A New Age Ethical Theory and the Acceptance of Human Cloning

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God made man in His own image and His plan for humankind is that we should become one with God…This is a significant step in the right direction - Cloning advocate Richard Seed, Ph.D.

Dr. Seed's quote concerning the cloning of human beings seems to give the unnerving impression that he believes man's relationship with God involves developing a human divinity as we "become one with Him." Has Dr. Seed bitten from the same forbidden fruit consumed by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and accepted the lie from Satan that, "You will not surely die…For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:4-5)?

Dr. Seed and others like him believe the consequences of the human cloning process will usher humanity into a glorious new era. Even if many in the scientific community won't admit to a God-like role in their development of reproductive technologies, like cloning, it seems that man, science and technology are forming a new earthly trinity that is desperately trying to take on the role of creator instead of remaining a humble part of the creation. Should pluralistic societies embrace these new advances in medical science that may provide incredible cures for debilitating diseases, and increase man's longevity or physical prowess, even though the choices made available by these same technologies create a host of moral or ethical dilemmas? Is mankind moving forward, or is it accepting what Francis Shaeffer calls the "Great Lie" that is, "we have the capacity, like God, to create our own standard of right and wrong" (Colson, p.195, 1999).

Determining what is right and wrong or good and bad has been troubling scholars, educators, philosophers, mothers and fathers since the beginning of human history. In ancient Greece moral philosophers like Socrates struggled with the concept of how one ought to live. Through the centuries a number of moral decision-making processes or ethical theories have influenced individuals and whole cultures in addressing or determining when actions are right or wrong. Man-centered ethical theories such as Cultural Relativism, Subjectivism, Egoism, Utilitarianism and Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative continue to have a strong influence on ethical decision making. God or higher authority-centered ethics, such as the Divine Command Theory, have had profound results within many cultures, especially the Judeo-Christian tradition, one of the main historical sources of the moral heritage of the West.

How would these ethical theories respond to the issue of cloning human beings? If the human cloning process were filtered through some of these man- and God-centered ethical theories, what would be the final conclusion concerning the argument for or against this procedure? For example, Christians do not claim that the Holy Bible is exhaustive, that it specifically tells us everything we could possibly know about every ethical situation.

> It is silent about many things, including many moral problems we face today—problems in bio- and medical ethics, for example, problems about responsibility to unborn generations and about population control. Someone may say that we should draw our conclusions on such matters from other things the Bible says, perhaps from more general principles. But then we have invoked a structure of ethical thought which distinguishes general principles from more

> specific matters and which employs modes of moral reasoning. This is precisely what ethical theory is about (Holmes, p. 12, 1984).

Why is it important to discuss or determine if cloning human beings is right or wrong? There are at least four good reasons. First, we need to answer the question: Should man and his technology take over the creation role? Is the procreative process the only reproductive choice that truly keeps our human dignity unaltered and safe from abuse? In fact, many profess that life is just an evolutionary game of chance, so why shouldn't we create new life forms using cloning techniques or genetic engineering and go where no gene has gone before. Medical science seems to tell us that there are no limits to what man should be able to do concerning human reproduction. What absolute moral boundaries or ethical theories have been culturally established to control those who say "Why not?" to cloning human beings or to totally altering what it means to be human?

Second, moral perplexity exists, and moral direction is needed in an age where technology is advancing faster than man's ability to deal with its results. For example, scientists at Juntendo University in Tokyo and Temple University in Philadelphia have conducted research to create an artificial womb for severely premature babies. Though these researchers may have noble intentions concerning their work, their success will initiate the next logical step: development of an artificial womb that can carry a fertilized egg or a cloned embryo that has received human genetic material.

> There is almost no stopping the technological imperative: If something can be done, it will be done. Then, with the role of biological parents rendered superfluous, humanity can take another important step along the road to total autonomy. Truly our capabilities have exceeded our ethical and moral grasp (Colson, p.127, 1999).

Third, there is a great deal of misinformation about the human cloning process. The general populace needs to be educated on what human cloning actually is in order to dispel the myths surrounding the procedure. In other words, the revelation of what is science fiction versus what is reality concerning the concept of human cloning must be exposed. For many, the idea of human cloning produces images of soulless, mindless zombies controlled or abused by heartless individuals or groups. Understandably, ignorance of the process causes people to fear the idea of human cloning, or to consider it evil. What needs to be understood is not just the process of cloning itself, but the problematic aspects of reaching the goal of actually cloning humans, the resultant effects on the cloned individuals, and how world cultures would adapt to the social, economic, political and spiritual ramifications of human cloning.

Fourth, Christians need to be motivated to develop an informed, thoughtful analysis and moral stance on the subject of cloning, as well as other life issues. "What everyone hopes for as a guide are rules by which to settle all cases, applicable with ease, and in the same way to everyone alike" (Cahn & Haber, p.299, 1995). Instead, society is being influenced by a number of worldviews that are based on ethical theories that do not take into consideration the authority of Almighty God. These humanistic theories provide "…some broad and fairly obvious answers, but which for the rest leaves us to puzzle things out for ourselves, with a margin for error and disagreement too wide for comfort" (Cahn & Haber, p.299, 1995). As mentioned before, the Holy Scriptures are not obviously clear on human cloning as well as other bioethical issues, but they do contain many general principles that can be presented in a context that addresses specific issues, such as cloning. The Christian perspective must be a contributing voice in the marketplace of ideas, especially when dealing with complex, moral issues. Other worldviews that originate from a man-centered ethical approach should be countered with fresh "divine" perspective concerning the prospect of accepting controversial concepts like human cloning.

The importance of appropriate moral decisions concerning the cloning of human beings cannot be overly emphasized. A proper understanding of what constitutes the human cloning experience needs to be discussed, and the inevitability of this procedure becoming a reality in the not-too-distant future must be addressed. To accomplish this task, a four step approach will be used. The first step will briefly look at current political and social opinions and some disturbing trends that will influence acceptance of this very controversial reproductive technology. The second step will center on describing the cloning process itself, dispelling some of its myths, and presenting other contentious techniques and research closely related to cloning. The third step will present a number of arguments for and against human cloning, and then look at the views of four ethical theories to see if they support or disagree with the concept of human cloning. The last step will divulge my own personal belief that many of the major ethical theories are becoming a hybrid. This hybrid or "new age" ethical theory which bloomed in the mid 20th Century, created enormous ethical havoc, and is helping to set the stage in the early part of the 21st Century for the acceptance of human cloning.

The interest in the science of cloning human beings took a dramatic leap in 1997 when Dr. Ian Wilmut announced to the world that he had cloned a sheep named Dolly from a 6-year old ewe. It wasn't long after Dr. Wilmut's startling declaration that Dr. Richard Seed, a physicist based in Chicago, Illinois, made his own stunning announcement that he intended to create for-profit clinics that will clone human beings. Stuff that was once science fiction is now apparently becoming scientifically feasible.

Committees in both the U.S. House and Senate have heard testimony on human cloning. Nearly all who testified agreed that initial attempts to clone human beings would produce disastrous results – including severe mutations and dangers to the women involved in birthing the first human clones. The current wisdom seems to be holding to a consensus that cloning people is not a good idea, but a number of individuals on the committees mentioned above do not outrightly denounce the procedure. In other words, they are saying human cloning is not a good idea "for now."

A presidential commission was created to look into the issue of cloning human beings. The National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) held hearings and prepared a report on the religious, ethical and legal issues surrounding human cloning. The Commission recommended a moratorium on human cloning experiments, and emphasized the need for further public consideration on this very important matter. The real result not revealed by the media concerning the NBAC and the Congressional hearings was the development of a "wait and see" approach to human cloning.

Presently, many in the scientific community and the public are against the cloning of human beings. When Dolly was cloned, a CNN opinion poll found that 89% of those who responded believed that cloning humans was morally wrong, and 74% said it was against God's will. Many believe that cloning will degrade human dignity and cause severe damage to the family structure, which in turn will have detrimental effects on society. Many opponents to the cloning of humans strongly denounced the procedure as unsafe. Dr. Francis Collins, director of the federal Human Genome Project, made his opinions known at a gathering of 2500 researchers in Seattle, Washington. " 'Regardless of how you feel about the morality of it,' Dr. Francis Collins said, 'the safety issues are huge. Animals that have been cloned are not normal - and that's not to mention all the stillborns' " (King, p.1, 2001).

The ethics that seem to dominate the comments and concerns of people like Dr. Collins rest on the idea that medical science and its advancing cloning technology should not use human beings as a means to an end. The opponents to human cloning say that no matter what future benefits it can provide for humanity, the overall risks are much too dangerous. The idea of respect for human dignity and the role of man as creation not Creator are constant arguments against the push to start human cloning. Respect for human dignity is a foundational truth in Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative. This deontological or reason-based system of ethics focuses on the concept that an act is right because it is one's duty to do it. Respect for human dignity does not depend on what will happen

because certain consequences deem it right, but comes from a sense of duty that recognizes rational human beings as having value "beyond all price." Kant believed the ultimate moral principle could be understood as follows: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only" (Rachels, p.133, 1999).

The Divine Command Theory also holds an influential position in the human cloning debate. Many people believe that mankind is made in the image of God, and the more one moves away from the procreative process, the more that image is tarnished or diminished. Though Kantian and Divine Command ethical theories influence those who are personally against, or who have great reservations concerning human cloning, some disturbing trends which have roots in other ethical theories are setting the stage for the acceptance of cloning and other genetic manipulation processes.

As mentioned before, the majority of professional and public opinion on the cloning of human beings seems to be against the procedure, "at least for now." What is interesting is that other moral issues such as abortion, doctor-assisted suicide and euthanasia were strongly opposed in the past. However, due to undaunted determination by proponents of these practices, they are now accepted as normal and as personal rights, especially abortion. In fact, though polls constantly show public opposition to late term abortion, many of these procedures are still protected and practiced. So, even if polls and scientists denounce a particular process, such as human cloning, those who oppose it need to be aware that all is not well. I believe that the ethical theories shaping the worldviews of those who condone abortion, euthanasia and doctor-assisted suicide will again powerfully influence those who claim to be "pro-choice" toward accepting human cloning.

Cloning techniques have been used for many years in horticulture and in the mid-1950s were first applied to animals. The cloning of human embryos was begun in 1993 by infertility researchers trying to help infertile couples keep the cost of in vitro fertilization down. "Instead of removing a number of the women's eggs and fertilizing them in the lab, they remove one or two, fertilize them, and essentially copy them, creating more embryos that could be later implanted in the woman's body should they be necessary" (Rae, p.16, 1996). Even with the successful cloning of plants, animals and human embryos, many scientists, politicians and educators continue to believe that cloning a person is still in the realm of science fiction. On the other hand, individuals like Nigel Cameron, theologian and bioethicist at Trinity International University (TIU) in Deerfield, Illinois, believe it is only a matter of time and money before someone steps over that ethical line and clones a human being.

The procedure most likely to be used to clone humans would consist of four major steps. First, an unfertilized egg from a woman donor would be taken, and its nucleus removed. Next, genetic material from the person to be cloned would be placed inside the egg. The third step would involve an electro-chemical reaction to allow cell division and the growth process for the clone to begin. The final step would be implantation inside a woman's uterus, and if successful, nine months later a time-delayed identical twin of the genetic donor would be born.

> Since the DNA of every cell in the human body (except spermatozoa and ova), contains a complete genetic blueprint, a clone would have the same genetic code as her identical "parent" and yet be fully human, just as an ordinary twin has the same genetic code as her identical sibling yet is fully human (Beckwith, p.7, 1998).

A common fear among many opponents of human cloning is the idea that clones will be like mindless robots or soulless zombies. This fear has been nurtured by movies and television that depict human clones as less than human with no real heart or soul. Francis J. Beckwith, associate professor of philosophy, culture and law at TIU's California campus, wrote an article in *Focus on the Family Citizen Magazine* that answers the question:

> Will human clones have souls? Dr, Beckwith's reply is, Of course they would. For what makes you you is not your genetic code, but your individual personhood. Just as twins have the same genetic code yet individual bodies and souls, a clone and her parent/twin would have the same genetic code, yet each would have her own individual body and soul.

Dr. Beckwith is personally against the process of cloning humans, but feels strongly that if human clones were to be produced, society should treat them with the same dignity and respect as non-cloned humans.

Human cloning is part of the continuum of reproductive technology that falls somewhere between in vitro fertilization and genetic engineering. The main purpose of in vitro fertilization is to enable couples to produce a child with whom they have a biological connection. At the other end of the spectrum are gene transplantation technologies, whose primary function is to produce a child who has certain desirable traits. Though in vitro fertilization is an accepted practice amongst the medical community and society in general, it does come with its own set of ethical problems. If an individual believes in certain "absolutes," such as life beginning at conception, and once that life begins it has a God-given purpose, in vitro fertilization becomes problematic, because many fertilized eggs are discarded or destroyed in the process. In fact, a host of ethical and moral dilemmas surround most, if not all reproductive technologies. If an individual is a consequentialist, or someone who believes that the consequences of a particular action are the basis for deciding if it is morally right or wrong, acceptance of reproductive technologies, including cloning, might be fairly easy.

The justification for human cloning revolves around various reasons, two of the more popular ones being the ability of families to conceive twins of extraordinary individuals, and allowing childless couples to reproduce. Another benefit that makes cloning attractive is the number of reproduction options it can offer. For instance, if someone is against artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization because they involve masturbation, cloning removes that undesirable option. Cloning could be used to conquer genetic defects and diseases, as well as provide the opportunity for couples to choose the sex and physical attributes of their children. Human cloning could also provide a source for organ donors and transplants, reducing the fear of organ rejection.

Opponents of cloning center their arguments on the issue of using humans as guinea pigs. It is estimated that thousands upon thousands of embryos will be sacrificed to master the technological barriers to produce a mature human clone. A growing concern is that if cloning is perfected, some clones will be produced for their body parts, and in essence become second class citizens owned by scientists or medical institutes.

> From a scientific standpoint, cloning could increase the incidence of some genetic diseases in a given population…clones of one person would be half-brothers and half-sisters of one another. Without careful record keeping and regulations of marriages, cloning could lead to an incestuous relationship. Genetically, this could result in marriages where genetic disorders depending on recessive genes would be expressed in offspring and then enter the human gene pool (Feinberg, p.250, 1993).

If human cloning is practiced, society will have to deal with the puzzling aftermath of determining basic family, legal and other social distinctions. For example, family heritage would take on a whole new meaning: a father who clones himself would produce a time-delayed identical twin, which technically makes his cloned child more a brother than a son.

With all that has been said about human cloning, is there any real chance that it will actually happen? Is it right to promote and continue research in cloning humans, or is it wrong, and does medical science need to recognize the greater harm this reproductive technology could provoke, as

opposed to its perceived good? Taking another opinion poll will not give an accurate view of what the future holds for this procedure. The survival or ruin of human cloning greatly depends on how the dominant ethical theories shaping today's worldviews align themselves with it.

> The idea of universal truth in ethics, they say is a myth. The customs of different societies are all that exist. These customs cannot be said to be "correct" or "incorrect," for that implies we have an independent standard of right and wrong by which they may be judged. But there is no such independent standard; every standard is culture-bound (Rachels, p.22, 1999).

Cultural Relativism stands on the premise that people are products of their culture and that there are vast differences between cultures, and that these cultures were derived from anthropological processes that dominated and continue to influence the shaping of their moral practices and beliefs. This ethical theory challenges one's belief in the objectivity and universality of moral truth.

As societies become increasingly culturally mixed, sharing common needs, and using technology to bridge the various communication and educational barriers, the relativistic arguments of diversity and dependency may seem somewhat less convincing. In fact, Cultural Relativism has numerous critics, many of whom believe this ethical theory has no real relevance in the world today. However, Cultural Relativism's key principle, "different cultures have different moral codes," still continues to have a subtle but very influential effect on current moral issues, especially in highly technical societies. It may not be obvious, but there is a phenomenon occurring within countries that have obtained high levels of technological prowess. In many of these cultures there is a momentum that appears to have no real controlling factor, except a moral framework driven by the motto "technology will prevail." Once these societies increase emphasis on the freedom of man and his technology, and ignore or reject any form of Divine Command ethic, they will probably support practices such as cloning and other genetic manipulation processes. Cultural Relativism will see resurgence in this technological era, where medical technology will be idolized as the giver and extender of life. It will not be long before we start hearing individuals or groups within various cultures proudly proclaiming, "by all means stay true to what you believe, but don't tell me what I can and cannot do with my or our human DNA!"

Another ethical theory that is relativistic in a sense, but has its own unique perspective concerning moral judgment, is Ethical Subjectivism. Where Cultural Relativism distinguishes right and wrong through the moral filter of one's culture, Ethical Subjectivism proclaims there is no objective means to determine right or wrong; it only describes the nature of moral judgments. In its simplest form, ethical subjectivism says, "…that no matter what moral judgments we make, we are only expressing our personal feelings and nothing more" (Rachels, p.38, 1999).

Simple Subjectivism implies that since our moral evaluations are only personal attitudes and preferences, human beings in some way are infallible, unless they are not sincere in what they morally believe. This ethical theory basically lumps everyone into an "I'm OK, you're OK" system of ethics, where groups like the Nazis in Germany and their actions during World War II were neither objectively right nor wrong in comparison with the Sisters of Charity and their work in Calcutta, India. In other words, as long as the Third Reich under Adolph Hitler's rule and the nuns under Mother Theresa's supervision were sincere in their perceived morality, a sort of perfection was established by both groups. The critics of Subjectivism severely reject the strict definition of this theory, especially in light of the obvious fallibility of people, as well as the apparent disagreements that occur in ethics.

To make this theory more palatable, the supporters of Ethical Subjectivism began to develop various versions, which would hopefully be more attractive. One of these renditions, Emotivism, developed by American philosopher Charles L. Stevenson, is an extremely subtle and sophisticated form of Simple Subjectivism. Instead of interpreting moral judgments as statements of fact derived

from one's attitudes or feelings, as in Simple Subjectivism, Emotivism denies the factual aspect of moral judgments. In other words, it places statements about God or other moral topics in a category that cannot be verified or falsified. An emotivist believes that statements of moral judgment may seem to express factual information, but in reality they point only toward one's personal preferences. Though Emotivism has some major flaws, its attractiveness is evident in various circles.

The influence of Emotivism has been surprising, especially in the last four decades of the 20th Century. One example is the moral arguments presented during the 1973 Supreme Court ruling of Roe v Wade. Evidence in favor of protecting the unborn child was constantly refuted by the argument of those supporting unrestricted abortion that no one can really determine when life begins in the womb. Even though countless doctors, scientists, and geneticists provided convincing scientific, reason-based proof that life begins at conception, most of the judges were swayed by the emotivist's moral appeal or battle cry, "personhood in the womb cannot be verified or falsified." Since the moral right or wrong of the abortion decision could not be based on a consensus of facts, it fell to what is now known as the "pro-choice" preference — a woman can choose abortion anytime during her pregnancy. This same type of Emotivism will play a role in the approaching decisions concerning the cloning of human beings. The strong sentiments already established in world cultures concerning personal autonomy and "flexibility" in making "life" choices (i.e. abortion, euthanasia, doctor-assisted suicide) will inevitably contribute to the support of statements that declare, "human cloning is a deeply personal expression of one's desire to have greater reproductive or life options, and society shouldn't allow unpredictable moral judgments to stop people using this reproductive technology for their betterment."

Modern culture has endorsed a fairly high level of human selfishness. This infatuation with self-interest has its roots in an ethical theory called Egoism. "Ethical Egoism says we have no duty except to do what is best for ourselves" (Rachels, p.84, 1999). An egoist derives all his or her duties (e.g., assisting others, keeping promises, speaking the truth, etc.) from the one fundamental principle of self-interest. Though the idolatry of medical technology mentioned earlier will be a principle factor in the acceptance of new reproductive techniques such as human cloning, another driving force behind the desire to push the limits of the human gene is the idolatry within our egotistical hearts. For example, the generation known as the "baby boomers" have been greatly influenced by Ethical Egoism in the areas of health and life. The inevitability of death is not a principle that the "baby boomer" generation gracefully accepts in its pursuit of happiness. Cloning technology presents and opens the "genetic door" to a number of life enhancing possibilities that this self-preserving and wandering generation will be anxious to pursue. As with abortion and its successful self-centered argument, "this is my body and no one should tell me what to do with it," supporters of human cloning will declare a similarly effective statement, "don't tell me what I can and cannot do with my DNA."

Utilitarianism was birthed in the early part of the 18th Century, and continues to be influential today. Classical or Act-Utilitarianism states that an action is right or wrong as a consequence of the non-moral good the action produces. The most common form of non-moral good is pleasure and/or happiness (i.e., hedonism). A number of strong arguments have challenged the viability of classical Utilitarianism, revealing troubling aspects of this theory. For example, classic Utilitarianism is at odds with the concept of individual rights which should not be trampled on merely because one anticipates good results. To counter critics' complaints, contemporary utilitarians modified the disturbing aspects of Act-Utilitarianism, creating a new version called Rule-Utilitarianism. This new version no longer judges individual actions by the principle of utility (i.e., the greatest happiness of the greatest number), but instead establishes rules with reference to the principle, and judges individual acts as right or wrong according to the rules. Rule-Utilitarianism's shift from justification of acts to justification of rules provides a level of moral common sense that was lacking in the classical theory.

Concerning human cloning, Rule-Utilitarianism will probably favor the arguments for advancing the process, because some of the more attractive reasons for cloning will appeal to the

general public's shared attitudes of sympathy and benevolence, overshadowing the arguments against the practice. These popular arguments for cloning will be established through the careful construction of general rules or guidelines to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. In the case of abortion, Roe v Wade with its breakdown of trimesters, and the companion ruling of Doe v Bolton were the guiding "rules" that pontificated a utilitarian ethic that society would reap greater benefits and happier lives by allowing women "reproductive choice" and keeping the abortion practice "safe, legal and limited." A similar strategy may be developed by advocates of human cloning. For example, they will promote the lifesaving aspects of cloning technology. The ability for parents to clone a child from the cells of their terminally ill son or daughter, so that their child might live, will be a very potent argument. The cloned child could be a perfect match for bone marrow transplant, and would be used as a donor without significant risk or discomfort. The net result: two healthy children, loved by their parents, who happen to be identical twins of different ages. This type of argument will effectively focus on reducing the plight of the terminally ill or providing other reproductive choices, creating a sense of happiness for the greatest number of people, yet will dwarf the tragedy of nameless and faceless human embryos destroyed in perfecting the cloning process.

On August 9, 2001, President George W. Bush went before the American people in a nationally televised address, justifying his position in allowing limited stem cell research. The decision was met with mixed reviews and emotions, especially in the Christian prolife community, and also seemed to soften the blow for those who support human embryonic stem cell research. The president's decision laid out a process that allows federal funds to be used for stem cell research on embryos that have already been harvested or killed. He stated, "I have concluded that we should allow federal funds to be used for research on these existing stem cell lines, where the life-and-death decision has already been made." Though President Bush has made it clear that his administration will not allow federal funding for research on living embryos, his justification to fund stem cell research on already destroyed human embryos was unsettling for many individuals who wanted a stronger stance against embryonic stem cell research. The problematic aspects of his decision lie partly in a rhetorical question he put to the nation. He stated, "If they're going to be destroyed anyway, shouldn't they be used for the greater good, for research that has the potential to save and improve other lives?" This utilitarian way of thinking at first seems to be a practical approach. However, from the perspective of a life-respecting framework that should be an essential part of our humanity, the president's arguments overlooked a basic understanding of human evil that should cause Americans to recoil in horror, instead of praising the possible benefits of this research.

Paul Greenberg, who is a nationally syndicated columnist, puts this evil into its proper perspective, when he explains,

> Consider the case of the Japanese medical experiments on prisoners of war during the 1940s. No one approved of the inhumanity that was then obvious in such research, but after all, its subjects were no longer living. And here were the results all neatly filed in the Japanese Army's archives. Why not take a look? What harm would it do? Great advances might await in those neat, carefully kept records. Why keep Science waiting? And yet something held us back, some inner revulsion all still shared, some respect for life even when it is past. Those records were set aside unread, unopened, untouched, unused. What a waste. And yet no one at the time thought so. No scientist or priest, politician or ethicist. Because all shared a single value system, deeply rooted from time immemorial that told them: This work is contaminated. Not in any scientific sense but in a much older, almost instinctive way. It was contaminated with evil, another concept that has grown hazier since that time.

Regrettably, instead of mourning the loss of the destroyed human embryos or "potential adults" who could not give their consent to experimentation, and respecting their humanness by laying them to rest in some humane fashion, the President of the United States lost sight of the value of the dead embryos' humanity, while expressing the desire to protect and save living embryos from the same fate. The president's decision was hailed by many as good national policy that seemed fair and even cautious. He even emphasized the promising studies that are being conducted using stem cells from other sources such as umbilical cords, placentas and adults, the use of which do not destroy human life. In reality, the president lost an opportunity to send a message to the nation and the rest of the world on the true value of all human life.

As witnessed in the stem cell decision by President George W. Bush, the utilitarian ethic of producing the greatest good for the greatest number will be influential in pushing medical science and technology to its ultimate bottom line: there is no limit to human experimentation and its benefits to mankind. However, Utilitarianism will not survive on its own in creating the secular moral framework to keep pushing ethical limits; it will mingle with Cultural Relativism, Emotivism and Egoism. These four ethical theories have already woven themselves together, forming a hybrid or new age ethical theory that continues to shape the minds of numerous men, women and children.

Most cultures, even those who are lacking in technical expertise, recognize science and technology as a savior that provides many medical solutions to our emotional, physical and even spiritual needs. A cycle of dependency has formed in various societies that expects science and government to work together in advancing human health and life potential by using its technological prowess as a means to medical and moral ends. This type of Cultural Relativism in concert with Rule-Utilitarianism will be a major influence in promoting the above-mentioned "bottom line" in human experimentation. It is also crucial to see how Emotivism has influenced the language of our times. The level of verbal gymnastics or word games that have influenced rulings from Roe v Wade to the current debate on stem cell and cloning research can in part be credited to Emotivism. Emotivism has done its job in confusing issues of morality, and will further muddy the waters of moral decision-making concerning cloning and human engineering. Egoism is the final ingredient in this new age ethical theory. Human selfishness and its desire to consume the forbidden fruit of the knowledge of good and evil will inevitably put self first and everybody else last. This aspect of the new age ethical theory may be the most dangerous, because "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9, KJV)

So, is the acceptance of the human cloning process just a matter of time? Yes, unless the consciences of world cultures have a moral turnaround concerning life issues, and technological societies such as the United States administer restraining standards to tell science and government "this far and no farther." From a biblical perspective, cloning people is immoral because human life, lost during the process, even at the embryonic stage, is made in the image of God, given creative purpose and deserving protection. "Moreover…cloning also involves an immoral experiment on a person and does it without his/her consent. Hence…cloning is both impractical and immoral. As LaBar says, 'There is no need to put any nucleus in a human egg, except that of a sperm' " (Feinberg, p.252, 1993).

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