

Christian and muslims attitudes to abortion and euthanasia

[Family](#), [Abortion](#)



For my Religious Studies coursework I am going to do a study of a Christian and Muslims about abortion and euthanasia. There were a number of different areas that I could of chosen to study but I think that these two play an important part in our society today this is I think because of the increase in teenage pregnancies over the last couple of years.

To enable me to do my coursework I am going to need to start of by doing some research for some background information about what abortion and euthanasia are. For this I will be using the Internet, books from my local library and Minister and I have also sent off a number of letters to relevant societies and churches for more information about abortion and euthanasia.

From the choice of these two areas I hope to see whether there are any diversities within the same religion between the different denominations and whether there is a disagreement between the views that a Muslim would take and the view that a Christian would take. When you look closely at abortion and euthanasia they have many similarities, they are both the ending of someone's life, they both cause a tremendous amount of pain, to the families of the person, in the case of abortion to the mother and the anti-abortion groups who say that they can feel the pain of the foetus when it is aborted. With such similarities I would hope to find that the teachings are the same for both abortion and euthanasia and that there are no loopholes because of the difference in ages.

Abortion:

To begin with I am going to look at what exactly abortion is so I am able to understand why Christians and Muslims chose the beliefs they currently teach from.

What is abortion?

Abortion is the artificial termination of the foetus in its mother's womb. There are a number of reasons why a mother may want an abortion to be carried out. Carrying on the pregnancy may be a risk to the life or the health of the mother. The pregnancy could be as a result of a rape attack. Another reason could be that the mother has found out the child will be born mentally or physically disabled and feels that the father or herself are unable to cope with a child like that. One of the reasons for the increase in abortions is the increase in teenage pregnancies and as a result the mother is unable to cope with a child.

Many people claim that abortion is an illegal act, but it has actually been legal in Britain since 1967. An abortion may only take place up until the 24th week of the pregnancy. An abortion can only take place then if two doctors that:

- a) There is a risk to the mother's physical or mental health.
- b) The child is likely to be born with a disability, mental or physical.

Abortion is not as straight forward as some people would make it out to be, there are actual many different types of abortion here are just a few.

Vacuum Aspiration:

Whilst under an anaesthetic, the womb is opened using probes and a small tube is inserted. The vacuum machine is then turned on and the unborn child is pulled down the tube into a disposable jar. In some cases if the heads are too large to fit and are crushed before being removed.

Dilation and Curettage:

Instead of using a tube, a curette is used to scrap the unborn child from the womb. Every part of the unborn child is removed otherwise the mother may get an infection. Similarly with dilation and evacuation small forceps are used instead of the curette. Again every part must be removed to stop infection.

Backstreet Abortion:

This is the term given for illegal abortions performed on premises other than a hospital or clinic. They use the same method as the vacuum aspiration abortion but in less sanitary areas and with non-sterilised equipment.

The majority of our society is against mothers and fathers choosing to have an abortion. Some of these people are those that belong to religious societies or are part of the pro-life movement.

Euthanasia:

I am also going to need to know what exactly euthanasia is, so that I am able to understand how a Muslim or a Christian formulated their beliefs over euthanasia.

What is euthanasia?

Euthanasia is the act of bringing about the easy and gentle death of friend or relative, they are usually someone who is terminally ill or in a great deal of pain. In some cases euthanasia is often referred to as a mercy killing. There are three different types of euthanasia, although many people do not realise that suicide is a form of euthanasia.

Voluntary or Active euthanasia:

This is when the patient who is suffering asks a friend, relative or even possibly a doctor to help them to die. Another way that this can happen is if the patient refuses to take their medication or the treatment that is actually keeping them alive. This is where the term voluntary euthanasia comes from. This type of euthanasia is done when the patient is unable to commit suicide.

Passive euthanasia:

This type of euthanasia is done when the patient concerned is unable to make a choice for him or herself and so their relatives or carers make the decision arguing that 'It is what he/she would of wanted'.

Suicide:

This is when the patient is making the decision for themselves and then choosing to carry out their own death, usually done in a painful way. Many people chose slitting wrists or necks, drowning, or jumping off a high building or bridge.