

The 2021 Abortion Battle on the Opinion Page of the Waco Tribune-Herald.

The first three pages are full editorials critical of the pro-life movement in Waco. The editorials are written by a retired Baylor philosophy professor, a pastor of a Presbyterian USA church, and a prominent local attorney.

The next four pages are thirteen letters to the editor responding to the editorials and defending Waco pro-life outreach and pro-life thinking.

These letters to the editor were less than half of the total pro-life letters printed in the Waco Tribune-Herald. The pro-life faithful of Central Texas used their keyboards well for defending babies, moms, and families.

Perils in simplifying debate

Does 14th Amendment protect fetuses?



ROBERT BAIRD
Board of
Contributors

Prominent legal scholar John Finnis, emeritus professor of law at the University of Notre Dame, has recently opened, or reopened, a particular argument against permitting abortions. I'll come back to that.

I think a lot about abortion. Of course, if you're a reader of the Waco Tribune-Herald, my friend and former Baylor colleague John Pisciotta will not let you not think about abortion. And Pisciotta has company. A recent issue of this newspaper published a long list of Wacoans opposing abortion.

Because it's such a complex and troublesome issue, I never feel comfortable with my thoughts about abortion, though on one matter I'm rather sure: The abortion debate is often poorly framed or described. The question — Are you for or against abortion? — is so misleading. Everybody approves of abortion under some circumstances. And nobody approves of abortion under every circumstance.

Let me restate that: 99% of us approve of abortion under some circumstances. If all physicians involved agreed that a continuation of the pregnancy would result in the death of both the woman and the fetus, I'm confident 99% of us would judge the abortion justified. I did have a student once who argued that even under those circumstances abortion was not permissible. His argument was that in such a situation, God had willed the death of both the woman and the fetus. Even the most conservative of my students were shocked if not appalled by such a view of God.

And so, yet again, almost everyone approves of abortion under some circumstances.

On the other hand, I never encountered anyone who thought that a woman in the ninth month of pregnancy for some casual reason, like foreign travel, was justified in having an abortion.

So nobody (exception noted above) falls at the extreme ends of the continuum. Nobody opposes abortion under every circumstance and nobody approves of abortion under every circumstance. Everybody falls somewhere on a continuum between the extremes. Many reasons are given for having an abortion, of course:

- The life and/or health of the woman.



MARK ROGERS, A-J MEDIA VIA TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Teresa Clark addresses the crowd after celebrating early returns at an anti-abortion election watch party at Trinity Church in Lubbock on May 1. Lubbock became the largest city in Texas to approve a municipal ban on abortions, by an almost 2-to-1 margin.

- Medical issues related to the well-being of the fetus.

- Rape, incest, failure of birth control, the extreme youth of or the emotional stability of or the financial solvency of the couple.

The list goes on. The fewer reasons one sees as justifying abortion, the more one moves toward one end of the continuum. The more reasons one accepts as justifying abortion, the more one moves toward the other end.

So the debate is not over "abortion/yes" or "abortion/no." The debate is over when abortion is morally justified and when not. And notice we're talking about morality here. There is a difference between morality and legality.

Something can be legal and immoral or moral and illegal. Slavery, for example, was once legal in this country, but immoral. On the other hand, interracial marriage was once illegal, but that such relationships are moral eventually resulted in our changing the law.

The connection between morality and legality is reflected in our hope that our laws and morality match up. As we have seen, sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. One of the arguments for changing the law is to help get our laws and morals in sync.

But whether we're talking about morality or legality, everyone (everyone!) wishes that there were no abortions in the sense that everyone wishes there were no unwanted pregnancies and no unhealthy pregnancies. I have often wondered, by the way, how many unwanted pregnancies, and therefore abortions, were avoided as a result of Planned Parenthood's educa-

tional program "Nobody's Fool." I don't know how such numbers could be determined, but it may be that Planned Parenthood is not only a provider of abortions but also one of the greatest preventers of abortions.

Wouldn't it be interesting, encouraging really, seeing members of Pro-Life Waco volunteering to help Planned Parenthood carry out its "Nobody's Fool" educational program? After all, both organizations wish there were no abortions in the sense that both organizations wish there were no unwanted pregnancies.

In fact, could not Pro-Life Waco do this (support Planned Parenthood's educational program) while still adamantly opposing Planned Parenthood's providing abortion services? This is not a far-fetched idea. After all, it is quite possible to approve of and support some activities of an organization while disapproving of and strongly opposing other activities of that organization. Think of those who love our country, support most of what the United States does, yet took to the streets opposing the government's prosecution of the Vietnam War.

As I say, the whole issue is complex and troubling. Perhaps the greatest provider of abortions is Mother Nature if you think of miscarriages as spontaneous abortions. According to a Mayo Clinic document, about "10 to 20 percent of known pregnancies end in miscarriage. But the actual number is likely higher because many miscarriages [spontaneous abortions] occur so early in pregnancy that a woman doesn't realize she's pregnant."

These spontaneous abortions typically occur because of prob-

lems with fetal development. Of course, a problem with fetal development is one of the reasons women and/or couples sometimes choose to have a medically induced abortion.

But now let me pick up on the renewed argument against abortion by John Finnis referenced in the first sentence of my column: Most opponents of abortion have aimed at overturning *Roe v. Wade*. That would, in effect, return the issue to the states, resulting, many have argued, in red states legally prohibiting abortion and blue states permitting them. But Finnis moves in a different direction, arguing that fetuses are persons under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution and should, therefore, be protected as such.

The first proposition of the 14th Amendment refers to persons born or naturalized in the United States. That clearly would not refer to fetuses. Finnis notes, however, that the third proposition asserts: "nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process." Finnis then argues that when the amendment was approved in 1867, the context included familiarity with Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England. Those commentaries assumed that the fetus was a person, as did, argues Finnis, the states that ratified the 14th Amendment.

The likelihood of Finnis carrying the day with his argument seems slim. After all, extremely conservative judges Robert Bork (1927-2012) and Antonin Scalia (1936-2016) both rejected the claim that the 14th Amendment applies to fetuses. The conservative state of Mississippi in 2011 also rejected a referendum designating the fetus as a person.

And that is the question: Is the fetus a person? When a man and a woman conceive, clearly the fetus is human. It is not a frog fetus or a dog fetus. It is a human fetus. But is the early developing fetus a person? It is certainly a potential person, but is it yet a person? That is the perennial philosophical debate over what should count as personhood. The never-ending complexity of that debate is precisely why this country splits almost evenly over the issue and why so many of us "fall into the conflicted middle."

All controversial issues are controversial precisely because strong and legitimate arguments exist on both sides. So it is in the abortion debate. If each side acknowledged that to the other, would the tone of the debate be different?

Robert Baird is professor emeritus of philosophy at Baylor University.

Language held captive is propaganda

Waco Tribune-Herald

9-9-2021

Here's why I stand with Planned Parenthood in combating divisive SB 8



LESLIE KING
Guest columnist

It's assumed that Texas Senate Bill 8, the new law that restricts abortion by putting enforcement in the hands of individuals, not our government, is supported by Christian principles.

It's an assumption that is possible because of the pile-up of Christian language within political life. Christian language and doctrine have been on a centuries-long journey, too often leveraged as rationale for political posturing.

The reality is that this law exacerbates a civic climate of distrust and even fear that threatens to return us to frontier justice and mob rule.

Our shared work, the work of any civilized culture, is to find a balance between trust and critical reflection. SB 8 is a distraction from real civility and civic work because of its intent to erode trust between neighbors and its intent to disable critical reflection through fear-based politics. The law threatens. It means to make us afraid of

saying too much to one another when the stakes are high in our personal landscapes. The law seduces the public with inappropriate power. In it, we are encouraged to rat one another out toward a punitive end even though the welfare of individuals and families hang in the balance.

The recent journey of SB 8, from legislation to law, has been possible in part because people like me have not spoken more plainly about Christian propaganda at work in our civic life. I have a choice. SB 8 does not have to be my fate or our fate.

When Christian language is held captive toward a preference it becomes propaganda. Propaganda, at its worst, intends to erode trust and critical thinking.

Propaganda, at its worst, disables societies from moving forward. Civic life and Christian life are hallmarked not by fear but appropriate freedom within the scope of the common good. In days such as these, it is important for Christian communities to dismantle the propaganda that keeps the Christian message relegated to a foothold for political exploit.

Christian propaganda at work in politics depends on the idea that the Bible is a rulebook of right and wrong. The Bible as a rulebook quickly reveals a collection of inconsistencies. Many scholars and Sunday

Propaganda, at its worst, intends to erode trust and critical thinking. Propaganda, at its worst, disables societies from moving forward.

school teachers recognize that the Bible is less a rulebook and more a conversation partner that begs the seeker to ask important questions. When reading a biblical story or maxim we wonder, "How would I, with my authority and power, respond in a similar situation?"

Christian propaganda at work in politics depends on the idea that God is unchanging and rigid with expectation. Ironically, for Christianity, what is consistently unchanging about God is that the divine nature is observant, discerning and lovingly responsive to the human condition. Check it out.

Again, and again, the Bible reveals a God adapting and responding to the changing circumstances at work in people's lives. As God is, so we are called to be. Nothing dismantles propaganda like a God who is perceptive and fearless for humanity despite our limitations and flaws.

SB 8 does not have to be our fate. The better essentials of my Christian faith encourage me to ask myself the hard questions

about my own decision making. The better essentials of my faith help me to understand that the best authorities in my life are interested and responsive to my needs. The better essentials of my faith lead me to stand, despite propaganda, with Planned Parenthood. I stand with them because they provide health care and space for important conversations. In these conversations, individuals and their loving communities can talk, learn and decide.

There is no pretense that a perfect path exists. There is no taking the Lord's name in vain by invoking it in larger phrases of propaganda. Planned Parenthood is full of Christian people who trust the capacity of women and their loving communities to assess what is needed so that the greater good might be served. The only reason that Planned Parenthood seems contrary to Christian religious life is because of ill-used propaganda that seeks to coerce others toward a political preference.

I stand, because my faith demands it, with Planned Parenthood. I'll not be distracted from hard work by fear-based suggestions that I should not think critically nor trust in my neighbor's competence as they face their hour of crisis and claim important choice.

Rev. Leslie King is senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Waco.

MEANWHILE, ACTUAL COMMANDMENTS GO UNHEEDED

God's word & abortion

Many read into the Bible
what's not actually there



DAVID SCHLEICHER
Guest columnist

The demise of *Roe v. Wade* nears. Availability of abortion services is coming to depend not on what country a woman lives in but what state, even what city.

Now is the time to question the most basic assumption underlying the actions of those identified as "pro-life": whether the Bible really demands that stopping abortion be a priority.

I carried my Bible with me each day to my public high school and have read it through more than once. The anti-abortion views I grew up with turn out to be more thinly based on the Bible than my certainty in them suggested. One can string together verses against murder and about God knowing of someone before birth.

But verses plainly condemning abortion as such aren't to be found.

Abortion has been around for thousands of years, so the failure to directly condemn abortion is unlikely to have been out of ignorance of it. It was certainly a practice in the Roman Empire, so had Jesus and the writers of the gospels thought it fundamental, there's no reason it couldn't have been mentioned by name.

Jesus openly condemned anger, lust, divorce and failure to love one's enemies, among other things. Abortion would have been an easy addition to the list.

Jesus did say it would be better to have a heavy stone tied around your neck and be tossed into the sea than to cause harm to children. But he referred to misleading children who had been born, describing them as little ones who already believed in him.

The parable about goats (versus righteous sheep) being sent to fiery damnation? It was for failure to feed the hungry, take in the stranger, clothe the needy, visit the imprisoned and care for the sick. Not for terminating a pregnancy.

Similarly, St. Paul's views are spelled out to the point of knowing that he thought it a disgrace for women to have their hair cut off, but he didn't mention abortion. St. Peter likewise did not bother to condemn abortion, though he took time to denounce women having "elaborate hairstyles," wearing gold jewelry and dressing in fine clothes.

Do a Google search for Bible verses con-

demning abortion and you'll find that the New Testament ones given are instead general condemnations of various sins or praise for purity.

Plenty of Old Testament passages condemn the unjustified spilling of blood and remark on God's pre-birth knowledge of someone. But again none directly condemn abortion in a way one would expect if stopping it were indeed the 11th Commandment.

Moses alerted the Egyptians that God was going to prove a point by killing the firstborn child (and animal) in every household. In the book of Numbers, Moses gives instructions on how a priest can test whether a pregnancy is the result of adultery. The promised result is that, if the conception was not with the husband, a miscarriage would follow. In other words, an abortion was then an acceptable means to the end.

In Exodus, a fine is imposed if a fight results in a premature birth but no further injury. As defined some 3,400 years ago, a premature birth could be expected to result in death, not in a stay in the neonatal intensive care unit. So the reference to further injury would have been to the mother. Yes, some theologians interpret the passage differently, but if the point was to have abortion punished as equivalent to murder, why not clearly say so? Why not say so in at least one place in the Old or New Testament?

In the book of Samuel, we're told God turned against King Saul because he failed to obey a command to kill another tribe's every "man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey." (Saul's only disobedience was sparing some animals and one

king.)

As to the more recent past, the pro-life movement points to 1821 as when the first U.S. state passed a law against abortion. Give the many Judeo-Christian influences on the founding of the United States, if abortion were widely viewed earlier as equivalent to murder surely it would not have taken 45 years for the first state to get around to limiting it.

I respect that many consider abortion murder — I once was one of them. What I have come to see is that the biblical basis for such beliefs is more tenuous than I was willing to imagine. And the time I spent fighting against abortion could have been spent on things more clearly commanded: feeding the hungry, tending to the sick and caring for the stranger. In hindsight, I fear that the fact it was easier to pass out pamphlets was part of the reason I preferred that viewpoint.

It's common in Waco, Texas, to see signs urging us to "pray to end abortion." If one accepts that God could at any time choose to end the practice of abortion, unless and until that happens, assuming God is on one side or the other of the debate can mean creating God in our own image.

In the meantime, many children already born desperately need the time and attention instead being spent on protests and passing out pamphlets. May my youthful obliviousness be forgiven.

David Schleicher is an attorney who previously served on the Waco ISD Board of Trustees and as chair of the McLennan County Democratic Party.

Baird rebuttal

I write in response to Robert Baird's op-ed titled "Perils in simplifying debate" [May 9], which could just as easily have been called "Can't we just all get along?" I guess that would be possible if we were all as wishy-washy as Baird. There are, however, many people, myself included, committed to the sanctity of life (yes, a fetus is a life, 100% human). To suggest that we work hand-in-hand with Planned Parenthood is absurd. Why would any of us chose to cozy up to the organization that has led this nation into what is nothing short of a holocaust of innocent lives? Accordingly, I do not want to get along with the abortionists and I do not care to moderate my tone. Abortion is murder and since 1973 sixty-two million human beings have been killed in this senseless tragedy.

Gene Griffin, Lorena

I've been reading with interest Robert Baird's article and the responses on the difficulty in deciding "abortion, not a yes or no question" and I may have a solution. Substitute "destroying a child in the womb" for "abortion" and see if it's a more clear answer. Also in weighing the good with the bad an organization does, I'm always reminded of the timeless adage "Mussolini made the trains run on time."

Diane Schlecte, Waco

8-22-2021 Remember the soul

If I have misunderstood what Rev. King has written [Sept. 9 column], I hope to be enlightened.

I am to be like Jesus. I do not want Jesus to conform to me. The lessons and teachings on faith and kindness are the same today as years ago. Yes, the presentation of things of the world has changed only into evolved "modernized" appearance. But to me God is the same alpha/omega. Always above me, yet abounding in love and salvation's grace.

As for abortion, I would never question prayer and anguish between a mother and God. A mother in anguish and prayer

to God is a mother who knows she has created a soul, not just a baby. God will listen.

But, I must agree with those who do not even see life in what they create — much less a soul. Those womb babies need protection. I know I must never judge. I know I have voted for man-made laws that were already put there by God.

Some mothers are unknowing of what I believe, some are unbelieving and some might not just care.

Please, if you have made God and Jesus present, then remember the soul of that precious living baby. After you listen to the mothers, tell them about the soul and life of the womb baby.

Terry Brazelton, Waco

8-22-2021 Supporting SB 8

I have read article after article after article in the Tribune-Herald decrying the recently passed abortion law in Texas. Since the Trib seems to be disinclined to express any other viewpoint, let me try. Because of SB 8, 44,000 babies will not be murdered in Texas this year. The law has my absolute support.

Gene Griffin, Lorena

Whose 4-12-2021 propaganda? Waco Trib

In response to a minister's column in your paper [Leslie King, Sept. 9], I feel obligated to comment in considerable opposition to the premise of progressive language. I might be undereducated (master's degree in engineering and business), but I do understand the language of the Bible and its recipes for life. I believe truth is absolute and only gets diluted when you get away from Jesus and the teachings of the Bible, principles that

have stood the test of time. People are misled by modern liberal propaganda issuing from both media and progressive leaders that a fetus is a thing to be disposed of at will. Just ask yourself, where does most of the propaganda really come from?

Nowhere was Jesus or the Ten Commandments mentioned in the piece I'm referring to, which is the basis of our salvation and law as Christians. That's rather telling.

Bill Clark, Waco

LETTERS

Flawed logic 9-15-21

Rev. Leslie King [Sept. 9 column] does not like Senate Bill 8 or Christian propaganda that opposes abortion. But she apparently doesn't mind Planned Parenthood propaganda that claims abortion makes up only 3% of its services (2019-2020 annual report, Page 33). If only 3%, then why won't PP stop doing abortions in order to improve its reputation and qualify for financial grants from the state of Texas?

Rev. King states that "The Bible as a rulebook ... reveals a collection of inconsistencies." It's easy to make unsubstantiated claims of inconsistencies, but her credibility would be enhanced by citing some examples.

She writes that "the Bible is less a rulebook and more a conversation partner that begs ... important questions." Can our

answers to hard questions legitimately trump the Bible's rules?

She also states that "Christian propaganda ... depends on the idea that God is unchanging." Rev. King may view Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8 and James 1:17 as mere ideas, but they clearly describe God's unchanging nature.

Finally, while standing with Planned Parenthood, Rev. King states that "There is no pretense that a perfect path exists." What about God's path? 2 Samuel 22:31, Psalm 19:7 and Matthew 5:48 state that God and his law are perfect. She also states that the only reason Planned Parenthood seems contrary to the Christian life is because of ill-used propaganda. I take a different view: I believe the reason for Planned Parenthood's bad reputation is it unapologetically ends the lives of more innocent preborn babies than any other entity in the United States.

I find Rev. King's arguments flawed and unconvincing.

Tom Harrison, Waco

Day to remember

The Waco Trib editorial page of Sept. 9 was dominated by two opinion pieces 100% opposed to the Texas heartbeat law, which has sent shock waves through Waco and the nation.

If you do not agree with the derisive criticism of the law and those who support it, I encourage you to come out to the Waco observance of National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children on Saturday. It will be at Rachel's Park Memorial, 4720 N. 19th Street, from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Whether you support or oppose the heartbeat law, I encourage you to check out imagesofabortion.com. This website contains photos of preborn babies recovered from waste and interred in locations like Rachel's Park. Whatever position you take on abortion, you should know the realities of what you support or oppose.

John Pisciotta, Waco

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LETTERS

Unchanging God

In response to Leslie King's recent column [Sept. 9] regarding Texas SB 8, I emphatically disagree with her interpretation of this legislation. The overuse of her reference to "Christian propaganda" is nonsensical and the implication that pro-life advocates are Christian propagandists is very insulting.

Furthermore, the intent of Senate Bill 8 is not to turn pro-lifers into vigilantes or bounty hunters, as King implies in her column. The intent of this bill is to rein in or minimize the footprint of the evil of abortion in our state which is detrimental to real health care for women and fatal to preborn babies in their womb.

The Bible is more than a "rulebook." It is the written word of God and the God of my understanding does not "adapt" to a changing world. To the contrary, we are to adapt to God's word, which is unchanging and not fluid as some people would like to believe.

**Robert Lehman,
Meridian**

I'm writing in response to Leslie King's comments on Sept 9. I find it hard to believe that one who calls herself a Christian would even consider supporting an organization that is diametrically opposed to everything that Christ said or did. Jesus Christ himself tells us that "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me..." (Luke 9:48) Planned Parenthood — and its supporters — refuse to receive the children who are gifts from God, and based on the words from our Lord, they are refusing to receive Christ. An odd position for a pastor of a Presbyterian Church to take, in my opinion.

King claims that "the Bible reveals a God adapting and responding to the changing circumstances at work in people's lives." There is one fundamental fact in every version of the Bible: God is unchangeable. I would humbly suggest that King needs reread the

Bible — the complete one with 73 books in it — that the ancient "presbyters," or priests, compiled.

I do agree with King that language is often used as propaganda. She obviously knows well that Planned Parenthood has used language to distort their "work" in the eyes of many Americans. If Planned Parenthood in Waco actually provided "health care," there would be a full-time physician on staff at the facility. They would not have to fly in a doctor from Connecticut every two weeks to perform abortions. And pro-life Christians like myself would not have to stand out front of Planned Parenthood and pray for healing in our community, pray for the Lord's "language" to work in the hearts and minds of people, and realize that we all have a Christian responsibility to protect the most innocent of Americans — those in the womb.

**Tom McNew,
Copperas Cove**

LETTERS

10-6-21

Schleicher off base

David Schleicher in his column of Oct. 1 appears to be a fervent follower of Joe Biden, our current holder of the office of president. I guess that makes sense as he was the county chair for the Democratic Party. Do you remember, when Biden was running for vice president in 2008 and 2012, he thought that life begins at the moment of conception? However, Biden revealed on Sept. 3 that he no longer believes that life begins at the moment of conception! Good old Flip-Flop Joe.

Speaking of flip-flops, Schleicher of "Bible-banging" fame as a youth was formerly pro-life. I don't recall him ever being a member of Pro-Life Waco, although this organization has attracted as many Protestants as Catholics. Now, since he is not pro-life, he must be anti-life. The man and the woman already made their choice before the baby was conceived.

Schleicher repeatedly emphasizes that the word abortion never occurs in the Holy Bible. Perhaps this is because this English word only came into common usage in the early part of the 17th century. However, some of the early church (Catholic) fathers deplored the practice of killing a

child in the womb in the first couple of centuries A.D. Of course, not everything that goes against God's teaching is not written down and is not to be taken literally, e.g. the creation story in Exodus.

The current trend among politicians like Schleicher is to "follow the science." Since embryology teaches that specifically human life begins at conception, modern natural law ethics prohibit direct abortion at any stage. Also, a soul (the "human substantial form") exists from the moment of conception. For a reference, see the article by Dr. Dennis Bonnette titled "Abortion Ethics: Natural Law vs Naturalism." Is Schleicher aware that there have been numerous cases tried in a court of law, whether the baby in the womb died through a car accident or as the result of the mother being shot, in which the infant in the womb was given personhood? Is Schleicher aware of natural law, which I assume isn't taught in law school? Depending on where he was schooled, he might have had a course in ethics.

Finally, since a child in the womb is a person and not just a fetus, who is going to protect his/her right to life, which is protected by our Constitution?

**W.E. "Bill" McBride,
Woodway**

10-6-21 ***

David Schleicher's column on abortion is eristic "non-reasoning" again. Just pushing the liberal viewpoint.

He offers three Biblical references in support of abortion, all dishonest:

1. Numbers: The priest tests whether a pregnancy was by the husband; if not, a miscarriage would certainly (implied) follow. Therefore, abortions are acceptable.

2. Exodus: God had an opportunity to say abortion was equivalent to murder, but "failed to do so," therefore it is not condemned, and therefore OK. Twisted "reasoning!"

3. Samuel: Samuel disobeyed God's command to kill another tribe's "every man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox, sheep, camel and donkey." Samuel disobeyed and spared a few animals and one king. Therefore, this passage supports abortion.

What do these people think the beating heart in the woman's womb is — a sheep? A goat? Nah. It's a child.

Schleicher may be a brilliant, highly educated lawyer, but would have most certainly have earned an "F" in any of my undergraduate logic courses.

Lee Harkins, Hillsboro

LETTERS

Biblical principle

10-13-2021

In the continuing discussion of the Texas heartbeat bill (SB 8), several community leaders, including David Schleicher in his Oct. 1 column, make a logical error when they deduce that since the Bible does not specifically mention the term "abortion," therefore, this activity should be considered morally acceptable.

The Bible does not directly condemn recreational drug use, either, but its clear prohibition of drunkenness establishes a principle which applies to such illicit narcotics consumption.

Likewise, the Bible condemns the taking of all innocent, human life: "You shall do no murder" (Exodus 20:13). Thus, though the term "abortion" is not found its pages, this Biblical principle would apply to innocent, human life before birth, as well.

Schleicher acknowledges that the Bible speaks of God's knowledge of each one of us in our mother's wombs. Yet, the

Bible speaks even more poignantly: "For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13).

This begs the question: What is being terminated (or killed) in every abortion? The scientific (and Biblical) answer is: a human being in utero (the mother's womb).

If we would not justify the intentional taking of an innocent, human life, already born, for convenience, economic, or social reasons, how can we justify taking a human life inside the womb for similar reasons?

Finally, we should note that though abortion and infant abandonment were common, even legal, in ancient Roman and Greek cultures, Jewish law forbade such actions. Additionally, early, first-century Christians were forbidden to practice abortion in the clear teachings of the "Didache," one of the first published statements of Christian ethical concerns.

Christian history and Christian Scripture both come down on the side of protecting innocent, human life — from conception through natural death. This shows respect for the imago Dei — the image of God in each human soul.

Warren Fain, Waco

LETTERS

Schleicher's fallacy

10-21-2021

David Schleicher's column [Oct. 1] reveals an intense angst at the real possibility of the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, which would also invalidate its partner case *Doe v. Bolton*. I am not an attorney or academic, I am simply of a plain vanilla pedestrian intellect. But I do claim to possess common horse sense and God-given moral conscience.

Schleicher's polemical comments present the argument that the authority of the Biblical moral pro-life position is invalid because, in his view, a distinctly clear command against abortion proper is not stated in any text of the scripture. This is the first of logical fallacies elicited by Schleicher. It's the argument from silence fallacy (if X didn't say X then X must be false). Schleicher's comments are fraught with logical fallacy, false dilemma

fallacy (God could stop it but he didn't), hasty generalization and flawed interpretation.

Context is a key standard in correct Biblical interpretation. Deflect, distract, obfuscate and induce fallacy are the standard pro-choice response to clear reasoned and rational evidence based on truth, which are the tools of the pro-life position.

Justice Harry Blackmun stated: "If prenatal personhood is established" the case for abortion "collapses, for the fetus' right to life would then be guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment." Science and biology have long settled the personhood argument that human life and personhood begin at conception.

I believe the statement is true about the radical left agenda: The issue is never the issue, the issue is always the revolution. May we repent and cry out for God's mercy for the 60 million-plus babies slaughtered since *Roe*.

Nicholas O'Connor, Waco