

## The Human Person Is a Bioethical Word

by Francis Etheredge

‘Bioethics is about identifying the fullness of human personhood; and, at the same time, it is about forming our self-understanding on the basis of this reality. Indeed, it is not “what” began at conception, as “who” began at conception; or, conversely, that each one of us can look back to a point at which we began to exist. But if, at the same time, each one of us is as inseparably biological as we are psychological, individual as well as social, then what account of being a human person does justice to the whole event: the whole reality of human personhood? Bioethics, then, addresses the heart of being human; and, therefore, it addresses the most fundamental questions about each and every one of us and how we relate to one another. Bioethics, however, can seem to be a very problematic and difficult specialization, dealing with extremely rare medical emergencies, beginning and end of life dilemmas and the rights of human subjects who are, for one reason or another, involved in experimental procedures.

The more, however, the questions raised in bioethics are pondered, the clearer it becomes that bioethics is not actually a remote specialization but a central concern of each and every one of us; for, in reality, bioethical questions and their answers have a bearing on how we understand what it is to be a human being: to be a human person. Moreover, in that we are also social and political beings, how we understand the identity of a human being will also impact on what medical, legal and political processes are necessary in the society in which we live: both to protect people from harm and to promote the good of all. The question of human identity excludes no one and includes everyone; it is just as much a part of each person’s life as

it is integral to marriage, the family and the life of society.

The author, Francis Etheredge, begins with his search to be open to life, the sources that help us to understand who we are and he then goes on to the need to “explore” the specific difficulties that make it urgent that men and women recognize that the gift of human being founds our equality before God and each other. Etheredge hopes that his response, embraced and enriched by a variety of Forewords from other authors, will help to contribute to the family of man welcoming all who dwell in “planet-home”. It is hoped, then, that this work will contribute to the common good, founded on our equal reception of the gift of human being; and, if we are equally in receipt of the gift of human being, then our equality begs to be expressed as universally as each one of us is a witness to the integral beginning of human personhood. Access the book at this link. [www.enroutebooksandmedia.com](http://www.enroutebooksandmedia.com)

### Francis Etheredge

Francis Etheredge: Writer and Speaker lives with his wife and children in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, UK. Honors received, and earned include: BA (Hons) Divinity, MA in Catholic Theology, Postgraduate Certificate in Biblical Studies, Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, MA in Marriage and Family (Distinction). Etheredge has published widely in various scholarly journals and magazines, among them, Homiletic and Pastoral Review, The Catechetical Review and Communio. He may be found on LinkedIn as well.

“I tested the tenets of faith in my life laboratory, and I found them to be true. For example, I obeyed the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, to pray daily, to honor my role as wife and mother, to pursue virtue, and to try to avoid sin. Choosing to do those things clarified the truth I could not see when I was unwilling to enter the laboratory to experiment. When atheists criticize faith, it is as though they are standing in the hallway of a laboratory criticizing the scientists inside, whose work they do not understand. The empirical evidence I gathered gave me confidence that the leap of faith was a leap into truth.”

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