

Everyone Has A Beginning

I watched the birth of a baby, what some would call a beginning; but that was not the child's beginning. Her beginning was nine months earlier.

This birth occurred during the time I volunteered at my local hospital in the Women and Childrens' Center. I was given the opportunity to observe a C-section surgery in the operating room. The mother lay on the operating table with her husband by her side, both anxiously waiting to see their newborn. As the surgeon cut through the layers of skin and muscle on the mother, the uterus was exposed. When the surgeon cut through the uterus, I saw the precious head of the baby revealed to the world for the first time. The surgeon then carefully maneuvered the baby out of the uterus, welcoming the child to the outside world. I watched as the surgeon cut the umbilical cord and laid the child down with her mother. Although this was a beautiful moment, it wasn't the child's beginning. That was nine months earlier in the mother's womb.

The birth of this child did indeed mark a beginning, but more specifically her legal beginning. Many believe that humans originate at birth and gain legal status then. However, our actual beginning is long before that. In the nine months that the child is in the womb, he or she experiences many things that other children do outside the womb. The baby will have hiccups, suck his or her thumb, perform somersaults, and respond to voices. Sadly, one of these experiences is also violence. In Oregon, a mother is allowed to have an abortion all the way until childbirth. Research of abortion methods shows that the child is brutally manipulated or torn apart until dead. Most parents wish to protect their children from harm, but our laws allow - if not encourage - this violence before they enter the world. How is a child to be protected from this brutality? Similarly, how can it be acceptable to commit a murder of a human while in the womb, but after birth and legal beginning, it is a felony? The moment that child was conceived in the womb was the exact moment that it became "okay" to cause harm against him or her. The solution to this is to ensure a child's legal beginning occurs with the child's actual beginning.

Although all living children experienced two beginnings, only one of them accurately marks their start. As I saw in the C-section, the baby looked the same inside the uterus as she did outside only a few minutes later. I saw how much life and pure humanity she had before leaving the womb. In time I hope that we can focus on what really matters - the one, true beginning nine months earlier. Every child has a beginning, not two.