

## The Abortion Dialogue

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Merely Human Ministries

### **What is it? (Part 1) Science**

Science of embryology tells us that after the completion of the fertilization process the unborn are distinct, living, and whole human organisms.

**Distinct** (unlike any cell in either its mother or father), **living** (meets all the criteria required for being a living organism including metabolism, responding to stimuli, and cellular reproduction), and it is a **whole** organism (has certain capacities, powers, and properties, whose parts work in concert to the bring the whole to maturity).

- ! Peter Singer, **Practical Ethics** 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. p.85 – 86 (1993)
  - “It is possible to give 'human being' a precise meaning. We can use it as equivalent to 'member of the species Homo sapiens'. Whether a being is a member of a given species is something that can be determined scientifically, by an examination of the nature of the chromosomes in the cells of living organisms. In this sense there is no doubt that from the first moments of its existence an embryo conceived from human sperm and eggs is human being;”
  
- ! Dr. Micheline Matthews-Roth, Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, The Human Life Bill S. 158 (**US Senate Judiciary committee 1981**)
  - “So, therefore, it is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception, when egg and sperm join to form the zygote, and this developing human always is a member of our species in all stages of its life.”

Two Key Confusions:

- ! The Confusion of Parts vs Wholes
  - Skin cells, egg cells, and sperm cells are all living cells but are not wholes. They serve as constituent parts of a larger organism.
  
- ! The Confusion of Constructed vs. Developing Things
  - Cars, computers, and buildings are things that are built piece by piece. It makes sense to ask when they are done.
  - Organisms are developing things; development expresses physical

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changes in accordance with information present from the beginning.