

Redesigning the Created Human Being 5: Storm in the Petri Dish

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Stem Cell Research

Open with Prayer

What Are Stem Cells?

View the following video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Axkn8G18t8>. It is prolife, yet demonstrates the difference between the 'making' of adult and embryonic stem cells. Remember, 'stem cell' means that a tissue can develop from a stem cell into an organ, such as a stem cell isolated for bone marrow will eventually, over time make certain blood cells; a stem cell isolated for a kidney will, overtime, make a kidney. To date, only adult stem cells, primarily bone marrow and umbilical cord stem cells, are used in the treatment of certain blood diseases.

1. Discuss the difference of HOW stem cells are produced.
2. What method of retrieving embryonic stem cells results in lessening organ rejection? [Cloning, see Part 4 of this Bible study]. Based on the Bible's teaching of marriage and procreation, what concerns do you have regarding the production of embryonic stem cells using this method? Why or why not?
3. Discuss the two sample comics as a group. Discuss how the comics point out both sides of the Stem Cell Research issue, the desire to heal those we care for with the use of stem cells and the death of human embryos for the stem cell research. What are some of your Christian witness concerns regarding both 'political cartoons'?



What Does God Have to Say?

Read Romans 13:8-14

1. What are these passages teaching you regarding the sanctity of human life?
2. How is this passage related to the 5th commandment and Pastor Martin Luther's explanation? "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need."

3. From the preceding Sections/Units, how do you understand the word 'neighbor' that is used in Romans as well as living the life of Christ as a baptized Christian?
4. The embryonic human being, regardless of how the human is 'made' or 'procreated' and regardless of its location, whether in a Petri dish or the mother's womb, is the weakest amongst. Discuss caring for the weakest as teaches Jesus teaches in the story of the 'Good Samaritan' (Luke 10:29-37).

Case Studies

Case Study 1: The following video was used in Missouri to support of using embryos in stem cell research. This bill titled Missouri Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative passed by a very slim margin. As you already know, human embryos would have to be destroyed, that is, human beings murdered with the intention of using their stem cells for research and treatment of certain diseases.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUb3dsrR8AA>

1. Why or why not would you agree with the video's main theme and how do they use 'human emotions' to build their case for supporting the use of human embryos in research and the treatment of diseases?
2. Reflect back on Part 2 regarding marriage, procreation, and parenting. Would this type of research agree or complement these Biblical teachings. Why or why not?
3. Do you have any concluding thoughts about this video and stem cell research?

Case Study 2: View the following video about Adult Stem Cells and their use in this particular case.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gr00OtvKU0A&feature=related>

1. What are your thoughts regarding the use of Adult Stem Cells to help treat and possibly cure disease?
2. Would you have the same 'thoughts' regarding the use of stem cells extracted from human embryos and why or why not?

Closing Prayer