

**WSP-JB 87 When Does Life Begin?**  
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Edited Sermon Transcript

Well, the question I would like to ask this afternoon, which you can use for the title of this sermon, brethren, is, "When does life begin?" When does life begin? And you might think, "Oh, well, this is a trick question, and maybe this is going to be some spiritualized, philosophical thing." But, no, I do really mean it in the simplest terms: When does life begin?

Now, in the Christian community—whether in this country or in others—it goes without saying that true Christians believe that life begins at conception. And so you might be surprised, depending upon how long you have been in the true church of God, to know that this has actually been a debated concept. Now, I'm going to give you the answer in the back of the book for this message: There is no doubt in my mind that life *does* begin at conception, but it really has been an issue that I was surprised to find there is little concrete information about. And, in fact, if you try and go back and find written documentation from the Radio Church of God—from the early years of the work of Mr. Armstrong—if you are like us in the church office, you will have a difficult time finding any statements whatsoever that address the issue in a black and white fashion, that say when life begins. And I was surprised by that, because I just assumed that it would be easy to find them. So I was surprised to find that it has really been a major gray area and there has been a cloud over this and some back forth that has occurred over the decades within God's true church.

And so, a good portion of what you are going to get in this message is a number of quotes from old material—the *Correspondence Course*, *Good News* magazine articles and various quotes from Mr. Armstrong from the latter part of his life—all to show you the kind of debate, the back and forth, that has gone on.

I will also tell you that there are what I will call "old timers"—and I mean that in a very positive, and not in a derogatory, way—in the church, even in the churches

here in the Northwest, in our group, who remember their local ministers casting doubt upon this issue of life beginning at conception.

And so, I cannot tell you that I have answers, but what I am going to try and do is to give you as much as possible of what I have been able to find that at least implies what the faith once delivered is on this issue, and then also we will look at the Biblical texts which I think make it very certain. I mean, I am very confident in my mind when I look at the Biblical principles involved. But I just wanted to give you that advanced overview before we get into it.

Did the Radio Church of God ever publish an article clearly stating that abortion is murder? Not that we can find. Now, I think most of us will say, "Well, certainly the church must have believed that—must have taught that." And I think that is likely true, and yet, there was this alternative philosophy that came up sometime—and it appears to have been sometime in the 1960s—which we will just call the "breath of life" theory. And Mr. Armstrong even acknowledged in the last couple of years before he died that this was something he toyed with and wondered whether it might be true. So he acknowledges that this concept did exist, and as I say, old timers in the church remember it, and my parents are among them. They remember this "breath of life" theory being bandied about, and in some local congregations, I think, local ministers were even teaching it as an absolute. I cannot find evidence of that. Again, if it were the faith once delivered, it appears that we should be able to find some documentation in the old church material and the *Good News* magazine, but we just simply cannot find it.

But here is the closest concrete quote that I was able to find, from as far back as I was able to go, and I am sad to say that it's no further back than 1966. But I do believe, nevertheless, that it is a very strong quote. It is from the *Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, Lesson 16, from 1966. And this is what it says:

Physically speaking, you became a child of your parents at the very instant of conception when a new physical life was begun.

Now, that seems pretty strong. It doesn't say that life begins at conception, but if it is saying you became a child at the time you were literally conceived in your mother's womb, then that's certainly the strongest statement that I have found. Continuing the quote:

At that time you were conceived, or begotten, but not yet born. But you were your parents' child just as much as Jacob and Esau were their parents' children BEFORE birth.

And let me stop here again and say that in a little bit I am going to go through and give you the texts concerning what God said about Jacob and Esau, which supports the idea that life *does* begin at conception. But just keep that in mind. Continuing the quote now:

But you were your parents' child just as much as Jacob and Esau were their parents' children BEFORE birth. 'For the CHILDREN BEING NOT YET BORN . . . ' (Romans 9:11).

IN THE SAME MANNER, if you are a real Christian, you are now a BEGOTTEN child or son of God. Upon conversion, God the Father placed within you His Spirit, THE GERM or SPERM, so to speak, of eternal life. HE BEGOT YOU WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT JUST AS THE SPERM FROM A HUMAN FATHER IMPREGNATES THE EGG OF THE MOTHER.

So, that seems to be a pretty strong statement, especially the fact that it was written by C. Paul Meredith, who was the author of the majority of those lessons in the old *Correspondence Course* which were a part of what was sent out and taught. That's my strongest piece of evidence. But I was really surprised that I could not find anything earlier than 1966 that even addresses it one way or the other. The problem is that this alternative theory about the breath of life was extant at the same time this was written.

What are we talking about? What is the controversy? The claim is that man did not become a living being until he took his own first breath. And so, this theory says that a little child, a little baby, does not really become a human being in God's eyes until it is literally born and breathes air with its own lungs. What was the supposed Biblical justification for this theory? It was Genesis 2 and verse 7. Genesis 2:7 was quoted, which reads:

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

So, what they said was, "You see, Adam did not become a living soul [and we know that this is the word *nephesh*, which simply means an animated creature. It has nothing to do with an immortal soul.], Adam did not become a human being, with the spirit of man, until God literally breathed into his nostrils. And it was that 'breath of life' that then caused him to become a human being, and not before." And so the theory goes, if that is true for Adam, then so it is true for all little babies who are born, who do not breathe on their own while they are in the womb. And when they take their first breath, after they are born, that is when the spirit of man actually becomes a part of them. This was the theory. My parents remember it, and I remember the story from the Nashville church at the time about one particular couple in the church who lost a baby. The child was stillborn. But it was a late-term miscarriage—or the death of the child in the womb. Which means that this child was born dead and had never breathed. And so the question asked of the local minister at the time—and my parents remember it being circulated—was, "Is that little child going to be in the second resurrection?" Because it was not born alive and never took a breath on its own, is it really not considered a human being—because it never had the "breath of life"? And the question basically went unanswered from what I understand, having heard the story. People were left to wonder. There are others in the churches of the Northwest who go way, way back, as I mentioned, that remember this "breath of life" theory actually being taught more aggressively up here in this region of the country by a particular local minister at the time. And so there are a number in the church who have this concept that life really doesn't begin until that breath of life is taken—when air is breathed into the lungs. So that may be a surprise to many—not only for those of you who are before me today, but also for those who will hear this message in the future by recording.

But I think it is an important issue, and I am not here to say that I have all the historical information about what happened when, and by whom, in the church. But I want to share with you as much as I possibly can. But I think we can have absolute confidence and we can know what to do with this issue in the final analysis.

So that is the controversy. Is it life at conception, or is it this "breath of life" theory? Which? Well, let me read you the other quotes that I have been able to ferret out with the help of my staff in the office, that shed some light upon it. When did this "breath of life" theory begin in the church? I cannot say for sure,

but it really seems to have been some time in the 1960s. Don't forget, now, the *Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, Lesson 16 quote that I have already given you. That is our strongest evidence. If we are going to talk about what was the official teaching and the faith once delivered, I am going to go to that. It says, or seems to imply, very strongly, with the description of what it means to be begotten and born, that life begins at conception. The baby became the child of the parents at conception, not later on. But here, now, is a quote from November 30, 2001—so this was only a few years ago—from an issue of a newspaper called, "*The Journal; News of the Churches of God*." Now, this is one of those papers that is put out by former members of the Worldwide Church of God who are still trying to advocate this idea that, regardless of our differences in doctrine, we are still all God's people, so let's share and write articles together. And so we subscribe to this to keep up with the things that are going on and the things that are being said in these other groups. It's nothing but a mass of confusion and chaos, though, if you have ever read the things in this paper. And you see how far off people go once they reject the Holy Spirit. It is amazing. But we do subscribe to it because it is interesting to see what is going on. Well, the November 30, 2001 issue of this *Journal* newspaper contained this quote:

In a recent sermon, Garner Ted Armstrong takes issue with certain philosophical and theological discussions he calls 'anti-abortion arguments,' and seem to say that babies who are aborted, miscarried, or stillborn, will not rise in a resurrection. 'Many arguments against abortion,' said Mr. Armstrong, founder of the Intercontinental Church of God, 'are based on the concept that a soul may come into the little fetus at the moment of conception.' But, he said, he thinks it likely that an infant doesn't receive a 'spirit in man' from God until it takes its first breath immediately after birth. 'At the moment of the first breath is when I think God puts His, or our, human spirit in us,' the church founder said, 'and we have a human spirit from that moment on.'

So, in 2001, Garner Ted Armstrong went on the record to say that this is what he believes: that you don't really become a human being and receive the spirit in man until you take your own first breath. Now, what I find ironic is that he has flip-flopped on this. Now, we know at this point that Garner Ted Armstrong is dead, but here is a different quote from a sermon by Garner Ted

Armstrong, and I don't have a date for this. I tried to track it down, and could not find it. So I do not know whether this comes later than, or earlier than, the other quote that I just gave you from 2001. But it was a sermon that was on his splinter group's website. The transcript of the sermon was there, but it did not have a date, so I wasn't able to pin it down. But it was a sermon entitled, "When I Die, What Happens Next?" And here is what he said in that one—which contradicts the quote we just read. He said:

The human spirit is present from the instant of conception!

When did the *Logos* (John 1:1), who was the "Word," become the tiny, microscopic zygote which was to become Jesus Christ? *At the instant the Holy Spirit engendered that very Life that was God within the womb of Mary!*

Jesus Christ did not "become Christ" at the moment of birth, but nine long months before when He was conceived by the power of God's Holy Spirit! . . .

There was never a moment—not a single second—when the Holy Spirit was not present with Jesus Christ. . . .

It was the fertile egg of our mothers and the living spermatozoon of our fathers that "bore witness," once united together, that we were to become the children of our parents!

Here, God shows us that it is the *living human spirit* connected to our physical brain, together *with the living, Holy Spirit of God, our Father*, that proves we are *GOD'S CHILDREN!*

So, here in this documented sermon, Garner Ted Armstrong is making a strong statement that life begins at conception. But in the other sermon he gave in 2001, he is quoted as saying that he doesn't believe that at all. He believes it likely that life really begins, and God gives the "spirit in man," at birth when the little child takes its first breath. Which is it? Do you see the mass confusion involved?

But, you see, the 2001 quote of Garner Ted Armstrong is exactly that which was floating about within the church all the way back in the 1960s. Who started it? Did it come from Herbert Armstrong? I don't know. Did it come from Garner Ted Armstrong? Did it come from some of these other "scholarly" men who came up in the midst of Ambassador College who then wielded greater and greater influence? That's my guess. I have no proof for it, whatsoever, but I am telling you that my strong opinion—based upon the little information that we have—is that this is likely one of those theories that surfaced from one of these "scholarly" men who began to bandy this about in the back halls of Ambassador College. Whether or not Garner Ted Armstrong was a sponsor of this, or just picked it up and ran with it, he certainly seems to have believed it himself. So, there is no question in my mind that this is the reason we had pastors in local areas around the United States who were espousing this, and why old-time members recall it. Is it the faith once delivered? I highly doubt it. Again, what C. Paul Meredith wrote in the 1966 Correspondence Course lesson is what I accept as being the faith once delivered. That's the oldest, dogmatic statement in church-published material that I can find on it. I can't find anything else. Now, maybe there is something, and if any one of you come up with something older that either addresses this "breath of life" theory, or confirms that life begins at conception, I would be very interested in having it. But from our scouring, that is the limit of what we have come up with.

Let me read you another quote. This, now, is from a sermon given by Herbert Armstrong himself in October of 1983. So, now, this is about a year and a half before he died. It was entitled, "The Value of Human Life." This is a transcribed message from a website called [www.getbackontrack.org](http://www.getbackontrack.org). Now, I'm obviously not advocating any of these. I'm really just trying to give you the source of the quotes I'm reading—I want to tell you where I got them. I'm not advocating that these groups or these people that publish the information, transcripts, or sermons of Mr. Armstrong or other past, historical information, have any significant value, but I do want to be accurate in telling you where I got the information. So here is a quote from October of 1983, and this is obviously well after the apostasy of 1974, but here is what Mr. Armstrong said about a year and a half before he died:

I've wondered time and again: when does the spirit enter a human being? Does it enter at the first breath? I have never said it does.

Let me stop there and just point that out. Here, he vehemently denies that he ever confirmed this as a doctrine of the church, although, obviously, from what I am reading to you here, he acknowledges that it was bandied about in the church, and he even considered it.

Does it enter at the first breath? I have never said it does. Now because I've said it could, and it sounded like, seemed like perhaps it did, someone's going to say, "Well, Mr. Armstrong said the spirit enters at the first breath." I didn't say that, brethren. I said it could. And I've often wondered.

But now I see something more—that has been revealed, just during this trip. THE SPIRIT HAD TO BE, SOMEHOW OR OTHER, CONVEYED THROUGH THE HUMAN MALE SPERM CELL FROM ADAM. NOW WHETHER IT WAS ACTUAL SPIRIT, and that spirit was present in the embryo and in the fetus prior to birth, God doesn't say; and I don't know. It may be something that just caused spirit to enter with the first breath. But, if so, it was something that came from Adam, and came from conception.

Now that means some other thing: if it came from conception, then abortion is a murder. And that's the thing that the Supreme Court of the United States has been considering. That's the thing the lawyers are considering. And what do they know about the things of God? ABORTION IS MURDER [in Mr. Armstrong's writing, that is all capped]. Now you can put that down as absolutely definite.

So, that's a terrific quote from Mr. Armstrong. I just wish I had something like that from him prior to 1974, before the apostasy years. This was not stated until 1983. And so we are always very dubious about accepting anything that came after the time when the Holy Spirit was rejected by that ministry that stayed with the parent organization—including Mr. Armstrong himself. But he was very definite about it, at least a year and a half before he died.

In fact, he turned this sermon that he had given into an article which came out about a year later—only six months before he died. It was an article in the *Plain Truth* magazine, September 1985. He died in the first part of 1986, so this

was just a few months, less than six months, before he died, and it was a *Plain Truth* article entitled, "The New Truth About Abortion." And in that article, he said:

From the instant of conception, a human life is in existence. To deliberately kill or destroy that human life, the GREAT LAWGIVER and SUPREME JUDGE says, is MURDER, punishable by eternal and final DEATH!

So, here Mr. Armstrong is coming out with a very definite statement that life begins at conception, and any intervention, whatsoever, to interrupt that natural process in the body is murder. Again, I wish we had something definitive like that from the 1930s or 1940s, or even the 1950s, and we just don't have it. It appears that the ministry just didn't even consider it important enough to focus upon, and I suspect that is because it went without saying back in that day. Why would you state the obvious? You know, it's only been in recent decades that we have started debating, "Is it really murder or is it not?" When anybody with any moral compass whatsoever would say, "Well, obviously it's a wrong thing to do."

So I suspect that's the reason it never even got enough attention in the *Good News*, let alone *Plain Truth*, articles way, way back in the early years. So that 1966 lesson in the *Correspondence Course* is the earliest thing I can find that addresses it one way or the other. But, again, I'm telling you that I know for a fact that this "breath of life" theory was extant in the 1960s, and even our own members, who were there at the time, remember it. What was its origin? I cannot say that it did not originate with Mr. Herbert Armstrong, but I highly suspect that it originated either with his son, or with these other "scholarly" ministers who began to advance this theory within the church.

But what is the Biblical evidence concerning the beginning of human life? Can we know? Are there any indications—did God give us any indications? There is not a black and white statement by God in the Holy Scripture that says life begins at conception, but are there other ways for us to get an inkling? Did God leave some benchmarks in His Scripture which give us something to go on? And my answer to that is, absolutely! In fact, I think the indications in the Bible are so strong, I wonder how this "breath of life" theory ever got going in the church. That's my personal opinion on it, between you and me.

So, first, point number one: Does God distinguish between the born and the unborn child? In other words, what I am asking is, does He put an unborn child in a different category—a subcategory—in comparison with a child that has already been born? Is there a distinction in the eyes of God? That's the first important question that we can determine from the Scripture. Well, let's turn to Luke 1 and verse 41. Luke 1 and verse 41:

And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy [Spirit].

So this is Elisabeth, of course, who was the mother of John the Baptist. This is speaking, now, of her pregnancy with that one that God was raising up to be the forerunner in the spirit of Elijah—to pave the way for the first ministry of Jesus Christ. And, as you will remember, now, because I won't go through all of it, John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus Christ. So, both Elisabeth and Mary were pregnant at the same time—Elisabeth with John the Baptist, and Mary with Jesus. And John the Baptist was six months older. So, she was later in her pregnancy at this time. Mary was only in the very early stages of her pregnancy with Jesus. And here, the first point that we want to note, because I'm going to go back to another point in a minute, concerns this word "babe." "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the *babe* . . ." Well, what is this word, and what does it mean? Did God inspire through the Holy Spirit a distinction between an unborn child and a child? Well, the Greek word here for "babe" is *brephos*—b-r-e-p-h-o-s—and it means, "an infant, or a young child." An infant or a young child. So God inspired the word in the Greek that means exactly the same thing as a child that is born, and, yet, is applied to John the Baptist while he was still in the womb. Now, if God considered an unborn child not to be a human being—less than a true human being—because it had not taken breath through its own nostrils and lungs as yet, I would think that there would be a distinction in terminology that applied to this "non-human" in the womb. And, yet, God inspired exactly the same word for a child in the womb as is used for a child that is born and breathing.

To prove that, turn to Luke 18, verse 15. Luke 18 and verse 15: "And they brought unto him also infants . . ." Guess what word that is? *Brephos*—b-r-e-p-h-o-s—the very same word. So, here, what were they bringing to

Christ? Not miscarried fetuses. No, it was children—born, alive, growing. "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them." So these were the little children, then, whose parents had brought to Christ to give them a special blessing—even as we fulfill that same example every year on the Last Great Day with the service that we call "the blessing of the little children." And so, here, those little children—those live, breathing children—that were brought to Christ, were called "infants," or *brephos*, and it is the very same term God inspired to be used concerning John the Baptist while he was still in the womb.

Okay, well that may not be a greatly compelling point for those who want to argue the technicalities of it. Well, let's go to point number two, and I think the case is going to get stronger and stronger as we go. Point number two, then: Do the unborn manifest characteristics of human emotion and intellect? Why am I asking that? Well, human emotions and intellect are a manifestation of the spirit in man. What is it that makes a human being different from an animal? It's that intellect, that reasoning, that capacity of mind. You cannot distinguish it—scientists cannot confirm it—based upon an analytical dissection of brain tissue, because you cannot prove, or measure, the existence of the spirit in man. We know that spirit is not an immortal soul. To those of you who understand, we are talking about that essence which makes a human being different from an animal. An animal has a brain—and they always try to compare monkeys and apes to human beings and try to say they are so much like us. And so, our greatest, "wise" minds in this world want to say that monkeys are like human beings, but they are at some lesser "evolutionary" level. And we know that is totally absurd—it's absolutely foolish. Because those apes, although they can learn, as many animals can learn, do things by instinct. They learn by rote, but they cannot choose and make decisions—they do not have a self-awareness to make choices. They do not have that which human beings have—that God gave—and it is that which is caught up in this principle called the "spirit in man." We are not talking about an immoral spirit, we are talking about what defines the mind. You see, that's the difference. The human being has a mind, an animal does not. An animal has a brain that God has programmed with instinct, including emotions. You know, animals can be happy; animals can be sad; they have all of these different expressions which sometime appear to be human, but these are not the same as having a human mind. So, whatever this spirit in man is, it is the essence that God uses to make a human being truly distinct from anything in the animal kingdom.

The question is, when does that spirit in man become a part of the little child? Is it in the womb or out of the womb?

Do the unborn manifest characteristics of human emotion and intellect? My philosophy is that if they do—if you can find evidence in the Bible that a little child in the womb, who has not yet breathed, manifests these indications of a human mind, intellect, ability—then you are looking at the manifestation of the spirit in man. Even while they are yet in the womb. That's my thesis. Is there support for it in the Bible? Well, let's turn back again to Luke chapter 1. This time let's begin in verse 13. More discussion, now, on what God recorded about John the Baptist in the womb. Luke 1:13:

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias [this is, of course, the father of John the Baptist, the husband of Elisabeth]: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy [Spirit], even from his mother's womb.

Isn't that an interesting statement. This little child, this physical human being, John the Baptist, God said was going to be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb—before he ever drew breath.

Dropping down to verse 44, we read: "For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy." These are God's words. He is now revealing what was going on with this unborn child, John the Baptist, in the womb of his mother. And remember the account: When Mary—pregnant with Jesus for only a few weeks, in the early stages—came into the presence of Elisabeth, who was carrying John the Baptist in her womb, John the Baptist, this unborn child, leapt in the womb in recognition, by the power of God's Spirit, of the physical proximity of the Messiah in the womb of His mother. Just tell me, does that indicate to you that the spirit in man is already there, or does it not? Is there an awareness? Is there an intellect? How can that little unborn child, if it doesn't have the spirit in man, express joy? God said John the Baptist—unborn, in the womb—expressed joy. Do we believe that is true? "The babe *leaped in my womb for joy*." When a child expresses joy, is that, or is that not, a manifestation of the spirit in man?

Genesis 25 and verse 21. Now, as I promised you, we will get back to the example of Jacob and Esau. Genesis 25 and verse 21:

And Isaac intreated the [Eternal] for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus?

She was perplexed. "What is going on?" This was her first pregnancy after never having been able to bear children, so she must have thought something was terribly wrong with this battle going on within her womb.

And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the [Eternal] [she was perplexed; she was concerned]. And the [Eternal] said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel.

A more accurate translation from the Hebrew of this last part would be: "He was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel." And I will confirm that from another text—God's statement that this was exactly what was going on. It's not that he was born, and then as soon as he was born, he grabbed his brother's heel. This little guy, Jacob, was grabbing his brother's heel while he was still in the womb—before he was born or ever took a breath.

"[A]nd his name was called Jacob." And do you know what Jacob means? It means "to deceive, to defraud, to supplant." How would you like to be given a name by your parents that had that connotation? You know, names are one of the great vanities of human beings—and something that marketers take advantage of, with all of the things you can buy that has your name on them. You see these little trinkets in tourist attractions and stores, and people flock to buy these little key chains, or whatever it is, that has their name on it. And especially the ones that

have the name and then the interpretation of what the name means—from the Bible or whatever. And for just about any name, you can find a meaning ascribed. Have you ever seen a negative one? For every name you can think of, somebody has ascribed a positive interpretation. Because human beings are vain, and they want to believe that their name makes them special. I'll have to look, the next time I see one of those, because they have to have Jacob on there, and see whether or not they have put: "Jacob: deceiver, defrauder, supplanter." And I'll bet you that's not how they interpret it. So I'll have to look that up.

But this is exactly what the baby's name meant. And why was he called that? He hadn't done anything, had he? I mean, he wasn't old enough to be held responsible. He hadn't manifested any characteristics of deception, had he? Except that he grabbed his brother's heel while he was still in the womb. Before his head was even born in order to be able to take a breath, here he was grabbing his older brother's heel. Now, was that just inconsequential? Was it a knee-jerk reaction? Was it an involuntary spasm? Was it not anything to be attributed to the mind or orientation? Remember, these two children in the womb had been struggling all during the pregnancy. These guys were fighting one another. Poor mom. And, now, the elder one is born and the younger one is grabbing him by the foot. Remember what this same Jacob manifested later when he wrestled with God? He was a little fighter. And this child, when he grew up, proved that he *was* a supplanter, didn't he? He proved he was a deceiver. That was his character by nature. He conspired with his mother—I guess that's where he got it, from Rebekah. Remember, Jacob and Rebekah both conspired together to deceive Isaac concerning the birthright, and they were successful. It was God's intent to give him that birthright all along. They didn't have to take matters into their own hands. God said that from the beginning, while these children were in the womb, that the older was going to serve the younger. If God said that was going to happen, did Jacob and his mother really have to pull the wool over Isaac's eyes and do it by deception? No. God wasn't given the opportunity to show how He was going to make it work out, but it would have worked out that way, even without the deception. But it sure demonstrated the orientation of mind of this Jacob.

Now, he got himself into trouble later and paid the price because his future father-in-law, Laban, turned the tables on him and did the same thing to him. So Jacob didn't get away with that deceptive orientation of mind. He paid the price and later, in what you might call his "conversion"—although it wasn't a begetting of

the Holy Spirit—he did wrestle with God, like he wrestled with his brother, because he wanted that blessing. Basically God allowed him latitude to struggle with Him, although He could have flipped him away like a fly anytime He wanted to. But He made Jacob prove that he wanted it. And so he struggled with God all night, as God manifested Himself in physical form. And eventually, then, you see, He changed his name from Jacob to Israel—a name which was synonymous with the opposite orientation of mind. It is then that you see, in the story that is given, the change of direction in Jacob's orientation. And you find that from the time that his name was changed to Israel, his very focus in life was different than it had been in his younger years.

But by nature, this little child was a deceiver and a supplanter. And, yet, he was given this name based upon the act that he performed even before he drew a breath. He manifested the characteristic of the spirit in man—the intellect of mind to deceive, to supplant—when he reached his little hand out and grabbed his brother by the heel before he ever took a breath on his own. Does that, or does that not, indicate to you that he already had the spirit in man? Otherwise, if he was just a blob of flesh and blood that was alive, but yet didn't have a spirit, how was he manifesting a characteristic for which he was actually named? It just doesn't make sense.

Notice Hosea 12 and verse 2. Hosea 12 and beginning in verse 2: "The [Eternal] hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways." Well, what are the natural ways of Jacob and his descendants? Because, boy, did he ever pass along all of those characteristics to his twelve sons. Well, what are the "ways of Jacob" in the flesh?

. . . and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb . . .

Now, there is your clarification, in case somebody wants to say, "Well, he had already been partially born, including his head. So he had already taken the breath of life, and *then* he grabbed his brother's heel." No, that's not what this says. Yes, the account in Genesis 25 doesn't make it plain, but what God recorded here through His inspiration of Hosea confirms it without a doubt. "He took his brother by the heel *in the womb*." It was a good indication of his character, and, in

fact, Esau was born with his brother already grasping his heel. And that's probably why Jacob's hand came out even before his head: because he had Esau by the heel the whole time. "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God." He was strong—he was spunky—but he was a supplanter, by nature. But he manifested the very character of a deceiver and a supplanter before he ever took breath. Does that, or does that not, seem to indicate that he already had the spirit in man? I think it does. I think it's a very, very strong argument.

Alright, point number three from the Biblical evidence. The key is in understanding the type and antitype of physical and spiritual life. So let's just back up away from the technicalities for a minute and let's look at the blueprint that we understand from the plan of God—what He gave us in the physical type and the spiritual antitype to help us understand this process by which He is bringing salvation to human beings. Alright, let's start in Romans 8 and verse 9. Romans 8 and verse 9:

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

What's the significance of this text? Do you remember what we read about the Spirit being with John the Baptist while he was yet in the womb? If the Spirit is life, was John the Baptist alive, or was he not? If the Spirit—God's Spirit—gives life, then that would certainly be an indication he was alive. Then, somebody can argue, "Well, John the Baptist was unique—because no other little baby has the Holy Spirit in the womb; it was given as a special gift to him—so he might have been alive, but no one else is." Okay, so I understand how people can reason to try and get what they want out of it, but let's continue on:

And if Christ be in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you [emphasis added].

So now we have a reference to those who are called out of the world, who are converted, and who then are begotten of the Holy Spirit by the ordinance of baptism. And by the laying on of hands, they receive the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. And what is that synonymous with in the plan of God? A begettal of a new spiritual life in the womb of the mother—which is the Church. So, as it pictures our calling, our conversion, and being made part of the Church, the Bible is replete with this imagery of a little unborn child in the womb, being nurtured to birth, ultimately, into the Family—into the Kingdom—of God. It is a fundamental doctrine of the true church in this age, which we learned through the ministry of Mr. Herbert Armstrong.

First Peter 1 and verse 3 is a confirmation of this, just very quickly. 1 Peter 1 and verse 3:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

So, here Peter is speaking to whom? Members of the church who have been baptized. And he says, by the inspiration of God, that it was a begettal. Well, we understand what begotten means, don't we? Conceived. So, conception—being alive in the womb of the mother—is the image, the symbol, God chose to use to represent what we are now. So my question to you, brethren, is, as members of spiritual Israel, members of the true Church of God, are we, or are we not, living children of God? Or will we not really become alive—will we not really become beings, children of God—until we are turned into immortality at birth? Which is it? Are we alive now, or are we not? We are compared to the little unborn child who is still in the womb, not having taken a breath. Are we now His children, or are we not? If it is true in the Spirit, it is true in the flesh. I don't think any of these who came up with this "breath of life" theory would want to take it to that extent and say, "Well, I don't think we are alive now. We're just kind of like non-entities until the first resurrection actually comes and we are born and become fully immortal, and a member of the God Family. We are not really alive now. We don't really exist yet." Does that even make sense? It sure doesn't to me.

Romans 6 and verse 11. Romans 6 and beginning in verse 11: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through

Jesus Christ our Lord." Well, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit seems to say that if you are called and converted—if you are begotten of the Spirit, not yet born—you are now, today, this instant, alive. If you are a begotten child of God—synonymous with being in the womb, being fed by the mother, which is the Church, Jesus Christ being the head of that mother—if you are in that begotten state, you are alive, right now. You are. And that is what he says here.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but *alive* unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, *as those that are alive from the dead*, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God [emphasis added].

That's present tense. ". . . as those that are *alive* from the dead." It means, brethren, that before conversion, as physical human beings, without the Holy Spirit impregnating our minds, we were the same as dead, because we all die. I mean, it is appointed unto all men once to die, and without the intervention—without the miracle of a call and a conversion, and the implanting of the Holy Spirit in your mind—your end and my end is to die, to go back to the ground from which we were taken. There is no life after death except for this intervention God makes. But when you receive that intervention and when you become a member of spiritual Israel—a begotten child within the womb of the true Church of God—you become alive because God imparts the Holy Spirit to you. Now, if you received a down payment of the Holy Spirit in your mind at baptism, by the laying on of hands, and that Spirit, God said, is life, are you, or you not, alive? You see, to me it is obvious. I just don't see any possibility of debate. If you want to say that we are not alive now, and that the imparting of the Holy Spirit we have still keeps us dead, that just doesn't add up to me at all.

1 John 3 and verse 1—one more text to make the point. 1 John 3 and beginning in verse 1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It doesn't say that when we are ultimately born—turned into immortality at the first resurrection—then, and only then, will we be called the sons of God. It says, "that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God."

That wasn't future tense—sometime way off at the first resurrection, only then do we become sons. It says NOW are we the sons of God. ". . . and it 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." So it certainly refers to that future conversion, when we will see him as he is, because we will be changed into immortality and we will be a part of that very God Family and deal with the Father and the Son on their own terms in that Spirit realm. And, yet, it says that even before that time, while we are now in the flesh, only begotten with a down payment of that Spirit, that Spirit has given us life. And it says that this is the life that makes us, now, present tense, sons of God. So you are a child of God, now. You are, however, only begotten, not born. You are being fed by the church—which is the mother—through the power of the Holy Spirit. Is that not very strong symbolism which tells you that the child in the womb is a child of God and that there is life? I think it is absolutely compelling.

Point number four. Going on now, think about this relationship—this comparison—between the physical and the Spirit, as God gave these symbols. It's one that you will remember because I think it was here a number of months ago that I gave a sermon on the blood, the water, and the Spirit, which, if you think about it, has a lot of crossover with some of these same principles. Well, recall from that sermon, that life exists when blood carries oxygen to the cells. Is that not true, physically? Isn't that the way God made it to happen? Whether that oxygenation happens from one's own breathing—through the lungs—or by the mother transferring oxygen through the umbilical cord, that life is still very evident.

You see, this "breath of life" theory says, "Well, you are not really alive until you take a breath on your own, through your lungs, because that is what Adam did." Does that make sense, though? Is that really an analogy that could reasonably apply? I think it's absolutely absurd. First of all, Adam and Eve were unique in that they did not have a physical mother and father, so they were not created through the physical process of growing in a womb and ultimately being born. God made them as full, mature, human beings. God created Adam's body—all of his systems—intact, physically, and obviously he didn't have life in him until God animated him and brought him to life and consciousness. And how did He do that? Well, God said, as we have already read in Genesis chapter 2, that He breathed into him and he became a living being—He breathed that breath into

him and that was the first time in Adam's body that oxygen from the air (there is approximately twenty-six percent oxygen in the air that we breathe) entered into his respiratory system, and transferred from his lungs into his bloodstream. In Adam and Eve, that is how it happened. The first time they got oxygen into their blood, and that blood became, in essence, alive, was when God from an exterior source, then, breathed into their nostrils and their lungs.

But is that true for the rest of us? Was the first time you and I had oxygen in the cells—in the red blood cells—within our bodies, in our blood, after we were born and took a breath through our lungs? NO! We were receiving oxygenated blood through the interface with the mother's system and her breathing. She was really breathing for us. And that oxygen was transferred from her blood through the placenta, through the umbilical cord, into the bloodstream of that new little baby. That little child in the womb has rich, living blood. It is receiving the same chemical process of oxygenation, which feeds those tissues, as does a born, breathing human being. It's just that this process happens in a different way, through the mother's lungs.

Well, here is a quote now from 1957, and this one, ironically, is from Garner Ted Armstrong, from an article entitled, "Do You Have an Immortal Soul?" And here is what he said in this 1957 article by the Radio Church of God:

When God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, He started the process of the combining of oxygen with the blood, which then carried the oxygen to all parts of the body, thereby imparting physical, animal life. The life of a human being is in his bloodstream.

Is that principle supported by the Bible? You bet it is. Notice Leviticus 17 and verse 11. Leviticus 17 and verse 11. We read: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." That's what God says. The life of the flesh is in the blood. What is required for blood to have that essence of physical life, or to sustain physical life? It has to be enriched with oxygen that is transferred through a chemical process. That is why blood is said, by God, to be alive. Chemically, physically, it's because it is carrying oxygen. That's what makes a living being. "[T]he life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Then skipping down to verse 14:

For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

So there, God defines how He views it. The life is in the blood. When did Adam's blood first become, in essence, alive, animated, vital, to give those properties to the physical body? Not until God, from an exterior source, breathed into his nostrils and into his lungs. That was the first time, for Adam and for Eve, that this oxygen transfer happened to enrich and animate the blood—because they were not conceived and born from a womb as you and I were. So, therefore, is it even remotely appropriate to use the example of Adam, who did not even come through the process of conception and birth through a womb, and say that it applies to all human beings who do? To me, it doesn't even follow. It doesn't apply whatsoever.

What are the implications of this issue—when life begins, at conception, or after birth—concerning certain forms of birth control? And this is one of the points I really wanted to get to because I am not sure that everyone in the church has really thought this through all the way. Now, all of you, not only those before me, but under the hearing of my voice who will listen to this by recording later, at whatever point in time, I think you understand, if you are grounded in the faith once delivered, that just from the medical standpoint of what we were taught, we are not to take drugs of any kind—these man-made concoctions—and that would include oral contraceptives. They are absolutely harmful to the body. And I can tell you that I was taught, even as late as my time as a freshman at Ambassador College in Pasadena in 1980 that these should absolutely be avoided—that women in the church should not take oral contraceptives. They are a drug, and I'm sure that you've seen the documentation and the studies that show there are side effects, and there are risks. These things increase the risk of cancer, as well as a number of other things that I'm sure they haven't even identified yet. So, it's a violation for no other reason than the principle that God said these bodies are the temple of God. We are to take care of them—which means that we feed them right things, not wrong things. We put into them what God made and we don't put in corrupted and polluted things, including man-made pharmaceuticals which tear down and destroy. So, for no other reason than that, I think couples—I don't just want to put it on the ladies—wives, as well as husbands, recognize that oral contraceptives

should be avoided absolutely because they are a violation of that principle. But I'm not sure that many of us have thought through even much greater implications of the use of these drugs. Here is a quote, now, from an article entitled, "Birth Control Pill: Abortifacient and Contraceptive", by William F. Colliton, Jr., M.D., clinical professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at George Washington University Medical Center. And here is what this doctor has said:

The fact that the hormonal contraceptives have an abortive potential is discussed in the paper circulated at AAPLOG's [American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists] 1998 midwinter meeting. 'Most (virtually all) literature dealing with hormonal contraception ascribes a three-fold action to these agents . . .'

I know that this is kind of highfalutin medical terminology and it can get difficult, but basically what this doctor is saying is that the clinical action of these oral contraceptives that women take includes three things. And these are the three things that this drug does literally within her body: "1. inhibition of ovulation." And you understand how the process works: the ovary releases that egg, it travels down the fallopian tube, where it has the potential to merge with the sperm from the father to create a new embryo. So if there is no ovulation—if an egg never leaves the ovary and travels to the uterus—there is no chance for fertilization. So pregnancy doesn't occur. So, of course, the primary action of birth control pills is to prevent ovulation because that is the best way to prevent a pregnancy, right? And so action number 1 is really what their goal is. So I would ask you up front, if God made that monthly ovulation a normal function of the female body, is it right to intervene in that process and redirect it? Because that's what many of these women are doing and they like the fact that when they are on oral contraceptives, they basically stop having their normal menstrual cycle for the most part. Well, it is an absolute abomination to try and change that which God intended, and human beings are past masters at doing that. But that's just the first—the most desirable—action of oral contraceptives: to prevent ovulation to begin with. If ovulation doesn't happen, there is no possible pregnancy.

Okay, but what is the second one? Number 2—the second action of this chemical upon the female body—is "inhibition of sperm transport." Which means that this overload of estrogen, or whatever it is, in her body also inhibits the sperm from being able to make its trek to find the egg. So that's the second thing that can prevent fertilization.

But what is the third action, which is documented and accepted as a possibility that can take place? The third action of these oral contraceptives is the "production of a 'hostile endometrium', which [What does it do?] presumably prevents or disrupts implantation of the developing baby if the first two mechanisms fail." What does that mean? If ovulation isn't prevented, and if sperm transport isn't prevented, and fertilization takes place, then the third way the drug prevents a recognized pregnancy is the fact that it changes the texture of the endometrial lining of the uterus so that the God-given process by which that newly fertilized embryo implants and connects to the uterine wall so that it can begin to be fed by the blood supply, is interrupted. So, basically, what you have, if ovulation and fertilization takes place, is a hostile endometrium—an environment within the mother's body that prevents that embryo from being able to latch on to the uterus so that it can begin to be fed.

Now, as you can imagine, there is a huge debate in this country, and I'm sure in others, among those who claim to be pro-life, who believe that life begins at conception. Because 10-to-1 says you have a lot of these women—these pro-lifers—who are taking oral contraceptives. And so a big part of them are saying, "Yes, we believe that life begins at conception, but we don't believe that what's really happening when we take these drugs is that a true fertilization is taking place and that a new little embryo—which we believe is alive—cannot connect to the endometrial wall of the uterus, and therefore dies. We don't believe that happens." But you have another section of the pro-lifers—you see, they don't agree with one another—that believe that's exactly what is potentially happening. Continuing the quote, now, I'll repeat that number three again:

. . . production of a 'hostile endometrium', which presumably prevents or disrupts implantation of the developing baby if the first two mechanisms fail. 'The first two mechanisms are true contraception. The third proposed mechanism, IF it in fact occurs, would be abortifacient [That means the act of abortion—in this case, by preventing what we consider a new life from being able to be nurtured by the mother, and therefore killing it. Continuing:] (editor's addition) What is the precise language appearing in the Physician's Desk Reference . . . ?

If you are familiar with that, we call it the PDR. I used it all the time in the past in the medical financing business for processing claims. We were very

familiar with the Physician's Desk Reference, which basically is a list of all man-made drugs, pharmaceuticals, and controlled substances in all of the countries. If you look up a particular drug, it will give you a lot of information about it, including what it is used for, and what its purpose is, according to the manufacturer, and what it does in the human body. So, if you look up these agents in the PDR—and a particular one called "Ortho-Novum" is given here, which is a very common birth control pill—what are the indications? What are the actions of this drug as listed in the PDR? ". . . 'a progestational effect on the endometrium, interfering with implantation'."

How about another one? Norinyl. What does it do? The PDR says the effects are: "alterations in . . . the endometrium (which reduce the likelihood of implantation)." You see, it's not just saying that one-hundred percent of the time, always, it prevents ovulation, or sperm transport, it also says that what this drug will do in a woman's system is that it will prevent a fertilized egg from being able to implant on the wall of the uterus. Now, what side are we going to take as far as, does this drug, or does it not, cause abortion, because you have all of these doctors who will say it doesn't happen. Well, continuing:

Dr. Don Gambrell, Jr., a renowned gynecological endocrinologist addressed this issue during the educational segment of this same meeting [that happened in 1998]. He noted a 14% incidence of ovulation in women taking the 50 microgram BCP [birth control pill].

Now, remember, the first, most desirable thing they want this pill to do is to prevent ovulation. But this doctor says that he has documented that fourteen percent of the time, it doesn't prevent ovulation, and if it doesn't prevent ovulation, there is a possibility that the egg can be fertilized. But if there is a ninety-nine plus percent chance that a woman won't get pregnant, even though there is a fourteen percent chance that she will ovulate while on the pill, it means that, for some portion of that fourteen percent, she does have a fertilized egg which simply isn't able to implant on the uterine wall. Now, what do we call that? We call that a miscarriage. That's with birth control pills.

What about IUDs—intra-uterine devices? It's another thing that I was certainly taught at Ambassador College that should absolutely be avoided. Here is another quote from a religious website—[www.religioustolerance.org](http://www.religioustolerance.org). It's

another one that I don't recommend, but I have pulled some material from it because they have gathered information which is interesting on some of these technical issues. Now, these are not "pro-life" people. They are actually writing from the standpoint of the hypocrisy they think exists in the pro-life movement. And they are picking on the use of IUDs among these "born again" Christians as an example of that.

There are two inconsistencies in the "pro-life" movement from the viewpoint of pro-choicers:

There appears to be relatively little mention of IUD's (Intra-uterine devices). The precise mechanism by which IUDs prevent pregnancy is unknown [so, technically, they are not sure why it works, they just know that it works].

Some researchers believe that the IUD immobilizes sperm, preventing them from reaching the ovum; others believe that it causes the ovum to pass through the fallopian tube so fast that it is unlikely to be fertilized; [However most] believe that the IUD interferes with the implantation of fertilized ovum in the uterine wall [it's the same concept].

If the third property is true, then IUDs terminate the development of a fertilized ovum after conception, and cause its expulsion from the body. To a person who believes that human personhood begins at the instant of conception, there is no ethical difference between using an IUD, having a first trimester abortion, or having a partial birth abortion, or—for that matter—strangling a newborn just after birth. Yet pro-life groups actively campaign against PBA's [partial birth abortions], picket abortion clinics, and attempt to pass restrictive legislation limiting choice in abortion. Some have made negative statements about IUDs. But none have, to our knowledge, picketed IUD manufacturing facilities, or sponsored anti-IUD legislation. This is surprising, because in those countries where IUDs are widely used, the number of fertilized eggs which IUDs apparently expel from women's bodies far exceeds the number of surgical abortions. About 43% of American women will have had a surgical abortion sometime

during their lifetime. Women who use an IUD will expel about one fertilized ovum annually (assuming that they engage in intercourse once per week).

Now, I thought that was interesting information because I highly doubt that a lot of women in God's church have necessarily been exposed to, or heard, some of this information. I think most of us understand and believe, and automatically assume, that life begins at conception, even if you didn't realize that this controversy in the true church occurred and there has been a cloud over this issue from all the way back in the 1960s. But I wanted to get this material out because I perceive that not everyone in the church understands the implications of using either birth control pills or IUDs, let alone other birth control methods that we need to take a strong look at. But if what these particular researchers say is true—even though they are outside the mainstream—then you have the potential, if nothing else, for women using birth control pills, IUDs, and other forms of birth control, actually being guilty of manslaughter, let alone murder.

The difference between manslaughter and murder is that murder is an intentional act. Manslaughter is causing the unintentional death of someone through negligence. Now, I don't say that to scare, or to panic, anybody. I'm hoping that all of those under the hearing of my voice have been avoiding these things for no other reason than the fact that putting drugs into your body and using these sorts of mechanical devices in the human body is a violation of the temple of God to begin with. And if you have been following that rule, you see, then you are not in danger of inadvertently being guilty of manslaughter. But if it is true, as I strongly believe, that life begins at conception—as the texts that I have given you from the Bible seem to indicate—then use of these things by anyone in the church, especially once you become aware of it, constitutes murder.

Now, I also realize that there are many adult women, before having come into God's church—before ever having been made aware of God's Truth in many areas—who may have, probably did, use birth control pills, IUDs and different forms of birth control. So, it's not my intent to lay a great burden of guilt upon anyone for the potential that there have been little lives, embryos, that we never knew about, that God considered children, that never even came to fruition and were never born because of these acts. That is possible. Now, the mistakes that we make in life, in this realm and in many others—because every sin is the same

in God's eyes—can be forgiven. So I'm not singling this out. And some women who have this in their history are likely to want to beat themselves up about it. But this is something that goes under the shed blood of Jesus Christ like anything else. And God says if you break one law, you are guilty of them all. Which means that we are all guilty of that which brings upon us the death penalty. We are guilty, and there is not a single one of us who has any hope of being born into that Family without the grace and blood of Jesus Christ. But I guarantee you that because you *are* begotten of the Spirit and because you *have* come under the shed blood of Jesus Christ—I don't care what it is that's in your past, either before you were in the church or even after you were in the church—you can be forgiven of that and God will wipe it away. And in His record in heaven, and in the Book of Life, it's as if it never happened.

Now, if all the things that I have said are true, then it begs the question: will these little unborn children that were miscarried, or even aborted, come up in the second resurrection? And I don't want to get into that debate. I think there is a strong chance that they will. Now, that's another one of those things that is greatly contested among those splinter groups that came out of our parent organization. Garner Ted Armstrong is one of those who pooh-poohed this whole idea by saying, "Well, how is God going to take this little embryo and put it back in someone's womb in the White Throne Judgment period?" Well, are we going to put limits on God? It's just as possible that God considers them Sons and Daughters, even if they were only a fertilized ovum that never divided enough to even take human form. If life begins at conception and if for whatever reason a life is cut short while still in the womb, do I rule out the possibility that God intends to resurrect that little being in the White Throne Judgment period—the little individual with unique DNA that it was? I don't rule that out at all. Is it necessary that He starts them back where they were in the womb of a mother? No. That little child that He still has on record—what that being was—could certainly just be resurrected as a newborn infant. In other words, He could just speed up the gestational process and resurrect that little fetus as a newborn, living baby that would then be taken care of by its original parents or by some other method. That's just a speculation. I am not advancing anything on it because God hasn't told us in the Bible how it's going to work, one way or the other. But I'm certainly not going to limit God and say that it's impossible or not a part of His plan. It's very possible. So whether it is or whether it is not, we know that God has a perfect will and purpose that He is carrying out. We can have absolute confidence in that.

He hasn't given us the details, so it is obviously not necessary to our salvation for us to know. But what is important for us to know and to understand are these spiritual principles—the physical and the spiritual—that we may be sure in knowledge and wisdom to avoid getting involved in any of these things in the world and inadvertently becoming guilty of manslaughter or murder. So, I hope that this message has added significant understanding on these important spiritual principles.