

An Unborn Baby's Heart Is Beating—Stop Denying It

Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams turned heads last week in Atlanta when she defiantly announced during a political event that an unborn baby doesn't have a heartbeat at six weeks gestation.

"There is no such thing as a heartbeat at six weeks," said Abrams, who is running on the Democratic ticket. "It is a manufactured sound designed to convince people that men have the right to take control of a woman's body."

Abrams made the claim to emphasize her opposition to Georgia's "Heartbeat Bill," which bans abortion after the first six-weeks of pregnancy. Lawmakers passed the bill in 2019 citing medical evidence that a fetus' heart begins to flutter at that stage of development. The law was paused by a state appeals court in 2020, but it was reinstated in June of this year when the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Abrams, who supports abortion up to full-term, seemed to imply that the sound of a heartbeat is faked to manipulate women into keeping their babies. Abrams is running on a pro-abortion platform, and she promises to reverse Georgia's law if she is elected.

Abrams' claim that unborn babies don't have heartbeats is false, of course, and I think she knows that. What are the facts?

- For years, doctors have stated clearly that at six weeks the heart muscle is beginning to form while a baby is in the womb. While the actual heart valves form later, the heart muscles begin contracting and fluttering at the six-week point, according to Dr. Pradheep J. Shanker.
- The Washington Examiner noted that many other medical

experts say an unborn baby's heartbeat begins even earlier than six weeks. For example, Johns Hopkins Medicine maintains that the fetus' heart beats by the end of four weeks.

- Even Planned Parenthood at one time admitted that an unborn baby had a beating heart at six weeks. But after the comments by Abrams, the pro-abortion organization changed the wording of a statement on its website. It now reads: "A part of the embryo starts to show cardiac activity. It sounds like a heartbeat on an ultrasound, but it's not a fully-formed heart—it's the earliest stage of the heart developing."

It's sad enough that people support the killing of an unborn life, especially in the third trimester when every organ is formed and the baby is kicking and stretching and responding to sounds. It is even more despicable that pro-abortion activists—who constantly tell people to "believe the science"—would twist and manipulate medical facts to claim that a fetus is just a "mass of cells" that don't have a beating heart.

I don't expect that my Christian convictions on this topic will convince the most militant abortion activists to change their opinions. They will keep marching with signs that say, "Get Your Laws Off My Uterus." But I will always maintain that an unborn life also has rights.

The Bible is clear that an unborn life has unique value. David wrote: "You brought my inner parts into being; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for You made me with fear and wonder" (Ps. 139:13-14a). The psalmist understood that God's hand is involved in the miracle of gestation—and that this alone makes an unborn life sacred.

God also told Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5). An unborn

life is so much more than a glob of cells; a baby in the womb carries a God-given destiny.

America has a history of defending the rights of women, slaves, child workers, oppressed laborers, marginalized races, poor immigrants and gay people—not to mention whales, sea turtles and other endangered species. Yet today we are passing laws that allow mothers to kill full-term infants—and we pat ourselves on the back for being “progressive.”

The abortion debate today has been framed in the context of “reproductive rights,” and women have been told they must defend abortion at all costs to prove they have power over their bodies. But what about the rights of the child? Do unborn children have any say in this debate?

Unborn babies can’t carry protest signs, organize rallies or shout questions during congressional hearings. But if we could hear their muffled cries, I believe they would be saying, “Please let us live.”

Think about it. While leaders in our nation are arguing about whether unborn babies have a heartbeat, the real question is whether we as a nation have any compassion left. From the sound of our hateful rhetoric, we are the ones who have no evidence of a beating heart.

J. Lee Grady was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs the *Mordecai Project* (), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).

