

The Right to Choose
By
Daniel E. White, June 26, 2024

Abortion should never have become a political issue.

The right to choose is a basic human right. The freedom to live under a government that does not choose sides in matters of religious belief is the first guarantee to citizens in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. The expectation that American government ought to be limited is the foundation of the Constitution. The equality of genders before the law is a common sense given in any just society.

Most religious traditions do **not** subscribe to the notion that human beings are predestined. Rather, religions start with the belief that there is a divinity who has prescribed certain laws that, if the believer aspires to whatever the hoped-for afterlife might be, must be followed. The Jewish and Christian traditions, for example, plainly establish that Adam and Eve had a choice in the Garden of Eden and, in the eyes of God, made the wrong choice. Thereafter, humans would have to earn their way back into the good graces of God through actions and belief.

Non-believers do not worry about following divine law. Moral codes substitute for revealed law.

Any government that denies the right to choose, then, defies this fundamental human right.

The First Amendment in the Bill of Rights starts by prohibiting Congress from “making any law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The Framers knew history. Too many wars had occurred over which religion was the true religion (Protestant v. Catholic: Hindu v. Islam, etc.). So, they intentionally separated church and state.

The debate over the right to terminate a pregnancy is, without doubt, a matter of religious belief about when life begins. Even within the same faith tradition, there is disagreement about the point. In asserting that the law ought to enshrine their position, the anti-freedom of choice believers would ignore the prohibitions of the First Amendment.

Any American government that adopts the beliefs of one religious community as law does not follow its own Constitution.

The Framers also believed that the English government had exceeded what the Framers thought were the basic principles of a just government. So, they wrote a document that explicitly delineated what government should and should not be permitted to do.

Any government that denies the right to choose would not qualify as limited.

Then there is the matter of equality of the genders. The anti-choice movement, by definition, specifically targets women. There is no parallel movement to limit men’s choices.

In summary, the anti-choice movement seeks to obstruct the exercise of a basic human right, ignore the Constitution and establish a religion, abandon the idea of limited government, and enshrine the inequality of men and women.

Abortion should never have become a political issue. It is a matter of conscience for each and every human being.

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