

Cloning: Rebuilding The Tower of Babel.

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"Those crazy scientists should not be playing God:" "When they clone a man, I hope they choose a super-athlete." "I'd rather see them clone an Einstein."

The newspapers are full of stories describing the revolution about to be wrought by genetic engineers. Should Christians view their operations with approval or alarm? Indeed, with respect to the cloning of human beings, what is there to be so upset about, if anything at all?

To answer that question, let us see what the cloning of human beings is. "A clone is created by implanting the nucleus of a human cell, from any part of the body, into the enucleated cell of a female egg. This process, which can be repeated as often as eggs and womb are available, creates genetic copies of the donor of the nucleus...It has the additional fillip of making possible the abolition of males, since the three necessary elements -- a cell nucleus, an enucleated egg, and a womb -- can all be provided by a woman. Successful cloning has already been done with frogs, salamanders, and fruit flies... Progress toward cloning feeds on a stream of recent success related to in vitro fertilization, the conception of a child in a

laboratory dish and the transmittal of the blastocyte or fertilized egg to the uterine wall."¹

Man has been cloning useful plants for a long time. Cloning in animals is still in the experimental stages. Notwithstanding David Rorvik's book *In His Image: The Cloning of Man*, human cloning thus far is impossible. Nor is it likely in the foreseeable future. Some "scientists predict that it will be at least fifteen years before a human might be cloned. Many scientists say that such a feat will never be accomplished or never be attempted. Many people from all walks of life feel that it never should be."²

My thesis is that the cloning of a human being is unbiblical; therefore, it should not be attempted. Christians need to examine cloning biblically beforehand so that they are prepared to raise their voices of protest and concern. The church has now a unique opportunity to develop its ethic before a situation actually arises.

The cloning of human beings is unethical because it is one example of man in revolt against God. The Christian's warfare requires us to destroy speculations 'and

every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God... taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5). Many scientists are in open defiance of God and are purposing to establish an order apart from Him. They dream and plan a world in which God is left out and man is everything, a world in which man is his own god. Whether or not a man can be cloned is not the issue. The issue is: should the cloning of human beings even be pursued?

In answering that question, it should be pointed out that modern scientists are not the first to be in open defiance of God, purposing to establish an order apart from Him. The tower of Babel in Genesis 11 was the earliest, concerted mass effort to accomplish such a purpose. It provided a rallying point so that mankind would not be scattered in order to replenish the earth. Genesis 11:4 "breathes defiance of God. After the flood God had bidden Noah (Gen. 9:1) and his sons 'to replenish the earth.' This, of necessity, involved spreading abroad. These Babylonian builders... preferred to remain a closely welded unit and to refuse to obey God's injunction. The tower was to provide the rallying point and to be at the same time a token of their oneness of purpose. So it, of necessity, becomes the symbol of defiance of God."³

Babel was intended as an advance against God. The cloning of man is a modern tower of Babel, using microscopic cells instead of bricks to advance against God. The people gathered at Babel wanted to determine their own future, their own

direction. Those who would clone human beings have in mind the same purpose. Babel is a symbol of unity against God's purpose. So it is with the cloning of man. In the cloning of human beings man is a sovereign, and as such seeks absolute control over life and death, and the ability to create and alter life at will. Everything must be man-made and man-controlled. The stage has been set for the cloning of human beings to be accepted by society by society by the new reproductive technologies such as artificial insemination by donor, in vitro fertilization, surrogate motherhood, and sex selection techniques. Of these techniques, cloning is the epitome of man's reach for sovereignty.

The reproductive technologies are rationalized as a public good because they help infertile couples to have desperately wanted children of their own. The Christian community has become desensitized to the social impacts of these technologies and that, in turn, has led to a shift in attitudes and behavior. This has happened incrementally without conspiracy or malice. As a result our ethical conscience has been transformed. The reproductive technologies, which include cloning, must be examined not in light of the infertile couple they help to have children of their own; but rather these technologies must be examined in light of their destructive influence on both the family and God's intended order of procreation.

Cloning and the other more developed reproductive technologies of artificial inseminations by donor, in vitro fertilization, surrogate motherhood, and sex selection

techniques are all inimical to the family for at least four reasons.

1. These technologies circumvent the act of love.
2. They "promote the trend toward regarding sex as just another means of pleasure."⁴
3. "They weaken the male connection to the psychologically potent realm of procreation,"⁵ thus fostering male lust and irresponsibility and contributing to the further breakdown of the family.
4. They abdicate the tie between the mother and child, thus removing the very crux of human identity.

God said to the first couple, "Be fruitful and increase in number..."(Gen. 1:28). The means that God ordained to achieve that goal is the physical union of a man and a woman who are committed to one another as husband and wife. That is God's intended order for the begetting of children. With cloning the need for such union is eliminated. The man or woman simply contributes a microscopic cell that is "processed" through gestation and finally "birth". The cloned embryo may make use of a female uterus, but merely as a hatchery in which the cells could divide, multiply and develop.

Cloning, the modern tower of Babel, upsets and contravenes God's intended order of procreation; namely, the physical

union of a man and a woman.

Gen. 11:5-8 is clear that God is exceedingly displeased with man's intrusion into divine prerogatives. Only God is sovereign. Man has been made a vice-sovereign, or a vice-regent, as the dominion charter of Gen. 1:26-28 so clearly and exceedingly delineates; but man may not rise above his viceregency without displeasing God. The present preoccupation of genetic engineers with the cloning of animals to perfect the technique of cloning man is an example of another intrusion into God's sovereignty. IT is man making man after his own image. It is modern science saying, "Come, let us build...so that we may make a name for ourselves..."

References

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3. Leopold, H.C., Exposition of Genesis, Vol 1, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1942, p. 387.
4. Gilder, George, op cit. p.81.
5. *Ibid.*