

**What the Bible Says about...**

# **Abortion**

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## What is Abortion?

Abortion is the intentional termination of a pregnancy after conception.

## What methods are used to facilitate an abortion?

Abortion is most often achieved by a number of common methods the intensity of which depends upon when it occurs within the pregnancy cycle.

### Non-invasive methods include:

Non-invasive methods do not require surgical procedures and must take place in the first trimester of pregnancy only.

1. Certain birth control devices (IUD) allow fertilization but no implantation of the fertilized egg to take place. In this case fertilized eggs are eliminated from the body during urination.
2. The “morning-after” pill acts in a similar way to the above and results in the flushing of all fertilized eggs from the uterus. This pill must be taken no later than three days after conception.
3. The “abortion pill” (RU-486) is one of the fastest growing abortion techniques.

This pill blocks the effects of the hormone progesterone that is needed to maintain the lining of the uterus. This causes the lining of the uterus to become detached along with the unborn child within. It is usually used with another drug, a prostaglandin, which helps to dilate or open the cervix (the entrance to the womb) and expel the embryo as in a miscarriage. The abortion pill is no longer effective after six or eight weeks.

Note that RU-486 is not a contraceptive because it does not prevent fertilization or implantation. It is used only after the mother has missed her period and the baby is at least two to three weeks old. It should be noted that at this point the baby already has a beating heart (the fetal heart begins to beat when the woman is four days late for her period).

### Invasive methods include:

Invasive methods are aptly named because they involve the participation of medical personnel and the procedures involved are far more dramatic than the non-invasive methods.

### 1. A Saline Abortion

Saline is a heavily concentrated salt solution. It is inserted into the amniotic sac through a tube inserted through the mother's abdomen. The fluid is usually kept inside the amniotic sac. This process is followed by the delivery of a dead fetus within a couple of days. This method is not commonly used today because it is not always fatal.

### 2. A Suction or Vacuum Abortion

This form of abortion is usually done before the tenth week of pregnancy and simply involves using a hollow tube with a knife-like tip and suction to vacuum the uterus of cut up fetal and placental material.

### 3. Dilatation and Curettage (D&C)

This is a procedure that is commonly done after a miscarriage to be sure that all fetal material is removed from the uterus to eliminate the possibility of infection. This process involves cutting the placenta and scraping the inside of the uterus with a loop-shaped steel knife.

### 4. Dilation and Extraction

This procedure is usually used between 4-6 weeks of the pregnancy and involves partially dilating the cervix and using a pliers-like instrument to reach in and pull out pieces of the fetus. The head is usually crushed so that it can pass through the vaginal canal.

### 5. Prostaglandins

Prostaglandins are hormone-like substances administered to the pregnant woman through an intravenous drip or directly into the womb. Between 12 and 24 hours later, contractions occur, causing the premature birth of the baby. To make sure that the baby is not born alive, practitioners may poison the baby by injecting potassium chloride into the baby's heart or urea or salt solution into the amniotic sac.

### 6. Partial Birth Abortions

This procedure involves the full dilatation of the cervix and with the help of forceps and ultrasound the practitioner reaches into the uterus for the leg of the fetus and pulls it out. The fetus is killed before the head clears the birth canal. The rationale here is that the fetus is not a child until it is fully born and takes its first breath.

## **What does the Bible say about abortion?**

While the Bible does not address the subject of abortion directly, there are some things that are discussed in the Bible that have a direct bearing on this subject.

1. God is the one who opens and closes the womb (Gen. 16:1-2; 29:31; 30:1-2, 22; I Sam. 1:5-6).

*Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." Genesis 30:23*

2. God is the one who creates every individual regardless of the natural process (Ps. 139:13-16; Is. 44:2, 24; 46:3-4; Job 31:15).

*You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous--and how well I know it. 15 You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. 16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. Psalm 139:13-16, NLT*

*This is what the LORD says--he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.*

Isaiah 44:2, NIV

*Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself... Isaiah 44:24*

*Listen to me, all you who are left in Israel. I created you and have cared for you since before you were born. I will be your God throughout your lifetime--until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you.*

Isaiah 46:3-4, NLT

These verses indicate that ultimately every person born into the world is a creation of God. If we are a creation of God, we belong to God. To injure any person is a sin against the creator.

3. God has a purpose for every person who is born into the world (Is. 49:5; Luke 1:13-15).

*And now the LORD speaks--he who formed me in my mother's womb to be his servant, who commissioned me to bring his people of Israel back to him. Isaiah 49:5a, NLT*

*But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb." Luke 1:13-15*

4. God's purpose is established from conception and even before (Is. 8:1-4; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:4-5; Rom. 9:10-12; Eph. 1:3-6).

*Listen to me, all of you in far-off lands! The LORD called me before my birth; from within the womb he called me by name...And now the LORD speaks--he who formed me in my mother's womb to be his servant, who commissioned me to bring his people of Israel back to him. Isaiah 49:1, 5, NLT*

*The LORD gave me a message. He said, "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my spokesman to the world." Jeremiah 1:4-5, NLT*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:3-6*

*This son was our ancestor Isaac. When he grew up, he married Rebekah, who gave birth to twins. 11 But before they were born, before they had done anything good or bad, she received a message from God. (This message proves that God chooses according to his own plan, 12 not according to our good or bad works.) She was told, "The descendants of your older son will serve the descendants of your younger son." Romans 9:10-12, NLT*

This verse in Romans indicates that before birth God had a plan for the lives of the twins that would be born of Rebekah.

5. God has His time to bring forth a child from the womb (Ps. 22:9; 71:5-6; Is. 66:9).

*For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; You are my trust from my youth. By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You. Psalm 71:5-6*

6. God regards an unborn child as a person with all the rights of any other person (Ex. 21:22-23).

*Now suppose two people are fighting, and in the process, they hurt a pregnant woman so her child is born prematurely. If no further harm results, then the person responsible must pay damages in the amount the woman's husband demands and the judges approve. But if any harm results, then the offender must be punished according to the injury. If the result is death, the offender must be executed. Exodus 21:22-23, NLT*

## **What terms are used to describe the unborn?**

1. In the world of medicine there are terms that are used to describe the unborn.

There are two primary words used to describe the unborn at various stages of development.

## Embryo

The word “embryo” comes from a Greek word meaning “to grow.” In humans it is applied to the product of conception from implantation through the eighth week of development.

## Fetus

The word “fetus” comes from a Latin word meaning “offspring, bringing forth or fruit.” In humans it is applied to the unborn young from the end of the eighth week after conception to the moment of birth.

The use of these terms by the medical world tends to have the effect of depersonalizing the unborn child so that decisions regarding the treatment of the fetus can be made less emotionally.

It is interesting in the animal world that a fertilized egg or the fetus of an endangered species is never referred to in such a way. In such cases, the unborn is given the same protection and care as the newly born.

## 2. In the Bible there are terms used to describe the unborn.

In the Bible no distinction is made relative to the various stages of development from conception to birth. The following terms are applied at all stages:

- Child or children (Gen. 25:21-24; Job 3:3; Mt. 1:20)

*Isaac pleaded with the LORD to give Rebekah a child because she was childless. So the LORD answered Isaac’s prayer, and his wife became pregnant with **twins**. 22 But the two **children** struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the LORD about it. “Why is this happening to me?” she asked. 23 And the LORD told her, “The **sons** in your womb will become two rival nations. One nation will be stronger than the other; the descendants of your older **son** will serve the descendants of your younger son.” 24 And when the time came, the **twins** were born. Genesis 25:21-24, NLT*

*May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, “A male child is conceived.” Job 3:3*

- Son or daughter (Luke 1:36)

*Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. Luke 1:36*

- Infant (Job 3:16)

*Or why was I not hidden in the ground like a stillborn child, like an **infant** who never saw the light of day? Job 3:16*

- Baby (Luke 1:41-44)

*When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the **baby** leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the **child** you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the **baby** in my womb leaped for joy. Luke 1:41-44, NIV*

## What does the Bible teach about the unborn?

1. The unborn have some kind of consciousness or awareness in the womb (Gen. 25:21-26).

*Isaac pleaded with the LORD to give Rebekah a child because she was childless. So the LORD answered Isaac's prayer, and his wife became pregnant with twins. 22 But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the LORD about it. "Why is this happening to me?" she asked. 23 And the LORD told her, "The sons in your womb will become two rival nations. One nation will be stronger than the other; the descendants of your older son will serve the descendants of your younger son." 24 And when the time came, the twins were born. 25 The first was very red at birth. He was covered with so much hair that one would think he was wearing a piece of clothing. So they called him Esau. 26 Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they called him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born. Genesis 25:21-26, NLT*

2. The unborn already have some aspects of their character formed in the womb (not just their physical members).

*Before Jacob was born, he struggled with his brother; when he became a man, he even fought with God. Hosea 12:3, NLT*

3. The unborn can experience emotion (Luke 1:41, 44).

*And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit....For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Luke 1:41, 44*

4. The unborn can be filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:15).

*You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice with you at his birth, for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or hard liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. Luke 1:14-15, NLT*

5. The unborn can begin to walk in the call of God already in the womb (Judg. 13:3-7).

Samson's Nazirite vow began before his birth by the way his mother prepared her own diet.

*And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4 Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. 5 For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 So the woman came and told her husband, saying, "A Man of God came to me, and His countenance was like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I did not ask Him where He was from, and He did not tell me His name. 7 And He said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'" Judges 13:3-7*

## When does life actually begin?

1. From a biblical point of view life begins at conception (Job 10:8-12; Ps. 51:5; Mt. 1:20).

*You formed me with your hands; you made me, and yet you completely destroy me. 9 Remember that I am made of dust--will you turn me back to dust so soon? 10 You guided my conception and formed me in the womb. 11 You clothed me with skin and flesh, and you knit my bones and sinews together. 12 You gave me life and showed me your unfailing love. My life was preserved by your care. Job 10:8-12, NLT*

This verse seems to be clear that in God's mind life begins in the womb before a single day passes.

*For I was born a sinner--yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. Psalm 51:5*

This verse indicates that the Adamic nature was imputed from conception.

*For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. Matthew 1:20*

Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was the Son of God at that point!

2. From a scientific point of view life begins at conception.

When this subject is approached with the scientific method alone and not from a personal or political agenda, the conclusion is always the same. Life begins at conception.

The following articles help to explain these findings:

A recent article by Robert George titled, “When does human life begin? A scientific perspective,” offers a thorough discussion of the facts of human embryogenesis and early development, and its conclusion is inescapable: From a purely biological perspective, scientists can identify the point at which a human life begins. The relevant studies are legion. The biological facts are uncontested. The method of analysis applied to the data is universally accepted.

“Your life began, as did the life of every other human being, when the fusion of egg and sperm produced a new, complete, living organism — an embryonic human being. You were never an ovum or a sperm cell, those were both functionally and genetically parts of other human beings — your parents. But you were once an embryo, just as you were once an adolescent, a child, an infant, and a fetus. By an internally directed process, you developed from the embryonic stage into and through the fetal, infant, child, and adolescent stages of development and ultimately into adulthood with your determinateness, unity, and identity fully intact. You are the same being — the same human being — who once was an embryo.

“It is true that each of us, in the embryonic and fetal stages of development, were dependent on our mothers, but we were not maternal body parts. Though dependent, we were distinct individual human beings. That is why physicians who treat pregnant women know that they are caring not for one patient, but for two.” — *Robert P. George is McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University.*

In his book *Embryo*, Dr. Robert George further states:

“That is, in human reproduction, when sperm joins ovum, these two individual cells cease to be, and their union generates a new and distinct organism. This organism is a whole, though in the beginning developmentally immature, member of the human species. Readers need not take our word for this: They can consult any of the standard human-embryology texts, such as Moore and Persaud’s *The Developing Human*, Larsen’s *Human Embryology*, Carlson’s *Human Embryology & Developmental Biology*, and O’Rahilly and Mueller’s *Human Embryology & Teratology*.”

“Human embryos, whether they are formed by fertilization (natural or in vitro) or by successful somatic-cell nuclear transfer (SCNT — i.e., cloning), do have the internal resources and active disposition to develop themselves to the mature stage of a human organism, requiring only a suitable environment and nutrition. In fact, scientists distinguish embryos from other cells or clusters of cells precisely by their self-directed, integral functioning — their organismal behavior. Thus, human embryos are what the embryology textbooks say they are, namely, human organisms — living individuals of the human species — at the earliest developmental stage.”

The key point in this discussion is that human embryos only need a suitable environment and nutrition to become more mature human beings. This is essentially the same for humans at any stage – at least when it comes to biological maturity.

## What is science learning about the unborn?

The more scientists study the unborn, the more they discover. The following are some of the things that are being discovered about the unborn child.

- Unborn children can move just like any baby with yawns, stretches and hiccups by the sixth to eighth week.
- Unborn children's taste buds are formed and functioning by week eight and respond to bitter and sweet.
- Unborn children often suck a finger after week eleven.
- Unborn children react to pain and other stimuli.
- Unborn children respond to sounds by the tenth to fourteenth week.
- Unborn children can learn to distinguish their mother's voice from other voices.
- Unborn children even learn some rudiments of language.
- Unborn children have emotions and can cry.

## What is God's attitude about the shedding of "innocent blood"?

The Bible speaks of the shedding of innocent blood. The term "innocent blood" is used to describe the killing of the helpless and guiltless.

1. Shedding innocent blood is used to describe the action of people who sacrificed children on altars to their false gods (Ps. 106:36-37).

*They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters. By sacrificing them to the idols of Canaan, they polluted the land with murder. Psalm 106:36-37*

2. Shedding innocent blood is on God's short list of conditions for Israel being expelled from the land of promise (Jer. 22:3).

*For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. Jeremiah 7:5-7*

3. Shedding innocent blood is listed among the six things that the Lord hates (Pro. 6:16-19).

*These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, 18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren. Proverbs 6:16-19*

4. Shedding innocent blood is a reason for God bringing judgment on a nation (Joel 3:19).

*Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of violence against the people of Judah, for they have shed innocent blood in their land. Joel 3:19*

5. Shedding innocent blood is used of Jesus who was innocent of all charges yet betrayed unto death (Mt. 27:3-4).

*Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." Matthew 27:3-4*

It is clear that God cares about how we treat all children (Mt. 18:2, 10, 14).

*Jesus called a small child over to him and put the child among them...10 Beware that you don't despise a single one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father. 14 In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish. Matthew 18:2, 10, 14, NLT*

## **What are some of the things in society that are affected by the issue of abortion?**

If abortion is, in fact, the terminating of another human life then it has a serious bearing on other related issues.

1. The issue of birth control methods

If an embryo is indeed the most rudimentary form of human life, birth control methods should be limited to only those forms that prohibit fertilization from taking place.

2. The issue of embryonic research

If an embryo is indeed the most rudimentary form of human life, embryos should never be used for biological research of any kind. There is a vast difference between a human embryo and a lab rat. The Bible teaches us that mankind is made in the image of God and all human beings have a body, a soul and an eternal spirit. While animals have a body and a soul (mind, will and emotions), they do not have an eternal spirit, they do not live forever and they have been given to man for food and other services.

### 3. The issue of the woman's choice

If an embryo is indeed the most rudimentary form of human life, it is never any individual's prerogative or choice to end the life of another human being. Science confirms that the child within the womb of the mother is in no way a biological part of her body. The womb is merely an incubation chamber in the mother for the development of a completely separate person with its unique DNA, blood type and, in some cases, gender.

### 4. The issue of fetal rights

If an embryo is indeed the most rudimentary form of human life then laws treating a fetus as anything less than a human being should be amended. When you intentionally terminate the life of a person, born or unborn, the crime should be the same.

## **Can abortion ever be allowed under special circumstances?**

If an embryo is indeed the most rudimentary form of human life, whatever argument you use for these special circumstances should be able to be applied equally to other human beings as well. When is it right to kill another human being?

Some of the most common circumstances that are put forth as exceptions include the following:

#### 1. The rape of the mother

In actual fact pregnancies from rape are extremely rare. Less than .03% of abortions occur in the case of rape. As much as one can sympathize with this scenario, two wrongs do not make a right. The woman has been wronged. It is a tragic situation. However, the unborn child should not be punished for the crimes of others. In this case, the child should be allowed to live and should either be raised by the mother, the family of the mother or it should be released to another family for adoption.

The woman should receive counseling, support and ongoing care from her natural and spiritual family throughout the entire process. Women can be emotionally scarred by a rape, but they can also be emotionally scarred by having an abortion.

#### 2. Incest

This is similar to the above scenario and may or may not have involved consenting parties. Many children born of incest have an increased likelihood of birth defects. However, taking human life regardless of its perceived value is a judgment that no one can truly make. One thing is sure, every human being, born or unborn, fights to live. Even children with disabilities are valuable, eternal and loved by God.

#### 3. Potential birth defects

This is related to the above scenario and often accompanied by an argument that addresses “the quality of life.” We tend to judge the quality of a person’s life based on our own experiences of life. We cannot know what is in the mind of the person being considered.

As soon as you use the quality of life argument you open the door for mercy-killing or euthanasia. A policy in this regard could be applied to the elderly, the infirm, the severely retarded, the demented, the severely handicapped, etc.

Jesus encountered a man who was born blind. Should he have been terminated by his parents early on in his life? Ultimately he became a testimony of God’s grace and power (John 9:1-3).

*You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD.* Leviticus 19:14

#### 4. Potential death of the mother

This is a situation that occurs less and less with the rise of modern medicine. It is extremely rare where this situation is diagnosed as dramatic as this. There is no question that all of these scenarios require trust in God and His grace to sustain us whatever life throws at us. It is virtually impossible to judge between one eternal, living being and another eternal, living being. It is impossible to put a higher value on one life as opposed to another life. Whose life should be given and whose life should be saved?

It is not uncommon in the affairs of life for someone to sacrifice their life to save another. This is often seen as noble and is honored and respected. In most of these cases of sacrifice the person giving their life makes the choice to do so. In the case of abortion, however, the person making the choice would be the person choosing to save their life by imposing their decision on another human being without their consent.

#### 5. Unwanted pregnancy

More than 95% of all abortions take place for this reason alone. Pregnancy is a matter of choice that should have been made prior to a person’s engaging in sexual activity that produced the pregnancy. If a person does not want to get pregnant, appropriate precautions should be taken to keep that from happening. People want to live irresponsible lives without any negative consequences. The truth is that there are consequences for our choices. We cannot shed innocent blood so that we will not be personally inconvenienced.

It must be remembered that an “unwanted” pregnancy does not automatically translate into an unwanted child. The reality is that there are many people prepared to adopt and raise such children.

#### **An interesting case study:**

How would you advise a mother who was pregnant with her fifth child based on the following facts? Her husband has syphilis. She has tuberculosis. Their first child was born blind. Their second child died. Their third child was born deaf. Their fourth child had tuberculosis.

Should she have an abortion? If you said yes, you would have just killed Ludwig von Beethoven!

### **What are the alternatives to abortion?**

There are three primary alternatives to abortion that are all to be considered honorable.

1. Giving birth and raising the child.
2. Giving birth and allowing another family member to raise the child.
3. Giving birth and allowing the child to be adopted by another family.

The thing that all of these options have in common is allowing the child to be born. If the birth of this child is viewed as and embraced as the will of God, the end result can be very positive (Rom. 8:28).

### **What can a person do if they have either had an abortion or fostered an abortion?**

Like so many other sins, if we refuse to admit them or try to cover them it will often lead to more serious problems in the future (Pro. 28:13). The sin of abortion, however, is not an “unpardonable” sin. It is a sin for which Christ died. God is waiting to extend pardon to all. We receive His pardon for abortion the same way that we receive His forgiveness for all offenses.

God is poised to forgive. But we must trigger that forgiveness by certain things. The six conditions for forgiveness include the following:

1. We must call upon the Lord (Ps. 86:5).

*The Lord is abundant in mercy to all who call upon Him.*

We call upon Him because only God can ultimately forgive sin and because God is ultimately the offended party. All sin is first and foremost a sin against God (Psalm 51:4).

2. We must confess our sin (I John 1:9).

*If we confess our sin, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

No one can be pardoned unless there is an admission that a wrong has been committed.

3. We must repent of our sin (Acts 8:22).

This means that you have a genuine change of heart and mind and have a godly sorrow for sin.

4. We must be willing to forsake our sin (Pro. 28:13).

*Whosoever confesses and forsakes his sins will have mercy.*

God's forgiveness is not a license to sin. We cannot presume upon God's mercy. In this case we are committing ourselves to life for life.

5. We must accept God's forgiveness.

God is gracious, but He will not force the acceptance of His grace upon man.

Accepting our forgiveness has to do with forgiving ourselves. Forgiveness is completed by our acceptance.

Psalm 22:9-10, NLT

*Yet you brought me safely from my mother's womb and led me to trust you when I was a nursing infant. I was thrust upon you at my birth. You have been my God from the moment I was born.*