develop at an increasing rate. Capacity for development of soul is greater after birth because of the increased exposure to stimuli that affects the senses to cause growth. Such things as interpersonal relationships, school and the church are only a few of the factors that cause development of humanity throughout life.

7. Conversion: I think a special note has to be made about religious experience. Man, I believe, is a spiritual being with a capacity to know and to worship

\textsuperscript{13} Smedes, op. cit., p. 132

God. As we have previously indicated, because of the fall, the _imago dei_ in man has been tarnished. Man is at enmity with God and there needs to be a reconciliation. Through the cross, provision has been made for mankind to be brought once again into vital relationship with his maker. Eph. 2:1 says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins..."

v. 4 & 5 "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." This salvation experience is the same as the 'born again' experience of the neo-evangelicals and the crisis experience of men like Luther, Pascal, Wesley, etc. When a person is made alive or quickened by the Spirit of God, further and richer development of the spiritual aspect of soul is possible.

8. Diminishing of Soulish Activity: While there are factors in our lives which tend to increase the development of soul, there are also those that would diminish soulish function. Examples of this would be senility due to such things as Alzheimer's disease, etc. or organic brain damage which would possibly be a more immediate cause of cessation or diminishing of soulish function. Temporary suspension of some soulish functions
occurs when a person is in a coma or asleep. "Can we say that when a human being on the operating table undergoes suspension of activity he ceases to be human? As long as the native potentiality to function as a human being exists, one must be treated as human and must have his human right protected." 15 Certainly at times like this there is little visible sign of soulish activity. But who can measure the influence of such factors as dreams, sounds, and touch. It might also be that in this state there is the possibility for a very real sense of the presence of God and an intimate fellowship that is known only to those who have experienced it.

9. Death: Death brings a cessation to some soul-spirit functions, eg. communion and fellowship with other human beings. We can only guess, however, what our relationship to God will be. It would seem that communion at some level will continue. Heb. 13:5 tells us that He "...will never leave us nor forsake us." We are assured that He is a friend who "sticks closer than a brother" and one who is there even if we make our bed in hell. In Ps. 23 the psalmist tells us that even when we go through the valley of the shadow of death that He is with

15 Montgomery, op. cit., p. 92
us. As Cullman comments, "Nothing is said in the New Testament about the details of the interim conditions. We hear only this: we are nearer to God." 16

Another question arises at this point in regard to the position we have taken on the intimate connection between soul and body. At death, when the body goes to the grave, how can the soul continue if man is a body-soul unity? As Robinson puts it, "To suggest that we have a resurrection body ready-made to enter at the moment of death is to render unintelligible the inevitable prospect of 'nakedness' which Paul holds out for those dying before the Parousia." 17 As Montgomery suggests, 18 however, this nakedness is an "abnormal condition" (cf. II Cor. 5:1-10; Rev. 6:9-11) and perhaps the best explanation is that some kind of clothing or 'soul covering' is provided in this intermediate state. Cullman suggests this in his fascinating little book 'Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead' where he takes the position that: "The inner man without


17 Robinson, op. cit., p. 77

18 Cullman, op. cit., p. 33
the outer has no proper, full existence. It requires a body... The contrast with the Greek soul is clear: it is precisely apart from the body that the Greek soul attains to full development of its life. According to the Christian view, however, it is the inner man's very nature which demands the body. 19 It would seem that in this, Cullman would have the support of Bonhoeffer who says,

"The life of the body, like life in general, is both a means to an end and an end in itself. To regard the body exclusively as a means to an end is idealistic not Christian; for a means is discarded as soon as the end is achieved. It is from this point of view that the body is conceived as the prison from which the immortal soul is released for ever by death. According to the Christian doctrine, the body possesses a higher dignity. Man is a bodily being, and, remains so in eternity as well. Bodiliness and human life belong inseparably together. And thus the bodiliness which is willed by God to be the form of existence of man is entitled to be called an end in itself." 20

10. Resurrection: It has already been said that man is destined for resurrection (I Cor. 15). The resurrection of the body is clearly taught in the scriptures. At the time of the Parousia there will be a change according to I John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it

19 Cullman, op. cit., p. 33
20 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ethics, ed. Eberhard Beth (London, SCM Press, 1955), pp. 112-113
doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This is not just a change or a resur-
rection of the soul from its death in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1; cf. II Tim. 2:17, 18) as might have been thought by the Corinthians (I Cor. 15:12) being under Hellenistic influence, but a resurrection of the body. "Since man is both soul and body, redemption must include the quickening of both soul and body; hence the need of the resurrection...since the body is inherently part of his personality, his salvation and his immortality are not complete until the body is raised and glorified." 21 Tertullian, who saw a very close connection between soul and body, (to the extent that they are entwined or com-
mingled), and who questioned whether, "in such close connection that it may be considered uncertain whether the flesh is the vehicle of the soul or the soul the vehicle of the flesh, whether the flesh is at the service of the soul or the soul at the service of the flesh" 22, also comments on the necessity of the resurrection. For him, the resurrection is necessary so that there can be,

21 Pearlman, op. cit., p. 374.

"...judgment of both the human substances, the flesh no less the soul: for that which is fitting should be judged, will with good reason also be raised up again." 23

This is consistent with his view expressed in Apologeticus 48 which basically states the same thing. It would appear to me that there is a need for the resurrection body, also, in order to renew complete soulish function and capacity for life with God in eternity. Unless one feels that graduation comes at some earlier stage; it would seem to me that development and progress as individual personalities continues on into eternity. In this I must stand against Robinson who says, "Our survival (both now and hereafter) as distinct selves depends, for the Bible, not on the body, but upon the fact that everyone is called by God to a unique and eternal relationship with himself." 24

If this were the case, then the body could be done away with after the judgment. Tertullian's argument would still be valid and so would that of Robinson. The only reason I can see for the need of the body after this, is to continue the process of becoming. An argument against this of course is that if we are 'like Him' and in what Paul refers to as the state of perfection, then how is

23 Ibid, p. 39

24 Robinson, op. cit., p. 78
development or change possible. We change either for the worse or for the better and neither of these is possible for one who is perfect. One cannot help but think that the ten year old who has died prematurely (and for that matter, the two year old or the two month unborn, etc.) and who is resurrected will continue in some process of development in eternity. This would seem to be quite compatible if we think of perfection as maturing rather than the common idea which perhaps we can only attribute to God.

It should be noted that the development we have just traced is that of a human being and not some beast of the field. Developing human life is perfectly fitted for habitation on this earth, intelligent fellowship with the rest of creation and personal communion with God. When the twenty-three-male and the twenty-three female chromosomes unite, we have in the mysterious DNA the building blocks for an individual person. "...these chromosomes provide the genes, more than two million of them, which determine the special human individual that each of us becomes... The person I am now, what I look and feel like, what I can do, was locked into that tiny bit of biological life called a zygote. Can we say, then, that all a person is going to be is compressed into what his genetic code has in
store for him and a newly created fetus must therefore be reckoned a person with all rights pertaining thereto? I have already mentioned the other influences of environment, religious experience, etc., but the outcome is essentially the same. A human fetus develops into a unique human individual. It is conceded that even a one year old baby may have fewer human characteristics than a one year old monkey, but the baby has the potential within its genetic makeup to develop into an adult person. The baby will not become a gorilla neither will the year old monkey become a college professor. Common sense judgment by a responsible human being would not protect the life of a monkey over that of a year old child or, for that matter, a ninety year old grandmother. If the difference is humanness, I would suggest that there should be no point in the development of the human being that the trade-off could be made. Even the unborn in the earliest stages of gestation is a unique developing human being touched by the hand of God, made in His image and destined for resurrection and eternal life with Him.

25 Smedes, op. cit, p. 129

26 An interesting experiment in this area is recorded in Robert I. Watson & Henry Clay Lindgren Psychology of the Child, (New York; John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1959) p. 76
V. The Implications for Medical Ethics

John Stott's statement below sums up some of the ideas that have been discussed thus far:

"We cannot fix criteria of humanness (like self-consciousness, reason, independence, speech, moral choice, or responsive love) and then conclude that, lacking these, the fetus is not human. The newborn child and the senile old person lack these also. Nor can we draw a line at any point and say that after it the child is human and before it not. There is no "decisive moment of humanization," subsequent to conception, whether implantation, or "animation" (when some early fathers, building on Aristotle, supposed that the fetus receives a rational soul, a boy at about one month and a girl at about two), or "quickening" (a purely subjective notion when the mother first feels the fetus move), or viability (which is getting earlier and earlier) or birth (when the child takes his first independent breath). All these are stages in the continuous process by which an individual human life is developing into mature human personhood."

Having tried throughout this paper to establish the point that a human person is in a process of development right from the earliest moments of conception and even into eternity, and that no decisive point can be observed when one begins to be or ceases to be a human personality (indeed from the evidence of the various disciplines I can draw no other conclusions), what then are the implications for medical ethics? If there is even a remote possibility that the unborn child, at whatever stage of development, is a human being, (and I would

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1 Stott, op. cit., p. 50.
think that the burden of proof should be on the side of the pro-abortionist to offer evidence that the unborn is not, what is our responsibility towards the unborn child? If those who are mentally retarded or suffering from senility or brain damage are still human beings, destined for resurrection, what does that say about the attitude towards and the treatment offered to these people. If Robert Drinan is correct when he says that the ethical issue is, "...the immorality of the destruction of any human being by more powerful human beings merely for the sake of their own convenience, power or comfort," then society must take some responsible action in the whole area of medical ethics.

It is very evident that the position taken above has not been that of either the legal or medical professions, nor of many ethicists today. Fletcher, for one, feels that we cannot argue from a Theological or metaphysical position but rather from a strictly humanistic approach. "Our inherited classical accounts of 'man'," he says, "have been far too metaphysically or religiously based on discredited ontogenies and ontologies." The humanistic approach has led to a

2 Source Unknown - Cited in handout distributed by Father T. Kelly.

3 Fletcher, Humanhood, op. cit., p. 8
'quality' of life ethic that has replaced the 'sanctity' of life ethic. This is evident in case after case when the legal and medical professions are faced with decisions regarding retarded or otherwise handicapped individuals. A different value system seems to come into play. There is a whole new standard for those who might be considered less desirable to society. "In Ideals of Life, Millard S. Everett, who was professor of philosophy and humanities at Oklahoma A & M, writes,

'My personal feeling - and I don't ask anyone to agree with me - is that eventually, when public opinion is prepared for it, no child should be admitted into the society of the living who would be certain to suffer any social handicap - for example, any physical or mental defect that would prevent marriage or would make others tolerate his company only from the sense of mercy.' He adds, 'This would imply not only eugenic sterilization but also euthanasia due to accidents of birth which cannot be foreseen.'"

Everett's view is perhaps more acceptable than he thinks. Michael Tooley of Stanford University maintains that "...personhood should be withheld for a week after birth, during which time the baby could legally be killed if it fails to

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measure up to society's standards. But as Shettles rightly observes, "Once we permit the notion that defects cancel one's humanity, we risk losing all real humanity and open the way for arbitrary definitions of 'humanity' based upon subjective, shifting ideas of what is "normal" or "acceptable" at any given time."

The abortion decision in Roe vs. Wade of January 22, 1973 also characterizes a departure from a 'sanctity' of life ethic. In Justice Blackmun's view the question of 'personhood' was not one for the court to decide. He is quoted as saying:

"We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answers."

By voting in the negative the court by implication, however, did make a decision. The court rejected Christian moral standards, justifying its stand by referring to what it called 'ancient religions' i.e. pagan Greek and Roman law, which we have seen had little concern for the unborn or for the undesired

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5 Shettles & Rorvik, op. cit., p. 118
6 Ibid, p. 119
newborn. The overriding criterion for this landmark decision was the privacy and personal rights of the mother. In effect, the court gave the right for abortion for purely social indications. One of the two dissenting judges, Justice White, sums up the Court's action:

"The common claim before us is that for any one of such reasons (he cites convenience, family planning, economics, dislike of children, the embarrassment of illegitimacy, and others), or for no reason at all, and without asserting or claiming any threat to life or health, any woman is entitled to an abortion at her request if she is able to find a medical doctor willing to undertake the procedure. The Court for the most part sustains this position: during the period prior to the time the fetus becomes viable, the Constitution of the United States values the convenience, whim or caprice of the putative mother more than the life or potential life of the fetus..."

This kind of arbitrary sociological law has opened the door for more widespread abuses. "The Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion and the arbitrariness of that decision regarding who is or is not a 'person' have broken down barriers. There has been a drastic rise of crimes against children since abortion-on-demand became legal in the United States. We are convinced that this increase is caused in part by the liberalization of abortion laws and the resultant drastic lowering of the value placed on human life

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8 Editorial Comment, "Abortion and the Court", Christianity Today, February 16, 1973, p. 33
in general and on children's lives in particular.\textsuperscript{9}

With the practice of arbitrary abortion comes an increase and an ease in other forms of killing. There is a tremendous public apathy today which has contributed to the demise of the unique worth of humanity.

Schaeffer cites a report in the Associated Press where a British doctor, John Goudry, says that a "death pill" will be available and perhaps obligatory by the end of the century. Goudry says that doctors should be able to give a "demise pill" to old people if they ask for it and he concludes that in the end he can see the state taking over and insisting on euthanasia. Schaeffer comments, "As people are confronted with the flow of ideas from arbitrary abortion to infanticide to euthanasia, 'death by someone's choice' becomes increasingly thinkable."\textsuperscript{10}

The whole area of genetic engineering and research also seems to neglect or reject any consideration of humanity in the early stages of gestation. Much of the experimentation can only be called random bombardment with little consideration for those involved in the process. Rev. John Fletcher, Associate for

\textsuperscript{9} Schaeffer; op. cit., pp. 292-293

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid, p. 338
Theological Education at the Alban Institute in Washington, and one who is not pro-life, was quoted in the Toronto Sun, August 24, 1978, as saying, "It really does make a difference whether you think human life begins at fertilization... The problem for people opposed to the creation of test-tube babies is that, to do this technique well, you have to fertilize more than one egg... and the one that's doing the best is the one they re-implant. They discard the others."

The United States has attempted to get around the moral dilemma of spare embryos by implanting all of the extracted eggs, resulting in some cases in multiple births. In Australia, researchers have chosen to freeze fertilized eggs for later use, which has resulted in some recent ethical and legal controversies. Oftentimes the product of conception, as it is sometimes called, is observed, experimented on and discarded without any view to its humanness. Whether we are talking about the dangers of amniocentesis to the unborn or the frequent destruction of apparently live embryos in the lab or from such procedures as 'in vitro' and 'in vivo' fertilization, the idea of there being valued human life at stake does not seem to be a consideration.

Surely there must be an alternate and more acceptable view which reflects an honest evaluation of the
research of the various disciplines in this area. Indeed, "Those who regard individuals as expendable raw material – to be molded, exploited, and then discarded – do battle on many fronts with those who see each person as unique and special, worthwhile and irreplaceable."\textsuperscript{11}

The position I have taken in this paper is that there is true humanity from the earliest stages of development. Contrary to the humanistic ethic described above, I have argued mainly from a metaphysical or theological position. This position I believe to be valid. Gustafson says, "Theology contributes to medical ethics by providing a moral point of view. It provides a theological answer to the question, 'Why be moral?' One ought to be moral because the ultimate power, God, intends (both in his "intellect" and in his "activity") that human actions conform to his purposes and activity for the well-being of the creation."\textsuperscript{12}

Again he says, "Judgments are possible from this theological moral point of view which overrides certain human claims for individual rights and values for the sake of the more inclusive well-being of a wider circle

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p. 281
\textsuperscript{12} James Gustafson, The Contributions of Theology to Medical Ethics, (Marquette University, 1975), p. 25
of life."\textsuperscript{13} The practical purpose of the Christian ethic is clear, "...to assist morally serious Christian people to make proper moral judgments and engage in right moral actions, and to stimulate Christian people to reform (or in some cases defend) the social arrangements of their societies and of the human community as a whole."\textsuperscript{14} But what of those who refuse to look at the issues from any kind of Christian perspective, and for whom terms like ensoulment, etc. are meaningless? Surely even if we can't think in Theological terms, the more modern concept of 'if' and 'when' there is humanity, must have great significance for us. And if indeed it is conceded that criteria for humanness is, to say the least, arbitrary, then the benefit of the doubt must be given to those whose lives are being taken by 'more powerful human beings'.

Throughout this paper and particularly in the section "The Development of Soul" I have already commented on what I feel are the implications for the above position. Before I conclude, a few brief comments should be made in some specific areas.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p. 35

A. Abortion:

Abortions are performed for a number of reasons. There is little doubt that by far the majority are performed for social reasons. Possible physical or mental abnormality is one indication. The Anglican Church of Canada's Report on Life and Death as reported in (The Spectator, Sat. Aug. 6, 1977) says, "...our senses and emotions lead us into the grave mistake of treating human-looking shapes as if they were human, although they lack the least vestige of human behaviour and intellect. In fact, the only way to treat such defective infants humanely is not to treat them as human." The decision to abort, however, is not for the sake of the child who is judged to have little or no quality of life ahead of them, but rather for that of the parents who refuse to be burdened with a child who does not meet their expectations. The commonest problem in this area is German Measles. But, as Dr. Cal Stiller comments:

"A recent paper in LANCET described a study of 50 babies who were affected with German Measles' deformity and were followed up at 25 years of age. These were all well adjusted in society and only four were unemployed. Therefore, to decide which child should live or die because of some developmental abnormality is a rather dangerous course. Since four out of five pregnancies affected by German Measles are normal, it would make more sense to allow the child to be born and then destroy the defective ones. This would, however, offend even the most
militant pro-abortionist.\textsuperscript{15}

One has to wonder who has the right to judge whether a person will grow up to lead a meaningful life. I am reminded of the much quoted example posed something like this:

The father has syphilis and the mother has tuberculosis. They have had four children. The first one was blind, the second one died, the third one was deaf and dumb, and the fourth one had tuberculosis.

The mother is now pregnant with her fifth child but is willing to have an abortion if you determine that she should. What would you decide for her?

If you chose abortion...congratulations...you've just murdered Beethoven!

Many 'handicapped' children have been a great blessing in their homes and have grown up to be adults who have made a great contribution to society. Apart from this, however, is the fact that if that unborn child, handicapped or not, is a human being, then he/she should be treated with the same care as the one who seems in all respects to be 'normal'.\textsuperscript{16}

Another social indication is the risk to a mother's life. This is now very rare but if the choice has to be made, it is usually done in consideration of the

\textsuperscript{15} Stiller, op. cit., p. 5

\textsuperscript{16} This view is held by Paul Ramsey, Ethics at the Edges of Life, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 192-193
- known life' of the mother and the 'unknown life' of
the fetus. If the mother, however, is going to die
shortly of some incurable disease, I believe the life
of the child should be given priority. Another view
would be to do all to save both. Perhaps two deaths
are better than one murder. It is not the only example
in medicine or other areas of life, though, where the
path of the lesser of two evils has to be taken.

The case of felonious intercourse is sometimes
used as an example for justification for abortion.
While this is a tragic situation at any time, and while
the victim must be given support, compassion and love,
we must ask whether two wrongs ever make a right.
"Abortion does nothing to right the grievous wrong of
rape or incest; indeed, it only compounds it, adding
to the assault of one innocent person the taking of the
life of another innocent person." 17

For many women the fear of emotional or psycho-
logical trauma, has been enough to seek an abortion.
Indeed it is one of the commonest indications for
abortion on social grounds. But who knows whether
aborting a pregnancy will, or will not, adversely, or
beneficially affect the mental health of the mother?

17 Shettles & Rorvik, op. cit., p. 119
I have personally counselled a number of women who have suffered tremendous guilt for many years because of abortions they had for little or no good reason.

Other reasons given for abortion are, that every child should be a wanted child, that a woman has the right over her own body, that abortion should be used to effectively control overpopulation and poverty.

"There is no discernible reason that can justify us in allowing an external ("social") emergency situation to be made grounds for abortion. This applies not only to the individual case of an intolerable economic, vocational, or housing situation (in which case what is demanded is the help of the "neighbour" in direct personal form or indirect institutional form) but also to the situation in which the law permits abortion in order to prevent overpopulation and establish a balance between production and consumers (in which case pragmatic considerations would be empowered to decide matters of life and death)."  

Again, all these excuses seem very feeble if it is conceded that the unborn is a human being. "Once it is established as a premise that the life of the unborn child has the same inviolability as that of any innocent person, the conclusions come easily. The fetus may not be killed directly, but only indirectly and for a proportionate reason."  


19 Dedek, op. cit., p. 128
"...even some who favour the current abortion laws have conceded that by the end of the second trimester, the fetus is a feeling, responsive entity, by then attaining a "sense of self". One fetologist/psychiatrist has said that the fetus at this point is already possessed of the rudiments of "ego". Another has called the unborn at this stage "a fascinating human being."\(^{20}\) How then can abortionists justify the unknown pain and terror they must cause when little bodies are dismembered, skulls crushed and spines broken in a D. & E. (dilation and evacuation) procedure, or the agony caused by the injection of a saline solution which causes a burning of the skin resembling the appearance of skin exposed to napalm.\(^{21}\) There seems to be something dreadfully wrong with a society that would not tolerate such treatment of a two day old child, or even a dog for that matter, but quite calmly assents to what can only be described as the slaughter of innocent victims whose only crime is that they have not come out into the open and joined the rest of society. It is well worth noting that Dr. Bernard N. Nathanson who resigned as director

\(^{20}\) Shettles & Rorvik, op. cit., p. 69.

\(^{21}\) For more detailed descriptions of the act of abortion, see for example Nathanson's Aborting America of Shettles & Rorvik, Rites of Life, pp. 68-74.
of one of the largest abortion clinics in the Western world because of being troubled over the increasing conviction that he had presided over 60,000 deaths writes, "Somewhere in the vast philosophic plateau between the two implacably opposed camps – past the slogans, past the pamphlets, past even the demonstrations and the legislative threats – lies the infinitely agonizing truth. We are taking life, and the deliberate taking of life, even of a special order and under special circumstances, is an inexpressibly serious matter." 22

Other criteria for abortion could be mentioned. Lewis Smedes elaborates on what he suggests are strong arguments for abortion. These are:

1. A pluralistic society should not prevent individuals from doing what their religious principles allow. Some believe in their hearts that abortion is morally permissible.

2. A free society should not invade the privacy of a woman's body.

3. A just society should not pass laws whose execution inevitably creates unfairness. Poor women have to depend upon amateur "doctors" for abortions or bear children they cannot afford to care for.

4. A merciful society should not make laws that force terrible handicaps on children. It is not righteousness, but brutality, that forces women to bear children whose life will be a misery.

22 Cited in Ramsey, Ethics, op. cit., p. 40
5. A wise society will not pass laws that it cannot, and perhaps does not have the will to enforce. Nothing erodes the self-respect of a society like making laws it does not have the stomach to enforce or the will to punish offenders for breaking.

These arguments are good, he says, if the assumption is that a fetus is definitely not a human being. They are not convincing if you believe the fetus is a human being. He concludes:

"A pluralistic society does not allow people to follow their consciences if their consciences lead them to kill an innocent human being. A free society will invade a person's privacy if it is certain that she is privately about to kill an innocent human being. A just society may well pass laws whose execution leads to unfairness to some people if not to pass them causes a greater unfairness, the killing of innocent human beings. A merciful society may well make laws that burden children if not to make them encourages the killing of innocent, unborn children. A wise society may well make laws if does not have the will to enforce if not to pass them makes killing human beings legal. In sum, all of the arguments that are based on what a good society will or will not do fail at the frontier of the rights of a fetus to live." 23

Dedek comments on the Catholic position quoting Pope Pius XI who in 1930 in Casti Connubii clearly pronounced as a grave crime and as killing the taking of life of the offspring hidden in the mother's womb. Pope Pius XII in 1951 speaking to midwives repeated

23 Lewis B. Smedes, The Arguments in Favor of Abortion are Strong," Christianity Today - Date Unknown.
the teaching of his predecessor. "Every human being, even the child in its mother's womb, receives its right to life directly from God, not from its parents, nor from any human society or authority. Therefore, there is no man, no human authority, no science, no indication; whether medical, eugenical, social, economical or moral, that can show or give a valid juridical title for a deliberate and direct disposing of an innocent human life." 24 The Second Vatican Council and Pope Paul VI in Humanae Vitae have taken similar positions emphasizing the sacredness of life and the importance of guarding with the greatest care even from conception.

B. Euthanasia

It is very difficult to think seriously about the abortion issue without taking into account the problem of euthanasia. Some of the same ethical problems, principles and attitudes are common to both. So as not to be guilty of vain repetition, little more needs to be said on this subject. Certainly it is not my intent here to in total condemn the decisions made by some practitioners in the face of some very difficult ethical

24 Cited in Dedek, op. cit., pp. 118-119
situations. It is quite evident that there often comes a time when nothing more can be done to sustain the life of a patient. When discussing abortion, we ask the question, 'When does life begin?' In the context of euthanasia we are faced with the question 'When does life end?' Surely to use the modern technology at our disposal to keep alive certain organs of the body while the person himself is dead, is to be preoccupied with a pious heroism that transcends the reasonable. In 1968 the World Medical Association in conjunction with Harvard University developed criteria for death that has become widely accepted. The four points of the test are basically as follows.

1. A lack of response to stimuli
2. No movement or breathing
3. The absence of reflexes
4. A flat EEG

Often we 'pull the plug' on the basis of the above criteria. "The plain fact is that indirect or negative euthanasia is already a fait accompli in modern medicine."25 This aspect of euthanasia is not my main concern, although I can very much appreciate the positive approach taken by such men as Paul Ramsay.26 He quotes Dr. Cicely Saunders who says, "I do not believe in taking a deliberate

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25 Fletcher, Humanhood, op. cit.; p. 149
26 See Ramsay, Ethics, op. cit., pp. 145-188
step to end a patient's life - but then, I do not get asked. If you relieve a patient's pain and if you can make him feel like a wanted person, which he is, then you are not going to be asked about euthanasia. I think that euthanasia is an admission of defeat, and a totally negative approach. One should be working to see that it is not needed.  

My main concern is with euthanasia that is practiced for the sake of eugenics and the putting away of the malformed young and the unwanted elderly for the 'good' of society. If life, as we have seen, is a gift from God, surely we cannot so glibly throw it back in the Creator's face. Questions about 'active' and 'passive' euthanasia, 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary' means of saving life as well as the other verbiage that has become associated with the problem, become redundant if we again are faced with the death of a human being. We cannot then even under the banner of 'death with dignity' participate in the killing of those who are merely senile, retarded or infirmed any more than we can starve to death a newborn infant with congenital defect because that child may be imperfect, unwanted, socially embarrassing or, in our view, not capable of meaningful life. We must be very cautious

27 Ibid, p. 152
not to be too quick to rob someone of the opportunity of life no matter how difficult and unfortunate the circumstances may appear. As Smedes comments,

"No person has an undeniable right to live without burdens, even horribly heavy burdens. The lives of handicapped saints remind us that a person handicapped in one part of life may develop another part far beyond the rest of us, and shine as a bright star in the human galaxy. Her handicap may be a special reason for keeping her alive; to let her die may rob the human family of a saint or star."

If man is in the process of becoming, what right do any of us have to step in and bring to an end what might be God's finishing touches?

C. Genetic Engineering and Experimentation

In 1931 Bavarian psychiatrists advocated the sterilization of the chronically mentally ill. This step led to an insidious corrosion of medical thinking. Both "positive" and "negative" eugenics were practiced as a result. By 1931, according to J. H. Landman, 30 American states passed sterilization laws and thousands of American citizens were sterilized. In Germany there was not only the killing off of millions of supposedly defective humans but the attempt to breed a

28 Smedes, Mere Morality, op. cit., p. 150

a generation of supposedly superior Aryans. This resulted in cruel and inhumane experimentation that can more properly be described as torture than scientific work. Perhaps what is amazing to us is the active role played by German physicians and also the involvement and cooperation of the whole of German society in the terror, genocide and the barbaric experimentation.

Some of the same attitudes and motives that were prevalent during this period are still very much alive today. Space age technology in the area of genetic engineering is enabling man to manipulate genes and heredity; to alter the process of life itself. Research in the area of invitro fertilization, artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood, gene splicing (recombinant DNA research) and cloning is opening up doors to the creation of a supposedly better race. Admittedly, much of the research that is being done is centred on battling problems of disease and sickness. But how far are we morally permitted to go in our biological interventions?

Scientific technology is always ahead of ethical guide-

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30 The attempt by Hitler to create a 'Master Race' is documented in such works as Of Pure Blood, by Marc Hillel and Clarissa Henry, McGraw-Hill Book Co., N.Y., 1976

31 See Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 340
lines and often the work that is done is undertaken without regard to the humanness of the individual.

Human fetuses are experimented on and easily discarded. Through such technology as bio-chips, there is the possibility of changing the way we think, the way we learn and the way we feel. The development of such human qualities as speech, choice, memory and imagination can be altered or manipulated.

In light of the view expressed in this paper, that from the earliest, man is in process of becoming, then more care than is now being given, must be used any time man is tempted to engineer the developing process or to discard the products of failed experiments. Gustafson proposes one possible criterion for genetic experimentation which I concur with. "The meaning of becoming human is not something discovered as man develops in the course of his evolution and changes, but is something known authoritatively, and thus is imposed upon his actions from without... One would define the licit and illicit kinds of experiments in the light of an a priori definition of what man is, and everything done both in learning and in doing from what has been learned would have to conform to these determinations." 32 Man, if he is

to play God must first learn to be man or be very careful what kind of God he plans to play.
Conclusions

I have argued that personhood must be recognized as going back to the very earliest stages of gestation. Because any lines drawn which would separate the non-human from the human could only be arbitrary, the benefit of any doubt must be given to the innocent, the unborn and those who cannot defend themselves or speak for themselves. This is not the view of society today which has accepted a philosophy of secular humanism. The result of the displacement of Judeo-Christian values is a reduction of the value of human life. Instead of our decisions being based on the absolutes of the Word of God, arbitrary laws for the so-called benefit and comfort of mankind have taken precedence. A long list of inhumane attitudes and abuses have resulted which can easily be described as another holocaust. This time, however, the blessing of much of society is upon it.

One can only hope that as individuals and as nations there will be a turning back to God and the Christian base upon which many of our past values were founded.

"If man is not made in the image of God, nothing then stands in the way of inhumanity. There is no good reason why mankind should be perceived as special. Human life is cheapened. We can see this in many of the major issues being debated in our society today: abortion, infanticide,
euthanasia, the increase of child abuse and violence of all kinds, pornography (and its particular kinds of violence as evidenced in sadomasochism), the routine torture of political prisoners in many parts of the world, the crime explosion, and the random violence which surrounds us. 33

We need to get back to a 'sanctity' of life ethic that stresses our unique and individual relationship to God - that part of creation that is made in 'His image' and destined for resurrection and eternal life with Him.

33 Schaeffer, op. cit., 290
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