



# Fearfully & Wonderfully Made

a pastor's handbook

**Life Matters**  
**WORLDWIDE**



# **Fearfully & Wonderfully Made**

a Pro-Life Pastor's Handbook

**Life Matters**  
**WORLDWIDE**

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# Fearfully & Wonderfully Made

## a Pro-Life Pastor's Handbook

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# What You Should Know About Life Matters Worldwide

In 1984, a group of Baptists in Grand Rapids, Michigan, founded Baptists for Life, Inc. to mobilize and equip members of fundamental, primarily Baptist, churches for effective pro-life action. Since then, it has grown to become international in scope, affecting thousands of individuals, families, and churches each year. The decision was made in 2012 to change the name of the organization to Life Matters Worldwide.

Our primary objective has been providing alternatives to abortion, first through a network of pregnancy care centers in the U.S., and more recently abroad. Each ministry associated with Life Matters is an independent, non-profit, tax-exempt organization.

Life Matters Worldwide was established to uphold the sanctity of human life at every stage while proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. We believe it is consistent with Scripture to speak out on moral issues such as assisted suicide and euthanasia as we preach the gospel. And, as with abortion, it is not enough to say something is wrong without offering alternatives.

Life Matters Worldwide offers training and materials to prepare God's people for pro-life ministry and to equip them with the information and skills they need to confront these and other issues that touch on the sanctity of human life.

## Results of Life Matter's Ministry

Each year, the pregnancy care centers affiliated or associated with Life Matters have phenomenal results. Volunteers minister to thousands of women. A majority of those who are pregnant and considering abortion decide to give their babies life after receiving education and care at the PCCs. Hundreds of babies are born to women whose needs—arising from pregnancy, childbirth and parenting—were met at a PCC. Most significantly, these centers were

a means of spreading the gospel, many women having prayed to accept Christ or to renew their relationships with Him.

Members of Life Matters's staff have counseled pastors and families of local churches, spoken at missionary conferences and seminars, written biblically sound educational materials regarding

life issues, created a website, and assisted many believers in becoming meaningfully involved in pro-life ministries. There is no other ministry quite like Life Matters.

For more information on how we can assist you, please call or write our office. Ask for a catalog of our materials; we'd be happy to send you free samples. We're here to serve you and your church.

*Life Matters Worldwide encourages and equips Christ-focused pregnancy centers.*

– Our Mission Statement

*We want everyone in a crisis pregnancy to have access to fully equipped, Christ-focused pregnancy centers.*

– Our Vision Statement

## Our Philosophy of Ministry

- The sanctity of human life is not mainly a social or political matter, but a biblical, moral one (*Genesis 1:26-28; 9:6*)
- The Bible calls on Christians to oppose all attacks on the sanctity of human life (*Psalms 82:3,4; Proverbs 24:11,12*)
- It is biblically legitimate for Christians to address public policy issues where biblical values are involved (*Eph. 5:1-13*)
- Christians must provide practical as well as spiritual assistance to those affected by policies and procedures that undermine the sanctity of human life (*1 Jn. 3:16-18*)
- The local church must assume an active role in promoting the sanctity of human life within our culture (*Matt. 28:19-20*)
- Only a return to moral virtue through faith in

## About Life Matters Worldwide

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the Lord Jesus Christ can restore the blessing of God upon our nation (*Proverbs 14:34*)

### More About Life Matters Worldwide

#### How does Life Matters Worldwide differ from other pro-life organizations?

We differ from some groups in that ministry is our priority, to pregnant women and their families. Gospel presentation is the principle focus of that ministry.

Life Matters Worldwide does not engage in lobbying legislators, nor in partisan politics. Nor do we endorse candidates for office. We do, however, offer analyses of proposed pieces of legislation and educate voters about their how they will effect the sanctity of human life. Life Matters Worldwide's main objective is to help believers form pro-life ministries that change lives.

#### How is Life Matters Worldwide supported?

Life Matters Worldwide receives support from local churches (either through regular mission budgets or special offerings), individuals, grants from foundations, corporations and business, and events such as banquets.

#### Are donations to Life Matters Worldwide tax-deductible?

Yes. Life Matters Worldwide is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization.

### Should Your Church Support Life Matters Worldwide?

Life Matters Worldwide exists to serve the local church, its pastors and people. Few, if any, fundamental Christian ministries in the United States offer the services we provide:

- Mobilization and training of believers for pro-life action and ministry
- Provision of educational materials to assist local churches, particularly in observing Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Supporting churches receive significant price breaks.
- Development of ministries such as pregnancy

care centers, providing avenues of ministry for believers

- Alternatives to abortion for women facing unwelcome pregnancies
- A biblically-sound voice for change in our communities, states, and nation
- Consulting services to local churches, pastors, Christian colleges and seminaries concerning "tough" issues such as euthanasia, assisted fertility, end-of-life decisions, and more.
- Content-rich web site at [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org)
- Speakers for services, Sunday School, chapels, conferences, retreats, etc.

Life Matters has been a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability since 1995.

### What does it mean to be associated with Life Matters Worldwide?

Each year, a number of pregnancy care centers become associates of Life Matters Worldwide. This means they share the belief that true compassion ministry must be accompanied by the Gospel and reflect the totality of biblical principles and characteristics.

Being associated with Life Matters Worldwide means a center's administrators and board of directors have met our criteria for association, including alignment with our Statement of Faith and Standards of Operations. These documents and our association policy are available on our website or by request.

For a list of pregnancy care centers that have been or are now associated with Life Matters Worldwide, consult our website, [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org).

# Why Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday?

For the child of God, nothing is more fundamental to life than the worship of God. As His special creation, it is our high privilege to come before Him with sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. It is especially appropriate for us to offer our thanks to the Lord for our very existence. Through personal and corporate worship, we declare our wonder at the person and character of our Lord, particularly as we reflect upon the wonders of His creation — including mankind.

Churches and Christian pro-life organizations annually set aside the Sunday prior to January 22nd as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, a day to focus attention on the sacredness of human life and the value God ascribes to it. It was on this day in 1973 that the U.S. Supreme Court declared “open season” on unborn children. The memory of over a million preborn children lost to abortion each year since that dark day stands as a grisly reminder of the price of our indifference.

Instead of focusing on only one day, Life Matters Worldwide offers helpful materials to fundamental churches throughout the year. Some churches find that January is too busy, or that the weather is prohibitive. Because these are not good reasons for ignoring the abortion crisis, some churches celebrate the sanctity of human life whenever there is an opening in the calendar.

This flexibility is easily accommodated. Life Matters Worldwide’s materials are not dated, and can be used year round. Speakers from Life Matters Worldwide are available all year; anytime they are invited can be “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.”

Whichever date you choose, it’s important for Christians to be called to greater vigilance in the struggle against threats to the sanctity of human life, such as abortion and euthanasia.

As those who have been purchased with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, we readily appreciate the basic dignity and worth of every human being. It is, therefore, important that we declare our convictions in a day when the value of human life is eroding with startling alacrity. Sanctity of Human Life Sunday provides an opportunity for

guided corporate and individual worship, repentance, and a declaration of our resolve to be obedient to our Lord in response. We hope the ideas in this manual help to make Sanctity of Human Life Sunday a blessed and challenging time for your church family.

## How to Use this Handbook

This section of the Pastor’s Handbook has been prepared to assist local churches in listening to God and in responding to Him with praise, adoration, giving and obedience. You may use materials and ideas from this manual as printed, or design your own services by adapting them. The flow of a Sanctity of Human Life Sunday service should move from praise and adoration to confession, and end in commitment to action. God is never pleased by lip-service, therefore it is important that the pastor brings the congregation to a point where a commitment to some specific action or decision is expected or realized.

## Plan for a Successful Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

1. Pray for the success of Sanctity of Human Life (SOHL) Sunday, not only in your church, but in churches across the country. Highlight the date on your church calendar. Include it in your prayers, too!
2. Promote SOHL Sunday. Announcements should be in church newsletters and bulletins at least one month in advance. Handmade posters can be placed in hallways and classrooms, giving name recognition to this event. (See *Pro-Life Activities for Children and Teens*.)
3. Invite someone who is knowledgeable about the ministry and needs of a Christian pro-life organization to participate in your SOHL Sunday service(s). Representatives from Life Matters Worldwide are available, or possibly someone from a local crisis pregnancy center, to help the

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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congregation focus on specific works in which they can be involved.

5. Invite a pro-life legislator, judge, physician, or other individual on the front lines of the struggle for life to share prayer concerns and his or her views on current topics. Ask him or her to lead the congregation in prayer for all governmental, judicial, and medical leaders concerning pro-life issues.
6. Invite testimonies from a woman who has experienced abortion, or an unexpected pregnancy, to bring the reality of the issue and the need for involvement before your church family. Contact your local pregnancy care center for recommendations.
7. Schedule a parent/baby dedication to coincide with SOHL Sunday to underscore the importance of spiritual parenting and the value of all human life. (This is not to be confused with infant baptism, which we do not endorse.) In such a dedication, the parents publicly commit themselves to being godly leaders over the home and children God has entrusted to them, and ask the church family to uphold them in prayer.
8. There may be women in your fellowship who have had abortions and may not have told anyone about their experiences. In condemning abortion, remember to also offer words of forgiveness and hope.
9. Order bulletin inserts from Life Matters Worldwide. Visit our Online Store at [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org) and click the 'Church Items' category.
10. Schedule a Baby Bottle Boomerang campaign to begin or end on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, raising funds for Life Matters Worldwide or a local pregnancy care center. See page D-126 for information on conducting a campaign.

### Worship Service Ideas

- Make time for short, spontaneous prayers from the congregation for the unborn, women with crisis pregnancies, pregnancy care centers, our nation and its leaders, the terminally ill and their families. Ask several church leaders to lead the congregation in prayer concerning these matters.
- Special music can center around a pro-life theme, utilizing everything from solos to full choir and orchestra. Children's choirs organized for this occasion are always well received. They could sing Jim Bailey's song, *I Am Fearfully and Wonderfully Made* ([jim-bailey.bandcamp.com/track/i-am-fearfully-wonderfully-made](http://jim-bailey.bandcamp.com/track/i-am-fearfully-wonderfully-made)).

Don Wyrzten wrote a lovely choral number, "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made," based on Psalm 139. It may still be found in the song book, *Sing the Greatness*, by Singspiration, Inc.

#### Other songs:

*Who Will be Jesus to Them?* (Bruce Carroll)

*Suffer the [Unborn] Children* (Scott Roley)

*Who'll Speak Up for the Little Ones?* (Phil Keaggy)

*What Was I Supposed to Be?* (Ray Bolz)

*Maker of My Heart, He Loves You* (Glad)

*Who Will [Stand Up for the Children]?* (DeGarmo and Key)

*He Knows My Name [I Have a Maker]* (Tommy Walker)

*Search Me, Know Me* (Mildred Rainey, Kathryn Scott)

*Fearfully and Wonderfully Made* (Matt Redman)

*The Healing Has Begun* (Matthew West)

*I Cannot Hide From You* (Clay Crosse)

- Create a unique bulletin cover. Use the Life Matters Worldwide bulletin insert to emphasize the sanctity of human life. Sprinkle your bulletin with quotations from the Bible (see *Key Scriptures Concerning Abortion*) and Christian leaders (see *Quotable Quotes*).
- Show a pro-life video (see the *DVD Profile*) during Sunday School or after the evening service, to the appropriate age group(s). A few videos are available through Life Matters Worldwide. Films and videos can also be rented from other pro-life organizations or Christian film rental services.
- Decorate your church sanctuary with red roses, the universal symbol of the pro-life movement. Display one rose for every million babies killed or one for every year, since 1973, that abortion-on-demand has been legal in the United States.
- Find individuals in your congregation who were born in each of the years abortion has been legal. For 2013 that would be 40 people ranging in ages from one year to 40 years of age, plus one pregnant woman to represent a baby born during 2013. During the prelude or a special number, each person would carry one rose down the aisle, oldest to youngest. They would place their roses in a large vase (or vases) at the front of the sanctuary and then be seated.
- Have the winner of the Essay Contest read his or her work aloud in the service. Recognize others who participated. (See *Pro-Life Activities for Children*)
- Make the church family aware of any pro-life displays or bulletin boards that have been put together for the occasion.
- Announce pro-life activities the congregation can participate in as a body, for example an afternoon rally and march to the site of an abortion clinic or hospital that provides abortions (see *Miscellaneous Pro-Life Activities*).

# Sample Orders of Service for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## SERVICE #1 —

**Call to Worship** - *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

**Scripture Reading** - *Children: The Lord's Heritage*

**Parent/Child Dedication**

**Ministry of Music** - Children's Choir, *Let Me Live*

**Call to Confession** - silent or corporate prayer

**Testimony** - a restored unwed mother, PCC counselor, or adoptive parent

**Hymn of Praise** - *This is My Father's World*

**Message** - "Myths of Abortion"

**Closing Hymn** - *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

## SERVICE #2 —

**Call to Worship** - Read *Psalm 8:1,3-5,9*

**Hymn of Praise** - *All Creatures of Our God and King*

**Testimony** - of a pro-life physician, legislator, etc.

**Prayer** (for government and medical leaders)

**Ministry of Music** - Solo - *The Survivor*

**Hymn of Renewal** - *Have Thine Own Way, Lord!*

**Message** - "What One Person Can Do About Abortion"

**Dedication Hymn** - *Only One Life*

## SERVICE #3 —

**Reading** - Essay Contest Winner

**Hymn of Praise** - *Thou Art Worthy*

**Scripture Reading** - *Psalm 82, or Christian Responsibility: True Worship*

**Prayers from the congregation**

**Hymn of Confession** - *More Love to Thee*

**Ministry of Music** - Choir - *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made and Tiny Heartbeats*

**Message** - Representative from Life Matters Worldwide or PCC

**Response** - Offering for pro-life ministry

**Invitational Hymn** - *Jesus, I Come*

## SERVICE #4 —

**Video Presentation** - *Life is Sacred*

**Call to Worship** - *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

**Scripture Reading** - *God: The Creator and Sustainer of Life*

**Hymn of Praise** - *God is Good All the Time*

**Testimony** - of a post-abortive woman or the director of a PCC

**Choir Anthem** - *Go Light Your World*

**Ministry of Music** - Solo, *The Church Across the Street* (by Timothy Mark, <http://timothymark.com/downloads/>)

**Message** - "God is Pro-Life"

**Response** - *The Family Prayer Song [As for Me and My House] or Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord*

## Other Suggested Hymns

### Praise

*For the Beauty of the Earth  
How Great Thou Art  
I Sing the Mighty Pow'r of God  
Thou, by Heav'nly Hosts Adored  
God of Everlasting Glory  
Holy, Holy, Holy  
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee  
Lavish Love, Abundant Beauty  
We Come, O Christ, to You*

### Confession

*Beneath the Cross of Jesus  
Amazing Grace  
Cleanse Me  
Holy, Holy, Holy  
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

### Prayer

*Create in Me a Clean Heart  
O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
Lord, Speak to Me  
Breathe on Me, Breath of God  
O Breath of Life  
O to be Like Thee*

### Commitment

*Lead On, O King Eternal  
Take My Life  
I Would be True  
Jesus Calls Us  
Who is on the Lord's Side?  
Faith of Our Fathers  
We Are Called to Be God's People*

# More Hymns for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## *All That I Am I Owe to Thee*

All that I am I owe to Thee,  
Thy wisdom, Lord, has fashioned me;  
I give my Maker thankful praise,  
Whose wondrous works my soul amaze.

Ere into being I was brought,  
Thine eye did see, and in Thy thought  
My life in all its perfect plan  
Was ordered ere my days began.

Thy thoughts, O God, how manifold,  
More precious unto me than gold!  
I muse on their infinity,  
Awaking I am still with Thee.

The wicked Thou shalt surely slay,  
From me let sinners turn away;  
They speak against the Name divine,  
I count God's enemies as mine.

Search me, O God, my heart discern,  
Try me, my inmost thought to learn;  
And lead me, if in sin I stray,  
To choose the everlasting way.

*from The Psalter (Pittsburgh, PA: The United Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1912), number 383; <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/a/l/l/allthati.htm>; sung to the tune 'Federal Street' by Henry K. Oliver, 1832*

## *O Lord, Life is Sacred*

O Lord, life is sacred, a gift from above;  
Each person is worthy of honor and love.  
Your works are so marvelous, we're wonderfully  
made;  
We each bear Your image, conception to grave.

Your hands shaped and formed us before we  
took breath;  
You knit us together and clothed us with flesh.  
You give us our life and ordain all our days;  
Your works, Lord, are wonderful; we lift our  
hearts in praise.

Upheld since conception and carried since birth,  
To old age and hair of gray, we're still of great  
worth.

We still bear Your likeness, the stamp of Your  
hand;  
You made us in Jesus for all the works you  
planned.

And so, may we honor each person we meet;  
The kindness You've shown us, we wish to repeat  
From children to aged—we'll serve them in Your  
Name;  
As You honor us, O Lord, we pledge to do the  
same.

*by Susan H. Peterson, 1998 (released into the public domain); <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/o/l/l/ollsacrd.htm>; sung to the tune 'Gordon' by Adoniram J. Gordon, 1876*

## *Once to Ev'ry Man and Nation*

Once to ev'ry man and nation  
Comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of truth and falsehood,  
For the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, some great decision,  
Off'ring each the bloom or blight,  
And the choice goes by forever  
'Twixt that darkness and that light.

Then to side with truth is noble,  
When we share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit,  
And 'tis prosperous to be just;  
Then it is the brave man chooses  
While the coward stands aside,  
Till the multitude make virtue  
Of the faith they had denied.

By the light of burning martyrs,  
Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,  
Toiling up new Calv'ries ever  
With the cross that turns not back;  
New occasions teach new duties,  
Ancient values test our youth;

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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They must upward still and onward,  
Who would keep abreast of truth.

Tho' the cause of evil prosper,  
Yet the truth alone is strong;  
Tho' her portion be the scaffold,  
And upon the throne be wrong:  
Yet that scaffold sways the future,  
And, behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above His own.

*by Lowell, James Russell, 1819-1891 (sung to the tunes 'Beecher,' 'Ebenezer,' and 'Austrian Hymn').*

### Song of Life

Not in darkness nor in mystery,  
No depth of heart or mind,  
Nowhere in heav'n or earth or hell  
Can I run and Thou not find;  
Transcendent thoughts too deep for me  
Surround on every side.  
Thy mighty wisdom, O my God,  
Moves ocean, wind, and tide.

With skillful and with hidden hand  
Thou workest in the womb,  
And there, in dark and tiny space,  
Makest unseen life to bloom.  
Fashioned fearfully and wonderf'ly,  
Thy knowledge to display,  
Thine image bearer grows in night  
Which is to Thee as day.

How I love Thy wisdom and Thy thoughts  
Unnumbered as the sands.  
I joy that all my earthly trials  
Are written by Thy hands.  
And I trust that strong benevolence  
That never leaves my side—  
Thy holy, gracious presence is  
My treasure and my guide.

*by Neil Barham, 2007 (released into the public domain); <http://cyberhymnal.org/htm/s/o/n/songlife.htm>; sung to the tune 'Pentatone' by H. Walford Davies, 1923*

### Where'er His Creatures Gather

Where'er His creatures gather,  
The unseen God is near;  
Let rulers fear their Ruler,  
Their Judge let judges fear.  
How long, ye earthly judges,  
Will ye pervert the right?  
How long shall wicked persons  
Have favor in your sight?

Do justice for the helpless,  
The orphan's cause maintain.  
Defend the poor and needy,  
Oppressed and wronged for gain.  
When rulers walk in darkness,  
When judges truth forsake,  
The cornerstones are crumbled,  
The firm foundations shake.

The most high God has called you  
And set you up on high,  
But ye to Him must answer,  
For ye like men must die.  
Arise, O God eternal,  
Thou Judge of all the earth,  
Through all Thy ransomed nations  
Send now Thy justice forth.

*based on Psalm 82; from The Psalter (Pittsburgh, PA: The United Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1912), number 223; <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/h/whcgathr.htm>; sung to the tune 'Fairbanks' by Henri F. Hemy (1818-1888)*

# Scripture Readings for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

## GOD: THE CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF LIFE

- Leader:** Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.
- Congregation:* For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things and by him all things consist.
- Leader:** I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:
- Congregation:* And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
- Leader:** Marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well.
- Congregation:* So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
- Leader:** My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
- Congregation:* As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.
- Leader:** Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect;
- Congregation:* But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.
- Leader:** And in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.
- Congregation:* When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
- Together:** How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

(Ps. 139:13-17; Col. 1:16,17; Gen. 2:7, 1:27; Eccl. 11:5; Ps. 22:9-10, 8:3,4)

# CHILDREN: THE LORD'S HERITAGE

Suggestions: A group of children could do this reading, or four parents with their children gathered around them on the platform.

- Reader 1:** Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord:  
*Reader 2:* and the fruit of the womb is his reward.  
**Reader 3:** *Jesus took a child, and set him in the midst of them:*  
*Reader 4:* and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,  
**Reader 1:** **Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me.**  
*Reader 2:* *And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them:*  
**Reader 3:** *and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.*  
*Reader 4:* But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them,  
**Reader 1:** **Suffer the little children to come unto me,**  
*Reader 2:* *and forbid them not:*  
**Reader 3:** *for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you,*  
*Reader 4:* Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.  
**Reader 1:** **And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.**  
*Reader 2:* *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones;*  
**Reader 3:** *for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.*  
*Reader 4:* Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

(Ps. 127:3; Mk 9:36,37a; 10:13-16; Mt. 18:10,14)

## CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY: TRUE WORSHIP

**Leader:** Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?

*Men:* *Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?*

*Women:* *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?*

**Congregation:** Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

**Leader:** He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

**Congregation:** Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

*Women:* *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*

*Men:* *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

**Leader:** We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

**Congregation:** But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

**Leader:** My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

**Congregation:** What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

**Leader:** If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

*Men:* *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

*Women:* *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;*

## Scripture Readings

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Congregation: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not;

Leader: **Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?**

All: Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

*(Micah 6:6-8; James 1:27; I John 2:15; 3:14,17,18; James 2:14-17; Prov. 24:10-12; Romans 13:8)*

## LIFE: WORTH CELEBRATING

Suggestion: Designed for six, this reading could easily be altered to accommodate a smaller or larger group of readers.

Reader 1	The LORD is the true God;
Reader 2	He is the <i>living</i> God, the <i>eternal</i> King.
Reader 3	In his hand is the <i>life</i> of every creature and the <i>breath</i> of all mankind.
Readers 1,2,3	The Father has life in himself.
Reader 4	In <i>him</i> we live and move and have our being.
Readers 5,6	He is God;
Reader 5	He did not create [the earth] to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited.
Reader 6	God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.
Reader 1	God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."
Reader 2	God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.
Reader 3	God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.
Reader 4	The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the <i>breath of life</i> , and the man became a living being.
Reader 5	The word of God is <i>living</i> and <i>active</i> .

### *Slight Pause*

Reader 6	You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power,
Readers 5,6	For you created all things,
Reader 6	And by your will they were created and have their being.
Reader 4	When you hide your face, they are terrified;
Reader 5	When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.
Reader 1	Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
Reader 2	My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Reader 3	For with you is the fountain of life.

### *Slight Pause*

## Scripture Readings

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Reader 4	Sin entered the world through one man, and <i>death</i> through sin,
Reader 5,6	And in this way <i>death</i> came to all men, because all sinned.
Reader 5	There is but one God, the Father, <i>from whom</i> all things came and <i>for whom</i> we live;
Reader 6	And there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, <i>through whom</i> all things came and <i>through whom</i> we live.
Reader 3	For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.
Reader 2	He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.
Reader 1	In him was life, and that life was the light of men.
Readers 1,2,3	For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.
Reader 1	Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned;
Reader 2	He has crossed over from death to life.
Reader 3	I am the resurrection and the life.
Reader 4	He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.
Reader 5	I am the way and the truth and the life.
Reader 6	I am the Living One;
All Readers	I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!

### *Slight Pause*

Reader 5	We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men,
Reader 6	He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.
Readers 5,6	Whether we <i>live or die</i> , we belong to the Lord.
Reader 4	When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
Reader 3	For he is the <i>living</i> God and he endures forever;
Reader 2	His kingdom will not be destroyed,
Reader 1	His dominion will never end.
Reader 4	He rescues and he saves.
All Readers	The Father has life in himself.

(Jer. 10:10; Job 12:10; Jn. 5:26; Acts 17: 28; Is. 45:18; Gen. 1:11, 20, 24, 26, and 2:7; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 4:11; Ps. 104:29; Mt. 4:4; Ps. 84:2, 36:9; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Pet. 3:18; Jn 1:4, 5:26, 24, 11:25; Rev. 1:18; 1 Tim. 4:10; Lk. 20:38; Rom. 14:8; Col. 3:4; Dan. 6:26-27)

# Sermon Outline #1: What Price Freedom of Choice?

Introduction: No nation in the world enjoys greater freedoms than America. The choices available to us seem unending. However, having the freedom of choice does not necessarily make every choice right.

As we are seeing so tragically in such instances as drug and alcohol abuse, some individual choices have a profound impact on the lives of others. We are slowly coming to realize that such “victimless crimes” as smoking marijuana or snorting cocaine actually have a detrimental impact on all of society. So it is with the “freedom of choice” in the matter of ending a pregnancy. Like all other choices, this one cannot be made without exacting a price. The freedom to choose is not more important than the choice being made.

LeGard Smith, author of the book *When Choice Becomes God* states, “All choices are now thought to possess equal value or at least merit equal recognition under the canopy of being socially acceptable ‘alternative lifestyles.’”

We need to openly challenge the notion of unfettered individual freedom when it is promoted as the only absolute in society; when it is presented under such socially impeccable auspices as being the gateway to personal happiness and prosperity. Tragically, for women who abort their unborn children, the freedom to choose does not necessarily bring them the happiness they anticipated. There are some costs involved.

The Apostle Peter warned that in the last days false prophets would come who would lead masses astray. One aspect of this deception is that it promises freedom, but results in bondage. II Peter 2:17-19

- They appeal to human lust and greed
- They promise freedom
- They and their listeners end up in bondage

## I. **The freedom of choice does not exist apart from belief in God - Hebrews 11:6**

A person can only know him- or herself if he or she knows God. Without a belief in God a person is left with no coherent explanation of why the idea of freedom is important. Unless God exists and we acknowledge Him we are left only with a determinism that permits a few options, but not real freedom.

## II. **The freedom of choice does not exist apart from a moral consensus - Jn. 8:31-47**

Jesus’ confrontation with the Jews occurred because they did not want to accept His Word as God’s Word. They attributed his words to human origin, rather than to divine. Similarly, those who are “pro-choice” regard the truth concerning the sanctity of human life as a narrow religious doctrine. Choosing to disregard it, they insist that abortion must be kept legal, that women should be free to make such a decision based on her own beliefs and values. This only illustrates the fact that while they do not want to anyone’s morality imposed on them, they have no problem imposing their immorality on everyone else.

Gloria Steinem, editor of *Ms.* magazine states, “By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.” Clearly, she is not interested in God because to acknowledge His presence would also require an admission that He places moral requirements on people.

Freedom cannot exist without a moral consensus concerning right and wrong. Chaos would reign if we refused to acknowledge that certain things are right and wrong. What if everybody could choose which side of the street to drive on or whether they were going to choose to stop for a school bus that was unloading school children? What if everyone were permitted to choose

whether or not to pay their bills? Of course, people can choose to go against all these forms of basic social order, but there are consequences for doing so. The same is true when the choice involved takes the life of another human being.

### III. The freedom of choice does not exist without faith in Jesus Christ - *John 8:38*

True freedom comes through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul taught in Romans 6 that apart from Christ man is slave of sin, i.e. he is in bondage to his depraved nature. However, when we take Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior we are set free from the bondage of sin and are free to make choices that will bring us happiness, peace with God, and great fulfillment.

# Sermon Outline #2: The Myths & Realities of Abortion

Theme: The information about abortion available to us through the media is often incomplete, partially inaccurate, or completely false. Popular slogans have emerged which contribute to the confusion.

## I. Six Popular Myths about Legalized Abortion

- A. *"Women alone should have the right to choose whether or not to abort."*
  - 1. Women do not have a legal right to commit suicide, take narcotics, or engage in prostitution.
  - 2. The freedom to choose is not more important than the choice involved.
  - 3. Illustration: Should men be free to choose to rape a woman, or own slaves, or gas Jews?
- B. *"Abortion is only legal through the first six months of pregnancy."*
  - 1. The U.S. Supreme Court rulings have made it possible for a woman to abort throughout the nine months of pregnancy.
  - 2. Few states have laws which prohibit an abortion in the last three months of pregnancy.
- C. *"Legalized abortion will reduce the amount of child abuse in society."*
  - 1. Since the legalization of abortion in 1973, child abuse has increased 500 percent.
  - 2. Ninety percent of battered children were planned pregnancies, frequently named after one of the parents.
- D. *"Abortion is needed for cases of rape and incest."*
  - 1. Abortion is an admission that we will solve the victim's problem by the same means the rapist or molester used — violence.
  - 2. The victim of rape or incest who aborts does not forget the assault, does not forget being pregnant, and does not forget the abortion. Abortion adds another innocent victim to the list of casualties.

3. Abortion is an easy way out for the perpetrator of incest, only perpetuating the problem for the victim.
  4. Studies show that virtually none of the 1.5 million abortions performed on American women each year are due to rape or incest, primarily because there are few pregnancies resulting from rape or incest.
- E. *"The majority of Americans support legalized abortion."*
1. An independent survey conducted by a large life insurance company revealed that 79 percent of the general population is not in favor of laws allowing abortion on demand.
  2. Even some in the pro-abortion camp are increasingly uncomfortable with the number of abortions obtained for reasons of convenience.
  3. The outcomes of polls are dependent upon how the questions are stated. Questions such as "Are you in favor of laws limiting a woman's right to abortion?" and "Are you in favor of laws preventing the murder of preborn children?" amount to the same thing, but get conflicting answers in the same opinion poll.
- F. *"Abortion cannot be stopped."*
1. Many who oppose abortion are too ready to say that it cannot be ended.
  2. The same was said of slavery in England before William Wilberforce led a movement that brought it to an end there, and led to the abolitionist movement in America.
  3. Abortions can be stopped, whether it be one at a time in a crisis pregnancy center, or en masse by ending government-funded abortions, or through the passage of a Human Life Amendment.

## II. The Realities of Abortion

- A. There are serious physical and emotional hazards associated with abortion.
1. See *Can Abortion Hurt Me?* ([lifematters.org](http://lifematters.org)).
  2. The younger the patient and the further the gestation, the greater the risk.
- B. The educational effect of abortion leads to the devaluation of human life at other stages of the life continuum.
1. Infanticide is now a daily occurrence in America.
  2. The euthanasia movement has gained considerable momentum in the wake of legalized abortion.
  3. One further aspect of the educational effect is the increase in child abuse. Abortion cheapens all human life.
- C. Abortion is a direct attack on the throne of God — *Mark 10:13-16*
1. God places a high value on children.
  2. Parents are given a privilege with eternal implications; to shirk the responsibilities of parenthood invokes God's eternal judgement.

Conclusion: Abortion cannot be treated as an isolated social issue without bearing on our Christian convictions. We are responsible to be standard-bearers of truth in this and every area of life.

## Sermon Outline #3: Why Christians Oppose Abortion

- I. Abortion Denies that Man is Made in the Image of God — *Genesis 1:26*
- II. Abortion Denies that God is the Sovereign Giver of Life — *Exodus 4:11*
- III. Abortion Rejects God's Plan for the Family — *Psalms 127:3ff*
- IV. Abortion Sheds Innocent Blood — *Proverbs 6:16,17*
- V. Conclusion: Abortion must be opposed by Christians because it is ultimately an attack upon God Himself.

## Sermon Outline #4: Three Biblical Facts About Human Life

In the years since the Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand, more than [multiply number of years times 1.5 million] babies have been murdered. These facts about human life show us that this slaughter is an affront to Almighty God.

- I. **Human Life is Given by God**
  - A. Seen in man's creation by God — *Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7*
  - B. Seen in God's control of conception — *Psalms 127:3-5 (cf. Genesis 21:1-2; 25:21; 29:31; 30:1-2, 17, 22-23; I Samuel 1:6, 19-20, 2:21; Luke 1:13, 25)*
- II. **Human Life Begins at Conception**
  - A. Seen in David's creation by God — *Psalms 139:13-16*
  - B. Seen in statements about life before birth — (*cf. Judges 1:5, 7; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15; Genesis 25:22-23; Luke 1:41, 44*)
- III. **Human Life Has God-given Value**
  - A. Seen in the establishment of capital punishment -- *Genesis 9:5-6*
  - B. Seen in the sacrifice of God's Son — *Romans 5:8; I Peter 1:18-20*

**Conclusion:** We have been silent too long (*Proverbs 24:11-12*). If this is an affront to God, it should be to us also. [Suggest actions to take.]

# Sermon Outline #5: Abortion and the Need for Justice in Society

**Theme:** Abortion is more than a political or social issue. At its root, the issue is whether societies are obligated to treat their members justly.

## I. Christians Have a Biblical Mandate to Seek Justice

- A. Christians have a moral obligation to society — *Zechariah 7:9-10; Ezekiel 45:9; Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 13:1ff*
- B. Christians are to protect and preserve the innocent and the weak from oppression and murder — *Psalms 82:2-4; Deuteronomy 27:25; Matthew 5:21-23*

## II. Christians Have a Biblical Mandate for Acts of Love and Mercy

- A. We are to stand on the side of widows, the fatherless, the poor, and the oppressed — *Exodus 22:21; Proverbs 14:31, 24:11-12; Job 29:12-13; Matthew 23: 23; James 1:26,27*
- B. Ministering to women with crisis pregnancies is essential — *Genesis 16*, the first recorded crisis pregnancy!

## III. Christians Have a Biblical Mandate to Seek Spiritual Restoration & Reconciliation

- A. Our purpose on this earth is that of reconciling, not judging — *1 Corinthians 5:17ff*
- B. We are Christ's ambassadors who have been given the ministry of reconciliation

**Conclusion:** Abortion is an injustice against women, the unborn, and the family. God will judge us and our society if we are silent.

## Sermon Outline #6: The Sanctity of Human Life

- I. **Introduction** - We live in a day of uncertainty, in a day of revolutionary and revolting attitudes toward the absolutes of God's word, and the value of a human life. In this area we want to remind ourselves again that God has clearly spoken.
- II. **Hearing Scripture** - What has God said about human life?
- A. Human life in general terms is the result of His creation — *Gen. 1:27, 2:7, 9:6.*
  - B. Human life in specific terms (you and I) is the divine work of God, not an accident of nature, or the whim of a man and woman, but by the express will of God. Every life, from the most wanted to the unexpected or undesired is made in His image, and therefore is special. *Psalms 139:13*
  - C. It is God, our creator's, right alone to deal with life as he chooses — *Romans 9:20-21; Ezekiel 18:4; Job 1:21.*
  - D. God has expressly forbidden the taking of human life in general terms - *Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:21*
  - E. Two encouraging words to remember about what God says — *Psalms 119:160; Isaiah 51:6-8*

The fundamental struggle today over life, is essentially a struggle of lordship. Is man sovereign, or is God? Can men dictate with impunity the value of life. Not at all!

- III. **Hearing History** - What does history teach us? Has man submitted to God's royal law? Has man paid a price for disobedience?
- A. History is filled with proof that the fall and man's rebellion have marred man's value of life.
    - 1. *Genesis 4* - Cain and Lamech; also *Genesis 6:5, 11, 13*
    - 2. Violent societies - Assyrians, Hittites
    - 3. Recent years:
      - a. Nazi Germany (killing handicapped, poor, Jews, mentally ill)
      - b. Russia (30-40 million)
      - c. Communist China (30 million)
      - d. Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (10 million)
      - e. Not counting the millions killed by forced abortion
    - 4. America - 1.5 million abortions per year since 1973
  - B. History is filled with illustrations to the fact that they who live by the sword die by the sword — *Leviticus 18:25; Numbers 35:33.*

**Illustration:** Nazi Germany was ravaged by war as a result of its bloody ways.

- IV. **Hearing and Doing** - God's justice eventually falls on the murderer. Does He have anything to say to us who are not murderers?
- A. *Deuteronomy 21:7*
  - B. *Proverbs 24:10-12* — God holds me and you accountable if we do nothing!
  - C. What can we do?
    - 1. Become involved with Life Matters Worldwide.
    - 2. Be genuinely sensitive to the needs of others.
    - 3. Cannot be silent about the value of life.

# Sermon Outline #7: Who Cares?

*Message by Rev. Bill Abernathy, Jr.*

Apathy about the plight of 1.5 million babies aborted each year since 1973 must be ended. We need to be reminded that God cares about them and that we, His people, must also care. *Proverbs 24:11-12* shows us two compelling reasons why we must work to save the unborn.

- I. **Introduction:** God Cares About the Unborn — *Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 10:14, 146:7-9; Amos 1-2; Proverbs 22:22-23, 23:10-11.*
- II. **God Expects Us to Echo His Concern** - *Proverbs 24:11*
  - A. Helpless people — drawn to death, ready to be slain. The unborn top that list.
  - B. The call to echo God's concern — deliver them, hold them back. Who will speak for them?  
*Proverbs 31:8*
- III. **God Knows if We Echo His Concern** - *Proverbs 24:12*
  - A. He knows our hearts
  - B. He dispenses justice — if we fail to act, He will judge; if we act, He will reward.
- IV. **Conclusion:** "It is always easier to compromise with society and quite simple to say nothing. But to take no stand *is* to take a stand - a stand for abortion, or at least for tolerating the status quo." (*Abortion*, Paul Fowler, p. 207)

# Sermon Outline #8: Should We Legalize Murder?

Message by pastor/teacher Daniel J. Bong

## I. Introduction

- A. Purpose: To address moral issues of the day, the legalization of euthanasia and the attempt to keep abortion legal (in light of the expected overturn of *Roe v. Wade*). We must examine our Bibles in order to discover and apply any and all principles relating to these issues. Vote “no” not solely on the basis of human reasoning, but on the basis of divine guidance.
- B. Emphasis: Though the general biblical principles apply equally to euthanasia and abortion, our primary emphasis in this message relates to “aid in dying” or “death with dignity.”

## II. The Absolute Basis of all Moral Law

- A. Where do we start? With God! In the first verse of the Bible we see evidence of God’s existence, power and intelligence, and later, as the Bible unfolds, His holiness (*Leviticus 11:44, I Peter 1:16*). The only absolute and supreme basis of all moral law is God Himself!
- B. He is the standard by which morals must be judged. His Word reveals the only infallible, inerrant and absolute code of ethics with any real authority.
- C. If there is no God, then there is no absolute basis for moral accountability (*Psalm 14:1*). A growing segment of our society rejects God’s existence and His right to hold us accountable for our actions. This is why we have proposals to make eu-thanasia legal and to codify the result of *Roe v. Wade* in various states. This is the fruit of atheism. If there is no God, man can write his own code of ethics.

## III. General Principles Relating to Human Life and Death

- A. The nature of man
  - 1. Man was created in the image of God as a unique, living creature, separate from the animal kingdom (*Genesis 1:26,27; 2:7*).
  - 2. Contrary to the doctrine of evolution, man did not evolve from lower life forms, but was created by a direct act of God distinct from all other life forms (*I Corinthians 15:39*).
  - 3. If you accept the doctrine of evolution, there is no difference between killing a sick dog and killing a sick man, killing an undesirable rat and killing an undesirable human being (an unborn baby, an ugly or deformed individual, or someone of another faith).
  - 4. By allowing public schools to teach evolution as fact, we pave the way for the legalization of abortion and euthanasia.
- B. The nature of death
  - 1. More and more non-Christians, including many teenagers, are deceived into viewing death as an escape. They regard suicide and euthanasia as being preferable to living under some circumstances.
  - 2. The Bible regards death as part of the curse resulting from sin (*Romans 6:23; 5:12*).

- a. There is a positive aspect to death for the believer (*Philippians 1:21, II Corinthians 5:8*)
  - b. For the unbeliever there is absolutely nothing positive about death because when an unbeliever dies, he or she goes to hell. Death for unbelievers means the beginning of eternal punishment and irre-versibly increases their suffering.
3. Proponents of euthanasia and suicide reject the reality of hell.
- C. The sanctity of human life
1. The sixth commandment states, "Thou shalt not murder" (*Ex. 20:13*).
  2. The penalty for murder is death (*Genesis 9:3-6; Exodus 21:12*).
  3. Proponents abortion deny the personhood of the unborn child while pro-ponents of euthanasia (often the same as abortion proponents) deny that aid-in-dying is a criminal act.
  4. Calling murder "aid-in-dying" or "death with dignity" does not change the nature of the crime.

#### IV. Specific Examples Relating to the Aged, Infirm and Wounded

- A. The infirmity of David (*I Kings 1:1-4*)
- B. The death of King Saul (*I Samuel 31:1-4; II Samuel 1:2-16*). Here is a classic example of assisted suicide. But notice that King David prosecuted and judged the case as an act of murder, not of mercy. He believed that even on the battlefield, the life of a wounded soldier—in this case his enemy, King Saul—should be committed to the providence of God. Job, after the death of his seven sons and three daughters, said, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Let God be God!
- C. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) rewritten with "aid-in-dying" in mind:
- Jesus said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came along a couple of physicians who, upon seeing him, stopped and conferred with one another saying, 'Surely this man is going to die in less than six months. Why don't we help him?' So, pulling out an aid-in-dying form, one of the doctors asked the half dead man if he would mind signing it, and he said, "No, anything is better than being left here to suffer and die anyway." And so he signed the document.
- "But, just as one of the doctors was preparing the lethal injection which would instantly kill him, along came a certain Samaritan. When he saw the half dead man he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him; and whatever you spend more, when I come again, I will repay you.'
- "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell among thieves?" The man to whom Jesus told the parable replied, "The one that showed mercy to him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, and do likewise."

### V. Biblical Prescriptions for the Dying

- A. We can ease their pain (*Proverbs 31:6*)
- B. We can remind them of God's promises
  - 1. Promises concerning their eternal home comfort believers (*II Cor. 5:8*).
  - 2. For the person dying without Christ, there is nothing more important than sharing with him or her the good news of salvation. The longer such a person lives, the greater his or her opportunity to hear and believe and be saved.
- C. We can pray for their healing, believing it is within God's power to heal the person who is medically classified as "terminally ill" (*James 5:14-16*).

### VI. Conclusion

No doctor can predict with absolute certainty how long a person will live. People have recovered who were thought to be dead. The only person who knows for sure is God, and he is not mentioned in initiatives allowing for aid-in-dying. Pro-euthanasia and pro-abortion bills are anti-God, anti-Bible, and anti-life.

# Sermon Outline #9: Symptoms of Assisted Suicide

*Message by Rev. Ray Paget, LMW executive director (1992-2002)*

Proposition: Death — like God — is no respecter of persons. It recognizes no income bracket, no position in society. It takes the evil person and the good. Death is relentless in its task. If the Lord tarries, we will all experience death. It is a certainty for the believer and the unbeliever.

### **Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 9:1-6**

- I. **Introduction: Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, recognized a few things about death.**
  - A. He knew that God, in His sovereignty, determines the timing of death (*vs. 1*).
  - B. He knew that death is an event that touches the righteous and the wicked equally. Both those who love God and follow His commandments and those that hate God will die someday (*vs. 2-3*).
  - C. Solomon also knew that those who think that they are better off dead are *dead wrong*. He said that it is better to be a living dog than a dead lion (*vs. 4*).
  - D. He reflected that as long as one is alive there is hope. The living can still plan, feel, love, and experience hope. They can still enjoy life. But, the dead are dead (*vs. 5-6*).
    - In a humanistic sense, the dead have nothing and no one cares about them anymore. They are soon forgotten. They are finished. They are gone.

- Solomon did not offer much encouragement in his outlook. The phrase “under the sun” reflects man’s outlook — not God’s.
- What about death? It is still man’s enemy, the reminder of sin, and the result of judgment.
- Many try to beat death. By planning and taking their own lives they think they are in control. But they are actually playing into death’s hands.
- Euthanasia or *mercy killing* has been gaining many headlines in our country and around the world.

### II. Examples

- In Michigan “Dr. Death,” Jack Kevorkian, gained international headlines by helping people kill themselves.
- A woman in Grand Rapids has petitioned the court to allow the removal of her husband’s feeding tube so he can die a so-called dignified death (one problem, he wasn’t dying).
- Carla Myers, 14 years old, was killed by a court order which granted her father’s request to remove nourishment (she wasn’t dying either).

### III. Euthanasia: Easy Death? Painless Death?

Why has killing become the answer for the sick or suffering? There are as many reasons as there are people who have been killed. But at least three symptoms affect everyone:

#### A. Despair

Many people who desire a quick and permanent solution to a crippling disease or injury are in despair because of their situations. They believe their lives are hopeless. That they are burdens to their families. They feel worthless. Many are frightened about the future. About increasing pain. Many fear becoming a body hooked to machines never able to die.

Certainly, many are without the eternal hope found only in Jesus Christ. Being Christless is Hopeless. Paul wrote to Timothy (*1 Timothy 1:1*) that Jesus is our Hope. For the believer, strength is gained from a relationship with Christ. Christians get sick, severely injured, experience great pain. But they should not experience Despair. They should never have to give up.

Janet Adkins, Kevorkian’s first assisted murder, despaired of oncoming Alzheimer’s disease. She lacked hope. She didn’t have anything to look forward to. Euthanasia discounts the truth of *Titus 2:13*: “Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

The parents of Carla Myers were hopelessly in despair over the condition of their daughter. Not because Carla was dying — she wasn’t. But because they did not have the life-changing, life-saving hope found only through the Lord Jesus Christ. Because of her parents’ own state of emptiness, Carla was killed. Despair drives the desperate to find hope in the hopelessness of euthanasia.

#### B. Deception

From the very beginning, mankind has been easily deceived. It started in the Garden of Eden. The serpent asked Eve, “Yea hath God said?” (*Gen. 3:1*) and this deception has continued ever since.

The deception of euthanasia has deceived individuals into rejecting God’s clear commandments to preserve life. “Thou shalt not kill.” Instead, they place their lives in the hands of other

human beings who have also been deceived by Satan's world system, a system built on the genius of mankind and the rejection of God's absolute laws.

Even man's best intentions fall woefully short if they are not guided by Scripture. *Jeremiah 17:9* says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?"

Many in the medical and social science fields see euthanasia as a great humanitarian act. Except, rather than lifting up the human condition, it drags the uniqueness of humanity down to an animal level. We take our sick and dying pets to the veterinarian to be "put to sleep," not our family members.

The great deception becomes even more despicable for those fooled into thinking that the end of physical life is the end of all life. *Hebrews 9:27* reminds us, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Those who seek euthanasia to ease into a "death with dignity" find themselves standing before a Holy and Righteousness God. Without Christ, they are doomed for hell. A most hideous and undignified eternity of suffering.

### C. Denial

Proponents of euthanasia deny the sovereignty of God in the affairs of mankind. If they believe in God at all, it is an impersonal God who takes no active interest in the world or its inhabitants. Because of this denial, they become gods themselves, taking situations into their own hands and making life-and-death decisions that belong only to God.

The Bible is clear that God has an appointed time for man's life on earth. Read *Job 14:5*. Euthanasia supersedes the boundaries God has established. It denies God's word and work in an individual's life. It also denies the uniqueness of man as being made in the image and likeness of God (refer to *Genesis 1:27*.)

We are the image-bearers of God. Euthanasia cheapens and tarnishes that God ordained relationship. *Psalms 139* tells us that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made, marvelous are thy (God's) works." Those who condone and promote euthanasia call God a liar. They say that man is just an advanced animal, only a million years further along the evolutionary path than an earthworm.

## IV. What has this openness to euthanasia brought us?

- A. Babies suffering from operable defects are left to die untreated in hospitals while doctors and nurses go about their rounds.
- B. The sick and elderly are being eyed for assisted deaths because they no longer have a reasonable "quality of life" or they have become a burden on society.
- C. People in persistent vegetative states (comas) are being starved to death by the removal of standard practice feeding tubes.
- D. Doctors are routinely giving terminally ill patients drug overdoses to kill them either on the patient's request or a family member's.
- E. Jack Kervorkian continues to kill confused and desperate people while challenging the state and much of the medical community on the legal and ethical statues of assisted suicide.
- F. States are considering legalizing physician-assisted suicide through voter referendums.

V. **Summary: Why is euthanasia seemingly so attractive to all levels of society?**

- A. Despair - There is no hope
- B. Deception - The belief of Satan's lie
- C. Denial - The rejection of God

Christians can help. We can proclaim the truth of God's Word and His moral absolutes. And we can minister to these people who think death is the only hope they have.

We have the commandment to share the greatest hope of hope to people in need — *the Lord Jesus Christ*.

# Sermon Outline #10: Should Pro-lifers Use Violence Outside Abortion Clinics to Stop the Violence Inside?

*Message by Rev. Bruce Sparks*

**Introduction:** Recent shootings at abortion clinics in the U.S. have caused the media to devote much space to our topic and they have published widely divergent opinions. Here is a sample:

**Columnist Ellen Goodman:** "The mainstream pro-life rhetoric that calls abortion murder has led many to the 'logical' conclusion that killing a 'killer' is justifiable homicide and that a murder to prevent 'murder' is morally right. . . . It's not surprising that as the whole army moves toward the extreme a flank will carry the message over the edge. Are these deranged individuals or are they true believers of a movement that has lost the right to call itself pro-life?" (Washington Post Writers' Group, 1/5/95)

**Don Treshman, director of Rescue America:** "We're in a war. The only thing is that until recently the casualties have only been on one side. There are 30 million dead babies and only five people on the other side, so it's really nothing to get all excited about."

**Ray Paget** (former executive director of Life Matters Worldwide, 1992-2002): "The alleged suspect does not represent the thousands of pro-life women and men who are dedicating their lives and personal resources to the preservation of life through local church-based ministries and community-led outreaches. Adding more victims to the more than 30 million unborn children killed by abortion will not bring to a close what has become one of America's most tragic periods in modern history. We are sorry that more families are now suffering because of this grievous national sin."

If the Apostle Peter were alive today, what would he say to the pro-life movement in America? What would God say? I believe that *1 Peter 2:13-17* gives us an answer.

I. **Do Not Break the Law (or for some, Stop Breaking the Law)**

- A. We need to respect government as a God given institution (*Romans 13*). We need to obey the law (*1 Peter 4:14-16*).

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- B. Believers are to break the law only when to obey the law would: 1) cause them personally to sin (i.e., Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) or 2) prohibit them from expressing their faith and teaching (i.e. Peter and John in *Acts 4:18 and 5:29*).

Thus, we are justified Biblically (and must) break the law if the law says your wife must have an abortion, or you must perform the abortion, or you must not speak out against abortion. But there is no Biblical justification for bombing abortion clinics or shooting abortion providers, or defacing public property, or any attitudes, rhetoric or action that is filled with hatred for men. That is not Christ's way.

Peter Jennings, ABC News anchor: "While most Right to Life organizations decry the murders and injuries caused by zealots of the cause, there is a growing number of people who condone, approve and applaud such violence. The argument of a 'right to life' is in total contradiction to a supposed 'right to kill' in defense of a 'right to life.' The dangers posed by individuals who presuppose a personal moral law higher than the collective civil laws of our society are heightened by those who rally behind such zealots, and than them for murder and mayhem. The commandment says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' period. Not, 'Thou shalt not kill, except . . .'"

### II. Do Good (*verse 15*)

- A. By doing good we can silence or muzzle our critics. Read *verse 12*.
- B. Christians must always demonstrate what we believe by what we do. The most telling deed is simple compassion for one another. (*1 Jn 3:17-18, James 2:15*)
- C. We need to increase our help for women facing crisis pregnancies, and for families struggling with small children and poverty — providing diapers, food, medical care, love, counseling, baby-sitting, training, etc.

**Mary Glendon, pro-life Harvard professor:** "In the wake of the . . . tragedies, are there any words of hope? Perhaps. The Massachusetts news media have begun to cover those services that make the pro-life movement more than just anti-abortion — financial aid to single mothers, shelters for mothers and children with AIDS, parenthood classes. . . . building a culture that is respectful of women, supportive of child-raising families, and protective of the weak and vulnerable."

### III. Continue to Speak Out!

- A. Respect for government, as a God-ordained institution, also allows believers under a democracy to participate in the process of government in a responsible way. We have a responsibility to speak out.
- B. Our opponents want to use the recent abortion clinic violence to silence us. A Planned Parenthood newspaper ad with the headline "Words Kill" blamed pro-life rhetoric for the deaths of two clinic receptionists. Planned Parenthood seeks to silence even "verbal attacks" against abortion rights.
- C. We must not be silenced! We must continue to speak in defense of the unborn. We must abhor the fact that abortion providers have been killed by gunfire, but we must not forget that millions of babies have been killed by the tools of the abortion trade.

- D. Recognize that words can kill. Words kill by creating a climate where life is cheap. It is not a mere semantic choice to replace “baby” with “fetus,” to speak of a “clump of tissue.” We must choose our words carefully, and thus uncover “lying, deceitful words.”
- E. We must speak truth. We must not be silent. The church must take a stand. The church is designed to be the “pillar and foundation of truth” (*1 Timothy 3:15*).

# Sermon Outline #11: Duty, Negligence and Judgment

*Message by Rev. James Wells*

“Deliver those who are being taken away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back. If you say, ‘See, we did not know this,’ Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?” (*Proverbs 24:11,12*)

## I. Introduction

We know from Scripture that the Lord defends the innocent and is profoundly compassionate toward children who He calls His treasure, blessing and reward. What must God think? What must He be feeling, now that we have killed our national conscience and sacrificed the unborn for our own convenience and profit? How can we stand idly by while ignoring this unprecedented carnage? It simply boggles the mind. The first place of a nation’s failure is in the pulpit. The second place is in the pew. If we would be wise and not otherwise, then we must grasp as believers, that we have neither the right nor the justification for being uninformed and uninvolved.

The book of Proverbs is loaded with small capsules of truth, teaching us the skill of living and helping us to address life’s challenges head-on. Let us heed these words of wisdom and warning. Let’s first consider . . .

## II. Duty (vs. 11)

- A. ***The Nature of Duty.*** We don’t hear of that word very much anymore — *duty*. It means obeying God without question, evasion or delay. It’s doing what is Biblically right even if it’s not politically correct. Duty carries the force of moral obligation. It means following through on assigned tasks and specific service. It means having the courage of your convictions, even against incredible pressures and insuperable odds.
- B. ***The Character of Proverbs.*** Here we find our duty packaged in the form of a proverb. A proverb is a wise saying, tightly reasoned and briefly stated. Proverbs illustrates fundamental and universal truths. Their application is usually both timeless and transferable. In fact, there is no specific context to our passage that would reasonably curtail its claim on us today. Therefore, should we find ourselves witnessing the dreadful injustice mentioned here — then we are also liable to perform the duties outlined here, as well.
- C. ***The Obligation of Believers.*** What is pictured in verse 11 is one of the raw realities of life — innocents who, for some unspecified reason, are condemned. What a graphic portrayal of the abortion industry. Notice the believer’s duty to identify with the weak and the abandoned; to

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intercede without hesitation or delay. It is a prime directive obligating us to help the helpless; to deliver the innocent and guiltless who are clearly without defense. (*Prov. 29:10*) This duty is assigned to the whole of God's people. Silence is not an option, we must all sign on.

1. *This is not a social gospel.* This has a biblical basis the social gospel does not. Yet we must not forget that the true gospel of Christ has far reaching social implications. Both spiritually and physically, to rescue the perishing is Kingdom business. Scripture imposes both as our duty and we do not have the option of embracing one while evading the other. (*1 Jn. 3:18*)
2. *This is well illustrated in Scripture.* In the first chapter of Job we have the portrait of a man of such moral and spiritual fiber that God used him to challenge Satan. What kind of a man gets a character reference like that? A tither? A church member? A family man? Read Job 29:12-17. As a righteous man, Job aided those who were "ready to perish," snatching the innocent from the jaws of the wicked. Our passage calls Christians to do the same – not as social reform but scriptural responsibility.
3. *This is the work of the church.* There will always be those who feel that the church shouldn't meddle in such things. "The Bride of Christ must remember her place." "We should not interfere with medicine." "We must not correct the law." And, "We dare not rectify the false scales of abortion." Just let the church sing her little songs and teach her simple doctrine to her half-witted people. Don't upset the apple cart. Opt for the path of least resistance. Soften the message. Ease up and back off.

Yet, if the Bible is true, if the power and the promises are given unto us and the responsibility is laid at our doorstep, then the church has no choice but to be in the front-lines instead of on the sidelines. In questions of morality, the church should sway the political outlook. And certainly in a democratic society, the church should be in the thick of those issues involving life and death. (*Ps. 41:1,2*) When we neglect to employ our powers to help, we increase the power of others to harm. (*Prov. 31:8,9*)

Next, let's consider the dangers of . . .

### III. Negligence (v. 12a)

- A. *A Lame Excuse.* Here is the protest of the negligent: "We did not know this." How convenient. "We did nothing because we knew nothing," which being interpreted means that we qualify as human ostriches. The problem with this plea is that it won't hold water. It is like that prayer, "Father forgive us for we know not what we do and, please, don't tell us." This is partial knowledge based on willful ignorance. They know just enough to know that they didn't want to know any more. Like the priest and Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan, when they were aware of a problem, they just passed on the other side. Their ignorance insofar as it was genuine, was of their own making.
- B. *Dodging our Duty.* What excuses will we offer for our own carelessness in this area? Too busy? I forgot? Didn't know? Wasn't asked? No time? Our pretensions will fare no better before the God who "weighs the heart." Sadly, negligence is complicity because it allows the crime to continue by default.

Which leads us to our last point . . .

### IV. Judgment (v. 12b)

We will be judged, make no mistake about that. Omission of duty will be as fully recompensed as the commission of a crime — and all the more so when our sinful neglect has cost innocent lives. Abortion is murder. And those who support abortions, those who perform abortions, those who have abortions, and those who say or do nothing to stop abortions, will all stand guilty before God.

- A. ***This Judgment will be Divine.*** We know this from the description of the Judge. Only God can weigh our hearts, keep our souls, and render to men according to their work. Only the Lord could know with certainty our true motives. Only He could see how far we acted in genuine ignorance of an injustice or whether we acted out of selfishness and indifference. (*Prov. 5:21*)
- B. ***This Judgment will be Thorough.*** This will be no superficial inquiry. No room of our hearts will be locked against God. He will leave no thought or intent uncaptured and unexamined. Divine scrutiny will be “fiber optic.” And God will render judgment on what *was*, what *could* and what *should have been* done.
- C. ***This Judgment will be Just.*** God will render to every man “according to his work.” The lines will be drawn straight. The scales of heaven will always balance. God measures guilt by opportunity. (*John 15:22-24*) Nations and men will receive no more or less than they deserve.

### V. Conclusion

Whenever man destroys the innocent, he wages war against God. And those who profess to know and love God, cannot stop their ears, close their eyes or turn their backs. The fight for life is not just a “tempest in a teapot.” It is a desperate struggle in which the casualties are real. It requires embracing the strength that only God can give. This should awaken our need to pray, to evangelize, to legislate, and to participate. The Lord has taken sides on this issue and so must we.

“He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (*Micah 6:8*)

# Sermon Outline #12: God is Pro-Life

*Message by Tom Lothamer, President, Life Matters Worldwide*

### Introduction

Option #1 - Speak about your own relationship with your earthly father and how it helped or hindered your understanding of our heavenly Father. When we think about God’s attributes — love, justice, mercy, goodness, etc. — we can easily apply them to the cause of life.

Option #2 - Speak about the importance of understanding what Scripture teaches about being pro-life. It's appropriate at this time to ask ourselves how we can articulate the biblical pro-life ethic, and how should that understanding result in positive actions or ministry in real life?

**Transition:** Explain how understanding that our heavenly Father is pro-life – how he loves and ministers to mankind – will help us be truly pro-life. This message is arranged as an acrostic. The first letter of each point will spell PRO-LIFE. The first section, PRO, spells out what God has done in creation and redemp-

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tion for life. The last section, LIFE, spells out the blessings we have – resulting from Christ’s sacrifice – that enable us to be pro-life.

### **P** - People are Precious to Him (*John 3:16*)

Both the preborn and those outside the womb are precious to God — because He created life (*Genesis 1:26-27*). Calvary proclaims His love of life (*John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Ephesians 2:4*). If God so loves life, so should we.

### **R** - Reconciliation with God (*2 Corinthians 5:18*)

God pursues us! (*Romans 5:8-11, 2 Corinthians 5:18*) Reconciliation involves a changed relationship because our sins are not counted against us (*2 Cor. 5:19*). We are now able to announce to others this message of grace. Reconciliation means repaired or restored relationships — between our heavenly Father and us, and between people who were once estranged from each other. “We can stop pursuing reconciliation with people when God stops pursuing us!” (quote attributed to Andy Stanley)

### **O** - Offering of Christ on the Cross (*Hebrews 9:14, 10:12*)

Jesus Christ offered Himself on the cross for our redemption (*Romans 3:23-25*). This offering is totally unique for all time, yet our supreme example of self-sacrifice. Christ’s offering of Himself brings us justification. This is an act of God (*Romans 8:33*), Who takes the initiative and provides the means for reconciliation through the redemptive work of Christ. We are able to reconcile with others because of His work.

### **L** - Liberation from Sin (*Galatians 5:1*)

Christ’s redemptive work on the cross liberates us from sin and provides the blessing of forgiveness (*Ephesians 1:7*), which: 1) Pays the ransom to buy us out of sin’s slave market (*1 Cor. 6:20*); 2) Removes us from the curse of the law (*Galatians 3:13, 4:5*); 3) Releases us from the bondage of sin into the freedom of grace (*1 Peter 1:18*). In light of this liberation, are you and I willing to extend forgiveness to others? (*Ephesians 4:32*)

### **I** - Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (*1 John 4:13*)

Through this provision, we are victorious! (*1 Cor. 6:19-20, 1 John 4:13, John 10:10*) Through the Holy Spirit, we are children of God (*Rom. 8:14, 16*), heirs of God (*Rom. 8:17*), and produce His fruit (*Galatians 5:22-25*). How do we show this fruit except in ministry to one another during their hard times? Do we have patience, love and kindness for women in crisis pregnancies? Do we show joy, faithfulness and self-control in service? Are we gentle and peaceful toward others in need?

### **F** - Our Father Provides a Future and a Hope (*Jeremiah 29:11*)

By faith, we endure the dark days and difficult events of our own lives (*Psalms 23*). Are we, in turn, willing to serve others and bring a future and a hope into their lives when they need it? Women in a crisis pregnancy, or those who have had abortions, are in desperate straits, and in desperate need of the message of hope in Christ.

### **E** - Everlasting Life (*John 3:16, 36; 6:39-40*)

The Bible speaks of eternal life as being a new quality of life; not an everlasting earthly life, but a new heavenly one. We’ll close with two questions: Are you saved? If so, are you sharing your faith with others?

# Sermon Outline #13: The Stewardship of Life

*Pastor Jeff Halsted, Senior Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan*

**INTRODUCTION:** In our society, image is everything. Political decisions are often based on a perceived image that has little or no substance. Leadership in both politics and business in our country is often rooted in perceived images without any substance. Marketing and advertising work more to project an image related to the product, not its substance. But, when it comes to human beings, in our culture image means nothing! We must reverse our thinking in order to realign it with Scripture because image is everything! When talking about human beings, image is substance, purpose and meaning.

**THE COMMAND:** Mark 12:28-34 – Which is the greatest commandment? To love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

1. Love God: Loving God makes sense, because He's the one who created us. The very gifts He gave us are the faculties with which we are commanded to love Him – our hearts, our souls, our minds, our strengths. He also gave us Jesus Christ who has renewed our hearts, our souls, our minds, and our strengths. We should love God because He's our Creator and Redeemer. He is God. He has given us all that we are and have.
2. Love your neighbor: Look around you and admit that obeying this command can be difficult at times. Why should I love my neighbor? Yes, it's the right thing to do, but why did God make this demand? The answer is found in Genesis 1. We should love our neighbors because they are created in God's image and because we bear His image.

This truth is not only reflected in the creation ordinances, it is worked out in the Ten Commandments and carried throughout the entire Old Testament. It is further supported by the New Testament teachings of Jesus and the epistles.

**THE COMMAND AND CREATION:** Genesis 1:26-27 – the foundation for all stewardship. Loving our neighbor has everything to do with the fact that human beings are made in the image of God. God is the owner and sustainer of life. He created humans – all humans, male and female – in his image and likeness.

What does this mean? In part, it means that our very being – our knowledge and volition – has antecedent in God. God grants those gifts to us.

Further, personhood is not defined by function. Our ability to do certain functions is not what confers personhood on us. This sort of thinking is what gave us abortion in the first place, and why euthanasia and assisted suicide are becoming popular. Christians must be careful not to define personhood by what a person is able to do or not do.

Personhood is defined by "being" – being the image of God. Yes, image is everything, after all. Just because a particular human being cannot do the same as you and I, it does not make him or her any less a person. Life is a gift given by, owned by, and determined by God. And in God's view, all was well.

**THE COMMAND AND THE FALL:** We must recognize the sinful state of our world and think about the command in light of the Fall. How did it affect the image of God in man?

Even after the Fall wreaked havoc on creation, humanity still bears the image of God. It is because of the Fall that the image of God in man is threatened at all. Satan's attack is aimed at the image of God in man. God expects us, therefore, to honor and protect human life, and regard prenatal children as human beings, his image bearers. (See also Jeremiah 1:5 and Galatians 1:15).

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Psalm 139 is a beautiful, encouraging text that was obviously written after the Fall. Even though I am fallen, God still knows who I am. He considers prenatal children as human beings, his image bearers. The image has been marred, but not obliterated or summarily dismissed. This truth has application not only in regard to abortion and euthanasia, but also for everyday life as we interact with our neighbors.

James 3:9-12 admonishes us regarding the use and misuse of the tongue. He writes of the incongruity of how the same mouth can both praise our God and curse our brothers, "which are made after the similitude of God." Since God has created humanity as his image and likeness, not only should we work against abortion, but also realize that unborn babies don't survive and grow up to become the objects of our cursing and ridicule. The stewardship of life is also an indictment against speaking ill of or using coarse jokes against those who are made in God's image. It's not fitting as one who bears the name of Jesus Christ. We should not curse people because they are created in God's likeness.

**THE COMMAND AND REDEMPTION:** Sinners are rightfully under the wrath and condemnation of God. We cannot make ourselves right with God. God in his grace and mercy sent Jesus, to live a sinless, perfect life so that those who place faith in Him have His righteousness imputed to them. He died on the cross to free us from the bondage of sin. Therefore, God owns us.

As stewards of the gift of redemption we are to conform to the image of His Son Jesus. In Romans 8, Paul says that because of redemption, all of creation is renewed. In that context, God works all things together to conform us to the image of Christ (8: 28-29). We who have trusted Jesus for salvation bear His name. We have new life, are new creations! We are restored in relationship to God and others. We have everything necessary in Jesus Christ to love God and our neighbor in the way that God intended. We are gifted with the Holy Spirit so we can love God and our neighbors correctly.

We have been created as image-bearers in our humanity. As new creations, we can be conformed to the image of the One who came to redeem us. We are, therefore, responsible to be good stewards of life. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we should be shining examples of what it looks like to love God and our neighbor. As imagers of Jesus Christ we can love those who are made in the image of God.

### Practical implications for life:

- 1) **How should we then live our lives as good stewards?** (2 Peter 1:5-9) Celebrate! I'm a person who was created as the image of God and so are you. Give thanks! Live a life of gratitude rather than obligation. Don't murder (or hate, Matthew 5:21-22)! The people toward whom you express hatred were created in God's image. Don't harbor bitterness. Life is a gift everyday. What do you give your days for? How do you spend them?
- 2) **Am I my brother's keeper?** The typical American response, "I'm taking care of myself." The Bible, however, says we are our brothers' keepers. Because of the Fall, God commanded his people not to murder (*Exodus 20:13; Matthew 19:18; Romans 13:9*). This means we must not commit illegal violences against the image of God. (Capital punishment and war are the only violence allowed.) One may transgress this precept or break it by omission (by not doing anything), as well as commission (by participating in murder). Hear this challenge from the writings of Martin Luther:

*"Not only is that person guilty of violating this commandment who does the evil that it forbids, but also the one who fails to take the opportunity to do good to his neighbor and, who though able to prevent evil – protect, shield and save the neighbor from injury and bodily harm – fails to do so. If you see someone condemned to death innocently and you do not save him, although you know ways and means to do so, you have killed him. It will do you no good to plead that you did not contribute to his death, for you have withheld your love from him and have robbed him of the service by which his life might have been saved."*

Is it enough to believe that abortion is wrong? Are we truly loving our neighbor if we pas-

sively sit back and only pass judgment on euthanasia and assisted suicide? Or, as we engage the command to truly love others because they are God's image, are we responsible for being good stewards of our lives as well as the lives of others?

What options are available to us? Many. Use your pens and voices and votes to speak out against the devaluing and wrong understanding about human life. Our goal should be that these things not only become illegal, but also unthinkable. We must, therefore, share the good news of redemption so others will be conformed to the image of Christ as well.

We cannot adequately love God without loving our neighbor (*1 John 4:7-12*). Life is a gift of God. We must be good stewards of life for the glory of God.

# Sermon Outline #14: Human Life – Science or Sacred?

*Pastor Wade Estes, First Baptist Church of Modesto, CA*

**INTRODUCTION:** Have you ever wondered how to fix the abortion issue? Have you ever wrestled, personally, with what to do with an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy? Take the time to examine what God says in the Bible, because, when it all comes down to making informed decisions, it's not logic or science that is the ultimate authority, but it is what God says about the issue.

**READING:** Isaiah 55:8-9, 10-11, 12-13 — We can know "higher" wisdom. God's wisdom has a purpose. God's purpose is that we walk in His blessing. God gives us His wisdom through His word so that we can experience His joy and blessings in life. As we look at what God says about the sacredness of human life, it is important to understand that He is communicating truth to us so that we can walk in the joy that He has intended for us to have since the day we were created.

## I. What God Says About Human Life

- A. God is the Creator of human life (*Genesis 1:26a*). Not just the first human lives, but each successive life (*Psalms 139:13-14, Job 33:4*)
- B. People are created in the image of God (*Genesis 1:27*). What does that mean?
  1. Ability to have fellowship with God. All of creation declares the glory of God (*Psalms 19:1*), and all creation reveals the existence of God (*Romans 1:20*), but only human life can have fellowship with God.
  2. Human life is sacred.
    - a. There is a penalty for murder because people were made in the image of God (*Genesis 9:6*). There is sacredness in human life.
    - b. God declares His authority as Creator and Overseer of human life (*Exodus 20:13*)
- C. God creates human life for a purpose (*Psalms 139:16*). Since it is God's will that every person be treated as sacred *after* birth, it is certainly His will that the same standard apply to the person *before* birth.

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### II. God's View of Pre-Born Children

- A. Human life begins at conception (*Psalm 139:13*). God says that He creates, designs each person in the womb. From the moment of conception, a distinct human life begins that has his or her own unique combination of 46 chromosomes; 23 from the mother and 23 from the father. All that is added from the moment of fertilization forward is nourishment, oxygen and time.
- B. God says that the unborn child is a distinct person apart from the mother (*Isaiah 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:4-5*).
- C. Abortion ends a pre-born baby's life. Having an abortion need not be the end of your life. If you need to talk with someone because you have had an abortion or participated in an abortion, please let us know so we can help (*John 10:10*). You cannot, through punishing yourself, make up for your sin. You cannot make up for your sin by having more babies. You cannot bring back the life you have taken, but you can be forgiven and meet that child in heaven one day. Forgiveness comes through Jesus Christ. He loves you. He died for your sin. He wants to forgive you. He is full of grace and truth. Will you agree with Him on the truth and ask for His gracious forgiveness?

### III. Pre-born Children and Embryonic Stem Cell Research (*Psalm 139:13*)

Applications of stem cell research have already helped people recover who have had various illnesses and injuries. Stem cells are taken from adult donors and also from the umbilical cords of newly born babies. There is, however, great controversy regarding embryonic stem cell research, in which stem cells are taken from a human embryo. There is speculation that embryonic stem cells may be better than adult stem cells or ones harvested from umbilical cords.

The embryos used in this research are created the way in which all embryos are — by the union of male sperm with a female egg — but in a laboratory. There is never the intention of allowing them to grow to full-term babies, but they are created for the sole purpose of harvesting stem cells for experimentation. (Some scientists also propose using frozen embryos that are left over from fertility treatment.)

Why does this cause concern among many, especially those who are followers of the God of the Bible? Because we believe the Bible teaches that life begins at conception. To simply create embryos and then destroy them for the purpose of taking stem cells, or to maintain them for the constant production of more stem cells, is to treat human life as a collection of mere parts, taken to be used to replace parts in another human life.

In the past, medical experiments were performed on human beings without their knowledge or consent. This has been rightfully condemned. Today, because society says "science is God" and squeezes out the True God's perspective, many people believe it's okay to perform experiments on the unborn.

Is God opposed to all stem cell research? No! Does God oppose medical research that seeks to help people? No! Stem cell research done with adult stem cells and stem cells from umbilical cords does not destroy life, does not degrade human beings, and does not treat them as anything less than sacred.

**CONCLUSION:** What should we do? Look to God and honor His higher wisdom. Honor Him as Creator and overseer of human life. Honor Him as the final authority of all matters regarding human life.

We must stand up for human beings who cannot defend themselves against ungodly policies. We must treat these lives as sacred: Preborn babies whose existence is "inconvenient," embryos created merely for research purposes or pregnancy selection, people who have severe physical or mental limitations, elderly people who can no longer care for themselves. There are also living victims of abortion: the mothers and fathers of aborted babies. Some suffer in silence, often for years.

### Steps of action:

1. Based upon Scripture, settle what you believe about life: concerning abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, etc. Is a right to life based on a person's ability to contribute, or sacred in itself? Who has the right to end a person's life?
2. Walk in purity: mind, body, spirit.
3. If you become pregnant, love the child in your womb, even if you didn't plan or expect the child. Consider adoption if you feel you cannot or should not raise the child.
4. Volunteer at a local pregnancy care center, adoption agency, rest home, hospital, etc.
5. Make your home available to unwed mothers and/or support homes that are open to them.
6. Pray for politicians, pastors, physicians, pro-life leaders, pro-life organizations, mothers-to-be (to choose life for their unborn children)
7. It should make a difference in how you vote.

This sermon has been edited to fit the space. For the full version, please go to: [www.fbcmodesto.com/audio\\_notes/notes011605.pdf](http://www.fbcmodesto.com/audio_notes/notes011605.pdf).

# Sermon Outline #15: Why Should We Celebrate Life?

## I. God Created Physical Life – An Astounding Variety

Isaiah 45:18 says He formed the earth to be inhabited, and we see in Genesis 1 how the power of His word brought forth not only mankind, but plants, birds, flowers, trees, sea creatures, all kinds of animals, insects, etc. God created all things, and they continue to live according to His will (*Revelation 4:11*).

## II. God Provides Eternal Life – An Ultimate Effort

Mankind chose to sin, knowing the result would be death (*Genesis 3*). This is utterly absurd in view of the delightfulness of life. We were not abandoned to our choice, however, but God has gone to great lengths to bring us new life. Redemptive history is the record of God's repeated offers of life to His people (*Deuteronomy 30:19, Ezekiel 33:11*). In His Son Jesus, He obtained redemption that we may live again (*Hebrews 9:12*).

## III. God has Life in Himself – A Profound Truth

In John 5:26, Jesus says that the reason God can give life (both physical and eternal) is that He has life in Himself. It's an essential aspect of His nature. More important than knowing *when* a person's physical life begins is knowing *where* life begins, and that it is *in* God. He is the living God and the God of the living (*Luke 20:38, 1 Timothy 4:10*), the source and sustainer of life (*Matthew 4:4, John 1:4, Acts 17:24-28, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:17, Heb. 1:3, Rev. 22:1*). We honor God when we respect life.

### V. We Bear His Image – An Awesome Privilege and Responsibility

As bearers of God's image, we should share and reflect His passion for life through our care and concern for all people (*Proverbs 14:31, Deut. 10:17-19*). Not only will we not shed innocent blood, but we will spend our lives in the service of protecting, nurturing, and preserving human life (*Exodus 20:13, Prov. 24:11-12; Jeremiah 22:3, Jonah 4:10-11, Lk. 6:36, Jn. 15:13, James 1:27, 3:9-10, 1 Jn. 3:17 and 4:11*).

# Sermon Outline #16: Compassion Ministries

- I. **Problem: We don't always know what people need or how to help them.** We're in the same predicament as Jesus' disciples when confronted by demanding people. We have the same tendencies:
  - A. *Matthew 14:15* - "Send them away."
  - B. *Mt. 15:23* - "Send her away."
  - C. *Mt. 19:13* - in effect, "Take them away!" or "Go away!"
- II. **Solution: Intensive training.** Jesus made His disciples watch and learn something that did not come naturally to them. Then and now, it takes observation and practice to become compassionate toward people and to know how to help them.
  - A. Jesus revealed His Father's heart of compassion – *John 1:18; Hebrews 1:3; Exodus 34:6; Psalm 103:8; Lamentations 3:22; Jonah 4:11; Luke 15:20; James 5:11*
  - B. Jesus revealed His own heart of compassion – *Mt. 9:36, 14:14, 15:32, 20:34; Mark 1:41, 6:34, 8:2; Luke 7:13*
  - C. Jesus directed His disciples to perform lowly acts of service for others – *Jn. 13:14; Mt. 14:19, 15:35; Mk. 6:41*
  - D. Jesus served even when the response was less than satisfactory – *Lk. 17:11-19*
- III. **Pro-life ministries are ministries of compassion.**
  - A. They "suffer alongside" those caught in the web of sex outside marriage, unwanted pregnancy, and abortion.
  - B. They "suffer alongside" those who are chronically or terminally ill.
  - C. They serve the whole person – Body, mind, and spirit.
  - D. They go hand-in-hand with Gospel outreach.
  - E. They can be an entree past closed doors.
- IV. **Conclusion: The world offers counterfeit solutions to human problems.** Christ-like people can and must intervene. True compassion points toward the source of ultimate transformation —salvation through Jesus Christ. God often uses frailty or deficiency to draw a person toward Himself. People served by compassion ministries may not be aware of their sin problem. Physical, emotional, and social problems point to the reality of sin because they proceed from it.

# Sermon Outline #17: The Blood of Innocents

by Pastor Rick Jones, The Pines Bible Church, Michigan City, IN

- **Proverbs 6:16-19** - God hates hands that shed innocent blood. What is “innocent blood?” The best commentary on scripture is scripture.
- **Jeremiah 19:3-5** - Killing children is shedding the blood of the innocent. This was and is an abomination to God. Abortion kills the most innocent of children.

Is an unborn child really a human being? Most medical doctors agree that life begins at conception. Traveling a few inches down a birth canal does not change that life from a “something” to a “someone.” What else does the Bible say?

- **Luke 1:41** - “And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the *babe* leaped in her womb.”
- **Luke 2:12** - “This shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the *babe* wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”
- **Luke 18:15** - “They brought unto him also *infants*, that he would touch them.”

In all three cases here, the unborn John the Baptist, the baby Jesus, and the infants, the same Greek word, *brephos*, is used to describe children. It seems significant that Luke, a physician, does not distinguish between the unborn and newborn.

Certainly there is no proof that unborn children are not human beings. Humans are given a special significance in the Bible.

- **Genesis 1:26-27 and 2:7**

Other creatures were spoken into being, but man is given individual attention. Adam, and all humans, are designed by God individually.

- **Jeremiah 1:5** - The Hebrew word for “formed” means “molded,” as a potter shaped clay. Adam, and every individual since, is personally shaped by God, in His image. This carries an implication for how we are to treat one another.
- **James 3:8-9** - All men – not just fellow believers or people we like – are in God’s image and should be treated with a basic level of respect. If merely cursing a fellow human is condemned, how much worse would be killing – especially the killing of the innocent, unborn child?

People who accept the Bible as true must recognize that the unborn child is deserving of protection because he has been formed by God and carries His image. Those who do not accept the Bible may say, “I don’t know when human life begins” – but if they are pro-abortion, they are in effect saying, “Am I ending a human life? I don’t know, and I don’t care.”

Innocent blood is being shed. In our society, babies are being offered up not to Baal, but to materialism or social standing, or the concept of “choice.” In a 2004 *American Spectator* article, Doug Bandow responded to a *New York Times* story about ‘selective reduction.’ He said:

“It means killing one or more babies when a woman is pregnant with ‘multiples.’ It is a difficult decision of great moral moment. But not to Amy Richards. She was living with her boyfriend and decided to

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go off the pill. They agreed to have the child if one showed up. Alas, three babies appeared. Now what? Her income would take a hit. 'There was a part of me that was sure I could work around that,' she allowed. But, 'Do I want to?' No. There were health risks. Moreover, 'I'd have to start shopping at Costco and buying big jars of mayonnaise.' So she went off to the specialist, who would shoot potassium chloride into two of the fetuses.

"In Richard's view . . . making two heartbeats disappear is simply a 'choice.' . . . Yet abortion is not about choice. It is about consequence. The consequences of choices freely made. Consider Richards. She chose to have sex with someone. She chose to go off the pill. Choices left to her, unregulated by the government. But having enjoyed the freedom to make those choices, she wanted to avoid responsibility for the results . . . If you want the right to choose to have sex with whomever you want whenever you want, you can't act surprised when a child (or children) shows up. Especially if you knowingly drop birth control. It is life. . . . And life should not be terminated because one fears having to shop at Costco. . . . Men and women are free to choose to have sex, without birth control, as often as they like with whomever they like. They seek the 'right to choose' abortion in order to escape responsibility for their other choices." (*New York Times Magazine*, 7/18/04, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B07EED6113BF93BA25754C0A9629C8B63>; *The American Spectator*, 7/23/04, <http://spectator.org/archives/2004/07/23/choice-uber-alles>)

This is what people are really defending with "pro-choice" rhetoric: The right to choose between an abortion and embarrassment; between a life and a lifestyle; between a child and financial freedom. It is still sacrificing the blood of innocents on modern altars.

Some argue that if this is how a parent feels, the child is better off not being born into an unloving situation. The slogan is "every child a wanted child." Doctor James Dobson points out the absurdity of this argument: "Perhaps one day we'll hear the argument that murdering your husband or wife should be legalized to prevent spouse abuse."

More seriously, he relates, "The incidence of abused, abandoned, neglected and mistreated children has skyrocketed since the 1970s, when the radical feminists told us that abortion would make every baby wanted and loved." It is insane to propose that we eliminate abuse by committing murder! It's like arguing that we should burn down a building to prevent people from putting graffiti on it.

Abortion for convenience implies that children are less than human. No wonder there is more abuse of the ones who are born! The key to making every child wanted is in showing the parents that every child is a gift of God, individually formed in the image of God – **Psalm 139:13-14**. A child is a blessing, not a burden which can be sacrificed on the altar of Baal, or money, or social standing. "Every child a wanted child" should be achieved by changing the hearts of the parents, not by stopping the hearts of children. Protecting every unborn child by prohibiting abortion is not inconsistent with living in a free society. In any society, the right to choose has limits.

I can choose many ways to make money, but I don't have the right to kill you for money. I don't have the right to choose arson, rape, torture, or treason. Being American does not automatically give us a "right to choose" the murder of children. And God will not hold guiltless those who choose to destroy the unborn child; to shed innocent blood; to murder a human being made in His image. God's response to the people is described in Jeremiah 19:3-5.

That same God looks at us today, and America will not be held guiltless for the abomination of abortion.

- **Habakkuk 2:12** - A society built on innocent blood is an abomination, which God will not allow to go unpunished.

# Sermon Outline #18: Why Do We Say Human Life is “Sacred?”

by Pastor Rick Jones, The Pines Bible Church, Michigan City, IN

Sanctity of Life Sunday is purposely set near anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. While most attention is focused on abortion, other issues are involved – stem cell research, cloning, death penalty, euthanasia, etc – all matters tied to view of human life.

Most people, even atheists and evolutionists, recognize uniqueness or value of human life. But we speak of “sanctity.” Human life is more than unique or valuable. It is “sacred,” set apart by God as distinct from all other forms of life. The biblical view of human life is important. It affects discussion of “hot topics.” It also affects everyday life.

**Genesis 1: 26-29; 2:7** - Humans are special, distinguished by image and likeness of God. Animals are “living creatures” (Genesis 1:24); man is a “living soul,” literally “living life.” Doubling of the term in Hebrew indicates fullness or abundance – life on a higher level than the animals.

Man is patterned after God. God is unique in that He is not based on a pattern (Isaiah 40:18). Man is special because he carries characteristics of the Divine Creator (Psalm 82:6). God demonstrated His authority over His creation by naming (Genesis 1:5,8,10) and demonstrated Adam’s likeness to God by allowing Adam to name (Gen. 2:19).

Image and likeness did not disappear when Adam sinned. As noted in Gen. 9:6, “image” is still present after Noah’s Flood; James 3: 8,9 mentions man’s “similitude” (KJV); NIV and ESV say “likeness.” Even in sin, mankind is unique and valuable, being in God’s image, exercising traits such as dominion and creativity. Man is special. This is part of the biblical view of man.

Much of the trouble in the world stems from people who promote man’s worth without acknowledging God as its Source. In his pride, man wants the number one position. Instead of accepting his high place, he wants the highest place. George Appleton said, “Sin is putting of self in the centre where God alone should be.” Eve’s great error was to put herself in the place of deciding a question that God had already answered.

See **Romans 1:18-23;28-30**. Note the word “proud.” In the worldly attempt to glorify man, God is rejected and Man is declared “highest” – but the highest what? The highest animal. In trying to elevate mankind, he is instead dehumanized. The sanctity of human life disappears when there is no One to “sanctify” or set apart man from the animals.

There’s an irony to the biblical pattern:

- The hungry shall be filled, the mourners shall be comforted.
- Losing your life for God’s sake will save it.
- Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools.

Those who would honor God above man receive God’s blessing (Psalm 8). Submission brings glory from God. But those who would elevate Man above God lower Man to be an animal. Society is morally bankrupt, claiming to be special with no basis for the claim.

See **Proverbs 16:18 and 15:25**. There are two ways of viewing man as special. One is prideful and sinful; the other is humble and biblical. Do you see man as a little higher than the apes, or a little lower than the angels?

The concept of the sanctity (not just uniqueness or value) of human life affects many areas. William Temple said, “There are only two pivots about which human life can revolve, and we are always organiz-

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ing society and ourselves around one or the other of these. They are self and God."

**Examples:** 1) Embryonic stem cell research. If the embryo is alive, what kind of life is it? If it is human life, then it is the image of God.

2) Treatment of the elderly (including euthanasia). Human value doesn't come from our creativity or productivity, so when these fade, human value does not disappear. We do not have easy answers to all questions of bioethics, but our view of "man in the image of God" should shape our search for answers.

3) Is it hypocritical to honor Exodus 20:13 ("Thou shalt not kill"), yet execute the guilty? Can society take a valuable, special human life? God, through Moses, gave both Exodus 20:13 *and* Exodus 21:12 in the Law. Since God is not a hypocrite, it's obvious society can uphold sanctity of human life and establish a death penalty for murder without inconsistency. Gen. 9:6 was given before Israel was established. The death penalty is not *in spite of* or *in opposition to* man's uniqueness, but *because of* man's special status as image-bearer.

Obviously, being made in God's likeness is important to God, and should be to us. It even affects our speech (James 3:8-10). God says: Don't murder people, they're made in my image. He also says: Don't curse people, they're made after my likeness. To believe that Man's uniqueness is based on sanctity – on being set apart by God as special – is a motive to honor God by respecting all people, simply because they are people.

**Example:** Flag and nation. If you value the United States of America, you won't wipe your hands on, walk on, or burn the flag. Instead, you'll salute it, remove your hat, and display it properly. The flag itself is merely cloth, colored dyed, and sown in a certain pattern, but is treated with respect for what it represents. As you treat your fellow man, you treat God's image. This realization should affect daily life. Don't respect only bright, new flags, but the old, worn, and tattered, too. Don't just respect strong, beautiful, and rich people, but those who are old, worn, and tattered, too.

People are not only unique or valuable, they are sanctified. They don't have to cheer for your team, match your skin color, share your tax bracket, enjoy your music, or even worship the same God. All are still made in God's image and likeness.

### **Application: How do you treat the people around you?**

When the person in the checkout in front of you wants to argue a price, remind yourself he's made in the image and likeness of God. When she turns on her left turn signal, drives slowly for three blocks, and then turns right . . . she's made in the image and likeness of God. Look at the poor, the unclean, the unmannered, who sit next to you in church . . . they are made in the image and likeness of God. Look at the ex-con who moves to your town, the gay man dying of HIV/AIDS, the comatose person on life-support . . . all made in the image and likeness of God. Look at your neighbors . . . all special because all bear God's image. How you treat them is an indication of your respect for their Creator. See **Prov. 14:31, 17:5 and 22:2.**

### **Conclusion: What do we mean by "Sanctity of Human Life"?**

Man is not simply an accident of nature, a little higher than the apes. Man is the sanctified creation of God. To truly love God, we must love our fellow man. Love your friend, love your brother, love your neighbor, and love your enemy. Not because he is great, but because God is greatest, and Man is made in the image of God.

# Sermon Outline #19: Overcoming Pro-Life Malaise

by Chester Harris, former Life Matters Worldwide board member

## I. Introduction

How long can you stay on the alert? How long can you give attention to an idea or cause when it seems your efforts are having little or no effect? Are you tempted to give up when it seems pro-life government officials are unable to achieve victory?

## II. 50 Million Abortions and Counting . . . And Who Still Cares?

It's been \_\_ years since the Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion in America. In that time, over 50 million US children have been aborted. [Find recent statistics at [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org).] Abortion is the number one cause of death in the United States today.

[Statistics for your state may be available on its health department web site.]

The Guttmacher Institute, a pro-abortion research group, provides a number of interesting and shocking statistics on its website (<http://www.guttmacher.org>):

- Estimates that 40 percent of all pregnancies end in abortion
- About 35 percent of women will have had an abortion by age 45
- 90 percent of abortions occur in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (as if that is somehow better than later)
- A broad cross section of U.S. women have abortions: 56 percent are in their 20s; 61 percent have one or more living children; 67 percent have never married; (most shocking of all) 78 percent report a religious affiliation.

Though the numbers in the US are declining, still an estimated 50 million children are aborted world-wide every year. Using figures from the Guttmacher Institute, It is estimated that the worldwide number of abortions has reached one billion! (<http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009/oct/09101604.html>)

The enthusiasm that marked the early years of this battle has waned significantly – in part because there have been some limited victories, in part because of the long years of battle and the enemy is still on the advance, and in part because there are other issues that have been forced to the forefront of most people's thinking.

Pollster George Barna noted that in the general election of 2008, traditional issues did not energize conservatives. He said: "There was substantial issue fatigue related to the moral issues that usually rev up the troops on the right. Although the candidates had very distinct and dissimilar views on moral issues such as abortion and gay marriage, those differences were not deal breakers for most voters. Voters are tired of fighting battles that seem interminable. And in a year when there were so many other significant crises and conflicts to consider, people's focus shifted away from the usual throat-wringing issues." Not only are we battling the enemy who seeks to advance death at both the beginning and end of life, we're also battling a general malaise about the issues.

Do you know what malaise is? Let me give you the official definition [*big sigh of despair*]. It's an indefinite sense of mental or moral ill-being. Synonyms of the term are despair, dissatisfaction,

depression, and apathy. Malaise is the opposite of optimism. With all the time, effort, sacrifice, money, and legislative attempts to establish a culture of life in our country, we seem to have little return on our investment. So, why do we continue to fight? The odds are definitely against us.

### III. The Scriptural Basis for Being Pro-Life: Overcoming Malaise

Why should Christians be pro-life? And, why should we be involved in the battle for life? The simplest answer is because God is pro-life in His person and character. We see that clearly in the first verses of Scripture. Let's read Genesis 1:1-2. Beginning with verse 3 on through 2:3, the days of creation are summarized for us. By day three (1:11-12), God creates the first life – plants. On day five (1:20-21), He creates aquatic and bird life. Then, on day six, He begins by creating all sorts of animals. Just from what we've reviewed so far it is plain that God loves life. He loves to create life. Out of the superlative brilliance of His mind, He creates living things out of nothing. The crowning achievement of His creative efforts is described in 1:26-28.

What are the implications of this historical record?

- The man and woman were unique from all of God's creation.
- As humans, we reflect God's image in some way; we bear His moral likeness; we reflect His character in some limited way.
- That we are image bears requires an antecedent – there is a real image that we bear or reflect – God's likeness.
- How we act as image bearers reflects on the character of God! By giving us His image, He gave us the responsibility to act as His coregents on the earth.
- All people, regardless of age (from conception on), gender, ethnicity, education, socio-economic status, mental capacity, religion, or any other way to describe and distinguish them, are of great worth and value because they all bear God's image. Therefore, the life of each is worth defending. Each one deserves to be treated with respect and dignity as God's unique creature.
- The #1 implication is that human life is derived from God Himself. He has given us tremendous abilities and responsibilities, but we can't sustain life by ourselves. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all that lives. We don't have the right to end life!
- An additional implication, from Genesis 3 and our own life experience, is that the perfection described in 1:26-31 was significantly marred by Adam and Eve's choice to sin against God. But, sin does not eradicate the image of God. In fact, Colossians 3:9-11 explains that after we receive the free gift of eternal life and have put on the new self in Christ, that He renews the original image to some extent. A similar idea is communicated in Romans 8:29.

Following are some additional passages that give us a snapshot of the heart of God. These also give His mandate and charge to His people regarding human life.

**Deuteronomy 30:15-20** – the context is Moses' discussion of the Palestinian Covenant. Yahweh predicted Israel's waywardness and promises what He would do when they returned to Him. Christians are "pro-choice" in this meaning of the term. We all choose. This call to choose is reiterated by Joshua at the end of his life (Josh. 24:14-15). Some of the foreign gods required the killing of babies in their worship. Israel was here given a choice between gods of death or the One True Living God who is the Creator and Sustainer of life.

**Psalms 82:1-4** – there is no one more weak and needy than the unborn. Often mothers are pulled by powerful external forces – a boyfriend, or parents, or an abortion provider – who try to

convince her to end the life of this child. On top of that may be the woman's own desires to be free of the "burden." On the other end of the spectrum are those who are chronically or terminally ill who may wish to die, or may have others around them who wish for their deaths.

**Jeremiah 22:3** – this command was specifically given to King Zedekiah, but we again see the heart of God toward classes of people who lacked status in that culture. By way of application, the command comes to us. What groups of people lack status or significance in our culture? The unborn and those with severe cases of chronic or terminal disease (e.g. Terry Schiavo).

You may never be aware of some of the people in this church who have faced or are facing very real life and death decisions. Sometimes, situations play out behind the scenes: A young woman who becomes pregnant and is not married; A family whose elderly loved one faces a terminal illness; A couple whose unborn baby is found to have a condition that will cause death shortly after birth. What will they do? What about some who have chosen abortion in the past? Do they know that you care, that they could come to you for understanding and support? We need to watch our idle words so that they don't reveal a hard, uncaring attitude.

#### IV. Practical Suggestions for Overcoming Malaise

- A. Recognize that this seemingly undefeatable foe is no match for our all powerful God. The battle is not ours, but the Lord's. He is the one who will win the ultimate victory. Our job is to be faithful to the task He has given us to do.
- B. Pray –
  1. For the end of legal abortion;
  2. For the sidewalk counselors n the frontlines of this battle with Satan;
  3. For pregnancy care centers to be effective in ministering to the clients that come through their doors;
  4. For the defeat of legislation that would invalidate all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, policies, or actions that would deny or interfere with a woman's access to abortion, and prevent states from enacting any additional protective measures for the unborn child in the future;
  5. For our President and the majority of Congress who are pro-abortion;
  6. For direction from the Lord about how you should be involved, and how He might want you to help your brothers and sisters awaken from apathy.
- C. Be an advocate for the unborn. Contact your member of Congress and Senators and urge them to vote against FOCA and other pro-abortion legislation.
- D. Give – support your local PCC as it battles for life in your community; support Life Matters Worldwide on a monthly basis.
- E. Become informed about the issues that we face on both "ends" of life. Help your brothers and sisters in Christ to know what we are up against and enlist them to join with you to stand for the truth and the value of all human life.
- F. Volunteer – contact your local PCC for ways to help them; talk with your pastor about how you may be able to begin a LIFT ministry within your church.
- G. Consider adopting a child – possibly one who would have been aborted; or consider becoming foster parents to children our society tends to "throw away."

#### V. Concluding quote from Churchill

Winston Churchill's most stirring speech was his shortest, only nine words long. It was

uttered in the middle of WWII when it seemed hopeless, when it seemed the enemy was unstoppable. Churchill's words echo the attitude and mindset I believe the Lord wants for His often weary and apathetic children in the battle for life. We're in a different type of war with a different type of enemy, but the odds seem stacked against us much as they seemed to be against England. Here's what Churchill said: "**Never give in, never give in, never, never, never!**"

# Sermon Outline #20: The Sanctity of Life

By Gary Folz, pastor of Berean Baptist Church in New Berlin, NY

*Having been adopted and not aborted has a special place in my heart, thus all my sermons on the sanctity of life are biblically based, from-the-heart messages rather than planned, organized sermons. Here is a sample of a blog I wrote back in 2007. I thank my Lord for the opportunity to have written it.*

The sanctity of life is so precious and Psalm 139:14 has always been my favorite verse when it comes to that subject: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

'**Fearfully made**' - made out of reverence and respect. 'Reverence' meaning "an object that is sacred" and 'respect' meaning "held in the highest regard." When God made us, He did so out of reverence and respect, holding us as a sacred object of His love and affection and as well, holding us in the highest of regard.

'**Wonderfully made**' - made with tremendous excitement, enthusiasm, absolute joy. When God made us, He was excited and enthusiastic, filled with joy when He created us. In Proverbs 8:30-31 (NASV), Wisdom personified says, "Then I was beside Him, as a master workman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And having my delight in the sons of men."

No wonder the Bible says that children are gifts from our Sovereign Lord: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." (Psalm 127:4) **Heritage means "gift."**

1 Chronicles 28:5 says, "And of all my sons, (**for the Lord hath given me many sons,**) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel." The Lord is the one who gives children.

Life begins in the mind and heart of our great and sovereign God (Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you") and, as applied to nature, in the womb of a woman called conception. (Psalm 139:13-18)

May we remember well how sacred life is as God gave it to us (Genesis 2:7; 1 Samuel 2:6), and may we always treat it with **reverence, respect, and tremendous enthusiasm**, despite the fact that some in our world and society do not.

Have a great day with your life in the Lord today! It truly is a gift from Him. (James 1:17, The Amplified Bible; the italicized brackets are the author's inserts):

**"Every good gift** [*every gracious act of God's giving*] **and every perfect** (free, large, full) **gift** [*the gift itself*] **is from above; it comes down from the Father of all** [that gives] **light, in** [the shining of] **Whom there can be no variation** [rising or setting] **or shadow cast by His turning** [as in an eclipse].

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal *life*."

# Sermon Outline #21: The Golden Life

*Pulpit notes by Pastor John Hayden, Columbia Road Baptist Church in Mason, Michigan*

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:12 – “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

Commonly referred to as the “Golden Rule,” this teaching has been called the capstone of Christ’s Sermon on the Mount. The simplest child can understand it, but as we shall see, the most eminent saint fails to perfectly live up to it!

The verse begins “therefore,” which drives us to consider the immediate context, verses 7-11. John MacArthur comments, “The implication of 7-11 is made explicit in 12. The perfect love of the heavenly Father is most reflected in His children when they treat others as they themselves wish to be treated.” Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.

## THE PRINCIPLE STATED NEGATIVELY

Jesus’ hearers would have been familiar with the negative form of this Rule. Jews loved to tell the story of a man who came to the famously stern Jewish teacher Shammai and said, “I am prepared to be received as a convert to Judaism if you can teach me the whole Law while I am standing on one leg.” Shammai drove him away. So he went to the famously gracious Hillel, who received him as a proselyte. Hillel said, “What is hateful to yourself, do to no other; that is the whole Law, and the rest is commentary. Go and learn.”

That is the Golden Rule in its negative form. In the Apocrypha (Tobit 4:16) we read, “What thou thyself hatest, to no man do.”

At a banquet given in their honor, Jewish scholars in Alexandria who translated the Septuagint were asked by the Egyptian king, “What is the teaching of wisdom?” They replied, “As you wish that no evil befall you, but to be a partaker of all good things, so you should act on the same principle toward your subjects and offenders.”

The Old Testament prophet Obadiah gives it this way, in verse 15: “For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.”

The negative form of the Golden Rule was also familiar elsewhere in the ancient world:

- Confucius taught, “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.”
- Greek king Nicocles wrote, “Do not do to others the things which make you angry when you experience them at the hands of other people.”
- Greek philosopher Epictetus said, “What you avoid suffering yourself, do not afflict on others.”
- Stoics promoted the principle, “What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to anyone else.”
- A Buddhist hymn includes the line, “Doing as one would be done by, kill not nor cause to kill.”

## THE PRINCIPLE STATED POSITIVELY

Jesus brought a staggeringly revolutionary thought to the world of ethics when he declared, “Whatever [KJV “all things”] you want men to do to you, do also to them.” In this pearl of righteous wisdom we have the spirit and genius of the New Testament distilled, as contrasted with the Old Testament.

The gospels and epistles present us with the “Golden Life” – the life of Christ in those who are His. Eternity crashes into everyday humanity. New life is expressed in the thoughts and words and actions of those who have died with Christ. See Romans 8:11.

- The Golden Life is not just the *absence* of sin and selfishness, but a *positive overflow* of righteousness and love.

## Sermon Outlines

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- The Golden Life not just the avoidance of injuring or offending, but unceasing extension of mercy and blessing in every way possible to all people.
- The Golden Life is lived in constant acknowledgment of the debt of service we owe to every other human.

### THE GOLDEN LIFE EXHIBITED IN THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLE OF JESUS

- In the Law of Moses (Exodus 22:22-24), we read a command stated negatively: "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." In the New Testament, on the other hand, we read, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).
- In the Commandments, we read, "You shall not covet" (Exodus 20:17), whereas in the New Testament we read, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" and "Give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:18 and Ephesians 5:20).
- It is by this same principle that Jesus said earlier in the Sermon on the Mount, "You have heard . . . but I say. . ." (5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43)

Again, the supernatural life that Christ calls us to is not just the absence of sin and selfishness, but a positive overflow of righteousness and love – not just avoidance of injuring or offending, but unceasing extension of mercy and blessing in every way possible to all people.

One more example: The Commandment says, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16), whereas the Lord Jesus said, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

In this spirit, Paul says, "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also." (Romans 1:14-15) He is bound, not just to avoid falsehood, but to be always and indiscriminately proclaiming the truth of the gospel – preaching the good news "in all the world" and "to every creature" (Mark 16:15)

Your new life in Christ – the abundant, Golden Life – is so much more than getting enough water for yourself! In John 4:14, Jesus said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Later, in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

In the Old Testament (Psalm 1), one who delights in the Law is likened to a tree transplanted next to an irrigation ditch; the New Testament believer is the very water in the canal! "All things whatsoever he would that men should do to him, does he even so to them." That's the Golden Life – and it's yours today by faith! But, "to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

## Sermon Outline #22: The Proverbs 31 Man

We're all familiar with—and intimidated by—the model woman depicted at the end of Proverbs 31, but have you ever heard a sermon or read an article about the man in the first 9 verses?

Scholars note this king is unknown in the annals of biblical history and agree Lemuel may be a euphemism for Solomon. The name means “to God,” as in “belonging to God.” If the “Proverbs 31 woman” is God’s ideal for womanhood, then verses 1-9 could be said to describe the ideal leader – the one owned by God.

A likely reason we don’t hear much about this passage is its dangerous reference to strong drink, as though drunkenness is allowed the common man if not the king. Plenty of passages—including Prov. 20:1 and 23:19-21—clear up any misconception. (See also Luke 21:34, Romans 13:13, 1 Cor. 6:10, Gal. 5:21, Eph. 5:18.) Basically, good leaders are those who don’t indulge themselves, or let their pleasures overcome good judgment. Ecclesiastes 10:16-17 serves as a parallel:

*Woe to you, O land, whose king is a lad and whose princes feast in the morning. Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of nobility and whose princes eat at the appropriate time—for strength and not for drunkenness.*

Note that the “Proverbs 31 Man” also does not indulge himself with women—leading to unwise alliances, fatherless children, and broken relationships. Dalliances sap strength and, in our society, lead to abortions. The wise man exercises self-control in this area of life as well.

The point of sober and chaste leadership is the just use of power. The good leader doesn’t allow his friends to ply him with anything—wine, women, wealth—to the neglect of justice.

In a crowded throne room, a king could be dazzled by the pomp, ceremony, and influence of powerful advisers. He could overlook the poor man in ragged clothing standing at the end of the line, or forget the wretches outside who never gain entrance because they’re too ashamed, or disabled, or must work all day to survive. After all, they’re not the king’s party pals.

In all the competing interests, the king must keep the “little people” and their concerns in mind. The wealthy, the powerful, the beautiful have their own voices. But who speaks up for the little ones, the “non-persons” who have no voice?

Not only should the godly leader avoid perverting justice by condemning the innocent (Exodus 23:1-9, Dt. 16:18-20), but he should also be their advocate. “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. . . . Speak up!” Men who defend the weak and helpless imitate the character of God: Psalm 10:17-18, 82:3-4, 146:9; Proverbs 10:29, 31:9; Isaiah 1:17, 25:4; Jeremiah 5:28, 16:19; 2 Samuel 22:33.

What if we don’t have leaders like that? What if they’re under the influence of Planned Parenthood? What if they not only disregard the unborn, but advocate on behalf of their enemies?

It falls to us to do the speaking up—petitioning to and about our leaders. Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks should be made *to God for kings* and all who are in authority (1 Tim. 2:1-4). And, while the parable in Luke 18:1-8 is about demonstrating faith through persistent prayer, it also shows the propriety of petitioning “unjust judges.” Through our diligence, perhaps one day they’ll do the good they’re reluctant to do, despite their prejudices. (Note that the parable also diagnoses the root of injustice – no fear of God or respect for the sanctity of human life.)

Men—whether they’re leaders in government or at home—must speak up about abortion. Despite what feminist’s say, men shouldn’t be silenced because they lack female reproductive equipment or the experience of bearing children. Many women have abortions because their men are either coercive or weak. Since all human life in the womb is valuable to God—male and female—male voices are crucial to the pro-life movement. Abortion is not just a “woman’s issue.”

# Sermon Outline #23 – Exodus 20:13

## “But I’ve Never Killed Anyone!”

*Bill Abernathy, Jr., pastor at Berean Baptist Church, Portage, MI*

**Introduction:** Our world is confused about commandment #6. We must think clearly!

### I. “No”

- A. God can say “no” because man is His image-bearer – Genesis 9:5-6
  - 1) Human life has God-given value because God made us in His image – not animals
  - 2) We are not valuable because of what we can do, can achieve, value to society – we’re valuable because we’re made in His image!
- B. God can say “no” because He is sovereign over our lives – Psalm 139:13-16
- C. **Application:** The 6th command rules out this type of thinking: “It’s my life and I can do what I want.” God says “no”!

### II. “Murder”

- A. Background: The KJV “thou shalt not kill” was not entirely accurate
  - 1) Hebrew has 7-8 words for killing – *ratsach* deals with unjustified killing, murder
  - 2) It does not apply to capital punishment, but unlawful killing – cf. Gen. 9:5-6
  - 3) It does not apply to war (“just war theory”) – cf. Romans 13:4
- B. No pre-meditated murder – Exodus 21:14
  - 1) It doesn’t matter whether it has a deterrent effect or not. The murderer’s life is to be forfeited because the victim bears God’s image (Gen. 9:6)
  - 2) This taking of life not to be done lightly
    - a) Two witnesses (Deut. 17:6)
    - b) A fair trial (Num. 35:24)
- C. No abortion or euthanasia – Ex. 21:22-25
  - 1) This command rules out the taking of human life at any stage
    - 1 million abortions each year in the US
    - China is responsible for 400 million in 30 years; couples are fined for a second child
  - 2) Note that there’s no exception in the 6th commandment, “unless they are in pain or old”
- D. No suicide – there’s no object to the command, “you shall not.” In other words, you shall not kill anyone, including yourself!
  - 1) Suicide is now at epidemic levels among our youth, but is not just their issue

- 2) This is not an “unpardonable sin,” but it is sin. It usurps God’s authority over life.
  - a) If you are struggling, please talk to someone
  - b) Your life has God-given value
  
- E. No manslaughter (no treating human life carelessly or recklessly) – Exodus 21:12-13
  - By the time they’re 18-years-old, kids have seen 80,000 murders on TV
  - 1) Accidents do happen & God provided a system of trial and protection for such occasions
    - chopping wood & ax head flies off (Deut. 19:5)
    - Parapet for your roof, lest someone fall off (Deut. 22:8)
  - 2) However it was still a very serious matter – loses freedom until high priest dies (Num. 35:28)
  - 3) It was so serious that steps must be taken to avoid it and if you don’t . . . (Ex. 21:29)
  - 4) Transition: You may be thinking, “I’m still fine!” – but this command is also “no” to...
  
- F. No heart-murder – the spirit behind “no murder” – Matt. 5:21-22
  - 1) When we lower others to non-person status – *raca* = empty head
  - 2) When we show contempt for other’s moral character – “fool” = denier of God
  - 3) This is to reject their God-given value and usurp God’s authority to measure their worth (see James 3:8-10)
    - Refer to the poem, “The Cold Within”
  - 4) When we hate another, it is heart-murder – 1 John 3:15. We all deserve hell!

**Conclusion: No murder!** But God has made a way for all of us to be forgiven in Christ.

### The Cold Within

By James Patrick Kinney, public domain (<http://www.allthingsif.org/archives/1405>)

*Six humans trapped by happenstance  
In bleak and bitter cold.*

*Each one possessed a stick of wood  
Or so the story’s told.*

*Their dying fire in need of logs  
The first man held his back  
For of the faces round the fire  
He noticed one was black.*

*The next man looking ‘cross the way  
Saw one not of his church  
And couldn’t bring himself to give  
The fire his stick of birch.*

*The third one sat in tattered clothes.  
He gave his coat a hitch.  
Why should his log be put to use  
To warm the idle rich?*

*The rich man just sat back and thought  
Of the wealth he had in store  
And how to keep what he had earned  
From the lazy shiftless poor.*

*The black man’s face bespoke revenge  
As the fire passed from his sight.  
For all he saw in his stick of wood  
Was a chance to spite the white.*

*The last man of this forlorn group  
Did nought except for gain.  
Giving only to those who gave  
Was how he played the game.*

*Their logs held tight in death’s still hands  
Was proof of human sin.  
They didn’t die from the cold without  
They died from the cold within.*

# Sermon Outline #24

## Project the “Image”

Bill Abernathy, Jr., Pastor at Berean Baptist Church, Portage, MI

**Introduction:** Back to basics – Gen. 1:26-27

- 1) Here’s your Hebrew lesson for today
  - a) “Image” = *tselem* = carved statue. “Likeness” = *demut* = facsimile, a representative copy
  - b) An image or likeness was intimately connected to the thing it represents
    - The image of Baal stood for Baal’s presence and influence
  - c) It means that we represent God in every area of our lives – project Him!
  - d) We are business managers (stewards) for God
  - e) We generally think of stewardship in terms of money – but it’s a bigger idea than that
- 2) Stewardship of relationships – with other “image bearers”
  - a) “Image” has horizontal implications, “male and female . . . them,” others
  - b) So stewardship of relationships means I am “my brother’s keeper” and I should “love my neighbor as myself”
  - c) That has great implications for this Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
- 3) Let’s think about two basic implications of image – how do we project it out?

### A. We Are Not To Take Human Life For Our Own Selfish Ends - Gen. 9:5-6

- 1) To touch the image of God is to touch Him
  - Abel’s blood cried out to God from the ground
- 2) Human life is so valuable, I can’t just take it. God demands punishment if I do.
  - Read Gen. 9:5-6 – Government can legitimately take your life if you deliberately kill
- 3) Old Testament law hammered that home over and over again – guard human life!
  - Parapet (Deut. 22:8)
  - Ox (Ex. 21:29)
  - Kill for stuff (Ex. 22:2-3)
  - Cities of refuge (Num 35:25)
- 4) **Application** – Almost all of the 1 million abortions each year are for selfish ends
  - “I don’t want a baby”
  - “I can’t afford this baby”
  - “I’m embarrassed for anyone to know I’m having sex”
  - “The timing is inconvenient”
  - “My baby is handicapped”

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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- a) There have been roughly one million abortions each year since Roe v. Wade in 1973 (in USA alone)
- b) These are not “bits of protoplasm” or “tissue” – they are image-bearers
  - Read Psalm 139:13-16a
- c) Value does not come at birth or when able to do, but when God forms a person in the womb
  - Philosopher Peter Singer says personhood can be denied, not only in the womb, but up to a month after birth!
- 4) **Application** – Euthanasia at the other end of life: I can’t say, “This person has no value so let’s kill him or her!”
  - Assisted suicide has been legal in the Netherlands since 1998. Now it’s legal in Oregon, Washington, Vermont, Montana, and California
  - a) This is different from letting a dying person go – it is taking a life
  - b) God, our Creator, decides when our time is up
    - Read Psalm 139:16 – days written in His book
- 5) **Application** – Fetal stem cell research
  - a) No one denies the horrific diseases that need cures, but at the cost of taking lives?
  - b) Fetal stem cell research takes the life of an image-bearer
    - What if killing our youth pastor would get rid of all our colds?
    - You need a liver transplant, so should someone kill you to get your liver?
    - To work, the transplanted organs, cells, and tissues must be human – proving that the embryos and fetuses they’re taken from are persons!
- 6) **Application** – Our choices in these areas must be based on “image,” not our opinion
  - a) It is not a matter of how big I am, or what I can do, or if society deems me valuable. It’s a matter of God telling us we’re made in His image.
  - b) **Transition:** “I’d never do those things,” but . . .

### B. We Are Not To Treat Other Image-Bearers As Less Valuable

- Read Gen. 1:27; 3:20 – “mother of all living”
- 1) Every human being who ever lived or will live came from Adam and Eve (and Noah)
  - 2) All are equal in God’s eyes, all are made in His image with dignity and worth
  - 3) **Application** – Thus there is no place for racism (one race)
    - a) How I wish Christians had grasped this centuries ago, even in the 1960s
    - b) Skin pigmentation, eye shape, hair, language – it doesn’t matter. All are image-bearers, all created by God, all can be redeemed.
      - Read Rev. 5:9 – redemption applies to all people groups

## Sermon Outlines

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- 4) **Application** – Economic status doesn't mean someone is more or less "image," more or less valuable in God's eyes
    - Read Prov. 22:2 – Serve God by reaching out to those who are in need, homeless
  - 5) **Application** – Care for the "least among us" is critical - they are made in God's image
    - Read James 1:27 – It's called "pure religion" because it echoes God's care; unspotted = like the love of God
    - a) Adoption and caring for orphans, concern for people in places like Haiti and Darfur
    - b) This is not "social gospel" but how the gospel impacts society
  - 6) **Application** – We must even watch how we speak to one another, no murder by mouth
    - Read James 3:8-10 – Can a person be "pro-life," and yet "assassinate" and "abort" with his or her words?
  - 7) **Application** – A person's religion, politics, number of tattoos or piercings, dress or hairstyle, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. don't change the truth that he/she is made in the image of God. We may oppose someone's behavior, but must treat them as valuable – as fellow image-bearers.
- C. **Application** – We are made in God's image, as is every other person around us – born and unborn
- 1) How well are we projecting His image? Do we preserve life and treat others with respect?
  - 2) Those of us who have been redeemed (as well as created) must also do more
    - Read 2 Cor. 5:20-21 – more important than any other need, people need reconciliation
    - a) We are ambassadors - restored as full representatives of God and Christ
    - b) Compelled by His love to speak
    - c) See also Romans 8:29, 2 Cor. 3:18, Eph. 4:24, Col 3:10
  - 3) Project your image "out there" by stewardship of relationships
    - a) Maybe you need to work on how to talk to other image-bearers, or work on forgiveness
    - b) Maybe you just really need to build bridges to people who are different, sound different
    - c) Maybe you've been called to political action – pray, write, call, run for office
    - d) Maybe you've been called to get involved with the homeless and poor
    - e) Maybe you're called to adopt a child, or become foster parents
    - f) Maybe you're called to involvement in pro-life ministry, to help women who feel abortion is the only way
  - 4) Can't do it all – God made us with different gifts, interests, passions, and abilities. Do what He has called you to do.
  - 5) We're image-bearers of God. Let's project that image this week as we encounter other image bearers.

# Sermon Outline #25: How Shall We Then Live in These Tumultuous Times?

Tom Lothamer, former President of Life Matters Worldwide

**Introduction:** Refer to recent news reports highlighting our culture's turn from biblical values. Read Jeremiah 29 and explain its setting (Hananiah's false prophecy in Jer. 28:1-4)

- I. **God's call to right living as a distinct people** – How were they to live in exile?
  - A. Build houses and live in them
  - B. Plant gardens and eat their produce
  - C. Take wives and have sons and daughters
  - D. Take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage
  - E. That they may bear sons and daughters
  - F. Multiply there and do not decrease
  - G. But seek the welfare, shalom or peace, of the city where I have sent you into exile
  - H. Pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare
    - *The safest place to be is in the will of God!*
  
- II. **Similarities between then and now** – How are Christians to live in an increasingly hostile world?
  - A. The people of Israel, God's children, placed their hopes on living in the land again rather than living for the Lord in the foreign land where they were placed. They were in exile is because they had disobeyed God and were experiencing His wrath!
    - *Where are our affections? Are we intentional about seeking God in each part of our lives each day? (Psalm 105:4)*
  - B. We too are foreigners in a land that's not our real home. We wait for the Lord's return – for the new heaven and new earth. (2 Peter 3:11-13)
  - C. As people of God, the exiles were commanded to engage in their culture and make a difference.
    - *How are we doing? What is our passion? What do we look forward to?*
    - *Do we strive after the things of the world or the will and plan of God for our lives?*
  - D. The exiles were commanded to seek the welfare of their city, their culture. How are we doing? What does it look like to engage the culture for Christ?
    1. Pray for our nation, neighbors, cities, leaders . . . even those we don't like.
    2. Live peaceably with all men, especially in the community of believers (Romans 12:14-21).

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3. Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands. (1 Thess. 4:11-12) By the grace of God our lives will be marked by humility, integrity, ethical behavior, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, a servant spirit – the Fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
4. Live as Christ's ambassadors to people living in chaos, violence, and all kinds of evil. (2 Cor. 5:20)
5. Engage in the political process. Vote. Speak out for truth.

### III. God's promises

- A. God is Sovereign, has a plan and is in control! (29:11)
- B. God hears our prayers! (29:12)
- C. God finds us where we are, at our time of greatest need! (29:13-14)

**Summary:** In Jeremiah 29:4-23, the prophet wrote to the captives in Babylon, instructing them to move ahead with their lives and to pray for the pagan nation that enslaved them. Life cannot grind to a halt during troubled times. In an unpleasant or distressing situation, we must adjust and keep moving. You may find it difficult to pray for those in authority if they are evil, but that is when your prayers are most needed (1 Timothy 2:1-4). When you enter times of trouble or sudden change, pray diligently and move ahead, doing whatever you can rather than giving up because of fear or uncertainty. (Life Application Study Bible)

# Sermon Outline #26: What Are You Doing?

Bill Abernathy, Jr., pastor at Berean Baptist Church, Portage, MI

**Text:** Proverbs 31:6-9. According to verse 2, this passage is the words of a mother to her son, to us.

- *She is very concerned about her son's character and his actions*
- *She reminds us of two truths that we need to understand on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (and every day)*

### I. The world's condition cries out for our involvement – 31:8-9

- A. There are people, created in God's image, who are not valued
  1. People who are "mute" – lips tightly closed, no opportunity to speak, can't get a fair hearing
  2. People who are "destitute" – on last legs, being drawn off to death
  3. People who are "poor" (afflicted) and "needy" (poor) – people living in poverty, not only those facing abortion
- B. We are in a position to do something – 31:1-2
  1. This son is a king and his name means "belonging to God"

2. We are not kings, but we do belong to God, and we live in a country where we have power. We can act!
  3. None of us can be involved in every issue, but we can do something!
- C. Application: the world's condition cries out for our involvement – what are you doing?
1. This is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Talking is uncomfortable – but we must do it.
  2. We must stand against abortion on demand, euthanasia, infanticide
  3. All human life has value

### II. God's word commands our involvement – 31:8-9

- A. We are ordered to speak up and stand up
1. We are twice commanded to “open your mouth”
  2. We are commanded to judge righteously, to carry out justice
    - *Illustration: In a speech before the House of Commons, William Wilberforce said, “Never, never will we desist till we have wiped away this scandal from the Christian name, released ourselves from the load of guilt, under which we at present labour, and extinguished every trace of this bloody traffic, of which our posterity, looking back to the history of these enlightened times, will scarce believe that it has been suffered to exist so long a disgrace and dishonour to this country.” (April 18, 1791)*
- B. We cannot gloss over the problem (hide it) –31:6-7 – said in sarcasm
1. Give alcohol (strong drink) to people to “numb their pain” – treat symptoms, not cause stupor
    - Illustration: Turn up you car radio so you don't hear the bad muffler.*
    - a. Someone is “perishing” (ruined, dying), “in bitter distress” (discouraged, depressed)
    - b. Someone is “poor” or “needy” (in trouble financially)
  2. Instead of helping them, dull pain, so they won't notice. “This is what our culture recommends.”
    - *Illustration: If you're pregnant, should you take the easy way out but live forever with guilt? If you're poor, should you accept a government handout but become dependent?*
- C. Application: God commands us our involvement – speak up AND stand up
1. Involvement takes different forms and can't be in every battle - but in some!
  2. Most of all, share the Gospel, no matter who the person is

**Conclusion:** What are we doing? We need to come to the cross – for forgiveness and strength.

# Sermon Outline #27: You Are Valuable!

Bill Abernathy, Jr., Pastor at Berean Baptist Church, Portage, MI

**Introduction:** In 2013, a pair of twins received help committing suicide in Belgium. They were deaf and slowly going blind. Psalm 139:13-18 is one of the most powerful statements in the Bible about the sanctity of human life. What would David say to these two men who killed themselves? We will be jumping into the 3rd stanza of this song about our amazing God.

- 1st stanza – God knows all about us
- 2nd stanza – God is present with us everywhere
- 3rd stanza – God’s power is not about the universe, but us. We are valuable because....

## I. You and I are special creatures OF God – 139:13-15

### A. God Himself was involved in our creation – 139:13

1. The 2nd word, “You” is emphatic – God himself
  - a. God formed my inward parts – inner being, who I am inside
  - b. God knit me together, who I am outside
2. We’re part of “Your works” (v. 14) that are “made” (v. 15) – creation word (cf. Gen. 1-2)

### B. Our creation is intricate and awesome – 139:14-15

1. The human body is an amazing creation.
  - *The human body consists of 60-100 trillion cells. Each day 60-70 billion cells die and are replaced.*
  - *There are 200 different kinds of cells in the human body (skin, muscle, nerve, blood, bones, etc.). There are 19 million cells in a square inch of skin and 85 billion in our brains.*
2. Though David didn’t have our advanced embryology, he knew unborn life was amazing.
  - a. “Fearfully” (v. 14) – it brings a shudder of astonishment
  - b. “Wonderfully made . . . wonderful” (v.14) – same word, meaning extraordinary
  - c. “Intricately woven” (v. 15) – embroidered with complex patterns
    - *Each of us has about 60,000 miles of blood vessels (veins, arteries, capillaries = around earth more than twice!)*
    - *The longest nerve cell travels from the base of the spine to our big toe!*
3. David says his development was a hidden thing – “secret . . . depths of the earth.”
  - *Illustrate with a slideshow of images of life in the womb*
4. But none of it is hidden from God – “frame (skeleton) not hidden from you” – v. 15

### C. **Application:** We are special creatures of God. Human life has God-given value.

1. It is God, not society, who determines a human being's worth.
2. In the 40+ years since Roe v. Wade, over 55 million children have died.
3. If we claim to be followers of Christ, we cannot view a human life as having no value.
4. It is not up to me to determine my own value and worth. God is my Creator and Sustainer.

### II. You and I are special creatures TO God – 139:16-18

#### A. God knew us before we came into being – 139:16

1. David says God knew us the instant our lives began
  - a. The word “unformed substance” – raw material; something wrapped – embryo
  - b. But God saw us – He knew us and had a relationship with us then. He's our Creator.
    - *My inward parts . . . knitted me . . . I praise . . . my soul . . . my frame . . . I was made . . . my substance*
2. David says that even before the time of our conception, God knew the path of our lives.
  - a. All our days were written in His book before any of them came to be.
  - b. Before you ever existed in your mother's body, God knew all about your life.

#### B. God knows us right now – 139:17-18

1. His thoughts are directed toward us (“to me” – emphatic) right now.
2. That is a “precious” thought – valuable. The God of the universe cares about me.
3. It is also a mind boggling thought - God knows every one of us!
  - a. The whole psalm explodes with “you . . . me . . . I . . . my” – it's personal!
  - b. His thoughts are “vast (in) . . . sum” and uncountable like the sand (v. 18a)
  - c. It's almost like we're dreaming to think about it, but when awake He's still there!

#### C. **Application:** We are special creatures to God. He knew us before anyone else did, and knows us better than anyone else does now.

1. So you and I have value and worth, no matter what anyone else says.
2. In fact, God wants to have a close personal relationship with Him – as our Savior as well as Creator.
  - a. The ultimate demonstration of our worth in God's eyes is that He died for us!
  - b. That's how much God cares about you! He wants to be your savior.

**Conclusion:** We are special creatures of God and to God. Our lives have value and worth because God says so. I wish someone had shared that with those twins.

**Sources:** “Six lessons from death in Belgium,” *National Right to Life News Today*, Feb. 1, 2013, <http://www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/news/2013/02/six-lessons-from-death-in-belgium/#.V-1RW1Qkqhe>, “Belgian twins had first request to die refused,” *The Telegraph*, Jan. 14, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/belgium/9800378/Belgian-twins-had-first-request-to-die-refused.html>.

# Sermon Outline #28: Abortion is a Failure to Love My Unborn Neighbor

By Scott Klusendorf, President of Life Training Institute, [prolifetraining.com](http://prolifetraining.com)

Today we're going to take a careful look at **Luke 10:25-37**. The parable of the Good Samaritan is familiar to nearly everyone, even non-churchgoers. Everyone thinks they get it. Socialists say its about the redistribution of wealth. Conservatives say its about giving more to charity. Religious people say its about helping the poor with Christian love. Truth is, we all need to take a closer look. If the text ruins your day, you get it.

The primary context of the passage is not social justice. It's salvation. A lawyer schooled in the Mosaic Law challenges Jesus with a question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus gives a chilling answer. "What's written in the law? How do you read it?" The lawyer knows exactly what Jesus is driving at and answers correctly: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus affirms his answer with devastating clarity. "Do this, and you will live."

Whoa. Why did Jesus answer that way? The lawyer just asked how to get to heaven and Jesus says nothing about the gospel. He tells the man go do what the Law of God demands. Love God perfectly. Love your neighbor perfectly. Then, you will live. We find out why Jesus said this in the next verse. The man was self-righteous.

When the lawyer attempts to justify himself by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus replies with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The parable flips the narrative from "Who is my neighbor?" to "Am I a good neighbor?"

Here is where it gets real. If we think the story is simply about showing kindness to poor people, we have another thing coming. Take another look at verses 30-37. The love Jesus illustrates here is perfection: flawless self-sacrifice, flawless love for someone who hates you (remember, Jews despise Samaritans), flawless, unlimited financial sacrifice for the needs of a complete stranger, flawless giving of our time—not just once, but every day without fail. Nothing else is acceptable to the law of God.

Problem is, who loves like that? The lawyer should have fallen to his knees and cried out, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!" But instead, he seeks to justify himself.

We have a real conundrum. The Bible says without righteousness, no one will enter the Kingdom of God. It then says there is none righteous. Applied to the topic of abortion, the parable of the Good Samaritan is bad news for everyone in the room today. Whether you've had an abortion or not, no one in our church—or, anywhere on the planet—loves their unborn neighbor or any neighbor the way the law of God demands. The best pro-life advocate you know fails the test. Mother Teresa fails the test. The local pregnancy center director fails the test. I fail that test. In short, we are not righteous.

There's only one fix for our failure to love righteously. We need what Luther called an "alien righteousness"—not something we get from a popular horror flick—but a righteousness outside of us that we can't manufacture. Thankfully, the righteousness we need is the righteousness God provides through Jesus. "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Romans 3:21-22). Here we have the perfect alien righteousness. And it's a gift! We aren't *made* righteous by doing good stuff. We're *declared* righteous because God provided a perfect substitute to stand in our place condemned. Paul writes in Romans 4:5, "But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness." You read that right. God is in the business

of justifying the ungodly—sinners like you and me who fail to love. Forget about justifying yourself. We have grace greater than all our sin.

That's a game changer! Post-abortive men and women can now experience true forgiveness knowing that God accepts them on the basis of Christ's righteousness, not their own. Listen, if you've participated in an abortion decision—whether you're a man who encouraged a woman to abort or a woman who made that decision because you thought you had no other way out—I have incredibly good news for you. When you trust Jesus to save you, God the Father is no longer your judge. He's your dad, and He adopts you into His family as a dearly loved child.

If we truly understand the gospel, our motivation for loving our unborn neighbor changes from merit to gratitude. As adopted sons and daughters of God, we don't do pro-life work to *earn* God's favor; we do it because we *have* God's favor. Only then, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can we become more Christ-like in loving our neighbor.

All this is amazing news, but we'll never appreciate the extent to which we've been rescued from the judgment we deserve without taking a good hard look at ourselves through the lens of the Good Samaritan. How do we measure up loving our unborn neighbor? ***The score sheet should drive us to our knees.*** It leads to but one conclusion: Until we die to the law as a method of salvation, we are lost—just like the lawyer in the story! We don't love as God requires.

We need to stop kidding ourselves and do what the self-righteous lawyer in the text did not do: Repent.

### **1. We need to repent for justifying ourselves.** 10:29—*“Seeking to justify himself”*

That the lawyer sought to justify himself shouldn't surprise us. Jeremiah 17:9 reminds us, “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it?”

That's us. That's my heart and yours. We're sinners who fight the hard truth about ourselves. We are self-righteous. Indeed, sin is so deceptive that we'll offer religious excuses to justify our failure to love our unborn neighbor. We say things like, “If we talk about abortion, we will distract people from the gospel.” Even the best among us say this. In 1994, Billy Graham said that addressing abortion in the pulpit could impede his “main message” of salvation. “I don't get into these things like abortion,” Graham told talk show host Larry King. Graham forgets that right here in Luke 10—right smack in the middle of a passage about salvation—Jesus speaks about loving our neighbor. So much for those who say talking about abortion is a distraction from the gospel! Like Graham, I'm sure the religious leaders in the parable had spiritual priorities and saw the beating victim as a distraction, but that hardly justified passing by on the other side of the road!

None of this is surprising, really. We live in a culture of self-justification and it creeps up on believers just like it does everyone else. Indeed, the culture teaches us to celebrate sin! Feminist Katha Pollitt in her book *Pro: Reclaiming Abortion Rights* says we should stop apologizing for abortion. Forget about saying abortion should be safe, legal, and rare. Instead, champion it! After all, vacuuming out your womb is no different than vacuuming out your house! We also have “Shout Your Abortion” and “Kids, Meet Someone Who's Had an Abortion”—all attempts to justify sin.

Stick around long enough and you'll even hear abortion-choice advocates cite Scripture to justify abortion. They'll tell you the Bible never mentions abortion and nowhere condemns it, therefore, it's okay. Whenever you hear this, you should ask one question to clarify things: “Are you saying that whenever the Bible doesn't expressly condemn it condones?” When they say no, and they must, ask, “What's your point?” Indeed, Scripture nowhere condemns gay bashing or cutting your neighbor up for shark bait, but Christians universally condemn these things because Scripture teaches all humans—despite the impact of sin—possess inherent dignity and worth.

The Bible's alleged silence on abortion does not mean that its authors condoned the practice, but that prohibitions against it were largely unnecessary. The Hebrews of the Old Testament and the Christians of the New Testament were not likely to kill their offspring before birth.

To understand why, let's step into their world and take a look. First, children were seen as a blessing while barrenness a curse—the worst curse for a woman (Psalm 127:3-5; 1 Samuel 1:6, Genesis. 20:17-18,

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30:1, 22-23). Second, immortality was expressed through one's descendents. God promises Abraham to make of him a great nation (Genesis 12:1-3) and that promise is passed on to Isaac, Jacob, etc. "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him," writes the Psalmist (127:3. See also Gen. 48:16). Third, among a people surrounded by hostile nations, continuing one's family line was vital for national security. Fourth, having children was a sacred responsibility: God's promise to bless all nations through Israel was predicated on replenishing the land with offspring. Fifth, the early Christians of the New Testament were Jewish believers who inherited Jewish morality, including the commands against shedding innocent blood.

Put simply, in a culture where children are a gift and barrenness is a curse, and where a nation's destiny depends on parents having lots of children, abortion is unthinkable. Hence, the Bible's silence on abortion does not suggest permission, but that prohibitions were largely unnecessary.

If all these attempts to justify abortion aren't bad enough, "Christian" abortionist Dr. Willie Parker in his book *Life's Work: A Moral Argument for Choice* declares himself a "Good Samaritan" to women wanting abortions. The deception here is breathtaking. Abortionists are not Good Samaritans. They are substitute saviors. Substitute saviors can't save us. Only Jesus can. Run to Him as your only hope.

### 2. We need to repent for not recognizing the unborn as our neighbor. 10:29b—"Who is my neighbor?"

Again, notice that right in the middle of a passage about salvation, Jesus speaks about loving our neighbor. Is the unborn my neighbor? He is if he's a human being. The basic shape of the pro-life argument looks like this:

**Premise #1:** It is wrong to intentionally kill innocent human beings.

**Premise #2:** Abortion intentionally kills innocent human beings.

Therefore,

**Conclusion:** Abortion is morally wrong.

Pro-life advocates defend that argument with science and philosophy. We argue from science that the unborn are distinct, living, and whole human beings. You didn't come from an embryo; you once were an embryo. We argue from philosophy that there is no relevant difference between you the embryo and you the adult that justifies killing you at that earlier stage of development. Differences of size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency are not good reasons for saying you could be killed then but not now.

Scripture, meanwhile, is clear that all humans have value because they bear the image of their maker (Genesis 1:26-28; James 3:9). In laymen's terms, that means humans are valuable in virtue of the kind of thing they are rather than some function they perform.

Humans have value simply because they are human and thus are equal in their fundamental or intrinsic dignity. Our culture, however, confuses *intrinsic dignity* with *attributed dignity* and thus mistakenly grounds the right to life in a performance view of human value. The biblical view is different. The beach bum and the university president share an equal and intrinsic dignity in virtue of their common humanity. However, they do not share attributed dignity, which individuals only earn through age or accomplishment.

Because humans bear the image of God and thus are intrinsically valuable, the shedding of innocent blood is strictly forbidden (Exodus 23:7; Proverbs 6:16-19; Matthew 5:21). The Bible is not saying it's always wrong to kill human beings, a position only a strict pacifist would hold. It's meaning is more specific: We are never to intentionally kill innocent human beings.

Abortion is the intentional killing of an innocent human being, a claim we've already defended with science and logic. Thus, the same passages in Scripture that forbid the shedding of innocent blood apply to the unborn as they do every other human being.

Our culture is obsessed with equality. People want racial equality, income equality, and social equality—but can they account for it? Abortion-choice advocates cannot explain what makes us equal. Here's why: If humans only have value because of some developed characteristic like self-awareness that none of us share equally, it follows that since that characteristic comes in varying degrees, basic human rights come in

varying degrees. Theologically, it's far more reasonable to argue that although humans differ immensely in their respective degrees of development, they are nonetheless equal in their fundamental dignity because they share a common human nature made in the image of God.

**3. We need to repent for refusing to see.** 10:31-32—*“Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.”*

Like the two religious leaders, we'd rather “pass by on the other side of the road” and not see injustice for what it truly is. Since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, America has passed by 61 million abortion victims. We'd rather not be troubled, but we should be troubled.

That abortion intentionally kills a living human fetus is undeniable. It's conceded by many who perform and defend the practice. Dr. Warren Hern, author of *Abortion Practice*—the medical textbook that teaches abortion procedures—told a Planned Parenthood conference there's no denying that abortion is an act of destruction: “It is before one's eyes. The sensations of dismemberment flow through the forceps like an electric current.” Feminist Camille Paglia is even more blunt: “Hence I have always frankly admitted that abortion is murder, the extermination of the powerless by the powerful. Liberals for the most part have shrunk from facing the ethical consequences of their embrace of abortion, which results in the annihilation of concrete individuals and not just clumps of insensate tissue.”<sup>1</sup>

The short 55-second video we're about to show is not meant to condemn. We've already made clear that everyone in this room has failed to love their unborn neighbor as God requires. We've already established that God provides his perfect righteousness to everyone who trusts in Jesus—including those who've sinned having abortions. There was grace for murderous Paul and there is grace for you! We are showing this clip to help us see so we can better love. If you wish not to watch, you can simply look away. There's no narration, only instrumental music, so by looking away you won't even hear anything you don't want to hear.

*[55-second video found at <http://caseforlife.com>]*

Most Americans were not talking about racial injustice in July of 1955. A month later, they couldn't stop talking about it. Why? Because they had seen it.

In August of 1955, Emmett Till, a 14 year-old African-American youth from Chicago, visited his cousin in the town of Money, Mississippi. While there, he bragged to his cousin and others about his white girl friend back in Chicago. They weren't buying. After all, African-Americans in Mississippi during the 50s didn't make eye contact with whites, let alone date them! Both actions were considered completely out of bounds. On August 24, Emmett, his cousin, and a small group of black males entered Bryant's Grocery (a tiny convenience store) where, egged-on by the others, Emmett briefly flirted with a 21 year-old white, married clerk behind the counter. After purchasing gum, he either whistled or said something mildly flirtatious. (Reports vary.) The cousin and others witnessing the event warned Emmett that there would be trouble. Two nights later, Emmett was taken at gun-point from his uncle's home by the clerk's husband and another man. They savagely beat him for hours before ending his life with a single bullet to the head. Later that week, Emmett's body was found in the Tallahatchie River. He had been beaten almost beyond recognition. The local Sheriff placed Emmett's body in a wooden box and shipped it back to his mother in Chicago. When Mamie Till got the body, she made a stunning announcement: There would be a public, open-casket funeral for her son. People protested and reminded her how much this would upset everyone. Mamie agreed, but countered, “I want the whole world to see what they did to my boy.”

The gruesome photo of Emmett's body in that open casket was published in *Jet* magazine. By all accounts, those photo helped launch the Civil Rights Movement in America. Three months later in Montgomery, when Rosa Parks famously refused to go to the back of the bus, she said the bloody image of Emmett Till gave her the courage to stand her ground. In short, the picture did what no words ever could; it moved a nation to action.

It's time for Christians to lovingly but truthfully open the casket on abortion. The biblical mandates for

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doing so are Ephesians 5:11 and Proverbs 24:11-12. “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them” and “Hold back those being led to slaughter.” When evil is hidden, it flourishes. The world will tolerate abortion as long as it never has to see abortion.

**4. We need to repent for not loving with words AND deeds.** 10:33-37— *“But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.”*

Remember, the Good Samaritan not only *felt pity* for the beating victim, he *took pity* on the beating victim. That’s biblical love. If the unborn are human, we have an obligation to love them with words *and* deeds.

We’re not always willing to step up. The 2017 Evangelicals for Life conference featured a keynote address from Eugene Cho, the former lead pastor of Quest Church in Seattle. Cho told pro-lifers to rewrite their job descriptions to include a comprehensive, whole-life ethic. “We can’t just be anti-abortion. We should be for the sanctity of life from the womb...Not just American lives, but Syrian lives. Not just Christian liberty religious lives, but Muslim refugee lives.” We can’t cherry pick. “All life is sacred, and every single human being bears the image of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Except when that image-bearer isn’t sacred enough to legally protect. What conference attendees may not have known is that Cho is functionally pro-choice. He personally opposes abortion and wants to reduce it but thinks it should remain legal in a pluralistic society due to the high cost of outlawing it. He writes, “Like most Christians I know, I am against abortion. However, I just do not believe we can legislate it. . . . Can we maintain choice but do all that we can to preserve and ensure the life of an unborn?”<sup>3</sup> Has it ever occurred to Cho that a society which dramatically reduced the lynching of blacks, but left it legal to lynch them, would be a deeply immoral society? Imagine telling blacks, “We will do all we can to protect you so long as it’s not too expensive and meets with popular approval in our pluralistic society. After all, we want to maintain choice.” This is beyond mind-boggling. When a pro-choice pastor who thinks it should be legal to intentionally dismember innocent human beings because it costs too much to protect them uses his platform at an evangelical pro-life conference to tell abortion opponents they aren’t really pro-life, the term “pro-life” has lost all meaning.

Cho’s logic flies in the face of truly loving our unborn neighbor. The Good Samaritan did not ask how much it would cost to protect the beating victim. He did everything needed to save him. He knelt beside him. He cleaned and bandaged his wounds. He put him on his own animal and took him to an inn to recover. He spent all night there tending to him. He paid for lodging—for as many nights as the man would need to recover and more if needed. Cho isn’t providing biblical leadership on abortion. He claims to love unborn image bearers, but thinks it should be legal to butcher them because protecting them is costly. In what possible universe is this love? As Gregg Cunningham points out, “most people who say they oppose abortion do just enough to salve the conscience but not enough to stop the killing.”

Ouch. Of course, none of us loves as we should, gives as we should, cares as we should. We are sinners all our days. We already know we can’t meet the standard of God’s law any more than the lawyer in the story could. But as redeemed sinners, we must do better than say, “I personally oppose someone killing you, but I won’t force my views on those who see it differently! I’m for choice.” That’s not love. That’s cowardice.

We must do something. It’s not enough to just *feel* bad, like Cho does. We need to act like we feel bad. Listen up! When we taste the saving grace of Jesus, suppressing the desire to act out that perfect love is IMPOSSIBLE! We cannot fight God’s righteousness dwelling inside of us. The Holy Spirit propels us to live for Him.

You can start by going to the Colson Center’s website and picking up a free *21 Days for Life Prayer Guide*. In just 21 days—for less than five minutes a day—you can begin mastering the pro-life position and praying more effectively for your unborn neighbor. Surely we have five minutes, don’t we? Second, you can sup-

port organizations like Life Training Institute that reach students with pro-life presentations. Last year, they reached 72,000 students with compelling pro-life content. That costs a ton of money and they sure would appreciate your support (<https://prolifetraining.com/>). Or, maybe you want to financially support your local pregnancy center. But, please! Do something!

**5. We need to repent for caring what the world thinks.** 10:33—*“But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion.”*

The Jews hated Samaritans as vile enemies and yet the Good Samaritan loved his neighbor anyway. In the Old Testament, God told the prophet Jeremiah to testify against child sacrifice even though NO ONE in Judah would listen to him (Jer.7:27-34). And we thought our job description was bad? Jesus tells us that if the world hated him, it will hate us (John 15:18- 16:33). Love the unborn anyway out of gratitude for God’s grace toward you.

Suppose your Aunt Betty is visiting from Boston over Christmas. She’s not a Christian. She thinks pro-life is stupid. She thinks you are a bit crazy for opposing abortion. In between bites of turkey, she finally breaks all pretense of civility and responds with pure snark: “So, why would an otherwise decent person like you be opposed to abortion?”

Here’s your one minute response:

*“Aunt Betty, I am pro-life because it’s wrong to intentionally kill innocent human beings. And the science of embryology establishes that from the earliest stages of development, you were a distinct, living, and whole human being. You weren’t part of another human being like skin cells on the back of my hand, you were already a whole living member of the human family even though you had yet to mature. And you know what else, Aunt Betty? There is no essential difference between the embryo you once were and the adult you are today that justifies killing you at that earlier stage of development. Differences of size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency are not good reasons for saying you could be killed then but not now.”*

How many Bible verses did you cite? None. Nevertheless, you communicated biblical truth. You gave Aunt Betty something to think about. As a redeemed sinner, you loved your unborn neighbor by sticking up for him— not perfectly, not the way God’s law demands, which none of us do—but you did something! And that’s a great start.

### Resources:

- 21 Days for Life Prayer Guide—<http://www.breakpoint.org/21days>
- Scott Klusendorf, *The Case for Life: Equipping Christians to Engage the Culture* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009)
- *Life is Best* DVD series, order from Wretched, <https://wretched.givecloud.co/product/life-is-best/life-is-best>
- How to Defend Your Pro-Life Views in 5 Minutes or Less, [prolifetraining.com/resources/5-min-pro-lifer/](https://prolifetraining.com/resources/5-min-pro-lifer/)

### Endnotes:

1. For sources for all these quotes, visit [prolifetraining.com](https://prolifetraining.com) and select “The Case for Life” under the resource tab. Scroll down for the article.
2. <https://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/evangelicals-for-life-day-2>
3. Eugene Cho, “The Abortion Conversation,” <http://eugenecho.com/2008/10/30>. In a more recent post, Cho said his views had not changed.

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# Sermon Outline #29: Pro-Life Fundamentals

By Rev. James Wells, Pastor of Highland Hills Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Often sung to the same music as “O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus” – listen to these words, which call us to stand true in our battle for the hearts and minds of men:

*Once to every man and nation, comes the moment to decide.  
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for good or evil side;  
some great cause, some great decision, offering each the bloom or blight  
and the choice goes by forever, twist that darkness and that light.*

“Once to Every Man and Nation,” by James R. Lowell

One might think that since abortion is legal and has been for decades, that America’s “choice” has been made and any opportunity for upending abortion’s carnage is long past and beyond recall. But such is far from the case. A great divide still persists in America, despite the obvious legal muscle, celebrity clout, and deep pockets of the abortion industry. God has not left Himself without a witness! (Acts 14:17)

Although the battle lines are constantly shifting, the fight for life soldiers on! And since God has called us both spiritually and physically to “rescue the perishing” we should never grow “weary in well doing” (Gal 6:9). As believers, as “salt and light” in a culture both dark and decaying, we must press ahead, realizing victory is certain though it may not be immediate nor arrive on swift wings. So let’s stay the course and not run for the exits. Against the darkness, we hold a torch.

With that in mind, we want to review some Pro-Life Fundamentals, reminding us *why* we believe *what* we believe. And may heaven help us to continue in this struggle with every hope and full-bore enthusiasm.

## I. **The First Fundamental: The Sanctity of Human Life.** (Turn to Gen. 1:26-27 – Read)

All life, of course is a miracle of God’s creation but when we speak of the sanctity of human life, we’re affirming more than simply that life has value and worth.

The sanctity of human life is linked to how we were made . . . it’s rooted in creation. Our presence on earth is not a chance occurrence nor cosmic accident. None of us are on this planet because of a fortuitous confluence of decisive events. The Bible, surely, leads us to a very different view of the matter.

Man is the direct product of Divine Purpose and Intelligent Design. More so, we are the crowning outcome of a carefully planned creation, perfectly achieved by an eternal, all powerful God. Scripture is quite clear, that the culmination of God’s creative work, was the making of man in His own image. We’ve all been made to order – **His order** – full stop, period.

In fact, Genesis 1:26-27 provides a solid framework for how all human dignity **depends upon** and is **derived from** God.

*Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

According to the divine record, man is a peerless creature, a unique being who is assigned the utmost value by His Creator. Not only will he bear His maker’s image, but in certain, distinct ways he was put on earth as God’s representative, a steward or a vice-regent if you will, of all the Creator has fashioned (Psalm 8:4-6). But the driving point in all this is that man was made in the image of God and according to His likeness.

Now this doesn’t make man god, or even god-like, but it is what sets humans apart from every

other creature. Man possesses a higher order of being above all other earthly inhabitants. Further still, he has a one of a kind connection with his Creator, because he bears the stamp of God's image. He enjoys an elevated and sanctified standing in the eyes of his Maker. Sadly, this renders man's rebellion, unbelief and sin all the more grievous.

And since we've mentioned it – what about the fall? Didn't that entirely deface God's image in man? No, is the Bible's reassuring answer – even fallen men and women are still human, sinful but human. While sin has most definitely marred God's likeness in men – men are still image bearers, however faulty, of the Most High. They are unworthy and yet at the same time possessing real worth (Matt 16:26) for their soul's sake and to the glory of God.

We find an early proof-text for this in Genesis 9:6, where after the fall and following the Genesis flood, God warns:

*"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man." (Genesis 9:6)*

It's quite striking in making His covenant with Noah and establishing human government, our Lord would also institute capital punishment. To this day the death sentence remains within the purview of the state, "for it does not bear the sword in vain" (Rom 13:4). Now weigh what is implied by this –

Heaven's stated reason for the establishment of capital punishment is the image of God in man. (Gen 9:6) Even after the fall, man still bears the "image" of His Maker. Observe too, that should one man, willfully and maliciously take the life of another . . . he shall forfeit his own life, because he has murdered a being made in God's image.

What venerable testimony to the sacredness or sanctity of human life! As the Judge of all the earth "God will do right" (Gen 18:25) and exact a strict and severe penalty for the unjustified and deliberate taking of human life. Holy Scripture directly appeals to the "image of God in man" with its consequent sanctity of human life to assure that justice is done, especially when it is a question of murder. Small wonder the Psalmist reminds us that in God's light we see light. (Ps 36:9) Knowing His truth brings a context and depth of understanding otherwise missing.

The authority for capital punishment is delegated to the state . . . but the cause, material basis, and grounds for capital punishment, is the "image" of God in man. Capital punishment is not about vengeance, so much as it is about justice. Justice in terms of our recognition of a divine "likeness" in man. (Num 35:29-30)

Just as a marginal note, while it's plain that liberal objections to capital punishment are grossly mistaken, desperately muddled, and do not in the least warrant setting aside the Lord's decree here – we often find with God, that justice is tempered with mercy and execution is not always required, though the crime may very well merit as much.

David, for example, repented of his sinful crimes and God spared his life, though the consequences of his acts exacted a heavy toll on those nearest to him. Still David lived "to old age" (1 Chron 29). A reminder to us that while David is the exception that proves the rule, God "takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezk 33:11).

Years ago, when I first pastored in Grand Rapids, MI, I was accused by a pro-abortion advocate of rank hypocrisy because I was both pro-life and yet believed in capital punishment. Now the hypocrisy of his supporting abortion and opposing capital punishment – never quite occurred to him. As that may be, he kept appealing to the Ten Commandments, to "Thou Shalt Not Kill" (Ex 20:13) which I explained to him literally means "Thou Shalt Not Murder." In fact, I tried to show him how he was "cherry-picking" only what he wanted to see from the Bible. If he had just turned the page and looked at the next chapter in Exodus, he would have found there in Exodus 21:12 these very telling words: "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death."

**Bottomline:** "Thou Shalt Not Kill," is addressing the criminal act of cold, blooded murder not state-sponsored capital punishment, which is permitted when scripturally justified. Remarkably this ultimate

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punishment for murder only highlights the *value* of the victim and the *heinousness* of the crime.

What we truly find in the Ten Commandments is God's absolute affirmation of Genesis 9:6 and the sanctity of human life. What is taught in Exodus simply reaffirms all we're told in Genesis, because both books, together with the rest of the Bible, are authored by God. Old or New Testament, it makes no difference. Throughout Holy Scripture the message is always the same – there is a sacredness or sanctity to human life because of the image of God in man.

Which brings us to our next Pro-Life Fundamental. The first is the Sanctity of Human Life, the second is that . . .

## II. Human Life Begins at Conception.

Even apart from Scripture, the basic biological facts support this second fundamental with convincing fashion. To think otherwise is barking up a whole forrest of wrong trees! And let me just add, even if there was uncertainty as to when human life begins, the benefit of the doubt should always go to protecting and preserving life.

But really to the mind of any fair inquirer, there should be no doubt that human life begins at conception. As we know, conception occurs the moment the female egg is fertilized by the male sperm and that fertilization marks the beginning of a genetically distinct individual. It is the start of a new and unique person who will continue to grow and develop, unless he or she is wantonly terminated.

At conception, all 46 chromosomes are already present and active providing the unborn with a genetic code uniquely different from its father and mother. That means that each and every cell in a developing child is distinctly its own. Though inside the mother, that child is not a mere blob or a product of conception or just a collection of tissue. What he or she is – is a newly conceived and living individual. No matter what the reasoning of the pro-choice opposition, the facts state otherwise. Their argument is weak, speculative and just plain wrong. Such is the work of the devil, make no mistake. (1 Tim 4:1)

Consider that within eighteen days of conception, the heart is forming and the eyes are starting to develop. At 21 days that heart is already beating and pumping blood throughout the body. Seven days later we see the beginning of arms and legs. Reaching day 35 this new life has a brain with a mouth, ears, and nose all taking shape. At 40 days brain waves can be recorded. Given another 48 hours the skeleton is formed with the baby's brain now controlling the function of muscles and organs. By this point the unborn child reflexively responds to outside stimulus and can almost certainly feel pain.

And just think, all this development, growth and living takes place long before the earliest abortions are even contemplated or scheduled. Each fact is suggestive in itself and together they have a cumulative force.

Now we could go on, it just gets better and better describing this wonderful, amazing development of a child in its mother's womb. But suffice it to say that after the first trimester, the first brief 12 weeks of life, a child has basically developed all its parts with everything functioning and all that's required during the next 6 months is some thoughtful prenatal care and time for the baby to grow and mature.

Knowing this, how can anyone conclude otherwise, but that human life begins at conception. An unborn child is not a potential human being but an *actual* one. Sheer biological facts show this to be the case. There is no more powerful presentation of the truth when the evidence is reviewed honestly and without bias.

We may refer to the preborn as an "embryo" or a "fetus" but just like the words "toddler" and "adolescent" we're not describing sub-humans or non-humans but humans; real living, actual human beings who are just at different stages of development. And friends, a stage of development has absolutely nothing to do with either human value or dignity or the sacredness of human life!

We must however move ahead – (Turn to Ps 139:13-16) – because the of question of *when* life begins is not only biological but scriptural. And what we learn from Holy Scripture is that God's in-

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volvement in our lives extends to conception and even before conception (vs.16). For our purpose let's just look carefully at Psalm 139 and see here how similar language and the same personal pronouns are applied to the human author of this Psalm both prior and following birth.

(Read Psalm 139:13-16) David here is extolling the sheer greatness and omniscience of God – the fact that He is always present, all-powerful, and all-knowing. God can do anything and God sees everything. The immensity of God's knowledge is too thought-stretching, too mindboggling for you or me to comprehend.

*"For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them."* (Psalm 139:13-16)

What's so striking about Psalm 139 is how, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David is led to illustrate God's awesome skill and power by reflecting on his own development as a baby in his mother's womb.

Now it's not our intent to do a full exposition of these verses but let's not miss David's vivid description here of God's creative power and the exquisite delicacy with which He "knit" us together and "formed" our inward parts. Consider how aptly this passage describes the development of the muscles, tendons, sinews, nerves, blood vessels and bones of the human frame. When the psalmist speaks of his "unformed substance" (vs.16) he employs the Hebrew word for "embryo" suggesting something rolled or wrapped together. Amazing to think of it – all that a person will be physically or mentally is rolled up, wrapped like a gift, and entirely contained in that tiny speck of genetic personhood known as a fertilized egg.

Incredible too, is how David uses the personal pronoun "me" to both identify and refer to himself before and after birth.

You see, while it may not be explicitly stated . . . the Bible nonetheless assumes an unbroken continuity of life and personhood before the time of birth and afterward. The David who composed this Psalm was the same David who was conceived in his mother's womb. He did not become David, he was not a potential David, he did not develop into a person at some later stage or become human after his delivery into this world – No! That was "me" the psalmist says. He was already and altogether human; he was David from the very start as God's involvement with his life, even in the womb would strongly attest.

There are many other passages relevant to the question of when life begins. Isaiah tells us that the Lord "formed me from the womb to be His servant. (Isa 49:4). God tells the prophet Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jer 1:4). Once more in both these verses, we find an unbroken continuity of life – that same one of a kind personal identity whether before or after birth. Everywhere, we see God's sovereign activity in the formation of an individual person, from their point of conception. Both Isaiah and Jeremiah had a unique identity . . . were created "beings" before birth. Their personhood undeniably began prior to their delivery into the world. Which again to any thinking person must extend the sanctity of human life to the womb.

Do you recall from the gospel of Luke, in the New Testament, how "John the Baptist" while still in his mother's womb "leaped for joy" at the greeting of the pregnant though virgin, Mary? (Luke 1:44)

I don't pretend for a moment to understand all this, but plainly prior to his birth and in the prenatal presence of the Messiah, he (John) demonstrated recognition and joy which are both signs of "life" and actual personhood.

Without doubt in Luke chapter 1 we are keeping company with the extraordinary and the miraculous. But the fact still persists that John the Baptist as the forerunner of our Lord, though yet unborn,

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was enabled to recognize Jesus Christ while both were still in their mother's womb.

So again, we find that the unborn are not just "blobs of tissue" or subhuman "products of conception." Scripture assuredly indicates that they are human beings though still in their mother's womb. The weight of biblical evidence tips the scales decisively in favor of life beginning at conception.

Which brings us finally to our 3rd and last Pro-Life Fundamental. The 1st was The Sanctity of Human Life. The 2nd was that Life Begins at Conception. And the last fundamental we want to point out is that . . .

### III. The Battle for Life Concerns Us All.

What do we read in Proverbs 24:11-12? The people in view here are innocent victims, those vulnerable, in imminent danger and oppressed. And plainly from this passage we have a responsibility to help, an obligation to protect the innocent. We're called here to action not accommodation!

*"Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, oh hold them back. If you say, "See, we did not know this," does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?"* (Proverbs 24:11-12)

Could there be a more accurate description of the unborn or a more compelling argument for us to defend them. Verse 12 makes it crystal clear that excuses will neither be approved or accepted as God knows the condition of our heart. On that great day of accounts we are responsible, it is our God-assigned duty, to rescue those who are in mortal danger. And whether we do it or not . . . God will judge us accordingly. How futile it is to plead ignorance before a God who sees all; especially when our failure to help only strengthens the wicked to do harm. Fearing indictment in the court of heaven, let us rescue the perishing and "deliver those being taken away to death". This passage does not present us with a choice and all the time in the world doesn't matter, if we won't use it.

My friends, to act strong in faith in such important matters can only glorify God; which is why in this instance and every other, we need an exclusive devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ! God has not led us this far only to forsake us at the last. We should pray fervently for our nation, our leaders, and for those contemplating abortion as their only way out of a difficult situation. We can of course, do more than pray but only after we've prayed. Then, and only then can we render to the Savior, the maximum service of which we are capable. No one can settle for just being "good enough". Christians must walk out their faith. We need to hold the line, stand our ground and get it done. He who has begun a good work in us, will be faithful to complete it. (Phil 1:6; 1 Thess 5:24)

Something we can all be about is investing ourselves in a Life Matters ministry. This could include office work, counseling, distributing baby food and clothing, passing out gospel tracts and other pro-life material. There is no end to what we can do and no telling the difference it will make.

Should you be politically inclined, how fortunate that Lansing is just 30 minutes away and we need those who will contact and speak to our state legislators, and to those in Washington D.C. as well. If abortion on demand is ever to be overturned, then lobbying for life is certainly one way to make it happen.

We may not stop all abortions in our generation but through such things as "waiting periods" and "informed decisions" and "parental notification" we can slow it down. At least, that's something and in God's hands it only takes a small something to make a significant difference. Who knows? We may be closer than we think to the turning of the tide.

**Bottomline:** Pro-Life Fundamentals should compel us to know where we stand on the issue of abortion. We should naturally be willing to listen and have compassion toward those who disagree; but friends here is our Bible and from it we must never move so much as an inch. Abortion takes a life – is an offence to God and outrages all decency! And though it seems absolutely entrenched in our nation, let us remember that in God's strength we can do all things. (Phil 4:13)

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In closing, recall how on two occasions in Luke chapter 2, with the birth of Christ drawing near, Mary is described as being “great with child.” May we never lose sight of the fact that an expectant mother *is* “**with child**.” And since God has said it, it will always be so.

*Though the cause of evil prosper, yet the truth alone is strong,  
though her portion be the scaffold, and upon the throne be wrong;  
yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown,  
standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own. “*

—James R. Lowell

Let us take His Word exactly as it stands. In the service of the King and for the cause of life may our feet always remain firm on God’s unshakeable Truth.

**To Those Without Christ:** No matter our guilt and sin, the Bible is remarkably free in the offer of salvation – “Whosoever will, may come!” So how stands it between your soul and the Living God? Have you fled to Christ and committed your eternal welfare to Him as your only Hope and Refuge?

At the cross, Jesus took our guilt and paid its awful penalty. (2 Cor 5:21) Salvation is available and freely offered not because we are good but because Christ has died. (Titus 2:14) Only believe and trust all to His finished work at Calvary. (Eph 2:8-9) The “Lamb” has overcome! (Rev 17:14) Lean on His everlasting arms and they will never fail you.

You may listen to this sermon online at <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-5wu9t-d02a55>;  
<https://www.hhills.org/Sermons>, Pro-Life Fundamentals, January 19, 2020.

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #1: What Does it Mean to be Pro-Life?

**Introduction:** *Pro-life vs. pro-choice. Pro-abortion vs. anti-abortion. Women's rights vs. right to life.* These are all labels attached to the participants in the new civil war over abortion. At its core, the battle is not so much about abortion as it is about how we view human beings at different stages of the life continuum. It is a contest that pits the interests of women against the interests of pre-born children. If one listens to the rhetoric of either camp, the issue seems to center around whether women should have the right to control their own bodies (even a body that is carrying another body) or "suffer" the limitation of their rights once another life has begun.

Many Christians believe this issue is purely a political or social matter, not something that should draw the attention and involvement of the Church. It is asserted that the purpose of the Church is not social reform and that the Christian cannot expect non-Christians to adopt biblical morality. Those who argue for Christian involvement contend that a belief in the right to life does not require the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and acceptance of the authority of Scripture, but is so basic and fundamental that one can be informed of and committed to the principle without being a believer.

To know that the moral status of preborn human life is of greater significance than that of animals is not a matter of religious belief but common knowledge which has been embraced by nearly every culture and civilization throughout human history. Obviously, there have been some cultures where the value of human life was not given absolute value, e.g. Nazi Germany. However, every culture has had basic morality that recognizes the value of human life. Therefore, the question concerning abortion and the sanctity of human life is not merely political or social, but is a matter of the basic moral fabric of society. It is a question of who belongs to the human community for which we accept common responsibility and obligation.

The issue is not whether a woman has a right to end her pregnancy or not, nor is it a question of when human life begins. The real issue is what significance do we ascribe to human life in general and pre-born human life in particular. Abortion is simply the result of the conclusion that unborn babies are not fully human and that they do not possess the same value as the woman who bears them. Abortion is not a cause, it is an effect; the effect of de-valuing human life because of its size (unborn) and location (the womb).

Once a society declares one category of humans to be less than fully human, the door is wide open to include others to the list. Perhaps the next would be the infirm and enfeebled, the disabled and handicapped, or the elderly or terminally ill. We begin to openly question whether such lives are really worth living since they do not measure up to some notion of a "quality of life." The issue, however, is not "Are these lives worth living?" but "Are we as a society prepared to accept every life God gives and make it worth living?" In short, are we really prepared to be pro-life?

## I. **Being Pro-Life Means that I Respect All Human Life Because it is Made in God's Image.** *Genesis 1:26-28; 9:6*

### A. *Genesis 1:26-28*

1. Man is the special creation of God, made in His image
  - a. This verse does not say that man *becomes* image at some point, e.g. birth, but that he *is* image.
  - b. Man does not *contain* the image of God, he *is* the image of God
2. Man, as divine image-bearer, acts as God's vice-regent on the earth ("... let them have

dominion . . ." v. 26b). Man is not a *part* of nature, as modern science teaches, but he is *above* nature. He exercises dominion on God's behalf (v. 27).

3. Unlike animals, birds, fish, etc., man does not *reproduce*, he *procreates*.

A few years ago television talk-show host Phil Donahue produced a program entitled "*The Human Animal*." While the program succeeded in detailing how remarkable man is, it failed to show man in his true identity, that of an image-bearer of God. Instead, Donahue compared man to the animal kingdom, pointing out similarities as well as some differences. However, he ignored man's incessantly religious nature and totally omitted any explanation for such things as human love, personality and the human drive for freedom and self-direction.

In short, Donahue could provide no explanation for why man acts as a rational, volitional being. Consequently, in addressing human procreation he, along with the noted evolutionist Carl Sagan, treated the wonder of human birth as a purely biological process. In doing so, they completely overlooked the spiritual dimension of humanness.

When human beings bear children, both a physical and spiritual miracle occurs. Not only is another human being brought into this world, but it is both a physical and spiritual being. Human parents and God are involved in who this little human being will be.

Out of the millions of sperm cells God could have chosen to use to fertilize that female egg, He chooses a particular one. Not only will this choice affect such things as hair and eye color, but the actual person he or she will be. If any other sperm fertilized that egg, even though from the same human father, there would have been profound differences in who that child would be. The only way you came to be the person you are is that God used a particular woman's egg and a particular man's sperm to bring you into existence.

What makes the miracle of human procreation even more astounding is that human beings live forever. The location of your eternal existence (heaven or hell) is yet to be determined, but the fact of your existence for eternity is not in doubt. Thus, when a man and woman join to bring a child into the world they are cooperating with God. Procreation means participation in a divine-human cooperative. This is one aspect of imaging God — being "co-creators" of other human beings.

- B. The taking of human life is extremely serious because of who man is (*Gen. 9:6*).
  1. Because man is made in God's image it is considered an assault upon God to take the life of another human being.
  2. When a human life is ended by deliberate homicide it not only ends a life but it also finishes off an entire generation.
    - a. All the potential of that individual is lost as well as the potential of any progeny he/she may have procreated.
    - b. This is one of the profound tragedies of abortion. It not only terminates a pregnancy, it terminates a generation.

## II. Being Pro-Life Means that We Take the Loss of Any Human Life Very Seriously. *Deuteronomy 21:1-1-9; Numbers 35:6-28*

- A. The atonement for unsolved murder. *Deuteronomy 21:1-9*

When a person was discovered to be the victim of homicide, the entire community became involved. The death of any human being was a serious matter, subject to strict regulations as to how it would be handled. The people, led by the priests and elders, had to be able to

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say, "We did not kill this man and we did not see who did it." This was the only way for the community to be absolved of the shedding of innocent blood. Ironically, to atone for such a person's death cost someone a heifer and a piece of ground. No death was merely forgotten. It involved the entire community. Why? Because the death of any person was seen as a loss for the entire community.

Today, with rampant abortion, we cannot claim that we do not know who is taking the lives of unborn babies, nor are we able to claim that we do not know when or how these lives are being taken. We cannot claim ignorance.

B. The atonement for accidental death. *Numbers 35:6-28*

1. The Lord provided a number of cities called "cities of refuge" where a person could flee to plead innocence if someone were accidentally killed.
2. There, the person would present themselves to the priests and elders, as well as the whole assembly, and declare his innocence.

An investigation would be conducted to determine whether the person was truly innocent or not; whether he had motive to kill the person or acted maliciously. If found innocent he was not executed, as a murderer would be, but was required to stay in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest who heard his case. If he ventured outside the city of refuge, the avenger of innocent blood would be able to kill him without being guilty of murder.

Clearly, the accidental death of another person was a serious matter. Why? Because of God's high view of human life as made in His image. The loss of human life, for any reason, was a serious matter.

III. **Being Pro-Life Means I'm Willing to Live with the Consequences of Being Opposed to Abortion**

A. I am willing to care for women who are pregnant and need help in carrying their pregnancies to term. *Genesis 16:1-15*

1. Hagar learned in the midst of her "crisis pregnancy" that the Lord is "the God Who sees."

Because of His high view of human life God looked upon Hagar with compassion and concern. This does not mean that God blessed the circumstances under which Ishmael was conceived, but it does mean that God can bring blessing and good out of any circumstances. Furthermore, it is clear that God cares about women. He provided for Hagar and her son. Can we do any less for the women whose circumstances or families believe an abortion will resolve their problems? Consider some of the problems Mary, the mother of Jesus, would have had to face during her pregnancy. Would such a woman be welcome in your church?

2. Women with unwelcome pregnancies often accept abortion as the solution because they do not see any other alternatives available.

How aggressive is your church in making alternatives available to women in your community?

### Application

- Do we treat the deaths of millions of unborn babies as little more than statistics?
- Is the God we worship less concerned about the loss of their lives than He was of those lost in Israel?
- Do we share God's high view of human life?

- B. I am willing to lend a hand to families of disabled or handicapped children.

Being pro-life requires action and sacrifice. If it is *wrong* for a woman to abort a child that has some birth defect, then it is *right* to help her care for that child when it is born. Too often we do not understand the special needs of a family trying to care for such a child. We fail to comprehend how difficult it can be to even get time away to go shopping or for the husband and wife to go out for dinner. If getting an evening away to have dinner together is difficult, imagine trying to take a vacation! What are some ways your church could provide assistance to families with special needs children?

- C. I am willing to be an advocate for the elderly and terminally ill. *Isaiah 46:4*

Being pro-life is not simply being against abortion. It means literally what the label implies. Sadly, our society is increasingly tolerant of resentful attitudes toward the elderly. Too often their worth is being determined by how much it costs to care for them. There is more and more loose talk about the "quality of life."

Prior to the full-scale operation of the Nazi death camps, the people of Germany underwent a transformation of attitudes toward the sick, infirm, enfeebled, and elderly as those in authority began talking openly about *leben sun vertes leben*, life not worthy of life. Gradually, many accepted as fact the assertion that some lives were not worth living. This enabled them to look the other way as six million people considered not worthy of life were killed.

Once any class of human being is declared less than human, we are immediately forced to accept the proposition that not all human life is of equal value. Having done this it becomes monstrously arbitrary how we come to place value on any person's life!

From a strict, moral perspective, the assertion that any particular human life is of little or no value presupposes that there is no fixed point of reference to determine the value of any human life. To abandon the belief that the life of an unborn child is valuable is to abandon the belief that the life of a *born* child is valuable. As a consequence of this logic, we become a society where, in the words of H. G. Well's *Animal Farm*, "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others." Robbing the unborn child of his or her worth in exchange for giving his or her mother's "right to choose" is not only sheer brute force but an unabashed apology for genocide.

To be pro-life means there is no such thing as a life unworthy of life. This does not mean that all lives will *appear* to have purpose. But they all have value because they are made in God's image. Instead of communicating to the elderly that the only thing they have to look forward to in aging is illness, loss of physical and mental capacity, and loneliness, we should demonstrate our belief that life consists of more than physical vibrancy. In *Isaiah 46:4* God promises to not neglect the elderly. He continues to care for them even after their "prime." Should we not imitate God in remembering those who have left so much for us?

### Application

- Write a definition of what it means to be pro-life. How does this contrast with being anti-abortion?
- What are the marks of a pro-life church? How does your church fit this profile?
- What are some ways an individual can demonstrate his or her pro-life commitment?

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #2: The Pregnancy Care Center, the Church, and the Welfare State

The debate over welfare reform calls for a biblical response from the citizens of a sovereign God, not a political response from the citizens of a sovereign nation. Welfare was originally designed to help individuals or families to get back on their feet, not to lay at ease and pick welfare benefits from government programs and giveaways.

## I. Why Should Christians Care?

Concern for the poor is not new, but is a biblical precept. (*Leviticus 19:10, Psalm 82:1-4, Isaiah 1:17, Matthew 22:37-40*)

- A. Recognized the ownership of property
- B. Understood the rewards of one's efforts
- C. Insisted on a charitable response to others for the Lord's sake
- D. Called for an end to injustice and oppression as possible causes of poverty

## II. Early Government Welfare Measures

English "Poor Laws" of the 16th century were based on biblical injunctions and individual responsibility. The magistrates did not want their constituents dying in the streets, so provision made for those who would otherwise languish. Government-sponsored help was emergency-oriented and temporary.

- A. The Purpose of Poor Laws: This help was restricted to the "deserving" poor and helpless. It was not extended to the "vagrant" or "slothful." (*Proverbs 13:4, 11*)
  - 1. Reinforce righteousness (welfare was not ideal for society)
  - 2. Strengthen the family (basic unit of social stability)
  - 3. Get the poor back to work (responsibility and self-esteem)
- B. Limits of this Early Welfare System: Welfare was barely tolerable, socially unacceptable, but sometimes necessary. Welfare was not fancy, just adequate, and for relief purposes only. Poor Laws stressed discipline and responsibility. Unfaithfulness, sloth or graft resulted in withdrawal of help. (*Proverbs 20:4*)

## III. The Growth of the Welfare System in the United States

Accelerated growth followed "The Great Society" mandate of President Lyndon Johnson. The U.S. War on Poverty was declared in 1965. The Department of Health, Education & Welfare created or expanded over 100 welfare agencies. Poverty became the fault of the "system" or one's environment. Oppression, discrimination, materialism and injustice were thought to be the primary causes of poverty, with no consideration given to personal responsibility. Relief was extended to anyone in poverty, no matter the cause, and with no requirement of personal accountability.

### IV. The Effects of Welfare on the Needy Today

- A. Impedes improvement of poor (*Proverbs 26:13*)
  - 1. Impotent to do anything
  - 2. Dependent on others to live
  - 3. Helplessly entangled in government bureaucracy
  - 4. There are more poor in the U.S. than ever before.
- B. Contributes to the disintegration of the family (*Ecclesiastes 10:18*)
  - 1. Idleness
  - 2. Disincentive
  - 3. State paternalism
- C. Provides incentives to avoid work (*Proverbs 21:25*)
  - 1. Entitlement programs compete with salaries of lower and middle income families.
  - 2. Rather collect welfare than work for less money.
- D. Contributes to government waste (*Proverbs 29:14*)
  - 1. High overhead
  - 2. Less dollars to administer to real and critical needs.
- E. American Leaders concerned about welfare
  - 1. Franklin D. Roosevelt: "The federal government must, and shall, quit this business of relief. To dole out relief is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit."
  - 2. Harry S Truman: "No more soup lines, no more dole, and no more battlefields. That's what I want to see."
  - 3. John F. Kennedy: "Give a hand, not a handout."

### V. Meeting the Welfare Challenge: Humility & Servanthood

The current debate over welfare and its proposed "reform" provides opportunities for biblically based pro-life ministries that exemplify Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a model for the church. (*John 13:15*)

- A. He befriended the poor — *Luke 5:1-11*
- B. He ate with the poor — *Luke 5:27-32*
- C. He fed the poor — *Luke 9:10-17*
- D. He comforted the poor — *Luke 12:22-34*
- E. He ministered to the poor — *Luke 7:18-27*
- F. He healed the poor — *Luke 5:12-16*
- G. He defended the poor — *Matthew 15:5; 23:14*

### VI. A Scriptural Blueprint for Poverty Relief: The Gospel Mandate in Action

- A. Faith: A living and true faith equips the poor to walk in faith.
  - 1. Reorients fallen men to biblical reality — man understands his nature and becomes accountable in the light of his sinfulness (*Rom. 3:10; 6:23*)
  - 2. Counteracts the destructive effects of sin (*2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20*) — sin often

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- contributes immensely to poverty and its continuation.
3. Establishes a future orientation
    - Planning (*Matthew 7:24-27*)
    - Restraint (*Ephesians 4:25, 32*)
    - Self-control (*Galatians 5:22-23*)
  4. Provokes men to responsibility
    - Calls for selfless maturity (*Philippians 2:3-4*)
    - Redeem the time (*Ephesians 5:16*)
    - Use opportunity (*Colossians 4:5*)
    - Care for family (*1 Timothy 5:8*)
  5. Empowers men with confidence (*2 Peter 1:3-4*)
    - God is sovereign (*Romans 8:28*)
    - Believer is secure (*Romans 8:33ff*)
    - Believer is heard (*Hebrews 4:16*)
- B. Family: The family is the basic building block of society. Many poor do not live in intact families. Authentic Christianity helps establish the poor in stable families.
1. Provides a proper sense of identity
    - Bolstered by family love (*Luke 11:11-13*)
    - Strengthened by the confidence of family (*John 1:39-42*)
    - Stabilized by discipline of family (*Hebrews 12:7-11*)
  2. Provides a genuine social security
    - Exhorts to care for the needs of family members (*1 Timothy 5:8*)
  3. Provides accountability and discipline (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*), reinforcing principles of:
    - Authority
    - Structure
    - Liability
    - Obedience
    - Selflessness
- C. Work: Work is the heart and soul of biblical charity toward assisting the poor. Where humanitarian social policies keep people helplessly dependent, biblical charity seeks to remove them from that status and return them to a productive capacity.
1. The Bible teaches that honorable work is holy (*Eccl. 2:24; 3:22*). This ethic is illustrated in the people God used (shepherds, farmers, merchants, fishermen, even a carpenter).
  2. Work is intended to benefit family and community (*1 Tim. 5:8; Eph. 4:28*).
  3. High ideals of work ethic learned in Christian experience (*1 Cor. 10:31*).

### VII. Programs that Build the Individual and Community

#### A. Faith

- Evangelism outreach and witness opportunities
- Bible studies and discipleship
- Neighborhood Bible clubs
- Books and videos to lend
- Cultivating friendships and caring circles

#### B. Family

- Parenting classes and instruction
- Marriage building seminars
- Intervention and counseling
- Medical assistance
- Child care and pre-school education

#### C. Work

- Job counseling and placement
- Networking assistance
- Skills training
- Support and accountability meetings

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #3 – Abstinence: What, Why, & How?

*Pastor James Keen, Anchor Missionary Baptist Church, Anchorage, Alaska*

According to statistics from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for 2006-2008, 42% of teenage girls and 43% of teenage boys have ever had sexual intercourse.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, a 1994 study run by a University of Chicago professor indicated that only 7% of men and 21% of women were still virgins on their wedding night.<sup>2</sup> According to *Child Trends*, more than half of births to American women under 30 occur outside marriage.<sup>3</sup>

*Christianity Today* recently noted an even more alarming trend: Christian leaders have seriously discussed whether churches should promote birth control to singles.<sup>4</sup> They were responding to reports that evangelical singles are engaging in premarital sex that all too often results in abortion.<sup>5,6</sup> According to the National Association of Evangelicals, 80% of unmarried evangelicals between the ages of 18 and 29 have had sex.<sup>7</sup>

These statistics indicate a terrible problem in our country. Many of the unmarried people hearing this lesson have already had sex or will be seriously tempted to do so in the future. A spirit-led and enabled commitment to abstinence, the practice of abstaining from sex outside of marriage, is the solution. Before we talk about abstinence, let's first discuss what the Scriptures teach about sex.

## I. A biblical view of sex

### A. God created men and women and designed sex to be the means of procreation

Genesis 1:27-28 – *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply.”*

### B. Sex within marriage is good

Genesis 1:31 – *“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.”* See also Proverbs 5:15-19.

### C. God told Adam to cleave to Eve and become “one flesh” with her

Genesis 2:24 – *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”*

### D. Marriage reflects the oneness between Christ and His Bride, the Church

Ephesians 5:25-31 – *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”*

### E. God has declared that sex outside of marriage is sin

Ephesians 5:3 – *“But fornication (premarital sex), and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.”*

***There shouldn't be a question in people's minds about the purity of your relationship!***

## Bible Studies/Sunday School Lessons

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### II. Why is sex before marriage bad?

Proverbs 9:17-18 – *“Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.”*

The intent of this lesson is not to just teach that premarital sex is wrong, but why God gave this commandment. 1 John 5:3 teaches us that God’s commandments are not grievous or burdensome. They always have a purpose. Why does God want to prevent us from having sex outside of marriage? Let’s look at a series of passages from 1 Corinthians 6.

#### A. Sexual sin brings destruction

1 Corinthians 6:12a – *“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient”* (good for me).

1. Guilt – over 60% of college students involved in premarital sex said it produced tremendous guilt.
2. Emotional distress – sex is emotionally binding and is destructive when misused  
*“The truth is that wherever a man lies with a woman, there, whether they like it or not, a transcendental relationship is set up between them which much be eternally enjoyed or eternally endured.”* - C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*
3. Broken relationships – 50% of males and 26% of females say they broke up because of sex.
4. Self-hatred – low self esteem is often one of the reasons people give in. Having sex doesn’t help.
5. Brings problems to a future marriage <sup>8</sup>
  - a. Those who have premarital sex tend to have less happy marriages. The physical relationship is an inadequate foundation upon which to build a lasting relationship.
  - b. A study by the National Center for Health Statistics and the University of Maryland showed that those who are sexually active before marriage are 71% more likely to divorce than those who are virgins on their wedding night. Also, marriages that started out as cohabitating unions (living together) have a 50% higher divorce rate than those that did not.
  - c. Persons and couples who have had premarital sex are more likely to have extramarital affairs.
  - d. Having premarital sex may fool you into marrying a person who is not right for you.
  - e. Couples who are sexually active before marriage often experience frigidity (lack of desire to have sex) later in marriage.
6. Abortion – One of the greatest tragedies of premarital sex: infants murdered to cover the parent’s sin
7. Spiritual devastation – sin always hurts your relationship with God and can leave you feeling cold and distant from Him

#### B. Sexual sin can control you

1 Corinthians 6:12(b) – *“all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”*

1. Sexual addiction – 44% of males and 26% of females said it produced “an intense desire for more”
2. Unplanned pregnancies – children will alter your life prematurely<sup>9</sup>

3. Downward spiral – disobeying God in this area makes it easier to disobey Him in others

### C. Sexual sin is a perversion of God's purpose for our bodies

1 Corinthians 6:15-18 – *"(1) Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. (2) Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."*

1. If you are saved, you take God with you into every sin!
  - a. You use God's property in a way that is totally contrary to God's purposes.
  - b. It taints His reputation. Do you know any people who claim to be Christians and are having sex?
2. Sexual sin is unique because it is a sin against your body

*"...although sexual sin is not necessarily the worst sin, it is the most unique in its character. It rises from within the body bent on personal gratification. It drives like no other impulse and when fulfilled affects the body like no other sin. It has a way of internally destroying a person that no other sin has. Because sexual intimacy is the deepest uniting of two persons, its misuse corrupts on the deepest human level."* – John MacArthur in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, 1 Corinthians, p. 151

### D. Remember, you can't play with fire without getting burned.

Proverbs 6:27-28 – *"Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?"*

## III. How far is too far?

Obviously, having premarital sex is wrong. Just how far does God allow us to go before marriage? The following passage provides the direction we need.

Galatians 5:19 – *"Now, the results of living in the flesh are well-known, which are these; Adultery, having sex before marriage, mental lusting, inappropriate sexual interaction (going too far)."* – Author's translation

### A. Control your thoughts about the opposite sex.

Matthew 5:28 – *"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*

### B. Keep your clothes on.

C. **Abstain from inappropriate physical contact.** A woman in Old Testament times was to have her hand cut off for touching a man inappropriately.

D. **Abstain from any behavior that can lead to violations of the above principles.** Discuss kissing, hugging, holding hands, making out, oral sex.

### E. Do not violate your conscience.

## IV. How can I resist temptation?

1 Corinthians 10:13 – *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God [is] faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [it]."*

## Bible Studies/Sunday School Lessons

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1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 – ***“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.”***

Temptation will come. It isn't a sin to be tempted; but it is a sin to give in. God desires that you know how to remain pure and chaste in your relationships. He always makes a way of escape. Here are some of the principles He teaches us in His Word.

**A. Pray that you might not be tempted**

Matthew 26:41 – *“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak.”*

- Seek spiritual help from on high. Good intentions need Divine intervention to become good actions.

**B. Avoid all sources of temptation**

Ephesians 4:27 – *“Neither give place to the devil.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:22 – *“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”*

- Don't allow yourselves to be alone in a situation where you are tempted to go too far.
- Avoid a prolonged engagement if the Lord is in the relationship.

**C. Flee temptation**

Genesis 39:1-12 – Joseph and Potiphar's wife

- When you look temptation in the eye, turn and run the other way!

**D. Surround yourselves with others of a like-mind**

2 Timothy 2:22 – *“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”*

- Your girlfriend or boyfriend should share your values and boundaries!

***Recommendation: Avoid getting serious with someone who is not a Christian.***

- Ask Christian friends to hold you accountable.

**V. Tough questions**

**A. God gave us the desire for sex and the ability to have sex, so why isn't it always okay?**

1 Corinthians 6:13 – *“Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.”*

- Just because God gave you the ability to do something, doesn't mean He wants you to do it.

**B. How can we know we're really meant for each other unless we have sex?**

- The ability to have intercourse exists between any male and female. It isn't dependent upon “finding the right one.” If you desire to be married and make the commitment to each other, the rest will work out to amazing satisfaction within a loving, committed, attentive, and monogamous marriage relationship.

**C. What if I owe it to him/her?**

1 Corinthians 6:20 – *“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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- When a person has sex with someone who is not a spouse because he or she feels an obligation, the arrangement is akin to prostitution. Don't let someone reduce your worth to the "price of a meal" (Proverbs 6:26).
- Christ is the One to whom you owe it all! He instructs you to refrain until marriage!

### D. If we're in love [engaged], why isn't it okay?

1 Corinthians 13:4-8(a) – "**Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.**"

- Is it love or lust? True love will wait for the blessing of God!
- God does not excuse current sin based on future promises. ILLUSTRATION: Stealing money that you promise to pay it back in the future is still a crime. You have unlawfully taken something that does not belong to you. The same is true of a couple having sex if they are "in love" or engaged, but not married. It is still unlawful.

## VI. I've already messed up. Is there any hope for me?

**YES!** There is hope, forgiveness, and peace available to you through Jesus Christ. Even though your sins are as scarlet, you can be white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). God alone can heal the destruction that has already begun in your life. Consider the following three steps that can bring restoration.

### Step #1 – Go to God

Matthew 11:28-30 – "*Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light.*"

- Above all others, it is God Whom you have sinned against. He offers forgiveness to those who repent.

*Ours is a God of second chances!*

### Step #2 – Enlist the help of your parents and/or your pastor

God has placed these people in your life for a purpose. You may feel that they won't understand, but you will need their support, love, forgiveness, and encouragement to help you through the times ahead of you.

### Step #3 – Revise the relationship if you are still in it

- If your boyfriend/girlfriend is repentant, pray about whether the relationship should continue and set mutually agreed upon boundaries.
- If he/she is not repentant – break off the relationship.

## VII. Final thoughts

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7-8 – "*For this is the will of God, [even] your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.*"

*Will you obey God's instructions or will you reject Him?*

## Bible Studies/Sunday School Lessons

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### Additional resources:

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- The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, <https://www.cbmw.org>

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# Student Worksheet – Abstinence: What, Why, and How?

## I. A biblical view of sex

- A. God created men and women and designed sex to be the means of \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Sex within marriage is \_\_\_\_\_
- C. God told Adam to cleave to Eve and become \_\_\_\_\_ with her
- D. Marriage reflects the \_\_\_\_\_ between Christ and His Bride, the Church
- E. God has declared that sex outside of marriage is \_\_\_\_\_

*There shouldn't be a question in people's minds  
about the purity of your relationship!*

## II. Why is sex before marriage bad?

- A. Sexual sin brings \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. Guilt
  - 2. Emotional distress
  - 3. Broken relationships
  - 4. Self-hatred
  - 5. Brings problems to a future marriage
  - 6. Abortion
  - 7. Spiritual devastation
- B. Sexual sin can \_\_\_\_\_ you
  - 1. Sexual addiction
  - 2. Unplanned pregnancies
  - 3. Downward spiral
- C. Sexual sin is a \_\_\_\_\_ of God's purpose for our bodies
  - 1. If you are saved, you take God with you into every sin!
  - 2. Sexual sin is unique because it is a sin against your body
- D. Remember, you can't play with \_\_\_\_\_ without getting \_\_\_\_\_

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### III. How far is too far?

- A. Control your \_\_\_\_\_ about the opposite sex.
- B. Keep your \_\_\_\_\_ on.
- C. Abstain from \_\_\_\_\_ physical contact.
- D. Abstain from any \_\_\_\_\_ that can lead to violations of the above principles.
- E. Do not violate your \_\_\_\_\_.

### IV. How can I resist temptation?

- A. Pray that you might not be \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ all sources of temptation
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ temptation
- D. Surround yourselves with others of a \_\_\_\_\_

### V. Tough questions

- A. God gave us the desire for sex and the ability to have sex, so why isn't it always okay?
- B. How can we know we're really meant for each other unless we have sex?
- C. What if I owe it to him/her?
- D. If we're in love [engaged], why isn't it okay?

### VI. I've already messed up. Is there any hope for me?

**YES!**

Step #1 – Go to \_\_\_\_\_

***He is a God of second chances!***

Step #2 – Enlist the help of your \_\_\_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_

Step #3 – \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship if you're still in it

### VII. Final thoughts

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7-8 – *“For this is the will of God, [even] your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”*

***Will you obey God's instructions or will you reject Him?***

# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #4: The Case of the Unknown Killer

**INTRODUCTION:** Many passages in Scripture underscore how special human life is to God and how high is the cost of every human life lost. At the creation of man, we have the statement that mankind is made “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:26-27). After the first murder, God said that the blood of slain Abel cried out to Him from the ground (4:10). In Gen. 6:11-13, God decreed “the end of all flesh” because there was so much unrestrained violence on earth. After the flood, He instituted capital punishment for murder because human beings are created in God’s image (Gen. 9:5-6).

God recognizes the lesser offense of manslaughter. In Numbers 35:9-34, Deuteronomy 19:1-13, and Joshua 20, God told Israel to create cities of refuge for the protection of those involved in accidental deaths. He wanted the victim’s life to be acknowledged, but did not want vengeance to run rampant. He only wanted those guilty of murder to lose their lives.

In these passages He spelled out the difference between murder and manslaughter. A killer would be charged with murder if he used a weapon against his victim, was known to hate the victim, struck the victim in enmity, or laid in wait for the victim. If the victim was a friend and the killing unintentional, the charge could be manslaughter.

It’s important to note at the start of this lesson that forgiveness for the sin of murder is possible in Christ. The lesson will focus on Deuteronomy 21:1-9, which poses an interesting question for Israel’s judicial system: What should be done when the person responsible for a violent death was unknown?

## OBSERVATION

1. Read Deuteronomy 21:1-9 aloud
2. Discuss the context:
  - Where is this passage placed in the canon of Scripture – history, law, prophets? (*Law*)
  - When – at what point in Israel’s history were these instructions given? (*Shortly before Israel was to enter the Promised Land*)
  - Who is speaking? (*Moses*)
3. What problem does the passage address?
  - *A dead human body is found*
  - *It’s apparent the person was slain, but not known by whom*
  - *It’s a murder mystery. Whodunit?!?*
4. What is the job of priests and Levites? (verse 5)
  - *To serve the Lord*
  - *To bless the people in His name*
  - *To resolve disputes and assault cases*
5. What were the people supposed to do in order to solve the problem?
  - *Report the finding to elders and judges*

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- *Measure the distance from the body to the nearest city*
  - *Appoint that city to perform a ceremony*
6. Describe the ceremony
- *The elders of the nearest city invite priests and Levites to observe*
  - *They take a heifer into a valley where there is running water (a stream or river)*
  - *They break the heifer's neck*
  - *They wash their hands in the water over the neck of the heifer*
  - *They swear an oath of innocence and ask God for forgiveness*
7. What promise is made in verse 8 to the people performing this ceremony? (*atonement/forgiveness for the bloodshed would be granted them*)

### WHAT IS A HEIFER?

A heifer is a young, female cow that has yet to give birth to a calf or to give milk. In this case, it's also one that has not yet been set to work plowing, threshing, or hauling loads. It would be prized for its beauty and potential as an agricultural animal that would produce other livestock, give milk, and work hard. According to the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (<http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/heifer.html>), a heifer in the Bible represents "sleekness combined with helplessness."

### INTERPRETATION

1. According to verse 9, why was it important for this ceremony to be performed?
  - *To do what is right in God's eyes*
  - *To put away the guilt of innocent blood*
2. Consider this passage in light of Matthew 27:24-25, where Pilate washed his hands of Christ's crucifixion and the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!" Discuss the significance of hand-washing.
3. Why should people ask forgiveness for a crime they didn't commit? What was the consequence of unexamined or unavenged murder according to Numbers 35:33-34?
  - *Murder pollutes (defiles) the land*
  - *The only thing that can clean the stain is the death of the murderer*
4. Have someone read Genesis 9:5-6. What is the importance of human lifeblood to God? According to Gen. 9:3-4, is there a similar consequence when an animal is killed? Why or why not?
  - *Mankind (male and female) are made in God's image*
  - *God demands a reckoning (accounting) for every person who is slain*
  - *Blood is associated with the life of a man or animal*
  - *Animals may be killed and eaten for food*
  - *Animals should be killed when they kill a human being*
  - *Murderers must be killed*
5. Discussion: Are the instructions of Deuteronomy 21 for us today? Why or why not?

### APPLICATION

1. What principles are there from Deuteronomy 21 for us and our judicial system to follow? What should happen when a person is murdered?
2. What comfort can be derived from Deut. 21 and related passages?
  - *There is a cost for the loss of life – a valuable animal is slain.*
  - *There is recognition of the victim's life. His life counts for something.*
  - *God is concerned about righting wrongs.*
  - *God provided Israel with a means for ridding the land of bloodguiltiness.*
  - *God provides atonement/forgiveness.*
3. Look at Isaiah 26:21. Get personal: Does this promise provide comfort or conviction for you? (*allow people to silently contemplate their responses*)
4. In the Old Testament, the punishment for murder was death. What should people do who are guilty of murder today? Think about your answer in light of 1 John 3:10-15 and Rev 22:14-15. Can a murderer be saved?
  - *Saul was guilty of approving the murder of Christians before God miraculously saved him (Acts 9:1, Romans 1:29-32).*
  - *David repented of killing Uriah and received forgiveness (2 Samuel 12:13; see also Psalm 32:5 and 51:14).*
  - *According to Revelation 9:20-21, failure to repent of murder and other sins shows the stubbornness of man.*
5. How is murder forgiven? (*the blood of Jesus*)
  - *1 John 1:7-9 – Cleanses us from all sin; note that in Rev. 22:14, people who wash their robes/do His commandments may enter the city. The key is confession of sin/repentance.*
  - *The sacrifice on the Day of Atonement cleansed Israel from all sin (Leviticus 16:30). According to Hebrews 9:22 and Ephesians 5:2, Christ sacrificed Himself for our sin.*
  - *Isaiah 53:12 speaks of Christ bearing the sins of many. Among other transgressions, He took the punishment for murder on Himself when He died on the cross.*
6. Have the class suggest other relevant passages on sin, repentance, and forgiveness. Close in prayer, contemplating how the murder of the innocent God-Man paid the penalty for all our sin and how His resurrection means we can live eternally.

**SUMMARY:** In cases of unsolved murder, the city nearest the spot where the body was found assumed responsibility. In order to purge the land of bloodguilt, the townspeople performed a hand-washing ceremony and appealed to God for forgiveness. God is gracious to recognize the value of the dead person and to give us a means of finding forgiveness. He shows that society should not allow any human death to go unexamined or unmourned.

**OVERTIME:** Watch the '*Brother's Keeper*' video (5:23 minutes, available in HD on the 2016 Slideshow DVD from Life Matters Worldwide [<http://store.lifemattersww.org/slideshow-dvd>], or watch online [<https://vimeo.com/140183946>]).

# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #5: David & the Biblical Pro-Life Ethic

Three instances from David's life illustrate his commitment to the sanctity of human life (the biblical pro-life ethic) – two positively, one negatively. As you see in the sidebar, many other episodes demonstrate how thoroughly the principle was ingrained. (*Suggested answers to discussion questions are indicated in italic.*)

## DAVID UPHELD THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

1. **Read 2 Samuel 23:13-17.** (Although recorded toward the end of David's life, this incident may have taken place around the time of the events in 1 Sam. 22.) Philistines had invaded David's hometown. How did David feel? *He was filled with longing for a taste of Bethlehem's water.*

What did David's men do for him? *The risked their lives to satisfy his longing.*

What was David's immediate reaction? *He poured out the water as an offering to God, without tasting a drop.*

To what did David liken the water? *He likened the water to their blood and to an offering for God.*

Imagine yourself as one of David's three mighty men. How would you have felt, seeing him pour the water on the ground? Would you have felt honored by David's action? Why or why not?

**Key questions:** What might the men have learned about David's values from this experience? What was more important to David, his pleasure or his men? *By pouring out the water, he showed that the lives of his men were more precious to him than his own life. He showed that, even though he was their king, their lives were equal to him in value.*

Whom did he value more, his men or God? *By pouring out the water to God, David showed he put himself lower than God.*

Do you think this incident would cause the men to behave differently in the future? In what ways? *Perhaps they would have a greater respect for life and resist foolishly risking it.*

2. **Read 1 Samuel 30:11-15.** Discuss how this little-known episode further illustrates David's commitment to the sanctity of human life.

Describe the person that was found by David's men. *Young man. Egyptian. Hungry. Thirsty. Servant (slave) of an Amalekite. Sick. Abandoned. Left for dead.*

### Related episodes in David's life:

- David refused to kill Saul (1 Samuel 24 and 26)
- David honored the lives of his enemies (2 Sam. 1:13-16, 3:26-30, 4:2-12)
- David cared for a disabled man (2 Sam. 9:1-13)
- David restrained himself from taking vengeance on people who treated him poorly (1 Sam. 25, 2 Sam. 16:5-13 and 19:18-23)
- The shedding of "much blood" kept David from building God's temple (1 Chronicles 22:7-9 and 28:2-6)

### David's commitment to the biblical pro-life ethic contrasted sharply with Saul's neglect:

- Saul did not care for the physical well-being of his fighters (1 Sam. 14:24-26)
- Saul killed all the insignificant people of Amalek but kept alive its king and the choicest animals (1 Sam. 15:7-9)
- Saul was jealous of David's kill-count (1 Sam. 18:7-9)
- Jonathan had to persuade Saul that killing David would be "without cause" and a "sin against innocent blood" (1 Sam. 19:4-6)
- Saul sentenced an entire village to death – priests, women, and children – for the "crime" of defending David against a false accusation (1 Sam. 22:14-19)

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What does this episode say about the Amalekites' regard for the sanctity of human life? *They had no compassion for people of another culture, for the young, the sick, the hungry, the dying. They cared more about their military objectives.*

The Egyptian was an enemy combatant. How might David's men have treated him? *They could have killed him, taken him prisoner, tortured or abused him.*

How did David treat the Egyptian? Note similarities between his behavior and that of the Good Samaritan in Jesus' parable (Luke 10:30-37). *Both David and the Good Samaritan took care of the physical needs of a natural enemy – food, drink, medicine, rest – and saw to it that he was restored to full strength.*

What did this treatment cause the young man to do? *He switched sides and helped David and his men gain a military advantage.*

**Note:** When did they care for him – before or after they knew he would/could help them? *Before.*

**Key questions:** What in God's law would have informed David about how he should behave? What about God's character would have informed him?

- *He would have known from the 6th commandment that he should not murder.*
- *He would have known from the creation account that mankind was made in God's image, and that it includes all men, not just Israel.*
- *He would have known from Genesis 9:5 that God is watching and keeps track of every human life. As leader, David would answer for this man's mistreatment or death.*

We also see language from Genesis 9:5 in the episode with the three mighty men. In likening the water to their blood, we get the idea that David knew he would answer to God if their lives were lost in the satisfaction of his desires.

What other considerations might have led David to conclude it would be wrong to kill the young Egyptian? In what ways was he innocent? *As a slave/servant of Amalek, he may have had no choice about fighting Israel. As an injured or sick person, he was vulnerable and unable to defend himself.*

**S**URELY FOR YOUR LIFEblood  
I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

–Genesis 9:5 (NKJV)

### DAVID FAILED TO UPHOLD THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

3. **If needed, review 2 Samuel 11.** This third incident, involving David and Bathsheba and her husband Uriah, is well known. Consider the following:

Uriah was one of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:39, 1 Chronicles 11:41). Compare how David treated him to how he treated the three mighty men in 2 Sam. 23. *He didn't care at all for Uriah's life, nor for the men under him. He arranged for Uriah's death.*

How did sexual sin play into David's disregard for the sanctity of human life? *Sexual sin is at the heart of this murder plot. David hoped to hide his sin, and then he wanted to assume Uriah's place as Bathsheba's husband.*

Note how strong drink was used in this instance (vs. 13). *David attempted to use strong drink to weaken Uriah's resolve, much like the way predators use drugs and alcohol in sexual assaults.*

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Comparing this episode with the first (2 Sam. 23:13-17), how did David change in regard to self-indulgence? *Depending on the order in which these episodes took place, in chapter 11 we see that he indulged himself with Bathsheba at the expense of a loyal soldier, and in chapter 23 he refused to indulge himself at the expense of three loyal soldiers.*

Look at 1 John 3:12 and discuss similarities between Cain and David. *David began to hate his “brother” warrior because Uriah was more behaving more righteously than he was. David’s deeds were evil. Uriah (who had done nothing but get in the way of David’s lust) was noble and loyal, while David behaved dishonorably and disloyally.*

Who else did David involve in his wicked deed? *David misused his servant Joab – who was already guilty of violating the sanctity of human life (2 Sam. 3) – for his own purposes. In this way he perverted kingly authority, much like Saul did when he ordered his men to murder the priests of Nob (1 Sam. 22:14-19).*

What does it say about David that he was placated by the news of Uriah’s death, heartened by his army’s loss, and unmoved by the loss of a brave warrior? *Everything about this episode in David’s life is topsy-turvy. A guilty conscience hindered him from thinking straight. His mind and heart were twisted by lust.*

In 1 Sam. 13:14, David had been called “a man after God’s own heart.” What do the final words of 2 Sam. 11 say about his relationship to God after he married Bathsheba? *David was completely out of step with God (v. 27). God was greatly displeased because David had arranged everything for his own pleasure, without God’s design for life and marriage in mind.*

**Key questions:** Considering how far this good man fell from God’s earlier high estimation, what lessons are there for us? *Sexual sin is closely related to disregard for the sanctity of human life. Obedience to God requires constant vigilance. We must guard our minds and hearts from temptation. When we’re pursuing our own pleasure we’re in danger of displeasing God.*

**Consider the rest of the story:** God’s law required adulterers and murderers to be put to death (see Exodus 21:12 & 23, Leviticus 20:10). David survived this terrible episode without losing his life because he thoroughly repented (see 2 Sam. 12:1-14 and Psalm 51). Years after his death, David became the standard by which other kings were judged (1 Kings 11:4-6). Nevertheless, as 1 Kings 15:5 indicates, the ungodly way he treated Bathsheba and Uriah forever stains our remembrance of David.

**D**AVID DID WHAT WAS RIGHT in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, **except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.**  
– 1 Kings 15:5 (NKJV)

**Application:** How well is the biblical pro-life ethic ingrained in your own heart and mind? How might you strengthen your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors in relation to the sanctity of human life?

<b>ADDITIONAL STUDY: David’s expression of the pro-life ethic in his writings</b>		
Psalm 9:12 Psalm 10:3-14 Psalm 11:5 Psalm 26:9	Psalm 37:12-15, 32 Psalm 54:3 Psalm 55:9, 21 & 23 Psalm 56:5	Psalm 59:3 Psalm 62:3-4 Psalm 86:14-17 Psalm 139:13-18

# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #6: Solomon's Test of Wisdom

**Read 1 Kings 3:16-28.** Consider why the writer of 1 Kings, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, may have chosen this case to demonstrate how powerfully God answered Solomon's prayer.

**I. THE PARTICIPANTS** (verse 16) – Who were they? What do we know about them, and what don't we know?

**Discussion:** Consider how a court case involving two women would affect other people who would have been in Solomon's courtroom or hearing about the case. What would they think when they learned both parties were prostitutes? How might they (and society in general) have viewed the other central figure in the case, a fatherless child? Do you think prostitutes and orphans would have been given a hearing in the courts of most kings of that day? Did "illegitimate" children have a right to justice? How does God's law view prostitution and the people who practice it?

**Relevant passages:**

- *Prostitution is considered degrading, lewd, and profane (Genesis 38:24-26; Leviticus 19:29 and 21:7-9; Proverbs 6:26, 7:10, 23:27, 29:3).*
- *Sexual immorality is equally wrong for men as for women (Numbers 25:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:8; Revelation 2:14).*
- *Prostitution and sexual immorality are punishable by death (Deuteronomy 22:21).*
- *Prostitution is likened to idolatry and connected with child sacrifice (Deut. 23:17-18; Isaiah 57:3-8; Jeremiah 3:6-25; Ezekiel 16:17,20; Hosea 4:12).*
- *The children of prostitutes are spoken of with derision (Isaiah 57:3-5; Hosea 2:4).*
- *In Jesus' day, known "sinners" such as tax-collectors, the sexually immoral, and prostitutes were believed to be disqualified from God's kingdom, but Jesus radically transformed that thinking (Matthew 21:31-32; Luke 7:36-50; John 4:1-42, 8:1-11), calling everyone to a life of repentance and forgiveness.*

**Discussion:** How, just by agreeing to hear their case, did King Solomon elevate the value of marginalized people? Are some women (and men) too sinful for our concern? Are there babies whose lives may be so difficult in the future that we shouldn't extend help to them now?

**ABORTION LINK:** Even today, some children—of the poor, of rape victims, or of teenagers—are viewed as having less value than others, and they are deemed unworthy of the trouble of giving them birth and raising them. Some believe their lives will be too difficult (or that their mothers have been too sinful) to deserve society's notice or help. In short, these babies in the womb are often not regarded as people who deserve justice.

**II. THE FACTS OF THE CASE** – 1 Kings 3:17-22

This was a classic case of she-said/she-said. God's law required two or more witnesses to make a judgment (Num. 35:30, Deut. 19:15-21), but here there were no independent witnesses. Solomon allowed both parties to be heard before the proceedings devolved into a shouting match: "The living child is mine!" "No, he's mine!" The only thing they agreed upon was that one child had died and one remained alive. Resolution seemed hopeless. Without DNA testing, how could Solomon identify the real mother?

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The king had to decide between two competing claims, the most difficult type of case. One witness had to be lying, and the living baby could not speak for himself. Solomon may have wished he could let the case go unresolved, but good government must provide justice and account for every life lost, regardless of the plaintiffs' position in society (Genesis 9:5-6; Leviticus 19:15; Numbers 35:33; Deuteronomy 1:17 and 21:1-9).

**ABORTION LINK:** There are two strong competing sides to the dilemma of abortion—the plight of the mother is pitted against that of the unborn baby. Both appeal to our sympathy. Should the rights of one be ignored in favor of the other, or can we somehow help both? Even if we oppose the killing of unborn babies, we're often reluctant to assign guilt to the mother. We may feel abortion is a problem that can never be solved. If we're honest, we may wish the problem would simply go away. How do you feel about the abortion problem? Are there situations in which you feel tempted to ignore it? When? Why?

### III. THE KING'S EDICT – 1 Kings 3:23-25

King Solomon reviewed the case before rendering his verdict: "Bring me a sword. Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." Stop for a moment and imagine you don't know the rest of the story. Let the verdict sink in, as though it was the final word.

**Discussion:** What effect would such a verdict have? What kind of king do you think Solomon would be perceived to be at this point: a wise and judicious king or a barbaric tyrant? What kind of person would applaud this verdict? What kind of person would be horrified by it? If carried out, what would be the effect of such a sentence? Do you think people would continue to bring their cases to the court? Why or why not? Would they have hope of finding justice? Why or why not? Does "might make right"? Why or why not?

**Key points:** Raw power—power lacking wisdom, righteousness, justice, or mercy—strikes fear in people's hearts, especially those without power. They're silenced into submission. Tyrants believe they won't have to answer to God for their rulings, that they can get away with killing innocent people, but the following passages show that God sees everything they do: Genesis 4:10; Psalm 9:12 and 10:11-14.

**ABORTION LINK:** Discuss ways in which abortion is an example of raw power. What problems are "solved" by abortion? Is it ever appropriate to kill a person who is causing problems? Why is it dangerous to think of a person as something that can be divided up (killed) in order to satisfy competing interests? Who holds the power in these situations?

**Caution for discussion leaders:** Please be mindful that members of your class may have regrets over past involvement in abortion. Be sure to remind everyone that, while abortion is a grievous sin, God's grace is sufficient, abundant, and free. Find biblical support at [www.lifemattersww.org/Need-Help/Find-post-abortion-help/Already-Aborted](http://www.lifemattersww.org/Need-Help/Find-post-abortion-help/Already-Aborted), "Can Women Who've Aborted Be Right with God?"

### IV. THE MOTHER'S APPEAL – 1 Kings 3:26

**Discussion:** Many plaintiffs would have taken King Solomon's edict as the final word, but not the mother of the living son. Why did she speak up to oppose the king? In what way might this have been a grave risk? What enabled this mother to value her child's life over her own? What did the second woman's statement say about her character? Why would she rather see her companion's baby die too?

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**Key points:** The true mother's plea was strikingly different from the other woman's. She said "Oh, my lord, give her the living child. By no means put him to death," while the other woman said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him." Though their lives were similar, these women had vastly different responses, based on their desires and worldviews. Even though the mother of the living child was a prostitute, sin had not dulled her conscience nor eroded her compassion. She was willing to sacrifice her own happiness for the sake of her child, even though it meant he would live with a liar and a cheat. The other woman could only be happy if both of them were miserable.

**ABORTION LINK:** Even people who seemingly have no power can (and should) speak up for those who are more helpless. A simple yet selfless plea can save the life of someone who is precious to God: "**By no means kill the innocent child!**"

Proponents of abortion, on the other hand, echo the second woman's advocacy of death, saying, in effect, "**By any means kill.**" Indeed, different methods are used to kill unborn babies—drugs, various instruments, and technology—depending on the child's size and level of development.

Pro-life advocates say it's wrong to rank a person's value on the basis of size, level of development, environment, or degree of dependency. Take a look at **The SLED Test** below.

### The SLED Test

There is no morally significant difference between the embryo you once were and the adult you are today. Nothing would have justified killing you at an earlier stage of development. **SLED** is a helpful acronym that reminds us of four non-essential differences between people.

**S** You were once very small as an embryo, but body **SIZE** does not make a person more or less valuable. A 7-foot basketball player is not "more human" than a toddler.

**L** As a fetus you were more developed than you were at the embryo stage, but less developed than you are today. Why should **LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT** matter? Two-year-old girls are less developed than 18-year-old women—should we kill them? Of course not, for the same reason that parents don't have a greater right to live than their teenage children, even though they're more developed physically and intellectually.

**E** Your **ENVIRONMENT** also has no bearing on what you are. The journey of eight inches down the birth canal does not change the essential nature of the unborn—from someone we can kill to someone we cannot.

**D** **DEGREE OF DEPENDENCY**—Each of us are dependent on sources outside ourselves for survival, to one degree or another. Being more dependent than someone else has no bearing on a person's value.

From *The Moral Question of Abortion*, by Stephen D. Schwarz (Loyola Press, 1990); see also "How to Defend Your Pro-Life Views in 5 Minutes or Less," by Scott Klusendorf of Life Training Institute (<http://prolifetraining.com/resources/five-minute-1/>). See also <https://www.lifemattersww.org/Need-Help/Questions-about-abortion> for more facts about the human embryo.

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### V. THE FINAL VERDICT AND AFTERMATH – 1 Kings 3:27-28

King Solomon revealed he was no tyrant after all. His shocking “edict” had its intended effect: revealing the women’s hidden thoughts. It was not his final word, but only the means to a just end. Justice was Solomon’s great concern, as he had said in his prayer (verse 9). The king echoed the mother’s earnest plea: “By no means put him to death!”

**Discussion:** Why would it be insufficient to simply state a just verdict without proving that the right woman got her son? How did Solomon’s final order of verse 27 reveal his regard for the value of life?

**Key points:** Solomon’s intent was to protect the child from death and restore him to his rightful mother. The fatherless son of a sinful woman had value in King Solomon’s eyes and in his court, but not in society. It would have been wrong for the king to ignore someone, even if that person might never have known his father, had an education, or achieved any kind of status in society. The child may have indeed gone on to live a miserable life, but killing him would have been the ultimate denial of justice.

**ABORTION LINK:** Many women consider abortion because they face thorny problems in their pregnancies. They need wise counselors to help them sort through their predicament and lead them to solutions that don’t involve killing a child. God approves of leaders and others who speak up for the weak against the ruthless. Refer to Psalm 82:1-4 and Proverbs 31:4-9.

**Conclusion:** Why do you think this case was chosen to represent Solomon’s judicial wisdom? If King Solomon upheld the rights of a prostitute and her “illegitimate” son, what do you think others could expect to receive from his court in the future? What was his priority, justice or power? Who might have received encouragement from this outcome, and who might have been discouraged? What can we know about God’s character from this account? How does it reveal what’s important to God?

**VI. SUMMARY:** The text does not say Solomon was given the answer to this problem in a dream or vision, or through the word of a prophet. God had, however, granted him the wisdom he needed to see which woman was the real mother and to demonstrate that fact to everyone else. Solomon’s wise verdict was eventually perceived by all as being from God for the purpose of rendering justice (verse 28). As the closing statement of the passage, we see it as proof of a direct answer to Solomon’s prayer. James 1:5-8 assures believers that we too can receive wisdom from God about difficult matters.

# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #7: Jesus is Mindful of a Disabled Woman

Read Luke 13:10-17

**I. THE LOCATION AND SITUATION** (verse 10) – Where was Jesus? What was He doing? What day of the week was it? What is the significance of these factors?

**II. THE WOMAN'S CONDITION** (verse 11) – What do we know about her? What don't we know?

**Key points:** We know from verse 16 that the spirit causing this sickness was evil, but we don't know whether this evil spirit still plagued her, or if it had left her sickness behind as a lingering consequence. We don't know if a particular sin in her past had left her open to evil spiritual influences, or if she was still practicing sin. We also don't know whether she knew Jesus was going to be the speaker that day or whether she had hopes of being healed by him. We can only speculate that, by attending the synagogue, she was now trying to follow God and perhaps accepting what Jesus said as God's word.

**Key comparison:** Earlier, Jesus had healed another woman of an "issue of blood" or hemorrhage (Luke 8:43-48, Matthew 9:20-22, and Mark 5:25-34). According to Mark's account, this woman had "endured" or "suffered" under the care of many physicians and spent "all she had." Doctors had not helped her at all, but instead her condition had worsened. Sadly, this can be the experience of many people with chronic illnesses. The woman with the constant hemorrhage must have been very discouraged, and we can surmise that the woman in Luke 13 might have felt similarly.

**III. THE ACTION BASED ON COMPASSION** – Luke 13:12-13

**A. Compassionate vision:** What did Jesus do? Why is it significant to know that Jesus saw her?

**Key points:** Even though Jesus was in the middle of teaching, He was not so intent on what He was doing that He couldn't take notice of individuals in the crowd around Him. He was also willing to interrupt Himself for someone else's sake. He noticed this woman and everything about her.

**Key comparisons:** In Genesis 16:1-15, Hagar expressed amazement that God saw her. She said of Him, "You are the God who sees me." In Jonah 3:10, God saw the penitent actions of the people of Nineveh and relented of the disaster He'd threatened. Gospel writers record what Jesus saw:

- *Matthew 14:14 – Saw a large crowd, had compassion on them, healed their sick*
- *Mt. 9:36 – Saw people, had compassion, told His disciples to pray for more workers*
- *Mark. 6:34 – Saw a large crowd, had compassion on them, taught them many things*
- *Mk. 10:14 – Saw children being turned away, became indignant, and rebuked His disciples*
- *Mk. 10:21 – Saw the rich young ruler, loved him, invited him to follow*
- *Luke 7:13-14 – Saw a widow, His heart when out to her, and He raised her dead son to life*
- *Lk. 17:14 – Saw 10 leprous men and healed them*
- *Lk. 19:5 and 41 – Saw Zacchaeus up a tree and went to his house; saw Jerusalem in the distance and wept over it*
- *Lk. 21:2 – Saw a poor widow making her gift at the temple and honored it*
- *John 5:5-9 – Saw a man who'd been ill for 38 years and healed him*
- *Jn. 9:1-7 – Saw a man born blind and healed him*
- *Jn. 11:33-35, 43 – Saw Mary and others weeping, was deeply moved, and raised Lazarus*

**Discussion:** How well do we pay attention to the people around us? Do we notice changes in their mood, behavior, or needs? What prevents us from really seeing each other? Is sight a fixed

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ability that can't be improved, or can our eyes be trained to see better? How?

What does compassion have to do with seeing people and their needs? What gets in the way of compassion? In general, do you look at people with compassion, or with feelings such as suspicion, impatience, or annoyance?

**B. Compatible teachings:** Two of Jesus' parables, also in Luke, have to do with seeing people and having compassion for them:

- *Lk. 10:25-37 – Parable of the Good Samaritan, who saw the injured man, took pity on him, and cared for his needs (in contrast to the priest and Levite)*
- *Lk 15:20 – Parable of the Prodigal Son, whose father saw him from a long way off, was filled with compassion for him, and ran to embrace him*

**Discussion:** What do these parables say about God? What do they say He wants us to do?

**Key points:** People who love God also love their neighbors. Love for neighbors includes caring whether they live or die and helping them with their physical needs. God loves us the way the father loved his prodigal son. Having compassion involves action as well as feeling.

**C. Result:** What was the result of Jesus declaring freedom for the woman in the synagogue and laying His hands on her? What affect did His ministry have on her life?

**Key points:** Her sickness and/or the spirit had kept her in bondage, hindering her from enjoying life abundantly. With Jesus' touch, her life was radically changed. Released from a debilitating condition, her body was restored and strengthened. She could now stand erect and look people in the eye. She could also obey and serve God more freely and fully. She began giving glory to God.

### IV. THE UNCOMPASSIONATE REACTION – Luke 13:14

**Discussion:** What was the synagogue official's reaction? At whom did he aim his rebuke? Why?

*\*According to the *New American Standard New Testament Greek Lexicon*, it was the duty of the synagogue ruler to "select the readers or teachers in the synagogue, to examine the discourses of the public speakers, and to see that all things were done with decency and in accordance with ancestral usage" (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/archisynagogos.html>).*

**Key points:** Consider James 1:19-20, "Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God." Human anger and indignation often go off course, and may even be directed at God. Righteous anger is reserved for those who are oppressing people and in favor of ones who are being oppressed, not the other way around.

### V. THE HEART OF THE MATTER – Luke 13:15-16

**Discussion:** What does Jesus' response to the ruler tell you about the root of the problem? To whom were His words addressed?

**A. Key comparisons:**

1. Oxen and donkeys – Did society value this woman more than, equal to, or less than an ox or donkey? If they would help an ox or donkey on the Sabbath, but not a person, what does that say about them?
2. Abraham – Did society see this woman as a daughter of Abraham or a slave of Satan? When Jesus called her a "daughter of Abraham," what did that do for her?

**Key points:** They may have viewed her as less valuable than an ox because they focused on all the things she could not do in her condition. If she could not work or care for herself she may

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have required the help of others. She may have been viewed as a drain on community resources.

Calling her a “daughter of Abraham” elevated her in their eyes. She was one of them, part of the community, and should be valued more highly than they had before. Jesus healed her so she could fulfill her God-given capacity as a woman made in the image of God. But there was a lesson for all of them in her healing, something they may have missed otherwise: Jesus had demonstrated God’s love for the weak, broken, and helpless among us.

- B. Application:** Since we cannot heal as God does, beside praying for their healing, what can we do to help people with disabilities and chronic conditions? Think of ways you can do this for people who are members of your church, or people from outside who might want to attend church services and events and may need to put their trust in Jesus. What would the Good Samaritan do? How might their lives be revolutionized by being noticed and included?

**Key points:** We can uphold a disabled person’s dignity, no matter what condition they’re in. We can include them in daily life as much as possible. We can notice them, greet them, remove obstacles blocking their participation, and provide help and support as we are able.

As a result, they will feel as though they belong. They may be drawn to Christ and encouraged in worship. They will be valued simply for their presence.

### VI. THE RESULT – Luke 13:17

**Discussion:** What was the effect of Jesus’ response? Why? What does it mean to you that Jesus was mindful of this woman?

- A. The mindfulness of God.** In Psalm 8:3-4, David marveled that, for all the grandeur of the created universe, God is still mindful of people and cares for them.
- B. A contemporary counterfeit.** “Mindfulness” is a common word in modern psychology and Eastern religion, usually used to describe a state of “living in the moment,” undistracted by thoughts or worries. A “mindful” person is supposedly able to fully enjoy the present without dwelling on the past or future.

**Key points of comparison:** In the life of Jesus, mindfulness was oriented toward God’s will and the needs of others. Jesus was always in tune with what His Father wanted Him to say and do. He was constantly aware of His purpose and not distracted by what others wanted Him to say and do that would waylay Him from it. Jesus was also supremely in tune with the needs of others around Him—what they were doing and thinking, how they were feeling, and whether they were oppressing someone else or being oppressed themselves. He was always ready to help them. Jesus’ mindfulness brought joy to the woman He helped and delighted onlookers.

**Application:** It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by the many needs of people around us. What are some helpful take-aways from our study of this passage?

- People with chronic illnesses or disabilities often live with discouragement.
- God notices everyone.
- We can interrupt “important” tasks for the needs of people without risking God’s displeasure.
- We can learn to see people compassionately.
- Wrong attitudes toward people can lead to misplaced anger.
- Sometimes it’s helpful to just include people who’ve been on the outside.
- God’s character shows us how to behave toward people who are weak and helpless.

**Related resource:** Watch “Jesus is Mindful of a Severely Disabled Woman” (4:29 minute video) at <https://vimeo.com/303586441>.

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #8: Profiles in Courage

**INTRODUCTION:** Read Proverbs 24:10-12. Discuss the following questions (*possible responses are italicized and placed within parentheses*):

- 1. What situation does this passage describe?** (*Days of adversity, distress, trouble, scarcity, injustice; people are being given death sentences even though they are innocent of any capital offense; others are “stumbling to slaughter,” perhaps by means of their own recklessness or because they are intent on killing innocent people.*)
- 2. What actions are required?** (*Rescue or deliver those being taken to death; hold back, restrain, or prevent unjust deaths.*)
- 3. To whom is the command addressed?** (*People who are not being led to death or staggering to slaughter but are by-standers or observers of the situation; people ignoring the situation who need to become involved; people who are hoping someone else will act.*)

Proverbs 23:15, 19, 22, 26 and 24:13 lend context. This section of the book was for Solomon’s son, who would one day be king. It’s worthwhile to consider this command as we evaluate government leaders, but as we will see in our study, kings and princes are not the only ones who should rescue.

- 4. What do we know about God from these verses?** (*God knows what is going on in the world and the dangers we face. He knows how much we know. He is acting behind the scenes to keep our souls. He is also watching and considering how we respond to helpless people dangerous times. He weighs our hearts—our action or inaction—and renders His judgment accordingly. Future reward or loss of reward is based on our response to distress.*)
- 5. Key questions: What methods should we use to prevent unjust death? Should we place our bodies between victims and their killers? Should we employ violence?**

The text does not specify why people are going to their deaths or how they should be rescued, but we are told about unacceptable behavior. It is unacceptable for leaders (or faithful followers of God) to be weak or lazy, to do nothing, or fail to act (verse 10). We can’t excuse ourselves because we feel incapable of action or ignorant of what’s going on. A lack of courage, compassion, or knowledge is inexcusable. Verse 12 says that God judges our action and inaction. He knows what we know and don’t know. He renders judgment accordingly.

Consider historical examples, such as people who rescued Jews from the holocaust, versus those who cooperated with the Nazis for their own survival. What sorts of things did people do to rescue Jews?

- 6. According to verse 10, what does inaction reveal about a person?** (*It indicates we have small or limited strength, are fearful or lack of courage, are apathetic, or perhaps weary. It could reveal our faith is small, that we don’t really believe God is watching over us and keeping our souls, and that we’re overly fearful of what people can do to us. It may show that we think too much about current comfort than future reward, treasures on earth vs. treasures in heaven.*)

Proverbs 21:2 says, “Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts.” We may be able to deceive ourselves, but God will make an accurate judgment.

**PROFILES IN COURAGE:** Even though Proverbs 24:10-12 does not tell us how to rescue or deliver people from death, the Bible does give us several examples. Look at the following passages to discover what

people did to prevent the unjust deaths of brothers and neighbors:

Genesis 37:12-27	Exodus 1:15-21	1 Sam 19:1-7 and 20:1-42
1 Kings 18:3-4	Esther 3:5-11, 4:1-17, 8:4-6	Job 29:12-17
Jeremiah 26:1-24	Jeremiah 38:1-13	Daniel 2:12-19
Luke 10:25-37	Acts 23:12-31	2 Timothy 4:16-18

**Activity:** Read each passage, identify the main characters, and discuss a few questions:

- What obstacles or dangers did the hero/heroine face? Consider the interpersonal dynamics at play between the hero and villain: Who held power? Why might someone decline to help in that situation?
- How did the hero/heroine show courage and strength? What action did the he or she take?
- What motivated the hero/heroine to action? What did he or she know about God?

Use one **Profile in Courage** worksheet to record your findings for each passage. The class could look at the first passage together and then break into smaller groups for the rest.

**SUMMARY:** This overview of heroism in the Bible gives us a good idea of how we can “rescue” or “hold back” people from death, as commanded in Proverbs 24:10-12. In each case, a brave person intervened in a life-and-death situation.

- Some were leaders (princes, kings, queens, prominent citizens), but others were ordinary folk (siblings, midwives, servants, fellow travelers). None of us can say, “It’s not my job.”
- Some situations called for secrecy or stealth. Working quietly behind the scenes, some heroes helped without drawing attention to themselves, the victims, or what they were doing.
- Their efforts were largely successful and these heroes have become good examples for all believers.

**What did you learn about the types of action that can be taken on behalf of another person?**

They fall into roughly two categories: speaking up and providing practical help. Which of our heroes spoke up? Which offered practical help? How many did both?

HEROES WHO SPOKE UP	HEROES WHO PROVIDED PRACTICAL HELP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made an effort to persuade: Argued on behalf of a brother (Reuben, Judah), friend (Jonathan), a people-group (Esther), a servant of God (Ahikam, Ebed-melech, Paul’s nephew)</li> <li>• Warned a potential victim (Jonathan)</li> <li>• Opposed villains who oppress the poor, the dying, the disabled, etc. (Job)</li> <li>• Interceded before the king and God on behalf of himself and other victims (Daniel)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refused to participate in murder (midwives)</li> <li>• Enabled a victim’s escape (Jonathan)</li> <li>• Hid potential victims and cared for their physical needs (Obadiah)</li> <li>• Helped victims according to their needs (Job)</li> <li>• Lifted a victim from misery and danger (Ebed-melech)</li> <li>• Tended to a victim’s physical needs (Good Samaritan)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jonathan both spoke up (to the king, and to David to warn him) AND acted to enable the victim’s escape.</li> <li>• Ebed-melech spoke to the king AND physically lifted Jeremiah from the pit.</li> <li>• Job both opposed the villains AND helped the victims with their needs.</li> </ul>	

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**PROFILES IN COURAGE worksheet:** \_\_\_\_\_ Passage

<b>Identify the main characters</b>	Victim: Villain: Hero/heroine:
<b>What obstacles or dangers did the hero/heroine face?</b>	
<b>What action did the hero/heroine take? How did he or she show courage and strength?</b>	
<b>What motivated the hero/heroine to action? What did he/she know about God?</b>	

Fill in one worksheet for each assigned passage and report your findings to the class.

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**One more biblical example:** Look at John 7:1, 14-20, 25, 30-32, 43-53 – Jewish leaders, who wanted to kill Jesus, had sent officers to the temple to arrest Him. After the officers returned without Jesus, Nicodemus reminded them that God’s law required proof before someone could be sentenced to death. It was a risky thing to do, but he feared God more. Jesus’ life was spared because a) the Jews had no answer, and b) it was not the right time for Jesus to die.

**APPLICATION:** In the distressing situation represented by abortion, thousands of unborn babies all around the world are being taken to their deaths each day.

**1. Think about their mothers: How are they like the people in Proverbs 24:11 who are staggering or stumbling to slaughter?** *(Some women are threatened with losing their home, job, or relationships if they continue the pregnancy. They are not the ones who will die, but they may have made reckless choices, endangering their own life or the lives of others. If they abort, they suffer many losses: loss of their child, a hardening of conscience, broken fellowship with God, etc.)*

**2. Describe the kinds of distress that leads pregnant women to have abortions.** *(Being abandoned or misled by the baby’s father, being a victim of sexual assault, lacking a husband or a home, lacking good parental guidance, repeated errors in judgment, etc.)* **A note of caution:** While it might be tempting to criticize the pregnant woman, finding fault does not help her or her child.

Looking at the demographics of abortion patients and their reasons for abortions, we find:

- Most abortion patients are unmarried and in their 20s or 30s
- 59% have had at least one previous birth
- The reasons for abortion include not being ready for a child, financial or relationship instability, not wanting people to know they’re pregnant or had sex, being coerced by a husband or partner

**3. How should we behave toward people who are caught up in the distress of abortion?** Make a list of practical things that God’s people can do to alleviate a woman’s distress:

*Welcome unwed mothers and their children to church  
Support the work of pregnancy care centers  
Donate clothing and furnishings  
Help with car and home repairs, job searches, etc.*

**4. How can we meet the challenge of abortion distress by speaking up?**

We must speak **to** the woman: about the dangers of sexual sin and abortion, about alternatives to abortion, about forgiveness for sin (including the sin of abortion).

We must also speak **for** the woman and her baby: to her parents and the baby’s father, to the government, to the community at large.

**5. Reflecting on the fight against abortion, how have people been weak and ineffective in response? How have they been strong and wise in their responses to abortion?**

**6. Reflecting on your own response to abortion, has it been weak or strong, wise or unwise? In what areas can you become stronger and wiser?**

If we’re afraid to speak or act, we can draw on God’s promises for courage and wisdom: Deuteronomy 31:6, Joshua 1:9, Prov. 2:8 and 24:5, Isaiah 40:28-31, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 6:9-10, Hebrews 12:3.

**RELATED PASSAGES FOR FURTHER STUDY** Days of distress: Prov. 25:19, 26. Human hearts: Prov. 17:3, 21:2; Jeremiah 17:10. Unjust killing: Prov. 1:10-19, Prov. 6:16-19. Wicked perpetrators: Prov. 3:31-32, 11:8, 12:6, 21:7, 24:1-2 & 19-20, 30:14. Wise rescuers: Prov. 31:8-9; Ezekiel 33:8; Ephesians 5:11; Hebrews 12:12, 13:1-3; James 2:15-16, 3:13.

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## KEY POINTS IN THE PROFILES IN COURAGE PASSAGES:

**Genesis 37:12-27** – Joseph (victim) needed rescue from some of his brothers who wanted to kill him (villains). Reuben and Judah became his heroes, speaking up on his behalf to preserve his life, even if it meant selling him into slavery. The eight brothers who were clamoring for Joseph's death could have turned against Reuben and Judah. It's easy to get swept up in a mob and scary to think about opposing it. Reuben reminded them it would be wrong to shed innocent blood. Judah may have thought about Cain and Abel and known he would answer to God for his brother's death (see Gen. 9:5-6). It does not seem they were motivated by love for Joseph but may have loved or at least honored their father. They used persuasion, not aggression.

**Exodus 1:15-21** – Baby boys (victims) needed rescue from Pharaoh (villain). The Hebrew midwives, who would have been the instrument of their deaths, instead became their heroines. They refused to obey Pharaoh's edict and saved the baby boys' lives. They risked making Pharaoh angry and losing their lives, or at least their livelihood. Even though they were under Pharaoh's authority, their fear of God was greater. They may have known God planned to work through the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God commended and rewarded them for defending their countrymen.

**1 Samuel 19:1-7 and 20:1-42** – David (victim) needed rescue from King Saul (villain). Jonathan (hero) spoke to his father in favor of David and temporarily persuaded King Saul to not kill him. Later, Jonathan warned David about King Saul's intent to kill him, which allowed David to escape. He set up a signal so that he would not be seen talking to David. Jonathan risked making his father angry and being killed himself. He was motivated to act by his love for David, and by the knowledge that God had chosen David to become king after Saul, not Jonathan. He also knew God's laws concerning capital punishment, that David had done nothing deserving of the death penalty, and that he would have to answer to God if he did nothing (see Genesis 9:5-6).

**1 Kings 18:3-4** – Prophets of God (victims) were being massacred by Queen Jezebel (villain). Obadiah, a servant in King Ahab household, became a hero by protecting 100 of them. Obadiah risked losing his job and his life by hiding them in two caves and feeding them bread and water. He was motivated by fear of God, fearing God more than the king and queen. He knew God was his King and Judge.

**Esther 3:5-11, 4:1-17, 8:4-6** – Haman (villain), the 2nd most powerful man in Persia, succeeds in convincing King Ahasuerus that all Jews should be killed (victims). Mordecai (hero) convinced a reluctant Queen Esther to become a heroine, even though she feared being killed if the king didn't extend his scepter to her. She was motivated by the knowledge that she would be killed with the rest of the Jews, and by the idea that God had made her queen for just this moment. Esther bravely and passionately spoke up for her people before the king, gradually winning the king over and letting Haman think he was being honored. She astutely persuaded the king to allow Jews to defend themselves.

**Job 29:12-17** – Villains were wicked people who preyed upon victims who are poor, orphans, the perishing, widows, the blind, lame, and needy. Job (hero) rescued people in various practical ways, making them joyful and earning their blessing. He not only prevented the killing of innocent people but rendered the wicked people toothless against future victims! He made his business to help people. Job investigated cases about which he knew little (or was willing to help people who were strangers). Knowing God is righteous and just, Job was motivated by his desire to be like God.

**Jeremiah 26:1-24** – Priests and false prophets (villains) were determined to kill Jeremiah (victim), even though Jeremiah had done nothing to deserve death. Ahikam is credited by name with saving Jeremiah, although princes/officials, elders, and the people were also heroes. They risked angering King Jehoiakim who had chased another prophet all the way to Egypt to have him killed. They feared God more. Even though they were living in a time of God's judgment, they knew His law well enough understand killing Jeremiah would be wrong.

**Jeremiah 38:1-13** – King Zedekiah allowed his princes/officials (villains) to throw Jeremiah (victim) into a muddy cistern, leaving him there to die. The king was weak and could not control them; he feared having anything to do with Jeremiah. Ebed-melech, Zedekiah's Ethiopian servant (hero) risked his own life by persuading Zedekiah to let him rescue Jeremiah. Ebed-melech seemed to be motivated by compassion for Jeremiah and considered how to make his rescue more comfortable. We know little else about him, except that he was promised deliverance in the coming destruction (39:15-18). He knew right from wrong (Romans 2:14-16) and that God's prophet would die without intervention.

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**Daniel 2:12-19** – When King Nebuchadnezzar (villain) ordered all the wise men (victims) to be killed, Daniel (hero) spoke up on behalf of himself and others. He requested more time to seek wisdom from God that would eventually save all their lives. He was motivated by His faith in God. Daniel and his three friends were the only real wise men because they knew and trusted the true God, Sovereign Creator of all. The others were weak, fearful idolaters who had no resources for saving anyone.

**Luke 10:25-37** – Thieves (villains) were greedy for a traveler's money. They beat the victim severely and left him to die by the side of the road. A Samaritan (hero) acted to see that the man survived. He spent his own time and money to help him and risked falling prey to the same robbers. He was motivated by compassion for a neighbor, even one he didn't know. The Good Samaritan did not tell the victim to "be warmed and filled," as James 2:15-16 warns against. He stood in contrast to religious leaders who failed to do anything.

**Acts 23:12-31** – Some Jews (villains) conspired to kill Paul (victim), but his nephew (hero) learned of the plot and spoke to the Roman commander on Paul's behalf. He risked being found out by the conspirators. The commander (another hero) used stealth and military might to bring Paul to safety. Even though he was not a Christian, he knew right from wrong and that Paul had done nothing deserving of death. (Notice the contrast between the pagan commander and people of Jeremiah's time who should have known it was wrong to take an innocent man's life.)

**2 Timothy 4:9-18** – Paul (victim) was on trial in Rome because some Jews (villains) had accused him before Roman leaders. People had done him much harm, and others had failed to help. No one defended him and he felt alone. He needed friends, but ultimately had no hero but God Himself. During the trial, God strengthened him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and he was delivered from a death sentence. Even though Paul grew in his conviction that God is able to deliver and that he would be preserved until he was called home to heaven, he still sought human companionship.

**RELATED VIDEO:** *Profiles in Courage* is available for free download from Vimeo, at <https://vimeo.com/372727327>.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Waltke B, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 15-31*, Eerdmans, 2005

Jerman J, Jones RK and Onda T, *Characteristics of U.S. Abortion Patients in 2014 and Changes Since 2008*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2016, [www.guttmacher.org/report/characteristics-us-abortion-patients-2014](http://www.guttmacher.org/report/characteristics-us-abortion-patients-2014).

Finer L, Frohwirth L, Dauphinee L, Singh S, Moore A, *Reasons U.S. Women Have Abortions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2005, <https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2005/reasons-us-women-have-abortions-quantitative-and-qualitative-perspectives>.

Ayers D, *Current Sexual Practices of Evangelical Teens and Young Adults*, Institute for Family Studies, 2019, <https://ifstudies.org/ifs-admin/resources/final-ifsresearchbrief-ayers-evangelicalsandsex8819.pdf>

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #9: Lament for the Unborn

A lament is a genre of psalm in which people pour out their complaints to God to persuade Him to act on their behalf, all the while affirming their trust in Him. Sixty-seven psalms are laments, more than any other type of psalm.

Laments can have seven parts:

1. An address to God
2. A review of God's faithfulness
3. A complaint
4. A confession of sin or claim of innocence
5. A request for help
6. God's response
7. A vow to praise and/or statement of trust in God

Of those seven parts, only one—the complaint—must be present for it to be considered a lament.

We usually think of complaining as disrespectful to God. In the psalms people pour out their hearts to God while still trusting in Him. In a lament people do not attempt to solve the problem themselves but they cry to God for help. They look to God, not the enemy, as the One ultimately in control. They ask God to take action—to bring justice—rather than acting themselves or cursing the enemy.

Read Psalm 13 as an example of a lament. Write your own lament—about a common complaint that people have, about your own personal complaints, or about a huge societal complaint such as abortion.

Here's a lament for the unborn that was written by Melissa Heiland of Beautiful Feet International:

*Oh Lord, You are the Giver and Sustainer of life.  
You are faithful to us even when we are unfaithful.  
How long will You allow the senseless slaughter of innocent lives?  
We are a nation without a conscience.  
We kill our children and call it choice.  
We applaud things that should be unspeakable.  
Help us, Lord, to see the truth, to value life as You value life, to cherish our children as gifts from You.  
I will praise You all my days.  
You are a faithful and true God, the One who forgives and forgives again.  
Your compassion never fails.*

<https://www.facebook.com/beautifulfeetinternational/videos/250760159510335/>

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# Bible Study/Sunday School Lesson #10: Hard Hearts Won't Help

**INTRODUCTION:** Believers search the scriptures to discover what pleases God. They also find what displeases Him. In Mark 3:1-6 we have a vivid example of the latter. (Read the passage together, then discuss the following questions.)

1. Note that people were watching Jesus and testing Him, but He was also watching and testing them. How do you think they felt when He looked around the room at them "with anger"?
2. What was it about this encounter that so greatly displeased Jesus?
3. What was He expecting to see when He looked around at them?
4. Note the words used to indicate His displeasure: "anger" and "grief" ("deep distress"). In Exodus 34:6, God describes Himself as "slow to anger," so what does it say about this incident that it caused Him to experience such strong emotion? Why do you think He reacted so strongly?

Spend a few moments comparing the passages that parallel Mark 3:1-6—Matthew 12:9-14 and Luke 6:6-11. What does each account of this event add to our understanding?

- In Matthew's account, it's the watchers who ask the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" and Jesus who answers it. Matthew's is the only account that compares helping animals on the Sabbath to helping a person.
- Mark's is the only account that mentions Jesus' emotions and the watchers' hardness of heart. It's also the only one that refers to Jesus looking around at them and the Pharisees' subsequent conspiracy with the Herodians.
- Luke identifies the watchers as scribes and Pharisees; like Mark, he tells us they were watching Jesus. All the accounts refer to their purpose of hoping to accuse Jesus of wrong-doing, but Luke alone mentions that Jesus knew what they were thinking. Luke is also the only Gospel-writer to mention the anger (rage) of the scribes and Pharisees.
- Like Mark, in Luke's account it is Jesus who asks the question, posing it differently than they did in. Perhaps after the scribes and Pharisees asked Him whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath, Jesus rephrased it, saying, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?"

**LAW**—How do we reconcile the law against working on the Sabbath with Jesus' many miracles on the Sabbath? Is there a contradiction?

Ultimately, we must acknowledge that, as the Son of God and Author of the law, Jesus had every right to explain how the Sabbath principle was intended to be understood. This is at the core of the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus. Either Jesus had the authority to explain Scripture or He was in violation of the law. In His explanation, doing good for others is not to be considered everyday work or labor.

We can examine the legal background concerning the Sabbath (*see passages in the text box at right*). Even though the Old Testament clearly

#### **Laws concerning Sabbath:**

*Exodus 16:13-36, 20:8-11, 23:10-12, 31:12-17, 34:21, 35:2-3; Leviticus 16:29-31, 19:3 and 30, 23:3, 25:1-22; Deuteronomy 5:12-15*

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prohibited labor on the 7th day, there are only two recorded instances of the Sabbath being violated in Scripture; in only one of them is punishment meted out.

- In Exodus 16:27-30, some people went out to gather manna on the Sabbath. They found none because God had told them He provided that day's manna on the 6th day. God was angry they failed to heed His warning, but He did not punish them.
- In Numbers 15:32-36, a man found gathering wood on the Sabbath was brought to Moses. God confirmed to the people through Moses that they should all participate in putting him to death by stoning.

When Jesus asked those gathered in the synagogue whether it was lawful to do good or harm on the Sabbath He framed the question using two forms of a literary device known as **parallelism**.

*Is it lawful ... on the Sabbath    to do good    or to do harm,  
to save a life    or to kill?*

He used **antithetical parallelism** to contrast opposite ideas. What is the opposite (antithesis) of doing good? *Doing harm*. What is the opposite of saving a life? Killing.

To antithetical parallelism Jesus added **synonymous parallelism**, which is the repetition of a phrase using different words. This structure gives us a broader picture of what is meant by doing good vs. doing harm; the second line explains or expands on the first.

5. What does Jesus use as a synonymous parallel for doing good? Saving a life. What is His synonymous parallel for doing harm or evil? Killing.
6. Discuss how Jesus' question clarifies the issue of healing someone on the Sabbath. If someone is unsure whether an action or behavior is good or evil, do you think it is helpful to ask, "*Does this promote life or destroy it?*" Is it fair to say that doing good is *always* life-saving while doing harm is *always* life-destroying?

**Extra work:**

- Review other forms of parallelism (emblematic, synthetic).
- Practice writing antithetical and/or synonymous parallelisms of your own. It's not easy!

By using a combination of synonymous parallelism with antithetical parallelism, Jesus heightened the contrast between good and evil. Killing is shown as an extreme form of harm, while saving a life is the greatest good that a person can do.

7. What two things did the scribes and Pharisees begin to do on the Sabbath that could have been considered illegal (unlawful)?
  - They plotted ways to destroy Jesus—harm Him, take His life.
  - They actively conspired with the Herodians. Who were they?

**Background on the Herodians:** They were a Jewish political party aligned with the kings of Herod's dynasty. The Herod of Jesus' day was a king well-known for his wickedness. John the Baptist had confronted him for marrying Herodias after killing her husband, his half-brother. According to Luke 3:19, John also chastised him for other wicked deeds. Ordinarily, the fastidious Pharisees would not have wanted anything to do with Herodians who excused Herod and compromised with the Roman Gentiles who had given Herod's family power to rule.

In Mark 8:15, Jesus warned His disciples to "beware the leaven of Herod," clearly meaning they should avoid behaving and thinking as he did. In Mark 12:13, the Pharisees and Herodians joined against Jesus in a trick question about paying taxes to Caesar. Herodians most likely advocated paying taxes to Rome while Pharisees probably argued against it. Jesus wisely replied they should give to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's. (Sources: Smith's Bible Dictionary, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/smiths-bible-dictionary/herodians.html>, and the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia <https://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/herodians.html>.)

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8. **Discussion:** What do you think God would say about a believer joining with unbelievers in a project to harm or destroy a person? (*Helpful passages are 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 2 Cor. 6:14-16, Ephesians 5:11, 1 Thessalonians 3:6.*) Which is worse as a Sabbath activity: Exerting oneself physically to help a person, or compromising oneself spiritually by conspiring to kill?

**LOGIC:** In the Matthew 12:9-14 parallel passage as well as the related Luke 13:10-17 passage, Jesus forced His audience to consider the logic of their own behavior by pointing to common Sabbath practices involving domesticated animals. Sheep, oxen, and donkeys are valuable commodities that cannot go a single day without the assistance of some form of human labor.

- In Matthew 12:9-14, Jesus noted that most good Jews would readily exert themselves to rescue a fallen sheep from a pit on the Sabbath.
- In Luke 13:10-17, He pointed out that no one would hesitate to do the labor of leading an ox or donkey out of a stall to food and water on the Sabbath.

In both examples, Jesus recognized the common-sense necessity of some labor on the Sabbath. He also upheld the value of people in relation to animals. People are always more valuable than animals. Anyone who would help an animal on the Sabbath but object to helping a person is a hypocrite.

9. To what does Jesus attribute their hypocrisy? Their hardness of heart.

**LOVE:** A study of the words “anger,” “grief,” “heart,” and “hardness” will reveal further depths of Jesus’ love for the man with the withered hand as well as the shallowness of His opponents’ hearts.

**Anger**—the Greek word is *orge*, which describes agitation of the soul or any violent emotion (wrath, indignation). It’s used only once here in Mark, but ten times in Paul’s letter to the Romans. Notice that in Exodus 34:6 God described Himself as “slow to anger.” While Jesus felt angry, He did not lash out against them violently. He withheld His powerful wrath and only rebuked and instructed them. Nonetheless He fully experienced this very real, very raw emotion.

10. What does His anger reveal about Jesus’ level of concern for the man? He has taken the man’s plight to heart. He is offended by the others’ lack of concern.

**Grief**—the Greek word is *sullupeo* – *to affect with grief together, give with one’s self* – and it’s only used here in the New Testament. It’s related to *lupeo* (Strong’s 3076) – *to make sorrowful; to affect with sadness, cause grief; to grieve, offend; to make one uneasy, cause him a scruple*. **Lupeo** is used twice in Mark 10:22 and 14:19 – both verses speak of an isolating grief or sadness, one that drives people apart rather than drawing them together. Perhaps *sullupeo* is used to show that Jesus was not repulsed by the crippled man but rather drawn to him and into his plight.

It’s apparent that Jesus felt great sorrow for the man and wished that others felt similarly, however no one seemed willing to help. While they could not heal him, the people in the synagogue could have shown empathy. As He looked, Jesus could see all they had not done for the man prior to this. It’s conceivable they had seen the man every Sabbath and failed to do anything.

**Hardness of heart**—a combination of two Greek words:

The Greek word for heart is *kardia*, referring to the organ at the center of blood circulation and regarded as the seat of physical life. The Bible also speaks of the human heart as the center of spiritual life. It’s used 11 times in Mark:

- 2:6,8 – of the scribes reasoning in their hearts

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- 6:52 – of the condition of the disciples’ hearts (also 8:17)
  - 7:6,19,21 – of hearts far from God, the fountain of evil thoughts, sexual sin, theft, murder, adultery, etc.
  - 11:23 – as the seat of doubt and faith
  - 12:30 – Jesus exhorts us to love God with all our *kardia*, (with every beat)
  - 12:33 – loving God with all the *kardia* is more than making all the sacrifices (as in Mt. 9:13 and 12:7)

The second Greek term, *porosis*, sounds like a medical diagnosis, especially in reference to the heart. It indicates being *covered with a callus; obtrusiveness of mental discernment, dulled perception; the mind has been blunted, stubbornness, obduracy*. It’s also found in Romans 11:25 (referring to Israel’s rejection of Christ) and Ephesians 4:18 (about the unsaved person’s ignorance of and exclusion from “the life of God,” because of hardened hearts). Saying a heart is “hardened” implies this wasn’t its original condition. Hearts were made to be soft and pliable, but now they’re stiff and unyielding.

Jesus accurately diagnosed their condition as *kardia-porosis!* Because of it, they not only did not want to help the man but also wanted to destroy Jesus, ultimately because they hated God. This was the exact opposite of loving Him with their whole hearts (Mark 12:30,33)!

11. If they’d had soft hearts, what might they have done differently for the man with the withered hand? They could have helped him find a good seat and ensured that he had a place to go for lunch that day. Knowing Jesus could heal people, they could have asked Him to heal the man: “Oh, will you please? Would you be willing?”
12. Consider how radically the man’s life would be changed for the better by having two strong hands. He would be able to work rather than depending on the generosity and kindness of others. He would be able to provide for his family, rather than being a burden on them. He could care for himself in all the little daily tasks—feeding himself, putting on clothes, etc.
13. Consider the strength and purpose of Jesus: What obstacles did He overcome in order to help the man? No one asked Him to help the man, but that didn’t hinder Jesus. He didn’t even allow their hatred to stop Him, no matter what they would do in retaliation. He didn’t try to avoid controversy but set Himself up as their opponent.

**APPLICATION:** Christians are not bound by Sabbath ordinances but exhorted to have soft hearts and exert themselves on behalf of others. Compare 1 John 3:17 to Deuteronomy 5:7-11.

- Deuteronomy 5:7-11 warns God’s people against hardening their hearts against impoverished brothers. Hardness of heart is paralleled with closing one’s hand, having base thoughts in one’s heart, having a hostile eye, and being grieved over the loss of what is shared. God knows our thoughts and actions toward needy people.
  - 1 John 3:17 echoes the language of Deuteronomy concerning the disposition of a Christian’s heart toward others: “But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?”
14. There are many ways to apply this principle, but we’re going to consider it in relation to the problem of abortion. What might Jesus’ expectation be for us as He looks around this room?

Consider the problem of abortion in terms of law, logic, and love:

**LAW**—Many women have abortions because they’ve broken God’s law concerning sexual sin

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(whether they're aware of it or not). Should their guilty status prevent Christians from helping? Why or why not? (One reason is that abortion is a further violation of God's law.)

**LOGIC**—The following syllogism is one use of logic in the debate over abortion:

**Premise #1:** It is wrong to intentionally kill innocent human beings.

**Premise #2:** Abortion intentionally kills innocent human beings.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, abortion is morally wrong.

While the Bible does not address the issue of abortion by name, many passages support the logic of opposing it:

- God views human life as special (*Genesis 1:26-28, 5:1-3, 9:1-7; Psalm 8:3-6; Proverbs 14:31, 17:5; Jonah 4:11; James 3:8-10*)
- God treats preborn children as individual members of the human family (*Genesis 16:11-12, 25:22-24; Judges 13:4-5; Job 31:15; Psalm 22:9-10, 71:5-6, 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15 and 41; Galatians 1:15-16a*)
- God hates the shedding of innocent human blood (*Genesis 4:8-11, 6:11-13, 9:5-6; Exodus 20:13, 23:7; Deuteronomy 27:25a; Psalm 9:12, 10:13-14, 11:5; Proverbs 21:7, 28:17; Jeremiah 22:3; Amos 1:13; Romans 13:9-10; 1 Peter 4:15; 1 John 3:11-15; Revelation 22:15*)

Find more relevant passages at [www.lifemattersww.org/CHURCHES/Why-life-matters/What-the-Bible-says-about-life](http://www.lifemattersww.org/CHURCHES/Why-life-matters/What-the-Bible-says-about-life).

**LOVE**—How does love for people who are “crippled” by abortion serve as a powerful force for saving lives? List practical ways for showing love to...

- Women who've had abortions
- People who support keeping abortion legal
- People who perform abortions

**CONCLUSION:** It's easy to be angry about abortion, but man's anger doesn't fulfill or achieve the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20). We also don't want to be paralyzed by grief over abortion. Like Jesus, we want to actively show compassion, especially to unborn babies and their parents but also to people who promote abortion.

# What Does the Bible Say about Abortion?

*All those who hate wisdom love death. (Proverbs 8:36)*

The Bible doesn't mention abortion explicitly, but it does teach that human life is sacred and begins in the womb. Here are some key passages that establish the principle that all human life is sacred:

***God creates and gives life as He wills.***

Genesis 2:7                      Genesis 30:22-23  
Genesis 25:21                  Nehemiah 9:6  
Genesis 29:31                  Job 33:4  
Genesis 30:1-2                 Acts 17:24-25

***God is sovereign over the beginning of life and the timing of death.***

Deuteronomy 32:39             John 21:22-23  
I Samuel 2:6                    Acts 17:26  
Job 10:8-12                    Philippians 1:21-24  
Job 14:5                         Colossians 1:16-17  
Psalm 139:16

***God commands us not to murder, which includes abortion and suicide.***

Genesis 9:6                      Proverbs 28:17  
Exodus 20:13                  Romans 13:9-10  
Exodus 23:7

***God speaks of unborn children. They are people whom he made, knows and loves, for whom he has a plan, and with whom he has a relationship.***

Genesis 16:11-12                Psalm 139:13-16  
Genesis 25:22-24                Jeremiah 1:5  
Job 31:15                         Hosea 12:2-3  
Psalm 22:9-10                  Luke 1:15  
Psalm 58:3                        Luke 1:41  
Psalm 71:5-6                      Galatians 1:15-16a

***Children are precious in God's sight.***

Psalm 127:3                      Matthew 19:14  
Isaiah 40:11                      Mark 9:36-37  
Matthew 18:1-14                 Mark 10:13-16

***God punishes those who shed innocent blood. Who is more innocent than unborn children?***

Genesis 9:5                      Isaiah 59:7  
Deut. 19:11-13                  Jeremiah 22:17  
Deut. 27:25a                      Amos 1:13  
Proverbs 6:16-19

***God condemns the use of abortifacient drugs. The term translated 'sorcery' (pharmakeia) is used in other Greek writings to refer to abortifacient drugs.***

Galatians 5:20                  Revelation 22:15  
Revelation 21:8

***God abhors child sacrifice as used in idol worship. Today unborn babies are sacrificed, not to Baal and Molech, but to gods of Self, Convenience, Health, Perfection, and Lust.***

Leviticus 18:21                  Psalm 106:35-40  
Deuteronomy 12:31                Ezekiel 16:20-21  
Deut. 18:10-12                  Ezekiel 20:31  
2 Kings 17:17                    Jeremiah 19:5  
2 Kings 21:6                      Jeremiah 32:35

***God forgives those who have had, or participated in, abortions.***

Psalm 103:11-12                 Romans 6:23  
Proverbs 28:13                  Ephesians 1:7  
Isaiah 43:25                      1 John 1:9  
Isaiah 55:7

***Abortion is not the answer to problems.***

Proverbs 14:12                  Micah 6:7b-8  
Isaiah 5:20-23                  1 John 3:11-12

## What Does the Bible Say About Abortion?

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*God shows his glory through disabilities. Disabled babies should not be aborted.*

Exodus 4:11                      Isaiah 64:8  
Leviticus 19:14                John 9:1-3  
Psalm 94:9                      Romans 9:20-21  
Ecclesiastes 11:5              1 Corinthians 1:27-29  
Isaiah 45:9-10

*Rape and incest are not acceptable reasons for aborting.*

Deuteronomy 24:16

*A person conceived through incest is included in the lineage of Jesus Christ: Genesis 38:13-26, Ruth 4:18-22, Matthew 1:3 and Luke 3:33.*

*God's justice and love demand we respond to the plight of the unborn and their oppressed mothers.*

Genesis 16:11-13                Zechariah 7:9-10  
Exodus 21:22-24                Matthew 5:16  
Leviticus 20:1-5                Matthew 7:12  
Job 29:11-17                      Luke 6:36  
Psalm 72:12-14                 John 15:16-17  
Psalm 82:3-4                    James 1:27  
Proverbs 24:10-12              James 2:15-17  
Proverbs 31:8-9                Galatians 6:1,10  
Isaiah 1:13-17,23               Ephesians 2:10  
Isaiah 10:1-2                    I John 3:17-19  
Ezekiel 3:16-19

See also *What Does the Bible Say About Abortion?* online, at [lifematterswww.org](http://lifematterswww.org).

# Key Scriptures Concerning the Sanctity of Human Life

*The following is condensed from a treatise by Rev. Dale Fisher, **The Sanctity of Human Life and the Abortion Holocaust**.*

There are numerous Scriptural passages which bear upon the most fundamental issue in the whole abortion debate—namely, does the Scripture (God) teach that the baby in the womb is a human life from the moment of conception? The answer is *yes!* All of the pertinent passages, both general and specific, fully support the sanctity of human life from the instant of fertilization. [Herein] I will present a classification of these passages; there will, of necessity, be some duplication.

## God opens the womb

*Genesis 29:31; 30:2,22; I Samuel 1:5,6,19,20; Ruth 4:13.* This surely implies that God is cognizant of and concerned with the baby in the womb from the moment of conception. Why? Because that is the instant when a womb which has been shut (incapable of conception) is opened (capable of conception).

## God gives children in answer to prayer

*Genesis 16:15,16; 25:21-24; 29:31-35; I Samuel 1:15,20,27; Luke 1:13,57.* The answer to such prayers would logically begin to be answered at conception.

## God is concerned with the baby in the womb

*Genesis 4:1,2,25; 21:1,2; Ruth 4:13; Job 3:1-3,11; 10:8-12; 31:15; 33:4,6; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 49:1-5; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:13,31,57; 2:1-7; Galatians 1:15,16.* The implication is that this divine concern begins at conception; after all, that is when the baby begins to exist.

## God calls His servants from the womb

*Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15; Galatians 1:15,16.* Of course, we know that God in His omniscience knows from eternity all about His servants, but the emphasis of these verses is that God prepares and calls His servants beginning at the moment of conception [or even before!]. This preparation has to begin at the instant of fertilization, since the whole person . . . is present in the one cell produced by fertilization.

## God views the baby in the womb as a person

This is clear from a number of passages in both Old and New Testaments [when similar words are used to describe born or unborn people]:

**The unborn baby referred to as a child:** *Genesis 16:11; 38:24,25; Amos 1:13; Exodus 21:22; Hosea 13:16; I Samuel 4:19; Matthew 1:18,23; 24:19; II Samuel 11:5; Mark 13:17; II Kings 8:12,15,16; Luke 2:5; 21:23; Isaiah 9:6; 26:17; I Thessalonians 5:3; Jeremiah 31:86:17; Revelation 12:2*

**Personal pronouns used to describe the unborn child:** *Job 3:1-3,11; 10:8-12,18; Psalm 22:9; 55:5; 71:6; 31:15; 33:4,6; 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15,16*

**Referred to as a boy, sons, children, and babe:** *Genesis 25:22; Luke 1:41,44; Proverbs 31:2; Job 3:3; Isaiah 49:15; Ruth 1:11*

## **Key Scriptures Concerning the Sanctity of Human Life**

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### **The unborn child is capable of emotions**

John the Baptist displayed joy while still in the womb, at six months (*Luke 1:41-44*). God knew the personalities of Jacob and Esau, how they struggled, in the womb (*Genesis 25:22,23*).

### **The unborn child can be filled with the Spirit**

John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit while still in his mother's womb (*Luke 1:41-44*); the Spirit of God only indwells and fills persons.

### **Children are gifts of God**

*1Chronicles 28:5; Psalm 127:1-4*. Children should be viewed as such, welcomed and loved, not mistreated during pregnancy or after birth. Mistreatment during pregnancy is potentially harmful to the baby. These passages also note that an abundance of children is a special blessing of the Lord.

### **Heirs of the grace of life**

*1 Peter 3:7*. Parents are the recipients of the gift of bringing a new life into existence, and this new life begins at conception. To misuse this gift at any time and/or mistreat the children resulting from this gift, whether during pregnancy or after birth, is sure to incur God's judgment.

### **The example of Jesus**

*Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:31-35; John 1:1,14*. The humanity of Jesus Christ was conceived by the power of God the Holy Spirit fertilizing Mary's egg (a virgin conception). God the Son then took to Himself that human nature conceived in Mary's womb at the instant of conception; therefore, it never existed except that it was the property of God the Son (a virgin incarnation, God taking to Himself humanity). Jesus Christ, then was the God-Man in the womb of Mary from the very moment of conception. This is evident from the worship given to the God-Man, Jesus Christ, by John the Baptist and Elizabeth shortly after the virgin conception and incarnation took place (*Luke 1:41-45*). Nine months later this God-Man, the Theanthropic Person, came into this world by a normal birth (a virgin birth).

### **"Out of" and "from the womb"**

Over twenty times these and similar phrases are used in the Scriptures (*Judges 13:5,7; Job 31:18; Ps. 22:9,10; 58:3; Eccl. 5:15; Is. 46:3; Jer. 1:5; Gal. 1:15*). The personal pronouns and names used indicate that the newly born baby came out of the womb a person. This definitely points to the baby being a person while in the womb. Two of these verses are prophecies of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and He was a Person in the womb from conception.

# Key Scriptures Concerning Assisted Suicide

Although the Bible never says, “Thou shalt not commit suicide,” it does say “You shall not murder,” (*Exodus 20:13*) and that would include self-murder.

Some people think that since the suicides recorded in the Bible are not explicitly condemned, then it is all right for us to commit suicide. The problem with that view is that it is clear from scripture that the people who killed themselves (e.g., Saul - *1 Samuel 31:4*; Judas - *Matthew 27:5*) were living outside God’s will at the time of their deaths. They were not living in faith, and their deaths did not express hope in God.

## Suicide and sovereignty

This brings us to the main point, whether we’re talking about suicide or assisted suicide. Suicide — assisted or not — is an expression of despair and/or an effort to wrest control out of God’s hands. Christians believe in the sovereignty of God, that he is all-wise and all-powerful, and that life and death are best left in his care (*1 Samuel 2:6, Job 14:5*).

Not only is this ‘best’ but also right. It is an affront to God to take one’s own life, both for reasons of his sovereignty, but also because any murder is an attempt to annihilate His image in man (*Genesis 1:26,27*). God requires the strongest punishment for murderers (*Genesis 9:5-6*).

## Death and eternity

Christians believe that when a person dies, he or she enters eternity (*Hebrews 9:27*). One who is saved enters eternal life, one who is not saved is eternally damned (*John 5:24*). Thus, a Christian should never recommend, or help with, a suicide of an unsaved person because that would be hastening the unsaved person’s damnation and prevent any chance of repentance. Does that mean that suicide is all right for a Christian, since he or she will enter glory? Well, no, for the above reasons, and for the following.

In *Philippians 1:20-24*, the Apostle Paul expressed his sincere wish to die and be with Christ. He’d certainly had a rough life, and an early entrance into glory would have been a great relief. As the first missionary, who had brought many people to salvation, he could expect great rewards. Yet, he realized that he was needed on earth for the benefit of those whom he had brought to faith in Christ, so he would leave the timing of his death up to the sovereign Lord. (*See John 21:20-23*.)

## Ultimate act of self-will

While you or I may not be able to imagine what could possibly be the reason for our remaining on earth, that decision is best left to God. This is one way we can live in faith. We also have the example of Job, who had lost everything — children, wealth, health, respect — and his wife thought he should curse God and die. She was basically suggesting suicide. But Job would not think of it. He was under incredible physical and emotional stress, for no apparent reason, but he refused to give in to despair (*Job 2:10*).

Does a person’s autonomy give him or her the right to assisted suicide? In *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*, the Bible says we (Christians) are not our own. We are bought with a price — Jesus’ blood. We belong to him. Therefore, we do not have an absolute right to do whatever we wish with our bodies. We can and must use them to honor God.

Similarly, we have no right to involve another person in carrying out a ‘death wish,’ to carry out what is essentially murder (*Exodus 20:13*). Assisted suicide means asking another person to take responsibility for your life, which you have no right to do. That is properly God’s venue.

## Challenge for God’s people

Assisted suicide is a direct challenge for Christians. What can we do to prevent people from taking that drastic, irreversible step? One of the

## Key Scriptures about Assisted Suicide

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things causing people to consider suicide is fear of being alone at the time of death. Christians are beginning to realize that we must come alongside people who are facing terminal illness, either by being with them right until the end, or by offering practical service to family members so that they can be with their loved ones until the end. Life Matters Worldwide has instituted the LIFT program for just this reason (*Matthew 25:34-40*).

### True compassion

What do we need compassion for if not for moments when people are suffering? Compassion is best — or perhaps only — expressed in the event of another person's suffering. The word means "to suffer alongside" or to take another's problems on as one's own. Consider *Acts 4:34-35* where the first believers had all things in common. If any were in need the rest didn't consider not sharing.

There's also the admonition in *James 2:15-16*: "If a brother or sister is naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" These verses apply directly to the needs of the terminally ill and chronically debilitated.

### Dignity or grace?

Another fear people have is the loss of dignity, but is it possible for a person to lose dignity? Dignity is innate in the individual by virtue of his being made in God's image (*Genesis 1:26,27*). That can never be taken, or given, away. As with compassion, dignity is best — or perhaps only — expressed in the face of suffering. The greater the suffering, the greater the occasion for dignity, because, as the Apostle Paul found, we can glorify God in our suffering (*II Corinthians 12:9-10*).

Many people equate a loss of independence with a loss of dignity, however that is a Western (or American) invention. Christians grow as they minister to people who are vulnerable and dependent. Likewise, it requires a special grace to be the one helped. There is no shame in being served. Both experiences are needed in a person's life, and in the life of the Church.

If suffering induces loss of dignity, then Jesus Christ himself lost dignity on the cross. On the contrary, he is our greatest example of endurance and our source of comfort (*Hebrews 4:15-16*).

# Quotable Quotes In Defense of Life

An abortion kills the life of a baby after it has begun. It is dangerous to your life and health. It may make you sterile so that when you want a child you cannot have it.

—*Planned Parenthood World Population brochure, 1963*

In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a man which is going to be one; you have the fruit already in the seed.

—*Tertullian, c. 197*

The fetus carried in the mother's womb is already a man; and it is quite unnatural that a life be destroyed of one who has not yet seen its enjoyment. For, it seems more unworthy that a man be killed in his home rather than in his field because for each man his home is his safest refuge. How much more abominable ought it to be considered to kill a fetus in the womb who has not yet been brought into the light.

—*John Calvin*

There is not a thing that happens in an abortion mill that is not a lie. A tremendous number of lesbians work at the clinics. There is a definite link between abortion mills and the occult. People involved in abortion are involved in demonic activity.

—*Carol Everett, former owner of abortion mills in Dallas, Texas*

Why aren't abortionists referred to as serial killers?

—*Joseph Sobran, columnist*

I would like to suggest to you that we are a schizophrenic society. We will fly a deformed baby four hundred miles by airplane to perform a series of remarkable operations on such a youngster, knowing full well that the end result will be far less than a complete cure. We will stop a cholera epidemic by vaccine in a country unable to feed itself so that the people can survive cholera in order to die of starvation. While we struggle to save the life of a three pound baby in a hospital such as mine, next door in the University Hospital obstetricians are destroying infants yet unborn.

—*C. Everett Koop, former U.S. Surgeon General*

Many Christians take their wives to hospitals in which the room in which their baby is delivered . . . is the same room in which only moments earlier a child's life was brutally taken through dismemberment, poisoning, salting out, and other foul means of the abortion industry—a veritable death chamber no less! This is no better than their using a gas chamber at Auschwitz in 1944 for church services during the SS's lunch break!

—*Franky Schaeffer*

We each began life as a single cell. Forty-five generations of doubling the number of cells by growth divisions were needed to reach the 30 million million cells of an adult. Of these 45 generations of division, eight, or nearly one-fifth, have occurred by the time we were implanted in the uterus, 30, or two-thirds, by the time we were eight weeks old, 39 by 28 weeks' gestation, and 41 by the time we were born. The remain-

## Quotable Quotes in Defense of Life

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ing tedious four occupied the whole of childhood and adolescence, and then there were no more.

—*Professor Sir Albert William Liley in "Development of the Tiniest Humans"*

Life begins for each one of us at an unfelt, unknown, and unhonored instant when a minute wriggling sperm plunges headlong into a mature ovum or egg.

—*Margaret Shea Gilbert, scientist, in "Biography of the Unborn"*

There is perhaps no phenomenon in the field of biology that touches so many fundamental questions as the union of the germ cells in the act of fertilization; in this supreme event all the strands of the webs of two lives are gathered in one knot, from which they diverge again and are rewoven in a new individual life-history. . . . The elements that unite are single cells, each on the point of death; but by their union a rejuvenated individual is formed, which constitutes a link in the eternal procession of life.

—*F. R. Lillie, biologist, in "Foundations of Embryology"*

Our whole life can go on in observation of the laws of nature, if we gain dominion over our desires from the beginning and if we do not kill, by various means of a perverse art, the human offspring, born according to the designs of divine providence; for these women who, in order to hide their immorality, use abortive drugs which expel the matter completely dead, abort at the same time their human feelings.

—*Clement of Alexandria, c. 200*

The Law of Nature dictated by God himself is Superior to any other. It is binding over all the Globe, in all Countries and at all times. No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this, and such of them as are valid derive all of their force and all their authority mediately and immediately from this Original. Upon these two foundations, the Law of Nature and the Law of Revelation, depend all human laws. Human laws are only declaratory of the act in subordination to Divine Law.

—*William Blackstone, (1723-1780) English jurist*

The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of Divinity itself and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

—*Alexander Hamilton*

If there are no absolutes by which to judge society, then society is absolute.

—*Francis Schaeffer*

When asked whether a Christian should desire death or not, British evangelist *George Whitefield* said, "I have no opinion about it. . . . Life and death are God's to decide. How would any of you like to find your servant lying at his ease under a tree, moaning and complaining about the work you have given him and wishing the day were over so he could work no more?"

The conviction that one should always choose life lies at the heart of the practice of medicine and nursing. In that sense, medical ethics must be pro-life. . . . The immorality of choosing death as an end is founded upon our religious faith that life is a gift. A gift is not given if it is not received as a gift, no more than a gift can be given out of anything other than kindness or generosity (to give out of flattery or duplicity or to curry favor is not a gift). To choose death as an end is to throw the gift back in the face of the giver; it would be to defeat his gift-giving.

—*Paul Ramsay, ethicist*

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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Euthanasia does not mean withholding or discontinuing heroic, unnecessary, futile, experimental or unduly burdensome treatments from patients — that may be appropriate medical procedure. Euthanasia means an action or omission designed to kill.

—*The International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force*

The idea of determining a person's life or death based on his shape, inside or out, is completely un-Christian. Furthermore, both physical and intellectual evaluations are quite capable of change over the course of a lifetime. A scar here, an accident there and a person could end up looking quite inhuman — but judging him thereby would be inhuman.

—*Mary Pride and Paul deParrie, "Unholy Sacrifices of the New Age," Crossway Books, 1988*

If I declare with loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of God's truth except that one little bit which the world and the devil are at the moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ no matter how boldly I may be professing Christ. For the soldier to be steady on all the battlefield besides, it is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that single point. . . . If you see anyone condemned to death innocently and you do not save him, although you know ways and means to do so, you have killed him. It will do you no good to plead that you did not contribute to his death, for you have withheld your love from him and have robbed him of the service by which his life might have been saved.

—*Martin Luther*

There were few heroes in this sorry chapter of history [Nazi Germany]. . . . Major opposition did come from the pastors who directed institutions and from the churches. However, even much of this opposition was flawed. It was: (a) slow in coming, (b) restrained in expression, and (c) just as neat as the extermination in that it pursued administrative, legal and other normative channels of recourse. For instance, a major memorandum from a major Protestant church leader protested that the killing violated due process — rather than the law of God. A pastor-administrator of one of the affected institutions similarly focused his protest on the illegality rather than immorality of the killing. I have not yet discovered a sufficient documentation of persons having taken a prophetic stand such as actually blocking the doorway to the henchmen or offering themselves in lieu of a handicapped person.

—*Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger, "The Extermination of Handicapped People in World War II Germany" 1981*

Some men shew a love to others as to their outward man, they are liberal of their worldly substance, and often give to the poor; but have not love to, or concern for the souls of men. Others pretend a great love to men's souls, that are not compassionate and charitable towards their bodies, they must part with money out of their pockets. But a true Christian love to our brethren, extends both to their souls and bodies.

—*Jonathan Edwards*

Will future generations look back and remember that — even if the twentieth century did end with a great surge of inhumanity — at least there was one group who stood consistently, whatever the price, for the value of the individual, thus passing on some hope to future generations? Or are we Christians going to be merely swept along with the trends — our own moral values becoming increasingly befuddled, our own apathy reflecting the apathy of the world around us, our own inactivity sharing the inertia of the masses around us, our own leadership soft?

—*Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop*

Of all the issues I have encountered through all the years I have been engaged in people-related

## Quotable Quotes: Voices of Life & Death

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involvements, none are more significant than the sanctity of life and sexual purity. The ground swell of concern surrounding each has made them the inescapable issues of our times. Remaining silent on either is no longer an option.

—Chuck Swindoll in *"Sanctity of Life"*

When I reached Amoy [China] thirty-two years ago, there was a pond in the center of town known as the "Babies Pond." This was the place where unwanted little ones were thrown by their mothers. There were always several bodies of innocents floating on its green and slimy waters and passersby looked on without surprise. This is what a world without a clear uncompromised Christian gospel leads irrevocably toward.

—James S. Dennis, missionary to China, 1909

The pro-life movement and the Christian faith are synonymous. Where there is one, there will be the other — for one cannot be had without the other.

—George Grant in *"Third Time Around," Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991*

The Modern world is full of the old Christian virtues gone mad. The virtues have gone mad because they have been isolated from each other and are wandering alone. Thus some scientists care for truth; but their truth is pitiless. And thus some humanitarians care only for pity; but their pity — I am sorry to say — is often untruthful.

—G. K. Chesterton

## Quotable Quotes: Voices of Death

All they who hate Me love death.

—Proverbs 8:36

As far as Modern Medicine is concerned, death is a growth industry. You can't pick up a medical journal without reading the latest on: contraception, abortion, sterilization, genetic counseling and screening, amniocentesis, zero-population growth, "death with dignity," "quality of life," and euthanasia. All of these activities have as their purpose the prevention of or termination of life.

—Dr. Robert Mendelsohn

A woman, I said, at twenty years of age may begin to bear children to the State, and continue to bear them until forty. . . . And we grant all this, accompanying the permission with strict orders to prevent any [subsequent] embryo which may come into being from seeing the light; and if any force a way to the birth, the parents must understand that the offspring of such an union can not be maintained, and arrange accordingly.

—Plato, 427-347 B.C.

Let there be a law that no deformed child shall be reared; but on the ground of number of children, if the regular customs hinder any of those born being exposed, there must be a limit fixed to the procreation of offspring, and if any people have a child as a result of intercourse in contravention of these regulations, abortion must be practised on it before it has developed sensation and life; for the line between lawful

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Ideas

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and unlawful abortion will be marked by the fact of having sensation and being alive.

—*Aristotle, 384-322 B.C.*

All state officials, workers and employees, and urban residents, except for special cases which must be approved, may have only one child per couple. . . . Those women who have already given birth must be fitted with IUDs, couples who already have two children must undergo sterilization of either the husband or the wife, and women outside of the plan must undergo remedial measures as soon as possible.

—*Directive No. 7, Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee*

I consider the Chinese Government's policy among the most intelligent in the world. It is a policy limited to the heavily overpopulated areas and it is an attempt to feed the people of China. I find it very intelligent.

—*Molly Yard, former president, National Organization for Women*

A long and painful development over the centuries has been retarded partly because of the Christian way of thinking which has brought us to our present level of thinking. A new time will come when we no longer in the name of higher morality will carry out this demand [to care for the handicapped] that has its origin in an exaggerated idea of humanity. The present morality places too much value on mere continuation of existence and asks too high a sacrifice.

—*Karl Binding and Alfred Hoche, "The Release and Destruction of the Life Devoid of Value," 1920*

If a child were not declared alive until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice that only a few are given under the present system. The doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so chose and save a lot of misery and suffering. I believe this view is the only rational, compassionate attitude to have.

—*James D. Watson, Nobel laureate and co-discoverer of DNA*

The great masses of the people will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one.

—*Adolph Hitler*

The custom of human sacrifice admits that the life of one is taken to save the lives of many, or that an inferior individual is put to death for the purpose of preventing the death of somebody who has a higher right to live. . . . Ritual killing often thrived in remote continents only until it was extirpated by people who were Christians.

—*Nigel Davies, "Human Sacrifice in History and Today," 1981*

There has not been and there will not be a place for the unfit. The fit will lead, and if the unfit are not coming along there is not place for them. . . . Non-existence of the unfit has been the law of nature.

—*Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*

I have touched upon these various aspects of the complex problem of the feeble-minded, and the menace of the moron to human society, not merely . . . that it is one of the greatest and most difficult problems of modern times, demanding an immediate, stern and definite policy, but because it illustrates the actual harvest of reliance on traditional morality, upon the biblical injunction to increase and multiply.

—*Margaret Sanger (1922), founder, Planned Parenthood*

## Quotable Quotes: Voices of Death

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As we celebrate the 100th birthday of Margaret Sanger, our outrageous and courageous leader . . . we should be very proud of what we are, and what our mission is. It is a very grand mission. . . . Abortion is only the tip of an iceberg.

—*Faye Wattleton (1979), president, Planned Parenthood*

I don't see how rights apply to potential humans, therefore, because I don't assign human status to fetal life, I see no ethical objection to using fetal tissue in transplants.

—*Joseph Fletcher, father of situation ethics*

I don't think these kids [anencephalic new-borns] are dead, but would I take the organs out? Yes.

—*Art Caplan, ethicist*

From my point of view there is nothing intrinsically wrong with experimenting on human embryos, given that there is no intention of reimplanting them, and therefore no particular point, ethically speaking, in looking for alternatives. . . . I should have thought that, from any sane point of view, it was far preferable to experiment on a near-microscopic blob of unfeeling protoplasm [the human embryo] than a feeling caring being, albeit of a different species [a research animal].

—*Michael Lockwood, "Moral Dilemmas in Modern Medicine", 1985*

With great advances in life-support technology and organ transplantation, the dead today do indeed have much "protein" to offer us — in the form of their organs and body parts. We are the neo-cannibals.

—*Carleton Gajdusek, Nobel Prize winner*

Is it your life to command or isn't it?

—*Derek Humphrey, former director of the Hemlock Society*

# The Legal Status of Abortion

Currently, the legal status of abortion is such that a pregnant woman can obtain one at virtually any stage in her pregnancy, for any reason. If she can find a willing physician, her constitutional right (according to the United States Supreme Court) permits the destruction of her unborn child, even to the moment prior to delivery.

## Landmark cases

***Griswold v. Connecticut.*** In this 1960's case, the Supreme Court justices of the United States ruled that the constitutional "right to privacy" was not restricted to married couples, but was a personal and individual right extended to a single woman seeking to use contraceptives.

***United States v. Vuitch.*** In 1971, the Supreme Court upheld a District of Columbia law permitting abortion to preserve a woman's life or "health." Health is defined by the Court as meaning "psychological and physical well-being," effectively allowing abortion for any reason.

***Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton.*** These two cases, decided January 22, 1973, struck down restrictions on abortion in 47 states. The justices ruled that states could not infringe upon a woman's right to privacy, as decided in *Griswold*, by interfering with her decision to terminate a pregnancy. The court ruled that in the first three months of pregnancy, no state law limiting or prohibiting a woman from obtaining an abortion was constitutional. In the second three months, states could only require that abortions be performed in certain facilities in order to protect maternal health (although the Court later ruled that this did not require that facility to be a hospital).

The Court did say that in the last three months of pregnancy, "in the interests of protecting the potentiality of human life" states could proscribe abortions except those necessary to save the life or protect the health of the mother. The Court uses the World Health Organization's definition of health, which includes not only physical aspects, but social, emotional, economic, and professional

considerations as well.

## The affirming cases

***Planned Parenthood Federation of America v. Danforth.*** The Court ruled in 1976 that states could not require the father of an unborn child to give consent to an abortion, based again on the right of privacy. They also ruled that states could not require the consent or knowledge of a minor's parents before she obtained an abortion.

***Akron Center for Reproductive Health v. City of Akron.*** In this 1983 case, several features in the Akron city ordinance were found to be unconstitutional. They included a required 24-hour waiting period (from the time a woman signed the consent form until the time of the abortion) and a parental notification requirement for minors.

***Planned Parenthood Federation of America v. Missouri.*** The Court ruled that the state of Missouri could not restrict second trimester abortions because the viability of the fetus was not a medical certainty at this stage. However, the Court did uphold the law's provision for a second medical team to be present when a second or third trimester abortion was performed to care for the baby, should he or she be born alive birth. A woman's right to an abortion does not necessarily mean she has the right to a dead baby!

***Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians/Gynecologists (1986).*** Among the provisions of Pennsylvania law was the requirement that clinics and physicians performing abortions must inform women of the alternatives available to them. The Court struck this down as unconstitutional because it violated a physician's right to free speech and was a deliberate attempt to make abortions more difficult to obtain.

***Madsen v. Women's Center Inc.*** In 1994, the Court ruled that lower courts could create buffer zones to keep pro-life demonstrators away from abortion clinics.

### Movement in the right direction

***Maher v. Roe, Beal v. Doe, and Poelker v. Doe.*** In 1977, the Court found that federal and state governments are under no obligation to fund abortion in public assistance programs, even if childbirth expenses are paid for poor women, and even if the abortion is deemed “medically necessary.”

***Harris v. McRae.*** In a 1980 ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Hyde Amendment, affirming there is no constitutional right for women to receive abortions at public expense.

***H.L. v. Matheson (1981).*** The Court approved a Utah parental notification law that requires abortionists to notify parents of a minor girl who is still living at home of a pending abortion.

***Center for Reproductive Health v. Webster.*** This 1989 case involved a Missouri law which required fetal testing for viability after twenty weeks, prohibited public employees from performing or assisting with abortions, and prohibited public medical facilities from being used to perform abortions. The Court upheld these provisions, setting the stage for further regulation of abortion.

***Hodgson v. Minnesota.*** The Court ruled in 1990 that Minnesota’s two-parent notification law with a judicial by-pass is constitutional. The law also provided minors with a 48-hour waiting period before obtaining an abortion.

***Rust v. Sullivan.*** In 1991, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Bush Administration’s regulations prohibiting counseling and referral for abortion in the nation’s 4,000 clinics that receive Title X family planning funds.

***Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey (1992).*** The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of most of the restrictions on abortion in Pennsylvania (a 24-hour waiting period, parental consent for minors, mandatory information on alternatives, and prohibitions on sex selection abortions), but struck down provisions for a father’s right to involvement in the decision to abort his child.

***Mazurek v. Armstrong.*** In 1997, the Court upheld a Montana law requiring abortions to be performed only by physicians, not their assistants.

***Gonzales v. Carhart.*** This 2007 decision marked the first time the court upheld a ban on a particular procedure commonly known as “partial birth abortion.” It undercut a 2000 ruling (*Stenberg v. Carhart*) that said states could not forbid the method without an exception when it best protects a woman’s health. In *Gonzales*, the Court concluded the government may ban a procedure without the health exception when another alternative exists. It also narrowed the definition of “health” to focus on “significant health risks,” laying aside that an unlimited emotional health exception is required for every abortion regulation.

# What About the Hard Cases?

## Rape?

There is no doubt that rape is a heinous crime, worthy of severe punishment. However, the incidence of pregnancy resulting from assault rape is rare, less than 2 percent. Several factors contribute to this statistic. One is the fact that many rapists are impotent. A second is that rape frequently does not involve intercourse. Thirdly, women who are raped are often not at the fertile point in their menstrual cycles.

What about those few rapes that do result in pregnancy? Emotion may indicate that abortion is the solution, but what would it really solve? The woman pregnant as a result of rape will not forget having been pregnant. She will have a second violent act to remember — the abortion.

Women who have been raped feel dirty, which affects future relationships with men. Abortion compounds these feelings. It is an admission of defeat: that nothing good can come out of a bad situation. The child of the rapist should not pay for the crimes of the father. Abortion does not solve the long-term problems associated with rape.

## Incest?

Like rape, incest does not account for a significant number of the 1.5 million abortions performed each year. About one percent of all abortions are for reasons of incest.

There are many emotional and familial factors involved with incest that an abortion will not resolve. The victim's tremendous fear often prevents her from seeking help in the first place. An abortion only helps the perpetrator continue his crime unhindered and adds to the victim's long-term pain.

## Life of the mother?

Life-threatening pregnancy is so rare that it really does little good to discuss it in the same context with elective, family planning abortions. Other than ectopic (tubal) pregnancies, few obstetricians have ever had a clear case of deciding between the mother's life and the baby's. Usually they can treat both.

Nevertheless, in a day when physicians practice defensive medicine to avoid malpractice litigation, it is not uncommon for a physician to recommend an abortion to a woman who is high risk (diabetic, epileptic, etc.). However, the incidence of genuine medical conditions which will most likely result in the death of the mother are extremely rare.

What of an unruptured ectopic pregnancy? Eventually, such a pregnancy is not viable and the result is fatal for the baby and potentially fatal for the mother due to blood loss. Standard medical procedure calls for abortion as soon as an ectopic pregnancy is diagnosed. Traditional Catholic medical ethics proscribed physicians from intervening until a rupture occurred. There have been a few attempts at the delicate process of embryo transfer whereby the embryo is removed from the fallopian tube and implanted in the uterus. Success is limited, but this seems the more moral approach, rather than immediately discarding the embryo.

## Serious fetal defect?

The development of techniques for discovering and diagnosing intrauterine fetal defects has increased society's focus on "perfect" children. An insidious discrimination against the disabled is emerging, to the point that some would rather not bring to birth those with any deficiency.

The essence of this argument for abortion is centered on the belief that impaired existence is less desirable than non-existence. Most (94 percent) abortions are performed for the sake of convenience. However, 98 percent of women who are told they carry a child with some congenital defect obtain an abortion. Despite the fact that a majority of these pregnancies were planned and wanted, mothers increasingly opt for abortion to "cure" a defective child. They believe that it is in the child's best interests to not be born.

The Bible makes it clear that humans are made in God's image, thus their value is not determined by how well they function or the number, shape and size of body parts. An abortion for reason of fetal defect indicates a belief that God is not sovereign and that matters must be taken into our own hands.

## Sanctity of Human Life Issues

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Of course, a materialistic society encourages such decisions in order to be spared the economic burdens that a handicapped child may bring. Chris-

tians must offer families facing the birth of such a child assistance in caring for the child. Offering a solution of death is not compassionate.

# Questions About Christians and Politics

More and more, Christians are expressing concern over the moral drift of our nation and an increasing frustration over not knowing what they can do about it. Many wonder about the role of the pastor, the role of the local church, and the role of the individual believer. This section is intended to provide some answers on this important subject.

## Why should Christians be involved?

A consistent trait throughout history is that societies to break down, decay, and eventually disappear. It is also true that a society cannot operate long in a moral vacuum. When people of good conscience fail to influence society with their values, other influences will fill the gap. This has happened in America. In the past one hundred years, most fundamental Christians have left the political arena, considering it “worldly” and outside the legitimate realm of Christian influence.

## What have been the results?

Tragic consequences abound: Divorce rates, epidemics in drug and alcohol abuse, the horror of abortion and the widespread acceptance of nearly every form of sexual perversion. We can also add to this list the growing corruption within government itself and the increasingly hostile attitude of the state toward the Church.

Christians need to be involved in the political process in order to have a positive effect on the future of our communities and our nation. It is poor citizenship and poor Christian stewardship to permit this great nation to plunge on toward destruction by default.

## Is political involvement Scriptural?

Much is made of the fact that nowhere in the Bible is it mentioned specifically that Christians should participate in politics. The assumption is made that unless the Bible clearly says we *should* — we should *not*. However, integrity to Scripture

demands that we acknowledge that the Bible nowhere condemns involvement in politics. According to Romans 13:6,7, Paul’s view of government was positive, that it is a God-given instrument for the promotion of good and a restraint to evil. I Timothy 2:1-2 records Paul’s admonition that we pray for our government leaders. It is a serious mistake to take this passage as only having application to the Sunday morning pastoral prayer. Paul surely meant our prayers for civil leaders should encompass more than a general petition for God’s blessing. In Romans 16:23, Paul relates a greeting from Erastus, the city treasurer. Some commentators that this was an elected position which gave the official responsibility over all public works as well as the city treasury. There is not the slightest indication that Paul considered Erastus outside the will of God.

Politics, in the strict sense, relates to the art of governing. It is doubtful that any Christian would advocate a total absence of government. Of all the people who should hold positions of authority, it should be those who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and committed to the absolute authority of Scripture.

## What about separation of Church and State?

Our national constitution was not framed with a view toward excluding Christians from civil affairs. Rather, it was written to exclude the formation of a state church or religion. Furthermore, separation of church and state cannot be taken to mean that when a Christian seeks public office he must place his faith into a blind trust. To do so would be to compartmentalize Christianity — separate life into the secular and sacred, which is impossible for the committed Christian.

## What does federal law allow churches to do?

For the most part, fundamental churches are recognized by the IRS as non-profit, tax-exempt

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religious organizations. Within the guidelines for 501(c)3 organizations it is legal for churches to engage in the following activities:

- *Voter registration and education.* A church may engage in or spend money for non-partisan voter registration and voter education activities, so long as those activities are not intended to benefit any particular candidate or political party.
- *Conduct public candidate forums.* A church may hold public political forums for the purpose of discussing election issues, debating political or social matters, or hearing several candidates present their views, so long as all viable candidates for that office are invited.
- *Introduce candidates at services.* The candidate may only be introduced, or invited to deliver a message, lead in prayer, or read Scripture. The candidate may not ask for support or funds to be used in his campaign.
- *Circulate petitions and lobby.* A church may spend up to twenty percent of its time and

annual budget circulating petitions and engaging in other legislative activities, such as lobbying. Such steps are intended to influence the outcome of legislation.

### What does federal law prohibit?

Briefly, federal law prohibits 501(c)3 organizations from engaging in activities designed to specifically influence the outcome of elections:

- *Establish a political action committee (PAC);*
- *Contribute to political parties or candidates;*
- *Endorse candidates.*

Nothing, however, prohibits individuals in the church (including the pastor) from participation in any of these activities.

For the 2012 Guide to IRS Rules on Political Activity by Religious Organizations, go to: <http://www.pewforum.org/Church-State-Law/preaching-politics-from-the-pulpit-2012.aspx>.

# Social Involvement Without the Social Gospel

By Joel Shaffer, director of Urban Transformation Ministries in Grand Rapids, MI. ©2011 Regular Baptist Press. Used by permission. The article originally appeared in the May/June 2011 edition of *The Baptist Bulletin*.

Can churches create compassionate social ministries in their communities without inadvertently becoming sidetracked from their essential gospel motivation?

The question is not new—a promising young German seminarian slipped down this path in the 1880s. “The idea came to me that I ought to be a preacher, and help to save souls. I wanted to go out as a foreign missionary—I wanted to do hard work for God,” Walter Rauschenbusch said in 1913. “Indeed, one of the great thoughts that came upon me was that I ought to follow Jesus Christ in my personal life, and die over again his death, . . . and it was that thought that gave my life its fundamental direction in the doing of Christian work” (Rauschenbusch, “The Kingdom of God” in *The Social Gospel in America*, 1870–1920).

Rauschenbusch, who began his ministry with an orthodox view of salvation, would later become known as “the father of the social gospel.” Regrettably, once he became pastor in the Hell’s Kitchen district of New York City, he preached a different gospel, altering his Biblical message to address social ills such as poverty, unemployment, and malnutrition. In the process, Rauschenbusch lost his emphasis on Christ’s atoning sacrifice for the sinner.

Even today Christians tamper with the gospel message, as Rauschenbusch did, applying his ideas to our modern problems.

This is not what the New Testament teaches. The command by Jesus to “make disciples” does not imply a change in the gospel, but rather a proclamation of the good news, which Paul affirmed to the church of Corinth: “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (*1 Corinthians 15:1–4*).

Yet our disciple-making does not happen in a social vacuum. Cities are filled with poverty, hunger, and unemployment. Public schools become drop-out factories, leading to teen pregnancies,

abortion, and AIDS. In response, the urban church has tangible opportunities to “love our neighbors” in their need, adorning the gospel as salt and light in our communities, using social ministry as a platform for the proclamation of the gospel.

But sponsoring social ministries can pose troublesome questions for churches that wish to proclaim traditional, orthodox beliefs. Doesn’t focusing on social issues detract us from the true gospel? Won’t our social involvement lead to the social gospel?

It is my experience that some Regular Baptists fear a social gospel for the wrong reasons. The danger does not come from churches providing a community-wide food pantry for the poor or helping single mothers find employment. Rather, the hazard sets in when we let our theological guard down by not aggressively applying the doctrines of our faith to the social crises of our day. If churches are to create compassionate social ministries in their communities, they must have a robust theology actively functioning as boundary lines. If not, the social gospel will eventually do away with the good news that “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” In this writing, I will briefly unpack three articles of faith deconstructed by the current form of social gospel. This deconstruction inevitably leads to theological compromise within the church.

## Total Depravity

Supervising a neighborhood recreation program almost two decades ago, I encountered unspeakable evil. My coworker who lived in the projects shared with me the story of her crack-addicted neighbor. Teenage drug dealers who were attending our program had abused and humiliated this single mom because they had grown tired of trading drugs for sex with her. At once I began to comprehend what the Scriptures mean when they say that God “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,

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and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (*Genesis 6:5*).

I realized that sin is so much more than "societal selfishness" toward fellow human beings, Walter Rauschenbusch's definition in *A Theology of the Social Gospel*. Humanity's interaction with sin is more than "a story about the downside of 'progress' . . . the human intention toward evil," as Brian McLaren states in *A New Kind of Christianity* (a denial of the historical event of the Fall and the inherited sin nature from Adam).

What about sin as open rebellion against God? What about the reality that because humans inherited the sin nature from Adam, we are born sinners totally depraved and we, too, are guilty and under condemnation? Did those teenagers have only an intention toward evil, or did their sin spring from evil hearts, which they always had before God? Belief in original sin and total depravity goes so much deeper than the naivety that Rauschenbusch and McLaren have proposed.

Moreover, Adam's sin nature is found in all people. This may seem obvious, but our basic beliefs about total depravity are increasingly downplayed by my evangelical urban ministry colleagues, who are greatly influenced by Shane Claiborne's *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*. His semiautobiographical book describes his work with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, during which he began to refer to the lepers as "Jesus in disguise." Claiming Scriptural support from the "least of these" found in Matthew 25:31–46, Claiborne teaches a sacramental view of the poor, where street ministry is like a liturgical act by which the believer earns sanctification. Such ideas have Roman Catholic roots in the theology of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Martin of Tours.

Viewing the poor as "Jesus in disguise" leads to significant theological problems. As a result, those who serve Christ from this motivation often romanticize the poor and oppressed, believing they are mystically encountering Jesus. But Jesus had no sin. And since Jesus had no sin, those who minister from this motivation have no cause to lovingly share the gospel with the poor. They are left with social action, but no gospel.

Five years ago as I paused for a stop sign while driving through my inner-city neighborhood, a young drug dealer on the corner pulled out his

gun with a laser scope and aimed its red dot at my forehead. With a pull of his trigger I would've been a dead man, but out of sheer terror my body jolted with fear, causing him to double up with laughter (allowing me to drive away!). The gunman was not the high-level pusher seen in movies or music videos. He didn't have flashy clothes, a Hummer, a mansion for a "crib," or an assortment of scantily clad women by his side. No, he was like many other young adult men in my community: a jobless, desperate dropout lacking marketable skills, and most likely addicted to the drugs he was selling. In other words, he was poor.

So if Shane Claiborne is right, and the presence of Jesus mystically resides in the poor, was this drug dealer actually Jesus in disguise? Would Jesus have terrorized and mocked me in this manner?

Or what about when I saw one homeless person beating another homeless person nearly to death? If the "least of these" were actually "Jesus in disguise," wouldn't we have to claim that somehow Jesus was criminally assaulting Jesus in some mystical way? This illogical conclusion—stemming directly from Shane Claiborne's teaching—often leads to discouragement among young urban workers as they begin to question whether they are really encountering Jesus among the poor.

Scripture offers a different conclusion. The poor (and all of humanity) have been broken and maimed by sin. And unless they repent and believe the gospel, the poor and the rest of humanity are still under condemnation because of sin.

### Penal Substitutionary Atonement

When people see sin as more societal than personal, more as selfishness toward fellow human beings than an offense before a holy God, or more as a human intention toward evil than having an evil heart, when they overlook sin because somehow the mystical Presence resides in the "least of these," their atonement remedy for sin often veers away from penal-substitution and embraces a form of moral example.

With accusations of divine child abuse, certain Christians have spurned penal-substitution for a more nonviolent view of the atonement. Rauschenbusch, for instance, saw the atonement as more of a demonstration of public evils, which he revealed

as religious bigotry, the combination of graft and political power, the corruption of justice, the mob spirit and mob action, militarism, and class contempt (*A Theology of the Social Gospel*). Consequently, Rauschenbusch believed that the atonement was an ultimate demonstration of love by Jesus. "The life of Jesus was a life of love and service. At every moment his life was going out toward God and men. His death, then, had the same significance. It was the culmination of his life, its most luminous point, the most dramatic expression of his personality, the consistent assertion of the purpose and law which had ruled him and formed him."

In the same vein, McLaren advocates a form of moral example, highlighted through vulnerability and sacrifice: "By becoming vulnerable on the cross, by accepting suffering from everyone, . . . Jesus is showing God's loving heart, which wants forgiveness, not revenge, for everyone" (McLaren, *The Story We Find Ourselves In*).

Both Rauschenbusch and McLaren rejected substitutionary atonement in favor of the Cross as God's love for us so that we could sacrificially love others. But an atonement that only sets a loving example for us to follow does not deal with the problem of our totally depraved sin nature that is a violation before a holy God. Only Jesus, Who bore our sins as our perfect substitute on the cross, can remove the guilt and absorb the punishment for our sins. Since the punishment of sin is death, which Jesus took upon Himself on the cross, those who reject Christ in this lifetime must pay it themselves in the future life. Yet for social gospelers, future judgment does not depend on belief in the atoning work of Christ, especially when original sin, total depravity, and substitutionary atonement are denied.

### Final Judgment

Walter Rauschenbusch straddled the fence contemplating whether or not a future Hell exists. But in *The Last Word and the Word after That*, Brian McLaren looks to "deconstruct our conventional concepts of hell," by creating a straw man argument against the traditional belief of Hell, which he summarizes as, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life, and if you don't love God back and cooperate with God's plans in exactly the prescribed way, God will torture you with unimaginable abuse forever."

McLaren can imagine a final judgment that "will not involve God . . . pulling down our pants to check for circumcision or scanning our brains for certain beliefs. . . . God will examine the story of our lives for signs of Christlikeness—for a cup of cold water or a plate of hot food given to one in need, for an atom of mercy shown to one who has been unkind or unthoughtful" (*A New Kind of Christianity*). McLaren describes the final judgment as "not merely retributive . . . but reconciling and restoring."

McLaren teaches universalism with his assertion of a future judgment where God eventually saves all of humanity anyway and where the differences between the righteous and wicked are downplayed.

But why would the final destination of the righteous and the wicked even matter if essential doctrines such as original sin and total depravity are denied and Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross is disregarded? Thus, the timeless words of H. Richard Niebuhr acutely apply to both Rauschenbusch and McLaren: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross" (*The Kingdom of God in America*).

As long as people distort the doctrines of the Christian faith, there will be a social gospel. Yet believers do not need to be wary of church-based compassionate social ministries that may compel a pagan world "by [our] good works which they observe, [to] glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12). Rather we should fear the consequences of ignoring sound doctrine and refusing to apply our theology to the social issues that plague our world.

# What You Should Know About Medical Abortion

Abortion advocacy groups cheered the development of RU-486 (“the abortion pill”) as a means of granting women greater control over their reproductive lives and further privatizing abortion. Since the year 2000 when the Food and Drug Administration approved specific medications for inducing abortion, now over half of all abortions occur by the abortion pill.

In the United States, abortion pills refer to a two-pill process intended to terminate the pregnancy of a developing baby within the first 7 to 10 weeks.

The first pill (mifepristone or RU486) is prescribed and given at a doctor’s office visit to block the effects of progesterone. Progesterone is an essential hormone that women naturally produce to provide vital nutrients for developing babies to thrive. Without progesterone, pregnancies will fail.

The second drug (misoprostol) is taken at home 6-48 hours later. It is intended to cause cramping and bleeding that will empty the uterus and expel the baby.

We object to the use of any chemical or medicine for the purpose of destroying unborn human life in the very early stages of gestation. Abortion pills also pose some very real dangers to women.

## Known dangers of medical abortion

Potential risks of medical abortion include:

- Incomplete abortion, which may need to be followed by surgical abortion
- An ongoing unwanted pregnancy if the procedure doesn’t work
- Heavy and prolonged bleeding
- Infection
- Fever
- Digestive system discomfort

The medications used in abortion may also cause nausea, vomiting, fever, chills, diarrhea, and headache.

## The “abortion pill” can be reversed!

The good news is, the course of medical abortion can be halted and result in a live birth. If begun in time, a process known as abortion pill reversal can reverse the effects of the abortion pill and allow pregnancy to continue.

After taking the first pill in the medical abortion regimen, some women regret their choice and want to reverse it. Using the natural hormone progesterone, medical professionals have been able to save 64 to 68 percent of pregnancies through abortion pill reversal. Hundreds of women have successfully spared the lives of their babies by taking advantage of this safe and effective method.

Women who have taken the first dose of the abortion pill can call the 24/7 Abortion Pill Reversal hotline, (877) 558-0333. They can also use the chat feature on the website [abortionpillreversal.com](http://abortionpillreversal.com). After an on-call healthcare professional determines whether reversal is possible, the woman will be connected with a doctor or medical provider in their area to begin treatment.

It’s optimal to start the reversal protocol within 24 hours of taking the first abortion pill, however, there have been many successful reversals when treatment was started within 72 hours of taking the first abortion pill. Even if 72 hours have passed, the Abortion Pill Reversal website encourages women to call the hotline. “It may not be too late.”

As soon as possible, an ultrasound is conducted to confirm the baby’s heart rate and placement, and to date the pregnancy. The doctor or other medical provider will prescribe a course of progesterone, which usually continues through the first trimester of pregnancy. Progesterone has been safely used in pregnancy for more than 50 years.

# Advance Directives for Health Care

“Advance directive” is the generic term for any document which contains a person’s wishes regarding how he or she wants his or her death to be managed. The most common documents are *Living Wills* and *Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care*.

What makes these documents unique in the field of health care is that they are *anticipatory*, made in advance of the actual implementation of the patient’s directions, while most medical decisions are made at the time a need arises. The concept of the advance directive is based on the principle of informed consent and permits a person to exercise some control over his medical care in a situation where he or she is unable to participate in the decision-making.

Advance directives are a natural consequence of our galloping medical technology. The problem of deciding which life-extending treatments to do on whom would not exist if our death-denying technologies did not exist. The fault lies not with technology, however, but with people who have abandoned belief in a sovereign God, leaving themselves morally impoverished. To fill the void, men devise legal, but not necessarily moral, means for handling death and dying.

Christians must be careful not to adopt philosophies of death and dying incompatible with biblical principles. Christians should be cautious about advance directives on the following grounds:

1. Advance directives can be interpreted as endorsing the so-called “right to die.” So far, advance directives have been enforced only in states having right to die statutes. It should be clear to Christians that no such right exists in a universe ruled by a just and sovereign God. He is the one Who numbers our days and sets the boundaries of our lives. The believer knows that there is a divine purpose in all suffering and that life at every stage has value.
2. Advance directives are frequently not specific enough to protect medically vulnerable people who are not imminently dying. This hazard rests primarily in the language that advance directives use, for example “artificial medical treatment.” Does that include insulin injections for diabetics? Medication for high blood pressure? Food and water through an IV? Definitions of “health,” “quality of life,” and “death” are constantly expanding. Who knows what these terms will mean down the road?
3. Advance directives and the statutes which enforce them are powerless to assess the motives of an appointed medical decision-maker. Medical considerations can come in second to non-medical factors such as economics, quality of life, perceived pain, etc.
4. Durable power of attorney for health care declarations dangerously expand the concept of *substituted judgment*. A decision resulting in another person’s death, under the assumption that this is what the patient would choose for themselves, should be taken very seriously.
 

The Christian who adopts a *Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care* should insist upon the following conditions:

  - The surrogate is a committed Christian capable of assessing the medical information and invoking the instructions of the patient.
  - The declaration contains specific information which clarifies key terms, e.g. “artificial medical treatment.”
  - The document is amended periodically to update terms and instructions.
  - It contains a statement rejecting the notion of a right to die and affirming belief in the sovereignty of God.

To assist believers with these end-of-life matters, Life Matters Worldwide has developed a *Protective Medical Decisions Declaration*. Visit our online store to order a free download: [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org).

# Criteria for the Determination of Death

In many states, the guiding principle for determining death is the Uniform Determination of Death Act, which says:

*An individual who has sustained either (i) irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions, or (ii) irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including the brainstem, is dead. A determination of death must be made in accordance with accepted medical standards.*

On the surface, this appears to be a fairly straightforward approach to determining when a person has died. However, it is not as simple as it seems. Three medical developments force us to look again at our definition of death:

- 1) The growing practice of solid organ substitution,
- 2) the development of effective resuscitative methods which restore vital organ function, and
- 3) the use of artificial means of maintaining heart, lung and kidney functions.

Most medical experts assume that irreversible loss of brain function is synonymous with death. However, some argue that the loss of organ *function* is not the same as organ *destruction*. Irreversible loss of organ *function* cannot be determined empirically through observation, but the *destruction* of an organ can. Death ought not to be viewed as the absence of organ function but as an event that separates the process of dying from the process of disintegration.

Obviously, this creates problems at a practical level, especially for those who seek organs for transplant. However, we must separate the determination of death from any outside influences that have a vested interest in a particular outcome. The good that could be done by transplanting organs, or the financial savings for the survivors should not have any standing in determining whether or not a person has died.

When thinking about death, we must distinguish between a person and a corpse. A person's organs are controlled by the central nervous system. A corpse lacks such control and the organs are in the process of disintegration. A person who does not experience consciousness, but whose body maintains vegetative functions, is still a person. The person in a persistent vegetative state may not enjoy the full expression of personhood, but it is not accurate to say he or she is a soul-less body, or an organism that was once a person. The loss of personal identity is a value judgment, not a biological fact.

Higher brain (functional) criteria for death would not even be part of this discussion were it not for the practice of solid organ substitution. Until it became possible to harvest organs from victims of trauma (auto accidents, homicides, etc.), the notion of higher brain death was a fairly moot point. Now, with the transplant industry accounting for nearly \$1 billion annually, there is an incredible demand for spare parts. Add to that the increasing number of stroke and heart attack victims who are resuscitated, but left in a persistent vegetative state, and the stage is set for the tension that exists.

Since organ transplants require "fresh" organs, those not deprived of blood and oxygen, there are today two classes of people: potential organ donors and non-donors. An organ donor is typically determined to be dead as soon as a flat brain wave is perceived, but before blood flow and breathing have ceased. His or her circulation and respiration can be "assisted" by machines. Hence the paradox of modern medicine: A patient may be "dead," but his or her organs are alive enough for harvesting.

There is no compelling biological reason to consider loss of consciousness or cognition as the loss of life. One's ability to communicate or respond to communication does not detract one iota from one's value as a person. The brain is not the equivalent of the spirit. We love whole persons, not just their brains.

# Implications of Post-Abortion Syndrome for the Church

Ever wonder what happened to that family in your church that had been so faithful, but is now absent? Or that woman who seemingly overnight lapsed into promiscuity or substance abuse and is now hostile to anything having to do with God?

Terry Selby, a counselor who has dealt with over 100 post-abortive women, tells an enlightening story in his book, *The Mourning After* (Baker Book House). One family, who would come to Selby's office for marital counseling, had been "pillars of the church" until they resorted to an abortion in an effort to cover up their unwed teenage daughter's pregnancy. Selby describes their metamorphoses this way:

*The parents, who had always been active in community and church activities, now both dropped out entirely. They retreated into the fortress of their home and raised the draw-bridge, not venturing out unless absolutely necessary. Their world, which had once been quite large, shrank to include just the two of them — and frequently they weren't speaking to each other.*

Moreover, the daughter began a self-destructive lifestyle as far from what she had known before the abortion as she could possibly get. After Selby made the link between the abortion and their downfall, restoration could begin. The abortion, done in an attempt to keep the family intact, had eventually torn them apart.

This is one example of what could be representative of an epidemic. Admittedly, the causes are many, but anyone considering how to win back "drop-outs" ought to include abortion as a possible cause for a wandering away from God. With 1.5 million aborting each year, 600,000 being first-timers, abortion is taking its toll on a significant number of women and families, including some drifting in and out of your congregation. The after-effects of abortion are something that should concern pastors and other church leaders.

Psychologists and social workers have identi-

fied a list of symptoms that occur in some women following abortion. The list includes broken or dysfunctional relationships, sexual performance problems, depression, anxiety, drug and/or alcohol abuse, and poor parent/child bonding. These symptoms follow the pattern of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a malady affecting war veterans, accident and crime victims, and victims of natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes.

Women who suffer these symptoms after undergoing an abortion are said to be suffering from Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS). The onset of these symptoms may begin immediately following an abortion, or be delayed by months or even years.

At the time of a traumatic experience, a person typically registers some degree of denial. One must put off dealing with personal feelings until a later time in order to respond to the stress of the situation. Should the denial of an emotional response continue beyond the period of trauma, a lifestyle of denial, which includes the aspects listed above, may begin.

The inability to process feelings surrounding an abortion is exacerbated by a woman's real or perceived isolation. A person who loses a loved one through death or divorce is expected to mourn, and will usually benefit from a support network of family and friends to talk through the loss. In contrast, the woman who aborts does so in secret. There is no funeral, no public acknowledgment of her loss. It is precisely because many in our society do not view abortion as a loss of anything but a blob of tissue that so many women suffer PAS. Their self-destructive lifestyle builds around society's denial that unborn human life is precious.

Christians should not be surprised at this, but should sensitively help women unlock the door to their private grief. This is not to say that we should automatically assume that a woman who displays the symptoms has had an abortion. Yet, Christian counselors need to be aware of what may be at the root of the problems they encounter. Treating symptoms will not make them go away; one must deal with the cause. Women and families can be

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healed from an abortion, as with any sin. They can experience the forgiveness of God and full freedom in Christ. The counselor who helps a woman break the pattern of denial must then guide her through

the grieving process. Although this is not a job for the layperson, a supporting loving church can be a great help to a woman going through this difficulty.

# The Pro-Life Response to Fetal Tissue Transplants

The experimentation and transplantation of tissues from aborted babies raise a red flag with the pro-life movement. Being opposed to the destruction of unborn human life, the movement rejects the use of electively aborted tissues for any purpose. Treating tissues this way diminishes the value of the unborn human lives taken—the child becomes an assemblage of so many spare parts.

It also legitimates abortion in the minds of those who procure them. Dr. Kathleen Nolan noted that “since studies of women’s decision-making about elective abortion . . . show that women do take the perceived needs of others into account, as a major and often determinative factor, the potential for influence on individual elective abortion decisions is real, and it in no way demeans women to acknowledge this fact” (*Transplantation Proceedings* 22:3, June 1990). She suggests that some women might agree to donate the bodies of their aborted babies to atone for any guilt they feel over ending their pregnancies. “At least they’d be doing some good,” the feeling goes. Already, women have offered to become pregnant in order to provide compatible fetal tissue for loved ones.

Pro-lifers point out the bizarre twist of logic fetal tissue transplant advocates make. Drs. Paul O’Connor and Paul Ranalli, of the division of Neurology at the University of Toronto, describe the dilemma this way: “One simply cannot have it both ways. The first-trimester fetus cannot be simultaneously both a ‘blob’ and a human being with a specialized brain structure suitable for transplant. And after eight weeks, the fetal brain only becomes more mature, more developed, more specialized” (*National Right to Life News*, 5/12/92).

Finally, pro-lifers believe that no matter how promising the use of fetal tissue is in alleviating the suffering of others, no sufferer should expect another to die that he or she might live. One woman diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease courageously declared, “I have made up my mind that I will refuse any prescription or treatment that involves using fetal tissue. My life is no more valuable than that of the baby who would be giving its life—not for my

life, but for my comfort” (Ellen Fleming, *ALL About Issues*, June-July 1991).

Aside from these questions of relative worth, pro-life people are concerned about how fetal tissue from aborted babies is obtained. Descriptions of the process implicate the researchers in complicity with the abortionist. When fetal tissue is to be harvested, the abortion procedure is significantly modified to ensure that the desired organs are intact. Indeed, it is actually the retrieval process that causes the abortion!

Furthermore, medical technicians are sometimes stationed in abortion clinics to sort out the good fetal remains from the bad. Those who say that using tissue from aborted babies is analogous to using organ transplants from murder victims miss the point that in this case the researcher is standing alongside the murderer, advising him or her on the best way to kill his victim so that organs remain usable.

Sometimes the procedure is delayed by days or weeks in order to obtain tissue that is at the right point of development. This, and the sometimes more lengthy procedure, alarms even some pro-abortion feminists because fetal tissue transplants may present a danger to the woman receiving the abortion. They also worry that the demand for fetal tissue transplants will turn women into tissue factories.

Pro-lifers observe that fetal tissue transplants have not been as successful as advocates would have the public believe. Dr. Bernard Nathanson notes that fetal tissue transplants do not cure the diseases and conditions they have been used to treat: Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, and Huntington’s diseases, epilepsy, spinal injuries, stroke, diabetes, hemophilia, and birth defects. “In short,” he says, “the clinical experience in treating adult disease with fetal tissue transplants has been expensive, uniformly disappointing and unpromising” (*ALL About Issues*, March-April 1992).

There are several alternatives to using aborted fetal tissue in transplants: 1) The development of cell lines from spontaneously miscarried babies, 2)

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various drugs, 3) gene therapy, 4) stem cell stimulation, and 5) brain cell stimulation. These alternatives deserve the support of the pro-life movement.

Animal rights activists protest the use of animals

in research. How much more ought defenders of the sanctity of human life to protest the use of human preborns in research?

# Is There a Right to Die? Is There Dignity in Death?

## The Right to Die

Biblically, there are several arguments to be made against the claim for the right to die. First, God is sovereign, and He alone determines the length of days (1 Samuel 2:6; Psalm 39:4).

Second, a Christian does not own himself, for we have been purchased by God (1 Corinthians 6:19b-20). Since we do not own ourselves we have no right to dispose of ourselves. God determines when, where, and under what circumstances our lives will come to an end.

Third, to consider the right to die as an inalienable right enjoyed under the Constitution means that it should be self-evident and derived from a law higher than man's. How, then, do we explain Christianity's significant influence upon cultures, causing them to outlaw suicide, murder, and mercy killing? Assisted suicide has been considered a criminal offense for centuries. If anything is self-evident it is that murder, including self-murder, is wrong.

Fourth, physical life is intrinsically good, not merely a means to another good. Our bodies are not incidental to our existence; they are an integral aspect of our "being." If the body were not significant to being but merely the "tomb of the soul," as Plato described it, why would God bother to resurrect and glorify it? Why not just create an entirely new body or create beings with no body at all?

Since the body is important to our being and because bodily life is good, it is improper to speak of continued bodily life as a burden. If physical life is not inherently good, and if "to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21), why do we attempt to extend this earthly life? Why would any Christian go to a doctor? If this body is insignificant, why spend money trying to keep it healthy? We may not understand the purpose for our bodily existence on earth, but that does not mean that there is no purpose. We may not desire to live a life devoid of "quality," but the notion of quality of life is purely subjective and arbitrary. Few would desire a life sustained by locusts and honey, with sackcloth for dress, and a home in the wilderness,

but aren't we grateful that John the Baptists lived that life? One of the consequences of belief in the sovereignty of God is accepting the fact He often chooses to do things differently than we would. Sometimes that may mean an earthly life characterized by deprivation and hardship.

On the other hand, the right to die may be legitimate if it means the right to refuse burdensome medical treatment when terminally ill, if such treatment is of little or no benefit. Traditional principles of medical ethics and the law recognize patient autonomy, which includes the right to refuse treatment. And individual autonomy is not entirely outside the biblical framework of man. Within Christian theology we have a degree of autonomy in that we are divine image bearers, meaning we are rational, thinking beings to whom God grants the power to make certain decisions. Decision making is one of our most human traits. However, our autonomy to make decisions does not eliminate responsibility for the results of those choices. . . .

## Death With Dignity

For the child of God, death means a departure from earthly life and an entrance into the presence of God for eternity (2 Corinthians 5:1-10). To be absent from the physical body is to be present with the Lord, the greatest hope of every believer. The psalmist declared, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones" (116:15). God looks forward to having His children with Him.

However, death itself is not dignified. It is an affront to dignity because it is the consequence of sin (Genesis 2:17). Every observance of death, whether it be a dead animal in the middle of the road or a human corpse in a funeral home, should remind us of the terrible price of rebellion against God. How can God's judgment against sin be considered dignified? Any effort to make it so is an attempt to hide the consequences of sin, thereby negating our need for Christ.

Proverbs 8:36 states, "All those who hate me [God] love death." How is death portrayed in modern

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culture? Popular music is filled with references to it. Nearly all the songs of a group called Suicidal Tendencies glorify death. It is no wonder that suicide is a leading cause of death among teenagers, reaching epidemic proportions.

The Bible teaches the existence of a literal hell—a place of eternal torment and separation from God for all who reject the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Revelation 14:10, 21:8). No matter how peaceful or controlled the surroundings, or how painless or welcome it may be, the death of an unbeliever is undignified because the only thing he can look forward to is judgment and separation from God.

It may be appropriate to speak of a believer's death as dignified if we mean that he or she experiences a peaceful home-going, one relatively free from pain and suffering. The death of Francis Schaeffer, the great Christian philosopher-theologian, could properly be called dignified. Once it

was determined that medicine offered no further extension of this life following a long battle with cancer, Schaeffer was released from the hospital and sent home. His death came shortly after he visited with each member of his family, while his favorite music played in the background.

Most Christians hope that their lives will end similarly, in the company of family and friends, in anticipation of a glorious entrance into the Lord's presence. By that definition, the concept of death with dignity is acceptable. However, we must remind ourselves that the event of death is never dignified.

—by Mark B. Blocher, excerpted from his book, *Vital Signs: Decisions that Determine the Quality of Life and Health* (Moody Press, 1992). His subsequent book, *The Right to Die?*, offers caring alternatives to euthanasia.

# Life Matters Worldwide's Position on Violence Against Abortionists

After fatal attacks on abortion providers, Life Matters Worldwide responded with the following statements to the media:

“We emphatically reject and abhor the actions of those responsible for the deaths and woundings of abortionists and their cohorts. As a Christian organization affirming life, we offer our prayers on behalf of the family members of the victims that God would comfort them in their grief and anguish over the loss of their loved ones.

“The task of pro-life organizations and individuals devoted to ministering in Christ’s name to women with unplanned pregnancies has been made that much more difficult by these killings. But we must continue to reach out with compassion and mercy despite the increased difficulties and rejections that are sure to follow as a result of these reprehensible acts of violence.

“Those responsible do not represent the thousands of pro-life women and men who are dedicating their lives and personal resources to the preservation of life through local church-based ministries and community-led outreaches. Adding more victims to the more than 30 million unborn children killed by abortion will not bring to a close what has become one of America’s most tragic periods in modern history.”

## Biblical reasons to oppose attacks on abortionists

- The State is God’s instrument of justice (*Romans 13:4*).
- When the State fails to administer justice, God is the avenger of innocent blood (*Psalms 94:1, 21-23*).
- It is not God’s will that we suffer as murderers (*I Peter 4:15*).
- Good works, not evil deeds, reflect the glory of God (*Matthew 5:16*).
- We are to be “a peculiar people” (*I Peter 2:9*), not conformed to the ways of the world (*Romans 12:2*).
- Our weapons are not the ones used by ungodly people (*II Corinthians 10:4*).
- Our fight is not with ungodly people (*Ephesians 6:12*).
- In combatting sin, we must be careful not to fall into sin ourselves (*Galatians 6:1*).
- God is not pleased when abortionists die in sin (*II Peter 3:9*), but wants them to repent and live (*Ezekiel 18:23*), as some already have.

# Why Planned Parenthood is the Unborn Child's #1 Enemy

- Clinics affiliated with Planned Parenthood are responsible for killing more unborn babies than any other organization in the U.S., and possibly the world. In 1993, PP clinics aborted 134,277 babies, according to the Planned Parenthood 1993-94 Service Report. That is 8.4 percent of the 1.6 million abortions performed every year in America.
- While national abortion figures decreased in 1993, Planned Parenthood's increased by 3,000 from 1992.
- Planned Parenthood clinics that do not perform abortions will refer women for abortions elsewhere. In 1993, they referred 80,743 women for abortions.
- Abortion is Planned Parenthood's primary pregnancy "service." While they also offer prenatal care (to 9,943 women in 1993) and infertility treatments (789), the number of abortions is far greater.
- Many of the birth control methods they dispense cause very early abortions. In 1993 they gave out post-coital contraception to 9,758 women. This very high dose of birth control pills renders the womb inhospitable to fertilized eggs.
- Planned Parenthood clinics were involved in the U.S. tests of the abortion pill, RU486.
- Planned Parenthood sex education programs teach young people that abortion is a viable alternative to pregnancy, among other objectionable ideas.
- Planned Parenthood is the primary champion of abortion "rights" in Washington, D.C., and state capitols. They can be counted upon to oppose any and all pro-life legislation that would limit the reach of abortionists' instruments, including laws ensuring informed consent and parental involvement in minors' abortions. They even oppose health standards for abortion clinics and laws requiring abortion record-keeping, while favoring abortion coverage in health care reform.
- Planned Parenthood trains doctors to do abortions.
- They generate expensive ad campaigns defending the pro-abortion agenda and denouncing pro-life causes and individuals.
- The International Planned Parenthood Federation works to impose abortion-on-demand in Third World countries, under the guise of population control and family planning.

# A Christian Looks at Fertility Technology

Infertility affects couples on a deeply personal level, causing feelings of anxiety, disappointment, anger, guilt, jealousy, grief and despair. If such emotions are not controlled by the Spirit of God, they can create tension within a marriage. They can also compound a couple's infertility.

Infertility has many causes, some — but certainly not all — being the direct or indirect result of sin. High on the list of causes are sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs), often the result of sexual immorality, and induced abortion. It is ironic that one result of the "sexual revolution" is a rise in the rate of infertility. Other causes include pollution, alcoholism, drug abuse, marijuana use, and smoking.

The Christian must be aware of these causes and yet avoid assuming that everyone who experiences fertility problems is suffering the consequences of his or her own sin. Additional causes include exposure to toxins, diseases and disorders, stress, and poor nutrition. Some never discover the cause of their infertility.

Childless couples deserve sympathy and understanding, not constant inquiries about their parental status. Infertile couples can derive comfort and encouragement from the faithful example of many couples: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, Elkanah and Hannah, Zachariah and Elizabeth, among others.

Parenthood is a privilege, not a right. Children are not objects we possess, but are blessings from God requiring careful stewardship. It is up to infertile couples to rein in their desperation and not ask science to go too far. Mark Blocher comments, "Unmarried men and women do not have the right to procreate. Likewise, in our fallen state some bodies are incapable of bearing children. As with other abnormal physical conditions, infertility should receive medical attention. However, childlessness is not a medical condition and not amenable to medical treatment." Childless singles and couples may want to consider adoption, especially the adoption of children with special needs, sibling groups, and older children who are harder to place.

## Where should infertile couples draw the line?

As they benefit from fertility assistance, infertile couples must avoid violating two abiding principles: (A) the sanctity of human life and (B) the sanctity of marriage. There are basically four problem areas that compromise these principles:

### 1. The problem of the "perfect" child

Regardless of whether there is such a thing as a perfect child, some couples have fallen under the spell of its myth. Unfortunately, the only "cure" for the conception of an "imperfect" child is abortion. The deliberate abortion of any child is a violation of the sanctity of human life.

Parents must question their motives in choosing one characteristic over another. They need to decide whether such foreknowledge is appropriate for Christians. Is it proper to so manipulate the outcome of a pregnancy?

### 2. The problem of donated eggs or sperm

Several methods of fertility assistance involve donated eggs or sperm, depending on the inability of the couple to produce one or both. While the introduction of a third (or fourth) party into the marriage relationship in this manner does not constitute adultery — especially when the donor is anonymous — it does affect intimacy. And it creates confusion about the meaning of motherhood and fatherhood.

What about surrogacy arrangements? Problems include (a) violating the sanctity of marriage; (b) confusing the parent-child relationship; (c) treating children as objects for sale; (d) requiring the surrogate to agree to abortion should prenatal tests reveal the baby has a defect.

### 3. The problem of extra embryos

Many fertility techniques involve stimulating the woman's ovaries so that they produce many

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eggs at a time, instead of only one a month. Extra embryos created in a petri dish may also be frozen for later implantation.

This multiplicity of eggs and embryos gives the couple a greater chance of conceiving, and the success rates for techniques such as IVF improve proportionately. But when as many as eight embryos implant, the mother risks a difficult pregnancy and the death of some or all of her babies. The recommended “treatment” is multifetal pregnancy reduction, a fancy name for abortion.

What is the fate of extra embryos stored in frozen limbo? Should they be destroyed, “adopted” by another childless couple, or “donated” to research? What happens to embryos suspected of being handicapped? Might forgotten embryos be stock-piled for future generations? Who would control this treasure? Does the very idea of storing embryos fragment the cycle of reproduction, distancing the process of fertilization from the rest of pregnancy? Does it lend credence to the argument that an embryo is not a person unless implanted in the womb? Answers to these questions have direct bearing on the sanctity of human life.

### 4. The problem of embryo research

Aside from the possibility that extra embryos may be destined for *future* research, much of fertility assistance technology rests upon the foundation of *past* embryo research.

Pro-lifers object to experimentation using human embryos because, at the very least, it violates the basic requirement for most research: informed consent of the one experimented on. The very

nature of the experiments, and the often cavalier attitude of researchers toward embryo “wastage,” further violates the sanctity of human life.

### 5. The problem of being ‘unequally yoked’ with unbelievers

In the course of some fertility treatments, clinic personnel are invited into the most deeply personal, intimate aspects of a couple’s life. Furthermore, they join with them in activities that have long-term, far-reaching and cosmically significant effects: bringing new life into the world. A presumption is reasonably made by the clinic that the Christian couple accepts its standards, not the other way around. In light of 2 Corinthians 6:14, how odd it is for believers to mesh their efforts with those who lack the wonder, awe and conviction about life and God’s sovereignty. It is incongruous for pro-life Christians to go to great lengths to find physicians who don’t perform abortions or refer women to other doctors who will, yet not question the activities of their fertility clinic.

### Conclusion

Possibly the only treatments passing muster are fertility drugs, corrective surgery and techniques that do not “handle” the embryo, such as artificial insemination with the husband’s sperm. Some treatments are clearly out of bounds for the Christian couple. Others may be modified to satisfy the requirements of the sanctity of human life and marriage. Children are the Lord’s heritage, but the end never justifies the means.

# The Prenatal Testing & Abortion Connection

The main goal of prenatal testing is the prevention of birth defects, but what began as a medical sub-specialty to allow early treatment of diseases and to prevent fetal death, quickly became a “search and destroy mission.” Now doctors uncover conditions for which there is no known cure, and they detect diseases like Huntington’s that do not show up for many years. Most times the only “cure” is therapeutic abortion, but just who is being cured?

In the case of sex selection abortions there is no disease, only the “malady” of being female. India and China, report alarmingly high numbers of abortions after amniocentesis or ultrasound reveal the baby is a girl.

## Does prenatal testing save lives?

It has been argued that women over 35 or those at risk of passing on some abnormal trait might abort every pregnancy if they were unable to detect healthy babies. Prenatal testing can relieve these parents’ worries. It can also make a positive difference in the delivery room by correcting due dates, identifying multiple pregnancies, and alerting doctors to pregnancy complications.

Because of prenatal surgery, lives have been saved or enhanced through the detection of correctable anomalies. And, when treatment is not possible, prenatal diagnosis enables families to prepare emotionally and logistically for the birth of their special needs children.

Still, the argument can be made that the philosophy behind prenatal testing promotes abortion. Many people would not consider one without the other. Indeed, there is some evidence that women who participate in prenatal diagnosis are predisposed in favor of abortion. One study claimed to have found that abnormal test results do not necessarily affect attitudes toward abortion, but they did not survey women who refused to undergo prenatal diagnosis. Do women reject such screening because they also reject abortion?

Is our society being set up to accept mandatory prenatal screening? This question is increasingly

relevant in view of recent political developments. The reinstatement of federal funding for fetal tissue research is paving the way for more prenatal testing to be done. Also, health care reform could have a dramatic effect on the number of people choosing prenatal testing and abortion. Will parents feel pressured to abort “abnormal” babies?

## Is the abortion of “defective” babies really therapeutic for the family?

Studies have shown that doctors’ attitudes about abortion and knowledge of fetal anomalies is crucial to the decision parents make. Beyond that, the parents’ beliefs concerning the sanctity of human life are vital. Parents who are ambivalent about abortion often have the most difficulty deciding what to do.

Surveys have compared parents who have aborted an affected baby to parents who lose a child during pregnancy or shortly after. Their experiences of grief are similar, but parents who abort find more difficulty mourning (*Obstetrics & Gynecology* 8/93). Their grief is “complicated by the fact [they] actively decided to end the pregnancy” (*New England Journal of Medicine* 328:23). Parents who abort report more feelings of isolation, alienation, and fear of rejection by people who might not approve of their decision. While pointing out the fact that abortion for fetal anomaly does not necessarily improve the parents’ outlook, this finding also challenges the Christian community to support parents who bring “differently-abled” children into the world.

Children who learn about their parents’ decision to abort a sibling exhibit sadness, guilt-feelings, dependent behavior, difficulty sleeping, regressive behavior, loss of appetite, boredom, school problems, separation anxiety, and anger. Researchers noted that this experience can also create insecurity in children, causing them to wonder what might happen should they become ill or fail to meet their parents’ expectations.

Anecdotal evidence supports the idea that it is

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healthier to allow the child to live as long as possible. Parents who are able to see, touch, and name their newborn children, are better able to cope after they are gone. In the words of one mother, "We didn't have to also deal with the guilt of causing his death." This family cherishes the memory of the son they knew for only a little while, secure in the knowledge they did nothing to shorten his life.

### Problems for pro-life physicians

Doctors who support abortion are more likely to offer their patients prenatal testing. Some consider it immoral to carry a defective baby to term. What about doctors who are opposed to abortion? Should they perform these tests or inform patients that they are available? What do they say to parents when a problem is found? Should pro-life students enter this field? If a pro-life doctor does not offer prenatal testing is he or she liable for malpractice? In coming years, these questions will become more pressing. In order to make room for special needs babies, doctors (and the rest of society) will have to reassess their attitudes about handicaps and the cost of treatment.

### Common methods of prenatal testing

- Amniocentesis. Detects many, but not all, abnormalities. Done between the 14th and 20th week of pregnancy. Drawbacks include a small risk of causing pregnancy loss and the possibility of misdiagnosis. Abortions after amniocentesis are especially cruel since babies are farther along in gestation; also a greater risk for women.
- Chorion Villi Sampling. Developed in response to problems with amniocentesis. This more definitive test can be done earlier, between 9.5 and 12.5 weeks, enabling treatment of the baby or earlier, somewhat "safer" abortions. Questions remain about whether CVS causes some abnormalities like limb defects. Also, CVS cannot detect all the defects that amniocentesis can.
- Ultrasound. A non-invasive tool to determine a baby's gestational age, detect multiple pregnancies, locate the placenta, diagnose anomalies, evaluate fetal well-being, and guide treatment. It is very accurate detecting malformations among high risk groups, including those associated with chromosomal abnormalities. Detects a baby's movements long before a mother can feel them.

# Is Abortion the Answer to Overpopulation?

Many population theorists relate all the problems of the world — hunger, war, poverty, crime, oppression — to population pressures. Former Central Intelligence Agency director, William Colby, is cited saying world population growth is the most serious threat to U.S. security. One doesn't have to look very hard to find that their first line of defense against overpopulation is birth control and abortion. An *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* (142:951, 1982) article called the availability of abortion an "indisputable" national security issue. What developing countries need, however, is better sanitation and health care, not abortion.

Yet, abortion remains a significant weapon in the population controllers arsenal. A 1970 medical bulletin from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) stated that, "No human community has ever shown a marked fall in the birthrate without a significant recourse to induced abortion and it is unlikely that, in the foreseeable future, contraceptive procedures alone will provide a sufficient measure of population control in developing nations wishing to lower the birthrate."

How has this philosophy played out in the years since 1970? At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the World Bank teamed up with the WHO, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund), the IPPF and others to launch the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Developing nations wishing to obtain World Bank funds must legalize abortion, as well as pave the way for sterilization programs and other family planning initiatives.

## Can you trust the numbers?

The question must be posed, Is our world really over-crowded? It is widely accepted that world population reached the five billion mark in 1987. The total is expected to reach 6 billion by the turn of the century. The prospects for such huge numbers are grim, according to many population theorists: global warming leading to massive drought and

famine, air and water pollution, the exhaustion of important resources, and the extinction of many plant and animal species. Others disagree, saying no matter how large world population becomes, with proper stewardship, the ecosystem can take care of itself.

An article in the July/August 1992 Population Research Institute *Review*, by Italian journalist and historian Franco Bandini, calls the generally accepted population figures into question. He doubts the very bases upon which the population totals are founded and believes that what has exploded in recent years are the numbers used to describe population, not the actual human population of the earth.

As an example, Bandini tells the story of Ethiopia. "While we Italians were there, from 1936 onwards, a census was carried out . . . . When they added up the figures, they found that in Ethiopia proper and in Eritrea there were no more than six million indigenous inhabitants. Today, in the same area, the government of Addis Abba claims 50 million inhabitants — which is a ninefold increase — notwithstanding three frightful famines, two epidemics of cerebrospinal meningitis, the interminable war with Somalia, and the equally interminable civil war with Eritrea! The comical side of this tragedy is that four years ago [1987], the former dictator Menghistu declared that the Ethiopian growth rate 'almost reached three percent' and was thus the world's highest. If one applies this science-fiction figure to the six million with which one began, one would not reach a present-day figure of 27 million inhabitants. At a rate of two percent, one would scarcely exceed 16 million, and at a growth rate of one percent, one would not even reach ten million. The brutal fact is that Ethiopia has probably remained the size that it was when we Italians left it in 1941. Nothing has happened to enable use to believe the contrary.

"In 1968, before Menghistu dethroned Haile Selassie, I asked the Minister of the Interior at Addis Abba to explain why his government continued

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to publish population figures which did not have the slightest relationship to any possible reality. At first he pretended not to understand me, but then, with a privy little half smile, he told me that since American aid was fixed in 'dollars per head,' it was no great crime to 'inflate the figures a little.' It was a policy which the Derg of Menghistu has followed — parallel, of course, to the massacre of the population."

Concerning recently independent African states, Bandini goes on to report that they "announce population figures which are totally and completely invented. They do this because numbers are power, because foreign aid is proportionate to numbers, because admitting the truth would also be admitting the sanitary and civil failures of their regimes. And since they do not allow any checks or controls, the world organizations of the United Nations are forced to accept their declarations, naturally ignoring in silence what is, in fact, the credibility of the declarations themselves. The confirmation of this is the fact that wherever the colonial powers made a greater impression in the areas of health and sanitation, and where outside statistical checks and controls are less difficult, there are either no increases in the population, or the measured increases practically never exceed a

redoubling of the population in a fifty-year period."

Similar creative accounting techniques have been used to political advantage in Communist China and in the former Soviet Union. Bandini concludes that "there is no such thing as a truly reliable source" for population figures, and that "the world total has been over-estimated by at least one billion persons."

It seems, then, that the desire for money and power are at the root of this deception. The inflated figures are used to enhance the regime of whatever tyrant happens to be in command. The charitable organizations, both secular and religious, have either been hoodwinked by or are in cahoots with the corrupt governments. No matter which explanation is true, the bottom line is that the more dire the scenario can be painted, the more money will be funneled their way, either by an unwitting U.S. Congress or by compassionate citizens sitting in their living rooms.

More troubling than the misapprehension of funds, though, is the loss of unborn babies lives. Abortions done in the name of population control are no less repugnant than those done for any other reason. Perhaps these abortions are even worse since they are done under false pretences.

# In Brief: The Ethics of Cloning and Stem Cell Technology

In November of 1998, scientists reported they successfully isolated and cultured human embryonic stem cells. They promised treatments for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, heart disease, diabetes, and more.

In the scientific community, battle lines were drawn immediately. Some saw the potential for tremendous advancements in treating heartbreaking diseases. Others foresaw the compromise of medical ethics in the sacrifice of human life for speculative research.

## What are human embryonic stem cells and how are they obtained?

- Human embryonic stem cells are cells from which all 210 different kinds of tissue in the human body originate.
- They are obtained from aborted fetal tissue or the more than 100,000 frozen embryos stored in fertility clinics.
- When obtained from living embryos, the harvest destroys a human being.

## Why are stem cells so special?

They are master cells that can give rise to many different types of specialized cells. They also have the ability to divide for an indefinite period of time. Other cells cannot do this.

## Are human embryos the only source of stem cells?

No. Non-embryonic stem cells ("adult stem cells") are present in adults, children, infants, fetal bone marrow, placenta, umbilical cords, and even cadavers. The harvest of these stem cells does not harm a human being.

## Alternate sources of stem cells

- Fat – transformable into cartilage, muscle and bone.
- Bone Marrow – transformable into smooth muscle, cardiac tissues, neural cells, liver, bone, cartilage and fat.
- Neural Tissue – can differentiate into skeletal muscle, and all neural cell types.
- Placenta – can be induced to form bone, nerve, cartilage, bone marrow, tendon and blood vessels.

## Have scientists been successful treating diseases using embryonic stem cells?

A number of problems are related to conducting this research. Some scientific companies have, therefore, chosen to invest financially in non-embryonic stem cell research instead. Actual clinical success is limited at best.

## Has there been success using non-embryonic stem cells?

Yes. Unlike failures with embryonic stem cell use, non-embryonic stem cell treatment has been successful. For example, German doctors were able to repair heart damage by injecting a patient's own bone marrow stem cells. Patients suffering from sickle-cell anemia, multiple sclerosis and corneal scarring have also benefited from non-embryonic stem cell treatment.

## What's the relationship between stem cell research & therapeutic cloning?

- Because of the concerns of stem cell rejection, scientists would create an embryonic clone of a patient and destroy it to harvest "compatible" stem cells.

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- The process is termed “therapeutic” even though it results in an embryo’s death.

### What is the “success” rate of cloning so far?

- Dolly the sheep, first cloned mammal – One live birth out of 277 cloned embryos.
- Mice – Five births out of 613
- Pigs – Five births out of 72
- Goats – Three births out of 85
- Cattle – 30 births out of 496
- Rabbits – Six births out of 1852

### Should a few be sacrificed to save the many?

- Proponents suggest that killing of the “insignificant” is morally permissible in order to find a cure for disease, which is the rationale that fueled the Nazi medical experiments of World War II. Scripture rejects this idea we should do evil for “good” purposes (Romans 8:3).
- The Nuremberg Code affirms the ethical principle that, “No experiment should be conducted where there is an *a priori* reason to believe that death or disabling injury will occur.”
- The case of the embryonic stem cell research is essentially indistinguishable from one in which researchers kidnap individuals off the streets in order to conduct lethal experiments that would result in a cure for cancer.

### What some bioethicists are saying:

- People that don’t measure up to a set standard for health and cognitive capacities ought to be “aggressively used as human research subjects and sources of organs.” —Professor Thomas L. Beauchamp, Georgetown University

- Princeton University professor Peter Singer insists that infants have no rights until they attain “personhood,” possibly not until one month after birth. Up to that point, he supports the killing of infants for organ harvesting or research without moral censure.

### Stages of human development

- Zygote (single cell)
- Morula (3 days)
- Blastocyst (5-7 days)
- Embryo (through 8 weeks)
- Fetus (from 9 weeks to birth)
- Infant
- Toddler
- Child
- Adolescent
- Adult

There is no intrinsic difference between a zygote and adult human being.

### Reason embryonic stem cell research should be prohibited:

It destroys defenseless persons at their earliest stages of development and is, therefore, immoral.

Resources: *The Truth about Stem Cell Research*, by Charles A. Donovan and William Saunders, Family Research Council, [www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org); *Stem Cells: Potential and Problems*, by David Stevens, MD, executive director of the Christian Medical Association, [www.cmda.org](http://www.cmda.org). For up-to-date information, visit [www.stem-cellresearch.org](http://www.stem-cellresearch.org).

# Sex: God's Good Gift

*By Rev. Steve Harduk of Murphy, Texas (pastoral advisor for Life Matters Worldwide)*

At the completion of creation God looked at all He had made and declared it "very good." And it was so until the first couple plunged our race into sin and subjected the creation to its destructive effects.

Despite sin's corruption we still see the beauty that God made in the loveliness of a flower, the color of a sunset, or the wonder of a marriage relationship (Proverbs 30:19). Yet, from the moment sin entered our world, Satan has sought to corrupt and pervert what God made and intended for good. Food is good, yet we can become gluttonous. Ambition is good, yet man can become greedy. Sex is good, yet man can be lustful.

## **Yes, sex is good!**

God made it and declared it good along with the rest of His original creation. Yet generation after generation fails to learn the lesson that involvement in sexual sin can bring devastating long-lasting effects.

Why do we do this? Partly because we're sinful and choose to ignore God or our parents in order to do as we wish. Moses reminds us that God's direction is for our own good (Deut. 6:24). How many adults wish they could go back in time and choose differently?

Another reason is we haven't been taught what the Bible teaches about sex, perhaps because teachers are uncomfortable with the subject. Yet some passages are plainly sexual and teach the child of God the correct way.

Many churches properly teach that sexual intercourse outside of marriage is bad. Fornication is bad. Adultery is bad. Incest is bad. All true. But some young people interpret that to mean sex is bad – which is untrue.

Meanwhile, the media and the Internet bombard them with advertising and pornography. They learn that most people enjoy sex, that it's pleasurable, and that it's the inevitable result whenever euphoric emotions overwhelm them. They buy into the deception of seduction.

Later, after the hurt and betrayal of broken relationships, disease, or unwanted pregnancies leave them disillusioned and cynical, they may conclude sex is nothing more than a biological act. It's only for pleasure, or just a tool to get what they want.

## **This is far from God's good design for sex**

The message we must convey is the proper place and blessing of sexual union within the protective boundary of the marriage covenant. Fire is good and useful when it's contained and directed, but outside of protective boundaries it is deadly. So too is sexual expression.

Solomon expressed the joy and blessing of marriage. In Proverbs 5 we read, "Drink waters out of thine own cistern" (love your own wife alone). A few verses later he says of his wife, "Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her love."

The Song of Solomon graphically pictures the beauty of love. It's not intended to be lustful, but to express that the sexual union of marriage is a great joy which God intended to be enjoyed. The protection of the covenant allows the love between a husband and wife to grow. While the physical expression of sexuality is a wonderful delight, it's not the culmination of a relationship but one aspect of intimacy in a growing relationship.

Our world has so sexualized everything that without God it would be easy to denigrate and corrupt the sexual union to a mere act. Some perhaps see it as no different than eating cheesecake, or as an act for obtaining something else desirable. But God makes it clear there's a vast difference between lust and love.

We must proclaim and live the selfless commitment of love. Our world says couples should split up and achieve selfish ends. Couples who stay together through hardships, and honor their commitment, proclaim something far greater than what this world offers.

### **Sex is good within the protective boundaries of marriage**

In that blessed union we see what love really is – a selfless commitment for the benefit of the one loved.

Scripture declares marriage good (Hebrews 13:4). That shouldn't surprise us, seeing that it was ordained by God from the beginning. While sin will always seek to corrupt what is good, God has shown us the better way.

Sex in marriage is blessed and good, and mar-

ried couples can thank God for the joy of intimacy in marriage. Churches must teach chastity and the preciousness of the marital union, but also that God in His grace can forgive and restore. Truly God is good! (Matthew 19:17)

*This piece is also available in a format suitable for printing as a flyer or bulletin insert. Look for "God is good! And so is sex!" at <https://www.lifemattersww.org/CHURCHES/Resources/-Free-downloads>.*

# Can Women Who've Had Abortions Be Made Right with God?

**I**T'S BEEN SAID THAT, when churches are silent about abortion, people conclude abortion is either permissible or unforgivable. Sometimes, however, we can be vocal advocates for life and yet fail to convey the vital message that God extends mercy and healing to people who've had abortions, paid for abortions, performed abortions, or advocated for abortion. There is hope!

Too many women have had abortions, and many of them sit in the pews of our churches. They all need to hear there is hope and forgiveness with Jesus Christ. What can we say to them? Here's one way the message can be expressed.

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## Example from the Old Testament

The Bible tells us about a man who probably could relate very well to women who've aborted their children, or to anyone who's participated in an abortion. His name was David.

2 Samuel 11 records how King David lusted after another man's wife. He committed adultery with her, got her pregnant, and abused his kingly authority by having her husband killed so he could marry her. Earlier in his life, David had been called "a man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14), but now that close relationship was broken.

If we were to jump ahead to long after David was dead and buried, we'd find he became the standard by which other kings of Israel were judged. Except for killing an innocent man and taking his wife, it was said he "did right in the eyes of the Lord" (1 Kings 15:5). How could a person with murder on his record be right with God? God hates murder (Exodus 20:13, Proverbs 6:16-19).

The answer is in 2 Samuel 12. When David was confronted about his sin by Nathan the prophet, he confessed it. He admitted he had sinned against God. Nathan immediately assured him, "The Lord has put away your sin." David would suffer the consequences of his sin the rest of his life, but 2 Samuel 12:13 says very clearly that God forgave him.

David later wrote two songs about his experience of living with unrepented sin—Psalms 32 and 51. They expressed the turmoil he felt before confessing, and the joy he experienced afterward. This can be your experience too, no matter what you've done.

## Example from the New Testament

The same was true of the people who'd crucified Jesus. In Acts 3:14-19, the Apostle Peter accused them of killing the One who'd come to give life . . . of condemning to death the only One who'd never sinned . . . of demanding a killer go free in His place. They were guilty of His death. They'd acted in ignorance, but that was no excuse.

What now? Were they forever guilty? Were they the worst people who'd ever lived?

No! Even they could be saved from sin and death. Peter told them to "repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

## Return to joy

That was good news for them back then, and it's still such news for all of us today. What should you do? Isaiah 55:6-7 says it like this:

*Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near.*

*Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts.*

*Let them turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on them, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.*

God doesn't want anyone to die in sin, but for all to repent and live (2 Peter 3:9). He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross. In dying on the cross, He paid the penalty our sins required (1 Peter 2:24 and 3:18). We no longer must die for our own sins. It is finished!

Just as the forgiven sinner feels great joy, so there is great joy in heaven when lost sinners repent and seek forgiveness from God (Luke 15:7, 10, and 32).

## Sanctity of Human Life Issues

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To experience the joy of forgiveness, do as Peter and Isaiah said we all should do, and as David did. Repent and turn to God from sin. Then rejoice! Begin to really live. And know that there will be a great party going on in heaven. Your church will celebrate with you!

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*"PRODIGAL" SONS AND DAUGHTERS may worry about how they'll be received when they return to church. They may fear looks of disappointment or disgust, being the subject of gossip and speculation, constant reminders of their sins and unworthiness. What they*

*hope to find is the welcome of the father in the parable of Luke 15:11-32.*

*In this parable, Jesus described God's warm and welcoming response to repentant sinners: He avidly watches for their return; His heart is full of compassion for them; He closes the gap on their journey home; He embraces them affectionately; His last thought is to add to their shame, but instead He celebrates their return with lavish joy.*

*Truly, the response of heaven to sinners who repent is one of great rejoicing (Luke 15:7,10). And this should be the response that people who repent of sin (whether it's abortion or having sex outside marriage) can expect from their church.*

# How Can My Church Become Even More Pro-Life?

How pro-life is your church? Without providing a gauge for measurement, it's hard to quantify. That is why Life Matters Worldwide has identified five key elements that can measure a church's level of pro-life engagement.

How is your church doing in each of the following areas? Where might there be improvement?

## pray

Do members and groups in the church pray for a pro-life ministry (or individual staff member) on a daily or weekly basis? Is there an exchange of prayer requests? Does the ministry regularly alert prayer warriors to specific needs and update them as prayers are answered?

## learn

Have members or groups from the church toured the pro-life ministry's facilities? Have leaders from the ministry been invited to speak to the church family as a whole, or to smaller groups within the body? Do church members receive newsletters and updates from the ministry?

## serve

Do members of the church volunteer regularly with the pro-life ministry? Do church groups participate in ministry events, or take on special projects for the ministry? Through close contact with church members, are clients of the pro-life ministry becoming integrated into the life of the church?

## tell

Have church members been trained by the ministry so they can graciously and confidently address pro-life issues in one-on-one conversations and in social media?

## give

Do individual members and the church as a whole contribute to the needs of the pro-life ministry—not only out of their pockets, but also from their skill-sets?

Note that giving comes last and doesn't necessarily (or only) involve a financial commitment or donations of diapers and baby wipes. What pro-life ministries need most is **people**: ultrasound technicians, advertising consultants, web designers, experts in finance, law, medicine, and so on. These are people who may be in your congregation!

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## Why is a deeper level of engagement important?

Life Matters Worldwide recently conducted an informal survey of pro-life ministries. We limited it to ministries that are on the front lines of the battle for hearts and minds, who deal directly with abortion-minded, abortion-vulnerable, and abortion-determined women: pregnancy care centers, maternity homes, and sidewalk counselors.

We asked a variety of questions (*What's the most difficult thing about your role at the center? What keeps you going back? How do you recharge or renew yourself for ministry?*), but keyed in on two: ***Do you ever feel lonely in ministry?*** And, ***What is the greatest resource your center lacks?***

This is what they said: 60% of respondents, most of whom are in leadership positions, admitted they do feel lonely. And while the number one deficit in pro-life ministries is volunteers (followed closely by the lack of funding support), the needs vary widely for people who can help with:

- Ultrasound scans
- Advertising strategies
- Financial decision-making
- Housing and educational resources for women

Local churches can be the solution for these problems because the Body of Christ is often a great, untapped storehouse of generosity, love, and support.

Our goal is to connect pro-life ministries with local churches and help them form meaningful, mutually engaging relationships. We want pregnancy care centers and other similar ministries to be fully staffed, spiritually built up, sufficiently equipped, and serving their communities as effective Gospel outreaches. We want local churches to gain a better awareness of what these ministries do and be able to confidently articulate the biblical pro-life message.

May Life Matters Worldwide come alongside your church to help facilitate a new or renewed relationship with a pro-life ministry? Please call us or email. Learn more on our website: [www.lifemattersww.org/PCCs/Church-Engagement-Model](http://www.lifemattersww.org/PCCs/Church-Engagement-Model) and [www.lifemattersww.org/CHURCHES/Pro-Life-Ministry-Engagement](http://www.lifemattersww.org/CHURCHES/Pro-Life-Ministry-Engagement).

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# Pray to End Abortion

*Is prayer the **least** we can do to attack a problem? Is it our **last** resort when all else fails? Or should it be our **first** response, the **most** we can do, and the **best** we can offer?*

Lately, some in the pro-life movement have stepped up efforts to call followers to pray for the end of abortion. Of course, it's not a new tactic in the Christian arsenal, but it seems to be receiving renewed emphasis. An entire pro-life organization, **40 Days for Life**, is devoted to encouraging people to simply pray on the sidewalks outside abortion clinics – with remarkable results. Life Matters Worldwide also knows prayer is essential as we seek to provide alternatives to abortion.

## **Why should we pray for the end of abortion?**

- 1) Because it honors God.
- 2) Because prayer is a vital point of connection between heaven and earth. And
- 3) because abortion is primarily a spiritual battle, not just social or political.

The first disciples watched Jesus return to heaven. As you read Acts, it's as though prayer was a lifeline linking them to their just-departed Master. Prayer became vital to their survival. They had not been left alone, without help or guidance.

Daniel of old understood this connection, which is why he risked his life to continue petitioning God three times a day while in exile so far from Jerusalem (Dan. 6). He and the early disciples honored God by repeatedly turning to Him in prayer. When we believe God and entreat His help, we bring Him glory.

Abortion is a problem that often overwhelms and baffles our best efforts. It is relentlessly spreading like a cancer across the world. If the senseless slaughter of unborn babies is ever going to end, it will be an act of God.

What goes on in the heart and mind of a person involved in abortion – a woman contemplating her pregnancy, a doctor considering the procedure, a political leader deciding a crucial vote on the issue?

Only the Holy Spirit knows and can touch those places and change a life. While we work and give to end abortion, we must also pray.

## **What should we pray for?**

- Pray for God's protection on **all unborn babies** threatened by abortion.
- Pray for **mothers** – to recognize and love their unborn children from the moment of conception; to have courage to face any challenges associated with their pregnancies; to turn to God for help; to overcome the temptation of abortion; that they'll receive the support they need; to consider an adoption plan.
- Pray for **fathers** – that they'll commit themselves to raising their children and caring for the mothers.
- Pray for **family members and friends** of the parents – that they'll support the choice for life.
- Pray for **all who facilitate abortions**: clinic workers, doctors and nurses, security guards and escorts – that they'll admit the error of their ways and seek other employment.
- Pray for **all who have participated in abortions** to repent and come to know, love, worship, and follow Christ.
- Pray that more **pro-life people** will join the effort to stop abortions.
- Pray for our **elected leaders** to put an end to abortion.
- Pray for those who faithfully and sacrificially offer **alternatives to abortion** – pregnancy care centers, maternity homes, sidewalk counselors, etc.
- Pray for **couples** to practice purity before marriage.

### How should we pray for the end of abortion?

**PERSONALLY & CORPORATELY.** Make prayer to end abortion part of your daily devotional habit. And, whenever your church comes together, pray corporately for the end of abortion. Pray for your local pregnancy care center (get on the mailing list). Use our bi-monthly prayer calendar as a reminder to pray for specific requests from pro-life ministries around the world. Download our *Bookmark for Prayer Warriors* and tuck it in your Bible. ([lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org) > Events > 40 Days for Life)

**WITH OTHERS AT AN ABORTION CLINIC.** If there's a clinic in your area, join others praying outside as a visible testimony to staff and clients. It will also be an eye-opening experience for you! 40 Days for Life campaigns are in the spring and fall.<sup>6</sup> If you're unable to make it to a clinic, you can still sign up to receive daily email updates from sites around the country.

*To learn more about 40 Days for Life, go to [www.40daysforlife.com](http://www.40daysforlife.com) and search for a location near you. If members from your church desire to pray at your local abortion clinic as a group, sign up for a time slot on the vigil schedule for the local campaign. If there's no location near you, sign up to receive daily email updates from around the country.*

# Church Covenant Pro-Life Statement

Does your church covenant include a statement on the sanctity of human life? Should it? The typical church statement of faith addresses the inerrancy of scripture, the deity of Christ, the eternal hope of believers, and other important issues. Life Matters Worldwide recommends the addition of a declaration on the sacredness of human life according to the Bible.

Why? In the past, attacks on fundamental doctrines motivated Christians to develop statements that clarify and codify beliefs and practices. The sanctity of human life has been under attack throughout history, but not on the scale nor with the sophistication of the 20th century. Even some who call themselves Christians have joined the attack. This demands a firm response from fundamental churches. The church covenant is a good place to start.

The biblical principle concerning the sanctity of human life deserves a place in every church covenant. Here is a sample that your church may use or adapt:

*All human life is sacred from fertilization\* throughout the human life continuum. We believe that human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and, as such, are to be protected (Genesis 9:6, Psalm 82:3,4). We believe the weak, vulnerable, infirm, handicapped, preborn, and needy deserve our respect and our care. Therefore, we oppose those practices, policies or procedures which undermine or deny the God-given right to life of every human being. We reject the notion that there are some lives not worthy of living and embrace the belief that we should graciously receive and protect all human life God gives. This means we will give ourselves to providing biblical, caring ministries to women with unwelcome pregnancies, the mentally and physically disabled, the elderly, and the terminally ill.*

*\* Taking into account various reproduction and cloning technologies, we recognize that human life begins when the merger of male and female pronuclei and synapsis occurs, which results in cell containing the requisite diploid number of chromosomes (46).*

# Pro-Life Presence on Your Church Website

Use your church's website to effectively spread the pro-life message and offer help to families who may struggle with an unwanted pregnancy. At the very least, you can provide links from your site to BFL's website ([www.bfl.org](http://www.bfl.org)), to a local pregnancy care center's site, and/or to other helpful online resources (see page E-131-133).

Here's a page that one church linked to their women's ministries page:

## SUNSHINE FOR LIFE

*Sunshine Community Church is pro-life in its philosophy and belief because the Bible says that God is the Creator of life. His Word states: "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." (Psalm 139:13) Pro-life issues include: abstinence, abortion alternatives, post-abortion healing, assisted suicide, and euthanasia. We will:*

- *Educate people about the sanctity of human life – the intrinsic value bestowed on each person by their Creator in whose image they were made.*
- *Care for those struggling with a pregnancy and help them to choose life by sharing the love of Jesus with them.*
- *Support, love, and encourage, through the healing process, women and men who suffer the effects of abortion – to let them know that Jesus Christ offers forgiveness, joy, and hope for a bright future.*
- *Help develop and support projects with a Biblical, pro-life basis.*
- *Motivate and encourage people whom God raises up to act for life, and help them find their place as they take a stand for righteousness.*

*The Sunshine For Life Helpline is available to offer friendship and emotional support to women who need help in making a decision about an unplanned pregnancy as well as to women who have had an abortion and are looking for peace. Statistics show that abortion and crisis pregnancy impacts the church in almost the same way it impacts the rest of society, so we feel that there is a real need to be available to women for love and support. No matter what the situation is, we care. We're here to listen and provide non-judgmental and caring support whether a woman is single or married and regardless of age, race, or religion. We can be contacted via our 24 hour message line at (616) \_\_\_-\_\_\_ or via e-mail at \_\_\_\_\_@yahoo.com.*

# Pro-Life Activities for Children & Teens

It is important to include children and young people in pro-life church activities, or in other pro-life events throughout the year. A poster contest, read-a-thon, and essay contest are three opportunities to involve them at their own levels.

## Give a Birthday Party for Jesus

Hold a children's birthday party for Jesus, and give presents to a local pregnancy care center. This is a good opportunity to impress on them the sanctity of human life and the necessity of giving practical support in order to help mothers and babies.

### A month in advance:

- Obtain a *list of needed supplies* from the local PCC.
- Send out *invitations* to the party. Using pink and blue paper, cut an eight-inch square in half diagonally. Fold each triangle into a diaper. On the inside, print the party information (What: A Birthday Party for Jesus; When, Where, and contact information). Insert a copy of the list of needed supplies from the PCC. Refold the diapers and secure them with a pin or sticker.
- If your local PCC conducts *Baby Bottle Boomerang campaigns*, obtain baby bottles from the center and distribute them to the children. Explain that they can fill them up with loose change from around their home – with their parents' permission – and that money collected will go to the center to help babies. (Life Matters Worldwide also has baby bottles, if your church would like to raise funds for Life Matters Worldwide. See information on a following page.)
- Ask your pastor for an opportunity to present the fundraiser to the congregation. Hand out baby bottles to others who wish to participate.

### Day of the party:

- *Decorate for a child's birthday party* – with balloons (enough for each child to take one home), streamers, a "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" banner. As they come in, arrange the gifts and baby bottles in a manger or baby crib.
- *Games* – Play **Feed the Baby**. Draw a large baby on a piece of poster board. Cut out and laminate a baby bottle for each child. Print the child's name on it and portions of Psalm 139:14-16. Play the game as you would *Pin the Tale on the Donkey*, but instead use the bottles to feed the baby. Children can take home their bottle for use as a bookmark.
- *Bible story* - Tell the story **Moses Had a Right to Live** from Exodus 2. As you tell the story, begin with the father seeing his child for the first time. "**This baby has a right to live,**" his father Amram says. When his mother Jochebed makes the basket and carefully puts it in the river she says, "**This baby has a right to live.**" When Moses' sister Miriam watches to see what happens to him she says, "**This baby has a right to live.**" When the princess picks the child out of the river she says, "**This baby has a right to live.**" Conclude the story by saying, "Just as Moses had a right to live, **every baby has...**" If you hesitate the children will say with you, "**a right to live.**"
- *Presents* – If a PCC director or volunteer is available to attend the party, the children can present their gifts to her. You may want to invite her to say a few words about the center.

**Credit:** Pamela Kuhn, Children's Director at a church in Muncie, Indiana; originally published in *At the Center magazine*, <http://www.atcmag.com/Issues/ID/154/categoryId/116/Happy-Birthday-Jesus>.

## Pro-Life Activities for Children & Teens

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### Poster Contest

Give children, grades four through six, two weeks to complete pro-life posters to present in their Sunday School or Christian day school classes. Have poster board, markers, glue, old magazines, yarn, colored paper, and other supplies available and suggest several themes, such as:

*Jesus Loves the Little Children*

*Let Me Live*

*Thanks, Mom, for Life!*

*Unborn Babies are People, too!*

*A Person's a Person No Matter How Small*

*Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*

*Let the Little Children Come to Jesus*

Posters can be judged by school administrators or the Sunday School superintendent and staff (unless they have children involved in the contest). It is probably best to award every entry in some way, by grade. Various distinctions can be made: First and Second Prize, Honorable Mention, Most Original, Best of Theme, Best Use of Poster Paints, Best Use of Color, etc. Display all posters in a hallway, to be enjoyed by the entire school and/or church family.

### Read-A-Thon

A read-a-thon gives children grades three through six an opportunity to support a pro-life ministry and benefit themselves at the same time. Children of a Christian day school, a homeschooling group, or Sunday School can also participate.

Children obtain pledges from interested adults, so much money earned per book read. Parents are asked to verify the number of books completed. The child then collects pledges and turns in the money to his or her teacher. Monies are then sent to a pro-life organization, such as a local pregnancy care center, or Life Matters Worldwide.

### Essay Contest

Teenagers (Junior and Senior High) can participate in an essay contest on pro-life issues. (They may also enjoy a poster contest of their own.) This

will be of great benefit to them as they research the material and will benefit the church or Christian high school as the winners read their entries in a church service or school assembly, perhaps around the time of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

The suggested length of the essays should be 200-500 words on an assigned or chosen theme. Possible themes are:

*What the Bible says about the Sanctity of Human Life*

*A Christian's Response to Abortion*

*How to Help Women with Crisis Pregnancies*

*The Loving Option of Adoption*

*The Psychological and Physical Dangers of Abortion*

*Why I Believe Abortion is Murder*

*The Methods of Abortion: Chemical and Surgical*

*The Stages of Human Development Before Birth*

*The History of Abortion*

*Chastity: What Is It?*

*Do I Have a 'Right to Die?'*

*What Does the Bible Say about Sexual Purity?*

Teachers can suggest resource materials from the *Annotated Bibliography* and a local pro-life group, crisis pregnancy center, or Life Matters Worldwide. Essays can be judged by a panel of teachers, youth group sponsors, pastoral staff or Sunday School staff. First and Second prizes and Honorable Mention should be awarded for Junior and Senior High divisions.

### Pro-Life Plays & Skits

Students can write their own skits or plays around a pro-life theme and perform them for their peers or the entire church family. Or check with your local Christian bookstore for already-published pro-life plays and musicals, such as *Toys and Treasures* (Word Music), a musical that emphasizes each child's unique importance to God.

# How to Talk to Children about Abortion

Abortion is a difficult subject for parents and teachers to explain to children. The issue, although often swept aside, is still highly visible in society. Sooner or later, a child will hear the word and wonder about its meaning. How detailed should our response be?

Perhaps a clue to solving this problem is the advice given to parents who want to explain human reproduction: Tell the child only as much as he or she wants to know. In other words, answer their questions simply and frankly. Don't imagine you must have a science or law degree.

A statement such as this about abortion should be understood by a very young child: "Abortion takes a baby out of his or her mommy's tummy before the baby is ready to be born. Abortion kills the baby, and you know that it is wrong to kill people."

Be prepared for questions about why anyone would want to kill a baby. Tell them that it doesn't make sense to you, but that some people don't want the babies God gives them, that they don't believe God will help them take care of their babies. Say, "It might not always be easy to raise a child, but it never helps to kill one."

Children may not be prepared for discussions of the actual nature of abortion—how abortions are performed, what an aborted baby looks like—until they are junior high age, unless they are somehow exposed to the information and need more facts. During their teen years, children should be guided in appropriate activities concerning the abortion issue: Writing an essay or letter-to-the-editor about abortion, doing a Bible study on Psalm 139:13-16, holding a car-wash and giving the proceeds to a pregnancy care center, visiting a pregnancy care center, making a poster or drawing about abortion, preparing a research paper or speech for school on abortion.

## Taking the offensive

Rather than being on the defensive, parents and teachers can be pro-active in addressing the subject from the sanctity-of-human-life angle during the

earliest years of a child's life. Having this foundation, children will be able quickly reject abortion when they learn what it is.

Tools are available to help children appreciate the value of human life from the time of conception onwards. The Bible is our primary source. The youngest child can learn that God made us, that He is sovereign over our lives, and about His tremendous knowledge and care for each person at all stages of life (Psalm 71:5-9,17-18; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15).

Look for books and videos, even those not necessarily from a Biblical perspective, that reinforce this theme. Here are some you might like to use:

- ***Pro-Life Kids*** (book and website). Teaches young children the value of each human life, age-appropriately explains what abortion is, and encourages children to take a stand for the preborn. [www.prolifekids.com](http://www.prolifekids.com)
- ***Horton Hears a Who***. This delightful tale from Dr. Seuss proclaims that, "a person's a person, no matter how small." The book and/or 20-minute video should be available in most libraries. Ages 3-8.
- ***Before I Knew You***. Author Shelley Lee and artist Denise Lehman explain the wonders of fetal development through simple words and beautiful illustrations. Available at [www.BeforeIKnewYou.com](http://www.BeforeIKnewYou.com). Proceeds support the Bowling Green (OH) Pregnant Center. Ages 3-7.
- ***Life Before Birth***. A large-format picture-book teaching the next generation the dignity of human life. Gary E. Parker explains the biblical view of life before birth. Topics such as abortion and birth defects are covered in a careful manner. From Answers in Genesis.
- ***That's Me in Here***. Jean Darby writes about life before birth from the baby's perspective. Explains what's happening inside the womb, as well within the expectant family, to help children with a new brother or sister on the way.

## Talking to Children about Abortion

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Pencil-sketch illustrations by Kathy McCord. St. Paul Books and Media, 1989. Ages 3-7.

- ***Before I Was a Kid.*** Written by Reta Spear-Stewart, with colorful illustrations by Mary Rumford. Leads a child back through the developmental stages, from toddlerhood through infancy to before his birth. "Before you were an embryo, you were a person in God's mind. And God has always loved you." Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1991. Ages 3-7.
- ***Before You Were Born.*** Written by Joan Lowery Nixon to emphasize the uniqueness of each person. "When your life began you were so small no one knew you were there. Except God." Illustrated with bold, abstract designs by James McIlrath. Published by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1980. Ages 5-9.
- ***Something Beautiful From God.*** By Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, this book is for older children (9-12) to read, or to give parents the words to explain difficult concepts to younger children. Subjects covered include fetal development, crisis pregnancies, adoption, and babies born with physical and mental challenges. Photographs by Ron Seymour and Manus Huller accompany the text, including images from inside the womb. Crossway Books, 1980.
- ***I Have a Sister, My Sister is Deaf.*** Jeanne Whitehouse Peterson explores the world of a deaf child from the point of view of a sibling. Helps children have an appreciation for and understanding of those who are "different." Black and white drawings by Deborah Kogan Ray warmly illustrate the story. Harper & Row, 1977. Ages 4-8.
- ***More Alike Than Different: A Down Syndrome Awareness Tale.*** Follow Arthur, a dog with Down syndrome, as he explores the world and discovers who he is. Author Gail Hamblin, whose son has Down syndrome, wants the book to raise awareness about Down syndrome and reduce bullying. [www.nightingalbooks.com/product-page/more-alike-than-different-a-down-syndrome-awareness-tale](http://www.nightingalbooks.com/product-page/more-alike-than-different-a-down-syndrome-awareness-tale)

- ***Finding a Friend.*** Zilpha Booth explains the special gifts and needs of Mike, who has Down's Syndrome, through the eyes of his friend, Andy. The give-and-take of their relationship yields hope for similar situations among other children. Illustrated with pen and ink sketches by Teisha Breeden. Windswept House, 1987. Ages 5-12.

### Other teaching aids

- ***Young One Fetal Model.*** Demonstrates the size and perfect formation of a 10 to 12 week old unborn baby. Available from Life Cycle Books (1-800-214-5849) for \$1.00. All ages.
- ***All About Me coloring book.*** Rhyming verses to read and pictures to color while learning about life before birth. Available from the Educational Center for Life, 909 Woodward Ave., Suite 19, Pontiac, Michigan 48053 for \$1.00 each. Ages 4-9.
- ***Life Before Birth,*** *Life* magazine reprint. Full color photographs by Lennart Nilsson, of life in the womb, with explanatory text. Fascinating for all ages. Available for \$2.00 from Primary Communications, P.O. Box 480, Southern Pines, NC 28387. For a laminated copy, send \$10.00 to the Right to Life Educational Fund Resource Center, 2340 Porter St. SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49509.
- ***Valuing Life from the Start,*** age-specific lessons and activities for very young children to teenagers, with links to additional helpful resources; free download – [www.thrivingfamily.com/~media/Thriving/1-articles/PDFs/valuing-life-tool-kit.pdf](http://www.thrivingfamily.com/~media/Thriving/1-articles/PDFs/valuing-life-tool-kit.pdf).
- ***How Do I Explain Abortion to My Children?*** Here are four practical suggestions from Pastor Michael C. Sherrard for parents and church leaders. [crossexamined.org/how-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children](http://crossexamined.org/how-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children) and [www.michaelsherrard.com/blog/2016/11/1/how-and-when-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children](http://www.michaelsherrard.com/blog/2016/11/1/how-and-when-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children)

# Puppet Script: The Sanctity of Human Life

based on Psalm 139:13-16

by Pastor Terry L. Jenks, Maplehurst Baptist Church in Hinsdale, NY

Puppets: Katie and Kelly

*Katie and Kelly enter*

**Katie:** Did you see what I saw in the garbage the other day over at the pastor's house?

**Kelly:** No, I'm not really interested in looking in other people's garbage.

**Katie:** I wouldn't have been looking either, but I saw a foot coming out of the top of the garbage can.

**Kelly:** A foot? Whose was it? (Looking down) I still have two feet, and so do you.

**Katie:** You can laugh all you want, but I saw a foot hanging out of the garbage can. When I got a closer look, I found a discarded puppet!

**Kelly:** A puppet? Pastor loves his puppets. He would never treat a puppet like that.

**Katie:** That's what I used to think, too, but the proof was in the garbage.

**Kelly:** Maybe before we jump to the wrong conclusion we should talk to the pastor first. I'm sure there's a good explanation for all of this.

**Katie:** I can tell you what his explanation will be. When he's finished with us, he'll throw us in the garbage can, too!

**Kelly:** Katie, we need to talk to the pastor about all of this.

*Pastor enters*

**Pastor:** Good morning, girls!

**Katie:** Puppet killer!

**Kelly:** Katie!

**Pastor:** Did I miss something?

**Katie:** Yes! You're missing one of your puppets! I found it in the garbage can.

**Pastor:** Oh, that! That puppet was old and had a big hole in it. It had gotten so bad, it could no longer be repaired.

**Katie:** So when we get full of holes, you'll just throw us away, too?

**Pastor:** Look Katie, we repaired that puppet numerous times and it was beyond repair.

**Kelly:** I have a question, Pastor.

**Pastor:** What is it, Kelly?

**Kelly:** Isn't there a verse in the Bible that talks about being fearfully and wonderfully made?

**Pastor:** Yes, you're talking about Psalm 139:13-14. It says, "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvelous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well."

**Katie:** So how could you throw a puppet away? You puppet-killer, you!

**Pastor:** I don't mean to be disrespectful to you, Katie and Kelly, but that verse is talking about humans. Human beings are made in the image of God. Puppets are created by people on a sewing machine.

**Katie:** Nobody would throw away a human life.

**Pastor:** That's where you're wrong, Katie.

**Kelly:** What do you mean, Pastor?

**Pastor:** Every day in our country, thousands of innocent babies are killed. Millions die around the world every year, and some of their bodies are disposed of in garbage dumpsters.

**Katie:** That's criminal! Are these murderers arrested and tried for their crimes?

**Pastor:** I wish they were, Katie. No, what they're doing is perfectly legal. It's a big business that brings in millions of dollars each year.

**Kelly:** That's terrible! How can people kill babies and get away with it?

**Pastor:** They call the practice abortion. The babies are unborn. They're still in their mothers' wombs when they're killed, and then they're discarded.

**Katie:** Like an old, battered puppet!

**Kelly:** Except they're human beings who've been given life by God.

**Katie:** What can be done to stop abortion?

**Pastor:** First, Christians can pray. We need to pray that our lawmakers will outlaw all abortions. Then we need to support pro-life political leaders and help moms when they're pregnant. We also must speak out for the rights of those who can't speak themselves.

**Katie:** Pastor, I'm sorry I called you a puppet-killer. I was way out of line.

**Pastor:** It's all right, Katie. I understand.

**Kelly:** Pastor, can you promise us something?

**Pastor:** I will if I can.

**Kelly:** Will you make sure we won't ever get so full of holes you'll want to throw us away?

**Pastor:** I'll see what I can do, girls.

*Pastor, Katie, and Kelly exit.*

# Full-Length Drama: To Die For

*by Matt Harper, Assistant Pastor, Truth Baptist Church in South Windsor, CT*

**Synopsis:** The President of the United States faces personal and political crises – and then there's an assassination attempt! Who's after him? Will he stand firm against pro-choice demands, or is he pro-life in name only? What will be his legacy?

This political thriller will hold your church or school audience in suspense as it touches hearts, informs minds, and motivates wills to fight for life itself. Here's an excerpt:

**President:** *I don't know how to be a great dad and a great president at the same time. I can't escape the responsibility of this office, the expectation to make every decision – public and private – in the best interest of the country.*

**Rev. Morrow:** *Mr. President, as noble as that reasoning is, few things are so potentially destructive.... The danger of making decisions based on the "greater good," is that reasoning can be so easily misused to justify almost anything.*

**Performance time:** 1.5 to 1.75 hours.

**Fee:** \$50 for a copy of the script and rights to make as many copies as necessary for production. To order a script package for your drama ministry, call (860) 906-6784 or email [tbcpastor3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tbcpastor3@sbcglobal.net).

# Pro-Life Evangelistic Skit: He Will Give You Rest

By Morielle Stroethoff; a performance of this skit can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/WMVgTCOGKCo>.

*Monica is in her room "chilling," although she appears uncomfortable. Alexa and Emily have made themselves at home on her bed.*

**Monica:** Hey, so, guys I've been studying for the U.S. History exam and was wondering what you thought about a couple of the questions on the study guide.

**Alexa:** Shoot! I can't guarantee I'll have any idea what you're talking about, but I'll give it a shot.

**Emily:** Whereas if you asked her to give a detailed inventory of the freckles on the back of Travis Montgomery's neck, she'd be scarily accurate.

**Alexa:** Ha ha! But actually, you're probably right.

**Monica** (*not laughing*): Yeah, okay. Well, it's the Roe v. Wade one I've been thinking about. I've got this feeling he might ask us to do one of those essays where we explain why it's relevant to our lives.

**Alexa:** Oh, that's easy! For centuries . . . nah . . . millennia, right? Anyways, for basically forever, when a man and a woman make an oops-baby, the woman has to deal with it while the man goes scot-free like nothing ever happened.

**Emily:** Unless he has a conscience.

**Alexa:** Girl, when you meet a guy who has a conscience like that can you send me his number? Anyway, now that we have abortion, women are on the same playing field as men.

**Monica:** So we also can have no conscience.

**Alexa:** Huh?

**Monica:** Never mind. Emily, what do you think?

**Emily:** I don't know, Roe v. Wade's constitutional isn't it?

**Monica:** Well, that's kinda the point, that's what they ruled. I wish I knew what you thought, though . . . about women who do it.

**Emily:** Never really thought about it. I mean, it's her body, her life, her right to make that choice. Who am I to make it for her?

**Monica:** Oh.

**Emily** (*looks at her phone*): Ah! I'm sorry, gotta go. Lex?

**Alexa:** See ya later, Mon. You seem kinda down. Text me if you wanna go try on prom dresses later! (*They leave.*)

**Monica** (*Drags herself across the room, seeming to be physically weighed down, and collapses on the bed. She opens her computer and types, hits enter, and then reads.*) "What to do when your pregnancy is unexpected: If your pregnancy is unexpected, you may be feeling scared or confused about what to do. It's important to remember that you have options. You can continue the pregnancy and raise the baby, even if you'll be a single parent. You can continue the pregnancy and create an adoption plan to allow someone to raise the child. You can end the pregnancy." (*Picks up the phone and dials.*) Hey.

**Phone voice:** Hi, dear. I'm so glad you called. I'm here to help. How far along are you?

**Monica:** Ummmm . . .

**Phone voice:** Don't worry, dear, this is our confidential hotline. Now, it's very important for you to know ending a pregnancy is easier and safer the sooner you have it done. How far along are you?

**Monica:** I . . . (*Obviously uncomfortable. At a knock on her door, she hangs up frantically and drops phone.*) Come in!

**Francesca:** Hey, sorry I didn't see your text earlier. You okay?

## Christian Pro-Life Activities & Resources

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**Monica:** I . . . I . . .

**Francesca:** You're not. That's okay. Tell me about it. Anything you want.

**Monica:** I don't know how. *(Pauses, then turns her laptop so Francesca can see the screen.)*

**Francesca:** Oh. Oh, Monica. You know, I've been kind of afraid to share this with you before. But now, I guess I'm realizing how much you need it. *(She pulls a small Bible from her pocket and opens it in Monica's lap.)*

**Monica:** Francesca, I know you're all into God and stuff . . . but it's really not my thing.

**Francesca:** *(sighs)* Just read this one part. They're Jesus' words.

**Monica:** "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and *(pause)* you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

**Francesca:** Monica, I listened to the voices – our teachers, classmates, the nurses, doctors, Supreme Court justices – because it seemed like there was no other choice. The facts they claimed to share were elegant, complex, full of vague medical words. The truth is naked, bare, simple . . . like a child. I pushed down that truth until it was too late . . . too late for my daughter.

**Monica:** They never use the word "child" or "daughter" or "son."

**Francesca:** They also don't tell you there's no way to abort a child that isn't horribly painful to the child. I've never said out loud what they did to my daughter. What they really did, not the medical terms . . .

**Monica:** And . . . you have to live with that.

**Francesca:** I do. But – Monica – there are these words in this Book *(refers again to the Bible):*

"Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,  
The God of my salvation;  
For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it;  
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,  
A broken and a contrite heart—  
These, O God, You will not despise."

**Monica:** I haven't gone through with it yet. But I've thought about how to make up for it, if I do.

**Francesca:** That's why I memorized those words. I keep thinking about the blood on my hands and how to pay it back and . . . I've wondered so many times what I can do. But there's nothing I can do. If you read the Gospels, the stories about Jesus' life, you'll see He says over and over that He came for those who are broken-hearted about their own sin, to die in their place. You see, He is the sacrifice. *(Takes Monica's hands in hers.)* But . . . I'm sorry, I just keep talking about how He has helped me. What are you thinking?

**Monica:** I'm scared.

**Francesca:** Of course you are.

**Monica:** But . . . I want to know more. He's helped you. Can He help me?

**Francesca:** Yes. Remember. *(Points down at Bible.)* He will give you rest, not just for your body, but for your soul . . . if you follow Him.

**Closing Message:** *If an abortion is troubling your conscience, we would love to pray with you and talk with you about what comes next. If you or someone you love is in a tough place right now and under pressure to have an abortion, we know people who are trained and knowledgeable about all the options for help available.*

# Pro-Life Activities for the Entire Church Family

## Light a Candle for Life

One beautiful and meaningful way of commemorating Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is to utilize candles. In some communities, pro-life people light a candle in a window (or a luminaria\* on their doorstep) on the night of the 22nd of January, to symbolize their unity with the pro-life movement and the unborn. The media should be notified of this public display so that the significance of the candles is understood.

Another idea is to light one candle (luminaria) for every million or hundred thousand children killed by abortion in our nation, or one for every child killed by abortion in your city or county. These candles can be placed on the ground in a highly visible area (a public square, park, hillside or church yard), at night, for those passing by to see. The lighting of the candles could be the focal point of a march or rally on the 22nd or some night near that date. Pro-lifers should be ready to offer explanations and literature to curious on-lookers.

\*Luminaria are created when stout candles are anchored in sand or gravel inside paper bags, preferably white ones such as bakeries use (not too large, but bigger than a lunch bag).

## Marches and Outdoor Rallies

An outdoor gathering of Christians from one or several churches is a potent way of showing pro-life strength in your community. Organize a march with participants carrying banners and picket signs and wearing pro-life T-shirts, hats and buttons. Start the march at a local church or park. The route should take marchers along busy streets and past area abortion providers (stop to picket for a while if abortions are being performed at that time). End the march at another local church or park, or circle back to the starting point, for a family picnic with games for all ages, or a rally with a message from a pro-life speaker.

Walk-a-thons or bike-a-thons can be used in conjunction with a march, using the opportunity

as a fundraiser for Life Matters Worldwide or a local pregnancy care center. Participants collect pledges from friends and family members, so much money being given per mile walked or cycled.

Before the march begins, give instructions to the marchers (i.e. stay on the sidewalk, no shouting at cars, make room for pedestrians, etc.). Encourage singing along the route. Appoint marshalls to “shepherd” allotted numbers of marchers. You may need to ask local police authorities for help in stopping traffic should there be hundreds of marchers and/or major streets to cross.

## Pro-life Presence at the Fair

Several churches, especially in rural areas, have taken advantage of local fairs and festivals to spread the pro-life message. This can be a good opportunity to educate the community in an informal way.

Arrange for a booth with fair organizers. There may be a fee involved. Recruit volunteers for setting up the booth, manning the booth during the fair, and taking the booth down. Line up literature and other items (balloons and stickers with a pro-life message, pencils and note pads with the name and phone number of a crisis pregnancy center, candy or gum, etc.) to give away. Show short pro-life videos or slides. Display fetal models or posters that describe the growth of the baby in the womb. Use your imagination!

## Cemetery for the Unborn

If your church has a large lawn overlooking a busy street or highway, this idea could have a significant influence on your community. It would help passersby visualize the impact of abortion numerically.

Construct small wooden crosses or tombstones representing the number of abortions performed in annually in your community or state (figures should be available from your state health department). Paint them white. These would then be “planted”

## Pro-Life Activities for the Entire Church Family

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in the lawn at regular intervals. Use them for a few weeks each year in an annual memorial.

Construct a sign to explain the meaning of the crosses and/or have people posted at the site to answer questions and hand out literature. Literature should include information on abortion's impact on the economy, the personhood of the unborn, and the grief and guilt of abortion for women. Prepare for media attention and possible vandalism.

### The Display

Victory Won has created "The Display," a ready-made cemetery for the unborn that is easier to install, less expensive to purchase, and more compact to store than the traditional crosses. It includes:

- 4000 5" x 8" flags (2000 pink and 2000 blue) printed with a cross, and picture of a baby, and the words "Abortion Kills Babies, Jesus Forgives." These are mounted on 30" wire staffs that can easily be planted in frozen ground.
- Four 16" x 26" yard signs explaining the meaning of the display and the death toll of abortion.

This non-threatening display occupies only 64 square feet of ground. Visit [www.victoryone.com](http://www.victoryone.com) and search for 'The Display,' or call 1-800-858-3040 for ordering information.

### Memorial for the Unborn

This is a project requiring greater effort and money, but with a long-lasting value. The idea is to create a memorial for babies who die before birth, whether through spontaneous miscarriage or abortion, to help parents and family members cope with their loss. A memorial also serves as a permanent reminder to the community, helping them realize that the victims of abortion, the unborn, are human beings deserving the dignity of remembrance.

A memorial site should be chosen in a local cemetery, preferably one that allows monuments or large, visible markers. Funds for the plot and marker can be raised discretely through letters to pro-life individuals or by approaching them personally.

The more people that are allowed to participate, the more people will understand the purpose of the memorial.

Once the memorial is installed, arrange for a dedicatory memorial service at the site. Invite church members, crisis pregnancy workers, post-abortive women and their families, and couples who have experienced miscarriage. A pastor or group of pastors would officiate, the service consisting of prayer, a few hymns, and a short message.

Publicity concerning the service and the memorial itself should be quiet to prevent harassment and vandalism by abortion advocates. Periodic reminders about the memorial, its location and purpose, should be sent to hospital chaplains, pastors, crisis pregnancy center workers, professional counselors, physicians, etc. Those who have lost a child before birth will benefit the most as they progress through grief, having a physical reminder of their children.

### Host a Baby Bottle Boomerang

#### What is a Baby Bottle Boomerang?

- It's a four to five week campaign in which a church distributes at least one baby bottle to each family. (Good times to host the campaign surround January's Sanctity of Human Life Sunday or Mother's Day/Father's Day.)
- Families are encouraged to fill their bottles with coins, currency, and/or checks.
- Bottles are returned on a designated Sunday, with all the proceeds going to support the pro-life ministries of Life Matters Worldwide.

#### Why participate?

- It's one way to inform your congregation about the sanctity of human life.
- We need you to partner with us in this uphill battle to protect the lives of unborn children.

#### How does a Baby Bottle Boomerang work?

- Select start and end dates (typically a three to four week span).

- Publicize the event enthusiastically before and during the campaign through the church media.
- Distribute bottles (provided by Life Matters Worldwide) to church families on your Kick Off Sunday (start of campaign).
- Gather bottles on Celebration Sunday (end of campaign).
- Send checks received to Life Matters Worldwide for receipting, along with converting currency and coin received into a check payable to Life Matters Worldwide. (Many banks are willing to count large quantities of coin at no cost.)
- Life Matters Worldwide will report back the total of funds received and arrange for return shipment of bottles for reuse.

To learn more or to arrange for a campaign, contact Life Matters Worldwide: (616) 257-6800, 1-800-968-6086, [staff@lifemattersww.org](mailto:staff@lifemattersww.org).

### Pinwheels to Mark the Number of Abortions

In January of 2007, the lawn of Faith Baptist Church along Highway 11 in Monroe, Georgia, was festooned with hundreds of pinwheels, all spinning in the breeze. As Stephen Milligan of the *Walton Tribune* reported, "The bright plastic rods . . . are generally seen as children's playthings, but these pinwheels [were] anything but toys." The 630 pinwheels were being used by the Mothers of Preschoolers group at the church to commemorate the sanctity of human life. They represented the 630 abortions per week on average then happening in the state.

One mom noted that, rather than the usual display of white crosses, pinwheels are colorful and shiny, and remind people of children. The group hoped the display would open the public's eyes to the grim reality of abortion, and planned to set it up again in subsequent years.

**Source:** "Pinwheels Mark Georgia Abortion," *The Walton Tribune*, 1/10/07, <http://www.waltontribune.com/story.lasso?ewcd=fe3f7d0023854afb#>

# Pregnancy Care Center Needs

Listed below are items typically in demand at pregnancy care centers. Check with your local center before making delivery. Some of the new, more expensive items make excellent projects for Sunday School classes, fellowship groups, missionary societies, etc. Aside from needing volunteers to staff the center, every PCC uses . . .

**Videos** - on abortion, fetal development, sexual purity, adoption, Christian living, pregnancy, parenting, etc.

**Bibles** - to give to clients

**DVD equipment, TVs**

**Office equipment and furniture**

**Coffee, sugar & creamer** - for the waiting room

**Toys and snacks** - for the children of clients in the waiting room

**Magazine subscriptions** - for the waiting room

**Office supplies** - computer software, copy paper, toner and ink-jet cartridges, file folders, etc.

**Discipleship materials** - for new Christians

**Baby furnishings** - cribs, bassinets, cradles, car seats, toys, bath-time items, etc. (compliant with current safety standards)

**Maternity clothes** - clean, new or used, in attractive styles

**Baby clothes** - new or used, clean

**Diapers** - various sizes

**Baby food, formula** - not past expiration date

**Prenatal vitamins**

Physical labor and the supplies necessary for accomplishing projects are also often in demand at PCCs. Some areas of service are:

**Painting**

**Laundry** - washing, folding, and labeling baby and maternity clothes

**Wallpaper hanging**

**Carpentry**

**Babysitting** - for children of volunteers, or for clients during appointments

**Plumbing**

**Heating/Cooling**

**Electrical**

**Teachers** - of parenting skills, crafts, aerobics, Bible studies, childbirth instruction, etc.

**Lawn care** - mowing, trimming, raking, etc.

**Housekeeping**

**Snow removal**

# Commitment to Provide Assistance

*Note: The following sample pledge is intended to be addressed to women considering abortion. Used in conjunction with picketing or sidewalk counseling at a local abortion clinic, or in cooperation with a local pregnancy care center, it would be an excellent project for a Sunday School class, fellowship group, or entire church family to take on the support of one woman. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).*

We the undersigned, as followers of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, realize that you really do not want to have an abortion, but that a child and the responsibilities of parenthood would pose some major problems and heavy burdens for you at this point in your life. Therefore, in the name of our most loving God, we dedicate ourselves to assisting you with your material, emotional, and spiritual needs. As a reflection of God's love, we pledge the following:

- **Food** - for you, your baby, and other children
- **Shelter** - in a loving Christian home, if you desire
- **Medical attention** - for you and your children for the next 18 months
- **Guidance and counseling** - to assist in meeting your emotional needs and achieving your career goals
- **Educational opportunity** - so that you may pursue your career goals
- **Income supplement** - of \$100 per month for the next 18 months
- **Christian fellowship** - where you can experience Christian love and the peace that can only come from walking daily in God's grace
- **Other** - assistance with any other need or problem you may have

Our offer is made in love and concern for you and your child. Please call [local number] for more details. We have attached an information sheet that spells out the dangers of abortion to you, your future children, and your present unborn baby. Please review this information. We will pray for you and yours.

May God bless you,

[name of group or individual]

**We, the undersigned, commit ourselves to carrying out the above pledge:**

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE

# Abortion Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed for use in churches that are in the process of joining the Sheltering Church Ministry Network. The first page of the survey is confidential (no names given) to aid church leadership in determining the amount of pro-life education needed within the church. This section may be turned in to Life Matters Worldwide to assist us with our educational efforts as well. Respondents are asked to give their name and phone number on the second page of the questionnaire in order to facilitate pro-life involvement. Feel free to modify this questionnaire as you see fit.

## Part I: Confidential—

1. Do you know anyone who has had an abortion? YES NO

Do you know anyone who has considered having an abortion? YES NO
2. How would you rate your knowledge of abortion? (Circle one)

EXCELLENT ABOVE AVERAGE AVERAGE FAIR POOR
3. How would you rate your knowledge of what Scriptures say about the sanctity of human life?

EXCELLENT ABOVE AVERAGE AVERAGE FAIR POOR
4. As you read the Scriptures, what is God's opinion of abortion?

ALWAYS WRONG SOMETIMES RIGHT ALWAYS RIGHT NOT CLEAR
5. For what reason might abortion be permitted? (Circle choices)

EARLY PREGNANCY RAPE INCEST LIFE OF THE MOTHER

KNOWN FETAL DEFECT OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ NONE
6. Should legalized abortion-on-demand be ended in the United States? Why or why not?

If so, do you believe it can be ended? Why or why not?
7. If Jesus were living in the United States today, what might he do or say about the practice of abortion?
8. Should Christians actively oppose abortion in some personal way? Why or why not?

**Part II: Give your name and phone number if you want to be called upon for future involvement —**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

9. *Make a check mark next to the activities you believe are appropriate for Christians to engage in when opposing abortion:*

- Sidewalk counseling at abortion clinics
- Picketing hospitals, clinics, and doctor's offices which provide abortions
- Operating pregnancy care centers offering alternatives to abortion
- Political involvement (writing congressmen, petitions, voter education, etc.)
- Publishing the names of abortionists in local newspapers
- Physically blocking entrances to abortion clinics
- None of the above
- I need more information on the following activity(ies) before giving my opinion:

10. *If my church were to form a group committed to opposing abortion, I would be interested in serving in the following capacities:*

- Liaison between my church and Life Matters Worldwide and other pro-life groups
- Liaison between my church and a pregnancy care center
- Volunteer weekly at a pregnancy care center\*
- Phone counseling on a PCC hotline some evenings & weekends\*
- Donate pro-life books to the church library
- Produce a newsletter for the church family on pro-life issues
- Befriend a woman with an unwelcome pregnancy
- Take a woman into my home for the duration of her pregnancy\*
- Picket the local abortion clinic an hour or two a week

## Abortion Questionnaire

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- \_\_\_ Sidewalk counsel women entering the abortion clinic\*
- \_\_\_ Do a community survey to discover who provides abortions or alternatives in our area, and publish the results
- \_\_\_ Babysit (at no charge) for PCC volunteers while they counsel each week
- \_\_\_ Donate good, used maternity and baby clothing to a pregnancy care center
- \_\_\_ Mend, wash, label and fold clothing for a pregnancy care center
- \_\_\_ Disciple a woman who became a Christian through the pregnancy care center
- \_\_\_ Make pro-life presentations in schools, community groups, etc.
- \_\_\_ Hand out pro-life literature at fairs, community events, etc.
- \_\_\_ Donate cribs, car seats, high chairs, etc. to a pregnancy care center
- \_\_\_ Hunt for baby furnishings at garage sales for a pregnancy care center
- \_\_\_ Repair or build baby furniture for donation
- \_\_\_ Drive PCC clients to doctor appointments, childbirth classes, etc.
- \_\_\_ Volunteer to be a childbirth coach\*
- \_\_\_ Subscribe to pro-abortion publications
- \_\_\_ Provide professional services to women with unwelcome pregnancies (legal, medical, counseling, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Teach sewing, mending, cooking, cleaning, child-care and parenting classes
- \_\_\_ Offer a young woman a job or job training
- \_\_\_ Help medical costs, housing down-payments, etc.
- \_\_\_ Develop a pro-life film/video library open to the public
- \_\_\_ Keep the church aware of legislation on life issues at the state and federal levels
- \_\_\_ Create a letter lobbying file, with addresses of congressmen, judges, etc.

*\* Denotes ministries that require some training or orientation from a pregnancy care center or other experienced individuals prior to involvement.*

# Maternity Resource Centers Offer Alternatives

Columbus, Ohio, had several good pregnancy care centers already. Knowing this, the board of Baptists for Life of Central Ohio felt the affiliate's energies should be channeled into a different aspect of pro-life ministry. No one knew what that would be at first.

"In bouncing around ideas of what we could do in direct ministry to women with needy pregnancies," recalls former BFLCO director Bill Abernathy, Jr., "we came up with the concept of a maternity resource center [MRC]. We saw a need for additional support for these women after they left the crisis pregnancy center, since the centers were not able to meet their needs completely."

The Maternity Resource Center, temporarily housed in an unused room at Immanuel Baptist Church, is stocked with maternity clothes, baby clothes, and baby furnishings. It has given the Life Matters Worldwide associate an identity in the community and captured the imagination of the Christians who support the work financially and with donated goods.

Bill went on to describe how it works: "Our board set aside funds in our budget so that volunteers can purchase needed items at garage sales. Women's groups make baby blankets for us, and they hold baby showers to replenish our supply."

Christians visiting the MRC are excited by what they see. An average of eight to ten women come for assistance during the three hours the center is open on Saturdays. Many come with children and husbands in tow. This need has challenged more Christians to volunteer their time in the center. With 15 to 20 volunteers, most work once every five or six weeks.

The MRC gives away many tracts and Bibles, something the women do not have and really seem to want, according to Bill. "The majority of our clients have no church background. We serve

a wide spectrum of people — Muslims, Vietnamese boat-people — but most are single and pregnant." He says it has been an eye-opening experience for the volunteers.

Although one woman came to Christ through the ministry, and others have recommitted their lives to Him, Bill looks upon this work as one of planting seeds. This year he hopes to conduct a survey of past and current clients to learn what other needs — such as classes in child care, Lamaze, and nutrition — the MRC can target in an effort to provide more structured presentations of the Gospel. He also wants to increase the number of hours the center is open and provide more training for the volunteers.

Currently, clients are referred to churches in their neighborhoods, but since he can't know what happens after that, Bill is working on a way, with their permission, to give their names and addresses to local churches for follow-up.

Bill, who formerly pastored Immanuel Baptist Church, recommends this type of pro-life ministry to other churches. "You don't have to be a Life Matters Worldwide associate to do this, or even have other churches to help you. One church can do this on its own. You don't need regular hours or even a lot of volunteers." Clients can call the church, or someone from the church, for an appointment. "A room in your building, some supplies and advertising are all you need."

Former Life Matters Executive Director, Mark Blocher, says we should have had maternity resource centers in place before 1973. "Maybe then the Church wouldn't have appeared so unconcerned about the plight of unwed mothers, and maybe abortion wouldn't have seemed so attractive. Looking at the future of abortion in this country, I'd say we need a maternity resource center in every church."

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# A Pledge of Pro-Life Commitment

- **I THANK GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER** for the gift of life – for my own, the lives of loved ones, brothers and sisters in Christ, and all of mankind. We were created to bear His image.
- **TODAY I PLEDGE** to uphold the biblical pro-life message in word and deed. As I fulfill the Great Commission, I will do my part to preserve the sanctity of human life.
- **I WILL LIVE** my life – including my viewing choices – in a way that is sexually pure and respectful of the sanctity of marriage as designed by God.
- **I WILL PRAY** for the end of abortion and other threats to the sanctity of human life.
- **I WILL SPEAK UP** for the unborn, the disabled, the elderly, and the terminally ill – anyone whose dignity or humanity is questioned. I will choose words that show respect for all – even my enemies – and honor their dignity as people who bear God’s image.
- **I WILL TAKE ACTION** on behalf of vulnerable human lives where possible, in the way the Holy Spirit leads, with God’s grace and provision. I want my life to reflect His mercy, expressing compassion to others in practical and sacrificial ways. I will persevere until all human life is protected or Jesus Christ returns.

*Visit [lifemattersww.org](http://lifemattersww.org) to download the pledge and/or pledge bookmarks in PDF files for printing and distribution.*

# Annotated Bibliography of Pro-Life Reference Materials

*This bibliography contains works that have been helpful to the staff of Life Matters Worldwide. However, it should be noted that not all the views expressed in these books are necessarily endorsed by Life Matters Worldwide. Neither is this an exhaustive list of the titles which would be useful in research and for motivational reading.*

***Aborted Women, Silent No More***, David C. Reardon (Crossway). Twenty-one women tell the story of their abortions, intermingled with the most current data on the physical and psychological effects of abortion.

***Aborting America and The Abortion Papers***, Bernard Nathanson, M.D. (Pinnacle Books). Nathanson, one of the co-founders of the National Abortion Rights Action League and former director of one of the world's largest abortion clinics, details his "conversion" from being militantly pro-abortion to a pro-life point of view. He provides personal insight into the subversion of the media by abortion advocates and how the American public has been manipulated. Written from a non-Christian perspective; some raw language.

***Abortion: A Christian Understanding and Response***, James K. Hoffmeier, ed. (Baker). The writers of this book want to help evangelicals articulate their position with conviction and in a convincing manner, and to work effectively for change in our nation's laws.

***Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue***, R. C. Sproul (Nav-Press). This book was written with the undecided Christian in mind. Thought-provoking discussion

questions end each chapter, making this book useful for Sunday School classes, youth groups, etc. A special feature of this book is an appendix containing Dr. Jerome Lejeune's fascinating and factual testimony in the Tennessee frozen embryo trial.

***Abortion & the Early Church***, Michael J. Gorman (IVP). Gorman traces Jewish, pagan, and Christian views on abortion in the Greco-Roman world. He adopts a "seamless garment" position on abortion and issues such as nuclear war.

***Abortion's Impact on the Church Family: A Pastoral Reference***. This free ebook (PDF) by Sydna Masse of Ramah International is aimed at helping pastors with sermon and ministry development—to offer the hope of God's healing and salvation to abortion's wounded hearts. Download via [ramahinternational.org/product/free-ebook-abortion-impact-on-the-church-family-a-pastoral-reference-pdf/](http://ramahinternational.org/product/free-ebook-abortion-impact-on-the-church-family-a-pastoral-reference-pdf/)

***Abortion Rites: A Social History of Abortion in America***, Marvin Olasky (Crossway). Places abortion in its historical, social, medical, and legal contexts. Analyzes which pro-life efforts have been successful and which have not. Important reading for those in leadership positions.

***Answering the Call***, John Ensor (Hendrickson Publishers). An invaluable resource that clearly lays out a blueprint for the life-affirming Christian response to the abortion issue.

***Arresting Abortion***, John W. Whitehead, ed. (Crossway Books). Contributors to this book expose the myths of pro-abortion thinking and also provide insights into what can be done now to save the lives of unborn and newborn babies.

***Bad News for Modern Man***, Franky Schaeffer (Crossway). The son of the late Francis Schaeffer presents compelling arguments for Christian activism in defense of the sanctity of human life. A call to action rather than an educational treatise, this book's tone is direct and uncompromising.

***Beyond Abortion: A Chronicle of Fetal Experimentation***, Suzanne M. Rini (Magnificat Press). The author, a journalist, uncovered a network of medical researchers practicing non-therapeutic experimentation on unborn babies.

***Blood Money***, Carol Everett (Multnomah). A former abortion clinic director and owner pierces the veil of secrecy surrounding abortion. After six years in the business, Carol walked away from her clinics when she met Jesus Christ.

## Pro-Life Resource Directory

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**Body, Soul, & Life Everlasting**, John W. Cooper (Eerdmans). Cooper takes up the monism-dualism debate of Biblical anthropology. Successfully argues down Platonic influences on Christianity. Not for the philosophically uninitiated.

**The Case for Life: Equipping Christians to Engage the Culture**, Scott Klusendorf (Crossway). The pro-life message can compete in the marketplace of ideas, provided Christians properly understand and articulate the message. From one of the premier pro-life apologists of our day.

**Challenging Conversations: Practical Guide to Discuss Controversial Topics in the Church**, by Jason Jimenez (Baker). Our tendency is to either avoid talking about olatile topics (depression, mental illness, substance abuse, pornography, premarital sex, racism, divorce, abortion, LGBT issues, or politics) with other Christians, or go on the attack, causing rifts that do nothing to encourage further discussion or growth.

**Compelling Interests**, Jessica Shaver (Pleasant Word). The fictional, yet truthful, history of two movements in America – pro-life and pro-choice. Hard to put down.

**Contenders: A Church-Wide Strategy to Unmask Abortion, Defeat Its Advocates, Empower Christians, and Change the World**. Drawing on decades as a pro-life communication trainer, apologist, professor, and director of intercollegiate speech and debate, author Marc Newman equips readers to speak up with confidence for the unborn, resist and respond to abortion ad-

vocacy, and persuade powerfully, yet winsomely. <https://speakerfor-life.com/contenders/>

**Created in His Image series** (Grace to You blog, by John MacArthur), beginning with The Centrality of Man in Creation at [www.gty.org/library/blog/B200706](http://www.gty.org/library/blog/B200706)

**Deadly Compassion**, Rita Marker (Morrow). The director of the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force reveals fascinating behind-the-scenes information on the world-wide euthanasia movement. This book is especially compelling because Marker looks at the movement through the disenchanted eyes of one of its founders in America, Ann Humphrey.

**Death Before Birth**, Harold O. J. Brown, (Nelson). Here is a book which looks at all sides of the abortion problem—the psychological implications, the physical dangers, and the relationship between abortion and mercy killing. Includes a discussion of when life begins and women’s rights.

**The Death Decision**, Leonard J. Nelson, ed. (Servant Books). Eight experts address the legal and ethical issues emerging on the frontier of biology—including abortion, euthanasia, treatment of defective newborns, genetic screening, bio-engineering, and reproductive techniques.

**Evangelical Ethics**, John Jefferson Davis (Presbyterian & Reformed). Brings together a wealth of data and insight from Scripture, medical science, law and history on a variety of pressing issues, including

contraception, reproductive technologies, abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, civil disobedience.

**Fighting for Life**, Melinda Delahoyde (Servant). The author presents evidence that the practice of infanticide (killing children born with mental or physical defects) is widespread and leading us down the path to active euthanasia. Well-documented instances of infanticide are presented.

**Forced Exit**, Wesley J. Smith (Times Books). The author, a consumer advocate and attorney, shows how the claims of euthanasia advocates have already been proved false.

**Genetic Engineering**, J. Kerby Anderson (Zondervan). Presents an appraisal of the achievements and capabilities of geneticists (artificial reproduction, genetic manipulation, etc.), offering a balanced discussion of both the benefits and the various implications that call for consideration and restraint.

**Gianna: Aborted and Lived to Tell About It**, Jessica Shaver (Focus on the Family Publishing). The incredible true story of one girl’s remarkable journey from abortion survivor to steadfast defender and lover of life.

**Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood**, George Grant. Exposes cracks in the carefully maintained facade of the organization. Grant calls for a biblical approach to disentangling the grip Planned Parenthood has on our schools, the media, and government.

## Annotated Bibliography of Pro-Life Reference Materials

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***Has Sex Education Failed our Teenagers?***, Dinah Richard, Ph.D. (Focus on the Family Publishing). This research report gives credence to the idea that so-called "values-neutral" sex education has increased the teen pregnancy rate, not reduced it. Good documentation and abundant resource referrals make this a weighty tool in the hands of concerned parents and teachers.

***How the Gospel Shapes the Sanctity of Life*** (booklet), Russell Moore. The Gospel is central to the sanctity of human life and the reason we speak for those without a voice. [erlc.com/resource-library/e-books/how-the-gospel-shapes-the-sanctity-of-life](http://erlc.com/resource-library/e-books/how-the-gospel-shapes-the-sanctity-of-life).

***Innocent Blood***, John Ensor (Cruciform Press). God always presents the shedding of innocent blood to His people as a matter of the highest priority. It falls to us who believe to suffer the imposition and take whatever preventive steps are necessary, lest innocent blood be shed and bloodguilt stain us all.

***Is Rescuing Right?***, Randy Alcorn (IVP). A passionate but clear-minded examination of issues surrounding blockades of abortion clinics is steeped in Scripture and provides a basic Christian understanding of civil disobedience.

***Justice for the Unborn***, Randall Hekman (Servant). Details the experiences of a juvenile court judge who refused to authorize an abortion for a minor ward of the court, and documents the wave of national attention the case generated. Hekman, a former member of

LifeMattersWorldwide's executive board, gives an excellent analysis of the Supreme Court abortion decision and provides practical suggestions for combatting abortion.

***The Least of These***, Curt Young (Moody Press). Outlines the necessity of offering alternatives to abortion. The author served for ten years as the executive director of the Christian Action Council.

***Life Before Birth***, Gary E. Parker (Master Books). A book for families to share as they pass on the dignity of human life to the next generation. Dr. Parker explains the biblical view of life before birth, carefully covering the topics of abortion and birth defects.

***Living in His Forgiveness***, Sandy Day (Focus Publishing). Men and women have written about the impact that abortion has had on their lives and how God has set them free from the guilt and pain that plagued them. Follow this biblical, God-centered path to find your way out of a dark past into the glorious light of God's grace. You can overcome the anguish, heartbreak, and guilt of abortion.

***Lyme 5***, Mark Crutcher (Life Dynamics). The never-before-told behind-the-scenes report of two forgotten groups: The women who have abortions and the people who perform them. Unveils the devastation of women's lives that has been carefully suppressed by the abortion industry.

***Medical Ethics, Human Choices: A Christian Perspective***, John Rogers, ed. (Herald Press). Addresses the hard questions of medical

ethics from a Christian perspective, questions that individuals and families are often forced to face alone.

***The Mourning After***, Terry L. Selby, M.S.W. (Baker). Subtitled "Help for the Postabortion Syndrome," this book offers help, hope and recovery for those suffering the aftermath of an abortion. Selby urges those in the helping professions to recognize and properly treat a growing malady of the post-Roe era. Important for pastors and others in counseling ministries.

***The Myths of Sex Education***, Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers). In this "open letter" to his school board, the acclaimed writer exposes the futility of society's "value-free, morally neutral" approach to sex education.

***Ninety Days for Life***, Fred Kerr (Hannibal Books). This jailhouse journal of a pro-life advocate recounts how the atmosphere in the Fulton County Jail changed when the author began sharing the Gospel with fellow inmates.

***Operation Rescue***, Randall Terry (Whitaker House). Written by the founder of the organization that stages large, peaceful sit-ins at abortion clinics, this book outlines the history of Operation Rescue, the rationale behind it, and practical considerations. The author focuses on the need for repentance in the Church and pro-life movement for our lack of action on behalf of exploited women and babies.

## Pro-Life Resource Directory

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***Politically Correct Death: Answering Arguments for Abortion Rights***, Francis J. Beckwith (Baker). Written to break through the rhetorical hostility of the abortion debate. Beckwith contributes to the pro-life arsenal by providing a rigorous intellectual defense of the pro-life position which is helpful to policy makers, political consultants, pro-life leaders, and ordinary Americans.

***The Press and Abortion, 1838-1988***, by Marvin Olasky (Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.). In this important work, the author reviews 150 years of abortion in the news and how journalists have handled it. Such a history reveals that abortion has not always enjoyed the favor in media circles it has today.

***Pro Life Answers to Pro Choice Arguments***, Randy Alcorn (Multnomah). A handbook for Christians who debate the issue of abortion at work or at school. Helpful format pairs common pro-choice statements with pro-life responses. **Pastors receive a free copy upon request: [info@epm.org](mailto:info@epm.org).**

***Prospects for Growth***, Calvin Beisner (Crossway). Brings Biblical principles of theology, anthropology and ethics to bear on issues of population, freedom, natural resources, and environmental management.

***Real Choices***, Frederica Mathewes-Green (Multnomah). An inside look at reasons women make an abortion decision and how we can help both mother and child.

***The Rescuers***, Paul deParrie (Wolgemuth & Hyatt). The grip-

ping stories of ordinary people who risked their reputations and freedom to save babies from abortion. Answers the question, How does it feel to take this kind of action?

***The Right to Die: Caring Alternatives to Euthanasia***, Mark Blocher (Moody). Explains how we can differentiate ourselves from those who support death on demand.

***The Right to Live; the Right to Die***, C. Everett Koop, MD (Tynedale). The prominent physician probes attitudes and trends from important perspectives: medical, personal, social, and theological.

***The Right to Picket and the Freedom of Public Discourse***, John W. Whitehead (Crossway). The author outlines the history of picketing and its legality in the United States, while offering guidelines to those who participate in pickets.

***Sanctity of Life: The Inescapable Issue***, Charles R. Swindoll (Word). More than just another call to legislative remedies for abortion, this book urges individual Christian involvement in reaching out to women.

***Sexuality and Sexually Transmitted Diseases***, Joe S. McIlhaney, Jr., M.D. (Baker). Dr. McIlhaney, an obstetrician/gynecologist, exposes "safe" sex for what it really is: extremely dangerous. He aims his frank remarks about STDs, the symptoms and cures—what cures there are!—at young women considering, or currently engaged in, casual sex. He is informative and compassionate without being an alarmist.

***Shattering the Darkness***, Joseph Foreman (Cooling Spring Press). Subtitled, "The Crisis of the Cross in the Church Today," this work by a leader in the rescue movement challenges all Christians to live out the rescue theme of the Gospel in every area of life. That is the message of the cross.

***Stand for Life: A Student's Guide for Making the Case and Saving Lives***, John Ensor and Scott Klusendorf (Hendrickson Publishers). This comprehensive guide to the critical issues at the heart of the pro-life movement will help you stand up for the sacredness of human life and reach out with compassion and grace to those on the difficult road of unplanned pregnancy.

***Suffer the Little Children: Christians, Abortion, & Civil Disobedience***, Mark Belz (Crossway). Evangelicals want respect for life and respect for authority. At the door of the abortion clinic, these two values collide. The author, an attorney, addresses the collision in a thoughtful manner.

***The Terminal Option***, John T. Rogers (Destiny Image Publishers). A novel that takes the abortion philosophy to its logical conclusion. Shows what life might be like for Christians in the 22nd century.

***Third Time Around***, George Grant (Wolgemuth & Hyatt). Contrary to popular opinion, the pro-life movement is not a recent phenomenon. Principled people have fought for the rights of the unborn for centuries. Grant documents this history.

## Annotated Bibliography of Pro-Life Reference Materials

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***Till Euthanasia Do You Part?*** Wayne Stayskal (Baker). A light-hearted, yet poignant collection of cartoons by the popular syndicated editorial cartoonist. Many cartoons comment on pro-life issues.

***A Time for Compassion***, Dr. Ron Lee Davis with James D. Denney (Revell). The authors call upon Christians to affirm the sanctity of human life, showing how Christ's love compels us to alleviate people's spiritual and physical suffering, as well as defend the rights of the unborn.

***The Tragedy of American Compassion***, by Marvin Olasky (Crossway). Olasky can be counted on for an accurate interpretation of history. Here's a valuable discussion of the roots of American charitable efforts, the cave-in to the "welfare mentality," and how Christians can find their way back to true compassion. Chapter six is important: "The Seven Marks of Compassion."

***Unholy Sacrifices of the New Age***, Paul deParrie and Mary Pride (Crossway). In a fast-paced, gripping style, the authors expose the link between modern medicine and the New Age movement, likening abortion, infanticide and euthanasia to pagan human sacrifice and cannibalism.

***Vital Signs: Decisions that Determine the Quality of Life and Health***, Mark Blocher (Moody Press). The executive director of Life Matters Worldwide wrote this helpful volume to assess current trends in medical practice in terms of biblical ethics. Useful for fami-

lies, pastors, counselors, Sunday School teachers, and discussion leaders.

***The War Against Population***, Jacqueline Kasun (Ignatius). Point by point, Kasun smothers the dogmas of the doomsayers and population controllers under a mountain of data.

***Wednesday Mourning***, Mary Waalkes VerWys (Roberts Publishing). Story after story relate Mary's experiences as an abortion clinic sidewalk counselor. Gripping short chapters reveal the pain and sorrow of those who go on to have abortions and the joy of answered prayer when someone changes her mind. Walk with Mary as you read. You won't be able to put it down!

***Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*** Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop (Crossway). One of the earliest books calling Christians to action against the erosion of the right to life, the authors describe the development of the abortion mentality which paved the way for active euthanasia.

***When Choice Becomes God***, F. LaGard Smith (Harvest). Smith sorts through conflicting emotions and confusing arguments to debunk Choice, which has become the supreme right in our society.

***Who Broke the Baby?*** Jean Garton (Bethany House). The author, a former pro-abortion feminist who eventually served as director of Lutherans for Life, explodes the major arguments for abortion.

***Why Pro-Life? Caring for the Unborn and Their Mothers***, Randy Alcorn (Hendrickson Publishing). Offers factual answers to the central issues of the abortion debate in a concise, non-abrasive way. Infused with grace and compassion, and grounded in medical science and psychological studies, a solid case is presented for defending both unborn children and their mothers.

***Without Moral Limits***, Debra Evans (Crossway). A thorough critique of reproductive technologies (hysterectomy, abortion, in vitro fertilization and more) that exploit women and devalue human life.

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# Pro-Life DVD Profiles

Check with distributors (such as American Portrait Films, Heritage House, Life Cycle Books, and others listed under Pro-Life Groups, Resources, and Distributors) for availability and additional titles. *Life Matters Worldwide* does not necessarily endorse all the views represented and recommends that videos or DVDs be previewed before a presentation.

**180 Movie.** Watch interviewees take a 180 degree turn and change their minds about abortion. Then pass this video on. It could save millions of lives. Available from Living Waters on YouTube ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7y2KsU\\_dhwl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7y2KsU_dhwl)) and [www.180movie.com/](http://www.180movie.com/). **Teen-Adult • 33 min.**

**Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue, 2 vols.** Bible teacher R. C. Sproul attempts to cut through the emotional rhetoric of the abortion debate in light of biblical, civil, and natural law. Accompanying study guide promotes classroom discussion. **High School-Adult • Six 30 minute segments.**

**After the Choice.** Women talk about their actual experiences with abortion—thoughts and feelings going into the abortion, fear and pain during the abortion, and sense of loss, shame and regret after the abortion. They also relate the forgiveness found in Jesus Christ. Beautifully done, compelling, all-around excellent presentation. **Teen-Adult audience • 25 minutes.**

**Baby Choice.** A sensitive and powerful presentation of five babies who died as a result of their mothers' "right to choose." A realistic, yet dignified look at abortion. **High School-Adult • 30 min.**

**Bearing Burdens.** By Lutherans for Life, this video seeks to combat euthanasia—quickly becoming an obligation to die rather than just a 'right' to die—by exhorting Christians to bear one another's burdens. High School-Adult • 22 min.

**Choice Blues.** Broadcast quality abortion procedure and aftermath footage. Part one shows abortions in progress and part two contains footage of aborted embryonic and fetal tissue. Use with caution, fully disclosing the contents prior to showing, and allow people to leave if they're uncomfortable. <https://www.abortionno.org/product/choice-blues-dvd>. **Teen-Adult • 7:30 min.**

**The Dignity of Human Life.** From the formation of a child's first tiny cell to life's final breath, all life has dignity and value because each and every one of us is made in the image of God. Also available in Spanish. View and share at [www.focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/promos/advocacy/be-a-voice](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/promos/advocacy/be-a-voice). **Child-Adult • 4:12 min.**

**Eclipse of Reason.** This landmark video produced by Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a former abortionist, exposes the horror of late-term abortions. Viewers glimpse the growing unborn child through fetoscopy, a camera in the womb, and then witness his death by the dilation and evacuation method

of abortion. Narrated by actor Charlton Heston. **Adult • 30 min.**

**Faces of Life.** View winning entries of this Focus on the Family contest, including the grand prize winner "Precious Cargo." Candice is homeless by choice. Pregnant and planning an abortion, she made an adoption plan for her baby after visiting a pregnancy care center. Available on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/yvS34icpA2s?list=PLE11CFA4632C213B5>. **Teen-Adult • various lengths.**

**Fearfully & Wonderfully Made.** An anatomist looks at the incredible complexity of human life. Dr. David Menton explains Psalm 139:13-16 using anatomical science and biology. This illustrated lecture reveals the amazing and intricate design of the womb and the processes of fertilization, implantation, embryonic development, and birth. These "irreducible complexities" cannot be explained by chance and random processes, but are truly miraculous. Also explains the process of "second birth" in salvation. <https://answersingenesis.org/store/product/fearfully-wonderfully-made/>. **Teen-Adult • 63 minutes.**

**The Heart of the Matter.** Designed for use in pregnancy care centers, but could be used with teenagers in abortion prevention. Offers facts about pregnancy and life

## Life Matters Worldwide's DVD Profile

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in the womb, information on abortion and its dangers, and discusses the options of marriage, single-parenting and adoption. **Teen-Adult • 28 minutes.**

***The Hidden Holocaust.*** A documentary in which pro-life and pro-abortion leaders are interviewed. Portrays a live ultrasound of a three month old unborn child. Contains footage of experiments on live aborted babies and clips of a first trimester suction abortion from *The Silent Scream*. **High School-Adult • 50 min.**

***It Ain't Worth It.*** Athletes for Abstinence, including A.C. Green, Barry Sanders, and David Robinson, promote sexual purity as the alternative to "safe" sex. Also utilizes positive peer pressure as teenagers respond to worldly messages concerning sex—"every-body's doing it"—and outlines the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases. The message that sex is reserved for marriage is clearly presented. Music video at the end could be omitted. **Teens • 30 min.**

***Knowing the Unborn.*** Expectant parents and others will be amazed at the development of unborn babies. Advocates "pre-birth parenting," based on scientific research. Not necessarily from a pro-life or Christian perspective, yet asserts that "the unborn child is a feeling, remembering, aware being" and "Birth is not the beginning. Birth is the continuum of life." **Teen-Adult • 29 min.**

***Let Me Live (Vanessa's Story).*** Dramatization of how sexual activity and a resulting pregnancy affected the lives of everyone

around Vanessa—her boyfriend, his and her parents, their friends and extended family members—as well as her relationship to God. Show how Christians working in a pregnancy care center can meet her needs and answer her questions. A little slow in spots, but contains a good gospel message. **Teens • 75 min.**

***The Light of Life.*** A behind-the-scenes look at the abortion industry through the eyes of Carol Everett, a former abortion clinic owner. Carol left the lucrative business after coming to faith in Jesus Christ. Hers is a powerful testimony to the grace of God. **Teen-Adult • 30 min.**

***Living Experiments.*** Scientific experiments which abused living unborn children are recalled in this interview with John Wilke, M.D., past-president of National Right to Life. Includes shocking footage of reflex-response tests in which six to twelve week old unborn babies are prodded to death. Parental guidance suggested. **High School-Adult • 15 min.**

***Maafa 21.*** They were stolen from their homes, locked in chains, and taken across an ocean. And for more than 200 years, their blood and sweat would help build the richest, most powerful nation. When slavery ended, America's wealthy elite decided it was time for them to disappear, and weren't particular how it might be done. the plan they set in motion 150 years ago is still being carried out: black genocide in the 21st century.

***Massacre of Innocence.*** A comprehensive look at the spiritual

nature of abortion. The first section looks at the legalization of abortion. Still photographs of abortion and aborted babies. The second section compares abortion to child sacrifice and demon worship. Intriguing insights into God's response to child sacrifice in the Bible. Can be divided into two parts. **High School-Adult • 85 minutes.**

***A Matter of Choice.*** A reporter researches an article on abortion, interviewing pro-life and pro-abortion leaders, as well as women who have experienced crisis pregnancies and abortion. Contains under two minutes of graphic medical footage of both suction and saline abortions. <https://youtu.be/4iF6ycQNFA8> **High School-Adult • 28 minutes.**

***A Matter of Death & Life—The Future?*** Exposes the dangers of Living Wills and the minefield of end-care decision-making through three intertwining stories. British accents difficult to understand at times. **High School-Adult • 26 minutes.**

***Meet the Abortion Providers.*** Former abortion providers (doctors, clinic owners and clinic workers) give testimony of their involvement in a death industry, why and how they got out. Provocative and alarming, many of the speakers attest to the forgiveness of Christ in their lives. Brief footage of aborted babies. **High School-Adult • 55 minutes.**

***The Miracle of Life.*** This first film record of human conception, photographed by Lennart Nilsson, originally appeared on *Nova*

and earned an Emmy. Follows the development process in the womb from a single cell to birth! Parental guidance. Origin of life explained in evolutionary terms. **Teen-Adult • 60 minutes.**

**The Miracle of Life.** Incredible ultrasound images show us how amazing and wonderful God's gift of life is. Useful as a sermon illustration video when preaching on the sanctity of human life. Also available in Spanish. Download from <http://www.hyperpixelsmedia.com/sermon-illustration-videos/the-miracle-of-life>, \$20; free PowerPoint available. **General audience • 3:32 min.**

**My Life.** Look past the numbers and be moved by the actual loss of individual lives. This video shows "what could have been" and encourages everyone to be a voice for life. Download and share from <http://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/35858/My-Life>, starting at \$15. **General audience • 2:22 min.**

**No Easy Way Out.** Rather than solving her problems, a pregnancy and abortion complicates a young teenager's life. Drama is interspersed with testimonies from teens about their own real-life pregnancies and abortions, as well as information on abortion given by a medical doctor. **Teens • 20 minutes.**

**Overpopulation: The Making of a Myth.** From the Population Research Institute, Population 101 series; <https://youtu.be/vZVOU5bfHrM>. **General audience • 1:31 min.**

**The Sound of Abortion.** Abortion statistics are vividly portrayed by the sound of metal BBs hitting the sides of a tin can. <https://youtu.be/EdTjLZPnvKM>. **General audience • 2:26 min.**

**Preview of a Birth.** Discover the amazing world of life within the womb. Fascinating chronicle of the journey from conception to birth. A full-color, fast-paced and dynamic learning experience for any audience. [hdrc.org/product/preview\\_of\\_a\\_birth\\_video/](http://hdrc.org/product/preview_of_a_birth_video/). **All ages • 17 min.**

**The Procedure.** The riveting testimony of a "very pro-choice" nurse who witnessed partial-birth abortions first-hand. **Teen-Adult • 29 min.**

**Pro-Life Doctors Speak Out.** Three doctors—John Willke, Bernard Nathanson, and C. Everett Koop—discuss the basic medical arguments against abortion. Includes authoritative statements on when life begins, viability, abortion techniques, and the complications to women. **Teen-Adult • 17 minutes.**

**Reversing Roe, The Norma McCorvey Story.** The story of how Jane Roe (McCorvey) found Christ through the friendship of a pro-life leader and the love of a child who'd almost been aborted. **Teen-Adult • 30 min.**

**The Right to Kill.** Can illness, age, or wanting to die justify killing? Host William F. Buckley, Jr. introduces experts in medicine, law, philosophy and religion who attempt answers to this question. Parental guidance suggested. **High School-Adult • 58 minutes.**

**Sex Has a Price Tag.** Four video set brings the reality of sexual promiscuity home to teenagers. Nationally known youth speaker, Pam Stenzel, talks about the physical price of sex outside marriage (pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and even death), the emotional price, and the social price. Available from Straight Talk, Box 83, Okabena, MN 56161, (507) 853-4600.

**Sex, Lies & the Truth.** Produced by Focus on the Family, this video persuasively argues against "safe sex" and for abstinence outside of marriage. Teens hear from television and sports personalities who decided to save sex for marriage. Public school and Christian school versions available. **Teen • 30 minutes.**

**Silent Scream.** A first trimester suction abortion is seen via ultrasound from the victim's point of view. The abortionist's procedure is explained by Bernard Nathanson, M.D., a former abortionist. **High School-Adult • 27 minutes.**

**A Song for Grandmother.** A powerful and sensitive documentary of the needs of America's elderly, this video demonstrates how Christians can minister to the residents of convalescent hospitals and nursing homes. **All ages • 35 min.**

**Ultrasound: Window to the Womb.** Shari Richard, an ultrasonographer, lets the babies "speak for themselves." Through high resolution, real-time ultrasonic imaging, viewers see fully formed babies from eight weeks after conception. Available in two lengths; shorter presentation omits abortion infor-

## Life Matters Worldwide's Film & Video Profile

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mation and is suitable for use in public schools. **All ages • 28 and 43 minute versions.**

***Unplanned.*** As one of the youngest Planned Parenthood clinic directors in the nation, Abby Johnson was involved in upwards of 22,000 abortions and counseled countless women about their reproductive choices. She deeply believed in women's rights until she saw something that changed everything. [www.unplannedfilm.com](http://www.unplannedfilm.com). **Teen-Adult • 110 minutes.**

***Your Life Before Birth.*** By helping people see the developing child, you can motivate them to better appreciate and support pregnant women and make healthier choices during pregnancy, whenever it occurs. Available in 9 languages. <https://www.ehd.org/your-life-before-birth-video/>. **General audience • 6 minutes.**

# Pro-Life Groups, Resources, and Distributors

*Disclaimer: Inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement by Life Matters Worldwide but is intended for your information and convenience.*

**Adoption Network**

[www.adoption.org](http://www.adoption.org)

**Abortion-Breast Cancer Link**

Dr. Joel Brind, Ph.D

P.O. Box 3127 Poughkeepsie, NY  
12603

[www.abortioncancer.com](http://www.abortioncancer.com)

**AbortionDocs.org**

*Collection of documentation on  
America's abortion industry*

**Abortion Pill Reversal**

[www.abortionpillreversal.com/](http://www.abortionpillreversal.com/)  
24/7 helpline 877-558-0333  
[info@apr.life](mailto:info@apr.life)

**Abstinence Clearinghouse**

801 East 41st Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
[www.abstinence.net](http://www.abstinence.net)

**American Association of  
Pro-Life Obstetricians and  
Gynecologists**

[aaplog.org](http://aaplog.org)

*Medical research and help finding pro-  
life doctors*

**Americans to Ban Cloning**

[www.cloninginformation.org](http://www.cloninginformation.org)

**Answers in Genesis**

[www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org)

*Life Before Birth children's book, Fear-  
fully and Wonderfully Made DVD*

**Baptist Children's Home**

1-888-464-9540

[baptistchildrenshome.org](http://baptistchildrenshome.org)

*Adoption services*

**Be Not Afraid**

[www.benotafraid.net](http://www.benotafraid.net)

*Outreach to parents who've received  
a poor or difficult prenatal diagnosis*

**Bethany Christian Services**

1-800-BETHANY

[www.bethany.org](http://www.bethany.org)

*Adoption information; Stepping Stones  
(support for couples facing infertility)*

**Birth of a Family**

[www.birthofafamily.org](http://www.birthofafamily.org), [www.familygodsway.com](http://www.familygodsway.com)

*Helps pregnancy care center clients  
connect with churches and build  
households based on biblical prin-  
ciples and values*

**Caleb Ministries**

[www.calebministries.org](http://www.calebministries.org)

*Comfort for infertility, miscarriage,  
stillbirth, early infant death, and post-  
abortion grief*

**Care Net**

109 Carpenter Drive, Suite 100,  
Sterling, VA 20164

[www.care-net.org](http://www.care-net.org); 1-800-395-  
HELP, (703) 478-5661

*Making Life Disciples*

**The Center for Bioethics and  
Human Dignity**

2065 Half Day Road

Bannockburn, IL 60015

(847) 317-8180

[www.cbhd.org](http://www.cbhd.org)

[bioethics.com](http://bioethics.com)

**Christian Council on Persons  
with Disabilities**

[www.ccpd.org](http://www.ccpd.org)

**Christian Medical and Dental  
Associations**

P.O. Box 7500

Bristol, TN 37621

(423) 844-1000

[www.cmds.org](http://www.cmds.org)

**Coalition on Abortion/Breast  
Cancer**

P.O. Box 152

Palos Heights, IL 60463

1-877-803-0102

[abortionbreastcancer.com](http://abortionbreastcancer.com)

**Compassionate Healthcare  
Network**

[www.chninternational.com](http://www.chninternational.com)

*International anti-euthanasia net-  
work*

**Crossway**

<https://www.crossway.org/>

*Life Before Birth tract*

**Do No Harm**

[www.stemcellresearch.org](http://www.stemcellresearch.org)

*Coalition of Americans for Research  
Ethics*

## Pro-Life Groups, Distributors

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**Elliot Institute**  
PO Box 7348  
Springfield, IL 62791  
(217) 525-8202  
[www.afterabortion.org](http://www.afterabortion.org)  
*Information on the effects of abortion*

**The Endowment for Human Development**  
<https://www.ehd.org/>  
*Prenatal timeline, summary, and overview; prenatal development images and DVDs; The Virtual Human Embryo; Your Life Before Birth free video download (multi-languages)*

**Equal Rights Institute**  
[equalrightsinstitute.com](http://equalrightsinstitute.com)  
(704) 584-9525  
[info@equalrightsinstitute.com](mailto:info@equalrightsinstitute.com)  
*Pro-life apologetics training, videos, and blog*

**Family Research Council**  
801 G Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 393-2100; [www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org)

**Focus on the Family**  
[www.focusonthefamily.com](http://www.focusonthefamily.com)  
*What the Bible Says About the Beginning of Life, What Does the Bible Say About the End of Life, plus . . .*

- *First Nine Months*
- *"I'm Pregnant. Now What?"*
- *"She's Pregnant. Now What?"*
- *"Healing the Hurt"*

And more, available at [www.heartlink.org/brochures.cfm](http://www.heartlink.org/brochures.cfm). These titles are also available in Spanish at [www.heartlink.org/brochuresESP.cfm](http://www.heartlink.org/brochuresESP.cfm).

**Healing Hearts Ministries**  
P.O. Box 7890  
Bonney Lake, WA 98390  
[www.healinghearts.org](http://www.healinghearts.org)  
*Post-abortion ministry*

**Heartbeat International**  
[www.heartbeatinternational.org/worldwide-directory](http://www.heartbeatinternational.org/worldwide-directory)  
*Worldwide Directory of Pregnancy Help*

**Heritage House, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 730  
Taylor, AZ 85939  
(602) 536-7592  
*Precious Feet pins, bumper stickers, more*

**Human Coalition**  
[humancoalition.org](http://humancoalition.org)  
*The Church Toolkit*

**Human Development Resource Council**  
3961 Holcomb Ridge Rd. Ste. 200,  
Norcross, GA 30092  
(404) 447-1598  
<https://hdrc.org/>  
*What They Never Told You About the Facts of Life brochure; Preview of a Birth video, booklet and slides; trusted sexual health and fetal development medical facts*

**Human Life Matters**  
4417-51 Street, Beaumont AB,  
Canada T4X 1C8  
1-877-205-4602  
[www.humanlifematters.com](http://www.humanlifematters.com)  
*Ministry to churches and the disabled; To Be or Not to Be video; The Nature of Suffering Bible study*

**International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force**  
The Human Life Center  
University of Steubenville  
Steubenville, OH 43952  
(614) 282-9953 [www.internationaltaskforce.org](http://www.internationaltaskforce.org)  
*Updates on euthanasia*

**James Madison Center for Free Speech**  
[jamesmadisoncenter.org](http://jamesmadisoncenter.org)  
*Guidelines for Political Action by Churches and Pastors, Do's and Don'ts for Political Activities of Pastors*

**Joni and Friends**  
P.O. Box 3333  
Agoura Hills, CA 91376  
(818) 707-5664  
TTY (818) 707-9707  
[www.joniandfriends.org](http://www.joniandfriends.org)  
*Equipping churches to evangelize and disciple people affected by disabilities*

**Justice for All**  
2250 N. Rock Road, Ste. 118-230,  
Wichita, KS 67226  
(316) 683-6426; [jfa@jfaweb.org](mailto:jfa@jfaweb.org);  
[www.jfaweb.org](http://www.jfaweb.org)  
*Students for bioethical equality*

**Life Cycle Books**  
[www.lifecyclebooks.com](http://www.lifecyclebooks.com)  
*North America's foremost publisher (US and Canada) of pro-life and abstinence-only educational material*

**Life Decisions International**  
P.O. Box 419  
Amherst, NY 14226-0419  
(716) 839-4420  
*List of corporations supporting Planned Parenthood*

**Life Dynamics, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 2226, Denton, TX 76202;  
(940) 380-8800  
[www.lidi.org](http://www.lidi.org)  
*Abortion Malpractice project; undercover work at abortion clinics*

**Life Education & Resource Network (LEARN)**  
P.O. Box 9400, Fayetteville, NC  
28311 (910) 488-9936 [www.learninc.org](http://www.learninc.org)  
*Largest African-American pro-life group*

**LIFE International**

72 Ransom NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 248-3300  
www.lifeinternational.com  
*Helps nationals form pro-life ministries around the world*

**Life Issues Institute**

www.lifeissues.org  
*Serving the educational needs of the pro-life movement*

**LifeNews**

www.lifenews.com  
*Daily compilation of news about life*

**LifeSiteNews**

http://www.lifesitenews.com  
*Daily compilation of news relating to life and sexual purity*

**Life Training Institute**

www.prolifetraining.com  
*Persuasively communicating the pro-life message*

**Live Action**

www.liveaction.org/  
*Pro-life videos, news*

**Love Life**

https://www.lovelife.org/  
*Mobilizing the church so families turn to churches and not to abortion clinics*

**Medical Institute for Sexual Health**

P.O. Box 4919  
Austin, TX 78765-4919  
(512) 472-9461  
(800) 892-9484 (orders)  
*Information on sexually-transmitted diseases*

**The Michael Fund**

400 Penn Center Blvd., Suite 721,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235  
*Pro-life medical charity*

**National Right to Life Education Trust Fund**

419 7th St. NW, Suite 402  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 626-8800; nrlc.org  
*Legislative information; educational materials*

**OptionLine.org**

**1-800-712-4357**  
**Text "HELPLINE" to 313131**  
*Find a nearby pregnancy care center*

**PassionLife**

P.O. Box 862223  
Marietta, GA 30062  
passionlife.org  
*"Bringing the Gospel of Life to the neediest places." Download the 4 Questions training.*

**Pharmacists for Life**

P.O. Box 130  
Ingomar, PA 15127-0130  
(412) 364-3422  
(800) 227-8359  
www.pfli.org

**Population Research Institute**

P.O. Box 1559  
Front Royal, VA 22630  
(540) 622-5240; pri@pop.org;  
www.pop.org

**Post Abortion Ministries**

postabortionministries.com  
contact@postabortionministries.com  
*Hope and encouragement for lives touched by abortion*

**Pregnancy Centers Online**

1-800-395-HELP  
www.pregnancycenters.org  
*Find a center near you*

**Pro-Life America**

prolifeamerica.com  
*Pro-life portal*

**Pure Intimacy**

www.pureintimacy.org  
*Theology of Sexuality and other articles*

**RBC Ministries**

PO Box 2222, Grand Rapids, MI 49555-0001  
1-800-653-8333  
*When the Pain Won't Go Away: Dealing with the Aftereffects of Abortion and other booklets*

**Right to Life of Michigan Education Committee**

2340 Porter SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509-0901  
(616) 532-2300, www.rtl.org  
*Lending library: films, fetal models, books, more*

**Save the One**

www.savethe1.com  
*Why there should be no abortion exception for rape*

**Science for Unborn Human Life,**

www.sfuhl.org

**Snowflake Adoptions**

www.nightlight.org/  
snowflakeadoption.htm  
*Frozen embryo adoption program*

**Stand to Reason**

www.str.org  
*Pro-Life 101, commentaries on abortion, euthanasia, bioethics*

**University Faculty for Life**

Box 2273  
Georgetown University  
Washington, DC 20057  
http://www.uflf.org/

**The Whole Sex Talk**

www.thewholesextalk.com  
*A biblically based multimedia program empowering parents to have ongoing conversations with children about love, sex, and relationships*

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# 20 More Resources for Churches

**1 The 4 Questions training**, from PassionLife. Free download at <http://passionlife.org/resources>. The Gospel of life explained and applied to the greatest bioethical challenges of our time: abortion, infanticide, and gendercide. Formatted as a “catechism” around four questions:

- What does God say about human life, including life in the womb?
- What does God say about the shedding of innocent blood, including abortion?
- How do we bring the grace of the gospel to the guilt of abortion, so that people are forgiven and set free?
- What does God call us to do to stop the shedding of innocent blood and how have others done so?

**2 An Eye for an Eye**, sermon by Kevin DeYoung on Exodus 21:12-36. He deals with the difficult verses – 22 and 23 – placing them in the context of other personal injury laws, Lex Talionis, and the New Testament. Find it at [www.universityreformed-church.org/sermons/an-eye-for-an-eye/](http://www.universityreformed-church.org/sermons/an-eye-for-an-eye/).

**3 How the Gospel Shapes the Sanctity of Life.** In this booklet, Russell Moore explains how the Gospel is central to how we think through the sanctity of human life and is the reason that we speak for those who do not have a voice. Available from [erlc.com/resource-library/e-books/how-the-gospel-shapes-the-sanctity-of-life](http://erlc.com/resource-library/e-books/how-the-gospel-shapes-the-sanctity-of-life).

**4 One Thing Every Pastor Can Do to Prevent Abortions in Their Congregation**, by Josh Brahm. It’s difficult to talk about abortion in church because so many women have had abortions, but silence on the issue doesn’t help them. What does help is a public commitment on behalf of the entire congregation to treat women who become pregnant with grace and compassion rather than shame and rejection. Read more at [blog.equalrightsinstitute.com/every-pastor-prevent-abortion-congregation/](http://blog.equalrightsinstitute.com/every-pastor-prevent-abortion-congregation/). See also **Pastor’s Pledge to Prevent Abortions**, <https://equalrightsinstitute.com/pastor/>.

**5 How to Address Unplanned Pregnancies**, a sermon on John 8:1-11 for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, by Matt Troupe, pastor of Free Grace Church in Fresno, CA. Find the podcast at [www.freegracefresno.com/feeds/sermons/2018/1/28/sanctity-of-life-sunday-john-81-11](http://www.freegracefresno.com/feeds/sermons/2018/1/28/sanctity-of-life-sunday-john-81-11).

**6 Abortion’s Impact on the Church Family: A Pastoral Reference.** This free ebook (PDF) by Sydna Masse of Ramah International is aimed at helping pastors with sermon and ministry development—to offer the hope of God’s healing and salvation to abortion’s wounded hearts. Download via [ramahinternational.org/product/free-ebook-abortion-imp-act-on-the-church-family-a-pastoral-reference-pdf/](http://ramahinternational.org/product/free-ebook-abortion-imp-act-on-the-church-family-a-pastoral-reference-pdf/)

**7 Dignity at the End of Life**, by pro-life apologist Scott Klusendorf. As a church leader, how would you respond to questions of whether it’s permissible to remove tube feedings from terminal patients or increase pain-killers even if they might hasten death? Are there any guiding principles for decision-making at the end of life? Scott offers help from theology, ethics, and pastoral care. Find his three-part series on Life Matters’ blog: [www.lifemattersww.org/Blog](http://www.lifemattersww.org/Blog).

**8 Departing in Peace handouts**, companions to the book by Bill Davis, *Departing in Peace: Biblical Decision-Making at the End of Life*. Free four-week study guides and lesson plans for individuals and groups: **Ask the Doctors** (handouts and leader notes), **Leaving Instructions** (handouts, leader notes, and case studies). Available at Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., [www.prpbooks.com/book/departing-in-peace/](http://www.prpbooks.com/book/departing-in-peace/).

**9 Creating a Culture of Life in the Local Church** (audio file from the *Association of Certified Biblical Counselors*). Dr. Heath Lambert talks with Greg Gilbert about cultivating a culture of life in the local church. They discuss what a culture of life means, what leaders can do to create a culture of life in the local church, and what stigmas need to

change in the church. [biblicalcounseling.com/till-011-creating-a-culture-of-life-in-the-local-church-feat-greg-gilbert/](http://biblicalcounseling.com/till-011-creating-a-culture-of-life-in-the-local-church-feat-greg-gilbert/)

**10 How Do I Explain Abortion to My Children?** Pastor Michael C. Sherrard knows it's difficult to talk to children about sensitive issues, but while we're contemplating the best way to do it, someone else is influencing them. Here are four practical suggestions for parents and church leaders on how to get ahead of the issue and teach your children about abortion. [crossexamined.org/how-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children](http://crossexamined.org/how-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children) and [www.michaelcsherrard.com/blog/2016/11/1/how-and-when-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children](http://www.michaelcsherrard.com/blog/2016/11/1/how-and-when-do-i-explain-abortion-to-my-children)

**11 Birth of a Family** aims to complete family circles with fathers. It's an innovative approach that reaches the root of the issues that pro-life ministries address, and connects struggling families to churches. Their relational approach opens the door for role modeling, mentoring, and education, creating transformation for many families. The Birth of a Family curriculum serves as a platform for creating dialog and building relationships between clients and trained family coaches. The goal is to help clients learn what it means to build households based on biblical principles and values. [www.birthofafamily.org](http://www.birthofafamily.org) and [www.familygodsway.com](http://www.familygodsway.com)

**12 Human Coalition.** To reset the cultural compass and make abortion unthinkable in America, change must begin in people's hearts and minds. This transformation begins with the church, moving the culture into one that values the life of every preborn human. The Church Toolkit includes resources for pastors and churches. [humancoalition.org/church-outreach](http://humancoalition.org/church-outreach) and [humancoalition.org/church-outreach/pro-life-pastor](http://humancoalition.org/church-outreach/pro-life-pastor)

**13 Making Life Disciples.** Courts can make abortion illegal but God, through His Church, can make abortion unthinkable. Many women who have abortions call themselves Christians who attend church at least once a month. Pregnancy care centers alone will not end abortion. This outreach of Care Net equips churches to fill in a gap. Churches can lead pro-life efforts with credibility and love—

offering compassion, hope, help, and discipleship to women and men facing pregnancy decisions. [www.makinglifedisciples.com](http://www.makinglifedisciples.com)

**14 The Whole Sex Talk** is a biblically based, six-lesson multimedia program that empowers parents to have healthy ongoing conversations with their children about love, sex, and relationships. It can be used individually, as a couple, with young people, or in a small group setting. It includes six sessions on three DVDs that utilize short films, brutally honest parent and teen testimonials, expert panel interviews, and more. [www.thewholesextalk.com](http://www.thewholesextalk.com)

**15 LoveLife** is uniting and mobilizing churches to create a culture of love and life that will bring an end to abortion. [www.lovelife.org](http://www.lovelife.org)

**16 How to Responsibly Show an Abortion Video in Church.** Gregg Cunningham, Executive Director of the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform, demonstrates showing a graphic abortion video during the main worship service of a large church. [www.abortionno.org/vidеоgallery/gregg-cunningham-demonstrates-how-to-show-abortion-video-in-a-large-church](http://www.abortionno.org/vidеоgallery/gregg-cunningham-demonstrates-how-to-show-abortion-video-in-a-large-church)

**17 Find Your State's Abortion Report.** In the United States, national abortion reports are compiled and published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). States voluntarily aggregate and share their data, but some do not participate. National reporting is out-of-date. To provide a more complete and current view of abortion in the US, the Charlotte Lozier Institute reviews state-level reporting as it becomes available and publishes state-specific abortion reporting summaries. [lozierinstitute.org/state-abortion-reporting/](http://lozierinstitute.org/state-abortion-reporting/)

**18 Created in His Image,** Grace to You blog series, by John MacArthur. The creation of the human race was the central object of God's creative purpose from the beginning. In an important sense, everything else was created for humanity, and every step of creation up to that point had one main purpose: to prepare a perfect environment for Adam. [www.gty.org/library/blogseries/BS231](http://www.gty.org/library/blogseries/BS231)

## More Helpful Resources

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**19 Zoomerang: Returning to the Value of Life** (VBS from Answers in Genesis). At Zoomerang, children will marvel at the unforgettable wildlife, culture, and beauty of Australia while exploring the wonder and value of life, from the lives of preborn babies to eternal life in the kingdom of God. <https://answersingenesis.org/vbs/zoomerang/>

**20 Pastors, You Can Reduce Abortions in Your Church** (Pro-Life Theology in Practice). No matter how pro-life the leadership of a church is, it is statistically likely that some women in the congregation will be in a position where they consider having an abortion. Josh Brahm of Equal Rights Institute suggests one minimal leadership decision that any pastor can make that is likely to save lives within their congregations. <https://youtu.be/szw8ASoUZGw>

# Life Matters

Thought-provoking, educational flyers on the sanctity of human life.  
Insert them in bulletins or place them in your tract rack.

**Past Issues:** These and other free downloads are available at [www.lifemattersww.org](http://www.lifemattersww.org) from our church resource page.

- Sanctuary cities protect the unborn Sanctuary cities for the unborn are one more way Christians can fight abortion at the local level and show moms and families they care.
- What is a pregnancy care center? And why is pro-life ministry essential for Christians?
- A hard time to be pregnant Why does God allow people to become pregnant when He knows how difficult their lives are? The first chapter of James offers answers.
- Abortion & racial inequality Abortion clinics target babies of color, but pregnancy care centers demonstrate the value of every human life.
- **How can my church become even more pro-life?** Life Matters Worldwide has identified five key elements that can measure a church's level of pro-life engagement. How's your church doing?
  - **God & the pregnant teen** Two messages must be expressed in tandem and with equal force, and a third must follow close behind.
  - **What do cities of refuge reveal about God?** God wants every human death to be examined and mourned. He involves people in carrying out both justice and mercy.
  - **Does God forgive the sin of abortion?** The simple answer is yes, but how do we know for sure since the Bible doesn't mention abortion?
  - **What does it mean to articulate the biblical pro-life message?** God said He made us in His image and we believe it. We also put our beliefs into action. Also in KJV
  - **Why should we protect life?** Three reasons Christians should defend the unborn, even though the Bible doesn't mention abortion.
- **Celebrate God! Celebrate life!** Where does life begin? First consider where it begins—in God Himself!
- **"Whatever" ... Voting.** When Paul wrote Colossians, it's doubtful he had voting in mind. Those of us who do enjoy free and fair elections know that not only is voting a right and a privilege, but it's included in those "whatevers" we must "do heartily, as to the Lord."
- **After-Birth Abortion?** When two bioethicists suggested that newborns were just like fetuses and could be killed for any reason, a firestorm of controversy erupted. Is there any difference between an unborn baby and an infant?
- **Blurring the Lines, Shortening the Playing Field.** God's word doesn't allow us to move in the goalposts when the game of life gets hard. Science, technology, and circumstances don't change the facts of life.
- **Pray to End Abortion.** Asking God to end the scourge of abortion should be our first resort, not last.
- **Opening Your Heart to a Child.** Myths and misperceptions about adoption persist. Women need to know that many couples are waiting to adopt the babies they may struggle to raise. Evidence shows that both women and their babies live better lives when adoption is chosen.
- **"Will God Forgive Me if I Have an Abortion?"** How would a wise counselor respond to a woman's plan to have an abortion and seek forgiveness afterward? What advice is there for a Christian who is tempted by abortion? Can God help someone avoid that sin?
- **Abortion: What Does Gos Say?** Pro-choice religious leaders believe the Bible is silent on

## Life Matters

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abortion. Are they correct?

- **Roe: What we didn't know.** Since the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision, our knowledge of unborn human life has grown almost as fast as a child developing in the womb.
- **Jesus Loves People with Disabilities.** In the account of Bartimaeus' healing we see six truths about disability.
- **Practicing Compassion.** This god-like quality must be learned by sinful humans, with the example and help of Jesus!
- **Why Does Life Matter?** What was once self-evident must be explained and defended.
- **Noah: Violent or Righteous?** A major motion picture depicts the saint from Genesis. How accurate is it? Was Noah a violent man?
- **Are the Foundations Crumbling?** A reflection on 40 years of abortion-on-demand in America that emphasizes the importance of having a firm biblical basis for being pro-life.
- **Time & Abortion.** What does the passage of time mean in relation to abortion? Forty years in, are we any closer to its end? Where can we find encouragement?
- **God is good! And so is sex!** The proper place and blessing for sexual union is within the protective boundary of the marriage covenant – what love really is.
- **How to Prevent Abortion** Parents, churches, and Christian schools want to convey the truth that sex outside marriage is sin. How can that be done in a way that doesn't lead to abortion when teens disobey and pregnancy occurs?
- **Pro-Life Voting & Beyond.** When Christians live out the biblical pro-life ethic, it does more to protect life than any elected official or court decision.
- **Too high? Too low? Or just right?** Goldilocks had to learn what was Just Right in porridge temperature and bed firmness, and we have to learn what's Just Right when it comes to mankind's identity and role in the world. Also in KJV
- **Should We Use Violence to Fight Abortion?** Written after an abortion doctor was killed in 2009, this piece is still relevant, finding that acts of violence do not end abortion but lead to more acts of violence.

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