

## ISSUES IN PERSPECTIVE

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### *The Validation of the Christian Worldview*

One of the key themes of *Issues in Perspective* is the articulation and defense of the Christian worldview. That worldview is discerned from a study of the Bible and the application of that worldview to life. Two recent studies validate that worldview.

- First, God created the human race “male and female” (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4), and it is His intent that they should marry. As a part of that same Creation Ordinance in Genesis, God established the inestimable value of all human life created in His image—both male and female (Genesis 1:26ff.). But consider the population imbalance emerging within China. According to the United Nations, there are far more men than woman on planet earth. That gender gap is especially pronounced in Asia, where there are 100 million more men than women. [This might be a surprise to the West because in the West women outnumber men significantly.] As historian Niall Ferguson points out, “In many Asian societies, girls are less well looked after than boys because they are economically undervalued. The kind of domestic work they typically do is seen as less important than paid work done by men. And, of course, early marriage and minimal birth control together expose them to the risks of multiple pregnancies.” If it were not for selective abortion, infanticide and economic discrimination, women would virtually equal men in Asia. But there is now an imbalance between the genders, with 100 million more men than women. Indeed, the gender gap is expected to widen because there is a cultural preference for sons over daughters and ultrasound technology enables families to gender select their children. Interestingly, one American feminist, Mary Anne Warren, has called this practice “gendercide.” This practice of gender selecting children is rampant in northwestern India and through China. According to the American Enterprise Institute demographer Nicholas Eberstadt, there are in China today about 123 male children for every 100 females up to the age of 4. In Jiangxi, Guangdong, Hainan and Anhui provinces, baby boys outnumber baby girls by 30% or more. This means that by the time Chinese newborns reach adulthood, there will be a chronic shortage of potential spouses. Ferguson reports that “According to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, one in five young men will be brideless. Within the age group 20 to 39, there will be 22 million more men than women. Imagine 10 cities the size of Houston populated exclusively by young males.” History teaches us that when there is such a radical gender imbalance in favor of males there is significant domestic instability, growing crime and potential militarism. Such a youth bulge in Japan helped produce the atmosphere for the emergence of Japanese imperialism. It would also seem logical that with an abundance of males in Asia, there will be increased homosexuality. When humanity attempts to manipulate and control life, as in gender selection, social disaster usually follows. That is what we are witnessing in Asia today. The more humanity seeks to control life, especially through genetic and reproductive technologies, unintended consequences, such as we now see in Asia, will result.

- Second, the value of prenatal life is a given in Scripture (e.g., Psalm 139:16). The Bible declares forcefully and categorically that life in the womb is of infinite worth and value to God. That is why abortion and all forms of manipulation of the fetus are so despicable. Recently, several studies done on the connection between fetal life and adult health issues prove that cancer, heart disease, obesity and depression, for example, can be traced to the nine months we spend in our mother’s womb. There is a straight-line connection between prenatal life and adulthood. The kind and quantity of nutrition we receive in the womb; the pollutants, drugs and infections we were exposed to during gestation; our mother’s health, stress level and state of mind while she was pregnant are all factors that shaped each one of us as a baby, as a child and continue to affect us to this very day! Here is a summary of what are now called “fetal links:”
  1. Heart disease—Individuals weighing less at birth have a higher risk of heart disease later in life than those of normal birth weight, perhaps in part because an undernourished fetus diverts nutrients to the brain, giving short shrift to the developing heart.
  2. Obesity—Mothers who gain excessive weight during pregnancy tend to have heavier toddlers; the link may be more than genetic. Kids conceived after a mother’s successful weight-loss surgery were 52% less likely to be obese than siblings born while she was overweight.
  3. Diabetes—A diabetic mother’s high blood sugar may disrupt the metabolism of a fetus, predisposing it to diabetes.
  4. Schizophrenia—studies have suggested that women who are pregnant during historical periods of stress or famine give birth to offspring who are more likely than those born in calmer times to develop schizophrenia in young adulthood. Also, maternal malnutrition may disrupt neural development, leading to mental health issues later in life.
  5. Depression—research has shown increased rates of premature delivery and low birth weight among babies born to depressed women. Scientists are also discovering possible links between a mother’s mood and a fetus’s sensitivity to stress and perhaps even the temperaments it exhibits after birth.

In short, the Bible affirms the value of the life growing in the womb. The mother’s physical and mental health has a direct bearing on the physical and mental health of her child. Life is a continuum that stretches from conception on into eternity and each stage of that continuum is of value and importance to God. Modern science is now validating that importance!!

See Niall Ferguson in *Newsweek* (6 March 2011) and Annie Murphy Paul, “The Womb. Your Mother. Yourself,” *Time* (4 October 2010), pp. 51-55.